

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Dr. Jaime Partsch introduces the Artist

Opening the Exhibit *La Palabra y la Piedra*

Universidad del Este, Carolina, Puerto Rico

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I have known Arturo Vonn Hartung for more than fifteen years. During this time I have come to admire several of Vonn's qualities. One of his fundamental characteristics is authenticity. He says what he thinks and feels and without meaning to offend, always defends his ideas and convictions. In this sense he is a person free from any hypocrisies and deceptions. I think the works we have on display today reflect a person of profound convictions.

Of course, I also admire Vonn's artistic and creative abilities. He has obviously mastered the skills of painting, drawing, color, shape, sculpture. Everything we see here today testifies to that. But as the artist that he is, that creativity and those skills he possesses manifest an inner world that gives direction and meaning to what is created. Vonn perceives the world from the perspective of faith. The lens of spirituality allows him to interpret the world in a very particular way, with a depth and with a light that illuminates aspects of reality that are unknown by many. In a society overwhelmed by superficiality and banality, it is stimulating and hopeful to be able to count on the presence of people like Vonn and to be able to enjoy their creations. Vonn is a highly reflective, thinking person. He is a true contemplative. The works that we have here are products of Vonn's reflections, meditations, of his contemplative life.

I cannot speak about Vonn without also speaking about his wife and companion Patty. The fact is that Patty is an extraordinary person. She possesses a patience and strength that are admirable. I know she is the hand that sustains and supports Vonn. And not only that. She is also an artist. Whether in the kitchen or

in the workshop or in dealing with people, Patty brings a creativity and a vital spirit to everything she does. Truly, the works exhibited here are also her works.

There is also another element in the life of these artists that I'd like to highlight. They, Vonn and Patty, live from their art. They sustain themselves with the work of their hands, their minds and their spirit. They have built, and rebuilt their own home in Guaynabo, little by little, through the years. We all know that the life of an artist today in Puerto Rico is usually one of economic hardship and insecurity. Vonn and Patty, however, have managed to create and build amidst many difficulties a home and a workshop that are reflections of the best of the human spirit. They have lived more than twenty years in Puerto Rico. This island which they both love deeply is now their home. Puerto Rico is fortunate to be able to count on people like them.

For me it is a pleasure to introduce you to Arturo Vonn Hartung.