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A Painting "Marathon" to Help Excluded Children

A young artist from Seville, Spain, set out to paint 400 paintings in 2 years, donating half of the profits to projects that help children at risk of social exclusion.

06/13/2019

The goal was to produce 400 paintings in two years... and Carlos Arco has done just that, turning solidarity into an art-form.

In December 2016, Carlos set out to produce a series of paintings "accessible to all." All the paintings measure 50 by 70 cm and are made using a mixed technique on canvas. Carlos pledged to donate 50 of the 99 euros he is charging for each work, although he has frequently adjusted prices in the process: whatever it takes to make paintings "available for everyone, at the service of many."

"If we're talking about helping others, it can't be that only those with a good salary can have my art," Arco says. "By offering a very economical price, I know that many people who otherwise could not have original works at home will now have them."

All the donations go to an NGO called International Cooperation which buys healthy food products for children in need, helping their families maintain a healthier

lifestyle. "My source of motivation is seeing people going through hard times or with needs that I have never had to experience," says Carlos. "This feeling that I experience every time I see a homeless person, or a child without enough clothes, or a mother with a baby that is freezing cold... to know that I'm serving them and am not just one more sympathetic passerby: that's what's really spurred me to keep pursuing this enterprise."

As for his artistic style, Carlos is reluctant to assign himself to a particular category: "Whenever I'm asked this question, I don't know how to answer... I'm just a young artist who wants to achieve beauty at all costs, so I'm constantly learning new things, all the while enjoying and suffering a lot."

A Painting a Day...

At first, Carlos was overwhelmed by the prospect of painting a picture a

day, especially given the challenge of combining it with everything else. "The truth is though that although my schedule is very demanding (not to say mentally exhausting), I find that I only have reasons to be grateful. People have been very generous with me, accepting and accompanying me in this challenge. Thank God, I have not had any need to stop production: that's lucky, given how short I am on time."

Awareness about the project was spread especially through social media as well as by setting up temporary exhibitions in different cultural spaces in Seville.