

PLANO DE CONTINGÊNCIA

(2022)

↳ CRISTINA GUERRA, LISBOA

This exhibition brings together four artists with clearly different creative paths and imaginations. However, a closer look allows us to discern common aspects, similar attitudes and convergent ways of looking at artistic practice. Firstly, because they are artists who value the contingencies of creative processes, considering the intrinsic conditions of each artistic endeavour, in drawing, painting or sculpture. It is also clear that they appreciate sparse, simple and ‘anachronistic’ means, in an economy of processes in which the work of the hands and the actions of (their) body predominate.

The works gathered here diverge from the agendas and program postures that abound in today's art. In a different sense, they are artists who distinguish themselves by their desire to investigate the opportunities that emanate from the adventurousness of artistic creation. Spontaneous, free and sensitive movements are unleashed in front of the plane (paper, fabric, canvas or looking at a patch of raw earth), with no anticipated destination, in which forms, images and objects are possibilities unveiled in the course of a physical and mental availability in which doing and imagining collaborate and articulate in a fruitful and unpredictable way.

This understanding of the core of creation explains some of the characteristics that run through all the works gathered here: we see forms that vacillate between figuration and abstraction, between empirical life and the realms of fiction, between having been and being on their way to being something like the world we know. The coherence between motifs, forms and themes is not always immediate or discernible, also because each work expresses unique and different realities, circumstances and stimuli. They are works that project a peculiar and intuitive time, the time that comes from the imagination, in which all the hypotheses, desires, echoes and reverberations are projected, until the moment when the artist glimpses a possible suspension, provisional or possibly definitive.

Sérgio Carronha created a series of sculptural pieces between 2010 and 2014. During his usual walks through unpopulated territories, mostly in the Serra de Sintra area and in Terena, in the municipality of Alandroal, the artist found and collected portions of raw earth (clays, marls, sedimentary rocks). Immediately or later in the studio, the artist sculpted and moulded the earth materials with his hands and using a few tools. Without a prior idea, the configuration of each object arose instinctively and sensitively, in other words, it took shape from the moment the hands and eyes (in fact, the whole body) assimilated the unique characteristics of the raw material (ductility, rigidity, colour, consistency, texture), but also as mnemonic expressions of a given experience in the landscape. The result is objects with a poetic resonance, unsettling because of

their strangeness and formal ambiguity, but which are also defined by their physical fragility - because they have not undergone the usual ceramic firing, they remain unstable portions of raw earth.

Fernão Cruz presents a series of works produced this year. There is a predominance of oil paintings that are distinguished by the expressiveness of the thickness of the paint, which indicates a prolonged creative time made up of accumulations of layers of matter, colours and images. In fact, what we see is what was finally superimposed on other layers, on other paintings (the artist reveals that they were very different in aesthetic and thematic terms to what we see now). These are works that deal with a broad pictorial spectrum, between abstract incursions and figurative experiments with dense, temperamental strokes. It is a painting practice that implies spontaneity, daring and availability, as factors that animate the confrontation with the canvas, a body-to-body in which biography and emotions contaminate the gestures and inflections that the painting takes on.

Francisca Carvalho is an artist whose practice has focused on drawing, with a special appetite for exploring different types of materials and supports. Since her stay in India, where she learnt dyeing processes in a small factory, the artist began to explore drawing on fabrics. These are drawings that stand out for their organic and metamorphic character, representing interlocking figures, hybrid forms where lines, patterns and colours overlap, which arise from rudimentary premeditation, because creation is expected to develop from the action of a body and a mind that throw themselves on the support to embrace the contingencies of drawing and the unconscious impulses and associations that are unveiled. Naturally, the support and the dyeing techniques give these drawings a certain unpredictability: the colour palette and the way the dyes adhere to the fabrics involve an uncontrollable play with chance and with what is immanent in the nature of the materials and media being worked with.

Finally, Gonçalo Pena, an artist who has had a daily and compulsive drawing practice for several years, namely through small drawings (A4 format) that are made in an extremely fast and uncompromising way, in which the artist rehearses different ways of articulating real experience (the representation of and commentary on situations, phenomena and figures in the public space), plastic experience (the functional and aesthetic aspects of drawing) and imaginary experience (fanciful, open, unruly). With each new drawing, the artist projects a new meaning, a new intuition, not necessarily coherent with the previous one or the next. In an attempt to circumvent the vastness and diversity of genres, themes, genealogies and styles that characterise this constellation of drawings, for this exhibition we have chosen to privilege the unique and singular character of each drawing, as well as emphasising a typology of drawings in which representational, graphic and narrative ambiguity is more noticeable.

WRITTEN BY

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