

REGUERA'S PICTORIAL DECLENSIONS by Roger Pierre Turine, January 2010

I have known his painting for over 20 years. And for more than 20 years Alberto Reguera has surprised and encouraged me to follow his progress relentlessly!

A painter who never fails to surprise is a painter who is forging ahead; who is excelling himself. He is a sportsman-like painter, although he has never once trained as a long-distance runner. He is an engaged painter, even if he will never howl with the wolves. He is a fighter who paces his life without weakening and sends it body and soul along the roads of discovery and plainchant. And that is rare!

Too many artists lose interest in the delight of a random future once they've received the stamp of approval. Consequently, being recognized for a given style that they have sometimes taken years to forge, their art seems to establish them in a perennial setting that they believe is forever convincing. Nothing could be further from the truth. "If you do not go forward you go backwards!" How true that is. No danger of that with Reguera, the proud Segovian.

From landscape views to cosmic reflections, from materialistic games to plastic excesses, even from the frame in its indefinite, if not infinite, outgrowths, from the canvas as painting to painting as object, he advances along a route which, in his case, is royal, except that he is a million miles from trying to usurp the throne.

It is a sentimental, proverbial, ideal route. Ideal, because it is simply the route that a man has chosen, because it is his second skin.

Reguera is one with his art. Both of them journey in tandem according to the vagaries and surprises of life itself.

For that reason, as with any man of worth, Reguera forges on and his painting almost precedes him, rather than following him. With him, the painting expands beyond expected conventional limits, growing in space, suddenly changing into a prolific conflagration. With him, painting gains freedoms that transfigure it and reinforce it as the art of painting before anything else. Painting before all else!

Abstract, if you like, nevertheless his painting is filled with very individual senses, images, odours and flavours. It breathes atmospheres, impressions, sensations, serenities, but also bruises. It reflects a life – the everyday. And life's future, because it never pauses on its way. It is the voice of a man who sums up and transcends his life with rhythms, materials and colours. From shadow to radiance, blues to yellows, greens to blacks, reds and red glows, every nuance is there according to the day and time. From almost smooth paintings to others swollen and bumpy, from limp matter to brutal obstructions. From south to north.

A man of Spain and arid lands, Reguera is also a global traveller and the flavours of other places (to help him to see more clearly?) shift him from Madrid to Paris, Hong Kong to Oslo, and translucent blue seas to luminous polar fjords.

Is it because of these limitless travels that he has convinced his canvas to be other than a mere canvas? To be art in suspension, art becoming permanent?

First there were his painted cubes; his paintings turned cubes that he arranged in chromatic installations throughout the galleries where he exhibited. Through this experiment the two dimensions of his painting took obvious liberties with their status, which was too rigid for an adventurous artist. Why the devil should painting not rival sculpture, or better still installation? From two to three dimensions was for him just a question of shaping. Thus, although he was not completely alone in this stance, painting won new stripes, being thrown open to audacity, and was no longer a wallflower (which was so often a criticism).

Since then, Reguera has gone further. His painting has overflowed one canvas onto another, and

even onto the wall... It has taken to its heels. Thumbing its nose at the canvas which gave it life, it has run away to live its life by trying to explode beyond every boundary.

The substance is denser than ever, colours burn like they seem never to have burned before, the painting rejoices, bursts out, laughs its head off as it spatters left and right. It disgorges its potential without holding back – on fire.

Placid when you meet him, shy towards those who approach him, discreet if he is questioned, Reguera mainly expresses himself through his paintings; through his immersion in the infinite projection of his feelings onto the canvas.

He also happens to take photographs. He photographs places that enchant or move him.

Photographed landscapes which, thanks to the graceful simplicity of an eye that has seen and coveted them, measure up to his paintings. Soulful reflections. Interiorized landscapes. Special moments. Colours on the grey cobblestones.

Who said that Reguera was an abstract painter?!

Art critic for *La Libre Belgique*