

## **Carmelo Fontanez: Sensory perception and awareness of the environment**

**José David Miranda, curator**

Carmelo Fontánez is one of the contemporary artists most committed to the exploration of Puerto Rican nature, not as an exercise in imitating a prescribed reality, but as a practice that allows him to visually render the impressions evoked by his sensory stimuli. Fontánez seeks to create artistic possibilities capable of transcending nature's external morphology of and of transmitting complex emotions and intangible concepts with profundity. The artist does not want to paint or draw the landscape; he wishes to express feelings.

This principle is evident throughout his work, which is why, when he paints the surface of the canvas or paper, he forgoes any planning. Gifted with a refined use of technique and a deft treatment of the visual elements, the artist takes a primary interest in impressions that arise from the subconscious, transforming them into unique and deeply meaningful forms through the creative process. This does not mean that he disregards conceptual or philosophical considerations, but rather that he bases his work on the premise that emotional reactions and thinking work in tandem and are interconnected and inseparable.

Fontánez explores nature as catharsis, freeing and shaping the emotions that arise from sensory impressions. This is why his visual language can only be expressed through abstraction, as is evident from his drawings: the vivid gestural strokes, the monochromatic palette, the rich visual textures, the planes of depth, the volume, the force of their visual weight, the atmospheric effects, and, at times, the biomorphic forms that appear as abstracted representations of nature. Although these forms are not literal representations, together they function as a mirror reflecting both artist and onlooker, generating an emotional and cognitive symbiosis that is central to the human experience.