

Webs in suspended equilibrium: Janaina Mello Landini's "Ciclotramas"

In her recent exhibition at the Zipper Gallery, the artist Janaina Mello Landini presents new works from the "Ciclotrama" series, showing for the first time in São Paulo a large site specific sculpture specially conceived for the gallery's main room. As in her previous works, her research focuses on the intersection of several types of knowledge and sciences, such as architecture, geometry, anatomy, physics, cartography, sculpture and drawing, thus creating, on the basis of apparently simple reasoning structures, rhizomatic structures that overlap and expand by connecting and crossing lines and points according to a dynamic distribution of forces.

Her work questions the possibilities of representation beyond a single point of view, superimposing onto the orthogonal character of the canvas and architecture, new spatial coordinates that result in designs of organic forms, of fluid and malleable appearance. With this, the artist produces a "conceptual twist" in the use of geometry when the web, the main figure of her work, is created in a very calculated way from an established scientific knowledge of projection and three-dimensional representation but aiming for an unorthodox result.

For *Ciclotrama 141 (épura)*, Janaina Landini fabricated, for the first time, her own rope, interweaving 1,440 yarns of common string. With this, she was able to reach an unprecedented weight of 120 kilos, which had to be distributed from a repeated procedure of binary division and bifurcation, in which finally the rope becomes almost undone through subdivisions, generating a total of 2,880 points that are fixed on the wall, and are responsible for supporting the mass. These points, simply attached with masking tape, divide the volume proportionally, creating a structure whose stability depends on the exact calculation of force compensation.

The result is an extremely delicate spatial design in which the simplicity (and why not say, precariousness) of the material produces a sculpture of enormous visual power. In some ways, it is as if the artist projected right here, right now the infinite possibilities of crossovers that exist in virtual space, embodying them and inviting us to participate in them. However, if the laws of physics and geometry are capable of securing and stabilizing the artwork, *Ciclotrama 141 (épura)* seems to point, in its movement of equivalences, to the unstable, impermanent, or constantly transforming and reorganizing aspect of things in the world. That is why the web that extends throughout the gallery resembles a living organism, as if the viewer, with each new visit, was able to contemplate another design, a new structure.

On the four canvasses that are part of the show (entitled *Ciclotrama 137*, *Ciclotrama 138*, *Ciclotrama 139*, *Ciclotrama 140*) and are displayed in a smaller area, the artist makes use again of industrial ropes, which are unwoven and fixed according to the same system of division, bifurcation and crossing of threads. However, here Janaina Landini chose to use as a surface plane a special fabric used in the manufacture of nautical boat sails. On it are embroidered geographic coordinates inspired by old and current maps, before the artist attaches the webs of coloured thread. Again, real and virtual space are interwoven, creating a new design, because at the same time that the embroidery refers to the existing, the web tells us of an imaginary space that can also be real.

The room with the *Ciclotramas* is arranged so that the ropes in shades of blue and black are clustered in the centre, connecting all the works. This hodgepodge suggests the existence of a common, still chaotic energy core that tends to propagate, and which will become arranged in the overlapping webs of threads on the surface of the canvases. Poetically, it shows the inseparable relationship between the part and the whole, and the coexistence of interdependence and autonomy through a subtle correspondence of forces.

It is interesting to note that these canvasses also suggest openness to reorganization. From the theoretical point of view, geography works with relatively stable boundaries, or that take a long time to be redesigned. But in the contemporary world relations and flows respond to a special dynamic, accelerated by technology. We can imagine new geographical maps created daily by the reinstating of diverse connections, beyond the limitations of the physical space. It is evident that this freedom of movement is not always welcomed by everyone.

However, the desire for expansion, as the artist seems to remind, is part of the history of humanity, especially since the modern era. The desire for mobility redesigned the geographical map and gave us a new apprehension of the Earth through the Age of Exploration, a decisive factor for the formation of our worldview. Today we see another kind of expansion, perhaps less real, and more virtual. But that has the same power to redesign our imaginary. In any case, the plastic form of living organisms, which seems to inspire the artist, is present both in nature and in society. To understand the on-going rearrangements of our social and natural environment is a more than current challenge. And also to think about the fragility of its system of reciprocal compensations, which can be put in check by a more abrupt movement, generating an irremediable imbalance.

Taisa Palhares