

Miguel Angel Barba

ALBA AÑIL

December 3, 2020 - January 30, 2021

How would a bricklayer paint?

A bricklayer prepares a canvas to be then used by another painter as an easel. To do this, he primes a canvas white and then makes a grid in which to place the images. In a way, this is what my works consist of, since they are in themselves that preparation, that construction, that container without content that is sufficient on its own.

I build with plaster and indigo using a trowel and I note down measurements with a carpenter's pencil on the fabric of cement sacks. The paint soaks through the canvas to the other side, it drips and stains the floor, creating constellations. It takes in random and unpredictable washes. Here and there, reference points and measurement marks on the raw canvas appear. Basic and orthodox elements of traditional painting such as the canvas and its priming are mixed with those of a bricklayer with trowel, plaster and indigo marker.

When a future house is under construction, you can see all those strata which will later be hidden by the last coat of paint applied to give the home colour. Among grids, beams, corners, ceramic squares, floor tiles and recesses, I situate myself to configure these paintings which are presented as austere, dry, without ornaments or anecdotes, just essential and basic, wanting to find the beauty in what holds and supports us secretly and in silence.

My painting is measured with the eyes of a home builder who will later hand it over to its owner and say: "Here you have it, take it, it's yours. Use it, enjoy it, and live in it".

Miguel Ángel Barba, 2020.

*Translator's note: The exhibition title **ALBA AÑIL** is a play on the words **albañil** (builder or bricklayer), **alba** (dawn) and **añil** (indigo)*