

# Galeria Estrany-de la Mota

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## Natividad Bermejo + Ana Prada. “Imāgo” — “Bild”

Opening: Friday, March 23th 2018, 19.00 p.m.

Exhibition: 23.03.2018 – 04.05.2018. Tuesday to Friday from 11.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. and Saturdays by appointment.

The Galeria Estrany-de la Mota is pleased to present the exhibition ‘*Imago*’ – ‘*Bild*’, a dialogue between the works of Natividad Bermejo and Ana Prada.

Both artists are part of a generation born in the sixties when art became a reflective tool that questioned its own nature and made use of the new sources of popular culture to develop projects in which the analysis of the images went together with the questioning of the representation and its devices.<sup>1</sup> However, their work approaches the concept of the image from a contrasting perspective.

The words that refer to the term ‘image’ in a large number of Western languages, such as French, Italian, English, Portuguese, Spanish or Catalan, come etymologically from the Latin word *imago*, *-inis*, and refer directly to the idea of ‘representation’. Many researchers have linked it to the Indo-European root ‘aim-’ which means to copy, and that is also present in words like ‘emulate’ and ‘imitate’, which corresponds to the word image that, in a certain way is an emule, an imitation of the thing, but not the thing itself. However, in other languages, such as German, we find it to refer to the word ‘*bild*’, whose meaning refers to the idea of ‘construction’ or ‘training’.<sup>2</sup>

Natividad Bermejo’s work (Logroño, Spain, 1961), although she has experimented with other formats such as sculpture, installation or photography, on drawing, making representations descriptive and realistic. The mimetic process of the represented objects acquires a certain category of monumentality, through scrupulousness in detail and attention to textures. A vision of the image as a copy, which is the result of an imitative process or reproduction as accurate as possible, very close to the Latin word ‘*imago*’.

Ana Prada’s work (Zamora, Spain, 1965) has been characterized by a process of appropriation of its immediate environment, which she decontextualizes and manipulates, it is although it is still recognizable, transforms it in such a way that it acquires a new identity. Her practice is very close to the idea of modular repetition of Minimalism, although the mass-produced objects she uses are deconstructed to the point of being almost unrecognizable images. A vision of the image as a result of a construction in which processes of perception, selection and opening into another meanings what surrounds us intervene, as the German word ‘*bild*’ connotes.

The exhibition brings together the latest productions of both artists to enhance, through the contrasts of their respective works, the characteristics that make them specific: a coming and going between the representation and the presentation of the object.

In the series of drawings *Banderas* [Flags] (2010–2018) Natividad Bermejo develops a work in process of flags countries that suffer (or have suffered) a armed conflict. As usual in her drawings, she reduces them to the black and white of graphite. By stripping them of their colors, these symbols lose significance levels and become blurred and confused. The whole constructs an allegory of our present and its conflicts, from the border and political tensions between countries and ideologies.

In the series of sculptures *Elixir de la eterna juventud* [Elixir of eternal youth] (2018) Prada retrieves jars of facial cream and alters them by cutting them in order to find its potential as a components of a new sculptural form. She infuses a formal discipline to these cosmetic containers that are grouped in large quantities assembled with a glue that is visible and reminiscent of the contents of the containers themselves.

In the series of drawings *Variaciones. Niebla AP-68* [Variations.Fog AP-68] (2018) Bermejo starts from a selection of images of motorways that she has obtained from traffic cameras, in which the scenes in their entirety or, in large part, are covered with fog. These drawings take a step further in that process of reproduction of reality, it ends up becoming abstract, but by including the origin and date of the images in the lower part, they returns the image, again, back to reality. For the first time she mixes digital printing in her drawings, to reproduce the noise of the screens when they do not have an image signal. With these drawings, the artist refers to the allegorical and constructive aspects of her own image.

In the series of *Preferencia inexplicable* [Unexplained Preference sculptures] (2017), Prada makes assemblages with teddy bears and vases. These are simple juxtapositions of domestic objects, temporarily pushed, which allows them to transform them into new bodies. She Selects the her object for their basic formal values that allow her to build new visual structures with irony.

In the series of drawings *Piedras – Huesos – Meteoritos* [Stones – Bones – Meteorites] (2017–2018), Bermejo selects a series of natural, biological or artistic elements that are found along the way or that come from anthropological and/or archaeological museums, such as a bifaz ax or the Lovers of Ain Sakhri. Timeless elements of different cultures that explain the cosmogony and the essence of human thought. She recovers them as symbols of human efforts throughout history that make sense of the world.

In the site-specific sculptures *Gases, líquidos y sólidos* [Gases, liquids and solids] (2018) and *Curly Bit* (2014), Prada continues her exploration with everyday objects of industrial production to form sculptural devices. Organize common objects by applying certain patterns that add to the whole a level of abstraction. It shows the versatility of any object when it is susceptible to adapt to a new environment from its decontextualization.

Both artists share an interest in the visual production devices and the denaturalization of the images consumption.

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<sup>1</sup> Manuel Borja-Villel, «La (in)utilidad del arte contemporáneo» in *Carta*, núm. 5, spring. – summer. 2014, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Lourdes Roca, «La imagen como fuente» in *Razón y Palabra*, núm. 14 (Problemáticas de la imagen como información), Feb. – Mar. 2004, s/p.

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\*For further information and/or images contact ferranElOtro (ferranelotro@estranydelamota.com).