

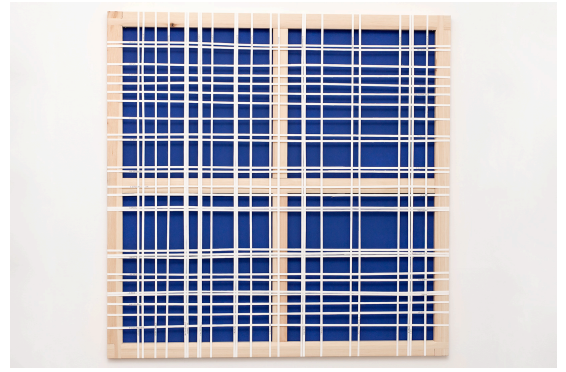
PEP AGUT

Penélope

29 September > 18 November 2016

Opening: Thursday 29 September – 7PM

In his fourth solo exhibition in àngels barcelona, Pep Agut makes an approach to painting and photography. Using his own words, " he brings us home." Agut is not undoing any road. Being back home is a step forward. If painting and photography are his base they also are his present and his future. With "Penelope" Agut delves on his research on the subject of representation (1979-2016) and accumulates the experience of a sailor in the waters of the world of art and aesthetics ... and all artistic experience is a form of social commitment.



"Odysseus leaves to join the Trojan War. Penelope, his wife, remains awaiting his return home in Ithaca. The powerful rulers of the place become Penelope's suitors and the palace becomes the headquarters of a large orgy that will take place for more than twenty years. Penelope proposes to marry one of them when the tissue she has started to knit, a robe to celebrate her husband's return, will be finished. However all her suitors do not believe at all in his return and in the meantime Penelope every morning she undoes what she has woven during the night. Her son, Telemachus, flees in search of his father. Odysseus finally returns home after more than twenty years of having been sailing around the Mediterranean and having experienced all kinds of adventures. Then he proceeds to kill all of her wife's suitors, one by one, and regains the throne. One of his servants recognizes him due to an old scar he bears on his knee in a body marked by the wounds of war. Because of her continually interrupted knitting process Penelope can not offer her gift, and therefore this "undone" tissue does not represent anything.

I take the story of Penelope and Ulysses (Odysseus) as a metaphor for the problem of representation and the sense that it may have just because this matter has concerned my work for more than twenty-five years.

Penelope is the awaiting of representation. She is the making and unmaking we all artists constantly do in our minds and our hands. There is a deep feeling of wanting, but not of desire or longing, as there is only one form of representation, a final single figure, if you will. Penelope knows that and refuses to accept it, just as I do and we, also, do. It is the image of death and thus death itself. Penelope refuses to that last and unique image, an impossible image to knit since it will always remain unfinished.

But this expectation is at the same time the awaiting of the return home. Beyond the crass ignorance of so many, in the West is impossible not to work with the images of the history that precedes us. Trying to build an image is to try go home with it, the place where one has lived and one you can die. The images of the history of painting are the genesis of any image among us.

My exhibition 'Penelope' is simply a return home (and by saying that I don't want to make dark premonitions of any kind). I have lived a lifetime from images of painting and photography. This a conclusive moment but it is a state of things. Line, color, volume, composition, text, shape, structure or content ... and time and more time. Content? In art is there a content beyond art itself? Wouldn't it be that art is the content par excellence of our civilization? Precisely. Art is not form but content. Beyond the cultural and artistic production there's no civilization. The society itself and its economy and its politics rise above it. There are some who make aesthetics out of it: form over content. One and only beauty in the service of a single truth. That old history of Christianity, body and soul. Kant was very confused. "

Pep Agut, September 2016

Pep Agut (Terrassa, Barcelona 1961) Departing from his double background in the practice of painting and photography very soon Pep Agut focuses his interest in the problems of representation, the role of the artist and the place of Art. His understanding of the space of Art as the public space itself, aside of any epoch conditions or culture particularities, and concerned about the modes of production of meaning and the strategies being used to bring art productions into the public scene, Agut develops a complex and personal process of work that allows him to imbricate his esthetical project with his political positioning.

In his various projects Agut deploys a long research process on a wide range of techniques, media and concepts in order to study the ideas that had caught his interest for long periods of time and addressing issues that concern subjects such as representation, language or architecture, for example. By using a big amount of creative conceptual materials inventoried, Agut can replace any moment of his own artistic history to the present and display it as a site-specific answer to each exhibition opportunity.

He studied at Sant Jordi Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Barcelona (1979-1984). He participated in the XXIII Olympic Games in Los Angeles (1984). Between 1988 and 1991 he lived in Cologne until 1991, when he was invited to Paris by the Cartier Foundation. He returned to Barcelona in 1992. He currently lives in Terrassa.

He has participated in solo and group exhibitions in major events such as the XLV Venice Biennale (1993), Prospekt (1996), the XI Sydney Biennial (1998), Art Unlimited, Basel (2004) and institutions like the Museum of Contemporary Art Tel Aviv (1993) or the MACBA, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (2000), among others. He has coordinated and participated in debates and conferences and has given seminars at the University of Barcelona.

àngels barcelona focuses on the debate of contemporary culture and art practices

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