

# GALERIA MARC DOMÈNECH

Ptge Mercader 12, bxs – 08008 Barcelona – TF: 93 595 14 82 – FX: 93 250 63 58  
info@galeriamarcdomenech.com – www.galeriamarcdomenech.com

## Press release

### **Charo Pradas. The 1980s**

16.04.26 – 29.05.26

This is the first exhibition the gallery has dedicated to the artist Charo Pradas (1960). Featuring around 40 works, including paintings on canvas and drawings, the exhibition focuses on the decade in which the artist developed her distinctive visual language and defined her style.

At the beginning of the 1980s, her work explored a figurative expressionism centred on the representation of imaginary beings, close to the world of insects, some rendered with a humorous tone and others more aggressive. For the artist, these are representations that emerge in an automatic, almost unconscious way, intended to convey emotions and states of mind. In her view, there is little difference between human beings and other living creatures, and therefore these works are framed within her need to analyse both the human being and the animal world beyond their merely formal appearance. The use of a colour palette based mainly on ochres and browns only serves to intensify this preoccupation with organic and earthly elements.

Towards the mid-1980s, her work largely abandoned any trace of figuration and moved into an almost abstract painting, extraordinarily biomorphic, focused on forms and compositions that recall organs, microscopic images of organic tissue, impossible artefacts or dreamlike spaces. It is inevitable to associate many of these representations with her interest in science and scientific discoveries, both in the fields of medicine and biology, as well as cosmology. For the artist, everything is life, and thus she seeks for her paintings to represent a changing, metamorphic nature. Hence, in many of her canvases there appear forms reminiscent of mouths or eyes that seem to look back at us. In later years, these eyes evolved into one of her preferred shapes: the circle. For Pradas, the circle is the sum of everything and the symbol that unites biology with cosmology.

Her influences are numerous, ranging from fellow artists of her generation to many of the works of the American artist Georgia O’Keeffe (1887–1986) or the scientific drawings of Santiago Ramón y Cajal (1852–1934). Even the work of Miguel Servet (1511–1553), another Aragonese figure, also finds a place within her practice. Pradas prefers the Renaissance to the Baroque and, probably for this reason, her work contains very few blacks and blues, while oranges, mauves, light greens, magentas and corals are abundant.

Her work from this period bears witness to an enormously vibrant era in Spain, one that was highly intense and active. The 1980s were a time of widespread effervescence and, although Pradas did not aim to directly reflect it, the formal aspects of her work fit perfectly within a moment in which a strong expressive drive was channelled through both figuration and abstraction. Pradas offered a fresh, unprecedented and highly original

perspective, and for this reason her painting immediately stood out. Her work shone above others by capturing the ceaselessly changing state of the world, making instinct coexist with culture. As Fernando Huici wrote in 1992, Charo Pradas' work stands "as a celebration of the surprise that lies at the very genesis of the creative act, where the cry settles into articulated language. But beyond that, it is also a mirror of a transcendent perplexity that traces, in the primordial space, a figure of the world, in that imperceptible, timeless boundary of dialogue in which chaos and cosmos come to know one another".

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## BIOGRAPHY



**Charo Pradas (Teruel, 1960)**

Pradas studied Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona, where she held her first solo exhibitions. In 1986 she was awarded a scholarship by the Spanish Ministry of Culture for the Young Art Exhibition held in Madrid, and in 1989 the Teruel Museum devoted her first retrospective exhibition. During this period, she became part of the group of painters who broke onto the art scene in the 1980s.

Her work over the years has borne witness to multiple methods of execution, conceived as «dialogues between the artwork and the painter», in which each brushstroke applied to the canvas can completely alter the subsequent course of the painting. Her work is

held in institutional collections such as those of MACBA, the "la Caixa" collection in Barcelona, the Álava Museum, the Teruel Museum, the Caja Burgos collection, the ARCO Foundation, the Banesto Foundation, the Coca-Cola Foundation, etc.

She currently resides in the city of Barcelona.

### Selection of solo exhibitions:

- Cretes, Fundación Germán López y Marian Sanz, 2024
- Zaragoza, La Casa Amarilla Gallery, "Xavier Grau and Charo Pradas. Elective affinities", 2023–2024
- Zaragoza, La Casa Amarilla Gallery, 2018
- Zaragoza, Carolina Rojo Gallery, "The House of the Soul", 2014
- Zaragoza, Juana Francés Hall, "Albarracín", 2008
- Valencia, Luis Adelantado Gallery, 2007
- Teruel, "Charo Pradas. Albarracín", Creative Residencies, Santa María de Albarracín Foundation
- Zaragoza, Veruela Monastery, Vera del Moncayo, "Without Eyes. 1994–2004", 2004
- Madrid, Masha Prieto Gallery, 2001
- Valencia, "The Expanded Vertigo", Luis Adelantado Gallery, 1999
- Barcelona, Miguel Marcos Gallery, 1999
- Zaragoza, Banco Zaragozano, 1995
- Valencia, Luis Adelantado Gallery, 1993
- Barcelona, Salvador Riera Gallery, 1992
- Barcelona, Ciento Gallery, 1991
- Teruel, Teruel Museum, 1989
- Zaragoza, Miguel Marcos Gallery, "Paintings", 1989
- Barcelona, Ciento Gallery, 1989
- Madrid, Buades Gallery, 1987
- Barcelona, Sala Montcada, La Caixa Foundation, 1987
- Barcelona, Barcelona Biennial (6th), 1986, first prize winner