

From Objects to “Objectuals” Processes: Assembly, projection, and perception of the exhibition Objectual/Processes by Antonio García

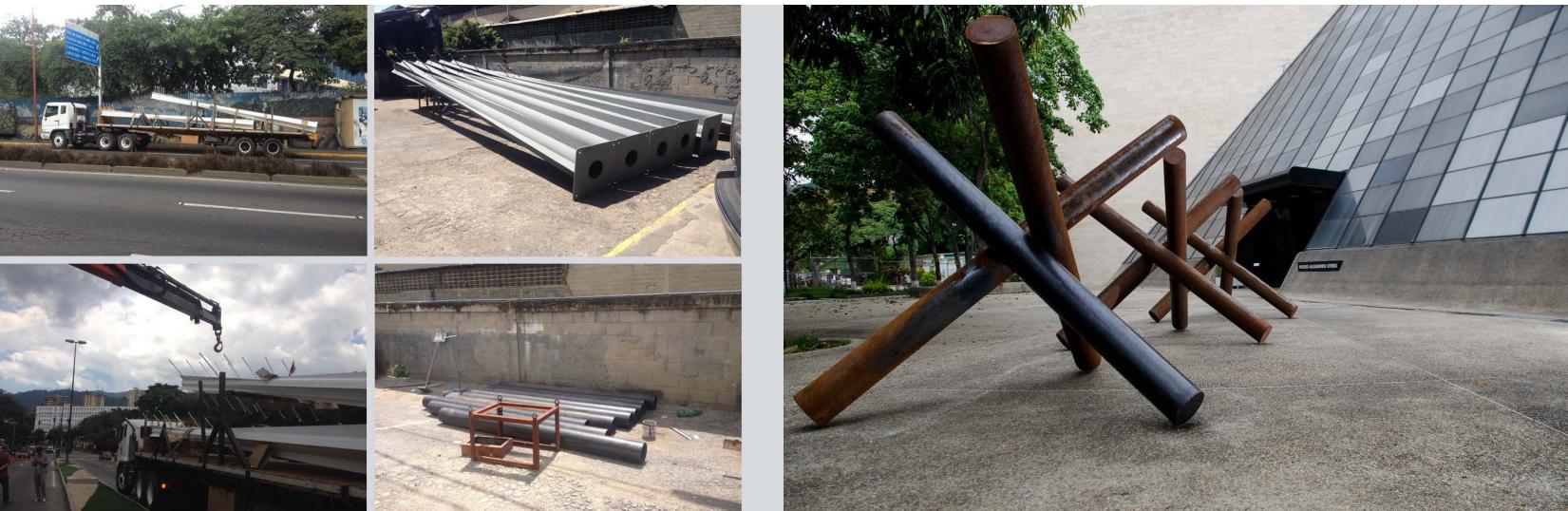
Perhaps it seems interesting to first explore the title chosen by Antonio García for this exhibition: objectual/processes. The slash between the two words represents an early form of theorization which can be explained as follows. There is without a doubt a kind of oxymoron if we talk about objects in terms of processes, for it is clear that an object in any case is the final result of a process and its ‘quality’ of being an object makes it, in essence, unalterable –it cannot be altered without being set object. However, what the notion of an object implies here is the adjективization of the notion of the process, and therefore it forces us to think –in a tradition that is as old as a modern society- the object placed in the foreground is not the final object but what we can call, as Warburg calls it, the artistic act: “The manipulative touch of the object with the consequent plastic or pictorial reflection.” In contrast, by separating the two terms with the slash “/”, a double noun is being proposed simultaneously: that of the process itself and that of the adjective transformed into a noun: “Objectual”. But what would “objectual” mean? It is clearly not an object but the “quality” of a materialized object. And it is this semantic twist the central part of the visual studies proposed by García. In them, he explores the “objectification” of processes, but also of objects, which seem to acquire meaning only insofar as they are linked to processes and, in a very particular sense, to projections of processes on materials. The alchemy then, of which García announces himself to be to some extent in debt, is simultaneously a “verbal alchemy”, as we shall see. Furthermore, the focus will now be “objectuals” -and not objects.



At first, two very different “objectual/processes” can be distinguished in the exhibition. On the one hand, the elaborations from concrete materials (aluminum, iron, wood, plastic, etc.) of objects that evidence their quality of being constructed, of being assembled, of being constituted in detachable parts, even in modular elements; thus, resulting in inscribed objects which show the traces of their configurative process.



Also, there is a record of the process of conception and the configuration of the models. This is a kind of record, archive, of the operations of the material, as seen, in the photographs of the light posts which were the idea behind the work exhibited at the entrance of the Alejandro Otero Museum, in the sketches and designs in the paper and plastic within some of the works of the exhibition, and the foundation of the scheme of the spiral staircase. But there is another element in the presentation of these objects which makes the proposal more complex. What seems to be objects constituted by a repeating element, by a series of superimposed or assembled structures, becomes objects no longer abstract but of use, with the recourse to the “alchemy” of nomination. The titling of objects comes to play here as a configurable element of perception and even of comprehension.



Thanks to it, a work like “Dismantled” proposes in its title an operation of perception that, instead of reviewing the construction and the production of the object, suggests to return from it to its constitutive parts. The intervention of the title thus forc-

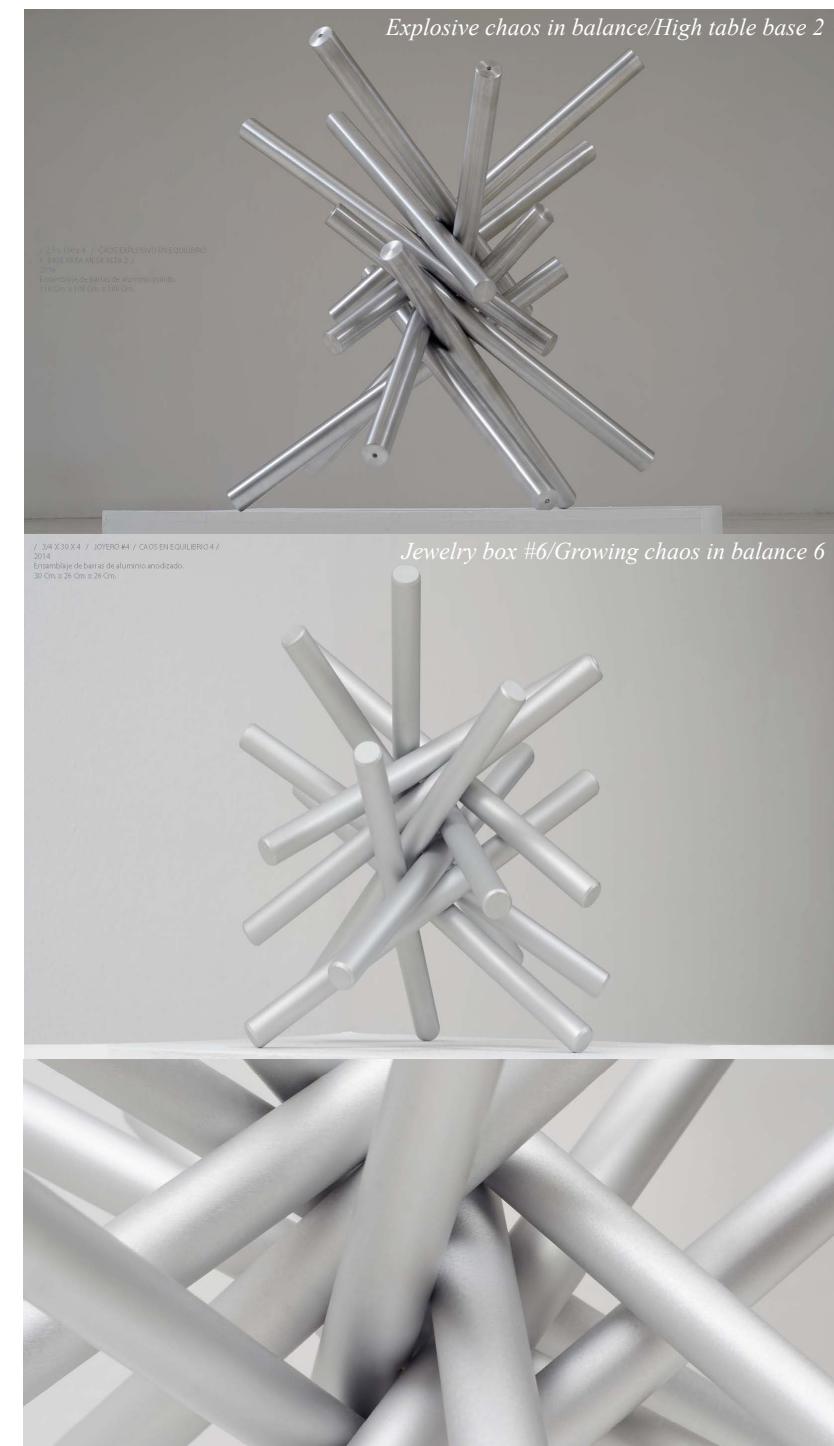


Dismantled

es us to go through the “process” in the opposite sense to the “natural” one, that is, in a “deconstructive” sense. On the other hand, this act of titling seems to explore at the same time how the processes of perception and understanding of the visual operate when there are superimposed divergent implications and explorations in the titles of some works that are simultaneously and contradictorily projected on them. Thus, our perception of the modular construction process of abstract objects - in a way that does not seem to represent any external reality - is radically transformed when the “objectual” is called “Chaos in balance/ Lamp base 3”, for example, or “Marriage of heaven and hell/ Lamp base” or “Explosive chaos in balance/High table base 2” or “Jewelry box #6/Growing chaos in balance 6”. This gesture evidences to what extent we perceive from a predetermined conceptual framework and to what extent certain “artistic” objects can be made visible, literally “made visible” simply by assigning them functions or evidencing similarities with everyday objects. This gesture has then a double implication.



Marriage of heaven and hell/Lamp base



Chaos in balance/Lamp base 3



Explosive chaos in balance/High table base 2



Jewelry box #6/Growing chaos in balance 6



On the one hand, it shows the subtle line separating abstraction from figuration (it is enough to project with a denomination or title an application of the abstract object for it to interrupt our visual/conceptual field). On the other hand, it alternates the attitude of the spectator who, when faced with an object of use, loses the cultural reverence that prevents him from approaching the artistic object. Once the ambiguity is set in the spectator's "perceptive protocol", it will inevitably contaminate the gaze of other "objectuals" that, despite their similarities with the previous ones, can be titled less ambiguously and now be called "Fall and Rise Again" symbolically or "Hard on the outside, soft on the inside" descriptively, or "Coat Hanger" projectively. Doesn't this nominalization imply, as we can see now, at the same time an interrogation of the "objectual"?



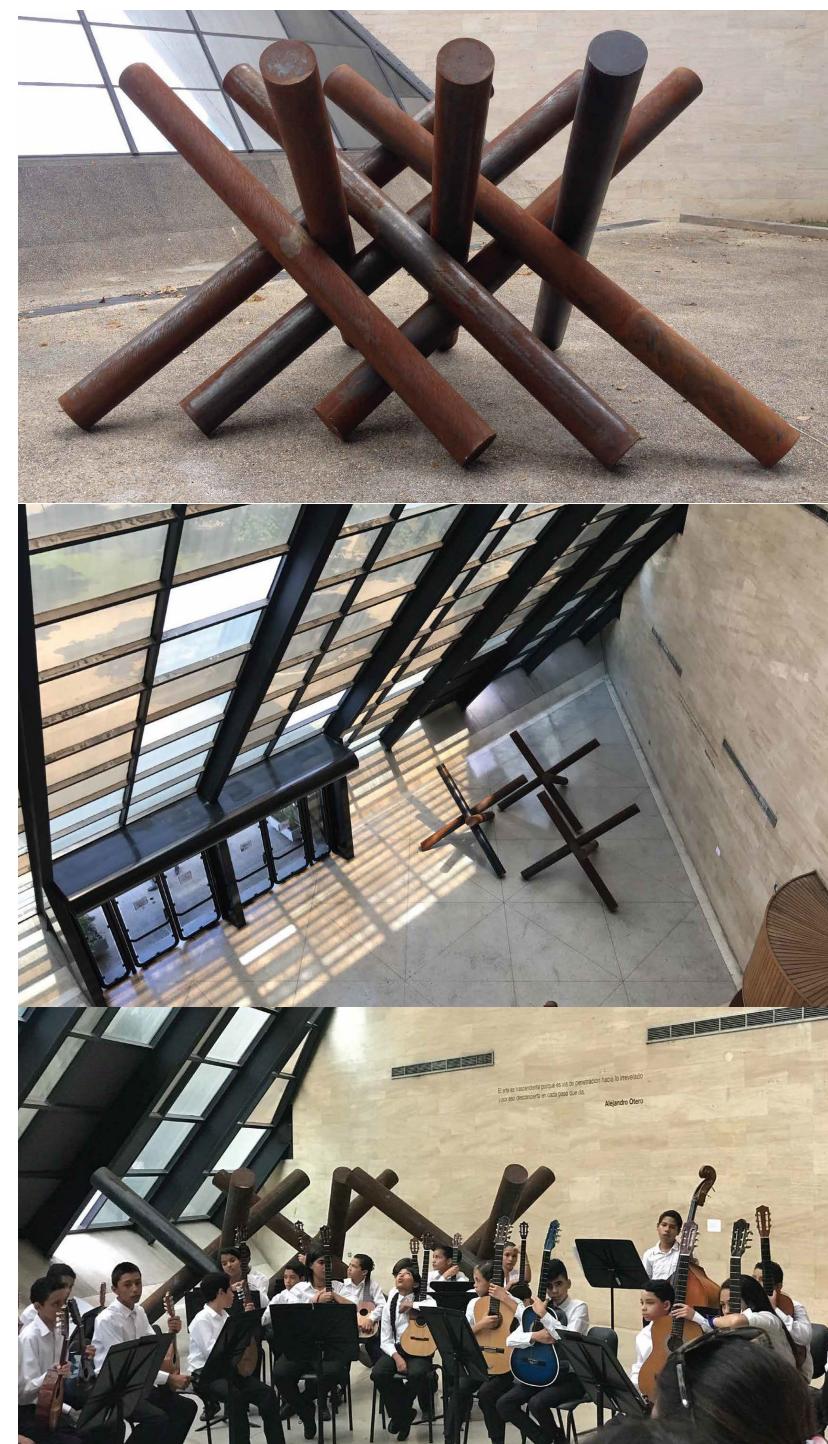
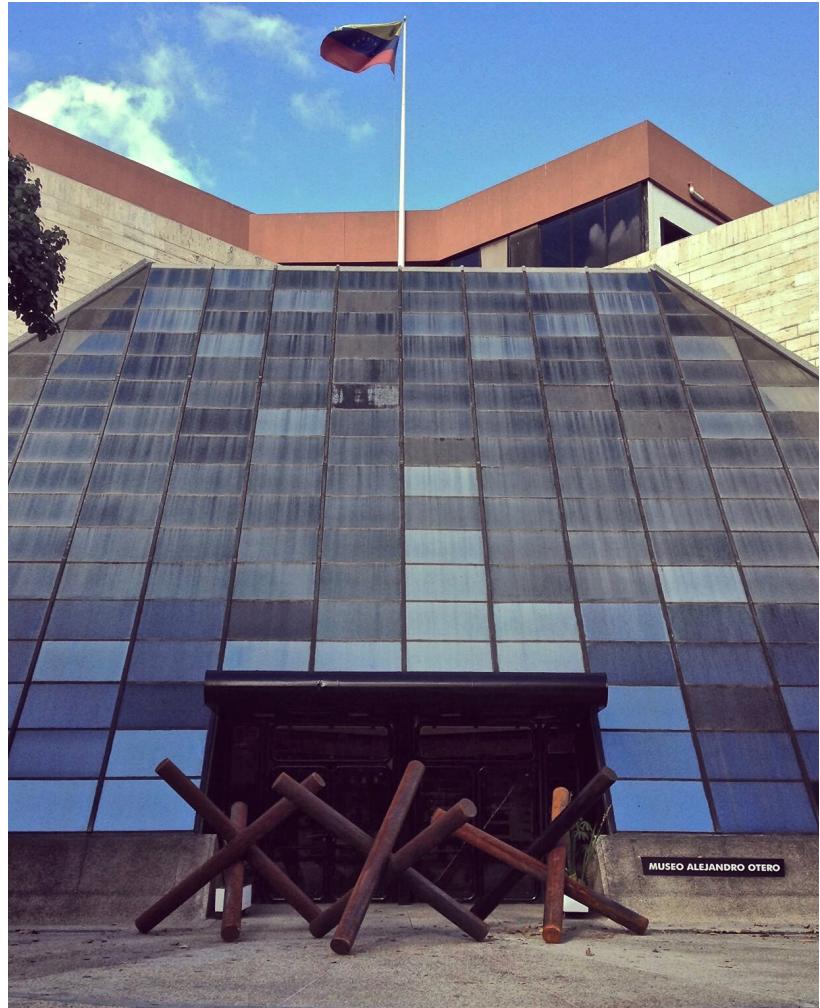
*/3 x 50 x 6 / CHICA Y LEVANTADA DE NUEVO / 2015
Ensamblaje de barras de aluminio pulido.
94 Cm. x 45 Cm. x 41 Cm.*



This is an interrogation of that which characterizes an object as being an object. This reflection can be extended to the work exhibited at the entrance of the museum. It is the same modular element (worked, obviously, with variations) of the pieces inside: that figure composed of three strips of different materials, attached (glued, screwed, or welded) perpendicularly to each other. In this case, the dimension invites us to reflect on another element: the so-called "Czech hedgehog" - the material is now

iron, more precisely iron tubes - which was used in World War II to prevent armed tanks from crossing the lines of defense. Here, without doubt, the material, the dimension, and its "rusty" quality make recognition inevitable; but again, the title projects other (double) meanings onto the "objectual": "Offering/Bolivarian Republic", in which the notion of "offering" is opposed to that of "resistance" -inherent to the "Czech hedgehogs"- but here projected onto a singular country-situation: Venezuela is

going through a situation that can be qualified as a war against its population. Doesn't this work, in turn, complicate the perception of the equivalent forms made of aluminum that are inside the exhibition hall? In fact, it should be noted that the "processes" presented in the works in the room constitute the record of the study that was carried out to design and manufacture the one at the entrance of the museum. And thanks to that, doesn't each one of those modular elements become a hint, a reminder of that pointing that precedes and therefore conditions the perception of the exhibition?



procesos / objetuales

Antonio José García Rico



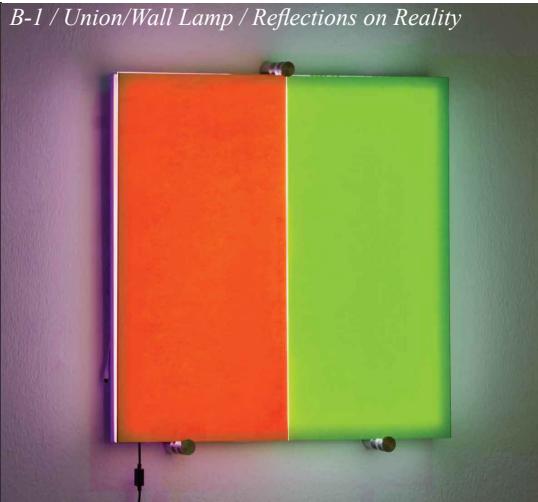
MUSEO ALEJANDRO OTERO

El trabajo plástico del artista Antonio José García Rico presenta una gran sutileza, donde la forma y el material se amalgaman principalmente en la concatenación y repetición de elementos de manera secuencial, con acabados simples, donde se expresa lo esencial de la materialidad y el uso de una geometría elemental con la que está concebida cada pieza escultórica. La mayor parte de su obra posee un carácter de sencillez y la reducción de toda alusión simbólica, en un primer momento, a simple vista; luego, al observar sus títulos podemos apreciar que, en torno a las piezas, surgen reflexiones del tipo existencial, en las que se interroga (el artista) y cuestiona aspectos del ser. También propone en sus piezas escultóricas relaciones y juegos de similitudes, haciendo analogías de sus formas creativas con objetos de uso cotidiano y doméstico, donde se evoca a una cultura de la forma.

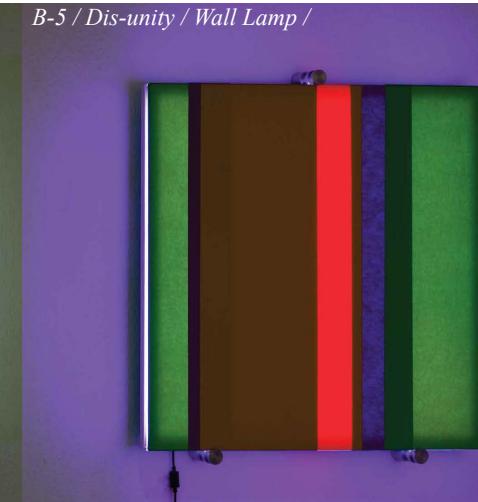
En el conjunto de piezas luminosas, realiza cuestionamientos y reflexiones sobre la realidad y el color original, debatiendo aspectos simbólicos, materiales y de alquimia. En estos trabajos el color es capaz de traspasar la discontinuidad física y saltar de la superficie al espacio o viceversa. Se puede observar la unión, separación, intercepción interior – exterior, la relación cromática donde el color luz, la temperatura del color y el tránsito cromático. Se generan atmósferas que crea cada pieza a través de mecanismos luminosos de lámparas que proyectan en el entorno un clima envolvente, muy rico a los sentidos.



B-1 / Union/Wall Lamp / Reflections on Reality



B-5 / Dis-unity / Wall Lamp /

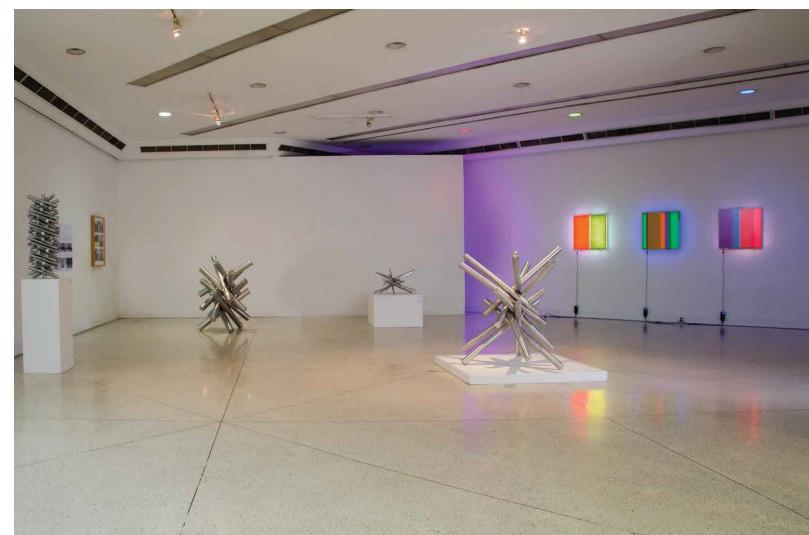


B-7 / Indecision / Wall Lamp /

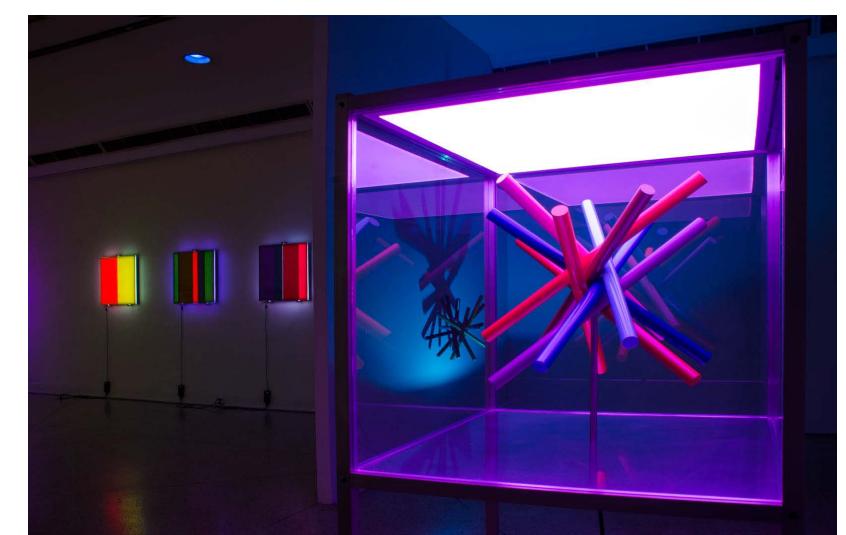
The other line of research of the exhibition explores the color as “objectual”. Another technology is used here: ultra-flat RGB LED lamps and interlaced color cards. The aim is to portray experientially the debates on the nature of color - a fascinating philosophical problem - as an attribute of objects. What is color: an inherent property of objects (realistic color theory) or a response-ordering of the senses (subjectivist theory)? The lamps periodically change the color they emit, the color that in turn is altered by the color of the cardboard on which it projects, so that the colors are presented as attributes of combinations that are controllable and relativizable at the same time. In this way, we find ourselves with surfaces whose apparent color alters with the projection of changing colored lights, so we are faced with the effect of change in perception that is not the result in the alteration of the property “color”. These pieces are then, by their dynamics, the portraying of processes of transformation of perception from elements, now more problematically material, such as the color of a surface and polarized light. And then again, the aspect of perception “graded” by the title of the works is added. Thus, we have, for instance, “B-1/Union/Wall Lamp/ Reflections on Reality”, to whose title is now added, to the symbolic ascription (“Union”) and the practice (“Wall Lamp”), a catalog index (B-1) and a philosophical projection (“Reflec-

tions...”) - “reflection” which in turn plays with the ambiguity of the word in matters of vision. Others will keep the last two elements, but the designation will change as well as the symbolic ascription: “Dis-unity” or “Indecision”.

Finally, we have a sort of conjunction of these two lines of study of the objectual/processes in the integration that we see in some pieces of the construction -the army- of aluminum pieces, now painted in different colors, and the projection on them



of colored lights, which now creates the integrated reflection of both types of research: the construction from relatively simple elements, types of modules, with the transformation of the perception of their superficial coloring -and the appearance of an entangled game of shadows. And then again, the title, “verbal alchemy”, operates on the perception of the pieces that are presented. However, they are now evidencing both the structuring configuration of the first line of objectual/processes being exposed, as the second. Hence, we have the pieces “F-1/Im-





A-1 / Floor Lamp



F-1/Improvised Lab. Table/Reflections on Reality



C-2/Sun/Wall Lamp



provised Lab. Table/Reflections on Reality” or “C-2/Sun/Wall Lamp” in which again a pragmatic and a theorizing perception is projected on the “objectual” simultaneously.

It is perhaps necessary then to understand the scope of this exhibition as the convergence of those lines of research into

processes that become objects, but with the imprint of the process that made them possible; processes to which we must add, to substantiate perception, that of nominalization, that of verbalization which, like the process of manufacturing and construction, like that of lighting and projection, contributes in a complex way to the constitution of what we see, of the objects

that, we now see, are always “objectuals”: “processes” of making them what they are (seem to be).

Luis Miguel Isava

January, 2018