

Flávia Vieira

Hopes and Fears

26.05.2018 - 28.07.2018

Beet, açai, jatoba, bean, charcoal.

By favouring the deliberate use of natural pigments and technical skills that relate to artisanal work, Flávia Vieira's exhibition *Hopes and Fears* is constituted in opposition to contemporary visuality, strident and chaotic. A tactile silence, a diffuse intensity, an almost "monotonous" chromatic repetition, impregnates not only the objects but also our perception. Is that fundamental gesture of Flávia Vieira in this "scene" and is that constancy that we can expect from her work since her first exhibitions presented in Lisbon, 2010.

An essential aspect of this exhibition is the status of the objects presented here. "Artefacts" would be an appropriate word for them – tapestries, modelled pieces, and small sculptures – since it combines the idea of the final object with the processes of its creation, and also the boundaries that are set between the artistic and the artisanal, erudite and popular, the machine and the hand.

Although they might have been planned in the mind, in a kind of conceptual half-light, the true vibration of these objects arise on the final work. What Flávia seeks to create is not an "avalanche" of colour, but an organization and construction that is sensitive in maintaining the delicate freshness of colour. And colour, as we know it, is about the senses, a means of understanding the essence of things, the small hands of the world, as would say Eugénio de Andrade (Portuguese poet).

The works gathered here, made with an intentional diversity of technical means, have as common thread the use of natural pigments from Brazil, country where the artist lives and works since 2012. Beet, açai, jatoba, bean, charcoal, among others, are granulated and manipulated to obtain a colourful pigment that afterwards is immersed in the dye of the weavings, applied in the baked clay or directly on the wall of the gallery. Consequently, a kind of "cosmetic" impregnates the exhibition, conferring an identity (a "mask" according to M. Mauss), that refers to symbolic and ritualistic operations, symptom of an invisible world on materiality.

But also present in her work is the research about the institutionalised making, which starts from the clarity and accuracy of the Brazilian modern project and which is translated on the appropriation of humanized geometric forms and signs. As referred by the artist: "It's from this confrontation that a mark of divergence or mismatch becomes productive and it's generated: the geometrical abstraction of pure shapes which is treated with rough and imprecise surfaces or the subject of abstraction and of the textile pattern that gains irregular outlines". At the same time, those geometrical shapes and signs codify within them a first language, devoid of history and, therefore, "illegible" for our present time.

Finally, Flávia Vieira's exhibition suggests a critical view about the formulation of the historical subject of the senses in the western world, especially since the beginning of the industrial revolution until today's advanced capitalism. It seems the artist is questioning, in which circumstances did we lose the ability to make with our hands? What kind of knowledge did we leave behind under the excuse of being obsolete, slow or

primitive? By the end of the XIX century, the essay of British writer and artist William Morris (1834-1896), that gives the title to this exhibition, emphasized this inherent pessimism and aimed for the need of an ethic for the senses, as a reaction to the capitalist system that was emerging at the time.

*"Threatened our ability of making with our hands, how to continue to making?
Beet, açai, jatoba, bean, charcoal, simple as that."*

- Marta Mestre, São Paulo, Maio 2018

Flávia Vieira lives and works in São Paulo - Brazil. She has a degree in Fine Arts - Painting (Faculdade de Belas Artes da Universidade do Porto) and a Master's degree in Communication and Arts (Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa), while is currently developing a PhD on Visual Poetry (Arts Institute of Unicamp - Brazil). She has participated in several exhibitions in Portugal and in Brazil, namely the projects "Song for my hands" curated by Marta Mestre at the International Biennial of Curitiba (Óscar Niemeyer Museum - MON, Curitiba - Brazil), and "Chama Plural" curated by Isabella Lenzi at the Portuguese Consulate in São Paulo (Brazil) both in 2017.

Marta Mestre is a curator, art critic and teacher. Graduated in Art History, with a Master in Culture and Communication / Museology, she studied at the Universidade Nova de Lisboa and at the University of Avignon et des Pays de Vaucluse. She was curator of the Inhotim Institute, Brumadinho, Minas Gerais - Brazil (2016-2017), curator-assistant of MAM - Rio de Janeiro - Brazil (2010-2015), and programming coordinator of the Arts Center of Sines - Portugal (2005-2008). She has been a guest curator at the Escola de Artes Visuais Parque Lage, Rio de Janeiro - Brazil, 2016. She is one of the curators of the Imago/Ymago publishing house, responsible for the publication of Didi-Huberman, Rancière, Warburg, among others.