

Las Golondrinas – Maya Saravia

(Migrant melancholia)

Las Golondrinas (The Swallows) is the name of a Mexican song from the end of the 19th century which is still part of melancholic goodbyes and nostalgic memories. Present in Latin American culture and its particular experience of migration, this song also entitles Maya Saravia's exhibition at Balcony Gallery. In this exhibition, she investigates the shapes and the expressions that such movements acquire both in shared as in individual circumstances.

Saravia is focused on building an open narrative, supported by the evocation of memory, of dance and of several movements that are linked to migration and to people's miscegenation. Using a great diversity of means, Saravia problematizes the idea of movement – of the body and culture – and develops her exhibition on the relation of two different but complementary moments. Articulated between the two floors of the gallery, these moments promote a schematic, factual and analytical reading, and also an empirical, engaging and subjective experience.

On the first floor, the artist presents a set of diagrams and small sculptures, divided into two parts. One part shows some instants of seven different choreographies registered on the streets of Lisbon, using the method of Labanotation¹. The other part shows the old "Atlantic Triangular Trade" maritime route, which was the main responsible for the dislocation of resources and slaves between Africa, America and Europe, and also for the consequent miscegenation of people in those places; the path of a migrants caravan which is running now from Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador to Mexico City, with the goal of reaching the US border; and also a map of different musical styles, that emerge from the mix of these different cultures. Still, on this upper floor, a set of small sculptures mimics the sound columns used by street musicians in their street performances.

A neon announces another space in the basement and suggests the ambiance of a ballroom invoking the culture and the memory of the communities which gather there. In this space, that was thought of as an immersive installation, we find two screens reproducing the choreographies we saw upstairs. In a very spontaneous way, the place celebrates the dance and the meetings, the cultural exchanges, and the fraternization. On the corner, a neon states "migrant melancholia".

In consequence of mixing these two environments, regarding heart and mind, emotion and reason, bar and gallery, we acknowledge the departure stories, the joys felt along the way and the desire of arriving somewhere. These movements range from a simple gesture to a great migratory process, and from an individual to a collective sphere.

Sérgio Fazenda Rodrigues

¹ Labanotation is a pictorial system designed by Rudolf Laban (Bratislava, Hungary, 1879.12.15/Weybridge, England, 1958.07.01). Focusing on the study and the systematization of movement, this system allows us to register the position of the body and its choreography in space.

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1 – TT
(80 x 100) Pintura e serigrafia sobre alumínio, 2018

2 – HND / SLV / GTM
(80 x 100) Pintura e serigrafia sobre alumínio, 2018

3 – Kuduro - Dembow
(80 x 100) Pintura e serigrafia sobre alumínio, 2018

4 – Dino (Parque das Nações)
(45 x 70) Pintura e serigrafia sobre alumínio, 2018

- André (Praça Luís de Camões)
- Fábio (Praça Luís de Camões)
- Bruna (Rua Augusta)
- Dino (Parque das Nações)
- André (Praça Luís de Camões)

5 – Janine (Rua Augusta)
(45 x 150) Pintura e serigrafia sobre alumínio, 2018

6 – Esculturas
Dimensões variáveis, 2018

7 – Las Golondrinas
(90 x 35) Néon, 2018

8 – Melancolia Migrante
(80 x 35) Néon, 2018

9 – Vídeo
1 canal, cor, 2018

10 – Vídeo
1 canal, cor, 2018

