

## **L'animisme**

### *An artistic ontology*

Art has, for too long a time, been defined according to the monolithic vision of the West and their Greek canon. The hidden reality that was stated was simple: out of Europe, there is no art. It took the twentieth and its loads of experimentations that would end by calling that bluff called “art history” to acknowledge the simple fact that art has no borders. The oversimplification that led to constructing the notion of otherness was challenged by the gaze of artists like Picasso. But in his visual analysis of the African sculptures and masks, the Spanish artist did not take into account the spiritual content of the object he was attracted by.

In the work of Pramodbabu Ramteke I have retrieved this key element that is spirituality; spirituality free for all worship; spirituality concentrated on the human. His aesthetic is direct, liberated from any consideration that would not put the human condition at the centre. In Works like *In search of love*, he creates a cosmogony of feelings and sensations that do not need any elaborated translation to speak directly to minds. Like Kant once wrote, beauty does not need concepts to exist. In *The unexplored tendencies*, the artist uses a female profile and operates as a brain surgeon who would be able to enter our heads. Once again, no psychoanalysis is convoked. We are directly confronted with what the French psychologist Henri Delacroix named the world of sensations, in his definition of language: language is the tool that allows us to transform the chaotic world of sensations into forms and representations”.

In *Endless emotions*, we are invited into the very heart of that world that Ramteke has been exploring through paintings, serigraphy and Platography. There is something mineral in these works where I can sense a three dimensional that is rendered through an impeccable technique. I have immediately thought of the word animism, not in the conventional way it is used, but in the definition given by Irving Hallowell and Philippe Descola. If animism is indeed a way to deal with leaving, it is also, and foremost an ontology, that field of philosophy which is busy exploring the very meaning of the word “being”. One could say in that sense, Ramteke is a fine “ontologist” trying to find an answer to a question humanity has always been struggling with: What is being?

That question resounds with strange echoes that open doors to what the German philosopher Ernst Bloch named the essential question: the question of the “we”.

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Untitled | Platonograph | 16" x 16" | 2019