

Elogiamos a casa que se abre a perder de vista

We compliment the house that opens up to the lost sight

A flag that trembles shyly in a foggy city, amidst somewhat dreadful buildings. The very urban mishmash, as seen from another angle, to testify an urbe of nearly strangled flows. Debris from civil constructions mingled with images of devastation. Acid rain, pollution, thermo nuclear. Rubbles from exchanges, trades and sales of a popular nature, so as to give the tune in a pre-apocalyptic landscape. The rythm of survival that lingers, despite de lack of the self-owned and legitimate land and the never-ceasing conflicts deriving from the fight for territory. Territory landscape that does not allow for the unveiling by the political scope.

A collective exhibition that investigates the landscape being held in Sao Paulo in 2017 and 2018 would not lead to an harmonic reading that is optimistic and light-hearted. *Elogiamos a casa que se abre a perder de vista* (*We compliment the house that opens up to the lost sight*) gathers 21 artists from various and multifaceted generations, continuing the discussions previously raised and seen in *To the South, Landscapes*, a show that took place at the Bolsa de Arte in Porto Alegre at the end of 2013. If the mood seems to be close to a war four years after by the country, now, at the Sao Paulo Bolsa de Arte, it is challenging to construct a new relationship web, exchanges and exhibits that are sensitive to the other, in the contemporary visual field. Approaching also one of the classic art history genders opens a variety of unrests, certainly, at the same time in which working again with some artists who were part of the Rio Grande do Sul State contour is rewarding.

The title of the exhibition comes from the unavoidable reading of *The Invention of the Landscape* by Anne Cauquelin. Referring to the theory of the gardens, the French thinker quotes texts by Horace (65 a.C.-8 a.C.), epicurist poet and philosopher of Ancient Rome, including the *Epistle X* – from which comes the excerpt that entitles the exhibition. “It is the remission and the expenditure that designate the garden, and neither the coast and the sea, the faraway and the contemplation of the world and its whole. Fruition of ‘convenient’, of the assessed suspension, of a fact taylored by its owner. Fruition of a part of a fragment chosen from nature and not its condensed metaphor”¹, says Cauquelin.

Such fragmentary perspective is worked upon in *We compliment...* beginning, at times, with these urban wrecks, disposed sparse materials of a post-industrial society at a high pace of transformation, making the seen consumism, for instance, in *pop art* to be today a viewed innocent. “Because the omnipresence of the precarious in contemporary art makes it effective, by the force of things, a return to the sources of modernity: the fugitive present, the moving crowd, the street, the ephemorous”², writes Bourriaud in his fundamental *Radicante*.

Distant Reflex, by **Marina Camargo**, may serve as one of the guides to the exhibition of today. It benefits from its strong physical presence (industrial, worth stressing) alongside the photographic records of skies (a representation). The tridimensional deals with the “to see”, and “not to see”, the sedimentation of incompleteness, the materiality and the dismantling of this landscape, that is soundly non natural, constructed, cultural. In a photographic image that also stands out due to the technique, **André Lichtenberg** uses the records of houses by the sea shore captured by a long exposition nigh light to assign with a dreamlike and mysterious air the customary buildings. **Layla Motta** in turn, browses the British Islands to translate images full with enigma early accounts of witchcraft and occultism, not without getting into friction with current times (let us think in the crossings of mottos that are more than doubtful) with the vernacular, the archaic. The series *Wind*, by **Dirnei Prates**, has in the frail and ephemorous materiality on of its attributes, with polaroid (that is, photographic analogic material and poor endurance) faded, but whose capture took place recently. The landscape opens up to a crisscross of times and spaces in intrinsic half tunes. **Julia Milward** inscribes, in her poliptic: “So, in the wandering, experiment the space through the photographic apparatus, following straneous footprints, ripping off the things more or less viewed”. *Material proof of the passages (the desert)* sinks and drifts of the artist in this exceedingly particular landscape, but that is coated by the human as a vestige, indication, track. And the pictoric places by **Alexandre Wagner** and **Roberta Tassinari** follow diverse strategies, although they are similar at their phase-changing statement. *Tree*, by Wagner, benefits from the scale of a certain ambition, in the borderline between figuration and abstraction, of the differences in the procedures for the obtaining of the color and of other language qualities. Roberta came from Santa Catarina to Sao Paulo and persistently developed the paintings about diversified materials, and the concrete, of the large metropolis, eventually imposed itself. Not due to a greyish option, but maybe for the encounter of trivial materials, of

markedly artificial chromatism (made-in-China type, 25 de março, in Sao Paulo, and Saara in Rio open-sky markets) and that generates color fields of great movement.

From Rio, **Bruno Drolshagen** and **Bruno Miguel** feature in *We compliment...* tridimensionals, however supported with decision in the respective researches on painting – here seen in an enhanced view. The objects of the series *The Crystal Cabinet*, by Miguel, are seen in the space as a mock up of a city, an urbe in project, an architecture topography pinpointed by glass peaks, resin-covered surfaces and pudgy glasses spread out on the basis. When lined up, the dead nature springs to the observer's eye. Today, the passer-by looks from above and he himself looks like a threat to this vitreous formation, of little definition materiality, however multicolored and bright-shining. Drolshagen, in *Bach* and *Universal Geographica*, resorts to the litter pickers in the Rio Lapa suburb that, at the end of each day, bring kilos of toys, magazines and the most diverse materials whose final destination was the garbage bin. Bought by the artist, they are transmuted, with the use of concrete, and widened throughout the pictorial space worked upon with oil by the author in his work at the atelier, in another end of his production.

Territory-landscape, focus of divergences, combats, disputes. From Sao Paulo State **Ding Musa** features an original series made in Palestine, such as the footage shot in Al Janiah, in Cisjordan, whose camera takes a 360° *tour*, from the height of a hill, in order to capture the tiny things of everyday life always surveilled and never full with normality. Through the camera, we see Jewish settlements make evident their presence in the landscape and reveal that peace is something remote in that context. The artist's book *Love for the land* compiles photos by the artist in the same region. The approach of Ding escapes from an obvious and worn out photojournalism (that would have chosen portraits and repetitive approaches) and exhibits, indeed, evidences of a non-free territory, torn, hurt, both by the security apparatus imposed in the region as by clear tension between neighbors. Nonetheless, the international geopolitics is not necessary to bring into light latent disputes. A plain American glass can contain a universe. In the object by **Gustavo Torrezan**, the land of the Guarani (who live in the surroundings of the Jaraguá peak, where there are big TV antennas installed) enclosed in a home appliance takes us to the lack of this basic right for such an indigenous population. If in Sao Paulo the indigenous people are outcasts and are nearly made 'invisible', in Rio Grande do Sul the same fate is repeated. **Xadalu**, that started as a street artist, creates remarkable interventions to highlight the ancestrality of the indigenous territory and makes explicit who the real invaders were.

The ecological context of earlier times still echoes, especially because it results in a greyish horizon due to the failure of the diplomatic stances concerning the environment. The set by **Shirley Paes Leme** about the air of Sao Paulo was started in 1985 and catches, in a still surprising visual way, the pollution we breathe everyday. Using poetic utterances, Shirley creates short-circuits about human constructions, the culture, and etc., together with plastic records that are greatly attractive. The South Brazilian **Vera Chaves Barcellos**, key-name of the national experimentalism, captures, just like a visual aid that presents itself gradually to our view, the contours of a nuclear plant in France. The Cold War seems like it is wearing a new attire, but the fears of anatomic catastrophe have not yet dissipated. **Leticia Lampert**, living in China – more and more hegemonic on the chess board of the global power –, creates a polyptic of delicate tessiture about the horrors of the destruction at large proportions and the development of unrestrained rhythm (doomed to a close congestion). The harms are whopping for the environment, urbanism and other more 'civilizational' factors that the powerful country refuses to reflect upon and change. Thus, the pollution dominates the landscape, indication of frail materiality for recording, but felt, literally, on the skin of the population.

The ecological key is not predominant in the work by **Renata de Bonis**, rather natural phenomena, meteorological and of a close-coming nature are noticeable in her production. The silent work *Puddle* was placed in the center of the exhibition space and lays out, in its bronze spheric volume something enigmatic. The inert basketball now, on one of its wilted sides, stores corrosive rain water that falls, from times to times, onto the people of the State of Sao Paulo. Very slowly, the tone typical of the bronze dissolves and creates new textures, hues, tiny recesses. Water is also crucial in the video, a sample isolated on the body landscape inside that cutout, with the performance record by **Maira Vaz Valente** in the fluminense mountain chain in Rio. The liquid has another function here and, stored in small sacks, it is the target of the artist due to its repetitive action of bursting them.

By using distinctive supports and approaches, the artworks from the Sao Paulo State **Leka Mendes** and **Manuela Costa Lima**, besides the foreign artists now present in *We compliment...* – the Italian **Marco Maria Zanin** and the Portuguese **Daniel Moreira** and **Rita Castro Neves** -, are less noisy while presenting a certain spirit of today's discomfort. Manuela records with more delicacy her perspective of nuisance. She builds, with a guide of a discarded street, a trivial ribbon of lamp posts and a rock, her *Guide granade*. Laid out now on the white cube, it swings between attraction and repulse, the quietness and the imminent danger, the city of the bureaucratic planning and the city of the real conflicts, most sensitive to us. Her intervention in the garden is even less blatant, but the links between the lamps and copper tubes also let show a subtle balance. Rubbish of prosaic dumptrucks is reinvented by Leka. In the diversity of the small tiles, ceramics, blocks, slates, 'tuffs' of cement and concrete of varied typologies, the artist applies war scenes browsed from the *web*. The approach is not stealthy as it mixes real estate speculation and the war industry, developmentalism and state of aggression, the lack of urbanism and the value clash. And the Bandeira Square, address with the status of non place in Sao Paulo, is the focus of different tools by Zanin and Daniel/Rita and may wrap up a reading of *We compliment....* The photography and the video result in a profound pessimistic state. There is the palimpsest-landscape, of nearly hellish configurations (by Zanin), and there is the foggy landscape, greyish, something immaterial and toxic (de Daniel/Rita), with their symbolic flag (Bandeira) standing poorly, moving with immense difficulty. Landscape-.

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1. CAUQUELIN, Anne. *A Invenção da Paisagem* (The Invention of Landscape). Editions 70, Lisbon, 2008, p. 49
2. BOURRIAUD, Nicolas. *Radicante*. Sao Paulo, Martins Fontes, 2011, p. 92

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