

With Hands Signs Grow

FROM THE PREHISTORIC CAVE TO THE CONTEMPORARY

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With Hands Signs Grow is a Collateral Event of the 59th Venice Art Biennale, an initiative of the Odalys Foundation and the Signum Foundation, with the support of El Museo Nacional y Centro de Investigación de Altamira (Ministerio de Cultura y Deporte, Spain).

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Curator: Alfonso de la Torre

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At the beginning of the last twentieth century, art history began to consider the possible interrelation between the manifestations painted in prehistoric caves and art, as well as their displacement towards what we could call "interferences" or interrelations with the art of our times. *With hands, signs grow - Con las manos crecen los signos*, refers to the possibility that, among the folds of time, the manifestations of the painters of the prehistoric walls, also in different utensils, with whom they paint in our time, are revealed as circumstantial signs. The shelter of nature (the cave) versus the protection of the jungle of our world, recalling that mysterious statement by Brassai, "dans notre civilisation (le mur) remplace la nature". A true and complex display of images and artistic forms, tempted to move forward in the twilight in multiple directions. And thus, in Spain, Picasso or Miró, the artists of the "School of Altamira", "El Paso", "Parpalló" or the "Indalianos", all in our generation of the fifties, have looked at those mysterious first creators of prehistory. Also Tàpies and his communication on a wall that was "cosmic", while Chillida, Miró, Oteiza or Palazuelo also had a part of their first immemorial inspiration, in Brancusi's way. We could certainly add so many others to the list: Dubuffet, Michaux, Moore, Motherwell, or Wols. Bataille or Blanchot explained it to us. In a 14th century palazzo, the Palazzo Donà, within its walls clamoring with history, *With hands, signs grow - Con las manos crecen los signos* is proposed, a curatorial project conceived after months working with a group of four young artists who believe in the incarnation of the forms made signs, following Yves Klein. An invocation to the transhuman values carried by these prehistoric signs like keys to images, in the manner of a marvel of figurability: resistance, a request for wellbeing with the environment and nature, an encounter with the animalia (both the existing and the utopian) or fixation of the personality and the body of the one who traces the traces. In such a way that their creation on the walls can meet a new time, emerged from the recent despair and anxiety so that, in this way, art, these surviving images, is found as a hopeful manifestation that tempts the balance between human beings and the environment, the bodies and this despised land (or did you say wasteland, Thomas?).

Alfonso de la Torre, 2021