

# La articulación de las Contradicciones. Chromatic Affections Carolina Guillermet D. (Acrylic on canvas, 195 x 145 cms., 2019)

By George García Quesada

Carolina Guillermet's most recent exposition featured a series of works under the name and concept of *The Articulation of Contradictions*, one of which we reproduce in our current front cover. At a first glance, the image reminds us of the geometrical compositions of the Bauhaus and Piet Mondrian; however, a closer examination reveals a unique diversity of playful forms and soft colours. Except for a handful of triangles, most forms in the picture are four-sided, nonetheless differing in varying degrees from the regularity of squares or rectangles. Some edges are slightly tilted; others frankly break the horizontal and vertical axes.

This variety of angles in strictly linear shapes matches with a palette that displays a spectre of tonalities. *La Articulación de las Contradicciones. Chromatic Affections* is thus a work of nuisance, of small differences. Kandinsky once famously affirmed that in modern times "our harmony consists of contrasts and contradictions"; Guillermet's work differs from this by constructing her conception of contradiction through smooth transitions rather than through strong contrasts.

It is perhaps in the overlaps between the forms where we can more clearly find this contradiction, as the forms struggle with their neighbours for the space of the canvas. The juxtaposition of irregular forms thus not only suggests depth, but even motion. Instead of a rigid order, we find an array of seemingly contingently ordered shapes. We find complexity in abstraction, and complexity in contradiction.

Even though the artist relates this work –as well as the rest of her exposition– to the emotions aroused by subjective and inter-subjective experiences, we could hardly have found a more fitting concept for an issue with a prominent dossier on Louis Althusser as a contemporary philosopher. Reemerging from long decades of oblivion, the recent readings of his work have emphasised the role of the aleatory and the disjointed, especially through his concept of the *décalage*. This line of interpretation closely relates Althusser's philosophy with Foucault's and Derrida's, and puts a distance between him and classical structuralism.

Althusser's *décalage*, as the articles in this issue indicate, is a concept developed by this author in order to explain historical time. Since Marx's materialism is, according to this philosopher, founded on contingency rather than on teleology or historical necessity, his conception of history does not follow a single direction. Hence, there cannot be a single periodisation for history as a whole, and a plurality of social dynamics must coexist within such a disjointed historical complexity. The first dossier in this issue may thus help the reader to engage in the discussion of this and other Althusserian concepts.

It is also quite fitting for our current issue to have this dossier on Althusser juxtaposed with another one about Wittgenstein's philosophy of language. Such a *meeting* of two different philosophical discourses configures another *décalage*, another articulation of contradictions such as that present in Guillermet's suggestive work.