

# Robert Nava

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### PRESS RELEASE

From Robert Nava's painting emerges a primordial gesture. Almost animal. Dazzling, like a hug or a fight between visible and invisible things.

The figures of the invisible are summoned by the painter like so many demiurges, deus-ex machina that haunt him, question him, whisper to him in the ear some «painted us, represents us». Who is this «we» at Robert Nava?

«I wanted to do something benevolent, but at first sight it seems scary... As if the dawn and its light had remained behind. We don't finally know whether the day starts or ends.» The whole ambivalence of Robert Nava's painting is expressed in this sentence.

Presumably, this exhibition is the result of a ritual initiated in the dusk. Ending at dawn, it consists of allegorico-metonymic paintings creating "a system of relations between two worlds". It links a conjunction of symbolic elements: characters, animals, objects, gestures, colors, numbers. He makes use of metonymy as a form both poetic and pictorial. Metonymy designating from antiquity the figure.

This is what Robert Nava is all about: creating figures in an allegorical frame, multiple fields of the figure, supers-figures, and making figure what is not a priori figure. The questions of beauty, truthfulness, plausibility or realism no longer prevail, what operates here is an alteration of our field of reality.

The paintings we are looking at push us to see a beyond because Robert Nava manipulates underlying codes known to everyone, almost religious, in any case sufficiently detailed not to have to be decrypted: a bestiary composed of rabbit, Shark, Leo, Stars... Simplified characters, almost simplistic, sometimes reduced to a circle, two points for the eyes, winged characters, others on fire. They are simple to understand, making using our reptilian, primitive, primary brain. We enter Nava's painting as if we were spectators of a crusade, a parade or a quest.

Nava operates paradoxically as a sculptor. He erects Golems of lines, textures, and fights to bring out on these canvases companions of dialogues. What do they talk about together at night or in the early morning after having crossed the nothingness of this ritual of passage leading from darkness to light?

Perhaps they are telling themselves a world seen since 2020. A singular year, in six paintings, six scenes, six characters.