

ALFONSO CRUJERA, PHILOSOPHICAL NOTES ON HIS LIFE AND WORK

by Juan Ezequiel Morales

"*Der Ursprung des Kunstwerks*", translated into Spanish as "*El origen del arte*" (The Origin of Art), is a work in which Martin Heidegger (1935) attempts to establish a framework which links the work of art to its metaphysical and ontological origins. Heidegger says therein: "All work of art originates in the artist. And the work of art is the origin of the artist. One does not exist without the other. However, each is independent of the other because both artist and work exist individually and together thanks to a third agent, which rules supreme and is art itself, the art to which both the work of art and the artist owe their names." (Spanish edition FCE, 1988, p. 37)

In the Eighties, I carried out a series of dialogues with several artists in the Canary Islands, all of whom belonged to the same generation as Alfonso Crujera, known as the Generation of the Seventies "*Generación de los Setenta*". In these dialogues, we talked about the reasons for art and even of how art should take its forms and channel its energy and power. It seemed (and still seems) important to distinguish between art, on the one hand, and the artist, on the other and that the key to this complicated enigma had two possible solutions: that art itself is more important than the artist when a certain magic atmosphere is in the air and, on the contrary, artists are more important than art when logic, intellect and the brakes of human reflection direct and make the ethereal and ever-changing shape of what can be defined as art (although art in itself escapes all definition).

In the case of Alfonso Crujera, and in general to the generation to which I too belong all of whom struggled to find art forms that expressed evanescence within the international historical context and a more jovial aspect within the national historical context, his is expressive art, rich in symbols and content informing a world where magic was in the air. The times, above all in Spain, marked a transition, a period when creativity was "domesticated" by the artist, where the two "divergent" characteristics of art ran together. Alfonso Crujera exhibited his vision of art and his art was affected by his times producing a *feed-back* that led Crujera down a road predetermined by history. Now we have this living lab of fifty years of subjective and objective experiments here before us in this exhibition dating back to 1974, so let us try to arrive at some teleological conclusions

THE FIRST SOCIAL STAGE OF ALFONSO CRUJERA, THE ARTIST

The Seventies were times of political struggle where the world was divided into two opposing philosophical and economic visions, to such an extent that all art, philosophy and humanistic elements were necessarily governed by politics. This was particularly the case in Spain, lagging far behind the open politics of its natural Western neighbours and where politics was a moral choice between one ideology or the other. The intellectuals, artists and writers all tended, as one would expect, to look for new avenues down which to travel, since the establishment or "*status*

quo” was in no way perfect or coherent, out-of-step with the rest of the world's vanguard movements and therefore not to be upheld.

This was particularly notable in art in all its shapes and forms and with rare exceptions, where any intellectual who did not clearly work toward solidarity, be it Utopian or not, was considered quite simply not to be an intellectual worth his weight in salt. When the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, a world symbol of tension disappeared almost overnight, affecting art to such an extent that it was drained of substance. Much the same happened with philosophy where the edifice of logic crumbled and was substituted by the ruins of "anything goes". Artists, who were especially affected became decorative creatures, empty vessels who found it impossible to offer anything of any social value or worth, anything courageous, whereas philosophers as such disappeared.

What we intend to analyse in this text through the work of Alfonso Crujera is this transition toward the symbolic, semiotic, moral and scientific void into which artists and art, left to the mercy of the only God, the "Golden Lamb or Lamb of Gold" still to believe in its possibilities (i.e, capitalist markets) were thrown at the end of the 20th century: a Lamb of Gold that has continued to have faith in art and that has sequestered artistic creation to its own ends. With this analysis we intend to revive awareness to the authenticity of Crujera's work. When we talk about the "Lamb of Gold" we must also necessarily speak of the other side of the same coin, social community, as complex and tortuous a labyrinth as capitalism itself.

Ramón Díaz Padilla in his doctoral thesis titled *The Generation of the 70s: an analysis of the forms of artistic expression among Canary artists in the decade 1970-80, (Generación de los 70: análisis de las formas expresivas de los artistas canarios de la década 1970-1980*”, (Universidad Complutense, 2001), defined Alfonso Crujera's role in said generation in the following concise and precise terms: “Essentially, Alfonso V. Crujera's (Seville, 1951) first work was marked by his concern for space and the desire to go beyond the object, the painting in itself toward a greater dimension of expression. His first exhibition, *From Man for Man in the Conca* exhibition rooms (1974) (*Desde el hombre para el hombre*), was made up of silhouettes of human figures in monochromatic red or black that entered or left the frames that "contained" them, altering space and creating voids. It marked an early presage of his conceptual and formal need to situate himself in the terrain between painting and installations while also indicating his clear social commitment and groundedness". When I met Crujera in 1975 and he showed me his work, there was a clear evidence of his travels in Europe, of the uninhibited Copenhagen or Amsterdam of the times, a world that slipped outside the rigid frames imposed by an old dictator, exactly as observed by Diaz Padilla.

To define Alfonso Crujera, however, as a "social" artist would be a drastic limitation of an artist who has always comprehended from his initial steps, albeit in an abstract way, that the framework from which we have to escape is not social but rather existential. All of us who suffered that place and time (of the Spanish dictatorship) and who experienced the same concerns were faced with existential

problems on a far superior scale than mere social aspects that, by comparison, were like belonging to a community of owners and paying the monthly running costs to survive. The human figures in the exhibition “*Desde el hombre para el hombre*” held in the *Sala Conca* in La Laguna, in the *Sala Tahor* in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and in *El Almacén* in Arrecife de Lanzarote represented a man that stood outside the framework, not to escape the dictatorship but rather to escape the discomfort of his existence. The first collective non-dictatorial regime theatre groups revealed the self-same concern. There were four of these groups in the Calle Cano (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria): Tarja, Muntu, TEC and Ug. Tarja, led by the poet Javier Cabrera, interpreted the archetypes of Greek tragedy in the key of Spain in the Seventies. The TEC were Communists and only interested in destroying the status quo in order to (hypothetically) build their rotten Utopias forged in hatred, somewhat soul-less beings led by the dictatorships of the proletariat from other countries and parts. Muntu, on the other hand, was the most professional of the groups and its proposals worked both within the dictatorship and outside of it, as was to be the case and how events rolled out. And Ug was Alfonso Crujera, a proposal tending toward a psychedelic vision of reality. Crujera co-founded the UG group MOTYVACIONES together with Alfredo del Pino and José Carlos Suárez a year later in 1975, to experiment with new forms of expression, *happenings*, *performance*, etc. They called their work “shifting the limits of known forms of expression”.

Art for Crujera is not only constructed in paintings and drawings but in the body thrown into the scenography of the theatre. He introduced the same content of the enigma of this world but in different forms, in theatre and in paintings (with performances given in University colleges, the art gallery or the Ugente establishment). His theatrical set known as *Cycles* or *Ciclos* was a scenic collaboration with Teddy Bautista in the most outstanding work of the musical group “*Los Canarios*” who successfully toured the States with their music, a symbol of the vital transition of the times. When they made their *début* in the Theatre Pérez Galdós, it bore the mark of Alfonso Crujera.

Painting and writing became the expressive forms of the revolution, occupying the place earlier held by the pamphlet but at the same time shaping the new aesthetics as only painting as an art form can do, with the exception perhaps of sculpture. It was then that, as Diaz Padilla so rightly affirms, that Crujera's work: “(he) revealed, in his exhibitions in 1976, the constant quest to bring together concept and expressive form in *Heavens upon Heavens Cielo sobre cielo*, the experimental *Erectocarpetografías (Pop-ups)* or the series, *For the living on the day of the Dead, Para los vivos en el día de los muertos*”. He stepped outside a purely political framework of artistic innovation to move in three different directions between 1978 and 1980. These, to quote Carlos Diaz-Bertrana, were. “The geometric-constructive trend, where Eastern trends are interpreted in geometric symbols, such as triangles and circles as allegories of traditional Oriental wisdom, limiting their expressiveness to a minimum contained zen or energy. Another direction would be non-geometric abstraction where the emblematic shapes of the East blend with the pictorial forms of lyrical evocation. And the third direction would be his investigation of the alchemistic potential of his materials” (Díaz

Padilla's paraphrase of Díaz-Bertrana on the Latest Trends in Art in the Canary Islands “*Últimas tendencias del arte en Canarias*”).

We could say then that Alfonso Crujera broke away from the rest of his generation and carved his own path, outside politics and the problems of the times, plunging headlong into hedonism and bucolics as portrayed in artistic form but in his own way, like Dalí, giving his own personal interpretation of art, distancing himself from his colleagues of the Seventies and exploring Nature, the human body and above all, the mysteries of the mind.

There has always been a debate as to whether it is more important to say something beautiful or to say something interesting. Obviously, in the intellectual context we all tend toward the latter. But let us just imagine for a moment a cinema that only puts on films like Ingmar Bergman's *Cries and Whispers*, for example. That would be just as horrendous as the exact opposite, a cinema that only showed films of Chuck Norris, or Chaplin or non-stop porn. The world is multiple and diverse, every person unique, a mixture of joy and pain, of trivial and epic, all experienced with the same degree of intensity. Art therefore has no other option than to be the same. Crujera takes the stage and explores everything explorable. His happening *Do what You Please with It*, “*Haga con ella lo que quiera*” (1976) was made up of installations of cardboard and painted or pasted paper mobiles that could be moved around, including a series of models taken directly from the stage of *From Man for Man* “*Desde el hombre para el hombre*”. It was taken to bits and destroyed by various guests including the original performers in the theatre-group “*Profetas del Mueble Bar*”(the Prophets of the Drinks Trolley) who entered the Galería Balos and proceeded with relish to decimate the work, with the exception of a few parts that I took home with me. It was like a farewell celebration or rite, destroying the political past, putting it to rest. Angel Sánchez the writer participated in the happening by presenting his book of visual poetry, *The Logistics of the Tapir* “*Logística del Tapir*” and I myself took part with a text that was meant to be prophetic, sketching the world of chaos we were then to enter. Then Crujera co-founded the journal “27”, a kind of fanzine of the 70s that gave free rein to his creativity, packed as it was with psychedelics. Crujera entered the Conservatory and studied two years of cello and then began studying etching with the architect, painter and etcher, Félix J. Bordes. In 1981, his friendship with the biologist Salvador Martínez led him to delve into botanics and then he moved on to bee-keeping with Vicentito in the deep countryside of Gran Canaria. He designed and illustrated one of my first books “*La Fiesta*”, produced in a period of euphoria. In 1986, he collaborated in the book, *Rare Complete Guidebooks to areas and inhabitants of Spain: El Hierro* (“*Guías raras y completas de territorios y habitantes de España. El Hierro*”) produced by the Madrid architect, Roberto Godoy, a kind of anthropological field study in classic Lévi Strauss style of that strange island but seen through structuralist eyes. In 1987, Crujera participated in the organisation of a gigantic Music Forum, the “*Parque de la Música*” led by the now-deceased architect José M. Aceytuno and the musician, José Carlos Suárez. In 1990, he began working on high-fire pottery with the potter Antonio Báez, and created his series known as *Solar Work* “*Obra Solar*”, where he

spent a long time working on clay, soil and ceramics, inspired by the surroundings of the gully of the Cenobio de Valerón, haunt of the native spirits of the past.

In short, Alfonso Crujera has explored everything explorable, in Nature and its functioning, and attempts to incorporate into his world everything from the roots, the soil and its inhabitants through the bees and clay to myths and anthropology. He slips outside political problems and inserts himself within the broader universe of “φύση”.

All artists defend their artistic privacy as an individual right and defend their public image as a legitimate part of the social order. The more the artist acquires a social presence, the more s/he becomes removed from his or her individual biography and the more his or her work becomes influenced by the social reality. Crujera has always walked that tightrope. He has been flogged for the same by many critics, some of whom were mere parrots of the politically correct, in other words, mocking-birds.

This much can be said: Alfonso has held a plethora of exhibitions, almost an unending stream and at times when paintings as such were considered respectable and there was a whole wealth of symbols which people observed with admiration as if awaiting a message. The exhibition of the work of an artist is not an exhibition of the act of creation but rather an exhibit of the product of that act. That is the metaphor that can be used to describe the life and work of Alfonso Crujera. He scours his inner self and its meaning, producing a message that falls like a stone cast into the lake, creating ripples and those ripples emanate and invade the world to a greater or lesser extent before disappearing.

Art exhibits other ethical-aesthetic problems, like the beauty of a nuclear "mushroom" explosion, or bullfighting and cockfighting and the distance that art creates for the spectator to re-view his world introduces certain relativism into its comprehension. But this very contradiction is what Alfonso Crujera explores when he distances himself from the political world as the only possible subject and looks at the real world in all its scope, anthropologically and ecologically, that is, naturally.

If we wiped out everything we know and the historical references behind each painting, "*Tabula rasa*" and attempted to view an artist's art stripped of all trappings no matter how difficult the endeavour might be, would we ask if the artwork in question can be classified by style or whether it is an intellectual, methodical, reflexive act that can be tracked back to the moment in which it was produced in the studio, and if so why? Why take it back to the studio and not to another moment outside that time? Artists back in the Eighties and Nineties were a respectable guild of workers with no computers and the most artificial substances present in their studios were the chemical ingredients of their paints and acrylics, the smell of the carpenter's sandpaper and the scissors and other tools used to offer alternative surfaces to the paper. And an artist could spend weeks and months, almost like a hermit, tucked away in his or her studio.

Let us argue that if art is an academic subject, then it should be compared to sport and so, like sport, can only be compared and contrasted when made public, as in the Olympic Games. For much that a Bantu warrior in the jungle throws his lance much further than an athlete, if this is done without an audience, his skills will go unacknowledged. This is the social dimension that produces a somewhat ascetic confrontation of the artist with the world. It was possible then and Crujera occupied that space.

Without said confrontation of opposite poles, as in electricity, the objective, the atmosphere, the conceptual level and the utility of art would not have been so vivid as it was at that time. It is the period of "*by opposing Franco, we live a fuller life*" that took the generation of the Seventies of writers, artists and philosophers completely by surprise. The Dark Ages imposed by the dictatorial regime provoked, like the principle of Archimedes, the completely opposite historical reaction most manifestly in all forms of art. Art uses symbols and when things cannot be said openly, symbols produce rich communication and throw light on what appears to be a dark and deep impenetrable sea, but that is in fact teeming with life, as opposed to the parched desert completely inundated with light that, contradictorily, is barren and sterile, suffocating all living things and empty of contents. Political repression produces symbols that are more instrumental in the revolution than other more complicated discourse, symbols that become mere embellishments in a context of freedom of expression, however, hence the importance of vanguard movements in totalitarian states.

In short, we have seen the following reasons why art and philosophy sunk into the deflated morass they did at the end of the 20th century in Western society: 1) there was a fall of totalitarian regimes to such an extent that dictators and dictatorship were persecuted on an international scale; 2) there was a parallel rise of democratic movements bringing an end to colonialism in the existing empires and giving vent to an ideological freedom such that convicted terrorists could form part of democratic governments, in other words, meaning that any message, no matter how powerful, lacked any kind of revolutionary value; 3) there was an exponential growth of social media and communication channels annulling all attitudes of protest as pronounced by intellectuals, since intellectuals have by nature protested through manifestos and manifestos are no longer functional and 4) consumption and the power of money took over art and philosophy, the true pandemic in our present society and the root cause of all social protests.

Alfonso Crujera has lived with these contradictions through most of his professional life as an artist. He has lived through the period when paintings stepped outside the frame and became expressive installations or took the shape of photos through to the period of excess where art is a mere representation of material status and value, without any soul and to the excretion of art, archetypical of our times.

THE SECOND PSYCHO-ACTIVE STAGE OF ALFONSO CRUJERA, THE ARTIST

When art obstinately persisted in opposing consumption, resisted becoming a tool, flying in the face of τεχνή, Crujera experienced intensely, on a personal and artistic level, the world of psycho-activity.

I remember doing my military service in 1976 and being transferred to Hoya Fría in Tenerife, where I was to acquire the fundamentals of military know-how. Hoya Fría was next door to La Laguna, the University city where the vanguard were experimenting all types of psycho-active drugs. Artists, students and general rebel-rousers got together in students' houses or in places like *Mamuth* to experiment. I was undergoing the last of the obligatory disciplinary military service the year before Franco's death but sometimes managed to escape to some of these strange encounters where the Zaya twins held court, the ultimate ambassadors of all vanguard movements and psychadelia imported from the other side of the Atlantic where "tripping" was a dire necessity to escape the horrors of the Vietnam war. On one of Alfonso Crujera's trips to Tenerife, I remember, he gave me Carlos Castaneda's "*Las Enseñanzas de Don Juan*", a text from 1968 that recounted Carlos Castaneda's incursions into the world of psychadelia thanks to a Yaqui witch-doctor, some nine years previous. It was at the time of the first encounters between East-West, above all along the West coast of America and in the main cities of Europe: a time when the Chinese were expelling the Tibetans from their territory, the Communists were fiercely cruel and fought among themselves and at the same time with the capitalists, and dictators submitted whole populations to their whims. In the midst of all this darkness, psychadelia, LSD and the rest of the non-synthetic drugs allowed people to escape to worlds of alchemy of impressive versatility. If it had not been for the drug products of plants such as cannabis, magic mushrooms, jimson weed, mescaline and lysergic acid (the active principle in LSD), art and its expressive forms would have been completely different, would have been something else. Because we are talking here about products that are not merely hedonistic but are rather psychoactive, taking their adept into other worlds. People soon saw how Nature was not only perceived in the sense that had been drummed into us by Society but in all of its multiple, infinite dimensions.

Let us consider for a moment that logic, as we understand it in the Western world, as the capacity for reason, is to be called "*tonal*", a pre-Columbian term that we will strip of all meaning as conceived in ethnological literature and that we will interpret as "reason" in the broadest sense of the word. And that "*nagual*" another term describing something incapable of being described will cover everything irrational and everything outside the rational: everything that is not "reason". Then let us revisit the following explanation of Carlos Castaneda's: "El tonal, that is Reason, is the guardian of something extremely valuable, our notion of ourselves... to such an extent is this so that in the long run the guardian becomes, for each and every one of us, not so much a guardian as a guard... a guardian is magnanimous and understanding. A guard, however, is an intolerant watchman, a despot... No matter how astute the guardian "*tonal*", the guard "*nagual*" will always bubble to the surface. And it bubbles inadvertently. The master skill of the guardian, "*tonal*" or Reason is to suppress all visible manifestations of the "*nagual*" (the irrational beyond reason) to such an extent that no matter how obvious it may be, it escapes

our notice." (Carlos Castañeda, *Relatos de Poder*, 1974). The Western world is a bastard “*tonal*” that has become a guard and so must be attacked to allow the other half of the world to be free.

When Kant, one of the keenest minds in the Western world, asked in his "Critique of Practical Reason" what can I truly know, what should I do, what can I hope for, and what is a Man, he used raw reflection and thought to answer. In the Western world, this is considered to be the most complete way to answer any question when, in fact, it is highly primitive, not to say rudimentary.

Art is not about producing mere objects, empty vessels. And artistic objects cannot be filled with rational meaning. They are filled with magic, with supernatural powers. True art is about going beyond the limits of possibility. If it does not, then it is logical art, reasoned art, that is Western art. And we can go beyond the limits of possibility. In fact, that is precisely the mission of any true artist. And the next stage in art when constructing an object is precisely not to do anything specific. Not to do anything specific is to go beyond what is possible. Not to do anything specific is to divorce oneself from the logic of art and so to break away from the logic of human existence. To do nothing does not mean that the artist has run out of alternative roads to travel (as Duchamp and other historic vanguard movements proved in the past) but rather is designed at dynamiting the Pandora's box of the other half of the world, of reason, and deflating its exaggerated control over Western society and history. It is perhaps no madness to suggest that art in its most supreme form is to do nothing much in the same way as the human being is more alert to his/her human state when they go beyond gastronomy into the unknown terrain of fasting.

Alfonso Crujera managed to do just that from the 70s to the 80s. He explored that world beyond and left an enormous amount of work, most of which has been lost. And then he returned to the fold, became more sociable again and entered into his ecological and proto-natural period. However, in his series, *Altars "Aras"* (1982-1986) as in all his exhibitions dating from the Eighties, there are traces of these worlds beyond, worlds that fascinated both him and myself. I then discovered Carlos Castañeda and continued to explore these worlds with him. Crujera, on the other hand, plunged into Nature and the need to respect and protect it, long before others talked about climate change and the need to defend the planet from unscrupulous human beings, long before the rundown *customised* version represented by Greta Thunberg and her cohort of politically correct *zombies* came onstage.

THE ECOLOGICAL STAGE OF ALFONSO CRUJERA

In the transitional period between psycho-active exploration and ecological defence (understood in a vital and not a political sense) Alfonso Crujera began to work with humanised objects, objects created by human beings to intervene in Nature, given form in the stage *"Tools"* (original name in English, 1989). I do not mean by this a utopian interpretation of bucolic harmony with Nature devoid of all technical innovation but rather that Crujera contemplated the Heidegger enigma of

human beings' complicated relationship with Nature. We are talking the end of the 20th century.

The exhibition "Tools" led us to have an interview where I asked him: "Tools, that is "herramientas" in Spanish, so we're talking about instruments. This is one of the themes that you have been working on lately. There is no greater symbol of utility than a tool. So, are we to suppose you are making a homage to everything that is useful, as opposed to useless, in art?" And Crujera answered: "Art is generally useless, except to those people who are interested in critical thought. But if as I feel you are, you are insinuating some kind of treachery in the object of my artistic proposal, I should indicate that my intention is to warn people, to make them see how tools occupy most of human life".

The dialogue continued in the following manner: "Am I then to understand that you are not broaching the subject in a critical manner but rather merely assuming and displaying events? Does that mean you're a kind of artistic photographer of the medium and you exhibit your photographs? My interpretation of your artistic career and production places you rather in an attitude divorced from Western canons, of exploration of the inner rather than the outer world, and therefore as having relegated the utility of art." Crujera replied: "If I were to adopt the attitude you have outlined with any degree of rigour, I would not paint. I would stop painting." And so I asked again, "So are we saying that your attitude is like that of the monk who spends his time in contemplation of the intangible but also devotes part of his existence to obtaining food to eat and building tools to help him survive? Or have you gone beyond that and, convinced that to live like a monk is a mistake, a Utopia, to live in a dream world, you have returned to the community?" Crujera answered, "I am aware that now I see something I did not see before and I communicate it. It is true that we can see a society that has destroyed itself in the name of utility, of tools, of high-tech, but that is not the problem I am spotlighting. I am looking at things more positively. High-tech can be destructive but it can also be constructive. I am looking at how it has scaled up progressively to work with our cultural development and be a tool for the same".

Later Crujera as good as confessed his artistic plan: "I've not abandoned Oriental concepts but rather the process now is somewhat more complex. A long time back I began with works that I called *Desde el hombre para el hombre* then and that were social in their content. Then my painting became more introspective, fruit of my awakening, so to speak, to Oriental values. However, I'm still living in the Western hemisphere and what's more I like it fine. But the period of introspection lasted several years when I lived on the East of the island of Gran Canaria. Then I went to live in the mountains for about four years and I started work on geometric forms that were markedly Western. And now, finally, I've moved to the West of the Island and begun a period of more integral contemplation of Western experience, not looking at it only from the West, nor only from the East but bringing a richer and more integrated vision to my interpretation of the world. I feel that the accumulative process is totally enriching".

“Strand”, “Anastomosis” and other works from the Nineties came about as the result of this integrating and balanced ecological view of the world. Alfonso Crujera began to observe the sheer might of human development, materialised in technology produced by logic that allowed human senses to extend almost infinitely and explore the world through techno-tools. The development of technology allowed it to be applied to leisure, to disorganised patterns of consumption and thus to climate crisis, where we find ourselves now. So high-tech mixed with bucolics and the basics of conservation of Nature, of ecology, with a pinch of romantic pursuit of the Holy Grail became the party political programme of the Eighties and the Nineties where the solutions to recycling and avoiding further pollution were seen to be exclusively material. In other words, everything boiled down to environmental management.

Although apparently not directly related to the subject in hand, at the end of the 20th century, Antonio Pérez who was a lecturer in Philosophy at the University of La Laguna, on the occasion of the second series of lectures given within the cycle on the subject of "*Crisis de Valores en las puertas del próximo milenio*", (The Crisis of Values at the end of this Millennium) held in El Ateneo, talked of the need to structure the bases of Ecological Philosophy, as important in his view as Moral Philosophy was seen by Kant for the enlightenment of Humankind. It seems pertinent to talk about this here. The conference was later published in the second Cuaderno de Humanidades journal published by El Ateneo that run under the generic title of "*Política y Modernidad*" (Politics and Modern Life). Pérez showed how Hans Jonas, in his work "*El Principio de la Responsabilidad*" (The Principle of Responsibility) had affirmed that respect for Nature should be demanded as a necessity and supported with reasons. The basic imperative for which justification should be sought should be formulated, according to Antonio Pérez along the following lines: "Act in such a way as to ensure there is a world to live in and people living in it".

The expression of this imperative is what has inspired the last two decades of Alfonso Crujera's work in the 21st century, in line with his social concerns and his interest in preserving a habitat he feels is being destroyed by its inhabitants. In these times of Transhumanism, there is much to be said but Crujera, like any true artist interpreting his time, has withdrawn from the public scene to perfect an ecological method of engraving that has made him famous worldwide, although he remains permanently alert to his ecological concerns and to how we shape our world.

Time changes people and things. Now the title of Crujera's first exhibition, from Man for Man “Desde el hombre para el hombre” would be politically incorrect. The psychoactive explorations of Crujera in the Seventies are now seen as a played-out part of the Beat Generation. Respectful observation of human tools, as made manifest by Crujera in the Nineties, has now been supplanted by Transhumanism and Heidegger has fallen into disrespect for not having been able to see how the problem of technique would become the technique of the problem. All things must pass, πάντα ρέει. The next thing we know, Greta Thunberg will be blocking an

aesthetic view of care for the Φύση, such as Crujera's and supplanting it with politically biased posters, more cynical in expression than the very capitalists she considers responsible for everything. So what will be left for us? Art in all its shapes and colours, as food for our souls: but an art capable of translating human experience on the verge of being abducted by transhumanism into symbols. And that will be the work of true artists like Alfonso Crujera.