



BARCELONA PRODUCCIÓ 23-24

MICHAEL LAWTON

ENG

TE RECUERDO DE UNA VIDA FUTURA

28.11.23-04.02.24

Te recuerdo de una vida futura (I Remember You from a Future Life) by Michael Lawton (Sheffield, UK, 1980) is an exhibition of paintings. In Espai Capella a number of pictorial works of various sizes dominated by colour and a certain air of abstraction have been displayed and arranged. It is a classical, stable scene: the paintings hang on most of the walls in the gallery; some of these, the majority, are made of stone; others, inside the two side chapels, are white and more neutral; and there are also a couple of false walls made of wood. The gallery has some benches in the middle that invite you to sit and contemplate the paintings, and also to read.

In fact, this information sheet is merely a preamble to Michael Lawton's painting and writing; an introductory note unintended to go any further, but simply to give way to the main aspects that define his work: the practice of painting and the act of writing.

Nevertheless, this preliminary note assumes three basic functions. First, it encourages visitors to move through the exhibition clockwise, i.e., from left to right, until they return to the starting point. This circular movement is perhaps not so obvious, given that the space is a large rectangle, but this sequence of the route, or narrative, is important.

Secondly, this information sheet allows us to indicate that the artist's use of abstraction is somewhat unusual. There is a strong narrative in Lawton's painting, which entails the strange and captivating presence of graphic-symbolic elements that combine the visual and the literary. Writing is an intimate part of his pictorial work, although not explicit – it acts precisely like a text, from a different place, consciously transforming that which is named. Despite its secondary role in an exhibition space – designed more for images and objects than for words – writing and reading encapsulate a large part of what occurs in painting.

And as the title indicates – I remember you from a future life – it is the text that triggers a poetic oxymoron that reclaims the initial desire to establish a fictional pact with the visitor: speculations with lived time and parallel universes as an experience of reading painting. A literary tale and a pictorial tale that incessantly accompany and feed off each other, the one not being able to exist without the other.

The third and last function of this prologue allows us to share an unusual, almost performative detail with the public. If painting traditionally responds to a time and place of execution, here we see it doubled. The tradition of the diptych – two pieces united by some unique meaning – is blurred in favour of what seem to be fragmented, torn and distanced diptychs. By repeating themselves in space – and consequently in time – these diptychs engender a series of spatio-temporal dislocations within the exhibition, thereby formulating a proposal that is more imaginative than tangible, more literary than visual, which in fact overflows the times of reception and consumption of painting. Like a trace, like a vestige or testimony of a possible past or a future already lived, the literary intensity enveloping the exhibition can alter its staging. Simply put, *Te recuerdo de una vida futura* begins with a specific form on 28 November 2023, although it will not remain the same from 9 January 2024 onwards. Whether this foreknowledge is a promise of future change or simultaneously the history of something that has already occurred relies solely on you, the visitor.

Enric Farrés Duran & David Armengol



LIST OF WORKS, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

I saw you the other week, at least I thought it was you.

Oil on canvas, 130 × 195 cm, (2023)

But then this you told me that you were in fact you from another future, lost, trying to find your universe.

Oil on canvas, 22 × 27 cm, (2022)

Or, you said, you can get here by crossing the water, which was how you had got lost, swimming out too far before returning to another shore.

Oil on canvas, 41 × 34 cm, (2023)

I knew it was you by the way your nostrils flared as you laughed at yourself, at the ridiculousness of your situation.

Oil on board, 40 × 26 cm, (2019)

You said that the sea roils across dimensions, that Poseidon knew. Proteus knew too, that's why he stuck to rivers, which stay in our universe.

Oil on canvas, 130 × 160 cm, (2023)

At least mostly, beware of underground rivers you told me.

Oil on canvas, 160 × 130 cm, (2023)

I told you about the times I thought that I'd seen a future self walking through our world and you told me that I probably had; that some I's had crossed this threshold following the water.

Oil on canvas, two panels 110 × 200 & 130 × 200 cm, (2023)

You said that you had been thinking; how do we know that Narcissus was looking at his reflection?

Oil on canvas, 150 × 180cm, (2023)

Perhaps he was staring at another self in that pool.

Oil on canvas, 150 × 180cm, (2023)

You said that maybe when Icarus crashed into the sea he plummeted across universes, leaving Daedalus there, desolate and unknowing.

Oil on canvas, 41 × 34 cm, (2023)

I asked you if death was a crossing of universes, and you said you didn't know.

Oil on canvas, 130 × 160 cm, (2023)

I told you that I sometimes feel myself flickering, as if I can sense the fragility of existence.

Oil on canvas, 160 × 130 cm, (2023)

You wouldn't be drawn on our future but you said that in your world we had taken that coach.

Oil on board, two panels 27 × 35 cm, (2023)

You told me that we weren't out of time, not yet.

Oil on canvas on board, two panels 105 / 136 × 86 cm, (2023)

And I felt myself getting aroused, at the hope and at the love and with that memory.

Oil on canvas, 20 × 25 cm, (2023)

Then you told me that I would be forgiven for all the mistakes I had made and I folded at the knees and cried into your belly.

Oil on board, 50 × 35 cm, (2023)

If you are interested, you said, you could try sleeping outside, to lay back and look at the sky, listen to the hiss of the fire and feel that you are living outside time, and then maybe you would be.

Oil on canvas, 46 × 38cm, (2023)

Maybe you would trespass universes.

Oil on board, 35 × 50 cm, (2023)

I told you I wasn't interested.

Oil on canvas, two panels 140 × 180 cm, (2023)

I told you that there were times that I would still stand by the window with a cup of tea in my hand and watch the rain come down in sheets, wondering how life had led me here.

Oil on canvas, 22 × 27 cm, (2022)

And you said that these sheets of rain are like the film of energy between parallel lives.

Oil on canvas, 20 × 25 cm, (2023)

I had wanted to say that I felt that I'd already lived more than one life, that I couldn't imagine more, that I couldn't imagine the decisions that I might've taken, that I couldn't imagine being washed up on the shore of another life.

Oil on canvas, 46 × 38cm, (2023)

But there wasn't time.

Oil on canvas, 195 × 130 cm, (2023)