

assume vivid astro focus . aquele vestígio assim... feérico

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Mon. to Sat. from 10 am to 7 pm

aquele vestígio assim... feérico

by Ricardo Resende

From the fatal dazzling of the vestiges and from the fiction of the excesses of conscious color, without brilliance or a glossy sheen. In the constant ecstasy of vogue dances, it is a celebration of the consciousness of the demolition and re-creation or reconstruction, it is trans-life. Devouring the splendor and dramaticity of baroque art in trans-luxurious, fantastical, sumptuous, magical and dazzling mountings. The desire for immersion into the fantastic world of the large pictorial installation entitled *aquele vestígio assim... feérico*. It is a pure hallucination that proposes to leap into the abyss of the colors seen in this exhibition.

From where do they emanate? After getting to know and observing the mixture of colors of the Huari people, of Peru, an age-old silent Andean culture that combines orange with pink, pink with green, pink with yellow, orange with green, brown with brown, brown with gray, Eli Sudbrack dives into and focuses on the power of colors, concentrating them in the rectangle of his recent chimerical paintings. These new paintings transcend the work of avaf. Color is an element of communication for this people, transmitting energy, beyond being a unifier of human beings. Color is culture.

The “artificialization” of the color in painting, which before going to the canvas is painted on the “window” of the computer, exploring the shapes and the digital “paints,” is the abstraction of abstraction as a simulation of the canvas in the digital machine. In other words, what is seen in a painting is exactly what is seen, nothing other than that.

A painting on corrugated cardboard can be nothing more than the various colors on the cardboard, the manner in which it is painted, and, of course, the way we interact with it. “It is nothing other than what is there...” Robert Ryman said on one occasion when asked about what he saw in his paintings.¹

The recent paintings by avaf (assume vivid astro focus, a reference to the personal pronoun We), can be seen in this way. avaf uses a specific material to paint with – *Liquitex Ultra Matte Medium* – a fluid extender that increases the thickness of the acrylic paint and makes it opaque. avaf mixes this liquid with the paint to reach the matte aspect of the colors that characterize the paintings on cardboard where translucent and fluorescent results are mixed with non-glossy, lusterless color in such a way that they coat the surface of the canvas without allowing light to pass.

avaf seeks opacity to achieve the “pure but fantastical” and luminous colors seen on the computer screen, which is where these paintings begin. avaf makes them as prototypes later brought to the surface of the corrugated, torn and exfoliated cardboard, thus exploring its ruffled texture and roughness. This process often reveals the fluorescent hues in the initial layers used to add more shine to the color tone.

avaf arrived at this painting still as an artist collective, but now with a more individual and intimist practice. It is a way of painting that expands through the excess of luminosity on the surface of colors that predominate in their “canvases,” as an outcome of what they had been doing in their mountings and installations, also charged with vibrant, vivacious, luminescent figurative colors, bordering on the abstract.

Reaching a synthetic and refined appearance, with many “excited and euphoric” colors that he uses to paint and construct his immersive environments, the artist winds up conferring to these paintings a new materiality with an aspect of “artificiality.” Otherwise, it is a painting that seems to surpass painting itself, not allowing a passive attitude when observing them. It is the painting of another painting.

The viewer is the central piece in his work, which beckons for interactivity from whoever is observing it, always. The viewer can be dragged into his installations and paintings where the colors “drag in” whoever is looking at them. In this sense, the concentration and intensity of the colors is striking, achieved by an extremely detailed process for obtaining the desired profusion of splendid tonalities, by which we are submerged into the rectangle painted on a human scale. The artist arrived at a format that is like we were standing before a mirror, of our size, which opens as a window to the world of colors. It is as though we were under the effect of a psychoactive, magical substance, with hallucinatory sensations of shapes and ultra-lively colors, which rush toward us, drawing us into a euphoric sensorial state, of ecstasy in the presence of the color.

There is an entire process of tonal studies and testing to obtain the colors in a way that makes the gaze run over the entire extension, from top to bottom, from bottom to top, from one side to the other, and so on, “imprisoning the eye” in this chimerical path over the surface of these paintings. One color leads to the next. Or one color complements the next even though they are conventionally opposite. There is no way to deviate from this pulsation that emanates from the “canvases” made of corrugated cardboard, which winds up giving them a certain rough look and visual/tactile dryness, since it is not necessary to touch a painting in order to feel it.

The faded, non-glossy intensity that characterizes these paintings comes from within the color itself, in its depthless opacity. But in these paintings, with their painstakingly studied hues, there is a tonal study of each color that will “go into the canvases”; there is always a reason, nothing is random.

We should look at what avaf has been developing over the course of its career as a collective in which the artists bring their personal experiences and interests cross-influenced by Eli Sudbrack, into a work conceived and made by many hands. It is an unfolding or experimentation that makes the artists of the collective explore all their potential creation without “appearing” individually. They move along without focusing on any personally distinct character, in a unique experience of being just artists.

In this exhibition, it could not be different, as he brings as avaf his assistants Gilson Rodrigues, Thiago Barbalho, Ricardo Alvez, Nadja Abt, and his former student and long-standing friend, Camila Rocha, in an installation within this show where everything is confused like a single work. An immersive environment of color, as it should be, which is the apex of dazzlement seen in the canvases and carpets all around the gallery’s large room. In this way the show exercises the idea of the collective.

Actually, what they do in these paintings is something like a zooming-in on the walls of the previous installations covered with wallpaper, which characterize the work. The closer we get to them, the more we abstract from their shapes and colors. As we get closer and farther away the image disappears and reappears.

That is what they did. They zoomed in, and what they got was the abstraction of abstraction. In some way they re-created their immersive installations in the space of the gallery by bringing together the paintings with the “dancing carpets” that are somewhat shamanic, somewhat ritualistic, and which by their movements put the color and shape into a trance. Made of dyed alpaca wool, they are characteristic of the Andean region and the Hauri people. It is nothing more than another version of the paintings on cardboard, now suspended and spinning above the heads of the public. They whirl and twirl ceaselessly in an unending movement, sometimes standing still, sometimes spinning, thus choreographing the center of the exhibition room in different rotations.

The color drawn in time and in the void is transformed into mobile sculptures.

It is interesting how the paintings give rise to their own title. In the same exercise that the neofelis symbolist poets used at the end of the 19th century, finding shapes in clouds, Eli observes his paintings after they are finished, looking into the abstraction of abstraction to find figures or figurative shapes drawn with abstract forms. He sees things that give him the titles which somehow wind up inducing the gaze of the observer. This is nothing more than an exercise of seeing figures hidden in abstraction. Names like *Bouquet Parrot*, *Chimerical Pastel*, *Brown Bonbon*, *Skirt Helmet Armor*, *Berber Sultriness*, *Lipstick Shelf*, *BB (Barbie Brasília)*, *Tongues*, *Cats and Vases*, *Downcast Glittery Fluttering...* He gives the titles a “campy” focus, or, in other words, a gay touch in the manner of seeing and being.

What is seen in the painting is exactly what is seen. Nothing other than this. In other words, a painting on corrugated cardboard is nothing more than paint on corrugated cardboard or the way it is painted, and of course, also the way that we feel. Which is nothing more than “also what happens in regard to the colors. A pink on gray paper colors the background green.”²

As Marinaldo Santos, from the state of Pará, says, “the caboclo [rural riverside dweller] only wants two things in life: a door to go in and a window to look out of.”³ What Eli Sudbrack made was a zoomed-in shot at what avaf had been doing up till then. By taking a profound look at where he had come from, through that window, he saw only colors and shapes, the magical essence of the world.

1. BOIS, Yve-Alain. Painting as Model. Ryman’s Tact. Abstraction II. An October Book. p. 215.

2. Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. O olho e o espírito. Cosac Naify Portátil 24: São Paulo, 2004. p. 133

3. Queiroz, Armando. Intrusos Impertinentes. Bienal Naifs do Brasil: 2018: Daquilo que escapa/Serviço Social do Comércio. Sesc Piracicaba, São Paulo, 2018, p. 19