



ALEXANDRE CONEFREY  
*A LESTE DO PARAÍSO*  
13.04 | 01.06

Each Alexandre Conefrey's exhibition brings with it an aura of event. He is an artist whose presence has been rare for a long period – at a time when visibility, tension, intensity and the proficiency of his work had reached a climax – and is an author whose pace has accustomed us to always expect the unexpected.

This time we get a set of landscape drawings – let's call them that for now, for the sake of easiness – made with coloured pencils.

The coloured pencil is perhaps the medium which, in drawing, refers more to (our) childhood, and for this reason I believe it always presents itself simultaneously as a memory of a time gone by and a territory of phenomenological delight. The simple act of looking at a box of coloured pencils in any display of drawing materials, holding and opening it, immediately creates a timeless, ageless joy. At the tip of a pencil, more or less sharpened, coincide line, stain and colour, along with a world of freedom to attain.

Think of Matisse or Lourdes de Castro, Elisabeth Peyton or Ângelo de Sousa, for example, and how they expanded the use and the material imagination of the coloured pencil.

The comprehensive set of drawings now presented is strange and familiar, at the same time close and distant. Perhaps because without quite evoking any historical age – as opposed to what is often the case in Conefrey's work – there is in several of these drawings a confluence of quite palpable but hardly identifiable temporalities. We feel that we recognize some of these places, we feel they are presented to us at different times from each other, and this space-time parallax summons a kind of perceptual anamorphosis, which is extraordinarily fruitful in the way it induces an active, uneasy, and expanded observation – we see from different times, from different places and from different lives.

Alexandre Conefrey's work method is quintessentially anachronistic (therefore irreducibly contemporary and radically utopian). It exists in different temporal plateaus and has the power to transpose the abyss of the past to the surface of today's paper.

In these strangely familiar landscapes we recognize the delicate but obstinate labour of derealization of the world operated by Impressionist painters. In these landscapes, the rick – an element that migrates from drawing to drawing – emerges as a mark of recognition but also as a landmark (etymology aside), such as marking a threshold. It marks the drawing, that particular drawing, as a place of passage and transformation to which, as observers, we are no strangers.

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