

Ana Elisa Egreja

Ana Elisa Egreja (b. 1983 in São Paulo) is a Brazilian artist who graduated from the FAAP (Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado), São Paulo, in 2005. She currently lives and works in São Paulo.

Between 2014 and 2017, Egreja featured in several prestigious institutional exhibitions in Brazil, notably at the 20th Contemporary Arts festival 'Videobrasil' in São Paulo, and CAIXA Cultural (2017), the Centro Cultural dos Correios (2016), the Museo dos Correios in Brasilia (2015); and Paço das Artes (2014).

Today her works are part of the Franks-Suss Collection, London, in addition to Brazilian collections, and to date she is the recipient of three prizes: MARP's Acquisition Prize in 2007 for 'Sarp' at Ribeirao Preto; MAM's Acquisition Prize for the 15th Salao da Bahia in 2008; and last but not least in 2009, the Incentive Prize awarded by Tomie Ohtake for Premio Energias na arte.

Ana Elisa Egreja's practice gravitates around both painting and architecture. Her creative process is transformative and poetic: in the past, she used to construct unexpected settings to syncopate different surroundings. These peculiar environments range from utopic illusive spaces to painted interiors of ghost-like houses or other inhospitable places. Each 'set' is dotted with objects like clues for us to fill the gaps in the story. The implicit narrative here is seductively strange: scattered traces call for us to inspect the work closely: There is indeed an enigmatic aura to her work, something palpably bizarre and yet weirdly harmonic: a poetic wit in some pieces, fragmented realities, subtle play with light in others.

With her current series, *Jacarezinho, 92* - five paintings of which were on display at ARTUNER-curated exhibition *Through the Looking Glass*, the artist goes a step further in blurring the boundaries between reality and fantasy. Here, Egreja took over her late grandparents' home, which was quickly becoming obsolete under her own eyes: a large storage space for her relatives to relegate unwanted objects to. The consequently whimsical decor inspired the artist to create fantastic sets, introducing plants, animals, and strange objects into the domestic environment. Ana Elisa Egreja acted as creator, film director, and documentarist in order to craft and document the incredible scenes born out of her imagination. Only after the process of staging and documenting was completed, did Egreja start painting. Relying on the photographs and her own memories, the artist recreates the staged scenes on canvas, without the aid of a tracing technique: indeed, they have the vividness and pace of a dream.

Egreja's works tread a fine line between balance and chaos; rational perspective and spontaneity. At times delightfully calm or eerily devoid of human life, at others totally delirious and kitsch, each work encapsulates an atmosphere and world of its own. Like a whirlpool, it draws us in, sets the eye in motion with a swirl of colour, characteristically illusive, almost dizzyingly so. Infused with an eclectic touch of Op Art, Brazilian flora, rococo and perhaps Matisse, the paintings also remarkably demonstrate the artist's operatic style that is both exuberant and uncanny; quite cryptic but oddly attractive.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS, Palazzo Capris, Turin and artuner.com, 2017
- JACAREZINHO 92, Galeria Leme, São Paulo, Brazil, 2017
- A LUZ QUE VELA O CORPO É A MESMA QUE REVELA A TELA (CURATED BY BRUNO MIGUEL), CAIXA Cultural, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2017
- VÉRTICE - CONSTRUÇÕES (TRAVELLING SHOW CURATED BY POLYANNA MORGANA), Centro Cultural dos Correios, São Paulo, Brasil, 2016
- DA BANALIDADE: VOL.1, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil, 2016
- DUPLO OLHAR, SÉRGIO CARVALHO COLLECTION, Paço das Artes, São Paulo, Brazil, 2014
- SEVEN ARTISTS FROM SÃO PAULO, CAB Contemporary Art, Brussels, Belgium, 2012
- NOVA PINTURA, Centro de Exposições Torre Santander, São Paulo, Brazil, 2012
- TEMPORADA DE PROJETOS, Paço das Artes, São Paulo, Brazil, 2010
- 15° SALÃO DA BAHIA, MAM Bahia, Salvador, Bahia, Brasil, 2008



Ana Elisa Egreja's work featured in 'Through the Looking Glass', an Exhibition curated by ARTUNER in Turin in 2017.