

# Ink reveries: Oscar Domínguez and the decalcomanie of desire

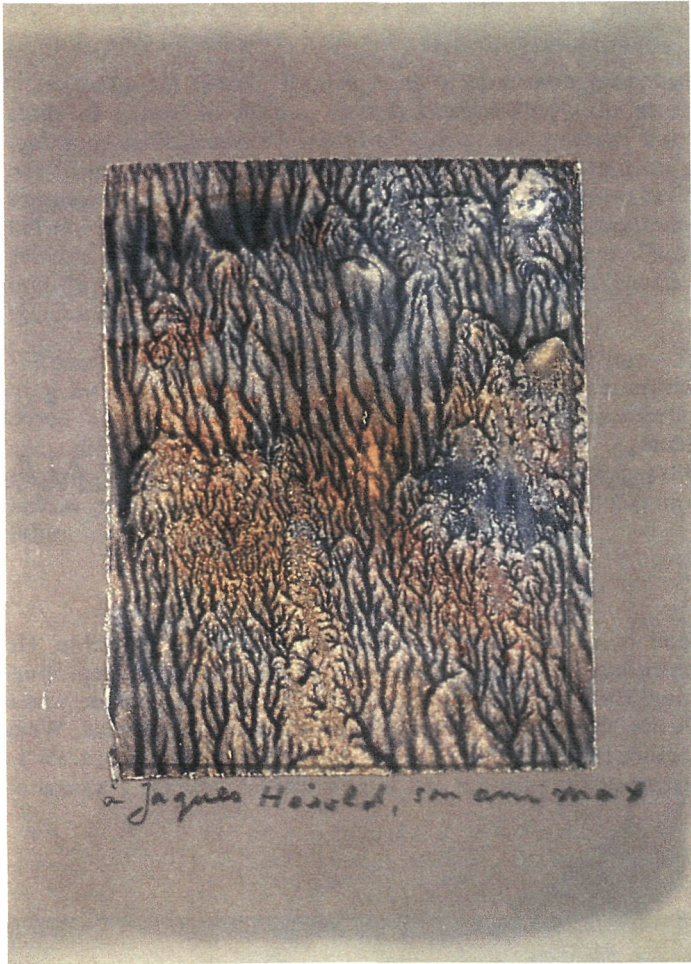
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The boundaries and the limits of this exhibition are defined by a comprehensive title: *Reveries of ink*. They are, really, dreams that stem from within, as Baudelaire might have said: “les beaux rêves de pierre”. A programmatic title that aims to establish who the great intercessors of the past were. In 1934, the same year that he made contact with the surrealist group, the canarian painter Oscar Domínguez inaugurates his new technique called, “decalcomanie without object”, or, “decalcomanie of desire”, on the front cover of a book by Eduardo Westerdahl published by *Gaceta de Arte*.

Obtained by pressure of one piece of paper on another, the ink, watercolour or gouache stains turn into fabulous landscapes, of an extraordinary diversity, resembling coral, rocks, lava flows, conglomerations swept along by torrential rains. In itself, it's a purely mechanical process that brilliantly synthesizes one of the great challenges of contemporary artistic thought: art, artistic event as chance happening. And it is, because the artist, among other reasons, can perceive in it the possibility of giving a more spontaneous appearance, a more natural allure to the artistic act; the artist believes in it because he tires of his role as conscious demiurge.

Here we recognize a very general experience, that of the fascination that on our vision can exert an irregular series of materials and colours, where, to begin with, we can imagine the shape of a figure. In this, our contemplation is compa-

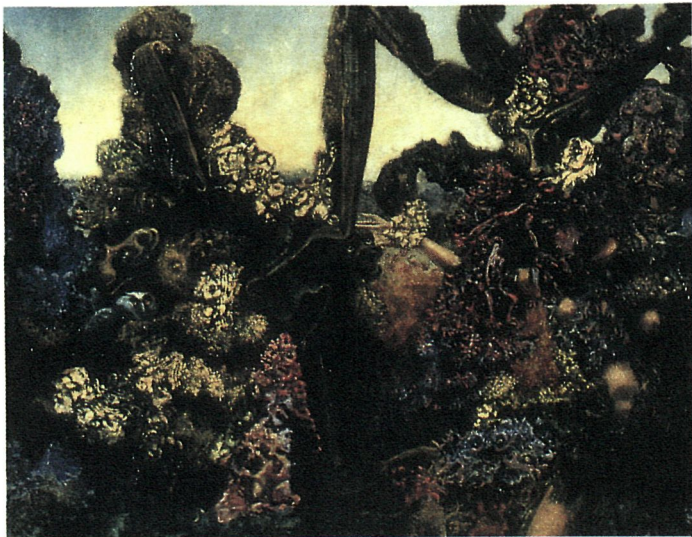
table to a clear line drawn on a chaotic backdrop. Avoiding the threat of indefiniton, how could the painter give form to an intelligible image? Frequently, the *decalcomanies of desire* have been considered Oscar Domínguez's contribution to surrealism. Enthusiasm took hold of the group. All of its members sensed they faced one of those discoveries that marked the history of the movement since its beginnings: automatic writing, collage, the exquisite corpse. There's a further variant, “decalcomanie with premeditated interpretation”, projected in the images that Domínguez created together with Marcel Jean for the album they called *Grisou*, that remained unpublished and whose plates are presented in this exhibition for the first time. Later, Max Ernst exploited and enriched these techniques, applying them to oils and producing, using this process, some of the most important works of his so-called “american period”. And there were more artists seduced by the unexpected wonders revealed by these “ink rêveries”, in particular, Hans Bellmer, Salvador Dalí, Georges Hugnet, Yves Tanguy, Roland Penrose, Shuzo Takiguchi, Remedios Varo. Through their often little known work the exhibition shows us some singular worlds, gestures more or less tragic or tender, sometimes comic. In other words, due to its characteristics and mobility, to its internal dynamism and to the wide range of the imaginary variations that it is prone to, decalcomanie not only has enjoyed influence, impact and artistic fame. It has produced the very stuff of dream.



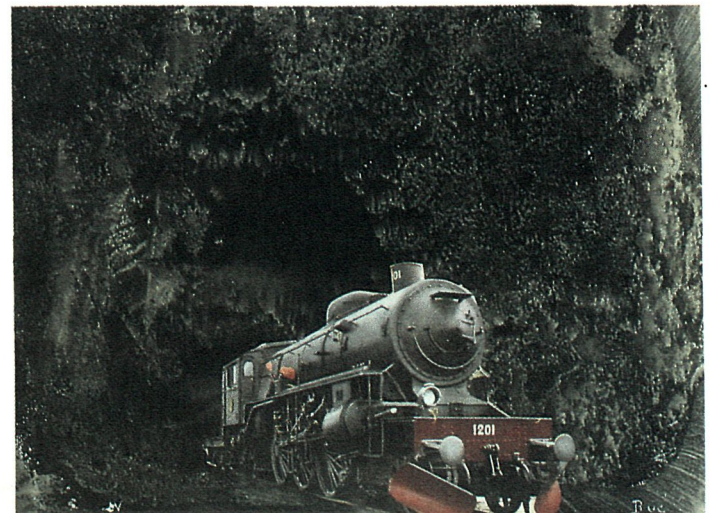
Max Ernst. Serie Microbes. 6×5 cms. Gouache sobre papel. Col. Part. Foto: Gerard Braida.



Modest Cuixart. Fando et lis, 1964. 31×24 cms. Tinta y collage sobre papel. Col. Xavier Amir.



Max Ernst. Bosque de Arizona. 32×40 cms. Oleo sobre lienzo. Col. Priv. Foto: Levon.



Max Buaille. La locomotiv Insurgée. 1950. 15×19,5 cms. Decalcomanía y collage. Galerie 1900-2000. Paris. Foto: Marcel Lannoy.