

Heterotrophic cartography or processes for the construction of new diagrams. Bettina Vaz Guimaraes

Articulating operations, meshing territories – spatial, picturesque, sensorial – and the absence of frontiers help characterize the works of Bettina Vaz Guimaraes at her exhibition in Galeria Sancovsky.

As a result of these articulations, some unprecedented landscapes, fragmented yet integrated constructions are born with its forms, frames and dimensions, new perceptions that fire other points of view, spatial orientations and scales, taking picturesque planes and transforming them into forces of rupture – deviating from the frankness within the pieces. What Frank Stella (1936) called *working space* here exemplified; a picturesque space inviting the viewer to go inside and wander within the painting, to go in from one end and come out the other, a space which could shelter a life. Unlimited with spatial extension.

Bettina's production process starts with the execution of drawings generating object inventories which unfold into pictorial and geometrical categorization of potential cuts and fragments to be expanded on in projects or pre-collage experiments. These, isolated from the works, almost as masks, participate in the process whether or not they're insertion into the piece is undergone. In this way, each mask plays a role in supporting the creative process, even if it is not actively portrayed in the piece. The result in a unique construct or painting collage replete with chromatic and geometric superposition. Each time a new layer is added with this painting collage method, new semantical structures become juxtaposed. In such the distribution of parts in Bettina's work follow a very unique procedure, and yet are homogenously articulated. In this way, the hierarchy of the materials used and implemented in this procedure intensify the hierarchy of the materials in that particular exercise, resulting in methods of chromatic nomenclature and a most unique cartography.

This type of operation is recurrent in various of the artist's productions, such as: *Imaginary Rooms*, 2015; *Imaginary Ambiences*, 2016; *Imaginary References*, 2015; *The houses that take me*, 2015; *Interiors*, 2015, *The Intimate*, 2015, and *Nook*, 2015, all of which prepare the paper surface homogeneously, by applying a monochrome backdrop as a voluntary gesture guiding and orienting the chromatic forces to be superimposed. This resource helps establish a sort of frontier to establish and highlight limits, or even as a source of continuity throughout the execution of the work.



The houses that take me, 2015 *The Intimate, 2015*

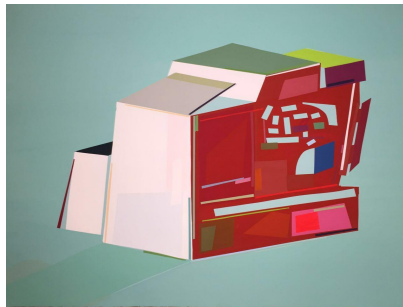
These chromatic limits, or their variations, are verified in the displacement of dark spots or patches from previous series, such as *Crossings, 2014*, in which there appears to be some sequential movement, lacking direction, between spots and geometric structures of varying chromatic intensity, until these geo-chromo-configurations occupy or support the piece entirely.

The artist is apparently preoccupied with the tension between the superficial and the illusion (perspective illusionism), particularly between the physicality of medium (the canvas, for example) and its figurative and/or abstract content; this forces the viewers to realize the “flatness” of the works before they realize what each contains. Such that even though the artist implements pictorial layers which may lend some tridimensional qualities, the pieces are seen, before anything else, as paintings.

By including the pieces: *Imaginary Rooms, 2015*, and *Imaginary Ambiances, 2016*, in the exhibition also establishes a sort of bridge capable of generating movement and suggesting a redesign and/or assimilation of each structural and material component of the same in any displacement of the spectator within the gallery space.



Imaginary Rooms, 2015



Imaginary Ambiances, 2016

On the other hand, the works: *Bingo, 2014*; *Bullying, 2014*; and *First Outing, 2014*, recount stories – real or invented – intertwining experiences/fictions of characters seemingly linked with the children storytelling universe. Erupt with possible references, which at first contact may seem incongruent, due to rearranged relationships between the elements, these works are saturated and impregnated with meaning, reaching new sensations in an ever fluid, however unexpected, interpretation.

The works of Bettina Vaz Guimarães evoke an uninterrupted movement, challenging its two-dimensionality and enhancing the role of light and viewer. Moreover, the pieces call upon suggested unfinished actions, where familiarity is uniquely fragmented to a pragmatic assimilation of a seemingly strange and unknowable reality. The diagrams are a result of the junction of talent, support and action, expanded into the aesthetic realm, focused and portrayed as multiple technical and procedurally innovative art pieces, paintings. In this way, diffuse relations between the pieces are established. These are intrusive pieces, with a strong chromatic intensity, in which geometrical elements (lines and forms) structure the figure and/or abstraction.



In *Element Collective*, 2016, the images are projected as floating elements, which as a whole constitute frames of a corporal sequential dance or movie, spatially repetitive, and transient such that all the pieces are structured as a single choreographed piece.

The beauty of this collective is articulated in the details, in the perfection and magnanimity that permeates this *whole*; it is in the eloquence of each of the details which together makes the piece as a collective protrude thereby reinforcing the picturesque value of the *whole*. In this way, the artist configures unfinished maps in which each of the structures makeup part of a plastic artistic language, transforming them into a series of animated graphs and impregnating them with meaning beyond their geometrical forms and identifications. In this way, her images transcend their usual meaning, becoming much more than what they usually portray.

These are pieces that conjure a sort of sensorial seduction by ideals that mesh the aesthetic and the conceptual. It confirms aesthetics as a “specific configuration” in the domain of art which we as spectators much learn to interpret or read. In this case what we see is a manifesto with traces curiosity and infinite continuity.

Each composition incorporates a repertoire of marked originality of operational and elemental concepts, plastic and visual, revealing a fascination of the artist with aesthetic construction of growing artistic quality. What is observed is a unique structural composition and representation

laden with symbolism, and mystery, while proposing an intimate bond and reciprocity between image elements. Thus defines “a way of thinking that develops on the things of art and seeks to say that they consist as things of thought”¹.

Andrés Hernández
Curator, professor and producer
São Paulo, Fall of 2016.

¹ Rancière, Jacques. “Prólogo”. In: *O inconsciente estético*. São Paulo: Editora 34, 1ª reimpressão 2012, pp. 11 e 12.