



CAPTALOONA ART
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Miguel Àngel Craviotto and his Grunge Art

From the first to the thirteenth of April, the Captalooona Art space in Madrid exhibited several works by the Spanish painter (and biologist) Miguel Àngel Craviotto, belonging to what is defined as "grunge" art, in relation to the homonymous musical genre that became popular in the late eighties and early nineties.

To provide an initial context of this disruptive cultural trend, we can reconsider the major factor in spreading the style as the musical group Nirvana, led by the famous Kurt Cobain. This style of dress, music, and life is deeply animated by a marked desire for rebellion, to dismantle past customs, and, in the specific case of fashion, to depart from the eccentricity and typical decorative taste of clothing from those years, instead opting for a more essential and unkempt style.

His artistic language has always been subject to evolutions and changes over time, ranging from realism to abstraction, to Pop Art. The grunge art that Miguel Àngel Craviotto now represents in his works undoubtedly evokes the chaotic and rebellious spirit that animated that period, accompanied by a great and evident vivacity attributed to his own personality. His works, mainly made in acrylic on paper, are visually identifiable as an explosion of elements, colors, symbolisms, and multiple cultural and urban references, studying the balance between order and disorder in the world, both internally and externally where we live.



Miguel Àngel Craviotto

"Japon" is one of his first works that introduce the creative style that will characterize his grunge art. The work displays various elements from the Japanese world, from the mention of the iconic video game Pokémon to the celebration of Sumo and the representation of a geisha's face, which becomes the main subject of another of his works. It clearly aims to reference the Land of the Rising Sun and as many icons that distinguish it. However, what is central, both compositionally and symbolically for the work, is the yellow ribbon that recalls the nuclear attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.



Figura 1 - Japon, Miguel Àngel Craviotto (2011)

From this symbol arises the rebellious spirit of grunge, which here translates into a denunciation of violence, destruction, war, and all the suffering inflicted on innocent people.

What makes his works interesting from a visual standpoint is that, although everything seems to originate from the material union of image clippings or newspapers, they are actually entirely painted works. The elements that surprise us the most are undoubtedly the parts that simulate torn paper, or the points where the images blend into each other, joining without distinction. His work is characterized by a pictorial illusion that makes the work seem to belong to the world of informal-material art, where not only paint is used for the realization of the works, but also various materials that add up to give life to the final composition.



Figura 2 - Sovrapposizione II, Miguel Àngel Craviotto (2021)

With Craviotto, the effect of the illusion of torn posters or newspapers can be seen even better in the work "Sovrapposizione II", in mixed media on paper.

The perception we have of this work compared to the previous one is of a very articulated whole in which we cannot clearly distinguish the different clippings and elements that make up the illusory collage effect. In "Japon", on the other hand, we could easily identify the different elements, as the objective was precisely to want to identify them to return a very specific ideological position. In "Superposition II", with precise brushstrokes, bright colors of the individual clippings of posters, and the composition that arises from their approximation and union, it almost seems as if any wall of a large urban metropolis has been removed from its location and transposed onto the canvas in the form of painting. The chaotic conglomerate that forms accurately reflects the rhythmic and rebellious soul of grunge music: just play a Nirvana song and observe the painting to encourage the viewer to become an integral part of the composition, animating themselves with the same spirit that inspired it.

However, the various works that Miguel Ángel Craviotto exhibited in the personal exhibition at the Captaloona Art gallery do not only belong to the grunge art movement. The artist has shown his artistic versatility and stylistic flexibility by proposing two small-format sculptures and several other pictorial works. Some of them can be associated with Hyperrealism, due to their way of representing their subjects extremely precisely and truthfully, such as a stack of books corresponding to very renowned literary works. This flexibility stems from the fact that Craviotto must be considered an extremely precise and talented artist with his brushstrokes, and he can create both very rich and complex compositions and simpler subjects, but always with magnificent attention to detail. Finally, we mention the most attractive work of the exhibition, "Quercus", made in oil on wood panel. It is a large vertical work that is fragmented into many small rectangular units, as if forming a puzzle that the artist enjoys dismantling and reorganizing to allow the public to interact with it and reconstruct the complete image.

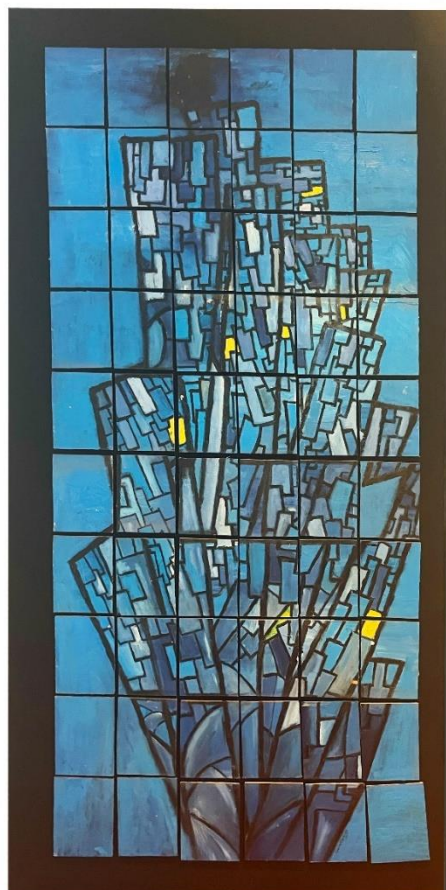


Figura 3 - Quercus, Miguel Àngel Craviotto (2009)

Sources

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