

Casa A. Molder Gallery

Joana da Conceição

The Mirror in Me

Joana da Conceição (1981) is the artist featured in the third exhibition of Part 2 of the **Casa A. Molder Gallery** project.

O Espelho em Mim [The Mirror in Me] is the title of this exhibition, which was specifically conceived and created for this space.

In a painting, three figures seem to observe us. Lines and repetition unite them; we know they are figures because they have eyes and the lines appear to be hands in a very peculiar position. We are told that these faces are observing us. The colours used and the suggested movement are electrifying. When we look closely, we find out that they are connected to a fourth, imposingly hidden one. A silhouette of death, with a skull-like design that could also be a butterfly. There is a certain chaos of colours, lines and movement, there is restlessness. **Dar a Ver** is the title of this painting; the artist tells us: “It’s a depiction of a continuum, and it works as a frieze, in the form of a meander on repeat. The three figures see – they are given eyes to see – through the figure above them, which is dead. That figure is a depiction of some woman or other who preceded me and taught me”.

“Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long
I think it is part of my heart. But it flickers.”

It was this section of Sylvia Plath’s *Mirror* that most influenced the construction of this exhibition, as well as its title, **The Mirror in Me**. The artist as mirror, her painting as reflection (in the visual and intellectual senses of the word). There are also recurring dreams, dreams of houses in which the discovery of a room, whose existence had been until then ignored by the artist, leads her to the mature acceptance of the fact we do not really know how old we are. Also present is the constant struggle between what we are and others’ perception of us. It is here that **Joana da Conceição** approaches stories of women from other times, whose transgression, nearly always driven by something the artist calls “love fever”, reveals to us a force that deserves to be highlighted. By approaching these stories, **Joana da Conceição** lends them weight and continuity, thus rescuing them from oblivion. In them, she also finds a mirror, which shows us sexuality and nonconformity as a reaction to the smothering and unfair environment in which their lives on this earth were spent.

This unusual painting is accompanied, on the other side of the wall, by something the artist describes as a deconstructed credenza. **In Media Res** is the title of this installation. On this “altar” of curved lines, evocative of pelvic bones, and timeless colours, are falsely laid a number of other paintings, which stand out from the wall due to both their placing in the space and their colour palette. We also find here small sculptural elements that allow the paintings to be installed in the space and at the same time change them: the pink lines that change one of the paintings into a strange face. Painting that wants to come out of the plane to become something more.

Some of these elements, which the artist calls “creatures”, are made with bamboo and artificial fingernails. Here, we recognise an element of death, a connection that surrounds us every day, seemingly impossible to shake off.

Joana da Conceição's painting lives off an intense dialogue between the artist's inspirations and a way of painting with very precise rules, which include an interaction between obedience and accepting the body and its needs, as well as a constant questioning of the act of painting. This painting is neither obvious nor facile, even though at first glance it might deceive us, perhaps due to its bright, garish palette and use of elements that seem familiar to us. There is a scent of death in these paintings, also present in Plath's Mirror.

Mirror

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.
Whatever I see I swallow immediately
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.
I am not cruel, only truthful,
The eye of a little god, four-cornered.
Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long
I think it is part of my heart. But it flickers.
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.
Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me,
Searching my reaches for what she really is.
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.
I see her back, and reflect it faithfully.
She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.
I am important to her. She comes and goes.
Each morning it is her face that replaces the darkness.
In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an old woman
Rises toward her day after day, like a terrible fish.

Sylvia Plath

The exhibition is open to the public on weekdays, during the shop's afternoon schedule, i.e. from **3.30pm to 6h30pm**; visits on weekends and holidays can be made by previous appointment.

The Casa A. Molder Gallery is a project by artist **Adriana Molder**, intended as a showcase for contemporary art that makes use of the exhibition space of **Casa A. Molder**, a historic stamp shop at the heart of Lisbon, on the third floor of 101, 1.º de Dezembro Street, its address ever since it was founded by **August Molder** in 1943. The Casa A. Molder Gallery is a fully non-commercial project.

The Casa A. Molder Gallery project is kindly supported by:
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
Câmara Municipal de Lisboa

The Gallery is installed in the A. Molder stamp shop, on the third floor of **101, 1.º de Dezembro Street**. For appointments, please contact info@galeriadacasaamolder.com. Access to the Gallery is through the shop.

www.galeriadacasaamolder.com

<https://www.facebook.com/galeriadacasaamolder>

Joana da Conceição

Was born in Rebordões in 1981. She lives and works in Lisbon.

She finished her degree in Visual Arts - Painting in 2004, and her Master in Contemporary Art Practices in 2008, both from the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto. Together with André Abel, she formed Tropa Macaca in 2005, a contemporary electronic composition duo still active.

She was awarded the 5th Edition of the Partnership Atelier-Museu Júlio Pomar/ EGEAC and RU - Residency Unlimited, NY (2020) and won the Anteciparte Millennium BCP Award (2005). Joana was an Inov-art scholar in Rio de Janeiro, at Capacete Residências Artísticas (2010-2011), participated in the ZDB Residencies (2011) and the Lagamas Artist Residency promoted by Cournelius Foundation (2013).

In 2018 she cofounded Toda Matéria, a female multimedial collective of variable formation.

A selection from the latest presentations of her work: **Humanta**, Quéréla, Lisboa, 2022; **Animais Sintéticos** - Tropa Macaca, Gnration, Braga, 2022; **Aerossol**, PADA, Barreiro, 2020; **Verbo Sideral**, Verão, Lisboa, 2020; **O Berço de Vénus**, Casa dos Crivos, Braga, BoCA Bienal, 2019; **Guia Interior**, Serralves Chapel, Serralves em Festa, Porto, 2018; **Cores em Silêncio**, Lehmann + Silva, Porto, 2018; **Matéria Doméstica Exótica**, ZDB, FLUR, Palmira and Pacific, Lisboa, 2017; **Síntese Radiante** - Joana da Conceição & Tropa Macaca, Cinema Passos Manuel, Porto, 2017; **Corpo que Sabe**, Galeria Carlos Carvalho, Lisboa, 2015; **Bora Puxar Atrás Para Ver Melhor**, Museu Bernardo, Caldas da Rainha, 2015; **Vinde ver Pintura**, Edifício Amparo, Lisboa, 2015; **#####**, Uma Certa Falta de Coerência, Porto, 2014.

A selection of recent group shows in which she participated: **Ninguém. Só eu**, Tropa Macaca, Centro de Arte Oliva, São João da Madeira, 2022; **Um Corpo, Um Rio**, Galeria Liminare, Lisboa, 2021; **Vai e Vem**, Tropa Macaca, Walk&Talk Festival, São Miguel, Azores, 2021; **Coleção Primavera - Verão: 10 artistas plásticos, 10 Lojas com História**, EGEAC and Câmara Municipal de Lisboa, **O Mundo do Livro**, Lisboa, 2021; **This must be the place**, L+S Projects, 2020; **Máscaras**, Galeria Municipal do Porto, 2020; **Ponto de Fuga**, Galeria do Torreão Nascente da Cordoaria, Lisboa, 2019;

Tropa Macaca has been performing live in venues and contexts as diverse as Cafe OTO, in London; Volksbühne's Roter Salon, in Berlin; Fylkingen, in Stockholm; Les Instants Chavirés, in Paris; MK Gallery, in Milton Keynes; Museu Vostell, in Malpartida de Cáceres; MNAC, ZDB, Lux Frágil, Stones, or DAMAS, in Lisbon. TM has participated in festivals such as BoCA Biennial '17, in Lisbon; Live Arts Week '16, in Bologna; Le Guess Who? '12, in Utrecht; Serralves em Festa '08, in Porto.

The band's discography: **Animais Sintéticos**, EP (2022, Private Press); **Vai e Vem/Colónia**, Cassette (2022, Private Press); **Guia Interior**, Cassette (2019, Edição de Autor); **Caçador do Futuro**, LP [2018, Dunno (PL)]; **Vida**, LP [2016, TTT (UK)]; **Praga de Urubu Só Pega em Cavalo Magro**, one sided 12" [2014, Wasser Bassin (PT)]; **Ectoplasma**, EP [2012, Software (EUA)]; **Sensação do Princípio**, LP [2009, Siltbreeze (EUA)]; **Fiteiras Suadas**, LP [2008, Qbico (IT)]; **Marfim**, LP [2007, Ruby Red (PT)].