

Foreword for the catalogue of the exhibition "Fragile"

In my profession, no matter how much talk is made of the "art" of psychotherapy, the artistic vein, as the maximum expression of individuality, must be subordinated to the service of the persons. That is why I am grateful for the opportunities to collaborate with "real" artists, either by offering them an inspiring therapeutic framework for artistic creation, or by writing forewords to their works. In my work my comments must be useful so that people can interpret their own reality. In the same way, when writing about artworks, I must take care that my comments do not authoritatively interfere with the personal interpretations of the public, but offer points of view and contextualizations that broaden the personal gaze towards what unites us culturally and socially. For this reason, instead of valuing and interpreting the artistic creation of Susana García and Erica Landfors, I will limit myself to pointing out an aspect of their work that has much in common with therapeutic work: the empowering capacity of making fragility visible.

This aspect goes beyond the relationship between fragility and strength. These human qualities work as the "complementary, which always goes with you, and is usually your opposite", and what Antonio Machado in his poem encourages us to search for. That relationship has been highlighted several times as part of the artistic process. The also plastic artist Josep Ginestar recently wrote about the work of Susana García:

«Apparently, they are works [...] associated with the traditional "feminine" sensibility [...] But [...] all this fragile and delicate universe is nothing more than the envelope of a powerful tension, of a persistent memory, of a desire to fight.»

We should remind ourselves on and on that neither sensitivity nor strength are monopolies of one sex or the other, and that artistically gifted people can be our models of how these two qualities can exist and manifest themselves at the same time.

Now, in the same way that a strong person is not necessarily empowered, an artistic work charged with strength is not necessarily empowering either. "Empowerment" is the "Acquisition of power and independence by a disadvantaged social group to improve their situation", that is, a collective process.

In my work I encounter many times the following objection: Why is it necessary to connect with our fragility and the wounds that have been inflicted on us by abusing of that fragility, especially when many shortcuts to strength are offered in the therapeutic "market" through positive thinking and affirmations? But precisely because of my work I know that the force that is not anchored in the experience of how fragile we are easily becomes a force on the other, instead of being the solid base of a personal force capable of connecting with the needs of other fragile beings, and, consequently, serve their empowerment.

Susana García and Erica Landfors had encountered in their respective personal and collective histories the fragility of women and girls, the most disadvantaged and disempowered groups by patriarchy, and they have chosen to capture that fragility in symbolic representations capable of connecting with the experiences of a lot of people. I entrust the visitors of this exhibition to immerse themselves in the beauty with which these experiences are represented, so they discover the beauty of fragility itself. That after having looked at the exhibited works they look at themselves and look at other people inside and outside the exhibition. That they discover in themselves the signs of fragility and that they practice observing them with that look so full of tenderness that the two artists teach us. We need to learn to look like this, if we all together want to create a comfortable world for who we are: fragile beings.

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