



Mirian Inêz da Silva

Biography

Mirian Inêz da Silva

1948, Trindade, GO, Brasil | 1996, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil

Mirian Inêz da Silva developed a trajectory marked by some significant ruptures and tensions that give a greater degree of interest and sophistication to her artistic production. Born in Trindade, Goiás, where she attended the Goiana School of Fine Arts, she moved to Rio de Janeiro and attended the course of Painting by Ivan Serpa at the Museum of Modern Art (MAM) in 1962-1963. She has changed from a popular culture of the Brazilian interior, from religious festivities, oral myths, ex votos and children's revels, to a metropolitan society permeated by the mass culture of music, theater, cinema and comic books.

The artist began her career as an engraver immediately recognized by the institutional circuit, participating in this condition of the São Paulo Biennial in the 1963 (VII Biennial) and 1967 (IX Biennial) and the 1st and 2nd National Young Print Exhibitions in the Museum of Contemporary Art of the University of São Paulo (MAC-USP).

If Mirian transfers from a popular culture to a mass culture, then she should move from the nocturnal setting of the prints to the

solar medium of the paintings. The woodcuts produced by her in the 1960s had great technical quality, accuracy in the notch and an organic adaptation of the forms to the contingencies of the wood. The result justifies her recognition in the arts circuit of the country and abroad. With common themes, linked to the visuality of daily life, such as a dog, an automobile, a woman at the door of the house, a boat and images of saints, the artist creates a gloomy universe in which the predominance of black color with small white veins produces a dialectic game between pause and movement. The strong Expressionist influence, the determined traits and the treatment and control of the little light remind Oswaldo Goeldi. At the beginning of her trajectory, Mirian already establishes a conflict by giving a nocturnal expression to what occurs in the light of day. Daylight is transmuted into darkness. Other tensions must also occur in future paintings.

Mirian abandoned woodcuts at the end of the 1960's and in 1970, she held her first paintings show at the Loja Residência in Rio de Janeiro. As well as an award-winning engraver, her performance as a painter is also remarkable, so much so that in 1983, a fruitful moment in her production, she made an exhibition at Galeria Bonino in Rio de Janeiro.

An article in the newspaper O Popular, from Goiânia, on December 20, 1983, affirms her prominence in the national scene and transcribes the artist's opinions: "For me to paint is life. I paint what I love and feel in my heart. The people for me, Brazil, are a huge attraction. I enjoy stories, popular music and most important, I am very much with people, no matter the social scale. My painting owes much to the great masters I had in Goiás. And in Rio, Ivan Serpa. "

This testimony allows to highlight the themes featured in her painting (and in the engravings): aspects of sociability in rural and in the city, popular culture, mass culture and religious and mythical representations. She turns to what is alive, festive, pulsating and ordinary.

One can see in Mirian's work the concern with a certain Brazilianness, sought in nature and culture. In her paintings these two aspects are represented by the vegetation, the sea, the circuses, parties and children's games.

Moving from the engraving to the painting, Mirian recovers the sunlight, hidden in the darkness of her woodcuts. In her white-painted paintings, the little round, orange shape of the sun insists appearing frequently. There is even a painting in which on the

left side there is a crescent moon and on the opposite right side, a luminous sun.

Her paintings appear in simple and repetitive compositions, on cut wood, inheritance of the woodcut. However, this apparent simplicity deserves analysis, from an internal approach to the work. Not enough of the tensions already noted, both in the trajectory and in the language of the artist, there may be new conflicts, hidden on the seemingly calm surface of her paintings.

At the outset, one can emphasize a tension that is given permanently in her paintings, that is, the coexistence between an abstract and geometric order and a figurative order. All of Mirian's paintings have a geometric structure at the edges of the frame (bottom, top and sides) and ample white space available to the narrative in the center of the frame. Thus the paintings are constituted by two pictorial orders, two visual territories, found side by side, the geometric abstraction of the edges and the white space for the figurative elaboration. In this sense, Mirian is more than a figurative artist, and it is convenient to emphasize her sensitive geometric making, close to concrete art. (Given Mirian's emphasis on the master Ivan Serpa, the question arises: would the artist have come in contact with the members of the Frente Group, who also attended Serpa's classes?)

By visually observing the presence of these two simultaneous orders, of these two movements of forms and colors, one perceives that they complement each other and also distance themselves, they deny themselves. As spatial composition, one part needs the other; while discussion of language, each one poses specific and differentiated problematization. In Mirian's paintings, this conflict is not solved, but it becomes a fundamental element to understand the particularity and aesthetic sophistication of her works.

The four lanes (which can be deployed in others, as will be seen below) are free of representation, mean by themselves, even if they can refer to the idea of windows, curtains or frames. But, if such were the equivalences of the bands, they might appear eventually. There are some paintings with curtains leaning on the bands, differentiating one from the other. So, the bands are not equivalences, nor representations, they are autonomous and permanent forms that imprint a certain structuring of the painting, composing its entirety. It should be noted that the banners are not only formally different from the visual events of the white plane but, as a great colorist who is, the artist gives a different color treatment for these two aesthetic orders. The bands

are made in dark colors and low tones, while the shapes / figurations of the white plane have bright, vibrant and bright colors. Moreover, the bands attract and retain the light of the colors, while the shapes / figures of the white plane emit and expel the light. Mirian is dealing with two distinct and opposing spheres that frame her paintings in conflict.

For the purpose of approximations, we can see that the palette of colors of the geometric bands refers to Iberê Camargo, while the colors used for the elaboration of the figurative plane - where bright colors contrast with the background - remember Anita Malfatti and Tarsila do Amaral. Moreover, Mirian seems to take from Tarsila the volumes and curved and synthetic tracings used to compose her vegetation, hills, clouds and sea waves.

When the narrative in the white space occurs in external environment, Mirian places two small blue semicircles in the upper corners of the painting, symbolizing the sky. In this way, some compositions resemble a Byzantine niche or architecture that welcomes the characters of the narration. It is thus created, due to the small curvatures, an environment of spirituality.

One can think of the use of the bands as a constructive effort to compose the paintings, valuing the plan and the absence of perspective. Both the bands and the figurations are in the same pictorial plane; are elaborated with control and with fair definition of borders between forms and colors. Therefore, without the presence of a vanishing point, the images (drawn with apparent simplicity) are usually frontal, as are the bands. So similar are these two orders and movements that we immediately grasp a unity based on the geometry emanating from the tracks, which impacts the figurative order, making it minimal and eliminating the naturalism and realism in the paintings. The specificity of Mirian's language moves in a constructive direction.

Thus, it is possible to affirm the existence of a hybrid unit, of coexistence between different, imparting particularity to her work. The geometric dimension can be reinforced by observing that much of Mirian's paintings are made by overlapping horizontal spaces. When starting to look at the bottom of the painting, the first layer is always the autonomous band, then generally the horizontal band of the ground / earth can occur. Sometimes this second band may be the one that represents the sea or the air. Finally, one arrives at the last band, usually autonomous, and the suggestion of the sky is the small blue semi-circles lateral.

Faced with the immobility of the tracks and the white background, in the scenes created by the artist the characters are always

in action. Mirian captures a moment of dynamic events: walks, parties, dating, religious acts, dances, bar tables and various shows. There is a certain tragic aspect in the realization that the fleeting, changeable movement of the figurative dimension occurs alongside an inflexible, rigid and permanent world of the geometric dimension. Contrary to the visual perception of movement that occurs in everyday records, religious perception dominates the perception of stability.

In the society and structure of Mirian's painting there are agonizing, irreducible conflicts. One might think that her paintings express not only the joy of living or the celebration of life. Why not consider, from a tragic perspective, that Mirian elaborates her transparent, leaked and floating figuration, as a desire for full life, in the realization or suspicion that strong and permanent structures can be obstacles or limits to the good direction of what happens in the daily? Perhaps for this reason the refusal of perspective, naturalism and realism. Maybe that's why her figures usually float in white space. Perhaps for this reason it is necessary to get out of the daily life and seek help in the religious and the mythical - give life to the mermaids, recognize the possibility of flying or gliding in the air, the pleasure of a bar table or a game of cards, balancing on a wire or a galloping horse. In mythologies and religion Mirian seeks to leave for Icarus to continue his flight or for Adam and Eve to continue their pilgrimage. The loss of paradise can be seen in many of her works.

Having to situate herself between different conflicts, the work of Mirian is permeated by some paradoxes. One of them is centered on the "woman in the red dress". Just as the series of paintings of a religious nature (exemplary of this theme is the painting of Christ crucified, in which it is flanked by two angels, 1981), the issue of the feminine is also remarkable. The artist, several times, crosses the themes of religiosity and sensuality, as in the paintings that represent Adam and Eve, nude and sensual, as shown in the painting Adam and Eve (1992). Or the artist insists on the theme of the couples' meeting (Gabriela and Nassif [1978] and Casal [1995]). But this question becomes potent when Mirian presents the woman in a red dress, ostensibly present in scenes of bars, dances and festivities. See the painting Geni and the Man of the Zeppelin (1981), in which the woman in the red dress places herself in a determined and haughty position, challenging and willing to face man and machine. This question of the feminine, sometimes approached with humor, pervades even the works with the theme of mermaids.

The posture, sensuality and scenery surrounding the woman in the red dress are a clue to bring Mirian's paintings closer to the theater's resources.

The exhibition of the Bonino Gallery in 1983 featured several paintings that refer to the theater: They do not wear black-tie, Gabriela, clove and cinnamon, Teatrinho azul and The flying circus. In addition, Mirian produced several paintings focusing on popular Brazilian music singers such as Dalva de Oliveira, Elba Ramalho, Gal Costa, Ney Matogrosso (in very sensual representations) and Chico Buarque (in intellectual posture).

The approximation between Mirian's works and the theater can be further enhanced by observing that the faces of the figures painted by the artist seem to be theatrical masks. Humans and animals wear a frozen, repeated mask with lots of make-up, rosy cheeks and pointed lips. Her paintings present the world going on in a scene mouth. The figurative action given in the white and luminous space is not real, but a possible representation. The climate is dreamlike, floating and playful - everything is desire seeking visual expression.

We have, then, a Brechtian paradox: Mirian does not want to deceive us with her paintings, they are allegories and do not pretend to be neither realistic nor naturalistic. From the conflict between geometric abstract order and figurative order, Mirian's work can be understood as an intermediate dimension to think about art and life. Her paintings allow us to problematize language in art and at the same time pass the vision of an observer of the life of Brazilian people and society.



Individual Exhibitions:

2021 Mirian Inez da Silva, Museu Nacional da Republica, Brasília, Brazil

2021 The Extraordinary Impurities of Mirian Inez da Silva, Almeida e Dale Art Gallery, São Paulo, Brazil

2015 Mirian, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

Collective Exhibitions:

2023 "Reverses and Transverses": Artists Outside the Mainstream (and Friends) at the Biennials, Galeria Estação, Sao Paulo – SP | Brazil

2022 Brazilian stories, MASP, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2021 They Were Already Here, Galeria Base, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2020 Women in Folk Art, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2019 The Sacred in Brazilian Modern Art, Museu de Arte Sacra, São Paulo, Brazil

2018-2019 Exposición Lina Bo Bardi Tupí or not tupí? Fundation Juan March, Madrid, Spain

2009 Brazil Brazilian, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil (CCBB), Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

- 2008-2009 Brazil Brazilian, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil (CCBB), São Paulo, SP, Brazil
- 2005 It is our pleasure, Galeria Brasileira, São Paulo, SP, Brazil
- 2004-2005 Forms, Colour and Expression, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil
- 2002 6° Biennial, Folk Art of Brazil, Piracicaba, São Paulo, Brazil
- 2002 Pop Brazil: Brazilian outsider art, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil (CCBB), São Paulo, SP, Brazil
- 2000 Brazil + 500 Rediscovery Exhibition, Parque Ibirapuera, São Paulo, Brazil
- 1999 Naïve Geniuses 70/80, Brasília, Brazil
- 1994 Great Exhibition of Brazilian Folk Art, Galeria Jacques Ardies, São Paulo, SP, Brazil
- 1980 Primitive Paintings of Brazil, Museu de Arte Carrilo Gil, México
- 1980 People of the Earth, Paço das Artes, São Paulo, SP, Brazil
- 1980 Images of Dance, Paço das Artes, São Paulo, Brazil
- 1976 Painter of Imaginary, Paris, France
- 1969 Biennial of Engraving of Santiago, Chile
- 1968 19° National Salon of Modern Art, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, MAM-RJ, Brazil
- 1968 17° National Salon of Modern Art, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, MAM-RJ, Brazil
- 1967 São Paulo International Biennial, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil
- 1965 Exhibition of the Young National Engraving, Museu de Arte da Pampulha (MAP), Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil
- 1965 Exhibition of the Young National Engraving, Museu de Arte de Santa Catarina (Masc), Florianópolis, SC, Brazil
- 1964 Exhibition of the Young National Engraving, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC/USP), São Paulo, SP, Brazil
- 1963 São Paulo International Biennial, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

Public Collections

Museu de Arte de São Paulo MASP, São Paulo, Brazil

Selected Publications:

2021 The Extraordinary Impurities of Miriam Inez da Silva, Almeida e Dale Galeria, São Paulo, Brazil

2020 2020 Women in Folk Art, Vilma Eid e Fernanda Pitta, Lis Gráfica, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2018 Brazilian outsider art: a contemporary survey, Vilma Eid e Germana Monte-Mór, publishing company WMF Martins
Fontes, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2015 Mirian, Vilma Eid e Miguel Chaia, Lis Gráfica, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2000 Brazil + 500 Rediscovery Exhibition. Nelson Aguiar, Bienal Foundation of São Paulo and Associação 500 Anos
Artes Visuais

1988 Dicionário crítico da pintura no Brasil, Artlivre

1979 Artes Plásticas no Centro-Oeste, MACP

1978 Aspectos da pintura primitiva brasileira, Spala

Exhibitions



2021 Mirian Inez da Silva, Museu Nacional da Republica, Brasília, Brazil



2021 The Extraordinary Impurities of Mirian Inez da Silva, Almeida e Dale Art Gallery, São Paulo, Brazil





Artworks



Casal, 1981

Oil on wood

24,5 x 32,5 cm | 9.44 x 12.59 in



Untitled, 1980

Oil on wood

30 x 40 cm | 11.81 x 15.74 in







O casamento, 1981

Oil on wood

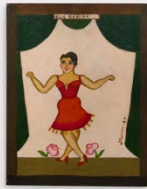
25,5 x 35,5 cm | 9.84 x 13.77 in



Serenata, 1981

Oil on wood

50 x 25 cm | 19.68 x 9.84 in





Untitled, 1970
Oil on wood
22 x 18 cm | 8.66 x 7.08 in





Untitled, 1978

Oil on wood

20 x 15 cm | 7.87 x 5.90 in

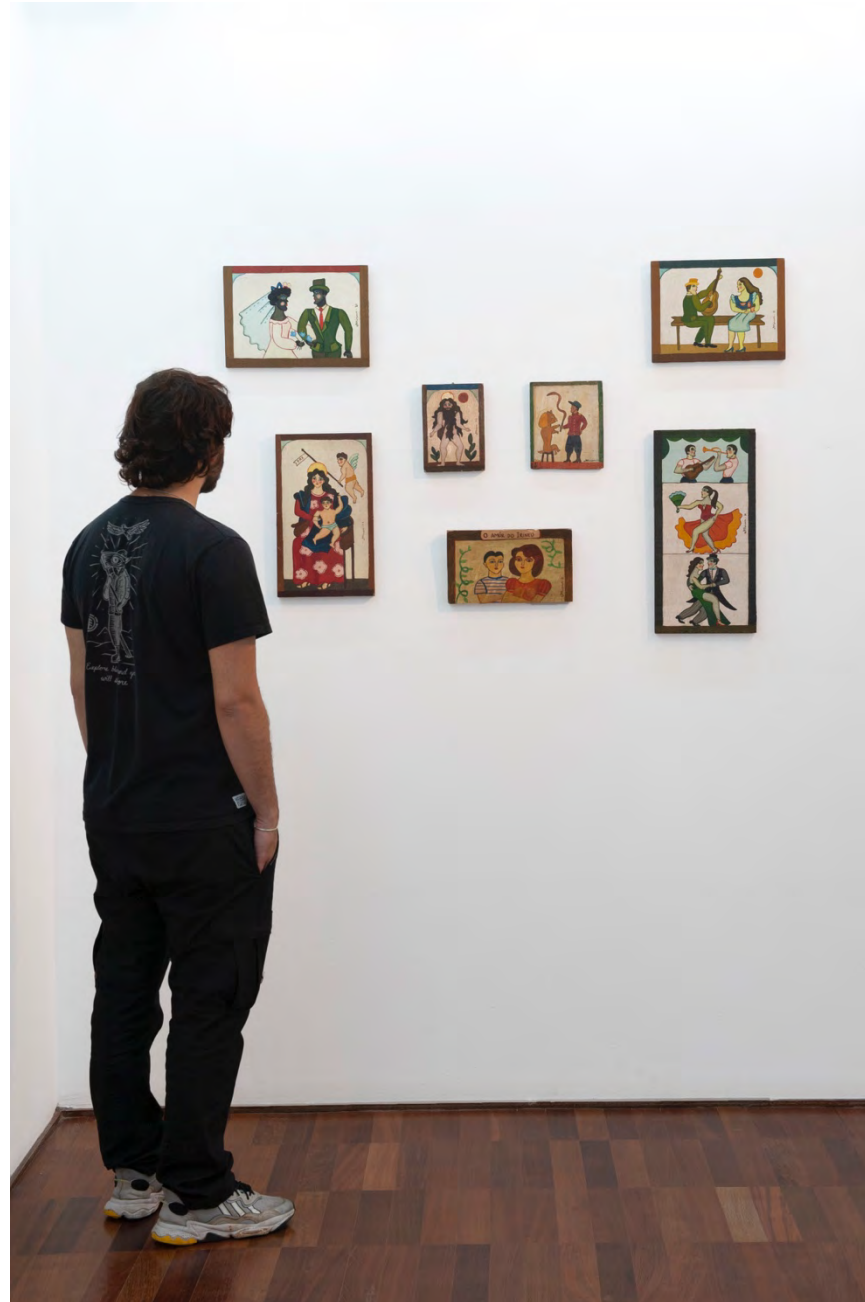


Untitled, 1977

Oil on wood

30 x 60 cm | 11.81 x 23.62 in





With a collection among the most important of the country, Galeria Estação, inaugurated at the end of 2004, devoted itself to revealing and promoting the production of Brazilian non-scholar art. The gallery was responsible for including this language in the contemporary art scene, while editing publications and holding individual and collective exhibitions inside and outside the country.

Galeria Estação works with well-known self-taught artists from various regions of Brazil, such as Agostinho Batista de Freitas, Alcides dos Santos, Amadeo Luciano Lorenzato, Artur Pereira, Aurelino dos Santos, Chico Tabibuia, Cícero Alves dos Santos-Véio, GTO, Gilvan Samico, Itamar Julião, João Cosmo Felix-Nino, José Antônio da Silva, José Bezerra, Manuel Graciano, Maria Auxiliadora, Mirian Inês da Silva, Neves Torres, among others.

Currently the gallery has been incorporating to its cast artists belonging to the contemporary artistic circuit whose works interact with non-scholar creation, such as André Ricardo, José Bernnô, Julio Villani, Germana Monte-Mór, Moisés Patrício e Santídio Pereira.

Starting from this rare competence, the space is able to offer a historical and current panorama of a production that went beyond the limits of self-thought art, at the same time as it investigates names that, independently of the formation, work with elements from the same source.

Galeria Estação

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From Monday to Friday, from 11am to 7pm, Saturday from 11am to 3pm

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