

Marina's Tree

by Silviano Santiago

J'avais besoin d'un poumon, m'a dit l'arbre: alors ma sève est devenue feuille, afin d'y pouvoir respirer.

André Gide

I want man to understand, said the tree, so Marina Nazareth decided to represent it. Just as the philosophical reflection about man cannot be detached from knowledge, so from now on the representation of a tree by Marina cannot be dissociated from the conception we may have of that vegetable. With a basic difference. The painting by Marina starts by telling us that there is a time; time for arborescence. And talking about things, the painting has an advantage over the philosophical reflection: it has the power of making us think about a world – the tree, for example – free of dangerous anthropocentrism. The colour and the shape are less egotistical (that is, less human) than the word and the phrase when it comes to talking about things. And because it is not anthropocentric, the tree (Marina's) is not romantic, a mere projection of man's contradictory feelings. The tree (Marina's) is not Cézanne, extreme dedication in learning about the volumes of nature by means of the geometric shapes coded by man. The tree (Marina's) is not hers; it belongs to the very tree. Hence the brackets.

There is, therefore, a mode of trees, a time for a tree – arborescence, which we would have never thought of had we not seen those colourful figures that swell within the rectangle. It is important to enter the space of the gallery, the space of the picture, in order to have access to this undefined time, this non-human way, at this hour of colours and vegetable reverie, which is the existence of trees. And in order to tell us that a tree has a 'life' irrespective of our perspective, Marina chose not to represent the roots. The roots of the tree. The tree is the trunk and the crown. It is what it is, severed from the soil into which the roots are tucked, the roots of man and the roots of the anthropomorphic vegetable. Landscapes deprived of a human figure, with no human perspective. The shape and colour, as they are less egotistic (that is, less human), do not represent the face so well as they represent the word and the phrase.

Marina knows the trees from the perspective she has of them. Arborescence time and mode. She knows that they, without roots, are free to fly into space and become colorful balloons. Attached to the trunk, the crown will expand, endlessly, audacious, and lose its vegetable consciousness, to gain the consciousness of a stone. The weight of the stone. Stones have no roots to fix them to the ground. It is, in relation to soil and man.