

Contemplation of a painting

by Ângelo Oswaldo de Araújo Santos – 2007

Marina Nazareth contemplates the mountain, and her painting becomes a dialogue with the colour and shape of those undulations of the land. Just like the waves in the sea, sometimes they are ruffled, creasy, and then they take wing, the high hills, some other times they recline, in gentle slopes, in peace with the sky. The artist appropriates this movement and from it she extracts the rhythm of her work.

From Cézanne, the mountain learns a great lesson. According to Merleau-Ponty, “rather than seeking ‘to mock the colours of nature’, the painter sought to express the ‘dimension of colour’, of the kind which creates – from itself to itself – identities, differences, texture”. Marina Nazareth seeks, in the mountains, a new height for her painting.

Leonardo da Vinci had long before seen in the fuzzy mountains, ‘a certain coily line that is like a generating axle’, and by departing from this line he discovered a metaphysic dimension as disturbing as the undecipherable smile of his muse’. Guignard loved Leonardo da Vinci’s sfumato. He brought it to the mountains of Minas Gerais, accommodating it to the hard foggy slopes so celebrated by poet Cláudio Manuel da Costa, who mythicized Itamonte. One day he offered art critic Mário Pedrosa two paintings on this theme, saying that he also painted abstract. What he really meant was that the mountain *transcreates* itself in the painting, and the mountain in the painting ceases to be a mountain to become simply a painting.

Being mountain people, the ‘mineiros’ abandon themselves to the mountain with their passion for painting. Guignard lets the hilly country off, hoisted by balloons and floating churches. Marcier engenders a conversation Mantiqueira and the sky in the shades of the afternoon. Inimá celebrates its steep slopes. Dnar Rocha raises dense volumes of emotions. Bracher exalts the hematite-streaked hills, in their iridescent gullies. Roberto Vieira collects the living matter in boxes of pain. Mário Zavagli illuminates the enchantment of the landscape. Fani Bracher frees the mountain into the clouds. In Roberto Gil, the mountain has the dramatic nature of an abstraction.

Minas is an abyssal word, said poet Carlos Drummond de Andrade to the artist Madu Vivacqua Martins, when she said that it is a mountainous word. Marina Nazareth’s mountain dispenses with adjectives, in it’s a dreamlike universe. It is painting, pictorial expression as if, in distinctive moments, trees and fruit expressed the wish of the artist to lend shape and colour to a space created by the gaze she turned to them.

The painter celebrates the splendour of the earth rising, in her work of rhythm and colours that seeks to translate the beauty of the orographic show. But the mountain is there inside the artist, filtered by memory, sheltered in the intimacy of the gaze devoted to contemplating the crests of Cipó, the domes of Caraça, the slopes of Itacolomi, the beautiful horizon of Minas. Because of this, the mountain never ends. Being a painting, it lingers on, raises itself to reveal reliefs, advances, and a continuum sets in. The polyptics expanded, beyond limits. The creative gesture remains open, now flowing as graphisms on paper.

These mountains make themselves be heard, in the sound of the wind that sweeps them. They let themselves be taken like pennants, flapping in hues of colours suspended in the sky. They shelter, in a wholehearted embrace, or sometimes, it seems, they confine the lonely looker to the empty immensity of spaces.

The colour moves along the crests and crosses the slopes inundated in light. The painting exercises itself in its silence and proclaims “vision as the conjunction of all aspects of the being”, according to Paul Klee.

Reference: O olho e o espírito, Merleau-Ponty, Vega, Lisboa, 2000.