

Álvaro Perdices, within the wastelands, by Sergio Rubira (February 6, 2015)



Imagining what the garden courtyard of the old Hospital of San Carlos looked like while waiting to become the actual Reina Sofia Contemporary Art Museum is one of the starting points of the photographic installation *Álvaro Perdices* (Madrid, 1971) has made for his second solo exhibition at www.casasinfim.com (Madrid). When the Hospital was closed in the 60s, the building (built in the late eighteenth century by architects José de Hermosilla and Francisco Sabatini as part of enlightened reforms of Charles III program), was abandoned for years without knowing very well what its destiny could be. It was even on the risk of being demolished, until a final decision to restore it becoming a museum space was taken.

For this period the "meanwhile", a place that was and it would be, but was still there, *Álvaro Perdices* speculated on the possibility of a garden that had ceased to be, becoming a non-controlled figure. The former regulated nature had been neglected and was no longer the subject of the rules of classical pruning hedges, obliged not to escape from regular boundaries that were marked to them, those who made them all alike, almost equal. Conceived it as wild wasteland, where weeds grew uncontrollably, the territory was invaded by a thicket that had been filled gradually, as it is now

inhabited by the avant-garde works of Joan Miró and Alexander Calder.

This is the place where the thicket fills everything within the image, or whatever can be filled. This is the starring protagonist of the series of photographs which occupies almost exactly the gallery walls from one end to the other, becoming a sculpture, as evidenced by the title, 300 x 437 x 240 cm (9 x 13 x 7 feet aprox.), referring to the size and dimensions of the room containing them. The viewer is surrounded by these wild plants that are violent, that attack (be careful not to be hurt when you decide to go), but they also serve as a hiding place in which to lie while waiting, a refuge where encountering safety or protection for a furtive, casual and urgent meeting. They are pictures that belong to the genre of landscape in the most traditional sense. They are pieces of framed nature with a given barrier, which make these pictures to appear as documents for their literalness, however, this work acts as metaphors of disobedience, despite simulating comply with the framing rules.

The artist has used the inverted, as it did in his project for the EAAC Castellon which turned the institution, exposing what was never seen, making visible what is hidden, and making a led into what is out, transferring those margins among which is forced to move. The natural has conquered the artificial, the disorganized is located in one of the spaces of the established, the uncontrolled is what is now regulated within it, the wild has been introduced in the civilized, as he suspected what had happened with the weeds attacking the garden of the abandoned Sabatini building. Perdices is always looking for that crack in the walls of the system where to creep and slowly causing its fall, or at least its wobble.