

BLACKBOARD AND CHALK

Writing or drawing on a blackboard with coloured chalks was, some time ago, the best way to explain the organization models of animals in the Zoology classes in all the biology faculties of the various European Universities. This practice constituted an entire tradition that even developed into a style of its own, charged with artistic value due to its simplification and colour harmony. This exhibition seeks to pay homage to those times, now displaced by the inclusion in teaching of technology in the visual field, with the use of electronic screens and digital projectors which, in our opinion, makes the transmission of information easier, but which can hinder learning. Amid controversy over the use of computer media in education, a pause is necessary to reflect on whether technology, in addition to transforming the way content is taught and the way we learn, is also changing the way we think.

University students who come to the exhibition will be able to see, in the 10 works on display, examples of how, by the end of the class, the blackboards looked with explanations supported using coloured chalk. The traces of the rags or felts used, corrections, underlining, etc. can be seen on the slate texture of the canvases. However, the artistic conception is present in the special care taken in the composition, balance and chromatic palette.

Ten unframed acrylics on canvas are exhibited, accompanied by models and murals from the MHN's Collection of plates and classic models, purchased from Les files d'Emile Deyrolle 46, rue du Bac, Paris, in the early years of the 20th century, coinciding with the establishment of the Natural History Museum in the University of Santiago teaching activities.

THE ARTIST

Fernando Cobo Gradín holds a PhD in Biology and is a professor at the University of Santiago de Compostela. He has an abundant body of work focused on photography and scientific drawing, and as an illustrator of popular publications on the natural environment related to his work as a teacher and researcher. Within a family tradition of vocation for the visual arts, at an early age he started painting with his father and the Santiago native painter Celso López Octavio. His work encompasses both figurativism and abstraction using a variety of techniques, although he has mainly specialised in oil painting, a way in which his style as a landscape painter draws on the influence of American tonalism and the Barbizon school. When he changes motifs, his brushstrokes became looser and the colour is handled more boldly. In abstraction the composition is solid and dynamic, with a geometrical drawing close to rational conception as an act of imagination. In sculpture he has made mycological models for exhibitions in natural science museums (Ibi Biodiversity Museum and USC Natural Science Museum). He belongs to the group Galeoska (Galicians with Art) and has participated in numerous collective and individual exhibitions.