

The myth, many clouds and little fear

[...] since myth is a type of speech, everything can be a myth provided it is conveyed by a discourse. Myth is not defined by the object of its message, but by the way in which it utters this message: there are formal limits to myth, there are no 'substantial' ones. Everything, then, can be a myth? Yes, I believe this, for the universe is infinitely fertile in suggestions. Every object in the world can pass from a closed, silent existence to an oral state, open to appropriation by society, for there is no law, whether natural or not, which forbids talking about things.

Roland Barthes, Mythologies

A cloud is seldom a cloud. It's an appearance, a presence, a metaphor, an analogy, an omen, a state of mind, but almost never is a closed cloud in the atmospheric sense of the term. To the many cloud denotations even more connotations correspond, which in their cultural codification change as easily and quickly as the shapes of the clouds that we observe in the sky. The clouds that Lea Managil shows us in "We'll feed the dream as long as we can" are located in the wide latitude of the myth which is the dynamics of collective perception or the poetics of the unspeakable that guide the meaning(s), and not the opposite.

In this exhibition, each cloud insinuates itself into concomitant synesthesia and polysemy, as both (our) imaginary and sensorial participate in the understanding of the displayed element. Throughout the gallery, the cloud is shown as an image (embroidered), a pattern, a game of shadows, an object, summoning the iconic semiotic triad, index and symbol in a game of multiple meanings. Each cloud, named after a giant, accumulates different plastic, visual and narrative layers that contribute to a cyclical awareness of what is done and falls apart, as if it were a dream. The different climatic representations affect (us) physically, being the body that determines what each cloud talks about.

In 2015, Serralves presented the exhibition "Under the clouds: From paranoia to the digital sublime", curated by João Ribas, in which the mushroom-shaped cloud resulting from the atomic bomb and the cloud that names, in the contemporary era, the information networks and data storage. These clouds, which are undoubtedly markers of key moments in recent history, are still present in the artist's (con)figurations, since it is impossible to escape their cultural footprint; however, Lea Managil, in her oneiric composition, rescues the vernacular relationship between cloud and language.

The artist knows that there is a cloud that has been hovering since the turn of the pandemic: a cloud that torments or a nebula that distracts. Gray clouds float over people's heads or rather we all roam with our heads in the clouds. This mystical knowledge results from the conviviality repeated in chairs the same or similar to those found in the exhibition: chairs on esplanades where, under the clouds, one talks and confesses. It will be in the comfort of these familiar chairs that these subjective clouds are inscribed and described in affections and emotions. Seeing them is having the courage of someone who doesn't use an umbrella because they're not afraid of rain.

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WE'LL FEED THE DREAM
FOR AS LONG AS WE CAN
LEA MANAGIL

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