

CHIMERA | Fernando Lindote

In his first solo exhibition at Anita Schwartz Galeria de Arte, Fernando Lindote presents a series of paintings that feature, among many references, dominant motifs of forest, garden, vase, and flower. However, it would be a mistake to think of these as the primary elements of the works on display, or even as the main subject of the artist's investigation. Lindote's primary interest lies in the very act of painting and the different ways of constructing a painting. He is a painter who immerses himself in the act of making in order to reflect on the structure in its essence: the ways of applying paint to the surface of the canvas, how to use varnishes and work with pigments, the incidence of light, the aspects of figure and background. To this end, the artist studies various periods in the history of painting, researches philosophy, and explores the worldviews of different eras to uncover the needs of representation. The botanical theme is, therefore, one of the motifs that enable such an investigation. Lindote poetically defines the forest as a vast picture gallery, a place where many possibilities of painting are stored. It is through the forest that he embarks on what he affectionately calls "the adventure of the exhibition."

A second theme that runs through the body of work presented in this exhibition is a critical reflection on humanism and the notion of the human being as the center, an idea often materialized in many classical European paintings through the depiction of a fully-formed human figure set against a secondary background. In contrast, Lindote explores in his paintings the exercise of bringing the background to the surface, shifting the figure forward and backward, allowing each of the various elements present to draw the viewer's gaze. This creates a dynamic in which there is not a single protagonist, but rather many. It is a mode of structuring that differs from classical academic painting: it does not abandon composition, but instead makes the background more prominent, echoing the work of modernist painters such as Matisse. To support this reflection, Lindote refers to Edward Said¹'s concept of humanism as mundaneness, a view that artistic and cultural expressions should be connected to the real world and to historical, political, and social issues, as argued in postcolonial discourse.

In this body of work, the artist also returns to his recurring repertoire of images, incorporating not only flowers but also other transfigured elements in his paintings: the cat, the skull, the Lumière brothers' Serpentine, the anthropophagic carnivores, the monkey... a practice that connects him to the thinking of Aby Warburg² and the idea of the recurrence of images, as distinct from mere repetition. It is a process of revisiting certain images and reinterpreting them, presenting them in a different way, within a new context. As viewers move through the paintings on display

¹ Edward Said (1935–2003): Palestinian-American professor, literary critic, and political activist. A literature professor at Columbia University, he was one of the founders of the academic field of postcolonial studies.

with a careful eye, they will be able to identify numerous references, such as Eugène Delacroix, Francisco Goya, Joseph Beuys, Lygia Clark, Maria Martins, Max Bill, Raymundo Colares, as well as elements that evoke marine themes, gold leaf, the figure of the *chat noir*, guardian monkeys of the orb, skulls of geniuses, the Liver of Piacenza, and icons from both the former and current capitals of Brazil — Sugarloaf Mountain in Rio de Janeiro and the Esplanade of Ministries in Brasília.

With so many elements present, the painter's garden transforms into a chimera, a heterogeneous or incongruous combination of diverse elements that, when brought together, take on a fantastical quality, evoking mythology and mythical creatures. Yet at its core lies the very exercise of painting itself.

Cecília Fortes

² Aby Warburg (1866–1929): German art historian, librarian, and thinker, considered one of the founders of modern iconology. He is one of the most widely discussed image theorists among contemporary scholars.