



## Seeing inside out

Texto parcialmente modificado for the publication in Exit magazine #14, 2003, about abstraction.

I see myself seeing inside out, I see myself seeing in negative. Viewing the recording in negative of the realization process of the painting “ Cuckoo’s egg virtual observer 1 “. I see the other reality of that painting. I am painting, and an image builds itself while its opposite grows latent on its base, on the floor and on the other base, my head.

I remember when I started, back there in the year 98 the first negative paintings, I did it with the idea of negative paintings as if it was a photo negative, without thinking that later I will make them positive ones. And they remained that way, in the negative image-painting phase.

As time went by, I felt the need of having in front of the eyes that positive materialized. I remember that during the process, once in a while I used to scan what I was making, reversing the image in the computer afterwards. That was the way of checking if what I imagined was what I expected. On those first paintings I continuously made mistakes. We are so used to see in a certain way that building the opposite becomes difficult. It’s a matter of exercising like the musician’s habit of playing the piano or the drums: They have to carry a different rhythm out with each hand.

The negative paintings require a great deal of mental effort during its creation. There is a strong abstraction process in the individual. Everything working out fine in the future and in the past, is something that has to be checked. Sometimes I get the feeling of taking photographs of something that it’s going to happen and has no past. When I make positive photographs of that painted object, I realize that it’s already a part of the world like a taken photograph of any other object somewhere else and of which we have the proof document of its existence.

The abstraction in all this process it’s not on its object but on the observer individual (creator of the image or the afterwards observer). When I make the photograph positive I am replacing the observer’s capacity of abstracting. In contrast to the Chaman-artist’s attitude or the Alchemist-artist’s one, with the power to transform. I believe in the power of the one who observes to transform. In this transformation the person observing reflects himself/herself mentally on it.

It reminds me of a fragment’s piece of writing by Ortega & Gasset’s about Velázquez:

*The rapidity in which the painting without demanding any effort, surrenders to our vision, is paradoxically the cause of the result of the painting. It is indeed the most hermetical of all arts. The facility in which we see the material object called “painting” flatters our inertia and makes us recognize that there is nothing else*

*to do with it. On the other hand, when someone is listening to a musical piece and realizes that he or she hasn't understood it, he or she doesn't truly believe listening to it in the first place. There is then a constituent contradiction between the evidence of its signs and its hidden sense.*

May be the negative paintings are made for an observer and its positive versions for a spectator.

Dario Urzay  
Bilbao, October 5 , 2003