



PEPE NEBOT
Etching and aquatint
560x650mm - 355x435mm
Edition 30 +3 PA

EDICIONS DE CÀNEM

4 OCTOBER – 5 DECEMBER 2025
OPENING AT 12h.

The Magic of the Workshop

The workshop bell rings when someone knocks, opens, or closes the door. That sound is the first and welcoming step. The glass door that follows lets the light envelop the atmosphere to get to the workshop with its imposing etching press, the worktable and the inking counter, the fish tank where the acid works on the plates, and then the room where the blotting papers allow the prints to set until they are numbered and signed.

Then there are us, the countless artists who have worked here to capture our art on copper, zinc, or iron plates. But above all, there is Pilar Dolz, whose small hands bring out the best in each of us. Watching her moving the rollers with a single flick of the wrist is merely an art form, back and forth, left and right, so that the ink extends, becomes liquid, sticks to the roller, and later, gently covers the wounds of the plate, and, like rivers of ink, floods it.

The realm of printmaking has some magic involved. Pilar learned from Stanley Hayter, master printmaker. Like a magician, he pulled out of a top hat the colour printing technique, that is the printing of an engraved plate using inks of various viscosities applied with rollers of different hardness, thus preventing them from mixing. This is magic, and mastery too.

Pilar taught us the art and craft of etching and engraving, the viscosities of inks, and how to respect the process. Some of us worked in her studio, each with our own quirks. Each of us was suited to a technique; there were the refined, the meticulous ones, mastering the burin, the dry point, and the copper plate. Then there were the coarse and clumsy ones who had already soiled the plates and the workshop before even starting. For us, it was better if the plates were made of iron or at most zinc, and we dared to try etching and aquatint. We engraved with sugar, and it was another magic trick to see how the sugar mixed with India ink bounced, detaching itself from the plate, leaving that void for the acid to eat away and later the ink to enter that etched line created by fate.

We also had different papers: Super Alfa, Arches, Guarro, Hontorinoko, Rives, Fabriano, Hahnemühle, and so many others that drove us crazy and when our obsessions were most evident. Each of us preferred a different paper for printing. It is true that those who preferred dry point or aquatint did not need a paper with much body as with a low weight, the ink penetrated, and the drawing was unbeatable. However, those of us who punished the plate and sought a larger body in the print had to turn to a heavier paper that could withstand the pressure of the press and the weight of the inks.

It was all magic in Pilar's workshop, and it became for fifty years our refuge. Over fifty years many plates and prints were created, and now they have been put together for the exhibition of Cànem Galería, *Edicions de la Galerla*.

Once you get to the workshop, a whole life passes before you, a lifetime of art and precision, of magic and craft, of recollection of all the work conceived in the studio open to contemporaneity, to innovation, and to learning. Many of us passed through the workshop to draw the plates with lines and stains. We played like children and learned to understand an art we had seen in Dürer and Rembrandt, Goya, also in Picasso, Miró and Tàpies, but of which we were unaware of its persuasive power, its strength, its poetic, and, of course, its magic. We too, for a few hours, were magicians and learned a craft that helped us grow as artists.

Vicent Carda

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c/Antonio Maura, 6. 12001 Castelló de la Plana
Tel.964228879-670369847 canemgaleria@gmail.com
www.canemgaleria.com



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