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Tudo o que é profundo ama a máscara

Whatever is profound loves masks

ANTÓNIO NEVES NOBRE and RITA FERREIRA

Curator ANA CRISTINA CACHOLA

23.06.17 – 23.09.17

Opening 23.06.17, 19h-22h

The truth is the masks

As an absolute the truth is, shall we say, an extemporaneous place of discussion. The metaphysical web, which established the truth as destiny, will or desire, crumbled down into the ruin of positivism, which was replaced with a dialogue encompassing subjective standpoints and polymorphic verities. It is in this field of infinite possibilities that the relationship between image and truth is set as the trope for contemporary visual (artistic) production.

Whatever is profound loves masks launches a discussion on the dynamics of representation that pervades image production throughout time. Here, the pictorial gesture and imagetic creation are exposed as sham, as fraud and as a faking of previously, and subsequently, existing realities. However, all these attributes are shown as essential to the possibility of a new making, or of making something that is new. This new making is also the making of truth, based on the certainty that truth only takes place in the field of representation. Representational dynamics, along with their ontological status, are brought into discussion via multiple strategies that throw representation beyond the function of reference or simulacrum. Representation is (artistic) creation.

Nietzsche's saying in *Beyond Good and Evil* - "Whatever is profound loves masks" - is convoked in the title precisely to question the articulation between creative possibilities and the poetic irrational: the masks that make images real. António Neves Nobre and Rita Ferreira approach this articulation from positions located within the (always expanded) territory of painting. Resorting to subjective strategies, the two artists build up a ritualistic imaginary that recuperates both the celebratory and the sacrificial. Truth is celebrated and sacrificed in its own name.

António Neves Nobre's paintings are also beyond good and evil. They do not contain a moral history (all the works are deliberately *untitled*), a figurative intention or a metaphorical inclination. It could even be said that their location, in a premeditated limbo, bestows upon them apparently contradictory attributes, a tensional drive - between ascension and fall, figuration and abstraction, monochromism and chromatic diverseness. While, on the one hand, his works display the luminal power of fire, a stellar irradiation; on the other, they harbour a liquefied dimension that proclaims the revealing will of pictorial matter, bringing experience and representation into coincidence.

Therefore, in his painting, there is no referential or verisimilitude generating certainty located upstream, his painting shows a reflexive-visual process, which is to say, the visual result is not conditioned by anything external to the artist: each painting testifies to António Neves Nobre's reflexive and reflected gestures. Indeed, his last exhibition was titled *Testemunhas* [Witnesses], convoking into the discussion the witnessing status of the here and now that (trans)form the work of art. That succession of moments is unveiled in the explicit layers involved in each painting by erasure and search. In this sense, António Neves Nobre's oeuvre is founded on a "stratigraphic activity", to borrow Douglas Crimp's expression, in which, through various strategies, the various strata of representation, the various dimensions that interacted and interact to create a visual signification of images are questioned.

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Rita Ferreira compulsively questions the truth of the medium: her works are always paintings that are not paintings – a truth that proclaims that there is no truth –, pictorial paradoxes with a sculptural and installational predisposition, which contradict one another as drive to paint. If *whatever is profound loves masks* the artist's work is permeated by a painting that masks itself with everything, including itself. Her work insists on showing objects removed from their context, so that the viewer is led to build structures of signification to host these objects, much in the same way as the artist constructs structures-sculptures that host painting beyond the canvas.

Each work by Rita Ferreira is an image creation device that produces imagined territories, which demonstrate how the alteration or obliteration of the context, as well as image juxtaposition, can expand signification and complexify it. We know that Rita Ferreira paints objects, but their origin, reference or reverence are unknown; they are objects inasmuch as they respect objectual conventions – confined within their limits, expanded in operative (im)possibility. The artist leads us to believe in their preponderance and validity, even if one doubts their existence. They are truth because they exist there in that specific location as a sort of Wittgensteinian (pictorial) language game, which is only meaningful *in situ*.

With their different backgrounds, the oeuvres of António Neves Nobre and Rita Ferreira seem to constantly distance themselves from one another, albeit along parallel paths, paths that pursue representational mechanisms without any sort of final destination. The truth is always an a-cyclical and spontaneous process. This does not mean that the artistic procedure lacks intentionality: in and of itself intention is a means and an end. We do not seek a truth below or above painting, the works featured in this exhibition do not belong only to an artistic genealogy, denouncing, overcoming or continuing a preceding creative movement or trend, they belong to a territory seething with the movement of other images that address and build the artistic discourse.

These two artists know that neither things in themselves, nor the subjects that use language (regardless of the code they might resort to), unilaterally possess the ability to generate and crystalize meanings. Meaning is always built through symbolic practices and processes that constitute systems of representation. By inscribing itself in an expanded spatio-temporal continuum representation rebels as action, practice, work, operation, in other words: representation is performative. Although signs possess a material dimension, it is the intellectual, social and cultural processes that activate their representation-ability, which is not inherent to that materiality, but depends on their symbolic function. Images do not emerge to represent, they are accepted and shared *because they represent*.

The truth is the masks. All masks.

Ana Cristina Cachola, Lisbon, 06.2017

Translation: Rui Cascais Parada

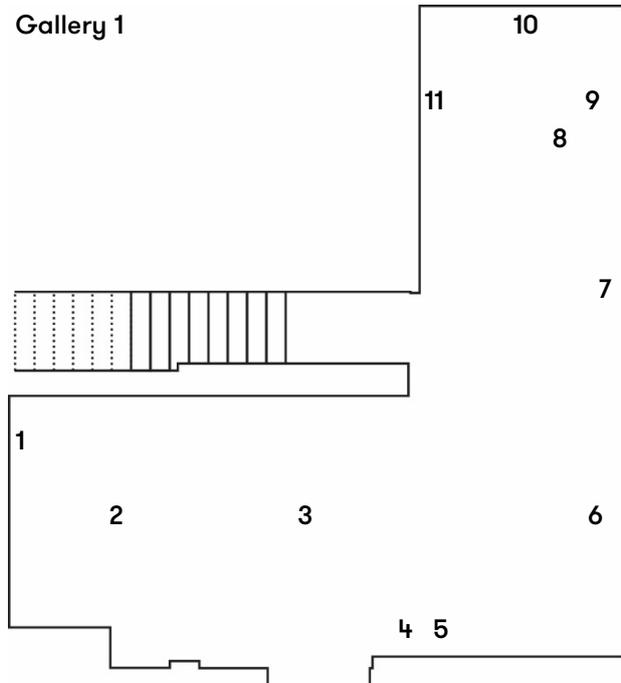
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António Neves Nobre was born in 1993. He lives and works in Lisbon. Nobre obtained a BA in Painting at the Lisbon School of Fine Arts (University of Lisbon). He was nominated for such awards as Arte Jovem, Prémio Nacional Para alunos de Artes Visuais, Carpe Diem Arte e Pesquisa, 2016. Recently, he has presented the solo exhibition *Testemunhas*, Travessa da Amorosa, Lisbon (2017). He has also participated in the following group shows: *Alguns Desenhos*, Rua Actriz Virgínia, Lisbon (2016), *Casa Ocupada*, Casa da Dona Laura, Lisbon (2016), *Finalistas Pintura Belas- Artes 14'15*, Sociedade Nacional de Belas Artes, Lisbon (2016), *Arte Jovem*, Carpe Diem Arte e Pesquisa, Lisbon (2016) *Ciclo Corda Bamba*, Casa Ferreira, Lisbon (2016) *Cast a Cold Eye*, Museu Condes de Castro Guimaraes, Cascais (2015) *Ninguém diz Nada*, Quinta da Alagoa, Carcavelos (2013) *96 Horas*, Espaço Porta 6, Lisbon (2012).

Rita Ferreira (1991) lives and works between Lisbon and Berlin. She obtained a BA in Painting at the Lisbon School of Fine Arts (University of Lisbon). In 2016 she was awarded the grant “Bolsa Jovens Criadores do Centro Nacional da Cultura”. Her first solo exhibition *Boca Seca Coluna Húmida*, curated by Ana Cristina Cachola, was presented at Galeria Diferença, in Lisbon, in 2017; *A coisa está preta*, curated by Pipi Colonial (Ana Cristina Cachola, Daniela Agostinho and Joana Mayer), Bregas, Lisbon (2017); *Primeira Página*, Galeria Módulo, Lisbon; *O Papel do desenho. O mundo é a minha imaginação*, Galeria Angeles Baños, Badajoz; *Finalistas de Pintura*, SNBA, Lisbon, 2014; *Ninguém diz nada*, Quinta da Alagoa, Carcavelos, Lisbon; *FUSO-Anual de Video de Arte Internacional de Lisboa*, Museu da Electricidade, Lisbon; *Summer Calling*, Sala do Veado - MNHNC, Lisbon, 2013; *Piquete*, Residências Coop, Lisbon and *GAB-A*, FBAUL, Lisbon, in 2012. In 2016 she published an interview with artist André Romão, titled *A política sente-se nos ossos*, in magazine *Revista Contemporânea* and was on the editorial board of *Revista Marte#05 - Os processos da arte* along with Catarina Rosendo, Igor Jesus, Ligia Afonso and Sara Brito; in the same magazine she had published an interview with artist José Loureiro titled *A pintura é uma sardinha* in 2014.

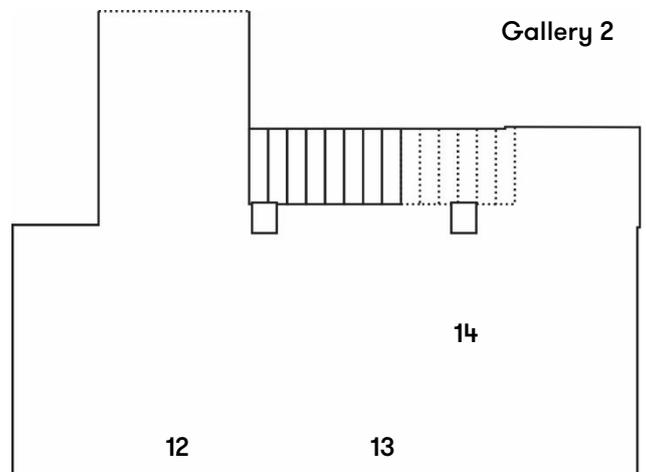
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1. Rita Ferreira, Rede, 2017
Oil on paper, 80 x 60cm
2. Rita Ferreira, Anel | Joelheira, 2017, Oil on paper and brass structure, 215 x 181 x 36 cm
3. Rita Ferreira, Leite de Cabra | Pétala, 2017, Oil on paper and brass structure, 215 x 181 x 36 cm
4. António Neves Nobre, Untitled, 2017
Oil on canvas, 60 x 40 cm
5. António Neves Nobre, Untitled, 2017
Oil on canvas, 60 x 40 cm
6. António Neves Nobre, Untitled, 2017
Oil on cotton material, 220 x 267 x 135 cm
7. António Neves Nobre, Untitled, 2017
Oil and paper on canvas, 3 x 40 x 30 cm (Triptych)

8. Rita Ferreira, Foguete, 2017, Oil on paper and brass structure, 100 x 70 x 25 cm
9. Rita Ferreira, Fino, 2017, Oil on paper and brass structure, 100 x 70 x 25 cm
10. Rita Ferreira, Manga, 2017
Oil on paper, 196 x 228cm
11. António Neves Nobre, Untitled, 2017 Oil on canvas, 150 x 120 cm



12. António Neves Nobre, Untitled, 2017
Oil on canvas, 220 x 180 cm
13. António Neves Nobre, Untitled, 2017
Oil on canvas, 220 x 180 cm
14. Rita Ferreira, Queria morrer anonimamente no deserto, 2017, Oil on paper and brass structure (7x) 54 x 40 x 15 cm (Polyptych)