
Heriberto Nieves **Collector of Perceptions and Memories** **Prof. José Pérez Ruiz, AICA**

In such a weary period as the present, to discover an artist able to materialize ideas is like suddenly finding a source of hope. That is the feeling experienced when discovering the most recent artwork by Heriberto Nieves.

When we contemplate his work, we can appreciate his capacity to surprise us by creating such a polyvalent body of work. He has used technical resources derived from a refined education in order to challenge the critical eye with artworks that are simultaneous painting, sculpture, installation, and what could become a surprising scenography.

In his work, there are foreshadowing that suggest places where the epic of the future will occur. He confronts us with distant realities that are perceived today as if we were predestinated to find the grounds of that inevitable future. Although perhaps, as Moses before the Promised Land, our generation could only observe it from distance. To create such emotions, he reinterprets states of being nourish by tradition, with the purpose of giving, to those who try to understand his work, a reliable foundation for them to project themselves towards the unknown. The artist benefits from astronomic discoveries that delimit modernity without losing contact with the astrological substrate coming from ancient beliefs, which many people exist with in the present.

His way to invoke the cultural legacy that precedes him is directed to the imperative of leaving an indelible mark in the collective memory of humanity. His presentations of lights that glow in the current firmament along with light aged by thousands of light years, make him establish contact with pictorial values that he has made his own until refining them. He has assimilated and transcended the ways of Anselm Kiefer and Jackson Pollock in order to turn them into acts demonstrate of an alchemist's vocation that keeps him permanently in touch with the past and the future. His goal is to hold in one act the elusive past, the inapprehensive present, and the enigmatic future. Maybe he has, like Faust, the anxiety to stop eternity in images that are comprehensible to a humanity in perceptual movement.

The artist cautiously takes advantage of the spirits of his age by submitting ideas to a hermeneutic exposition intelligently self-criticized. This action permits him to avoid falling into recurrent cycles. His maneuvering of the aesthetic discourse is what enables the development of a valid dialectic within his aesthetic conceptions. He understands the mechanism that carries the observer's mind to credible leaps that guide them from objective scientific observations to creative subjectivity. He alerts the perceptive mechanism with illusionary levels.

One of his current concerns is the representation of the laws of physics that control the pendulous movement. Sometimes, he uses an imperceptible geometry, which with its delicate deviations lead ideally to imaginary points of encounters, as it occurs with the columns of the Parthenon. At other times, he leaves out known theorems in order to create true collisions of concave and convex formations. This way, he established fields of visions that expand and contract at their discretion.

Heriberto's kleptomaniac eye sucked all that can be used from the media's flow of information. He uses the abundant images and data coming from the real and fantastic litanies emanated by cinema, television, and other means communication. His conceptual framework takes possessions of anything that is feasible in order to achieve his purposes. He takes what is essential in the hedonistic feast brought by the anesthetic informative tide, because he knows that at any moment his receivers would be forced to throw it all up. When that happens, the symptomatic process, propitiator of forgetfulness epidemics as the ones in Gabriel Garcia

Marquez's narrative culminates. It is precisely the desire to annihilate this illness that provokes emergence of collections like the one now studied. The collection is directed to pay attention to what's essential considering the danger of a situation where a generalized amnesia might occur. In case any individual becomes afflicted, establishing contact with this kind of exhibition will help them recover their memory.

A constant symbol in Nieves's work is the Moon, which is related to the female in occidental iconography. Nevertheless, its signification varies on other cultures. We can not forget that in Turkey it is considered a national emblem. The Vikings, in their poetic conceptualizations, compared it with the warrior's protective shield. On the other hand, Jorge Luis Borges, echoing Lugones, let us know that in the Guaraní cosmogony the moon was considered male and the sun female. Ancient Japanese belief had a representative god for the former, and goddess for the other.

Thus, we now have the elements of judgment to consider his great mural, *Constelación Fecundada (Autorretrato)*. In the 120 (12 times 10 or 10 times 12) metallic segments, he has exhausted the silhouettes assumed by our satellite through the reflections captured at first glances from the usual observatory of the domestic terrace. The use of white that is the simultaneous presence of all the chromatic range, acquires multiple purposes. He takes advantage of the allegoric possibilities of the mentioned color that in the political world is seen as synonym of equality and in the diversity of the superficial levels, and the presence of cabalistic numbers in decimal proportions give the feeling of continuity.

He established guidelines to avoid sterile melancholics that can distract the mind. That is why his work appears as uninterupted displacements intentionally conceived to prevent that our intuitions rust. As a good son of our times, Heriberto has assimilated the past, a fact that allows him to challenge sacred principals. By having answers he can have the luxury of breaking centenary rules. Nevertheless, for those that have not able to reconcile with the quick progression of discoveries that are revealed daily, they could believe that his artwork comes from a transgressing mind that inspires to threaten the fundamentals of official wisdom. The kind of "daring" is what makes it possible for an artist to possess the moment. His inventiveness doesn't allow feeling of confident, that is why in his realizations the continuing work takes on characteristics of permanent beginnings.

The gesticulations transmitted to every piece is worth being mentioned. All of them respond to well coordinated rhythmic movements. We perceive in them traces of a ballet that seems to be inspired by cosmic displacements. These formations are essential to understand how the author turns them into a rigorous metric that transcends the limits imposed by present realities. The great undertaking of Heriberto consist in synchronizing periods that converge and dissolve in the inexhaustible chronometric of the universe. If we accurately read his realizations, we would observe that his artistic language tends to emulate such as the Nordic, prone to summarize various ideas in just one world. Modes of Expressions where the possibility of summarizing a poem in a single term exist.

Another subject we can not omit is the dispensed attentions to details. It seems that Heriberto doesn't resort to improvisation. The care that he confers to the back part of his tasks is noteworthy. Our artist gives special attention to this back, which many times is ignored due to lack of public scrutiny in the exhibition forum. When we compare the visible part with the ones that stay on the wall we seem to be in front of Siamese images through which he can establish dynamic equilibriums. The inseparability of both makes us think of the theories that proclaim the existence of twin souls. By comparing the visible with the hidden he reveals his peculiar way of mobilizing the senses and feelings, in order to act assertively so he can take his work towards new goals.

Heriberto Nieves is an artist that throughout his infancy had the recurrent dream of being able to levitate using his hands as propellers. He experienced visionary episodes that situated him

in the margin of time and space. Similar internal situations permitted him to direct his energies to strengthen his self. During his adult life he has been able to find answers to his restlessness, which gives him the opportunity to orient his creative paths. These are the experiences that are essential in order to comprehend how he has been able to rescue three-dimensionality in two-dimensional planes. His work is depository of the cognitive abundance of a person that has become a collector of perceptions and memories.
