

# **My Question**

**Andrés Marcial**

Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art

in the Herron School of Art and Design

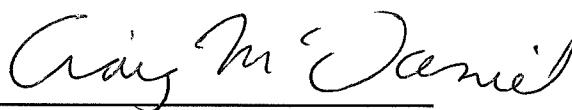
Indiana University

May/2015

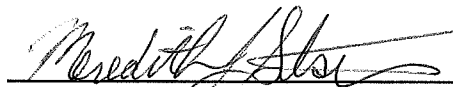
My Question

By  
Andrés Marcial  
Master of Fine Arts

Herron School of Art and Design  
IUPUI  
Indiana University



Associate Dean, Professor of Fine Art Craig McDaniel  
Advisor



Assistant Professor of Printmaking Meredith Setser  
Committee Member



Associate Professor of Foundations William Potter  
Committee Member

Accepted: May 2015



Professor Valerie Eickmeier  
Dean of Herron School of Art and Design

June 15, 2015  
Date

## My question

A cage made out of words sets an unreachable distance made out of the void between you and me, even though your presence surrounds me all the time.

What would an animal do in this condition? Be in a continuous state of alertness, observe a smile and the presence of death. Attack? Run? Bite?

How would an animal feel in this condition? The proximity, a contraction, the necessity and the loneliness, wounded? Naked? Vulnerable?

What would an animal see in this condition? The smell of sex, the lines, a violet shadow, distance? Identification? Copulation?

I am that animal that smells the colors, I am that animal that fears death, I am that animal that wants to couple with its surroundings, that wants to possess and pair with what is desired. The possibility of losing speech, the possibility of losing the social role, there it is, potentially, living with me, as an animal that cannot explain himself and his existence.

### What would an animal do in this condition?<sup>1</sup>

This question has followed me since the end of my adolescence and probably even before that. I don't know why this question came to my mind, but I always considered it relevant, probably due to the boredom of living as a human with the communal rituals. Possibly art and meditative experiences made me realize that I feel the world so vividly, so materially, so presently, that I am different from those grey humans that speak too much, from those grey humans that find comfort from what is given, from those grey humans that have to justify what they do. In front of them "no, a thousand times no", screams the animal.

"The man who suffers is a beast, the beast that suffers is a man. This is the reality of becoming"<sup>2</sup>.

During my M.F.A. program I realized that my exploration of painting is basically painting as an identification, painting as an embodiment of the animal whose instincts are not satisfied within the language, the animal whose instincts have been sublimated by the metaphor; therefore, these instincts lose all their immediacy. What I've painted for my thesis shows the condition of the animal that suffers because of speaking. But at the same time shows the condition of the animal that forsakes the same language, the empowered animal that screams out of the culture, that deliberately performs the immoral action, as Dostoyevsky's Raskolnikov<sup>3</sup>, the criminal who cannot avoid following his instincts and

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<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon, The logic of sensation*, 2002 University of Minnesota press.

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon, The logic of sensation*, 2002 University of Minnesota press.

<sup>3</sup> Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Crime and Punishment*. Modern Library; Reissue edition (August 30, 1994)

beyond his education, beyond his human condition, beyond his familiar values, realizes that just a few are capable of committing violence and that violence is in his nature.

## The process

### *Painting as a dialogue*

One interesting moment that I found during my MFA program was rediscovering my dialogue with painting. During the 8 years that I have been drawing and painting I have gone through multiple learning processes and different techniques and I noticed that in order to learn a technique, I had to abandon some important parts of my pictorial dialogue. However, that kept me unsatisfied. I think that on my first drawings (See image 1) I had a responsive process to what I was feeling after staining the paper and filling it up with marks and colors. On those drawings the construction of the image was based on the addition of elements, like texture, color, and figurative elements which were implied by what I was seeing or feeling on the previous image. Finally the drawing turned into a figure that not just contained all those elements, but also a figure that made sense and through which each element was part of the unit that was the final drawing.



Image 1: Portrait of an instant, 18 x 12 inches, pastels on toned paper. 2007)

Part of my research during my MFA program has been a return to that responsive process. I started the program painting still life objects that I found appealing based on what the object insinuated to me. After rendering that object on the canvas, I deconstructed it with paint, not just transforming this object into a different form but also destroying the symbolic connotation the object had<sup>4</sup> (See image 2 and 3) and responding not just to what the object insinuated but the affect of the object itself.

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<sup>4</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon, The logic of sensation*, 2002 University of Minnesota press.



Image 2: Object 3, 28 x 11 inches, oil on canvas, 2013

*Addition of tridimensional elements.*

I started to add materials to my canvas remembering a technique that my last teacher, Wladimir Tasso, used in a very sculptural way, and little by little I discovered the sensuality of the materials and how the materials transformed the canvas with their lights and shadows. I think that the selection of the materials is based on a complex set of significations, what the materials insinuate and how I feel identified with the materials, a deep sense of character. The materials contain forms that I like and cause a strong affect on me.

While developing paintings as the ones presented in images 3 and 5 there was a change of perception in myself. I adopted the found object not for its tridimensional qualities nor because the found object implies a symbolic relation. I choose objects for what the object insinuates to me or for what the object implies in difference to the meaning of the object; I try to reduce the object to its pure sensorial limits. After this I know that the preconceived connotations of the object disappear once the object stops having meaning. The object has something to tell, or as Merleau-Ponty said: "Matter is pregnant with form".<sup>5</sup> So in this sense even the depth, volume or distance of the object are not measurable, and the object can even look flat on my painting because that is what the object told me in relationship to my painting, to what I was feeling from it and to the time

and atmosphere where I used it.

In this sense the object stops being an object adhered to the canvas, but it is part of the flow and the rhythm of the painting, the object is integrated in it as part of the relation to the time and me.

Some flowers could be a smiling mouth sometimes, or some other times could give me the sensation of a defloration, or a microtonal variation of sound; a bubble wrap piece could become an intestine, a spine, beads, moldiness or simply some noise on the background; a sea shell could easily be a vagina, an eye or a cheek bone.

I think that at this point where the object has lost its symbolic connotations is easy to notice that I paint the relationships, and as relationships they happen in a place, that's

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<sup>5</sup> Introduction to Phenomenology, Dermot Moran, Maurice Merleau-Ponty: the phenomenology of perception, Roulette edition, 2012.



why I have never abandoned a background on my paintings. The background is space and not just what shows the diachronic relations on the painting (in its construction of layers over layers); the background creates the sensation of melting with the environment, of fusion with the world itself. Then if tension exists in the body, aggression is happening somewhere in the environment, because there's an intrinsic connection between the universe and the body.

I have made the background a more fluent and organic shape that resonates with the main figures of my canvas (See Image 7); they are figures because the objects stop being a representation of how I perceive a thing visually, the figure is a more complex rendering of the relations of the object, body, atmosphere. Having a background is important to me because I know that it is a space where these relationships happen and that the body is a relationship itself. I don't paint abstraction; I paint relationships and therefore bodies.

In contrast to a sculpture, my paintings are not in search of a place because my paintings happen in a place<sup>6</sup>. There are multiple things happening at the same time in the same place in my paintings. It is the congruence of events and movements that creates a sensation. A friend of mine told me they look like paintings screaming out of the wall. In this sense my paintings are not a narration either because they don't render a scream visually; rather, they render the sensation of a scream. The problem to be solved is not to paint something in order to illustrate the action of screaming or to represent a scream; the problem to be solved is to paint something that sustains the sensation of a scream, something that affects not just the visual organs but several or all of the sensorial organs.

The diversity of materials used in these works is wide and includes foam, acrylic paint, beads, necklaces, dry flowers, fabric, and finally oil paint with its smoother quality. The addition of paint and foam contribute to create the organic quality that the paintings sustain and at the same time integrate the materials into the rhythm of the painting. These works have some similarity to the works of Fabian

Marcaccio, especially in terms of tactile quality, but also on the desire of paintings to have a material life for themselves. The connection to Fabian Marcaccio's work is not thematic,



Image 3: Object 5, 38 x 12 inches, mixed media on canvas, 2014

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<sup>6</sup> WJT MITCHELL - WHAT SCULPTURE WANTS: PLACING ANTONY GORMLEY, Phaidon, London, UK, 1995

but I discovered some similitude with his paintings. While Marcaccio says: “I want to suspend the painting between idea and realization”<sup>7</sup>, I conceive a painting as a body, a thing that is constantly becoming. That’s why I don’t paint abstractions but unfinished bodies, without beginning and without end, a thing that has its own temporariness.

*The tactile quality of paint as a material.*

The last two paintings I am including in my thesis show are based on the same way of constructing the image. I started in a very improvisational way, just making marks with color over a monochromatic background. Those marks started to overlap each other or to blend with each other, creating a set of relationships between the color that is in the background and the color that is in the foreground. As in my tridimensional paintings I rotate the painting on each of the sides of the painting to discover what the more appealing side is. But at the same time I deconstruct what has been already formed. During the process I was always driven to represent some actual figurative elements and to include several elements that once the painting was rotated were not necessary for the unitary weight of the composition. Then these elements were covered by other brush strokes or other marks, but sometimes parts of them can be seen through the paint spots.

I know that most of the decisions I make are unconscious decisions, but at the same time I know that I try to discover a figure, a body that sustains a non-visual relation. Sometimes it could be a territorial tension, sometimes sexual tension, sometimes the psychosomatic response that the body has towards a latent desire, and even sometimes the psychosomatic response of the body towards the presence of death. (See Image 7)

In these paintings I connected with Van Gogh’s discovery of color, “a color itself constitutes a depth associated with its dimension and quality, color itself is tridimensional”.<sup>8</sup> Therefore I use color here to create immediately the sensation of space and volume, without the contribution of tridimensional materials. Acrylic and oil paint have the advantage of being a more latent structure than the present and predominant structure of tridimensional materials. But at the same time paint alone brings the awareness that color independently of the surface where it is applied sustains a tactile sensation because it is tridimensional in its own presence. (See Image 8)

The necessity of starting to paint without any tridimensional object just came as a challenge and as a fear. I felt somehow intimidated when confronting the canvas without any starting point and just using color and paint on their own qualities. At some moment in my artistic career I used to draw and then paint over those drawings. I think at this time I was using some of the tridimensional objects as a remembrance of the drawing I painted over, so my necessity and my fear at this time was to confront the canvas with paint, to rediscover the act of painting.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://bombmagazine.org/article/1573/fabian-marcaccio>

<sup>8</sup> Pierre Francastel, *Art Sociology*, Alianza editorial 1981.

## Nietzsche, the problem of existence.

One of the books that caught my attention when I was a teenager was *The Birth of Tragedy* by Friedrich Nietzsche. In this volume Nietzsche explores multiple themes: the ritual of the tragic chorus and the overcoming of the world of the Apollonian appearance; the world of the individual image and the separation of the human from its surroundings; he reveals how Dionysus, the God of drunkenness, destroys the individual and returns the human to his roots, to his instincts and therefore to the universal will. In the tragic ritual the difference between master and slave disappears, and the drunkenness itself blurs the separation between the other and I.

This separation from human and nature is amazingly sustained by the Hegelian quote, “man is the death that a human life lives”<sup>9</sup>. Hegel as a dialectic relates the origin of human consciousness to the separation of the human from the material world. At the moment that the man names an object, he separates this object from its surroundings; therefore, the object is no longer in relation with nature and loses its temporariness. The object becomes what Hegel calls an act of negation of the nature of things, and as negation the man is capable of giving death. At the moment the man calls himself, he kills the animal that lives in him and becomes conscious of his existence.

Later readings led me to understand the depth of Nietzsche’s thought and how he overcame the dialectic difference or the contraposition between human and nature, or Apollo and Dionysus. Nietzsche found that “tragedy” was not just a supra-personal experience in which the human comes back to his primitive state. Nietzsche found that Dionysus’s sacrifice and suffering are a strange source of joy, because the tragic in Nietzsche is not suffering merely as punishment for existing. Dionysus suffers but affirms the existence even of pain, and in this affirmation is where Nietzsche finds the revaluation of life and life as an affirmation as long as it exists. Life is independent of guilt and is fair in the sense that suffering is potentially pleasure, or the suffering of one individual is the pleasure of another. The problem of justice in life leads Nietzsche to discover that life is fair and therefore doesn’t need justification. There’s no guilt in life and therefore no idea that can subdue life.

Existence is irresponsible

The act of painting itself is an act of destruction because it doesn’t deny what is given as culture itself. Painting tears apart what is given as culture, as objects, as ideals and then creates a thing from what previously were objects, symbols, memories, words, culture. The violence of painting is sustained by the action of raising an image to the state where it becomes an unnamable thing, something present as a conjunction of different elements that together in a particular and unique order bring a sensation that escapes any word

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<sup>9</sup> Georges Bataille , *Hegel, Death and sacrifice*, el aleph.com



that already exists in the human language and gives birth to a new thing, independent of a name, independent of a theme, independent of justification.

Painting is irresponsible because it brings to existence something that stands by itself and in that sense demonstrates the individual existence of a thing. That thing is not human but is able to stand in front of a human without human ornaments. A painting is a fact that lacks justification and escapes not just any moral connotation but raises a fact to the level where it is predominant and independent of an idea.

[Deleuze, the communal, the man that suffers is a beast, the beast that suffers is a man.](#)

I have always thought that painting is ritualistic because painting for me is like a journey. I know that it is very probable that I find something that is not ordinary, because as I previously explained, painting creates an unnamable thing.

There are certain steps one takes prior to paint that prepares one for the creative act. One enters into an area of alertness and has to be ready to respond to what is perceived on the canvas. There's threat in painting, not just because I can ruin the painting with every brush stroke I give but also because I discover things that I probably never would have imagined, because painting carries during its process the possibility of being a mistake.

I think that for painting the mental and physical state of oneself is an important factor to determine the direction of the dialogue. How do I feel with my surroundings? How do I feel with life and therefore how do I perceive it? I think that maybe art is the only thing that really tolerates one's nakedness, with all the defects and all the beauty. Nothing else could tolerate that much.

I consider painting ritualistic, because one loses the censorship of normal behavior; one loses the censorship towards oneself and even beyond that, towards life itself.

Every painting is new and therefore brings a different problem to solve, but I know that I am finding a certain point of reconnection or a point in common with the animal, but mainly with the animal that suffers. As I explained before, I don't literally paint the animal that suffers, I paint the scream, - I paint the pain- the animal that can feel that pain sustained in my painting is my public, where I reconnect with the communal.

I reconnect with the communal in the sensation, but this is not a community formed by a voluntary decision or agreement. It is an unwilling community formed by the laces of feeling. It isn't even an empathetic feeling, it is more of a visceral feeling. It is a community of bodies not of minds. This is why I think I include the element of a sacrifice in my paintings. As Bataille explained in his beautiful ideas about the act of sacrifice, a sacrifice has social relevance and is a very potent action, because one feels a deep identification with the animal that is dying; therefore, in this identification one experiences one's death.

This complicated turn, -the identification of oneself with the meat of the animal- which happens in a place that is the image itself, translates into a body, the body of the person that feels. A two dimensional image is a thing, but it can sustain the feeling of mortality. I feel identified with this unanimated object, and there's a part of one that is potentially a

corpse, potentially a dead body. Everything that happens, happens in a place, and that place is the body itself. One potentially can be a dead body and discover that death occupies a place, because one feels the presence of death in the sacrifice of the other animal and one knows that there's no separation between the animal and I. As for Francis Bacon, for whom everyone becomes a beast and as a beast witnesses his own death, the human that suffers is a piece of meat<sup>10</sup>, and meat is what we have in common.

This point –where the human suffers- is what concerns the spectator and where my paintings connect the viewer with a deep identification with the painting's rhythm. *The unanimated object comes to life and the living thing decays*. This is why I feel that a sacrifice happens in the painting. One feels identified with the object that comes to life or the living thing that dies because it is material and mortal; therefore, one participates in the rhythm of it and one experiences it's dynamic of life and death.

The viewer is fundamental because the viewer doesn't just see the painting. The viewer and the painting suffer from the temporariness created by the rhythm of the painting, and the viewer is the trigger for the dynamic that by itself would not affect anything. This is the communal aspect of my paintings, the aspect where the integration of the elements and the viewer melt into the rhythm of the painting.

### An unfinished body vs. abstraction

*A face that eats itself, a mother that devours her children, no one finally can hide because, aren't they all the same?* (See Image 6)

As I stated earlier, during the process of my MFA program I experimented with several techniques and forms. At a certain point there was a tendency to create abstract paintings. Even the mixed media technique I use could be easily left as an abstraction, but I always have been attached to the figure. The human animal figure is the one which I am interested in but it is hard, very hard, to discover why I just needed that instead of the satisfaction of an abstract painting, which is enjoyable through the relationship between colors and forms. My needs lead me always to read what is happening in the canvas and make those relationships more noticeable and make those relationships a "body"<sup>11</sup>.

The figures that I find are obviously not figures that anybody could see in the human world (that is so schematic in comparison to the innocent look of the animal (See Image 4)). In fact I consider that the action of distortion<sup>12</sup> is breaking with the human; one deconstructs the idea of the human and transforms its organic forms into a pure relationship, into a body. A pregnant boy, pregnant with his own desire, transforms into a flower/mouth, a smiling mouth subdued by his own desire (See Image 4). Similarly, a

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<sup>10</sup> Gilles Deleuze, Francis Bacon, The logic of sensation, 2002 University of Minnesota press.

<sup>11</sup> Gilles Deleuze, Nietzsche and the philosophy, Editorial anagram, Barcelona, 6<sup>th</sup> edition

<sup>12</sup> Milan Kundera, The painter's brutal gesture, Editorial Debate, Madrid, 1996

bird is broken in two parts, a terrestrial heavy being, an abandonment of the earth, the desire for the air and the creation of the wing (See Image 5).

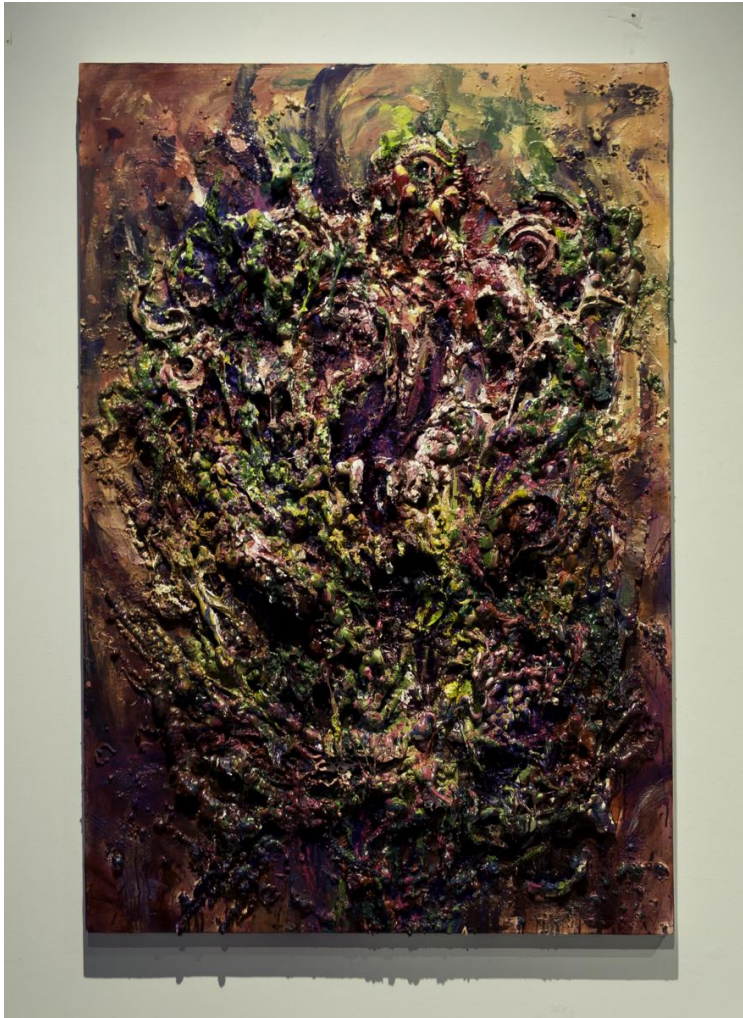


Image 4: Algunos entran, otros salen, 70 x 48 inches, mixed media on canvas, 2014.

*What is new in that Baconian quest is, first (to use his expression), the 'organic' nature of those forms in 'a complete distortion'. This means that the forms in his paintings are meant to resemble living beings, to recall their bodily existence, their flesh, and thus always to retain their three-dimensional nature.<sup>13</sup>*

I always had the intention of making my paintings look like they were alive, like they were moving and transforming. Like a body that has never had an initial point but therefore, never reached an end, I construct a painting like it were an unfinished body. Before reading Deleuze and even before understanding the complexity of Francis Bacon's paintings. I knew that there was the necessity of perceiving life through my paintings. I ask myself why through painting if we are surrounded

by life? The answer simply put, is because while I paint I lose the censorship towards life, because when I paint I can stand naked in front of my painting and not even worry about feeling vulnerable.

While painting, I direct and eliminate the parts that separate the materials from the figure that I found out was on the canvas. During this process there's a certain influence of my taste and of course my character plays an important role on it, there are many figures and forms that I dislike and I eliminate them with paint or cutting out the surface, but at the same time there is also certain perversion in this action of choosing, because I know that I am free and that I could play with this body in the way that I like, that my desires

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<sup>13</sup> Milan Kundera, *The painter's brutal gesture*, Editorial Debate, Madrid, 1996

and the desires of the painting are not even directed by any mechanism that controls me besides the limits of the material itself.

This discovery is not something that you easily find in ordinary life and many times people don't perceive the figures that I find on my paintings. I think, that is part of my process and the irresponsibility of painting. I am not trying to communicate anything because I am discovering a new object and the words to describe my artwork, to explain it completely have not been invented yet.

### [Analysis of my thesis exhibition.](#)

My Thesis exhibition is composed by 7 paintings of different sizes and different techniques. It synthesizes a big part of the exploration I did during my MFA program, but at the same time these paintings create an environment whose purpose is to produce strong sensations in the viewer. The sensations produced are not just something disgusting, but something disgusting and sacred, not an analysis of what is disgusting but an homage to the liberation from the separation of what is disgusting and me, an homage to the animal that screams in the human.

These paintings vary in color, texture and dimensions, and some of them are paintings that I developed at the beginning of my program.

In my exhibition space, the visual path starts with two paintings that are the only ones completely visible from outside of my exhibition space. These pieces were developed during the summer of 2014 when I had already abandoned my interest in representing an object or things as they visually appeal to me. By this time I started to improvise with heavy textural elements and the texture of painting itself to create a dialogue between the object and the paint.

These two paintings look organic in quality and include several elements like dried flowers or branches, plastic bubble wrap, spray foam, sea shells and cardboard. They still remain somehow figurative, not abstract totally, and with a reminiscence of an animal or human shape. The purpose of these paintings was to discover the form that all of the tridimensional elements and paint constructed. These paintings were built on a couple of found boards that had a similar quality. Both of them were already cracked and with several chips on the sides; in some parts I even found some fungus growing, which already gave me a starting point. I also broke the edges of the boards intentionally to give them a more organic look and to create a movement that was going to influence the painting.





Image 5: In Bloom, 55 x 33 inches, mixed media on found board, 2014

The first piece, “In bloom” (See Image 5), has the form of two human bodies attached one to the other which at the same time are emerging from the background or are merging into the background. This figure has several eyes formed by sea shells, and sometimes it becomes a face. When I showed this painting to a friend of mine, the first thing he said was: “the ritual of courtship and copulation”. This reminded me of the connotation of the smile, a smile that is blooming like a flower, a smile that looks appealing but at the same time violent because the subject that smiles is subdued by the necessity of the other on the one hand, but additionally the subject that smiles is subdued by the necessity of satisfying his/her instincts, to preserve life. I think the interesting part of this painting is that it shows a two-sided

love, love in a sense that hides the materiality of the other but also love as a tool of life to perpetuate itself.

The second piece, “The body of the air” (See Image 6), is similar in technique to “In bloom”. It renders a being that is becoming a long winged animal. This animal is half aerial, half terrestrial. In the center of the piece can be seen a head that is fractured in two as well a product of the separation of the animal with its terrestrial roots, like the desire for the air would be a body that becomes a wing.

The colors are colder than “In Bloom” because the found board was also colder in its tonalities. In this piece I adhered several branches to the center of the composition, and those branches connect with the background of the piece. I also used some cardboard mesh and bubble wrap, which became an organic element of the



Image 6: The body of the air, 55 x 33 inches, mixed media on found board, 2014.

body of the animal. They could insinuate its guts or somehow its spine, but the rhythm of this form gradually transforms into the shape of a wing

In these pieces I discovered the importance of the accident and basically the fact that one paints to create an accident and make the accident look as natural as it is. I never thought of rendering a wing, but the accident of discovering it redirected the whole painting.



Image 7: N/T, 80 x 80 inches, mixed media on canvas, 2015.

Once the viewer enters into the exhibition space, he/she is confronted by two big paintings. On the left side is a painting whose colors are vibrant but with a more pastel tendency. Most of the colors are saturated hues with a touch of white. This painting is impressive not just because of its scale, the painting is overwhelming in the sense that it threatens you. It is like a being wearing a dress made out of rib cages but at the same time an animal face that is transforming, a silent gaze that questions your presence, that melts while you watch it. The relevance of this central figure is increased by the elements



that surround it, a circle on the side and green, gray and violet tones with different forms that give a sensation of tridimensionality to the central figure.

This painting for me is one of the most successful I've ever done because it has a strong affective impact and reaches the level of unity on the paint that I have been searching for (See Image 7).

Once the viewer turns his/her look to the right side, the viewer finds a counterpart, not a silent gaze but a screaming painting, not melting but rattling with colors and shapes that want to extend all over the space, like a carcass, whose skin and meat are being violently separated from its bones. The hues in this painting are very saturated, and in some parts the color itself interacts with the background in contrast, giving a sensation of depth and tridimensionality, sustained by the pure hue itself. The painting blurs in certain points but is more defined in the center and has a body that in some parts is closer to the viewer and in other parts draws away (See Image 8).



Image 8: N/T, 80 x 80 inches, mixed media on canvas, 2015.

On the wall placed at the right of the viewer there are three small scale paintings that have a vertical shape.

These paintings started with an intervention of some recognizable objects (sea shells mostly) that were transformed into pseudo human, pseudo female figures. All of them possess an organic and embodied quality, and it is clear that these images render a semi destroyed body whose bones and guts are becoming a part of the external surface. These paintings don't render a dead body, but they render a becoming body. They have subtle variations in color and soft contrast.

Two of them are developed on a cold color scale. The first one resembles an egg form, but this egg form is little by little transformed into muscles, flesh and bones. The lower part has a similar form to a *vagina dentata*. The second painting was developed from a sea shell, and the insinuation of sexual organs in this one is explicit, mostly in red colors, orange and yellow. The last painting was one of the first attempts to paint with found objects and several elements, but it has the same orientation as the first two. All of them resemble a violent sexuality and at the same time create the sensation of smelling flesh and ocean.

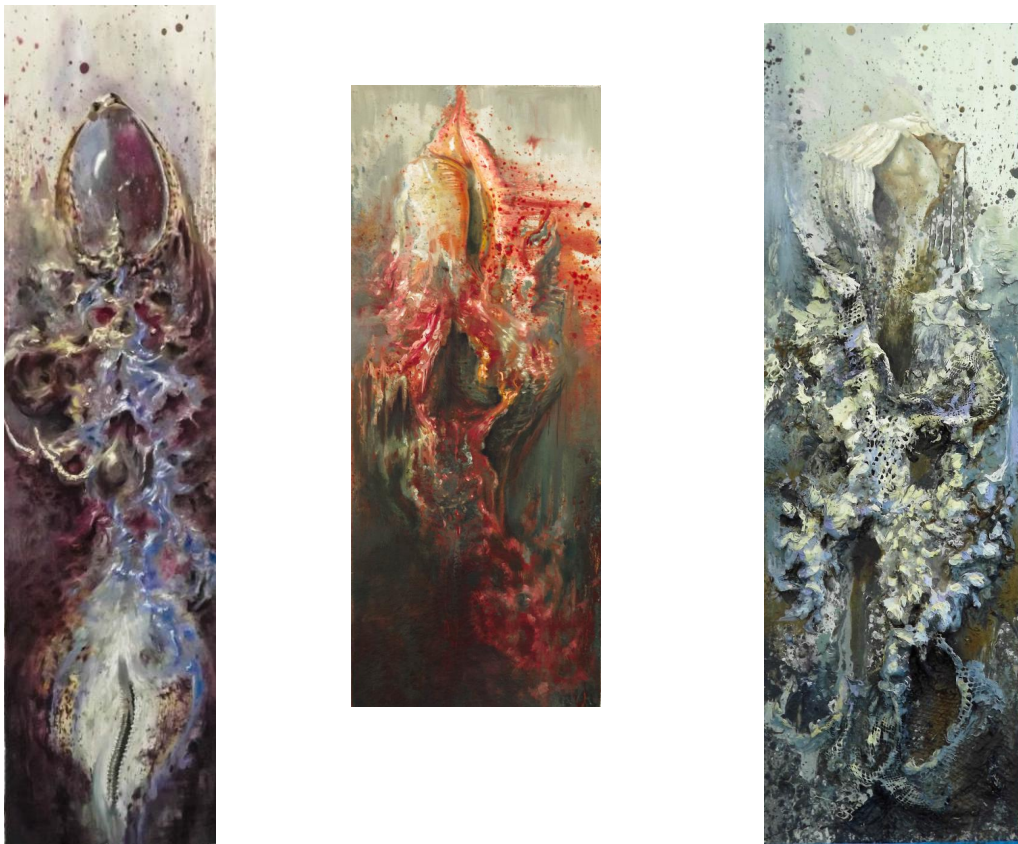


Image 9: Object 1, 41 x 10 inches, oil on canvas, 2013. Object 3, 28 x 11 inches, oil on canvas, 2013. Object 5, 38 x 12 inches, mixed media on canvas, 2014.

Even beyond my thesis exhibition, my paintings as a sustainer of the action of becoming have worked parallel to my deep necessity of integrating myself with the environment.

I don't think that my paintings are a representation of oneself but they are a symptom of a necessity; they are a desire that has been built up in a visual way, made physical.

Therefore, the whole artistic exploration I developed during my MFA program can be seen as a process of transformation, not just in the formal aspects of a painting but a transformation in a way of perceiving the world and the materiality of the world. A world which by its own presence intimidates and challenges the identity and the self; a world that contains the opportunity of changing, a world that resonates with what I want and intrinsically as a want implies a transformation of oneself.

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