

AFTERWORD

We found it useful to complement this book with an addendum or (why not?) a memoir of justification composed of annotations, some references and pan-historical comments, which would place its author, and the oeuvre of the passive subject of this study, in a retrospective panorama and on the horizon (common and without borders) of the written work and its images.

For this purpose we attached the following notes and footnotes, clearly disobeying historiographical cannons (as well as any other), for the sole purpose of elucidating the reader, less familiar with the subject matter and the context in which it is integrated.

SKETCH ON SURREALISM

The origin of the neologism «*surréalisme*» should be attributed to the poet and art critic Guillaume Apollinaire¹. His apologues, like Greek-Latin fables, *anthropomorphise* animals, linking them to strategic survival behaviours (cunning in the attack and in the defensive instinct) or, inversely, they metamorphose men and women, turning them into *monsters*, by associating them to the pseudo-typical attitudes of common or mythological animals (which approach the reminiscent stereotypes of the subconscious), attributable to certain human psycho-sociological profiles.

During his clinical experience with the Red Cross in the 14-18 War, André Breton² gathered testimonies from soldiers; delirious, feverish, moribund, gassed and drugged from the anaesthetics then in use. Their memories, in this lethargic, half-asleep state, emerged in waterfalls - sometimes of singular literary beauty -, released from the logical and chronological context of common sense. It was a literary beauty somewhat similar to the *images* in Baudelaire's poems³ ... the noun Surrealism becomes part of the cultural nomenclature and the word rapidly enters the common dictionaries of the western languages.

Breton yielded to the evidence of the role carried out by the subconscious as a source of creativity, confessing to being influenced by his researching interest in the field of Freudian psychoanalysis. There were identical conclusions; formulated in the mid-twentieth century by Harald Friezwinkel⁴, in scientifically more precise, up-to-date ... and seriously disputed terms, in an attempt to establish a relationship between ...schizophrenia and abstract painting.

The cultural manifestos of twentieth century surrealism, therefore, propose a theory of pan-scientific origin, which is more a challenge than a systematic or doctrinal proposal. They culminate in the unleashing of successive, libertarian or speculative, polemic but, above all, philosophically enriching *follow-ups*, in which the authors tried to use pseudo-methodologies and to systematise definitions, albeit contradictory, from the moment of their first «*edition*»⁵ because:

If the creative act works, in the sense of a [...] «pure psychic automatism through which one means to express, verbally or in writing, the real functioning of thought», it does not have to correspond to [...] «a dictate of thought, outside each and every aesthetic or moral preoccupation»...

The 2nd Manifesto⁶ reviews the *strictu sensu* literary acceptance of the surrealist phenomenon, believing it to encompass the Fine Arts (Plastic and Rhythmic), only one year after the Catalan Salvador Dali, developed «*a disciplined pictorial conception*»⁷, supported by the classical-traditional techniques of painting.

¹ or Wilhelm Apollinaris de Kostrowizky (Rome 1880-Paris1918)

² a doctor, writer and philosopher, born in Tinchebray, 1896, died in Paris, 1966

³ e.g.: «*Les Fleurs du Mal*»

⁴ then Prof at the Fac. Medicine Univ. Mannheim

⁵ *1st Manifesto of Surrealism* André Breton Paris, 1924

⁶ Breton, in Paris, 1930

⁷ S. Dali in Paris, 1929

Paraphrasing a notable contemporary researcher and essay writer⁷, [---]«*Surrealism did not pretend nor assumed itself to be a doctrine or system*» but it ended by formulating and proposing a theory, from its birth, coming to sediment the base of multiple trends.»⁸ It generates and fosters a «*new kind of sensitivity*»⁷ oriented towards the secret moves of the soul, towards all the forbidden places of passion and of the imaginary world. It does so by placing poesy at the centre of everything, using Art⁹ as an instrument, as a medium and durable plastic support to make it visible and palpable... And thus establishing it as an «*irreplaceable model for all who see in Art, not a search for an Aesthetic, but the use of the ineffable states of being and of the mysteries of the universe*»⁷...

From this same perspective a few critically objective inferences can be made:

- a) Surrealism cannot be considered (beyond the purely episodic concentration of discovery, never of invention) as a school or specific and locatable movement;
- b) It could not constitute itself as an academic language, with a dictionary of synonyms and a grammar, within the precise co-ordinates of the western calendar, nor did it possess a location of state on the geo-cultural maps of anthropology, being limited to the standardised model of a determined phase in the history of the evolution of painting...
- c) «*Whatever co-ordinates with which any chronological parameters for it are hinted at, they crumble as bases of any hypothetical definition.*»⁷

Surrealism *latu sensu* confers with and yet differs from what was promoted (*strictu sensu*) as an instituted and regulated Order by A. Breton. It is a kind of artificial ecumenical and pan-academic movement, to which many of the later *futurist*¹⁰ *plastic* artists, such as, in the *inner circle*, Chirico¹¹, René Magritte¹², Yves Tanguy, Max Ernst¹³, André Masson, Picasso, Marc Chagall, Paul Klee, Oscar Kokoshca ... in the *outer circle*, Archipenko, Alexander¹⁴ Zadkine, Ossip and many others *officially* adhered to and divested themselves of or were expelled from. From this list, the unique public image of the spectacular phenomenon Salvador Dali¹⁵ stands out. Trying to philosophically *thing-ify* it (although without devaluating or minimising the importance of Breton), the borders of surrealism must be understood as being much more indefinite, extensive, universal and historically a-chronychal, supposing that their essence and origins include very complex and not easily identifiable data (between the fantastic world of images, intuition, memory and *deja vu*, or paramnesia) that serve as reference to compulsive (or alienated) inspiration as a source of creativity or an *epistemological gnosis*¹⁶, less episodic, localised and dated than the one born of a streak of wonder, during the two recent world wars.

Thus, the roots of the surreal are lost in the remotest parts of human memory and affiliate themselves to (or are anticipated in) diverse thresholds of conscience in complete and total simultaneity, not being able to be extirpated of some essential notions of human social daily life (even in fields pejoratively designated unreal, para-logical or utopian) although they appear to «*drift on the motionless waves of the oneiric, feverish and delirious subconscious*»¹⁷.

And, notwithstanding, the identity of reminiscences emerging from the subconscious, recreated by instantaneous conduction and redirected by the creative instinct of the fascinated artist, could come to be identified, referenced and systematised in the future,

⁸ e.g. -Sarane Alexandrian in «*L'Art Surréaliste*»

⁹ inferring «*plastic arts*»

¹⁰ or, better still, from the contemporary avant-gardes (to avoid an approach parallel to Futurism and the Expressionisms)...

¹¹ **Giorgio**, born in Volo, (Greece), 1888 - exponent of Italian metaphysical painting.

¹² b. Lessen, 1898 - d. Brussels, 1967

¹³ b. Brühl(Germany), 1891 - d. Paris 1976

¹⁴ b. Kiev(Russia) 1887 - d. NY 1964

¹⁵ ...who abandons the *Movement* in 1937

¹⁶ according to the epiphenomenology of Huxley and Mandalay

¹⁷ **Sigmund Freud**, **Jean de la Roche**, **E. Hemingway**

thereby permitting an evaluation of the almost ghostly and of the synaesthetic mutations from *pathological* or oneiric sources (which psychoanalysts try to unveil and to which other researchers¹⁸ pre-attribute a specific weight, translated in the light of macroscopic organisation and ecosystemic vocabularies, in the proud world of our want of knowledge.

There is some ground for confusing, in the epithelial logic of appearances, from illumination¹⁹ to sculptural ornaments²⁰, in illustrative and decorative (dysfunctional) painting, whether art-nouveau or the arts-deco, a significant number of image related values, apparently doted with, more or less intense, symbolic meanings, which, notwithstanding, maintain relationships with each other - not always nor never - arising from a universal cultural inspiration (from a traditional or literary, popular or erudite source). And to reinforce this supposition, there seem to exist (albeit not trustworthy) similar sources (as improbable they are as factual), of a virtually identical, timeless or a-chronic, but common, signalling corresponding to certain recognisable patterns (of synonymy or antinomy), as codes, which are eventually not as random as the legal theories of conventional scientific coherence and politically correct positivist rationalisations allow us to believe.

THE ART OF THE SURREAL: FROM THE FANTASTICAL TO THE POETIC VISIONARINESS²¹

Ever since the dissemination of Photography²², there has become established - with Impressionism - a potential relationship, different to «*reciprocity, an intimate understanding that dispenses with each and every question*», between the art object (such as a painting) and the observer (in most of his categories).

In general it can be assumed that, «*by feeding his faculties, man seems to respond to that which the universe expects of him*», by justifying himself - before himself (in the singular) and society (in the plural) - by creating-inventing, by discovering-investigating, means and supports of information that transpose, try to overcome, or simply differ (in a transgressing originality) from the conventional languages, the forms, modes and manners of dialogue and understanding.

The artist conquers the use and fruition, with an (almost) unconditional lack of restraint, of the inalienable and socially legitimate right to enjoy Liberty and to express himself freely.

This customary statute has, in general, been granted to the artist and is historically recognised as his, contemporary social communities having rarely dared to demand explanations. Besides, considering that it is possible to regard the Plastic Arts as a «*privileged form of human speech*»²³ (in unconditionally and undeniably self-justifiable circumstances), it is believed that the absence of a determined type of communicative nature is not suspicious, even on the uttermost threshold of the hermetic quality of Abstract Art (*comme on dit*) which thoroughly populated the galleries, museums and other «*cemeteries of culture*»²⁴ of the 20th century, before which it was and is still manifested, as before cultural questions in general, a great disdain or the most «*fearful popular respect*».

The fantastical has always been, however, one of the familiar themes of painting. «*Even before, much before Surrealism, it had already proposed characters and objects, recognisable and identifiable, if not on the whole, then at least partially, creating relationships between themselves which defy verisimilitude and defeat the bases of evidence*».

¹⁸ such as Joël de Rosnay and Humberto Eco

¹⁹ ... in Persian, Arab and Orthodox Christian stylisation and illumination, as in the imagery of the Indian and Sino-Nipponese arts

²⁰ in the stylisation of gargoyles (Roman and Pre-Gothic), in Greco-Roman architecture and ornament, in the monumental Assyrian-Caldaican and Egyptian, Tibetan, Indian and Sino-Mongol arts, as in the said *Pre-Columbian*...

²¹ René Huyghe is repeatedly paraphrased in this sub-chapter (except the referenced excerpts)

²² the discovery of Photography is attributed to the physicist Nicéphore and initial photo-reproduction on glass, to his nephew, the chemist, Abel Niepce de St. Victor (1827). The research on and the invention of trichromatism are attributed to the industrialists Auguste and Louis Lumière (1903)

²³ an assumed and assuredly original expression by the author

²⁴ F. Hazan in «*Dictionnaire de l'Arte Abstrait*»: «*une peur respectueuse*» ... «*cimetières de culture*» (sic)

Painters like Hierónimus Bosch, Giotto, Peter Brueghel, Guiseppe Arcimboldo, William Blake, Albert Dürer, Lucas de Leiden, Grünewald, Lukas Cranach, or El Bosco and Goya - by *reuniting the visionary and satanic inspirations of the medieval Gnostic Christian, naturalist and pagan «supernatural»* - already practised, in a-chronychal deviations, this dismemberment and this ghostly reconstruction of the absurd, producing or recreating monstrosities and outraging the conventional art canons of their times. *«Our practical daily experience (pragmatic, social and mental) «can refuse to admit this possibility but, in parallel, resorting to skilful subtleties, it awakens us to the intimidating occult of the unconscious, confused impulses which search for an unrecognisable face under a diffused mask, which their works exhibit very concretely and revealingly. They find echoes of understanding in us at a subconsciously comprehensible level!»*

Most of the surrealists (from Dali to Leonor Fini) made every effort to emphasise *«the tangible, palpable and controllable aspects of the visual elements»*, which they reunited in accordance with a grammar of the absurd, renouncing each and every logical coherence or habitual stereotype, to make them reveal an unutterable content. And, to obtain effects of contrast between the credibility of the detail and the incoherence of the whole, they were forced to recuperate techniques which modern art considered completely out of fashion, thereby making full use of all the potentialities of literal realism. From this point on, they started to paint *«if not like the primitives of the 15th century, then at least like Meissonier²⁵»*...perhaps in this way appeasing the conservative monolithic critic with which this *«tranquillising appearance brings closer to spirituality the explosives charged of dislocating the very same structures on which its principles are based»*.

...«the soul, as soon as it leaves the safe platform of the familiar real, wants to choose between two directions: the fall into the abyss (from which it emerged and ascended to the lucidity of consciousness), or the effort to attain the heights (that are not subject to its powers, but on which it aspires to develop itself, destined to perpetual growth). And this «ascending impetus» was already understood and assimilated «by the Baroque, which became its instrument. In it, one sees frequently only «the luxurious ostentation of opera, or the useless, deceiving resource of theatre scenery... as a result of the fact of being lead by appearances, albeit not knowing the thing that (in the baroque) «conjures the acquired limits»...

Despite having inferior amplitude to that of modern art, *«the Baroque imposed itself as a means of refusing the suffocation caused by narrow-minded academic respect and the sterile repetitiveness of the canonical principles of the orthodox classical models, reduced to the state of a simple, restraining formulary...»*

The effortless power of man - who has the feeling of possessing the principle which regulates the universe - is transferred to the aesthetic composition: *«the scene is organised in accordance with the effects of the verticals and horizontals and the beauty attained is the outcome of human maturation - taste!»* ...and *«the kingdom of man that culminates here has been postulated from the moment in which art was subjected to the form by which the spirit distinguishes and isolates the observed object and confers on it the unity which is its principle.»*

...«visible forms appear to be only more seductive symbols than numbers, to perform the same function and fixate the calculus, the progeny of thought, in the hardness of its perfection. They are on the limit and it would be enough for them to shake off the eroded real to be liberated in absolute nudity, as abstract art tried to do», following another discipline, in the attempt to reorganise chaos.

Just as the baroque realised that this trust in the *intelligentsia²⁶*, announced by the art of the Renaissance, expanded its methods to all fields, repressing and excluding the organic forces that would not submit to it, surrealism - before an identical threat of interruption and suffocation, generated by the coercive freedom of official contemporary modernity - marks

²⁵ (Ernest) French painter of epic themes, battles and portraits (Lyon, 1815 - Paris, 1891)

²⁶ conceptual, of discernment and philosophic and inventive curiosity, in Leonardo da Vinci

the true revolution of rupture with the *establishment* (and, in the dimensional environment of the canvas, introduces new spaces, at the same time overcoming the sculptural immobility which contained movement- as baroque expanded to the tectonic and to the mural), supplanting the rebelliousness of communicable efficacy and figurative expression, to move beyond the comfortable posture of the hybrid and para-intellectual contestation of pure abstractionism, in its multiple and diverse attitudes.

LATE SURREALISM, IN PORTUGUESE

André Breton's 1st Surrealist Manifesto was launched in Paris forty years before GF was born. Only two years after (in 66), did the «*Surrealist Intervention*» texts by Mário Cesariny (the great poet and plastic inventor, graphic artist and painter of suspect technical quality) appear, which reaffirms the denouncement of «*the institutional anarchy of the Portuguese Surrealist Group (...) in constant disintegration*».

In truth, «*surrealism in Portuguese*» is a late-born movement, the direct descendent of the already late dissemination promoted in the name of the academic, professor and intellectual, fiction writer and critic, native of Tomar (himself contradictory and polemic, from the end of the 1940's), whose pertinacity, affirmative impulsiveness and cognitive capacity (at the time considered innovative), would come to lead - on the brink of systematic contestations and unconditional followings - a significant fringe of national critical thought: José-Augusto França²⁷.

With António Pedro, Marcelino Vespeira, Moniz Pereira, Fernando Azevedo, António Pimentel Domingues, Alexandre O'Neill and, later, with the adhesion of Cândido Costa Pinto, he formed a first episodic Portuguese Surrealist Group, which, from 1947 (after the inauguration of the «*Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme*», in the Galerie Maeght, in June of the same year), imported the title (the «original validity period» of the School of Paris and the «Manifestes du Surréalisme», launched 20 years before, not having yet expired)²⁸.

As early as 1942, Cândido Costa Pinto²⁹ - eight years later repudiated and disowned by the same «*compagnons de route*» - had exhibited the canvas «*Aurora Hiante*» (Wide Open/Starving Aurora) (in the collection of the Museu do Chiado) which, with the «*Cadavre Exquis*» (collection of the Centre of Modern Art/Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation), dated 1948, forming a unified work based on the contributions of autonomous painting and independent from António Pimentel Domingues, Fernando de Azevedo, António Pedro, Marcelino Verspeira and José Gomes Moniz Pereira, which can be considered to belong to the most significant exponents of "spontaneous" painting according to the «expeditious rules» of «pan-academic Portuguese surrealism, as a movement *ab initio* but about to be aborted»...

Nevertheless, a few of these authors (mainly, by cult and conviction, temporary surrealists) followed, in style and process, just like a recipe, the trial of this inspirational exploration, before embracing other trends.

It would have been more sensible to move on to other creative paths, less literary and ideologically committed: «*freer*» (?) and less obedient to the solidarity of the group; more independent in singular and competitive affirmation; in the acceptance of authorial individualism in rivalry legitimated by the neo-bourgeois market. Just as it existed, in an apolitical version (still incipient) from the polemic post-war passage to the glorious phase of "Salazarism" until the 50's and state patronage, whose aesthetics and precepts never favoured the typical affront of a cultural current «*disturbing and delirious and provocative of good patriotic, moral, religious and familial customs*»³⁰.

²⁷ sentence that is attributed to him and cited in the analysis of the period 1945-61, by R.M. Gonçalves (in Portuguese Art of the 20th Century): «*The most serious problem of Portuguese painting is that of eternal recommencement*» (sic)

²⁸ ...by the (aforementioned) doctor and intellectual, essayist on art and Freudian thinker, André Breton

²⁹ painter of technical notability (and of themes more ostentatious than profound), caricaturist and graphic illustrator (1911-1976)

³⁰ *tirade* of an anonymous censor, at the time an MP

Between 1949 and 1950, Risques Pereira, António Maria Lisboa and Mário Henrique Leiria, Pedro Oom and F. José Francisco, Eurico da Costa and Alves dos Santos, A. Paulo Tomás, J. António da Silva, João Rodrigues and Artur Cruzeiro Seixas (perhaps one of the most genuine and coherent cultivators of the language of surrealist style and authenticity), appear collectively and individually in institutional exhibitions and by personal initiative. It is still possible, without favouritism, to add to them the names of some other artists, notable, ignored and/or outlawed from the incomplete History of the Portuguese Plastic Arts of the last 50 years, such as:

A. Pimentel, António Quadros/Grabato Dias, Artur Bual, Bartolomeu Cid, Carlos Calvet, Eduardo Luiz, F. Grade, F. Lemos, Fausto Boavida, Figueiredo Sobral, Gonçalo Duarte, João Cutileiro, José Manuel Mougá, Lima de Freitas, Luis Jardim, Lurdes Castro, Paula Rego, Querubim Lapa, Santiago Areal, Victor Belém, Virgílio Domingues

Their careers bear vivid traces of the passage of the impassable paths of expressionist and supra-realist visionary art, of lyrical abstractionism and of the multi-neo-figurations, *a lattere* of the trends of group movements fabricated by J-A. França which, albeit being an artificial derivation of an insecure neo-realist current (extinct after ephemeral duration) went out-of-fashion, but which would leave behind as traces some replicas, fecund seeds, insatiable doubts, ferocious criticisms ... and also sensitive admirers.

In the last decades of the 20th century, besides those referred to in Edgardo Xavier's text, cited in this book (Artur Ramos, Margarida Cepêda and Barahona Possolo) - *besides the colleagues of GF (in the Group ARTITUDE: Luis Vieira-Batista, Magnus de Monserrate and Victor Lages)* - other 2nd and 3rd generation plastic artists devoted to Portuguese surrealism (*among who the passive subject of this work stands out asymmetrically*) should be, without doubt, mentioned. And in this light artists like Alfredo Luz, António Domingues, Fernando Ançã, Francisco Tellechea, J. Ferreira da Silva, João Santiago, Lud, Luis Furtado, Luis Osório, Onik, Silva Palmeira, Walter de Barros can be invoked (with integral, temporary or marginal dedication), the majority of whom participated (with him) in a recent collective thematic exhibition at the Trindade Gallery (1992).

ROMANTIC SENSUALISM, THE LITERARY INFLUENCE topical incursion | marginal notes

Novalis³¹, a poet of pre-romantic inspiration, allied mysticism to an allegoric explanation of Nature in his «*Hymns to the Night*» creating a surreal atmosphere... (similar to the one of important Portuguese illustrators)³²

Pre-Romantics and Romantics of the 17th to the 19th centuries: Richardson and Ossian (as remote sources of poetry and the theatre, of novel writing and poetic narratives ...from the «*Song of Songs*»), Milton (Paradise Lost), Dante Alighieri (The Divine Comedy - Inferno: Paolo Malatesta and Francesca da Ramini), in the dramaturgy of W. Shakespeare, etc., etc., in Lord Byron... Southey and Wordsworth (Lyrical Ballads).

Romanticism acquired definitive literary form in Germany, with Goethe and Hölderlin, in France with Lamartine, V. Hugo, Vigny, Alfr. Mousset and George Sand, following the trend of J-J. Rousseau, Mme de Staël and Chateaubriand. It imposed itself as a new form which privileged sentimentality, on top of positivism and rationalism, between the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, being transported to Italy (Manzoni and Leopardi), to Spain (J. Zorrilla), to Portugal (Garrett, Herculano and Camilo). A. Thierry and Michelet can be considered major historians of Romanticism (already in the 19th century) and there is Sainte-Beuve as literary critic.

The movement and the schools of Romanticism strongly influenced Music (Weber, Wagner, Schubert, Schumann, Berlioz, Chopin, Liszt...) and the Fine Arts (Gros, Géricault, Delacroix, Devéria, David d'Angers), above all in the subjectivism of thematic selection and emotional motivation, under the primacy of passion, of amorous ecstasy, noble and lyric, sacrificed and enslaved by emphatic notions of codes of sentimental honour even to pathetic and exacerbated dramatising, consecrated in the concept of romanticism, visible in the reference

³¹ Friedrich von Hardenberg (1772/1801)

³² visionary hyper-realism: annotated matters from 1962-1971, on the illustrations for the «Divine Comedy» (José Maria Figueiredo Sobral, Fausto Boavida, Álvaro Infante do Carmo and Lima de Freitas...)

to «*blissful love*», in the essay criticisms of works of art by a 19th century thinker (Stendhal³³): «*it is in this way that the great shadows of the pictures of Corregio, far from being, like those of other painters, transitions, not very pleasing but necessary to valorise the light parts and to give salience to the figures, possess in themselves charming graces that make us plunge into a sweet fantasy*»³⁴...

APPROACH TO COEXISTENT HYPER-REALISM, on the threshold of the 21st century

Hyper-realism constituted in its original acceptation, the classificatory designation of a free-current or tendency (whose characterisation is not properly a *theoretic-movement one*, as occurs in philosophic, technical-literary, or practical-virtual Surrealism), conventionally deriving from - since the 60's - the exact painting of Edward Hopper³⁵, to which can be attributed the uniqueness of a frigid emotional charge and of mitigated symbolism³⁶.

It is, perhaps, due to this fact that his name marks the beginning of the trend, associated with the fame which his immense individual oeuvre would come to attain³⁷, for adding to the indifference, or by opposing the majority of the currents in vogue, especially those with a future projection: in conceptual art, of gestural painting and of lyrical but not geometric abstractionism, of graphic minimalism and of the neo-figurations (erudite or naïve expressionists), overtaking the terminus-station of Pop and op Art.

A bevy of artists (mainly from the USA and Canada), such as Chuck Close, Richard Estes and Malcolm Morley³⁸, or Peter Howson, were inspired by it or could technically and aesthetically be associated to it (attributing to them the honours of being the pioneers of *hyper-realism*), adopting formal postures and proposing identical statements (regarding a common typology different from the one of their contemporaries), in the sense of the contemporary rehabilitation of eminent figuration, assumed as a *super, supra, hyper, or photo-realist* identity which extended itself, significantly, to the more recent generations.

The deliberately excessive proximity to optical reality, in the meticulous representative and interpretative sophistication of the Figure, with particularity and detail at times taken to extremes - otherwise inconsequent, outside the context of each work (pictorial or sculptural) - mainly uses the (classic) geometric description of perspective, albeit not meaning to be revivalist, nor to postulate (in this pictorial type) convictions of *Art as a photographic copy of reality*. However, on the other hand, it tends towards the integration of surprising, unused or enigmatic elements, which invade, in a-logical proportions the dimension and spatial ambient of the picture (for example and in the case of easel painting): both by establishing colour scales and tonalities that are unusual, attractive or absorbers of the involuntary attention of the observer, and by using studio artifices which provoke subliminal effects or generate *tromps d'oeil*, equated in algorithms, or the cumulatively perfectionist expeditious drawing solutions.

In an acceptation of autonomic and pan-definitive significance (of precarious rigour), which various estimable specialists attribute to it - in the inflationary version of common places and slang terms - the generalist concept of hyper-realism can be synthesised by admitting as

³³ pseudonym of Henry Beyle (Grenoble, 1783-Paris, 1842), who, in the Italian fashion, had pre-baptised it *Romanticism*, in 1823.

³⁴ Stendahl, in «*De l'Amour*», referring to «*an angel's head sketched in the pulpit of the Gallery of Florence and, in Parma, in the Madonna crowned by Jesus*»...

³⁵ Edward Hopper (1882-1967) considered «*the best American Realist painter of the 20th century*» is recovered *post mortem* by the hyper-realists in their first big exhibition in the United States, in 1972.

³⁶ contrary to his brilliant contemporary Thomas Hart Benton, leader of the US Realist movement (*industrial and urban*)...

³⁷ ...maybe because Hopper left a legacy of more than 200 works to the *Whitney Museum of American Art*.

³⁸ The Art Grove Dictionary of Art (2000, McMillan Publishers Ltd), makes a clean sweep of *Photo-Realism* and *Hyper-Realism* or *Super-Realism* as movement styles of the plastic arts (painting, engraving and sculpture) essentially originating in the USA in the second half of the 60's «*involving the precise reproduction of photography in painting or the minute reformation of real objects in sculpture*» (by direct mask). Among its pioneers, it mentions (besides the authors already referred to) Audrey Flack (b. 1931), Robert Bechtle (b. 1932), Robert Cottingham (b. 1935), Richard McLean b. 1934, Don Eddy, and even cites sculptors such as Duane Hanson and John de Andrea ...albeit including European artists among its exponents, like the English painter John Salt (b. 1937) and the German Franz Gertsch.

sufficient that its «*fundamental thematic [...] is the illusion of reality and the reality of illusion*»³⁹, in the basic sense of «*everything being as it is and, nevertheless, being different from what it seems*»⁴⁰, or in the absolute pretentiousness of the virtuous notion of the production of something «*more real than the real*»⁴¹.

The product of elementary rebellion or mass-cultural response to the challenges of competition in the world market of art- concentrated in the urban centres of North America and in the capitals of United Europe, which spreads itself to the East - *hyper-realism (with a conceptual definition, geo-strategic origin and continental borders ... or without them!)* will ostensibly deform the real commonness without disregarding it, but reformulating its static anatomy, or emphasising parts of its whole.

Thus it was acquired, within the context of a plastic, visual and performative language⁴². It expands and propagates itself like an accepted semantics in the innovative progression of legible registers, generating its own behavioural dynamic - in the creators and producers who cultivate it - to inoculate itself in the synergies of semiotic, interactive and social communication, finally reaching, touching and selecting preferential publics, which protected, preferred and promoted it.

Yet, it becomes apparent in our daily existence, with ever greater evidence, that the proportions of its cultural contribution and of its economic-social worth, in the ambit of the new and the *rare*, self-denounce the precariousness of its future isolated and (re)creative survival.

[...] «*In the final years of the last century, Art underwent a clear transformation. Even though change is, in its own essence, constant, this time it reached more profound layers, not being limited to external aspects. It is the very concept of Art that is questioned. Maybe that is why Art has never been so popular as it is today*» [...] «*Contemporary art has become a natural component of consumer society. Even works which have just left the atelier of an artist are welcomed and obtain relatively rapid recognition*», because «*the new is not durable*» but reflects the «*spirit of the times*»⁴³ in which we live: it dispenses (marginalises and overcomes), in numerous exemplary cases, the increasingly contradictory pronouncement of specialised critical literature, of opinionated journalism and the rare (at times obsolete) examination by traditional «*connoisseurs*», social columnists and «*instantaneous specialists*»⁴⁴

The ambit and the radical mass production of Culture, which emerged in the last decades, would determine profound alterations in the methods of phenomenological analysis and in the evaluation of its socio-economic and political spectre, presupposing not yet consolidated dynamic hypotheses.

«*The art of the 80's and 90's presents itself as a vast cohabitation of extremely diverse positions, each with the right of citizenship, extending its area of intervention to the fields of design, the media, publicity, architecture, cinema, theatre, dance and music*»[...]. «*Some artists adopt social strategies in which the author is the mediator of communication, the social actor, or even the therapist. Others, on the contrary, deny art any social function and insist on its autonomy*»⁴⁵, persisting in the exercise of a marginal professionalism, radical libertarian, or purely random, within the field of the insertion of the individual in society.

«*When examining the artistic trends of the 80's [...] one speaks of «the new 'primitive painters', a 'neo-figurative art', the new German or Austrian painting [(etc.)...], which are followed, «in quick succession, by an art with a neo-geometric programme, the neogeo'»*»⁴⁶.

And this accelerated succession (urgent, incessant and immature) of innovative mutations continues: [...] «*the 'neo-figurative' and the 'neo-geometric' artists of New York and*

³⁹ according to Karin Thomas (source: *Artur de Távola* see 5)

⁴⁰ vulgarised expression attributed to Howard Kanovitz, one of the pioneers of North American «*neo-realism*»

⁴¹ non-referenced citation, in a communication by Artur de Távola (*Journalist and Brazilian senator of the PSDB-RJ, critic for Mass Media*) Barcelona, 1993. [source internet]

⁴² recall here the happenings of Allen Kaprow (1959), the ecological performances of Joseph Beuys, the Body Art of the Frenchman Yves Klein and the North American Bruce Nauman, etc.

⁴³ from a text by Klaus Honnef in «*Contemporary Art*» - Taschen

⁴⁴ in the acceptance of M. Dana Rodna «*Bluff Your Way in Modern Art*» I «*The instantaneous specialist in Modern Art*», PÚBLICO/Gradiva, 1996 (technical revision(?) by Alexandre Melo.

⁴⁵ Uta Grosenick/Burckhard Riemschneider in the *preface to the edition* «*ART at the turn of the Millennium*» - Taschen

⁴⁶ *textual excerpt* by Klaus Honnef in «*Contemporary Art*» - Taschen

*Cologne, Paris and Vienna, London and Milan - who define the trends - had not yet left the ateliers to begin their organised digressions and present their exhibitions in museums and international art galleries, and the 'neo-conceptualists' were already claiming the attention of the art worlds*⁴⁷ and demanding, unsuccessfully, the privilege of seasonal *novelty* from the critics who had praised them and promoted them and who, in this great voracity of *opportune mercantilism*⁴⁸, did not, obviously, recognise anything new...

Hyper-realism survives in a diluted form. It loses autonomy, but recovers in aesthetic, technical- studio, technological, and even ethical, philosophical and mass-cultural appropriations. It has left behind the interim of the 80's and the a-chronic change of the century (the mythical turning of the millennium) and re-transformed itself into an almost purely morphologic and utilitarian trend, process-like, as a formula (alternative, not modular) susceptible to object development and applicable (as a notion of the visual principle) to studio easel painting, in the pictorial type of style and to other plastic modalities, whether they be pending, independent or dependant, with inter or trans-disciplinary attributes.

The perennial trend of *hyper-realism* seems, thus, to possess a relative timelessness (non-dateable and sustained by a strong perpetuity of images), whether it is taken to have appeared, conventionally, in the history of the 60's, or is attributed more remote origins.

Its presumed purposes of static register, of reality fixation in urban habitats and its affinities to the irrecusable virtual clarity of some thematic postures of figurative accuracy (in portrait, landscape and *nature morte* painting...), could be traced back to the pre-historic fine arts, to (pre and post) impressionist academism (which coincides with the discovery and the revolutionary industrialisation of photography). The inescapable logic of the futurist vision and of the oneiric Freudian imagination, in «*Bretonian surrealism*»⁴⁹, or of libertarian inventiveness in «*non-aligned surrealism*»⁵⁰, would end up addressing, by diverse means, the conscience of the *hyper-realist conviction*, and establishing extremely interesting synergies and relatively equilibrated couplings of style, which could indiscriminately have a claim on the *hyper* and on the *surreal*.

In Portugal, the original vestiges of this movement of International Realism are fatuous and controversially crossed, in all directions, by prolonged critical niggardliness and *neo-realist*, simultaneously and outside the conspiratorial complicity and the *official censorship*⁵¹, which lead to late, isolationist, or in multiple groups but precarious Surrealist attitudes, with post-generation developments, which are not necessarily confident or enlightened.

Disregarding, perhaps, para-scholastic research, provincial persistency, or the vocational obsolescence of the greenhouse-like spontaneity of new Portuguese painting (encompassing, or irreverent), in the last decade of the 20th century, the critical misinformation and the precipitation of historical analysis, restraining and monocular, of specialised official researchers surrendered to the commercial tactics of a market without a cultural strategy and ended up promoting stereotypes, turning plastic creativity into a helpless hostage of generalised disqualification.

The peripheral chroniclers of chaos, as the new aesthetic disorder emerged, left a colossal bibliographical inheritance for the researchers of pasts, in a future that started yesterday.

⁴⁷ *idem*, *ibidem*

⁴⁸ «*expeditious tactics of marketing for the reintroduction of surplus banal products, out-of-date, with recycled brand names, through commercial circuits led by unscrupulous businessmen*» J-J Grisard (*not authentic*) 1986

⁴⁹ *militant expression* of the late Painter and diplomat José Sarmiento

⁵⁰ *beloved verbal expression of the great forgotten Poet Manuel de Castro (1931-197?)*.

⁵¹ ...until 1974, substituted in the post 25th April period (and prolonged to the 90's), by political-cultural and teaching myopia, by fiscal patronage, by critical omission, by media alienation, by the consequent apathy of the public

RECONDITE INFLUENCES OF HERMETIC WISDOM

Notes: Analytic study 1 of the Oeuvre of G.F.

1. Time - in its concepts: scientific (post-Galileian) and well-lived (Bergsonian)
2. the *hermetic/profane* meaning ...the number (in Cabbalism), the Numen (of E. Kant) the triangle (in Masonic symbolism), the square (Greek), the rules and the Golden Age!
3. the neo-mythical Tantalus and Sisyphus condemned by tributary prejudice against the totalitarian sovereignty of rational power.
4. Other influences of the Occult and of Spiritualism: cabbalism, scatology, alchemy, shamanism, and Taoism...
5. Metamorphic images and metaphoric painting: Minotaurs and Icarus, Centaurs (vanquished by Lapitas); Sphinxes, Pegasi and Griffins, Dragons, Unicorns and the Licorn; Canopos, the Mut's, the Mermaids and the seahorses; the winged Angels («Putti», Amorini, Eros and Cupid), in the reinvention of the anthropomorphic divinities.
6. the Cosmic tree and the Cabbalist Tree summarise and reveal, mystically, the symbolism of existence (base rooted in the earth/ axis erect - the trunk; upper part branched - the leafy Sphere - Alchemy relates it to sex, so does Shamanism; «Man is an Inverted Tree (as in a Magritte canvas) and his branches are the heavens», as the proverb goes...
7. the Serpent - as the primitive Ophites conceptualise it, it is related to the orgiastic meaning of their rituals, such as the «opening of the oyster» and «the flight of the flock of seagulls above the cliff», in the Taoist ritual... the Nidhog (the mythic gnawing serpent) destroys the life of trees, devouring their roots.
8. the letter code of Utopia is(?) a graphic «*Esperanto*», a universal code of signals, which is reflected in «*virtuose*» and stylised «*Art Nouveau*» Drawing, recreating exotic symbols close to visionary intoxicated writing, to self-induced oneiric states and to spontaneous ecstasy, or to fantastical imagination and to lucid delirium.
9. 1st - one in the zero (or *falus* in the *cono*), constituted the therapeutic base for the cure of the *diabolic* diseases caused by witchcraft, according to the *occult method of the Abbot Joseph Boullan*⁵²: the «*possessed*» person *freed himself* by drinking a mixture of the urine of the cleric and that of *Sister Adèle Chevalier*, with whom the abbot copulated (a less solipsist Santa Theresa, contacted by the Virgin Mary and not by Christ...).

INNOVATIVE METHODS AND ICONOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Notes: Analytic study 2 of the Oeuvre of G.F.

1. the «*anti-pastiche*» of a «*neo-compositivism*», conjugating the «*mixed perspective of multiple vanishing points*» and *nuance dégradée* in the tonalities of the «*atmospheric-ambient perspective*»...
2. the *theory of the Art puzzle* of W. Loss: «*art is a game of harmonic junction, a modular architecture of many parts, pieces that adjust to each other and form a whole*»
3. a technical symbiosis of all the *tricks* from the conceptual technique of *divisionism* (geometric decomposition) of Paul Signac, to the pointillism of G. Seurat.
4. the «*trompe l'oeil*» (in perspective and in foreshortening) of more or less perfectionist and photographic suggestible illusionism
5. the pre-photographic sense in the precise faithfulness to reality of Realism, as a post-grammatical study of classic iconography...

EXPERIMENTAL REPLICATION IN THE «BRANCHE SURREELLE»

⁵² Boullian creates the *feminine papacy* and founds the Order «*marisiaque*» of Carmelo!

Notes: Analytic study 3 - marginal annotations, about GF

1. the cyclopean eye (in the *position inatendue* of the profiles); metaphorical feminine nudity (transfigured heads on anthropomorphic bodies); the simian (apathetic hominid, in post-consciousness); the anthropomorphizing of the machine (alien/oneiric); the couch and the armchair (which enthrone autism)...
2. the self illustration of the legendary-figure of the hyper-realistic: man in his *loisirs* and in his *trades* (headless); the corporeal expression of attire and adornment; the respect for anatomical drawing and the optical precision of light*.
3. the graphic (environmental) scenic (atmospheric) spatial background: without the *horizons of the hyper-naturalist landscape*; *illusionist* expansion of marine movement; *timelessness* through the presence of atypical architecture;
4. *compositional infrastructure* as a hypothetical geometric support of the basic-plan, as a starting point for analytic exploration: *general-planimetry* of the subjacent drawing and of the apposed drawing, in the panorama of the picture (Piet Mondrian, Kandinsky W. Loss); *partitive-planimetry* of theoretic equilibrium (subliminal sacred geometry, or the pondered insertion of its golden rules?).
5. the *place of the object-figure* and its spatial insertion: a parallel code to the symbolic, in the colour of light*, associated to illumination: luminosity, intensity, contrast (chiaroscuro), *nuances* of shadow and luminous graduation, from clarity to the optical dilution of the image (ghost), keeping the coolness (stored in the refrigerator of memory) of the paralysed horizons.

SEMANTIC MISCEGENATION OR SYMBIOSIS OF LANGUAGES?

Notes: Analytic study 4 of the Oeuvre of GF

1. The spatial and ultra and neo-romantic landscape climate of hyper-naturalism; the cold and the love of open spaces of the timeless voids, in surrealist space; the symbolism of the supernatural and the fantastical and their thematic orientations: mythological figuration and the 'hasard naturel', emphasised in stylised geomorphic aspects; the etyma of psycho-historic transformation, as symbols of the paradox
2. the virtual Light (in the absence of fire and heat); atmospheres of the macroscopic visionary: spatial monumentality and the extraordinary photographic vision of hyper-real detail
3. the ex-scenographic dive that absorbs the artificial heat and produces the paralysed landscape, the eternalised snapshot of the Still Life, the Portrait and static Figuration, the crystallised images of salt and sun statues (a cosmic light of Time - the zero moment of entropy - dilution and condensation of all the clocks and time-keepers, in the colours of a palette)...
4. a path distanced from the graphic-geometric research of Escher:
[Geometry/image = mathematics/poetry]

REFRAIN, APPPOSITION, OR CONTINUATION
summary analysis of the Oeuvre of Gustavo Fernandes

In the entire oeuvre of GF, one breathes the *poesy* of silence and the solitary nudity of the static image, eloquently paralysed in the dimension of timeless immensity, which romantic eternity establishes!

We are in the presence of a formal assumption, identifiable with *the semantics of essential surrealism*, constructed on a structural drawing of *op-graphic* disposition.

In the works reproduced here, there are vestiges of a *pop dialectic*, flagrantly associated to *Anglo-Saxon hyper-realism*, filtered by *meditation on chimerical romanticism*.

Atmospheres of a literary charm, which simulate the science fiction of *utopian anticipation and an eco-systemic inspiration*, are implicit in this.

The feet, the hands and the sea, are grasped in (almost mystical) singular acceptations (*ex-homo faber*) and reveal a profound apprehension, in which critical thought and the non-conformist spirit (of *homo-sapiens*) manifest themselves, contaminated by mythical concerns, which take root in an exacerbated magical oneirism, peculiar to the majority of his visionary proposals, and to the different themes he successively broaches: the Sea and marine landscapes (rarely invaded by a single or a few characters, if any) affirm themselves in his oeuvre as symbols of indescribable power, of *anonymous energy* - of the Occult - under the Empire of Water.

GF is a cultivator of style, in the well-defined plane of the constructive notion of a non-idle plastic language. Compulsive producer of meticulously crafted objects of art, he is a maker of beautiful artefacts, saturated with messages of a subliminal humanism, encrypted in the intimate spatial visibility of hyper-naturalist configuration.

Man has produced successive artefacts, since the primitive discovery (or invention?) of Art - tools, jewels and weapons, first, and then clothing and locomotives - but he trades and exchanges everything, in an impenitent game of power, in competition with other bipeds, (whether they be gallinaceous birds or limited only to) his supposed fellow creatures. However, his generosity manifests itself before All he considers superior to him and - idolised, as Love is - perversely attracts his affection. Individually and pseudo-collectively, Man acts as a reigning and independent being and imagines himself the possessor of something - exclusively his - in a universe which, after all, he does not manage nor control, does not know and, perhaps, never intuitively knew with lucidity.

The admirable wisdom of Man is an abstract concept the artist eagerly desires to permanently transform into the simplicity of a singular, masculine noun, absurdly possible to inflect, in the present indicative tense as if he himself - man and author - were the Verb.

Besides the peculiar and exciting pictorial monumentality and the enduring technical mastery, some initiatory values are clearly assumed and evident in the pictures of GF, gathered from surrealist symbolism, although he never swears unconditional or exclusive fidelity to them.

The significant aesthetic influence of *hyper-realism* - to which, formally, the exploration of his themes showed most fidelity - did not dilute but, on the contrary, sharpened and exacerbated the essential weight of the metamorphic, trans-human, and symbolist figuration of his pictorial world.

One can hardly be indifferent to the fascinating magic - virtually spectacular - of the stately vision his works project, of an enchanting microcosm, almost sacred-divine, almost inhuman, in which Man - dis-urbanised and subliminally sexual - differs, while not always being possible to tell him apart from the rest of the animals of upright bearing with which he cohabits and with which he, inflected in the feminine, mingles, in the essence of the blue planet.

...if the tree, the egg, the book, exorcise the oneiric phantasms of many oblique mutations, feminine half-nudity, erotic, transversal and orgiastic, marks the posture of the painter in the tableau of contemporary amorous disorder, producing extremes of mystical hallucination, which exhume and resuscitate princesses and queens, goddesses, fairies and sorceresses, eternal prisoners of the insurmountable charms of his corporeal and fantastical imaginary world, inhabited by mutant (and winged) Venuses, reborn from magical crossings with reptiles, birds, felines and giant insects.

GF conceives his pictures using automatic mechanisms of the abstract logic of the individual, randomly associated with the supposed subconscious of the mythical collective. He sublimates

the more or less ephemeral a-social registers of the present. He projects them onto the factual anonymity of memories, lived in timeless spaces - vague-latent and imprecise - in the a-historic Time of a Humankind which, progressively, self-disengaged itself from the dictatorship of successive poorly invented gods and demons, granters of incredible theocratic pacts, in terrestrial control and in the spiritual domain of lunar exploration, involved in the creation of the sun and the rest of its planetary system, under the indifferent vigilance of the Star of Bethlehem... and the Milky Way!

An entire universe, indiscreetly stolen from the sac of secrets of all the bibles and mysterious legends, which suffocate with fears and surround with ghosts the souls of children.

The symbolic and allegorical themes, which GF pursues in his painting, culminate in the ambiguity of the paradoxical figurative image: the animal, in the place of man, people in the place of the creatures.

They are supported by an extremely singular projective representation of the critical understanding - marginal and dynamic - of the disturbances of contemporary humanitarianism, hovering on the verge of profound scientific abysses, indifferent to the frontiers of passion chaos and to poetic interrogations, confounded by the heterogeneity of thought and the hesitant or radical philosophic sensitivity of our days.

The visionary language, which he establishes, between the enigmatic and some scales of figurative evidence, reproduces itself in multiple meanings and proposes the diversity of innumerable interrogations.

His pictorial discourse attracts us to the hyper space of a virtual world, subjugating us, or urging us to ignore everything which links us to appointment books, thrusting us towards unreal atmospheres, outside the calendar and clocks of conventional time - eventually created in the exactitude of a supposedly bio-cosmic Time - where the All and the Nothing are written in images emerging from the silence, bearers of the triumphal eloquence of a philosophy deprived of absolute truth, which waives any erudite explanations and does not need any practical or theoretical justification outside itself.

... the historical precedence, which - technically and aesthetically - upholds the current state of the oeuvre of Gustavo Fernandes, cannot be ignored. Such an omission would constitute a grave lacuna, insufficiently filled in this book by a scanty number of images selected from some of the few hundred pieces (black and white and coloured crayon drawings, watercolours, gouaches, and canvases) made between 1983 and the mid-90's, on the whole little known, but, nevertheless, particularly significant exemplars of the primordial phases to which his, already attained, maturity is affiliated, and which are traces of the origins of his pictorial vocabulary.

In the a-chronical process of his creativity, there is a dissertation, (only) apparently interrupted, which denounces the existence of a very clear evolutionary line which, besides giving credibility to his artistic trajectory, defines some of the demiurgic co-ordinates of his origin.

It is from this museum of the living imaginary that he «copies» the fecund memory of ancestral fetuses (*fetish*) and of the fossils of the future.

They are visited landscapes, with no return, intact figures suspended from nothing, having the Cyclopean vision of Time as background, remarkable (in)animate characters, which the painter surprises in fugitive *close-ups*, meddling - in secret complicity - with ghosts of a *dejà-vu Present*, or of a (*then*) *premonitory (now) Past*, which simultaneously has an intuition of the *Future*, between panic and the paradisiacal materialisation of the wings of slumber ... *flying through the cosmos*, hand-in-hand with the angelic immortality, of the *Androgyne* .

SURSUM CORDA

no comment, or final declaration?

The myopia and squinting of a certain form of critical autism - the victim of the formularies of the neo-academically correct - imposed on the writers of official art a kind of historical Manichaeism, which influenced the bulk of the post-war⁵³ Portuguese Art historians, and determined a new type of empire over restrained tastes, subjecting them to circular arbitrations, of different kinds of elegance and fashions, applied as a sovereign verdict: for this reason, according to the present social-cultural logic (of the market-place), the

⁵³ which seem (unduly compared) to be faithful to the systematic pragmatism of G. Plekhanov, against the philosophic stance of Pushkin...

repetitive appearance of the photographic and audio-visual images of the authors themselves (in weird settings) is more important, because it is more commonly disputed, than the edition of their works as objects, as if it were a new kind of *diktat pro-pudor*...