

SECUNDINO HERNÁNDEZ  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2016

To mark the start of the season, and to coincide with the Apertura Art Gallery Weekend events in Madrid, the Heinrich Ehrhardt Gallery is presenting the Spanish artist Secundino Hernández's (Madrid, 1975) seventh individual exhibition at our space.

In a sort of taster or preview, and with a certain pioneering spirit, Hernández is exhibiting a new body of work which, while not representing a complete departure in his oeuvre or the absolute reinvention of his pictorial language, does constitute a change with regard to his earlier work.

Beyond the nuances of the normal evolution of painting that each show aims to make visible, on this occasion we are witness to a shift rooted in the very fact of painting itself. While the subject matter, that endless pursuit of all the questions that the act of painting generates, has not undergone any fundamental changes, the gaze in Hernández's work is now constructed on new and unprecedented foundations. Gesture has been replaced by form; form, which was formerly constructed by gesture, has transformed into form *per se*. Geometry, the triangle, the line, the circle and the square emerge on a worn surface on which the painter has constructed the logic of his painting, which has marked out his language in recent years. Now, the wear of the canvas is not exclusively the location occupied by the painting, but the seed in which more rigid forms are floating in suspension, those forms which have consistently replaced more organic gesturing. It is as such that gesture, and not execution, steadily disappears until structural and formal motifs are encountered which construct a painting which is more elementary in its composition and which, inevitably, refer back to all of the founding moments of abstraction. The flight, perhaps unconscious, from subjectivity towards objectivity, as a need to polish and sand off painting to its most basic concepts,

forces form to emerge in its most profound elementary state. The objectivism of the square, the floating nature of the circle and the line, and pure, regular and cosmic form, mean that this exhibition constitutes a post-avant-garde gaze where all of the pictorial baggage that the canvas of Secundino Hernández at one time occupied becomes radicalised,. Having absorbed the infinity of thematic and formal matters, it comes together in the construction of two highly differentiated planes, between a geometric composition of verticals and horizontals, and surfaces which alternate pure whites, natural canvasses, wear, folds and cut-outs. For the first time we find ourselves face to face with a painting that questions its own nature in a way it had never done before. Gesture or pure form. Expression or objectivity.

We could state that this is a display of historical anchoring; that is to say, those elements which have been linked together in a discontinuous chain throughout a disordered history of primary avant-gardes and historical avant-gardes, until reaching the Western painting of the 1950s, here constitute the central core of the painting's development. The narrative is structured on the basis of a number of forms, sometimes stripped down, at others undefined, sometimes visible and at others hidden, and which through their own weight occupy the main location of the painting. Reminiscences of Africa, enigmatic symbols, geometrical figures, floating squares, elements in equilibrium, both positive and negative, colour and its absence, playful games, reflections on discourse, beauty... everything that the recent history of painting has loaded onto its shoulders, emerges here in discontinuity, with the use of just three colours (other than nuances and exceptions), and through a broken and shattered montage, as the purification of residual form. That form that was always there and which now, in a distilled state, decides to appear before us once more.