

The Other Scene

by José de Anchieta Corrêa

Marina Nazareth, working with her hands and eyes, has also worked on her speech – the game of language and spirit – making enquiries about her work, her experience as an artist, and, going deeper, into herself, that is, into the bond that makes the artist and her work one single body.

From this exercise of plentitude, Marina made me, once more, a witness. This was how my first contact with her latest work came to me earlier, by means of sound waves, the expression of her inquiries. When it was not the eye that, in a privileged way, enquired the spirit. It was indeed, the sensitivity of the artist that enquired the light that inhabits the man and feels glad to conceal itself in the creases of the things and in the entanglement of what is visible.

It was only after that that I was invited, in the light of her studio, to see the paintings that now form the exhibition of 1993. It was then that the happy synergy of the senses – speech, hearing and gaze – compelled me to bring together singularity and familiarity or, better still, urged me to shift from one to the other. This is because the living presence of the artist and her questions, associated to the memory of the time spent in other phases, prevented me from remaining in my comfort zone and compelled me to start talking about evolution, ruptures, subtly developed continuities. Yesterday, the magic of the trees –ships, the masts of the boat of life, the axle that sets man's history machine in motion– stunning, dizzying the viewer. Today, apparently familiar objects, the everyday world of bedrooms, sitting-rooms, furniture, floorboards, vases and flowers. Elusive figures that soon make us get lost in the entangled mass of lights and shades, opening a new space beyond the canvas, softly and insidiously involving us.

Games and contradictions. Past and present. The apparent solitude of the work right there, before my eyes, and the artist, bodily, beside me. The two speeches: the one emanating from the eye, that of the finished work, and the one coming from the ear, the questionings of the artist that render no word silent. A whole universe of questionings about which there is so much to say. But one thing is to have attended the philosopher and known that ‘contradiction should be found in every experience, in every reality, in every concept’ and, moreover, to agree with him that “nothing that is alive corresponds to the identity”. Another thing is to live the experience of contradiction as a sign of life and plentitude in this world of sameness, of reification, of artifacts and mass goods replicated and copied ad infinitum.

In this way, compelled to join the vision and experience of contradiction made into aesthetic reality, I had the chance to participate in Marina's work. Denying inhabiting in this world of fake realities, of empty and mute identities; leaving behind abstractions – a 'snippet' of a gaze, voices, tractability and tastes – I was allowed to 'see' and ramble through the experience of the artist. Discovering both the questions posed by her works and the questions the artist herself asked. In other words, discovering one within the other and one by means of the other. The work of art and the artist as a being. The painting by Marina Nazareth and the being painter Marina Nazareth.

Within this atmosphere, I was given the chance to understand: Marina talking about the emigration of the artist to the world of her art. Her need to be present in something that exists before everything else. Her wish to submit herself to a law that came before her and that imposes on every man artist the rigor of discovering it to discover oneself. This goes to such an extent that, at the peak of her art, the artist will no longer say, 'it was I who painted this picture', but 'it was this picture that made me an artist', in such a way that from now on it is irrelevant to ask either for the being picture or the being artist. One will not exist without the other.

Along this way, it was no longer objects that I was given to see and feel. It was no longer flowers, vases, chairs, floorboards or windows. Neither was it about retrieving to memory the old and majestic trees. The artist Marina Nazareth does not paint objects. She paints one in a whirl of light and shade, volumes and flat surfaces; she paints Another Scene, in which colours and objects only exist hollowed out by desire, affection, by the sensitivity of man. She paints Another Scene that is at the same time strange and familiar to us. Seeming silence forever inviting us to express the mysteries of the world endlessly.