

TO KNOW, TO DOMINATE, TO CONTROL AND TO SUBJUGATE

By Viviana Fischler

What is unknown tends to seduce men and triggers exploration as a way of knowing the source of this seduction. To undertake this adventurous activity there must be a territory to be crossed by and travelled and each of us carries out the experience in a unique way. This is intimately linked with the features of the explorer and the scientist, although there is something more that has to be taken into account. This surplus consists of not only the individual style of the adventurer but the different stages of recognition to which the territory explored obliges us. Therefore, what is known as “the personal style” must be adapted to the needs and requirements of these stages, without obliterating the causes that made that search to be thought as essential. By these means, the same object can be approached in different manners, and at the same time it can be treated as an object of attention and desire. This disparity is at the end what contributes to enrich what is known within an array of perspectives. Each of this offers a different aspect, and no matter if it suppresses other perspectives, it always adds something new. Maybe two manners of picturing the same fantasy made territory provide three different ways of addressing and knowing it. That is how we might consider the works of Mariana Sissia and Nicolás Sarmiento, brought together. Both artists share the space of the exhibition that will be available until March at the Recoleta Cultural Center.

Landscapes depicted by Sarmiento are drawings where the hegemony of stain and wash produce different levels of deepness. Sometimes lines are interrupted by some other illegible lines that are not capable of composing a defined outline of what is to come. Everything seems to have been made diligently, addressed with a rapid and energetic trace. As if there was an urgent will of recording in order to reach everything within this territory. As if in the next corner the latent threat of altering perception and therefore the chance of something wonderful or sinister overcoming were laying in wait. Maybe the possible encounter with others, not able to be sensed but yet known by intuition, between the light and dark that the artist manages to produce with his technique, stimulating the progress among the winding paths of those strange places.

Sissia's landscapes, on the other hand, reveal a skillful graphite drawing technique. There, developed tonal work is evident, in addition to an exquisite –almost decorative – attentive facture regarding the reflection of every detail. To these features, one must add the variations of lights and shadows within the drawings provide them with an essential material density. Something that considering the levity of pencil it would be impossible but turns feasible because of a skillful hand, close to scientific description. By these means, her landscapes seem to have been traced out of photography. All of them have been done from a point of view slightly higher than the observer's, so that the result is similar to past travelers artists output, who used to register the exact topography of a territory aimed to be recognized. Like them, the artist gives form to perfectly identifiable spaces, where the presence of man is revealed, although his figure has not been drawn. The tracks of actions he is the only one capable of undertaking, alongside some tools for those activities, narrate his perfect control upon these explicit items.

Sarmiento and Sissia, each in their own way, offer a personal route to follow in order to go along the same river. What is, then, the third route to which the title of the exhibition alludes? Perhaps, the story of man conquering one among many territories of Earth. And in that story, as if everything was about a time line, Sarmiento and Sissia are two different moments in it. The first appears more or less misty and chaotic. A kind of primal incursion in a rough, wild and virgin area, where nothing is clear even though one stares at it. The second, on the other hand, already studied and researched, not only geographically, geologically but even botanically, is perfectly ordered, allowing us to recognize and to name everything there. It evidences new incursions and at the same time denounces the hand of man.

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