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Love – total tropical or intuition, sensation, illumination, character
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Author
Artist

Jorge Emanuel Espinho
Luiz Zerbini

Nº 0

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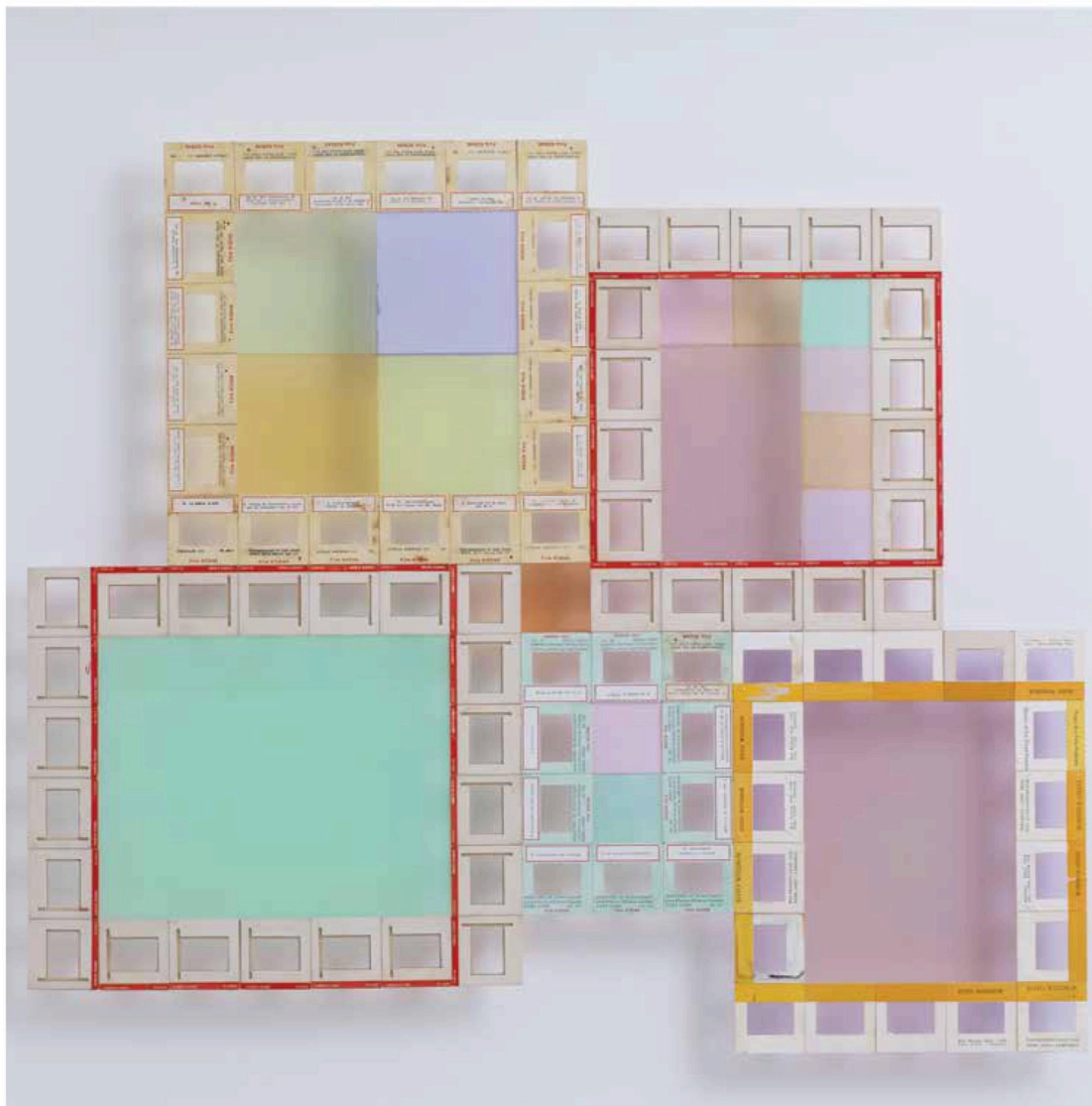
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*Jorge Emanuel Espinho

Luiz Zerbini



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The Tropical everything is always turned on and hot, everything touches grows and is brightly lit, alive, fleshy, sensual, colorful. The Tropical is the envy of the world because there true intensity resides – even when understated –, requiring openness and rapt attention, rewarding you with calm passion, creating more security, joy. In the drunken lust of the tropics there is the confused but revealing synchronicity of the medium – that does not divide but unifies –, a meeting-point of extremes in an enriching fusion, total and overheated, exaggerated, of the sensations that illuminate and fuel the world. Living in this reality that is a permanent and complex discovered treasure only makes sense with abandon and freedom of sensation, openness and levity of feeling, ambition and safety of emotions. To partake of this real and entrenched precious multiplicity one must have the calm soul of a crazy gold prospector lost in the body of a sailor. The prolific drift of life, Love.

Luiz Zerbini was born in São Paulo in 1959.

As a teenager he experimented with insights as he strolled through the empty city on Sundays; entering a street and feeling how the light was transformed into darkness, the noise of the colors in the air, the silence, the sunrays descending, the earth cooler in that enormous shadow, the imposing verticality of the buildings, the dizziness, in this drunken vision, everything led him suddenly to an understanding of the true nature of things: everything touched him and he woke up in this numbness, clairvoyant and sensitive, inundated with emotion, thinking of the nuances of color, the effects of the light, he transcended himself, his whole body, he found himself illuminated in this state, greater, taller, wider. And open, free; he understood. His painting teacher, Van Acker, attributed these experiences to the fact of him being, after all, an artist. Zerbini was surprised, but went along with it.

In this sensual and continuous learning and experience of life, which is translated into an availability and growing attention to the slightest detail, but also to the obvious, since there is meaning and magnificence in everything—he fostered his relationship with painting and painting was also profoundly influenced by this relation. This magic circularity is accepted and emphasized by the artist. It is born of the privileged naturalness of those who see the significant multiplicity of true life in exteriority, when recognized and transformed by the sensitive filter that is unique to each one of us. Zerbini's art is a reconstructed immersion of the exotic experience of being alive, a constant blurring of recognition and identification, testifying to the generous route to which life entitles us, let us then be free and receptive, open and sincere, authentic in our place, which will always be one of passage and relation.

It is important to know how to recognize the truth that inhabits the chaos of chance, to let the gaze hover like a brush in order to see better, to choose the deep colors that provide greater illumination. It is on this

crucial process that the artist feeds and that he later gives back – both he and the experience enriched and augmented – to the world, to us, the essence of this cyclical journey, like a pertinent passage. More than implicit in this active structure of life is the demystification of the hierarchy of things, phenomena, people. The contribution is total, free, autonomous.

When I took to the editor, Charles Cosac, my proposal for the book *Rasura* [Scratch] – an overflowing document that would take ten years to complete and represents the utmost effort of the imagination and the method of the artist, replete with references, images, works, words and sketches, his own and those of others – and gives him the will to explore in this the truth of his creative universe, his influences, his procedures, his journey. It was an apt question: “Are you not scared?” to which he replied “Yes, but this is no reason not to do it!” Such honesty and seriousness are rare and disarming and the result of a fabulous and generous testimony to the complex but free web that is the private world of the artist.

The first image in this book provides an important revelation about the relation between Zerbini and art and time: in an enormous exhibition space scores of paintings of all periods and all styles are scattered around, parallel but at various degrees of distance and proximity in relation to the viewer. One yearns to run through the spaces between those paintings from various epochs, various places, various ages, diving into that sea where everything converses, everything relates, everything is a part. This is how Zerbini says “that I understand the history of art, without the time thing. It's all synchronized!” You cannot fail to be reminded here of the insights the artist describes as “a bombardment of spontaneous information, an avalanche of sensibility”.

One of the most noble advocates of the return to painting in Brazilian art, Zerbini does not stick with this, which he masters as few others can. A member of the sound collective *Chelpe Ferro*, Zerbini has been an actor and a stage designer; he has produced installations and collage, sculpture and illustrations; he writes and he builds up a work of art that is a single landscape which forms the point of intersection of the communicating vessels linked by the flow they are made of; full, luxurious, alive. The tropical being thus manifests itself naturally in a profusion of media, always attentive and reflective, generous and profound in the life it brings, the total raw material which he imbibes and feeds on, transformative and sensory, free and aware, playful, creative, intense.

At the Rio MAM, Zerbini now presents the fabulous exhibition, *Love*, in which he presents himself in his entirety. This show is divided into three parts, the impossible geography of a symbolic map, total. One part occupies the three walls that appear to embrace the museum-goer: lush paintings various square meters in size which are an enormous and complex window on ev-

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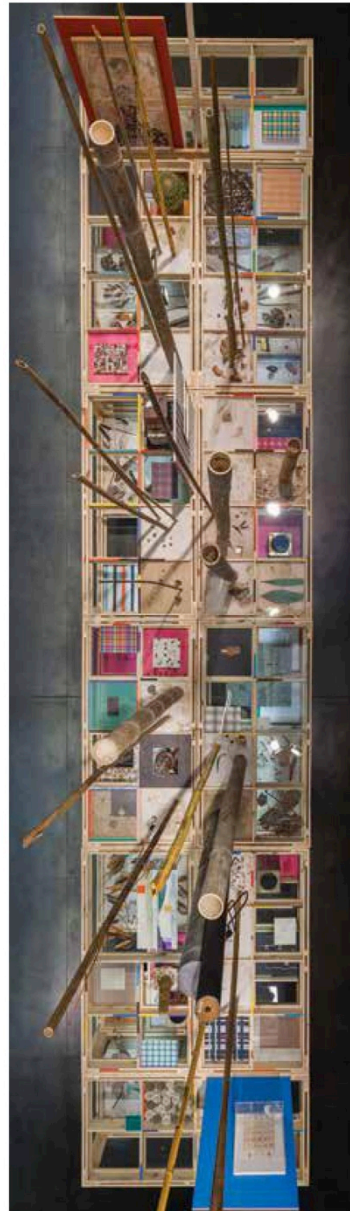


Luiz Zerbini

everything, replete with signs and symbols that delve into nature and emerge from it, technology, light and color, the city, the impressive pictorial world of a hand that invents by reproducing the unique experience of living, of nature. This group includes High Definition – a 2.5 by 4 meter living forest that took a year of daily work to paint – accompanied by other landscapes and settings, all intense, all rigorous, all admirably deep, complete, seductive. On the left, skulls—a symbol that Zerbini has returned to on various occasions – beneath the works, an absolute counterweight, a memento of the ephemeral, a poetic homage to the human feeling and thinking of life.

On the wall opposite, another kind of work: old slides arranged into small panels, create plays of color, small uncanny but familiar images suggesting memories, perhaps invented, perhaps distant; giving rise to ironies of familiarity, journeys, the beach, pleasure, discovery, childhood, art, morality... The playfulness of the artist also provides a zone of relief from painting, perhaps signaling the diffuse importance of memory – subjective and wide-ranging, important even when it comes from the experience of others – as a mobile space we return to, curious eager visitors from the private oblivion that always and growingly accompanies us.

But it is in the center of the enormous room that the medium seems to play itself out – from the Latin medium -, the sparse axis, the living tropical space that is the origin and the destiny, the source and the product, the end in principal, essence and form, the specific country of the artists in which the infinite



1. Grau, 2013, acrylic on canvas, 200 x 200 cm.
2. Natureza Espiritual da realidade I, 2012, installation
3. Mamangá Recife, 2011, acrylic on canvas, 293 X 417 cm.
4. Rio Negro, 2011, slides and tape, 70 x 60 cm

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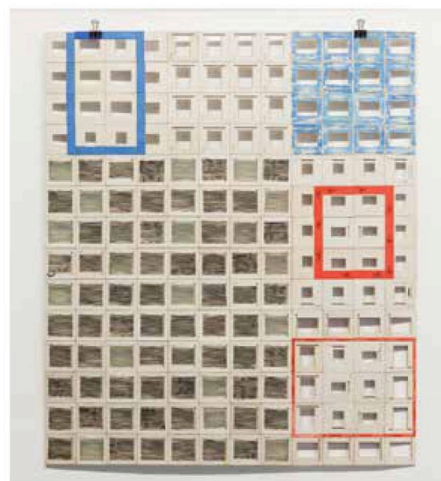
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relations of distant proximity and nearby distance feed on one another, change, mutate; the intimate and here shared heart that creativity inhabits and transforms; the multiple bridge that feeds and takes off in all directions, like a soaked, thirsty sponge that is always drinking.

In the manner of a table from a nature study – a formal tradition with echoes in the work and views of Zerbini – a long bench contains many objects, plants, insects, tree trunks and leaves, sand, reflective and colored surfaces, glass flasks and images, all together, that may be the cabinet of the artist's experience, a full house/bed where days follow dreams and relation follows confusion. In a mysterious intertwining of the horizontal and the vertical, color and content, sensation and seeing, flesh and concept, behold the precious Planeta Zerbini. To be discovered.

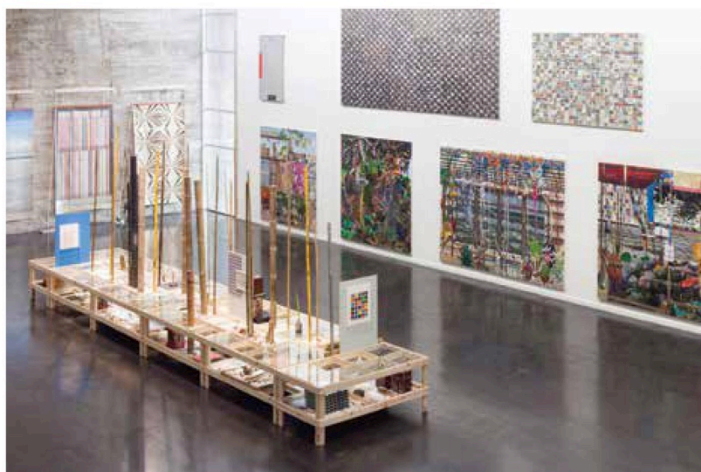
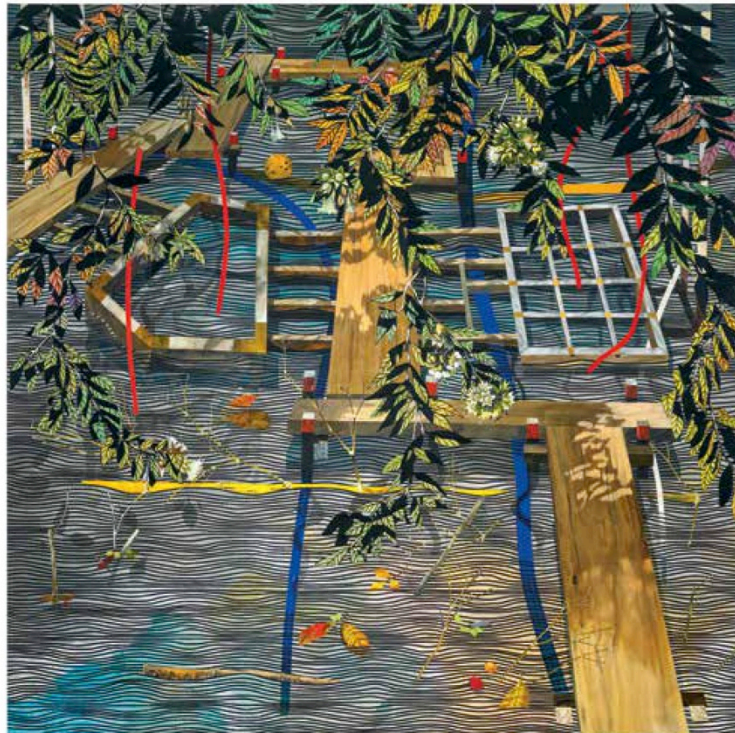
Once again here one is impressed by the delicate but explosive profusion of references and relations, and the courage with which this productive mix is revealed; the simplicity available to the artist, aware of and proclaiming the mysterious and prolific relations with which chance tempers creation and life, and feeds being and feeling, being-there, thinking. More than welcome, in this show we feel the desiring involvement of staying and diving deep – in this hot tropical multiplicity of seeing and feeling the world -, stripped of this movement, achieving that which is only filled from without, the natural occupying the specific, the plastic exuberance of the wild, also interior, a poetic translation that art makes of the mysterious network of the things and chance occurrences of life.



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 It is just what you see (Luiz Zerbini)