

Current Art in Mexico

Amilcar has accompanied us through Mexican Art from the influence of Surrealism ("Mexico is a surrealist country", Breton once said) to the social realism of muralists like Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros, from *la Generación de la Ruptura* ("Breakaway Generation) of the Fifties, influenced by abstract expressionism, up until the contemporary art scene and its revival of art galleries – from *Expo Arte Guadalajara* established in 2005 to *Maco Art Fair* and many others, including Amilcar's own gallery [Munive](#) which opened in Tlaxcala at the beginning of 2019. We could then observe some of Amilcar's own artworks, experimenting with various materials but often opting for cold, minimalist colours and typically revolving around the theme of loneliness and impaired communication, with many touching studies of human figures and their existential condition.

During the follow-up debate, some of the points emerging more forcefully concerned, a) the globalism of art (for instance, the fact that the contemporary artist's sensibility is not so strongly mediated through their own country of origin, but it reflects his or her concerns and countless international influences); and b) the misguided assumption, held up by the State, that since art should be democratic, the artworks showcased in galleries inevitably smack of elitism. But this never truly the case, pointed out Amilcar: galleries are open to the general public, and high-quality artistic experimentation can still reflect wider social concerns. As proof of this, we were shown a video of the *Disarmo* ("Disarmament") project by Pedro Reyes, whereby weapons seized by the police from criminals are turned into unlikely musical instruments so as to convert death into music.

All in all, this has been another inspiring and informative talk, crowning what has been a truly rich year for the Mind Sharpener project.

Talk by Amilcar Rivera, 11/12/2019

Report by Davie Castiglione, 21/12/2019