

Martinho Costa

Sombra de Terra Queimada

Terra de Sombra Queimada is the name of a pigment used by Martinho Costa in his palette, but it is also an expression that refers back to the Mediterranean culture, which is the origin of the Persian patterns and traditional tiles that have been a source of inspiration for the artist in his latest works. In this new project, Costa adds a wider reflection about the idea of surface in Painting.

Traditionally, the surface has been understood as a space where patches, lines and colours converge and create the language of painting itself. Nowadays, the painter continues capturing coloured spots on a canvas, but (s)he is also an individual who lives in a world populated by screens which are the space where (s)he can work in a similar way to the pictorial surface but taking into account an important difference: inside the screen, the image has a more mobile nature because it is part of a flow of ongoing information.

When a painter creates a paint stain, (s)he knows that, at least initially, this colour will remain immobile. That's why this gesture is charged with an increasingly deep resistance. Because, today, stopping, crystallizing, suspending the time is almost an act of rebellion. Stopping or only moving slowly implies that the other individuals' fast pace is going to be interrupted or conditioned; and any interruption in this flow engenders confusion and chaos. So, painting in the era of screens has quite a different nature. It requires a new manner of thinking the images and, therefore, it requires new methods and techniques which are radically different from the traditional way of painting.

In Terra de sombra Queimada, the viewer faces small realist fragments, lines, abstract spots of colour... all of them mixed with different kind of patterns. These all together construct a combination apparently free that produces echoes closely related to the fluidity and movement of the expressionist language.

Nevertheless, what is happening here is just the opposite.

The former expressionist painter's hand was loaded with hidden forces and it shot the paint as a lightning in a storm. But here, Martinho Costa creates a different type of expressionism which is cynical, pretended, and digital. Each line and stain have been entirely copied from an original: a complex net of pixels where all these elements were included. He reverses the idea of the free gesture bequeathed by the expressionism, to convert it into a gesture which is rather a simulacrum of freedom.

Painting has always been a reflection of each time. An example was the expressionism as a reflect of a society that originated the conception of the individual man. A liberal, modern, self-made man that surpass himself. An individual who is important enough to have the right to express himself. So, keeping in mind this connection between Painting and the society where it is developed, we can see that Martinho Costa creates his works facing up to the digital revolution in which, nowadays, we all are immersed in. A reality where freedom is just a simulacrum.

Martinho Costa

Fátima (Portugal), 1977

He lives and works in Lisbon (Portugal)

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 **Folding Screen**, DA2 Salamanca
Layer 0, Galeria 111, Lisboa
Casal da Cega in Dub, Galeria Vera Cruz, Aveiro
Baixas Frequências, Galeria silvestre, Tarragona
- 2015 **Todos os Dias Saio Por Um Caminho Diferente**, Galeria silvestre, Madrid
Pedra, Project Room, Justmad 6, Madrid
- 2014 **Unnecessary Repetition of Meaning**, Galeria silvestre, Tarragona
Les Statues Meurent Aussi, Galeria 111, Lisboa
- 2012 **Thumbnails**, Galeria WHO, Lisboa
A Primeira Pedra, Galeria Má Arte, Aveiro
- 2011 **O Diário de Robert Stern**, Galeria 111, Lisboa e Porto
- 2009 **Reconstrução** Espaço Arte Tranquilidade, Lisboa
- 2008 **Ruína**, Galeria 111, Lisboa e Porto
- 2007 **Poeira**, Espaço Living Room, MCO, Porto
Völkerwanderung, Centro de Artes de Sines, Sines
- 2005 **Máquina de Campanha**, Sopro, Projecto de Arte Contemporânea - Lisboa
- 2004 **GRAN TURISMO**, Sopro, projecto de Arte Contemporânea - Lisboa

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 **Pinturas** with Daniel Vasconcelos Melim e António Melo, Galeria Monumental, Lisboa
- 2016 **Gente, Cem Anos de Representação Humana na Coleção Manuel de Brito**, CAMB, Algés
10º Prémio Amadeo de Souza Cardoso, Museu Municipal Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso, Amarante
Just Mad 7, Madrid – Galeria silvestre
- 2015 **Positions**, Berlin (Galeria silvestre)
Just Mad 6, Madrid – Project Room
Viagem - Casa da Cerca, Almada
Exposição do Prémio Amadeo de Pintura – Museu Amadeo Souza-Cardoso, Amarante

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- Guarda, Israel, "Representações Ficcionalis da Paisagem" Catálogo Exposição: Paisagem e Limiar, 2007
- Oliveira, Luisa, Soares, "ÍTaca de Verde Eternidade", Catálogo Exposição, O Espelho de Ulisses, 2006
- Crespo, Nuno, "Paisagens Idílicas", Catálogo Exposição: MAQUINA DE CAMPANHA, 2005
- Villegas, Daniel, "A Precária Imagem do Controlo" Catálogo Exposição: GRAN TURISMO, 2004