

Beauty's intelligent nature

"Horizonte Vermelho" (*Red Horizon*, 2003), a very long, thin piece approximately four meters wide, appears, in essence, just to be a landscape photograph, with sky, sea, sun and cliffs. However, Mariana Tassinari subtly removes the thoughtless and abandoned comfort from nature's pure beauty to return to the viewer a more complex and interesting beauty.

Instead of a unique and immutable record of a view (and of life), she arranges this space with different photographic frames of the same place, adding sequences of various skies instead of only one, with different gradations of light and distinct proportions between the areas above and below the horizon line. Also, instead of connecting one image to another, she separates them with irregular gaps by applying red plastic adhesives in rectangular shapes of different sizes, contrasting them with nature. "Horizonte Vermelho" (*Red Horizon*) represents Mariana's practice throughout her first seven years of production.

She travels the world gathering images of mountains, seas, houses, buildings, windows, roofs, trees, beaches, people – and everything else that delights and intrigues in places and things of human space. From this raw material she creates not only a reproduction or a laceration of what she saw, but a multiplication of points of view by selecting different angles and variations of color and light, which will be printed when creating the final piece. Finally, she adds a non-photographic element, with a different physicality, less of memory and more of immediate, material presence, which can be an opaque adhesive, an acrylic or a tile. It is in this apposed, superimposed or juxtaposed element that the key to Mariana Tassinari's poetics lies.

Earlier in this journey, this "external" element came in the form of drawing over an acrylic-enclosed photograph. An experiment that, from a distance, reminds us of a meeting of the styles of René Magritte and Marcel Duchamp. She laid the outline of an open window on a celestial image encased within the transparent enclosure; Then, in another work, the apposition of the contour of a pair of legs; And in yet another - one of a little house. Already, her fundamental gesture was the activation of the photographic scene; not in the sequential sense of film, but rather in the sense of multiplying its contents, including its physical aspect. Here, everything suits the processes of movement and change.

Later, in 2005, Mariana added new complexity to her work by arranging photographs with colored tiles. On one hand, she placed this industrial element beside the picture, asserting its material presence as an outside thing, belonging to real and live space. On the other, she invoked the relationship between photography and painting through strong visual cues, articulating the work as a painter would. In one of this series of works, the almost abstract picture of a beige house with a blue sky, in the exact size and shape of a tile, seems to function only as a color element made to contrast with three red tiles. In this manner, the photograph is used as a collage, as another hue to the "pictorial" work, but without abandoning the memory of that which gave rise to the original coloration.

In the following years her paint-less and brush-less "painting" experience strengthened, particularly through the addition of colorful acrylic where, before, there had been tiles, even though Mariana simultaneously dedicated the same effort to the search for light and color variations through the exclusive use of photographic material. We can see this in the Paris ferris wheel work; or in the mountainous landscape of greenish-pink tones set between two images of interiors with pink walls and small red frames.

However, the introduction of the colored and reflective acrylic had started down a new and fruitful road for such a young and precise creative process. Thus far, we had had a multiplicity of views of the same landscape or the same situation with an implicit refusal of unity. We had also had the insertion of an external element to the photograph, as substantial as a tile or paint, or as immaterial as a drawing, that gave new color and movement. Now the acrylic, beyond its own color, brings to the picture, through its glass-like reflectivity, the vivid, busy, present-day and simultaneous experience – though virtual - of external events. I have in front of me, on the wall by the window, a small piece made in 2006, in which a horizontal strip was removed from the opaque photographic impression of dry trees, probably an image from a northern hemisphere

autumn. The two images that originated from the removed strip were recomposed over a yellow acrylic base, leaving a yellow strip between the two parts of the image of the trees. In this acrylic strip, external movement from outside the window is reflected – silhouettes of buildings and parts of the sky, with the light changing throughout the day.

In 2009, Mariana started intervening with a painter's hand as well, using acrylic paint over the photographs. Hence, it was no longer about simulating painting. In the series "Planares" (*Planar*), for instance, she applies monochromatic geometric forms over photographs of a strange landscape, which sometimes reminds us of Guignard. In both the "Aérea" (*Aereal*) and "Biblioteca Azul" (*Blue Library*) series, she selects parts of the photograph and introduces her plain and vivid colors. Once more, the photograph and the glaze are driven by something present and current.

A more complete experience, on a larger scale and in a public space, was achieved last summer on a busy avenue in São Paulo. With everything that was accumulated during the past seven years, Mariana used an outdoor glass panel, of 1.30 x 30 meters, in front of Sesc Santana, and applied images of beach-play interrupted by rectangular colored planes. In that case the glass worked as a mirror, allowing the cars, the pedestrians and the sky, reflected especially in the colored surfaces, to join in the game. A simple and beautiful combination of high complexity, in which intelligence and sensibility always win.

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