

PRESS

josé manuel broto

Exhibition from June 30 to July 28, 2007

Broto is a Spanish painter who was born in Saragossa in 1949. Echoing the "Peinture-peinture" and "Support-Surface" movements, he created the Trauma movement in 1976 in Barcelona with fellow painters Rubio, Tena and Grau under the tutelage of Antoni Tàpies. Despite the presence of "minimal" painting dominated by monochromes, these painters remained faithful to the physical reality of the painting and to its traditional space. After the dissolution of the group in 1979, Broto reinvented his pictorial vocabulary and gave up Minimalism for good. From 1980 on, Broto has ventured beyond monochromes for lyrical effusion and autonomous, colorful, yet highly structured compositions. Theoretical basis has given way to vital experience and intuition. Broto left Barcelona in 1986 to settle in Paris. That year marks the beginning of radical changes and the apparition of dreamlike images, where abrupt color contrasts and vibrant yellow or red tones completely or partially cover the painting. From then on Broto has been heading more and more towards a kind of abstraction where organic motifs, geometrical and maze-like patterns get together to evoke Nature in its most primitive manifestation.

For this new exhibit at Xippas Gallery, Broto will show a collection of recent paintings in which he uses acrylic and color in their most extreme ways. After creating the compositions for his paintings on the computer, Broto then reproduces the image on the canvas; his goal being to achieve the same textures, transparencies and fluidities as on the computer.

Paint is used in all its oppositions, mixing together rigor and freedom, transparency, fluidity and opacity. The freedom of such a process, which itself is the retranscription of a dynamic and loud but harmonious way of composing that results from a mere brushing of the surface, contrasts with the rigorous layout of solid background colors ("aplats"). Broto works the contradictions of matter and form so as to unite them into the possibility of new dimensions. By linking the movement and the fragility of color and making contrasts work together, he opens the space to meditation. Within the defined surface of a frame he invents an infinite space, which represents the antagonisms and the celebration of his mental landscape.

In 1995 Broto was awarded the National Fine Arts Award by Spain's Ministry of Culture. In 1996 the Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid held a retrospective exhibition of his works from the last ten years. Since 1988, his work has regularly appeared at Soledad Lorenzo Gallery in Madrid and Calers Taché Gallery in Barcelona.

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