Rubio Nomblot, Javier, “Cuadros hinchados” [Swollen Paintings], ABC, El Cultural, Madrid, April 16, 2005.

Stephen King explains at the end of Dreamcatcher (2003) that such a nefarious book was written under difficult circumstances (the ineffable one usually concludes with this type of ode to the writer of hyper-sellers, mainly to leave a record of his new speed record), since apparently he was prey to a painful illness about whose nature he does not elaborate, although he assures that certain details slip into the novel that could put the savvy reader on the trail. He refers, of course, to the way in which the invading aliens—affectionately nicknamed "shit-bugs" by the terrestrial resistance—emerge from the body that had served as their incubator, causing in their passage some ravages that the prolific author describes with irritating meticulousness (never better said). And here is what is truly unpublishable: no sooner had I entered the book's first chapter, six hundred pages before knowing these painful and irrelevant facts, than I myself was prey to the mysterious ailment (like all the unfortunate readers of Dreamcatcher, I believe), which allowed me not only to dispose of the book in a couple of dismal nights (that's King's dubious work: that a terrible novel hooks you despite everything), but also to verify that nature imitates art, just as Arthur C. Clarke said happened when he discovered a sea on the Europa satellite before astronomers did (2010). I will say then that in the work of Miguel Harte (Buenos Aires, 1961) there is much science fiction and much humor (his finesse, by the way, contrasts with the roughness of what is displayed here), but, above all, a certain hemorrhoidal aftertaste, in the good sense of the word.

In the presentation text, this surprising artist, previously unknown in Spain, is defined as "a Pollock of underdevelopment who burst onto the Buenos Aires scene with a novel and personal technique called Martilux" (the fascinating catalog of his retrospective at the Museum of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires, 2002, deals with such an irruption, necessary to understand the exhibited work). I suspect there must be some relationship between this procedure and metallized automotive paint, so that in Harte's paintings converge textures of hammered sheet metal, metallic reflections, strange material labyrinths (hence the allusion to Pollock) and an unmistakably industrial smoothness.

With a Cockroach Head

In his most recent works (which are perhaps the best), this so perfectly smooth skin tends to become monochrome and the entire argument of the work revolves around the openings, soft and swollen, hairy at times, through which drops of transparent resin escape; in them our dear aliens hide, little men with cockroach heads (or vice versa), plus an immense tiny landscape whose orography and vegetation, abundant at this time of the sky, recalls that of Zxcvb. A little further on, the characteristic adipose Venusian lamps, the desert plains of mortified flesh, the wrinkled deformed foreskins, the enclosed and palpitating worlds, so many "features of a fatigued eroticism" and without concessions that wounds, dazzles and obsesses—I suppose especially the science fiction devourer—because it occupies the very antechamber of madness.