

Mónica Alonso

La construcción de los sueños

Su obra es excesiva, aun siendo minúscula. Excesivamente poblada de arquitectura, de trampas, de recorridos y laberintos. Los títulos de sus series son reveladores de una persistencia y objetivos que aparecen cada vez más nítidos: *Habitación para conversar*, *Construyendo o descanso*, *Adosados*, *Aséptico*, *Somniurizado*. Es en 1994 cuando la autora inicia este ciclo en el que investiga sobre la naturaleza del espacio doméstico y sus propias obsesiones. En ellas se presencia una evolución en la que va depurando su lenguaje y abandonando todo el equipaje innecesario en el trayecto de la creación.

Desde Archigram y Archizoom, la arquitectura se ha construido como la ciencia de las utopías. Desde Vito Acconci y sus estudios sobre los espacios públicos y privados, reminiscentes de la arquitectura, la escultura ha jugado a ser un hábitat utópico, una arquitectura inútil ⁽¹⁾.

Cuando a mediados del siglo XIX Henry David Thoreau, desde los bosques de Nueva Inglaterra, elogió el estado de sabiduría del hombre salvaje, aquel que debió existir antes de realizar el *contrato social*, recriminó a la civilización el que haya creado una arquitectura inaccesible para la mayor parte de la humanidad. Si el pensador de *Walden* decidió prescindir de lo superfluo fue para llegar a los cimientos del ser humano y del bienestar. Es en este canto a lo esencial, a lo básico y lo necesario, donde Mónica Alonso se une a H.D.Thoreau.

Entender lo fundamental, diseccionar el espacio doméstico y extraer, como si fueran las vísceras calientes de algún animal en el vértigo de su extinción, los elementos configuradores del lar forma parte del trabajo de Mónica Alonso. Como un cirujano que extirpa los órganos enfermos, ella obvia lo prescindible y entonces una puerta, una ventana o una cama cobran un sentido, que no es el meramente físico sino uno mental o espiritual, y se *conforman* con las vivencias del ser.

La aparente ingenuidad de una habitación, construida como una maqueta, a escala, pintada, retocada, se transforma en una arquitectura de las obsesiones, que indaga, y hace meditar, y repite con cadencia interminable la necesidad de encontrar un lugar donde descansar...los sueños.

Conocemos los grabados de M.C.Escher, nos fascina de ellos ver cómo escaleras, columnas y muros se entrecruzan, y nos engañan siempre, viendo por unos segundos cómo lo irreal se hace real. Al igual que M.C.Escher, que representa una arquitectura irrealizable, Mónica Alonso nos invade con esta arquitectura de la imposibilidad y dice: "*A primera vista nos sentimos atraídos por los colores de mis habitaciones, pero cómo dormir si no hay tejado que nos proteja, si las puertas se suce-*



Asepsia 1, 1996. Alumini, tela i plàstic, 25 x 64 x 34 cm.

den y despiertan en nosotros la intranquilidad". Es la paradoja de sus esculturas, sus objetos, a través de los que la dualidad atracción/repulsa penetra en nuestros sentidos. Como si huyendo de todas las convenciones del arte del *Feng Shui* hubiera decidido encontrar su propio equilibrio, siguiendo un proceso de *prueba y error* que sólo puede llevar a la conclusión de su serie *Construyendo o descanso*. Desde los primeros intentos fallidos, la cronología ha hecho que vaya encontrando curas a estos problemas geománticos, y las sucesivas esculturas se convierten así en un modelo de experimentación que servirá para encontrar el descanso.

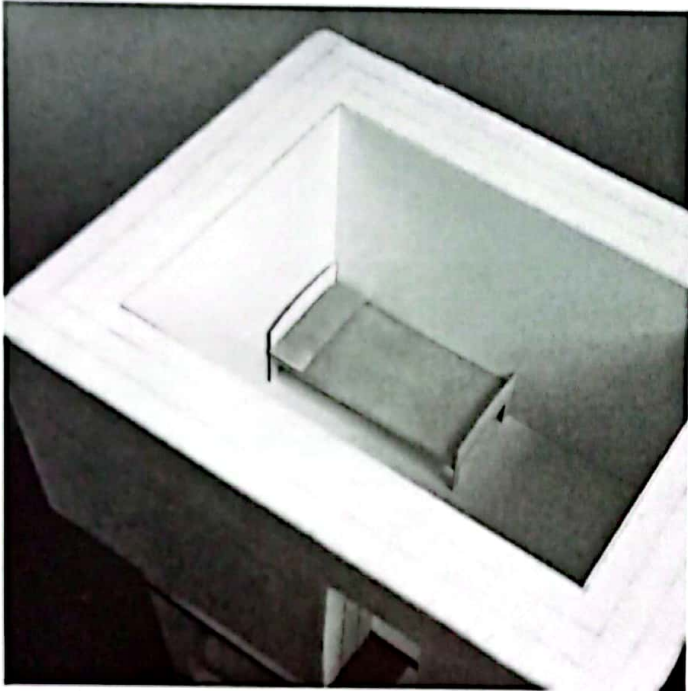
Hay un laberinto, una senda que guía nuestra mirada en cada una de sus piezas. Nos imaginamos un viaje y entramos por una ventana desnuda, salimos por el techo sin techo y volvemos a entrar, así hasta llegar al hastío, al reconocimiento sin tener que ver el lugar, sin tener que tocarlo. Interpretamos el *limes*, la frontera que conecta lo material con lo intelectual.

Existe un preciso momento, cualquiera que sea, en el que nos

mutamos en Minotauro para recorrer las estancias. Y existe otro momento, impreciso éste, en el que la autora toma la vida de Dédalo en préstamo imperceptible.

Hay colores que atraen, está comprobado. Cualquiera de nosotros lo ha sufrido cuando ha salido al campo con una camiseta del color equivocado, y todos los insectos del mundo querían libar en nuestros bolsillos. Y Mónica Alonso usa este recurso con precisión, premeditadamente, utilizando el rojo, el verde, el azul... "*como una trampa*", nos recuerda. Colores chillones, estridentes, *excesivos*, que nos llaman e hipnotizan. Este efecto fascina a la autora y lo emplea como un juego que le divierte.

Hay puertas, ventanas y camas. Es el ABC del espacio doméstico. Tras el cabezal de la cama ignoramos lo que ocurre más allá de la pared. En *Adosados* este desconocimiento se vuelve angustia, necesidad de saber, inquietud. Mediante la transparencia ficticia de las paredes observamos las escenas que se suceden en el espacio más próximo y más ajeno: el que está justo detrás de nuestros muros. Solucionamos lo insoluble, y otra vez lo irreal se vuelve real. La cama es el único espacio irreductible, la cápsula que nos protege y envuelve, pero también se nos aparece como el espacio de la vulnerabilidad. Quizás por eso hay que elevarse, para salvarse del desastre, de la violación, del permanente abismo. A veces hay ventanas donde no hay puertas, o hay puertas donde no hay ventanas, entonces se confunden las unas con las otras, y se usurpan mutuamente su función, se pierden en



Somniurizado 1, 1997. Fusta, espuma i metall, 135 x 40 x 30 cm.

tante, sujetas por unos elásticos, expuestas a la calda, al quebranto. Aunque siempre hubo una retórica y una presencia de la levitación en sus habitaciones. Incluso cuando tenían sus pies en la tierra, eran unos pies débiles, diminutos, unos pies de jirafa que relataban la voluntad de aislarse, de separarse, de decir adiós.

A veces nos preguntamos por el sentido que cobran los títulos de las obras, entonces éstos nos responden.

Álvaro Rodríguez Fominaya

esta mixtura, se arrasan en este caos. Otras veces no existen las puertas, ni los muros, ni ningún otro signo de lo esencial salvo la cama, y se transforma aún más en símbolo. Entonces lo esencial se torna extrapolable, intercambiable, y nos aturde.

Hay asepsia, que es uno de esos conceptos que surgen de forma casual para Mónica Alonso. Una imagen basta para convertir una idea en una nueva pieza. Contemplar la serie *Aséptico* es entrar otra vez en el túnel de la imposibilidad. La disposición de pequeñas bolas en el suelo impide lo que el título anuncia, proscribire la asepsia y nos sumerge en ese ámbito de la contradicción en el que transita la autora.

Adosados 3 es el proyecto que Mónica Alonso presenta en la Sala Montcada. *"Es la posibilidad de proyectar un edificio después de crear tantas habitaciones aisladas"*, señala la escultora. Las 12 plantas de la construcción, con sus correspondientes 27 camas, se elevan hasta ocupar casi todo el espacio. Ahora no es sino cuestión de la gravedad, de la Física y de Newton, ahora que sus camas rozan el techo, en un equilibrio incons-

(1) El término "inútil" se toma aquí en el sentido que le da Antonio Fernández-Galiano: como ontológicamente superior, ya que lo inútil es fin en sí mismo y no un medio para alcanzar otros fines.

bition. The works tune into the feelings of this end of the millenium by touching on the deepening of the relationship between art and the everyday, and hinting at the process which will render inseparable the terms "creation" and "life".

The complexity and plurality of the current situation, the appearance of new problems, the approximation of art to life, the transformations of space and the habitat caused by the telecommunications revolution mean that contemporary art must be viewed and understood within alternative parameters, as the traditional criteria are no longer valid. The break in history as a linear process, the absence of dominant artistic trends which were a feature of earlier avant-gardes, the appearance of phenomena adjusted to the new requirements of communication and of artists' messages, all intensify the chaos and the discomfiture of the viewer who associates art with entertainment and does not consider it as an instrument for reflection.

We hope that this show occasions a productive artistic encounter and provokes a wide range of readings which will all serve to reveal the existential questions which are the well-spring of our everyday life. Our selection accepts the risks involved in any personal choice, since without risk, without research, without experiment, then there is no creative process at all.

M^a José Balcells
 Ángela Cuenca
 Claudia Faus
 Guillermo González
 Gabriel Martín
 Pepa Palomar
 Dena Pérez
 Álvaro R. Tominaya

Mónica Alonso. Building dreams

Her work is excessive, even though it is minuscule. Excessively endowed with architecture, traps, paths and labyrinths. The titles of her series evoke persistence and aims ever more sharply defined: *Habitación para conversar* (Room for Having Conversations), *Construyendo o descanso* (Building Rest), *Adosados* (Semi-detached), *Aséptico* (Aseptic), *Somnolizado*. Alonso began this cycle of research into the nature of domestic space and her own obsessions in 1994, and as it has evolved she has purified her language and discarded all her excess baggage for the creative journey.

Architecture has been built up as a science of utopias ever since Archigram and Archizoom, and since Vito Acconci and his studies of public and private spaces, reminiscent of architecture, sculpture has played at being an utopian habitat, a useless architecture (1).

When Henry David Thoreau eulogised, from the New England woods in the middle of the last century, the wisdom of the savage man which must have existed before the drawing up of the social contract, he reproached civilisation for having created an architecture inaccessible to the greater part of humanity. If the thinker of *Walden* decided to forego the superfluous, he did so in order to plumb the depths of human beings and their well-being. It is in this song to the essential, the fundamental and the necessary that Mónica Alonso aligns herself with H. D. Thoreau.

Understanding the basics, dissecting domestic space and extracting, as if they were the hot entrails of some animal in the vertigo of its extinction, the elements of the home all go to make up Mónica Alonso's work. Just as a surgeon extirpates diseased organs, she gets rid of the dispensable, and so a door, a window or a bed take on a meaning which is not merely physical but also mental or spiritual, and these elements echo the experiences of existence.

And the apparent naivety of a room, built like a scale model, painted and touched up, turns into an architecture of the obsessions which inquires, provokes thought and repeats with an interminable cadence the need to find a place to put dreams to rest.

In M. C. Escher's prints, we are fascinated to see how staircases, columns and walls intersect each other, and we are always fooled, as we see for a few seconds how the unreal is made real. Like M. C. Escher, who represents an unrealisable architecture, Mónica Alonso overwhelms us with this architecture of the impossible, explaining: "At first sight we are attracted by the colours of my rooms, but how are we going to sleep if there's no roof to protect us, if one door opens on to another and provokes unease". This is the paradox of her sculptures, her objects, through which the attraction/repulsion duality penetrates into our senses. It is as if, flying against all the conventions of the art of *Feng Shui*, she has decided to find her own equilibrium, following a process of trial and error which inevitably reaches the conclusion of her series *Construyendo o descanso* (Building Rest). From her first failed attempts, the passing of time has revealed solutions to these geomantic problems, and the successive sculptures have thus become an experimental model which serves to discover the act of resting.

There is a labyrinth, a path which directs our gaze in all her pieces. We imagine a journey and we go in through an unadorned window, leave through the roofless roof and then we enter again, and so on until we get fed up, until we can recognise the place without having to see it or touch it. We interpret the lines, the boundary between the material and the intellectual. There is a precise moment, whatever it is, in which we turn into the Minotaur to roam the rooms, and there is another, vaguer moment, in which the artist comes to life as Dedalus in an imperceptible transference.

It is a proven fact that there are certain colours which attract. We have all suffered when we have gone into the country with a T-shirt of the wrong colour, and every single insect in the world wants to try out our pockets. Mónica Alonso uses this resource with premeditated precision, using red, green, blue, she reminds us, "as traps". Loud, strident, excessive, colours, which call to us and hypnotise us. This effect fascinates the artist and she uses it as a game to amuse herself.

There are doors, windows and beds. This is the ABC of the domestic space. We have no idea what is happening on the other side of the wall behind the bedstead. In *Adosados* (*Semi-detached*) this ignorance turns into anguish, the need to know, unease. Through the fictitious transparency of the walls we observe the scenes taking place in the space closest and furthest from us: the one just behind our walls. We solved the insoluble, and once again the unreal turns real. The bed is the only unconquered space, it is the capsule which protects us and tucks us in, but it also appears to us as the space of vulnerability. It is maybe for this reason that we have to get up, to save ourselves from disaster, violation and the ever-present abyss. Sometimes there are windows but no doors, or there are doors but no windows, then the distinction between them becomes blurred and they mutually take over their function, lose themselves in this mixture, they destroy each other in this chaos. At other times there are no doors or walls, or any other sign of the essential apart from the bed, which thus becomes even more of a symbol. And so the essential becomes extrapolable, interchangeable, and dumbfounds us.

There is asepsia, which is one of those concepts which emerge casually for Mónica Alonso. One image is enough to convert an idea into a new piece. To contemplate the series *Aséptico* (*Aseptic*) is to enter once again into the tunnel of the impossible. The arrangement of small balls on the floor obstructs the

fulfillment of the title, outlaws asepsia and submerges us in this atmosphere of contradiction through which the artist moves.

Adosados 3 (*Semi-detached 3*) is the project which Mónica Alonso is presenting in the Sala Montcada. "This represents the possibility of planning a building after creating so many isolated rooms", observes the sculptor. The 12 stories of the construction, with their corresponding 27 beds, rise up to occupy almost the whole space. It is now a question of gravity, of physics and Newton, now that the beds graze the ceilings in an inconstant equilibrium, secured by pieces of elastic, liable to fall and smash, although there was always a rhetoric and presence of levitation in her rooms. Even when she had her feet on the ground, they were tiny, weak feet, giraffes' feet which told of the will to isolate oneself, to separate oneself and say goodbye.

Sometimes we wonder about the meaning of the works' titles, but then the titles themselves give us the answer.

Álvaro Rodríguez Fominaya

(1) The term "useless" is used here in the sense given it by Antonio Fernández-Galiano: as ontologically superior, since uselessness is an end in itself and not a means to reach other ends.

Daniel Chust Peters: Exploding Domesticity

Beauty versus usefulness, art versus domestic necessities, aestheticism versus day-to-day living: these are debates which have been a constant feature of art in its quest to give value to everyday life. Braque, Picasso, Duchamp and Pop Art are just some of the reference points for these dialectics.

When an everyday object is removed from its normal setting, where it serves a practical purpose, and put into an aesthetic context, it is thus endowed with a far-reaching significance, and its artistic value no longer emanates from its technical use but from its surroundings, and from the artist's gesture.

Daniel Chust is an artist who works with materials like a craftsman and uses tradition to renew them. His works are not mere models projecting towards the future, but reproductions of our everyday life.

During the last few years Daniel Chust has concentrated his energies on a multi-faceted project with the overall title of *Il·lusió consolada* (*Consoled Illusion*). This private universe, which is the foundation both for his work and his methodology, is made up of art pieces, texts, meditations, photographs and drawings, which draw on public spaces, his personal life and past experience, as well as work in his studio. *Il·lusió consolada* (*Consoled Illusion*) is divided into three parts which record, like an open diary, the past, present and future. The past consists of published books with drawings or photos of his work; the present, the assembly of things from the outside world and the future, the realisation of his projects. The depictions of his studio and the spaces where he shows his work are an important part of this large-scale project, for they give form to his illusions.

It is now seven years since his studio emerged from a chunk of butter, and since then he hasn't ceased to reproduce both his home and other spaces which form a part of his personal