

The clouds by Marina Nazareth

by Rubem Braga

“She seems to be having fun and joy painting these colourful clouds. They are (forgive me this word, which does not belong to the artistic jargon to be used today) enchanting.”

At the same time as she exhibits her latest works in Galeria Bonino, in Rio de Janeiro, Marina Nazareth presents, at the Paço Imperial, a retrospective exhibition of her work. In May this “Assessment of her Work” will be in the Museu de Arte de São Paulo and in September in Palácio das Artes in Belo Horizonte (her land, where she has spent most of her life).

It was in Belo Horizonte that Marina started to study with Álvaro Apocalypse, in the 1960s, and produced pen-and-ink drawings, sometimes portraying surrealist shapes, some other times simple fioritures around castles and other imaginary and random buildings. But her painting, as much as can be seen in her self portrait of 1966, already had a beauty that was at the same time solemn and assertive.

It is funny that she abandoned these routes and turned her attention to experiments with cement, natural pigments and cork – a Project that she named Concreto Cor and was intended for putting together panels for architectural projects. It was not before two years that she turned her attention back to easel painting and for about five years she worked on the series “Fragmentos do Real”, most of the time landscapes lost in the fog. They’re only cities or districts in soft colours, rebated in a lyrical corner.

It would be more than normal for the artist to stay there, or merely look for variations around her own work; and the series that she named “Árvores” corresponds more or less to that: now it is no longer tiny houses in a row, like cubes, but trees with round crowns, green or blue. Her work with lithography resumed her project with trees in a happy way. But as of 1980 the artist takes us by surprise again with the series “Frutos da Terra”: close shots of tomatoes, beets, and other vegetables, like patterns. And until 1983 she insists, stating that ‘today, in the cities, it is usual to find people who only know, I wouldn’t say a star-fruit, but a few more ordinary fruit like cashew or lemon, in boxes or little bags’. It is in 1984 that Marina starts the present series, “Poética da Cor”. Some of these pictures are in the Paço, but most of them were sent to Bonino. Here there are no trees or houses: the landscape (the feeling of the presence of a landscape still lingers) is made of colours only. They are brighter than the colours in “Fragmentos” and “Árvores”; they are horizontal clouds of pink and yellow; the background is either greyish or greyish-blue. They remind me, these oils, of some watercolour

by Fayga Ostrower, the only difference being that the once severe Fayga today abandons herself to the romanticism of the sweet girl craving for the moonlight, and it is only her mastery that prevents it from becoming banal. Marina's lyricism is more constrained and she seems to be having a good time painting these colorful clouds. Which are (forgive me this word, which does not belong to the artistic jargon to be used) enchanting.