



PHOTOESPAÑA2013

Cristina Iglesias: Creative Processes

*At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is*
T, S, Eliot, "The Four Quartets"

The diverse work of Cristina Iglesias is characterized by its delicate handling of material and light as well as by its quiet, assured, even at times muscular strength. By contrast, the works currently on view at the Elba Benítez Gallery stand out for their intimacy. They are generally small in scale. Most are two-dimensional, among which format photography plays a particularly decisive role. Above all, they occupy a distinct but essential plane within the artist's working method: that of process more than execution, that of the potential more than the actual, that of idea more than object.

Yet while distinct, these different planes in fact are inextricably intertwined, like differing forms of a single verb that retains its perduring meaning across shifts of tense, person and aspect. And what is more, it is specifically via such fluctuations of scale and format that Iglesias's lasting concern emerges: a phenomenological exploration of the nexus of physical, fictional and psychological space, a nexus that must be apprehended from without, from beyond itself, from a metaphorical position of centered detachment, much like Eliot's 'still point in a turning world'.

For instance, the exhibition includes a selection of maquettes. In Iglesias's approach, these maquettes are polyvalent. On the one hand, they resemble three-dimensional drawings in which she freely develops her formal ideas and possibilities. At the same time, while the objects these maquettes propose may be at present be mostly unbuilt, they are nonetheless eminently build-able, and thus fully retain their function as model. And finally, they are objects in their own right, whole-heartedly displaying their own intrinsic value as 'constructions'.

In addition, the exhibition includes drawings, video and photography, all of which, again, carry out various functions within Iglesias's overall creative process. They are fully developed within themselves, and as such are free-standing and accomplished, not contingent or secondary. Yet they also explore themes found in Iglesias's larger works, such as the ambiguous duality of our current-day relationship to the natural world, a relationship that oscillates between nostalgia for refuge and a looming sense of catastrophe to come. And they inevitably shed light on the subtle power of Iglesias's large-format work by revealing the web of interrelationships among scale, material, texture and format that characterizes Iglesias's oeuvre.

Cristina Iglesias -- who was awarded the Spanish National Arts Prize in 1999 and the Berlin Academy Award in 2012 -- has had individual exhibitions in major museums such as the Reina Sofia Museum, the Guggenheim Museum (New York) and the Guggenheim Bilbao, the Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, the Renaissance Society, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, the Serralves Museum, the White Chapel Gallery and the Casa França Brazil (opening August 13 of this year.). She has participated in the 53rd Venice Biennial, the 18th Sydney Biennial and the Carnegie International, and her work forms part of numerous private and public collections around the world, including the Reina Sofia Museum, the Pompidou Center, MACBA, the Tate Modern, and the Hirshhorn Museum. Iglesias has also created major large-scale public commissions, such as the ceremonial doors to the Prado Museum in Madrid (2006 -7), *Deep Fountain* (2006), and *Estancias Sumergidas* (2010) in the Sea of Cortes in Baja California. This is her second solo exhibition at the Elba Benítez Gallery and forms part of the OFF Festival for PHotoEspana 2013.

George Stolz