

**Press release**

**Roberto Urbano**

**It will be a symbol or it won't be**

**From 6<sup>th</sup> April to 24<sup>th</sup> May**

**Opening: 6<sup>th</sup> April from 11:00 to 14:30**

*It will be a symbol or it won't be* is the first exhibition by Roberto Urbano (Granada, 1979) in our gallery, after his recent presentation at the OTR space in Madrid. Urbano is part of a new generation of Granadan artists characterized by their renovation of the art installation and sculptural discourse, his work finds subtle, surprising and often long-winded partnerships, avoiding clear or direct descriptions of the meanings or ideas as Óscar Alonso Molina shows in his text *Dejection* " in his work, Roberto Urbano stands out for his pronounced literary and philosophical background -at least insistently thoughtful- which provides his production with such distinctively semantic density, as well as having plenty of quotations concerning culture and thought, or prolific semantic games, organised through a rhetorical collection of allegories, metaphors, a great dose of irony, paradoxes, antithesis, oxymoron... everything implying, eventually, a certain encryption of the final meaning of his works when it comes to its interpretation".

Absolutely defining in his work, as we will see in the exhibition, is the use of different materials, like melted metals, steel, aluminium, sandpaper, laser-cut iron, etc, which make, under his handling, a *ready made*, a *second life* for these materials in his sculptures. Urbano adds his own experience as a worker in a metallurgical factory and the knowledge of these materials in their original scene to his creative process. He makes us notice rusty metals, iron and sandpaper worn away by use, which makes up volumes, textures, colours and shapes that, before Urbano's reuse, were imperceptible to our eyes.

In our exhibition, Roberto considers how the survival of a symbol depends on the evolution of the object that holds it, how it is inherently linked to the capacity of its design to adapt to changing gazes, to the different needs and to criticism. Net, anchor, strigil or palm tree, are underlying anonymous iconography, that secretly goes through the centuries; they are messages that can demand a deep knowledge for its complete interpretation, or simply a subtle gaze over its shapes, for its unconscious appreciation.

Established in materials such as metal, stone or wood, these symbols go from the 'Christic' to the cryptic – or vice versa – and are added to architecture, embodying it, to make up the mystery of everyday life. The journey proposed by this exhibition is precisely situated in the transhistoric junction between symbol, myth and design. He follows the trail of hidden motives in so distant elements as Byzantine funerary objects or a Shaker candle stand.

Roberto succeeds in redefining a catalogue of ambiguous images and pieces of a language doomed to disappear; he manages to bring them back to life, using sculptural solutions to give shape, material or display, they send us back to the role of a sacred outline, revealing its paradoxical relationship with the impulse of symbols and suggesting approximations to certain myths that still construct our culture.

Roberto Urbano has a Degree in Fine Arts, Graduated in advanced studies (DEA) doctorate Programme: " Languages and poetics in contemporary art" by the University of Granada. He is also making his master in "Latin American Studies: Culture and Management" at the University of Granada. For several years, he directed an Art Brut workshop for individuals with functional diversity at a prestigious foundation in Granada. His photographic and audio-visual works for the dance school Julliard School, working together with Héctor Zaraspe, Rudolf Nurejev's master in New York, stand out among his artistic experience. From 2001 he has often exhibited his work individually and collectively, at a national and international level, in such varied places as OTR space in Madrid, SCAN – Spanish Contemporary Art Network Foundation de Londres Zadok gallery in Miami, Galerie 59 Rivoli in Paris or the legendary Sala Santa Catalina at Ateneo Madrid . His work is present in several collections, both public and private, and has obtained different awards in his career. He is one of the artists selected by Txomin Badiola for his workshop " Practising distance, weighting up contact" in the Visual Arts Programme by the Dirección General de Promoción Cultural de la Comunidad de Madrid titled Madrid 45.