

## Visual Dialogues

Colours, forms, shapes, textures, all are constituent parts of Sofia Areal's work. Areal, expresses herself through the colours used and how they are applied to the canvas, the gesture which then is translated into the various forms, shapes and textures. It's an art of expression, not expressionist even though it has links to it, it's an art that does not have a clear discourse behind it or a concept for every piece or series, its concept or better said the practice that defines it, is an expression of the self, its problems, its needs, worries, dreams, through the act of painting and drawing, the two main currents in Areal's work. It's an "anti-pain practice" as the artist calls it, it is a filter of her reality, and this reality is filtered through paint or better said, colour. It's ultimately a work about life as life is what inspires the artist and life is colour, there is always colour, we perceive the world through the use of colour, colour and emotion are bound together intimately and it is through emotion that we connect with the other, with the self, we then rationalize and streamline this emotion.

This exhibition focuses on colour and its interactions between the different sets of colours, materials used to produce colour, the material that takes the colour in, how then do the different works interact with each other and the different rooms. As this space has a particular side to it, as it is composed of many rooms. This opens the space for various visual dialogues, which are then part of a larger one. Ultimately all this then relates to the viewer, how, by wandering through the various rooms with its different set ups and works, will the spectator feel, what will she think. A multi-layered dialogue indeed. As with life as in art, everything is always made up of multiple layers affected by countless factors and it is from this seemingly chaotic situation that everything is brought forth.

The works chosen represent a section of Areal's work throughout the years, with a stronger focus on works from the 2000s onwards. The selection is also based on two main points. On novelty, an important part of the works present, have not been shown at all or not very often and not very recently also. On the other hand, the idea was to use this various rooms to convey different visual dialogues with the works within each room, using also works with tones and shapes that possibly are less commonly associated with Areal's main body of work. One can think of each room being a mini exhibition by itself, which then leads to the other and so on, a chain of exhibitions or multiple dialogues.

Another connection that is sought and worked with, is the extending of this dialogue to other visual fields such as film/theatre, or fields which have influenced Areal with their strong image provoking possibilities, such as literature. In terms of film/theatre one links with Jorge Silva Melo's work, one of the greats of the visual field in Portugal, which has recently passed away and we would like to pay homage to his work. Areal and Silva Melo had a very strong friendship of many years and had worked together various times. The culmination of which was the film directed by Silva Melo about Areal's work, which is part of a series of films about Portuguese artists. But the most important part of this relationship was the usual meetings, the talks, the ideas exchanged, which is what creates a basis for peaks of visualization. On the literature side, one has added various quotes to the exhibition space, quotes by authors such as Cesare Pavese, or Cesário Verde, and also artists, such as Pablo Picasso. All very important participants in this dialogue of the self which is then translated into a gestural expression of colour. Dialogue and undeniable part of life and a basis of society, of understanding or lack thereof.

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