

The tress have routes , we have feet

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The constant negotiation between the local and the global, the foreign and the familiar, has become a basic condition of modernity. (Jean Fisher, 1992)

It remains the contribution of the borderline artists... to perform a poetics of the open border. (Homi K. Bhabha, 1993)

Mónica de Miranda is an artist of the cities. In a time of crossbred cities, which benefited a great deal of the arrival of people of multiple cultures. Immigrants? Cosmopolitans? A glance treated with care to the immigrant populations in the city of our time, to their complexities and new opportunities, allows us to show several things; one of them that the traditional counter position between origin and destiny it does not seem to turn out to be already very clear not even defined. The categories of immigrant and of cosmopolitan are superimposed when a significant part of the metropolitan city is formed by people of very varied conditions and positions, who in everyday weave economical, social and cultural bonds between very different worlds. From the telephone booths, from the cell phones and from the Internet there is the circulation of love, money and business, and there is trans-national nets being created that make connections with many other points of the planet. On the other side, the cities became more heterogeneous, for example music and dance have new and richer modes of fusion, though the function of the migrations had some heighten on this. Nevertheless, immigrants also change, in a way that their double relationship between the host country and the native land produces in itself an aesthetic that, by its turn contributes for changes to occur in the host country and in its cultural expressions. In this project, abstract subjects like globalization, migration, multiple identity, cultural hibridity, are re-contextualized through real situations marked through the work in the Great Lisbon, mapping what Mónica calls with great claim a Bigger Lisbon.

Besides the Underconstruction exhibition, there is also the launch of a book with the same title, a cycle of cinema, conversations, dinners and parties in several associations, walks and visits to some neighbourhood districts, taking the project further into its already recognized diversity. What Mónica de Miranda intends is "to create space so that the migratory and trans-national flows are seen by themselves as a diversified and multifaceted reality as a platform for creative opportunities and a place of transit for personal, social and cultural changes. "At the heart of its strategy is the principle of interculturality, which should involve a gradual and systematic promotion of spaces and processes of positive interaction, a possible generalization of relations of trust, mutual recognition, for discussion, learning and exchange. Strategy of the artist and of artistic creation that is always a privileged place

to capture and to create dynamism to these dimensions, even that utopian these are present.

Her artistic approach has led her to understand, and to create visibility of how much of the city's immigrant population lives within the city, in Greater Lisbon, out of what remains of the military road built for the defence of French invaders at the beginning of the century XIX. A "fortress Europe" finds here historical territories to protect the city from new invasions of foreigners ... But also, even there in the suburbs and in the margin, or perhaps because margins are under construction, unfinished and fluxional more definitive than other forms of urbanity, which in its turn create constant redefinitions of culture and identity.

The Works with which the exhibition starts and ends are a symbol of exposure of everything that is in the middle. I mean, as a kind of precipitate of multiple flows and movement of people and cultural dimensions. When you enter, "Public Works", a cement mixer, a mixer camouflaged. Machine-building par excellence, refers to the activity most often practiced to a very large number of immigrants in Lisbon. Inside itself everything moves and is mixed, and it is equipped with wheels, it occupies a temporary space, transitional, of under construction. But the mixer in the exhibition is fully covered, obscuring the machine, which could

so be transported from the area of building works, and get camouflaged in the context of art. Covered by a fabric with a pattern of palm trees, which in our imaginary (even if there is so many of us!) refers to the places of origin of these people. The last piece that you see, "Black House", reinforces the idea of process. We finished the building, but a temporary building. Made of the rest of a material used in the scaffolding work in construction.

Itself a migrant, born of migration, when thinking about migration, Mónica de Miranda does also a reflection of herself and the environments where she had lived and her own social relations. Which make part of her creative process, marked by collaboration and participation with her personal circle of friends and relatives, as shown in the video of the journey through the landscape of the old, and today's military road. And that process extends to other fellow artists, scholars and critics, as in happens in the exhibition that includes works by other authors, that present themselves sometimes collective works. As well as other activities that make this project.

We do not know what will be our civilization when it really finds other civilizations by means other than the shock of conquest and domination. We must admit that this meeting has not yet been held in the form of a genuine dialogue. So we are in a kind of interval in which no more believe in the dogmatism of a single truth, and still we are not able to overcome the skepticism that we had fall into. Work of Monica Miranda like this can help us understand this situation and, hopefully, to open the borders of the fortress.