

Camí-pintura (Painting Road), Artur Heras (2004)
acrylic and oil on canvas, 159 x 120 cm
(private collection, Perpignan)



transfer

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE // 2007

02

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Susanna Rafart

Vicent Alonso, 2005, *Trajecte circular*
(Round Trip), Alzira, Bromera, 344 pp.

After *Les paraules i els dies* (Of Words and Days, 2002), a compilation of newspaper articles, Vicent Alonso has presented a diary that could be introduced with the quotation Feliu Formosa used to preface his latest poetry anthology: “Observe? Remember? Find a point someone in between”. Writing involves a succession of moments that bring emotional and intellectual experiences into focus. It lies between annotation and lyrical text and renders words part of the real world. Without renouncing historical coincidence, political views, and cultural considerations, the work accepts that life is an endless circle and makes reflections for every season of the year. The book does not end in Summer but instead begins again with Winter in a journey without end. After all, a diary involves placing oneself before circumstances and accepting what happens. Writing poetry requires the same intermediate point. That is why it is interesting for readers to read the two books that Alonso wrote in parallel, the diary and his volume of prose poems: *Del clam de Jasó* (Jason’s Complaint). This approach sheds valuable light on the creative process. It is also interesting to note that texts such as *Un petit plaer* (A Trifling Pleasure)

are to be found on a diary page and not in the anthology. Perhaps it is an attempt to establish a distance between the poet's voice, self-confidence, language, and the text itself. For a poet, variation or versions of the same theme are not insubstantial repetitions but rather approaches to recall and hence facets that provide a broader understanding of the world, enriching the reading experience.

The subsequent pages follow this circular trajectory, creating a dialogue with both our daily worries and those of greater concern. Life's cares make us forget these acts, gestures, and readings but the writer tries to salvage them in an attempt to stretch time and kindle desire.

From another perspective, understanding reality requires time. However, this is hard because each event needs to be deconstructed to grasp its true nature. A diary allows this process. Vicent Alonso proposes some terms in his pages that are often discarded only to be taken up later in another context. Recalling Montaigne's "*Je le prens en ce point, comme il est, en l'instant que je m'amuse à luy*" (I take it as it is at the instant I consider of it), the voice of *Trajecte circular* interposes itself between events and their representation without resorting to dissimulation. The writer allows the reader to see his imperfections and moods as he tries to surmount hurdles. In so doing, we are given an insight into the human condition: "When all is said and done, you are yourself to the extent that others give signs of life," writes Alonso.

Observation of the world leads us to the highest poetic experience, encompassing reflection on the usefulness of literature or being privy to the comings and goings of a poet who takes delight in the reek of wood smoke from the chimneys of his native village. They are subtle touches that grab the reader's attention throughout the book. Some of the pages are master classes in the writer's art: *Turons com elefants blancs* (Hills Like White Elephants); *Els trucs de la intimitat* (Intimacy's Tricks) and *Efectes col·laterals* (Collateral Damage). Others reveal various shades of scepticism, whilst others are more personal. The thematic variation is linked to the whole. The fragmentation is intentional but very carefully crafted in order to measure each slight change in the broader themes: art as the route to knowledge; acceptance of the human soul for what it is; the value of reading. The pages defend everything from syllabic schemes to landscape because they serve to conceal the shortness of man's span. One of the texts that makes the greatest impact is *Vida i opinions de Tristram Shandy* (Tristram Shandy's Life and Views) because only digression based on memory and observation helps free us from the shackles of our own lives II

