

PALMADOTZE

"HERNÁNDEZ PIJUAN. THE LOOK OF ANTONI AROLA"

18 December 2021 - 27 February 2022

Palmadotze is pleased to present the exhibition Hernández Pijuan. The gaze of Antoni Arola, which will remain open until 27 February 2022. This is an artistic project in which the works of Hernández Pijuan (Barcelona, 1931 - 2005) will be accompanied by the lighting projects of the industrial designer and interior designer Antoni Arola (Tarragona, 1960).

The exhibition includes a selection of works by both creators, in which colour and light are the protagonists and common elements in their respective works. Thanks to Antoni Arola's gaze and approach to the painter's work, light and colour go hand in hand and establish a respectful dialogue in which the works of both artists express themselves.

Hernández Pijuan stated that the colours of his works would not exist without light. Antoni Arola, for his part, composes light with which he writes notes and describes light rhythms and harmonies. An opportunity, then, to see the light that makes up Hernández Pijuan's works through Antoni Arola's eyes.

What will be Joan Hernández Pijuan's third solo exhibition at Palmadotze shows that the interest and fascination for the life and work of this artist is still alive and well and is the subject of continuous revisions, whether in exhibitions, catalogues and/or publications.

The exhibition presents a selection of works on canvas and paper from an extensive body of work that the artist produced between 1980 and 2000.

Hernández Pijuan cultivated an intimate and personal pictorial language for more than fifty years, which placed him on the margins of the successive dominant currents and styles and positioned him as one of the most relevant painters in the national artistic scene in the second half of the 20th century. Between 1955 and 1956 he exhibited his first figurative works. In 1957 he spent two years in Paris, where he became acquainted with French abstract trends and American abstract expressionism, which influenced his work throughout the following decade. At the beginning of the seventies, the painter made a definitive change in his work. As he himself expressed on several occasions, he began to "be himself" and the period of research and influences came to an end, working on a figurative style to which he applied what would be basic, constant and characteristic of all his later work. On the one hand, synthesis in the colours and forms - which progressively became simpler and more schematic - and even in the process, and on the other, the spatial sense, which takes as a reference the landscape of La Segarra, which, according to the artist, conditioned his way of being, living and also his painting. This appears in his paintings either represented as an ordered space or alluded to through the reference to large modulated or vibrated surfaces, and at the same time it appears evoked in profiles of architecture, plants or flowers. However, this landscape and its colours, as the artist stated, are also created by light: "..... I could not say that the colours of the paintings were cadmium yellows, ochres, emerald greens or ultramarine blues, but that they are shaped for me by what they represent, that is to say: the colour of ripe wheat, green wheat, glaucous, stubble or in moments of a light that defines a landscape. Colours that would not exist without the light that precedes them".

Numerous exhibitions all over the world, including those held in prestigious museums, earned him awards such as the National Plastic Arts Prize in 1981, the Creu de la Generalitat in 1985 and the Ciutat de Barcelona Plastic Arts Prize in 2003. However, his work went beyond pictorial creation to include the production of academic texts - he worked for many years as a teacher and later as a professor and dean at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Barcelona - and others of a literary nature.

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Antoni Arola's current projects are increasingly halfway between art and design and are artistic proposals _ lighting projects _ where light and colour are the backbone to conquer the space.

The creator, considered to be one of the most relevant designers on the national scene, generally avoids labels and even more so if these are intended to define his work: "I like to create new things, to propose, to project... and light, over the years, has become the guiding thread that seduces me and allows me to do very different things". And very different "things" (furniture, perfume packaging, interior design projects, paintings, sculptures, books, lamps, light installations...) he has been creating - over more than thirty years - from his training and career as a designer, both with the team of the design studio he created in 1994 and as an individual. "Things" through which, time and again, he returns to the search for beauty and art, as he says very necessary for the good they do us and which are often inspired by ancestral cultures and ultimately focused and creatively developed by his particular vision of light.

A heterodox lighting creator, as he says, he "domesticates" light, through luminaires, wall lights or pendant lights that transform the space and the atmosphere that welcomes them. Understood also as matter in itself, it is projected into the void or in spaces as diverse as museum halls or cities, in which it draws colours, sculpts new profiles or breaks down into infinite frequencies, showing itself in all its sensuality and evanescence.

Antoni Arola studied industrial design at the EINA school in Barcelona, and in 1984 he began his professional career at the Lievore i Pensi Studio, and later at AD Associate Designers. In 1994 he founded Estudi Antoni Arola. He combines his professional career with teaching and artistic experimentation and research. He has been awarded the National Design Award 2003, five times Delta de Plata, two RedDot, and two IF Gold, among others. His work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions in cities such as Barcelona, Madrid, Milan, London, Mexico, New York and Tokyo. The latest solo exhibition focusing on lighting projects was "Antoni Arola. Reflexiones" presented this autumn by the Museu d'Art Modern de Tarragona. With his studio, he has also designed the Christmas lighting installations in the city centre of Barcelona as part of the City Council's call to promote Barcelona as a city of reference for design and innovation.