

43 | JAYME REIS | RECONSTRUCCIÓN EN AZUL | DAVIS MUSEUM BARCELONA

Jayme Reis (Itabira, Brazil, 1958), *Reconstrucción en Azul*, 2025

Balsa wood and pigments, 5.5 x 5.5 x 2.4 in (14 x 14 x 6 cm)

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Epigraph

Para Jayme Reis

*Quem faz barco tem fé
Acredita no vir a ser
no além
na transcendência.*

*No mar
nas ondas do mar
no vento e no evento*

*É sonho de viajar
viajando no sonho.*

Timoneiro do infinito.

*Guarda em segredo
que o barco abre um arco
do presente ao futuro*

*e abraça vagarosamente
o belo além do horizonte
- é o seu destino.*

*Amílcar de Castro
12/07/1998*

The pause: memory of the boat that sails

In Jayme Reis's work, the boat is not a mere object but an existential archetype: a form that condenses transit, memory, and permanence. Minas Gerais (in southeastern Brazil), his homeland, appears in his imagery from mountains that turn into seas to baroque churches that establish themselves as ships.

From there arises the metaphor of the boat, which in his hands becomes a bridge between the tangible and the symbolic, between the material and the spiritual. His first representation of a boat appeared in 1991, during his time in Florianópolis, when he set up his studio next to a fishermen's pier, followed by the Cais series in 2009, and later the Calmarias series in 2013. It became a formula, destined to be one of the central archetypes of his work. Since then, in his creative universe, the boat appears as a symbol of transit, passage, and the possibility of reaching new destinations. According to Reis: 'Each piece sails in different seas.'

In his most recent work, presented at the 43rd exhibition of the Davis Museum, *Reconstrucción en azul* (2025), there is always a correlation between two boats, as is evident in this piece. The choice of materials is key; light and fragile balsa wood contrasts with the intensity of the red and blue pigment, laden with symbolism that refers both to the sacred and to the infinite (the sky and the sea).

Far from the vessels that sail seas at speed, these ships seem suspended, stranded one upon another, sustained only by the tension of equilibrium, a state where memory and projection coexist. Reis develops a poetics that generates antagonisms and integrates them into the work, where the boats do not obey external forces, but the absence of forces.

The absence of wind on the high seas, the calmaria, is not a limit, but the opening of a space in which the fragility of human destiny intertwines with the power of silence and the strength of contemplation. The artist recalls: 'Since the early school years we knew that Pedro Álvares Cabral discovered Brazil in 1500 because of a calm... Calmaria thus becomes a word that, for Reis, preserves a dreamlike and polysemic power that overflows its literal sense.'

In his stranded boats resonates the paradox of the human: our fragility in the face of lack of impetus and, at the same time, our capacity to find meaning in pause. Pause becomes pure attention to materiality. Driven to a full curiosity for substantiality but also transcending the physical: time dilates and the everyday is perceived with intensity. It transforms the ephemeral into something profound, a need of artists that can be observed repeatedly throughout history. What once seemed fleeting becomes memorable. What was just a detail is revealed as a symbol. Consequently, it becomes a reminder that sense does not dwell only in constant movement or productivity, but also in the ability to stop, to listen calmly, and to feel fully.

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Fall Exhibition 2025 – To the Future