

The Rest of Time Reverses the Attack of the Present

If we were talking about genealogy, it would be tempting to relate Yago Hortal's work to Abstract Expressionism, Post-pictorial Abstraction, Color Field Painting, etc, etc. Without wishing to court bad taste, allow me to point out that whatever fails usually dies. A classic approach to history was to connect facts in a clear line of events; so those facts that for one reason or another could not be tied to those events, disappeared from historical memory. However, this vertiginous century that has just begun has mired us in a history where past, present and future struggle for power. We live in an expanded present, a present that sometimes plays the role of past and future, that combines them whimsically, that accumulates ghosts (i.e. the unreconciled dead) and that has long since delivered its verdict: tomorrow is gone—like the title of one of Alexander Kluge's films: *The Attack of the Present on the Rest of Time*. Because of that, family trees need more than a botanic garden; they die of dysfunction.

The abstract expression in Yago Hortal's painting has something of war. Thousands of battles seem unleashed over a broad ground. However, it is a strange war, where the unrelenting violence of some elements doesn't produce devastation; instead it fosters a sense of total harmony: the present crumbles; it shrinks and balances with the Rest of Time. This harmony of color and form in his paintings bears no relation to the tradition of classic composition, but rather to the restructuring of power between the past, the present and the future. The definitive moment is no longer the face of the present, but a fluid body in which the three dimensions of time appear simultaneously.

In Yago Hortal's work there is a twist in the time spiral, like Proust's madeleine, or Madeleine's chignon observed by Jimmy "Scottie" Stewart in Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, or the man that remembers images of his infancy in Chris Marker's *La Jetée*. They are not genealogies, but different treatments of time that suggest a significant paradigm shift. If the spiral caused the different layers of time to converge at a point in the present that was automatically illusory, the twentieth century did nothing but distort the spiral to visualize the power struggle between temporal layers.

Thus, this fluid body seems to be shaping the work of Yago Hortal, and insofar as the Rest of Time reverses the vicious attack of the Present, reveals the inevitable poetics of this century's obtuse beginnings—namely, that subjectivity is more than a dialectic between the Old and the New; it arises in the midst of uncertainty, a constant movement in pursuit of equilibrium.

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