

VÍTOR MEJUTO.

BREU HISTÒRIA MANUAL

05.10.25 - 02.03.26
MOLÍ D'EN FRARET.
ETHNOGRAPHIC
SECTION OF THE
MUSEU D'HISTÒRIA
DE MANACOR

Curated by:

—Eva Cifre



Vítor Mejuto. Research process at the Molí d'en Fraret. Ethnographic section of the Museu d'Història de Manacor.
Fotografia: © Es Baluard Museu (Carmen Verdú)

Vítor Mejuto's "Breu història manual" project, presented as part of Biennal B, establishes a dialogue between his pictorial practice and a selection of objects and tools from the Molí d'en Fraret collection, housed in the ethnographic section of the Museu d'Història de Manacor. These objects provide insight into the domestic tasks and agricultural work carried out in pre-tourism Mallorca during the first half of the 20th century, before the island's economic model was transformed by the tourism boom of the 1960s.

Mejuto's artistic practice is characterised by geometric and symbolic abstraction. Throughout his career, he has sought to solve a simple equation: combining ingenuity of form with precision of colour. Initially, his forms were purely abstract, consisting of meticulous developments of series of shapes. In his recent work, however, he incorporates external stimuli, introducing elements of figuration in an attempt to capture their essence after eliminating anything superfluous. His pictorial work focuses on elements of culture, tradition, architecture and craftsmanship. For this exhibition, Mejuto has observed and painted the everyday objects on display at the Molí d'en Fraret.

"Breu història manual" ties in with the line of research the artist has been developing for some time now, as seen in projects such as "La siega" (2022) and "Artanenc" (2022). In these projects, he focuses on objects and elements that connect us to history and tradition. Details that might otherwise go unnoticed suddenly take centre stage, becoming symbols of the harvesting work and tools used in Galicia, as well as elements, places and characters from Mallorcan popular culture in the case of "Artanenc".

"When I take on a project of this kind, I always approach it based on my own understanding of painting. Sometimes I take a very literal approach and stay close to the subject, while at other times the result is less eloquent and more abstract. There is always one aspect of the subject that acts as a gateway to the painting, as the catalyst. This is not necessarily the most significant or important part. I don't need to understand everything I want to paint; capturing its essence is enough."

Just as Mejuto breaks down objects to capture their essence in his paintings, if we break down the word *manual*, we find the Spanish word *mano* (hand). Manual refers to anything done using one's hands. The objects on display at the Molí d'en Fraret have been handled manually. They exist because people used them as small prostheses or artificial extensions needed to perform a specific task. They bear the marks of wear and tear from fingers, taking us from the manual treatment of objects to the traces left on them by the people who used them, and therefore the life stories they accumulate and preserve. As Mejuto himself says, "Painting these objects is like painting these people and the lives they lived." The term *manual* can also refer to a book that provides essential information on a specific topic and allows for quick and easy reference. Thus, this exhibition also serves as a visual compendium and manual, collecting and highlighting the memory and tradition of long-lost practices through the objects used, which have now become symbols in Vítor Mejuto's paintings.

The catalyst for "Breu història manual" was a visit to the Molí d'en Fraret. There, the artist shared impressions, knowledge and anecdotes with Nena, Catalina, Sebastià and Jaume about domestic chores such as spinning, ironing and making noodles, as well as farming-related tasks, and also spoke about the objects and utensils used for these activities. The objects in the Molí d'en Fraret are linked to specific tasks, which are in turn linked to specific life stories, and our hosts generously shared these stories with us.

During the chronologically organised tour of the ethnographic pieces on display at Molí d'en Fraret, small-format paintings by Vítor Mejuto are interspersed throughout. Rather than detracting from the objects, these paintings give them value and new meanings. This creates a dialogue between tradition and art, connecting the memory of our ancestors with future generations.

This Biennal B exhibition is part of the "Unique Forms" project and is complemented by an educational programme, produced by Es Baluard Museu's Education Department (Eva Cifre and Maria Verdejo) and designed in collaboration with Vítor Mejuto and Magdalena Salas, director of the Museu d'Història de Manacor. Young participants will learn about the artist's creative process and the life stories of the selected objects first-hand, while also having the opportunity to develop their creativity and carry out intergenerational work as part of their studies into the agricultural and domestic heritage and local customs and traditions of their area.

Vítor Mejuto (Barcelona, 1969) is a painter and photographer currently working as art director director at *La Voz de Galicia*. Having studied in the Fine Arts Department at the University of Salamanca in the late 1980s, his artistic practice is essentially pictorial. His most notable exhibition projects include "Pintor en la Corte" (Formatocomodo Gallery, Madrid, 2018), "O livro das Palmeiras" (Fernando Santos Gallery, Porto, 2018), "Torreón de tramoya" (Centro Párraga, Murcia, 2020), "Artanenc" (Igallery, Palma, Mallorca, 2022), "Un viaje extraordinario" (Centrocentro, Madrid, 2023) and "Vida y Milagros" (Espacio Valverde, Madrid, 2024).

Also worth mentioning is his recent residency at the Projeto Fidalga Residência in São Paulo, resulting in the "Copo Americano" exhibition, and his *Quadern d'Artà* project, a public space intervention in Artà, Mallorca.

LIST OF WORKS:

Aspi / Arada romana de fusta / Arada de tres solcs / Planxa / Debanadora / Beaces / Cuixals / Manegots / Didals o canons / Llatra / Carretó de batre / Raspallador / Barcella / Gatzoll o dall/ Cavall de fotmatjar / Fogó de tres peus / Forcat o escala (braços d'arada) / Càvec / L'erer / Forca.

All the works (acrylic on canvas, 40 x 32 cm) were created in 2025 specifically for the "Breu història manual" project.

BIENNAL B is an initiative promoted by Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma and the Consell de Mallorca, with the support of numerous institutions, agents and collectives of the island.

BIENNAL B highlights the cultural richness of the island of Mallorca and the Balearic archipelago with art as a tool.

BIENNAL B is a transversal, inclusive and non-seasonal project, born with the ambition to shape a creative ecosystem capable of integrating contemporary artistic practices with crafts and trades for the sustainable transformation of the Balearic territory.

BIENNAL B will activate ecological and cultural connectivity actions, a series of interdisciplinary creative projects and an international congress on art, culture and science.

PROJECT: Biennal B. Unique Forms

TITLE: «Vítor Mejuto. Breu història manual»

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CURATORSHIP: Eva Cifre

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