

Expressions of the multiple: interdisciplinary practices

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Translated by Roberto Cataldo Costa

Abstract: This article presents aspects of recent studies within the universe of the multiple in its various expressions in today's world, based on projects linked to the Research Group on Expressions of the Multiple (CNPq-PPGAV/IA/UFRGS).

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Far from the times when some people's pessimistic predictions and others' disdain foresaw the irreversible decline of every artistic practice that presupposed manual activity, today we see fields that are open to innumerable and distinct art forms and conceptions. As the use of more advanced technological resources and archaic technologies is recurrent, borders are often permeable as well – with the expansion of media and their contamination by different languages.

According to Maria do Carmo de Freitas Veneroso: "The frequent exchange that has been going on between art languages causes that, by interacting among themselves, they contribute to break away from old parameters that preserved the autonomy of the disciplines (2014, p.172)." In the specific field of printmaking, the author points out that "appropriation of pre-existing images, collage, photographic processes" and "the search for three-dimensionality in printmaking are some of the factors that contribute" to its expansion (op.cit., p.175). According to Paul Coldwell, in today's scene, printmaking is a multifaceted art with overlapping processes in which new processes arise and old technologies are revisited (2010, p.33).

In the local and institutional context, the *Instituto de Artes da UFRGS* (Institute of Arts) has promoted events that reassert those assumptions. Through the *Grupo de Pesquisa Expressões do Múltiplo* (Research Group on Expressions of the Multiple)(CNPq- PPGAV/IA/UFRGS)¹ we have been engaged,

in recent years, in research on the multiple, and especially on printmaking as a broaden field, carrying out studies, experiments and poetic propositions. Therefore, we will point out some actions and projects such as *The Rape of Europe* and *Rhinos are coming*, carried out in collaboration with the *Faculdade de Belas-Artes da Universidade de Lisboa* (Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon), project *Rhinoceros*, in collaboration with Goethe-Institut Porto Alegre, which, in turn, is promoting project *The Power of Printmaking*,² also with a partial contribution from IA/UFRGS, or the promotion of seminars and exhibitions such as an overview on the work of Maria Lucia Cattani, the exhibition on Nilza Haertel's works, and the group exhibition *Expressões do Múltiplo* (*Expressions of the Multiple*).

These activities have engaged large teams including students, theorists and researcher-artists linked to IA/UFRGS and they have reached large audiences.

That universe of producers and that eager audience are constantly growing and find their space in events that are unrelated but add to academic efforts, such as the *Parada Gráfica* (Graphic Parade), promoted by Porto Alegre's *Museu do Trabalho* (Museum of Labor), and fairs that are regularly or occasionally promoted by Santander Cultural, among other institutions.

AN OVERSEAS COLLABORATION

Projects *The Rape of Europe* and *Rhinos are coming*, for which I was the local curator, were carried out in collaboration with the *Faculdade de Belas-Artes da Universidade de Lisboa* (Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon) (FBAUL). They focused on production and exchange of similar prints and models, included participation by artists linked to higher education art institutions, and they culminated in exhibitions and seminars in 2013 and 2014.

The Rape of Europe sought to present and re-signify the wonders and dramas of the European continent's creation myth; it engaged students and professors of FBAUL – the proposing institution – the Faculty of Visual Arts and Design at HKU, Utrecht, the *Facultat de Belles Arts de la Universitat* of Barcelona, Spain, the *Akademia Sztuk Pięknych*, Lodz, Poland,

1. A group I created in 2009 together with Maria Lucia Cattani (UFRGS). Under the research line *Desdobramentos da Imagem* of the Graduate Studies Program in Visual Arts of the UFRGS Institute of Arts, the group is currently co-headed by Helena Kanaan (UFRGS).

2. With a focus on printed art, project *The Power of Printmaking* aims to encourage, disseminate and integrate expressions of contemporary artists in the sphere of printmaking and its extensions. Some of the related achievements will be addressed later.

and the *Instituto de Artes da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (IA/UFRGS)*. In each institution, a curator invited another teacher and eight students to the challenge of performing print works and/or graphic installations based on that myth.

Many different prints, monotypes, objects and installations were created for the project, building a rich panorama of the participating schools' production. In Porto Alegre, the collection was exhibited at UFRGS's *Fahrión Room*. Since they were multiple works, similar exhibitions were simultaneously presented in the other cities where the institutions involved are based.³

Concomitantly with the exhibitions in Lisbon and Porto Alegre, seminars on the myth of Europe with the same name were held with researchers from the participating institutions.

The following year, the collaboration with FBAUL was repeated, once again in the broadened field of printmaking in project *Rhinos are coming*, which sought to anticipate the celebrations the 500 anniversary of *Ganda*, the emblematic rhinoceros immortalized by Dürer, scheduled for 2015.

In this edition, as in the previous one, each artist-curator – all linked to higher education art institutions, invited another colleague and eight students to participate. In addition to IA/UFRGS and the proposing institution, FBAUL, the project included the Michaelis School of Fine Art from the University of Cape Town, South Africa, and again the *Akademia Sztuk Pięknych*, Lodz, Poland.

Based on an image so celebrated and consolidated in our imaginary, the result was a provocative exhibition that included, again, prints, monotypes, objects and installations. Held in Porto Alegre's *Centro Cultural CEEE Erico Veríssimo (CCCEV)*, it reached a very expressive and enthusiastic audience.⁴ PROEXT/UFRGS⁵ scholarship holders engaged in pedagogical activities with a large school audience and, similarly to project *The Rape of Europe*, lecture cycles took place in Porto Alegre and Lisbon. Identical collections were

exhibited in the other host cities where participating institutions are based.⁶ This time, the *Instituto de Artes da UFRGS* was at the center of the international seminars. Sponsored by CAPES and UFRGS,⁷ it hosted guest speakers from all the institutions involved, including artist and Professor Stephen Inggs from the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town, who, in addition to the poetic and mythical issues involved, brought to Porto Alegre his impressive testimony about the local reality of that pachyderm devoid of exoticism for South Africans.

Both projects resulted in publications⁸ including reproductions of works and articles by researchers from the participating institutions. After the exhibitions, the works of each set became part of the institutional collection of that participating school.

PROJECT RHINOCEROS AND THE COLLABORATIONS WITH PORTO ALEGRE'S GOETHE-INSTITUT

The *Rhinoceros* project, conducted in collaboration with Porto Alegre's Goethe-Institut and curated by Helena Kanaan, continued celebrating *Ganda's 500th* anniversary, with the rhinoceros masterfully represented in a print by Dürer, which became one of the most well-known and reproduced images in the Western world.

Exhibition *Deambulations: Between Prints and Rhinoceroses* took place at the gallery of Porto Alegre's Goethe-Institut in 2015, with eighteen works by artists from Brazil, Argentina, Spain, the United States and Germany, linked to institutions that teach and promote printmaking, in addition to joint work of the NAI group.⁹

Prints, digitally printed images, artist books, objects and installations were part of the exhibition that sought to celebrate and reflect on the permanence of *Ganda's* image from the point of view of today's printed art. In parallel to the exhibition, the seminar *Gravura, Palavra, Imaginário: 500 Anos*

3. Simultaneous exhibitions took place at the Gallery of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon, Portugal, at the Academie Galerie, Faculteit Beeldende Kunst en Vormgeving, Utrecht, Holland, Kobra Gallery, Akademia Sztuk Pięknych, Lodz, Poland, and the Exhibition Room of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Barcelona, Spain.

4. In addition to the large audience that regularly attends CCCEV, its visitation was increased by its geographical proximity to Alfândega Square, where Porto Alegre's traditional *Feira do Livro* (Book Fair) was taking place at that time.

5. UFRGS's Extension Division.

6. Exhibitions were held at the Kobra Gallery of the *Akademia Sztuk Pięknych*, Lodz, Poland, at Lisbon's *Torre de Belém*, at Goethe Institut, and the *Galeria da Faculdade de Belas-Artes da Universidade de Lisboa* (Gallery of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon), at the Center for African Studies (Gallery CAS), University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa.

7. Through Programs run by PROEXT and PROPESQ (Research Division).

8. *The Rape of Europe*, 2013/ISBN 978-989-8300-78-2/160 p. Bilingual edition – Portuguese/English and *Rhinos are Coming*, 2014/ISBN 978-989-8771-04-9/192 p. Bilingual edition – Portuguese/English.

9. *Núcleo de Arte Impressa* headed by Helena Kanaan and including members of UFRGS Arts Institute.

de Ganda, included lectures by theorists and artist-researchers from the five countries involved.

Later, the project gave rise to the beautiful publication *Rhinocerus: Gravura, Palavra, Imaginário*,¹⁰ featuring reproductions of the lecturers' works and texts. The exhibition, in turn, has had a fruitful trajectory.¹¹

In the wake of increasing re-valuing of the printmaking field, Goethe-Institut Porto Alegre director Marina Ludemann points out that the exhibition *Um olhar de Berlim sobre a Arte Impressa em Porto Alegre* marked "the beginning of networking and lasting international cooperation in the area of contemporary printmaking".¹²

Curated by Rolf Külz-Mackenzie, who was invited by Goethe-Institut Porto Alegre, the exhibition was held in 2016 at the *Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul (MARGS)* with works selected from the art collection from *Pinacoteca Barão de Santo Ângelo, Instituto de Artes-UFRGS*, strengthening collaboration between Goethe-Institut Porto Alegre and IA/UFRGS.

More recently, Goethe-Institut Porto Alegre's interest in printed art could be gauged by the significant actions carried out under project *The Power of Printmaking*,¹³ which, among others actions, established the *Concurso de Arte Impressa* (Printed Art Contest). The contest, now in its second edition, selected artists for exhibitions at the Goethe-Institut's gallery in Porto Alegre and included collaboration by researchers linked to the *Instituto de Artes, UFRGS*.

10. *Rhinocerus*, 2016/ISBN 9788555490163 / 200 p. Bilingual edition – Portuguese/German.

11. In 2016, exhibitions *Arte impressa: Entre Gravuras e Rinocerontes* were held at Bage's *Museu da Gravura Brasileira* and Asuncion's Paraguayan-German Cultural Institute (*Entre Gravuras e Rinocerontes* and *Entre grabados y rinocerontes* respectively). In 2017, *Entre grabados y rinocerontes: Deambulaciones* was held at the Brazilian Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, while *Impressões do Imaginário: 500 anos de Ganda* took place at the Gallery of the UFMG School of Fine Arts, Belo Horizonte, Minas.

12. Presentation of catalog of the exhibition *A Berlin Look over Printed Art in Porto Alegre (Um Olhar de Berlim Sobre uma Arte Impressa em Porto Alegre)*. Curator: Rolf Külz-Mackenzie. Available at https://issuu.com/difusaoddc/docs/catalogo_goethe_web Bilingual edition – Portuguese/English, accessed on October 2016.

13. In 2016, in addition to exhibition *A Berlin Look over Printed Art in Porto Alegre (Um olhar de Berlim sobre a Arte Impressa)*, the project sponsored Thomas Kilpper's art internship at Vila Flores in Porto Alegre and the 1st Goethe-Institut Porto Alegre Art Competition, which selected four artists to hold two exhibitions at the institute's Gallery. In 2017, it promoted the 2nd edition of the Printed Art Contest (*Concurso de Arte Impressa*) under similar rules and as in collaboration with Bogota's Goethe-Institut, to provide internships for two artists, one from Brazil and one from Colombia, and to bring Berlin artist Hanna Hennenkemper for an internship in Porto Alegre and a workshop in Asunción, Paraguay. In 2018, internships in Berlin shall be offered for South American artists.

EXHIBITIONS OF NILZA HAERTEL AND MARIA LUCIA CATTANI

In 2016, we held two large exhibitions with works – mainly printmaking – by former *Instituto de Artes-UFRGS* professors Nilza Haertel and Maria Lucia Cattani.

The exhibition *Nilza Haertel: Experimentações Gráficas* took place at *Centro Cultural CEEE Erico Verissimo*, with Helena Kanaan and myself as curators. The idea of the exhibition came to us in late 2015, when the family of the artist who died in 2014 offered to donate her collection to IA/UFRGS.

Considering that Nilza Haertel rarely exhibited her works during her life, after opening some folders we were absolutely surprised and amazed by the intensity and sensitivity of her work in which a profusion of lithographs stands out (fig. 1).

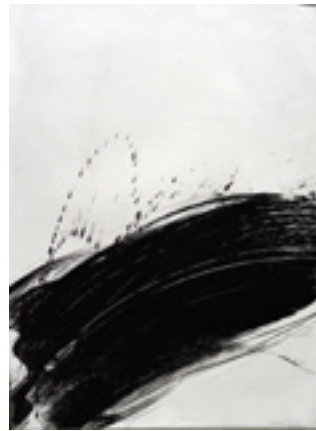


Figure 1. Nilza Haertel. *Spring*, 1984, lithograph, 76.5 x 57 cm. Photo: Maristela Salvatori

Therefore, it was with great pleasure that we set out to present a first reading of that wide-reaching collection that reveals the artist's investigative attitude. In order to establish relevant reflection, I organized the seminar *The Artist-Researcher* at the University, with artist-researchers linked to educational institutions.

As usually happens at the CCCEV, the exhibition attracted a large audience and was visited by several public schools from Porto Alegre's metropolitan area.

The exhibition *Maria Lucia Cattani: Gestos e Repetições* (fig. 2), held at *Pinacoteca Barão de Santo Ângelo*,

IA/UFRGS, had Paulo Silveira and myself as curators and was the first overview about the artist, who passed away in 2015. The exhibition allowed revisiting her extensive and vigorous poetic work of essentially multiple character and crossed by distinct languages¹⁴ (fig. 3). It included drawings, prints, paintings, installations, objects and videos and presented some works unpublished in Porto Alegre.

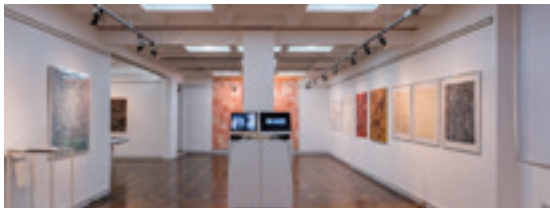


Figure 2. Partial view of exhibition Maria Lucia Cattani: *Gestures and Repetitions*, Barão de Santo Ângelo Pinacotheca, IA/UFRGS, 2017. Photo: Filipe Conde.

A publication with the same name was launched and the exhibition was opened in the midst of the 225^o *Encontro Nacional da Associação Nacional de Pesquisadores em Artes Plásticas (ANPAP)*. Since it took place at UFRGS, it enjoyed additional specialized audience.

In order to establish a dialogue with the exhibition, I organized the seminar *Múltiplos e Únicos* with artist-researchers – an event that was followed by the launch of books linked



Figure 3. Maria Lucia Cattani, *green 1,600*, 1998, gouache on paper, 124 x 124 cm. Photo: Maristela Salvatori

14. Incidentally, in the work *green 1,600*, for example, a small rubber stamp is used to make the large gouache paint panel. There is the matrix giving rise to sequential prints and which, used several times without replacing the ink, causes increasingly defaced spoilage until the matrix is again inked and the process restarts with graphic and pictorial results and thinking.

to her legacy – *A última parede and Vaga-Lume: mostra de vídeo experimental* – and closed with *Lecture-recital: Scattered Loves* by Celso Loureiro Chaves and *Um Ponto ao Sul* by Maria Lúcia Cattani – compositional intersections, in which the composer performed and commented on the process of creating the musical piece he wrote based on a page from Maria Lucia Cattani's artist's book.

The exhibition *Maria Lucia Cattani: Gestos e Repetições* received the *Troféu Açorianos de Artes Plásticas* for *Destaque Acervo e Memória* (Best Collection and Memory) from the City of Porto Alegre, in its 10th edition (2016).

POETIC PRODUCTIONS BY THE RESEARCH GROUP

Still in 2016, with the presence of Professor Bernard Paquet (*Université Laval*, Québec, Canada) who was doing his postdoctoral studies in Porto Alegre, we gathered the research group and conceived the exhibition *Expressões do Múltiplo* (fig. 4) curated by Professor Paquet and myself. Its goal was to present results of recent research by members of the group, which were joined by works of two other guests. In parallel, I organized the seminar *Expressões do Múltiplo: Interfaces*, focusing on contemporary experiences around the Multiple from different perspectives and including Professor Paquet and guest researchers.



Figure 4. Partial view of the exhibition *Expressions of the Multiple*. Barão de Santo Ângelo Pinacotheca, IA/UFRGS, 2017. Photo: Giordana Winckler.

The seminar was to take place within the period of the exhibition; however, in view of the students' occupation of the IA/UFRGS, which restricted access to its Pinacotheca – where both events should be held – and the imminent departure of

the Brazilian collaborator from Brazil, we chose to hold it at the *Mamute Galeria de Arte*, and the exhibition was postponed to 2017 when institutional activities will be resumed.

The exhibition reflected the group's focus on investigations of processes and poetic experiments in printmaking, video, photography, among other possibilities of the multiple, considering crossings and contaminations between distinct media. By covering quite different types of works, the exhibition sought to establish a conversation between the group's studies without closing concepts, since, as Stephen Bury points out, as long as there are artists consciously subverting or expanding images, materials and methods of other creators, any definition of the multiple will be difficult (2001, p.37).

Seriality and repetition prevail in Bernard Paquet's painting, whether in the recurrence of similar forms, which unfold incessantly, or in the pictorial gesture of overlapping layers.¹⁵ In the exhibition, he showed representations of a world reinvented and populated by genderless human beings¹⁶ and experimented with new interfaces when presenting his paintings as virtual projections on walls.

Taking a very different approach, Roseli Nery also recreates worlds. *Suas Colonias* are made up of tiny industrialized objects. Usually from the female universe and found in haberdasher shops, the objects, whose regular uses normally go unnoticed, acquire singularity forged by arrangement and accumulation.

As Bernard Paquet, Jander Rama¹⁷ projected future images using the language of technical manuals to do printmaking and creating cyborgs that mix fantasy, obsolescence and lots of irony.

Alice Porto presented digital printed images of her series *Marcha dos Vadios*, in which she re-creates images collected from social network sites to raise gender issues.

Focusing on similar matters, Natasha Kulczynski uses photographs and video and incarnates personas, where her shaved head – devoid of hair, which is strong female identity symbol – is offered to the interferences.

In Carla Borba's performance we find almost a cry for maintaining balance through breathing. In *Espaço de conflito*, which evokes Brazil's current fragile situation, the artist inflates colorful balloons and invites the public to do the same.¹⁸ The inflated balloons are left in the gallery and gradually occupy it, leaving the performance's traces and resulting in an installation under constant mobility (fig. 4).



Figure 5. Helena Kanaan, *Impressões, acumulações e lágrimas*, 2011/16, installation with lithographic watercolor and latex, 180 x 300cm. Exhibition *Expressions of the Multiple*. Barão de Santo Ângelo Pinacotheca, IA/UFRGS, 2017. Photo: Giordana Winkler.

For the seminary, Helena Kanaan also published her book *Impressões, Acúmulos e Rasgos* (UFRGS, 2016), presented work with the same name (fig. 5) – an installation with lithographic watercolor works and latex comprising a panel suspended by butchers' hooks and a wearable object. The textures and colors of latex – which already referred to human skin – became strong and compelling with the use of the hooks that stretched the volumes. Together with the opening of the exhibition, *Operação Carne Fraca*¹⁹ was started by Brazil's Federal Police and

15. His *DNAs*, as Bernard Paquet calls the small works that accompany the canvasses and play the roles of labels or bar codes, are made with acrylic paint exhaustively layered on acrylic (transparent) medium that, after being cut into strips, are rearranged and again covered by layers of acrylic medium: an extremely time-consuming and meticulous work.

16. See article by Bernard Paquet in this edition.

17. The artist also takes part in this dossier with a review.

18. Next to the balloons offered to the public, which contained the screen print inscription "*Espaço de Conflito*", there were instructions: To fill the balloons, sit down and observe the space around you. Inhale and release the compressed air from your chest, thus filling the balloon. Tie it and release it in the exhibition space. You are invited to fill as many balloons as you can.

19. Another one among recent and successive corruption scandals in Brazil, this time involving the meat industry. See <https://www.cartacapital.com.br/politica/operacao-carne-fraca-e-fragil-mas-uma-coisa-e-certa-ha-corrupcao>.

its echoes on the reading of the work became inevitable.

Janete Fonseca's photographs and by-products of performances such as reliefs on transparencies suggested scarred skins, vestiges of wounds. Water was added to the transparencies formed by white glue, which would be remodeled.

Photographic images or images whose lexicon was more photographic were also presented by Flavya Mutran,²⁰ Lurdi Blauth,²¹ Márcia Sousa²² and myself. Flavya Mutran's photographs had overlaps that left traces, like pentimenti and/or palimpsests, and they would build narratives. In Márcia Sousa's photographs, plants invade deteriorating buildings, resulting in new life and creating visual poetry.

In my work, I transited between languages, configuring urban landscapes in panels made of juxtaposed fragments of photographs and monotypes. A second scenario was established by the spoilage of the first one, as disappearing images. *Travessias Rio Negro*, Lurdi Blauth used resources to transpose photographic image onto a metal matrix that was later reworked with traditional techniques without losing its index aspects and therefore fusing those languages.

It is certainly difficult to delimit what the multiple and printmaking are today. As curator of exhibition *Print/Out* (MoMa, 2012), Christophe Cherix points out the versatile and sometimes even confusing nature of contemporary art in recent decades. Geopolitical borders have shifted and new technologies have forged channels of communication around the world, where printed materials have played a key role (2012, p.15).

Initiatives and projects presented here point to artistic practices related to the multiple and printed media, which corroborate the idea of the appropriation of new technologies as well as old technologies revisited in contemporary poetic production. Without prejudice, distinct resources are used, alone or in association. Processes and languages are overlapped, concepts and boundaries are expanded.

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20. The artist also takes part in this dossier with a review.

21. Guest artist who also takes part in this dossier with an article.

22. Guest artist who is currently a member of the research group.

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