



Last summer I came across a large number of cardboard packaging boxes for car windscreens in a skip. My initial intention was to make a scale model using accessible material that bore the marks of being used, that was easy to transport and to stack; and, above all else, that would help me to build a large volume extended in the space on a life-size 1:1 scale. The goal was to keep working in a trial-and-error process as long as necessary. However, what I didn't know at the time was that, much later, I was going to consider this scale model as the final work in itself. This compressed volume against the wall was destined to dialogue with a smaller version in steel.

With the first three units (which are numbers 9, 10 and 11 in the final work), I already started to wonder if it were really worth continuing. In the beginning, I thought that, because of the slenderness, they would have a flexible rubber-like look. Whenever I need to make up for my shortcomings, I get the urge to run roughshod over what, at that given moment, I understand as "sculpture". To this end, I confront whatever it is I am working with. I'm not sure whether it is a mere question of debasing the three-dimensional mass sitting in front of me, or whether it's a case of humiliating myself to undreamed-of limits. Or maybe both things at once. It is as if the aesthetic event that appears on the surface did not manage to resolve something internal that is cracked on the inside. This fight to the bitter end between symbolic reality and physical reality produces a catharsis. I am often assailed by the same basic questions in this venture whose result is still to be seen. Are the reasons telling you to stop there mistaken? At what point did I abandon my initial idea? When the moment arrives that the sculpture tells you "enough", is going back a way of moving forward?

Before throwing away this provisional material, I thought about using it as the support for an action in which the subject would be carrying this unfinished sculpture. It would consist in softening the structure in the air, distorting its straight lines. I did some tests with myself before coming up with other images using one of my regular collaborators. When doubts arose as to how to hold the piece, and above all, when basic questions were raised about external mass and body language, I had to shout instructions at her from a distance. I used single words as a kind of script, as if it were a secret code. They were the title of other photos I had made earlier in which this same collaborator appeared. It was as if all

these images in time had an internal unity and, at once, helped to refer to movements of occupying space. They alluded to subtle gestures that can only be decoded through shared experiences and because the photos are already independent entities in their own right: “¡Bicéfalas!”; “¡Firma de autor!”; “Pony girl performance!”... and many other statements whose representation does not exist yet, but which we can understand as an implicit slogan. You begin to realise the number of latent works that are waiting to be made with this metallic—and, I would also dare to say, magical—resonance. Leaps in space and in form: from St Teresa of Avila to David Bowie. Esoteric mysteries from our shared imaginary. An uneven mystic.

This led to a kind of painterly profanation, a banner on whose inside it seems that trees have been painted with painstaking calligraphy. One landscape within another, demarcated by cardboard prisms. An act of sabotage against the canon of appearances. Lurking behind this vertical figure of women being transformed into landscape, or of that flesh-coloured land being embodied, are dissociated thoughts. Thoughts like premoulds, moulds, transmoulds or supramoulds; mask and nature; dandy-worker guise; epiphanic experience; appropriation; iconoclast irreverence; primeval terror; minimum concepts that become images; symbolic language; allowing infinite time for each work; primordial androgyne; reason and soul; and a long etcetera...

But, without a shadow of a doubt, “resistance” is always expressed more clearly between them all.

Ana Laura Aláez (Bilbao) participated in the Istanbul Biennale (1997), in the 48th Venice Biennale exhibition “Apertutto” curated by Harald Szeemann, Buenos Aires Biennale (2001), 2nd and 3rd Busan Biennale (2002 and 2004) and 49th Venice Biennale Spanish Pavillion. She exhibited in various museums such as MUSAC (León), Guggenheim Bilbao, PS1 (Nueva York), Art Museum of Helsinki, Palais de Tokyo (París), Hamburger Bahnhof (Berlin), Centro de Arte Santa Mónica (Barcelona) and Museo Reina Sofía (Madrid) among others. In 2013 she was awarded Gure Artea for her lifelong artistic trajectory and her contribution to contemporary art and culture.