

GALERIA DA BOAVISTA

06.07–20.10.2024

Por quanto tempo mais
terei de nadar?

uma litania pela sobrevivência

Sara Fonseca da Graça

PETRA PRETA

curated by

Melissa Rodrigues



*You can't sit around waiting for someone else to say who
you are—you need to write it and paint it and do it.*

– Faith Ringgold

Por quanto tempo mais terei de nadar? – uma litania pela sobrevivência [How much longer will I have to swim? – A litany for survival], a solo exhibition by Sara Fonseca da Graça – Petra Preta, whispers time-space as a suspension, a breakage. It demands rest, lightness, pleasure. Black bodies floating against a deep blue background. Living Black bodies that float, plunge, breathe and laugh. Apparently banal images of jubilant bodies, were they not the result of the subversion of an aesthetic, visual and political construction in which the Black body is regarded as a body of labour, a body for producing added value, a body that is never allowed to slow down, to stop. The artist, in an act of counter-colonial subversion, retrieves and resignifies happiness, Black Joy, whispering 'we too can be gentle.'

This litany is a manifesto for existence, a liturgy of healing.

The exhibition is presented as a triptych, bringing together the *Humor Negro* (Black Humour) series, which unfolds here in painting, drawing, illustration and ceramics, with the work *Manchê Bom* (Good Dawn), initially a video, now expanded as a sound piece, which also adopts another format and support as painting and cyanotype on fabric. Both these works meet in the installation *Voltar para a Minha Terra* (Return to My Country), formed of ten islands made of zazange wood, water, black paste and text, a work that completes this triptych.

The evocation of blue in all its different tones is a constant, as in the *Manchê Bom* series, in which the artist uses cyanotype and pigment on fabric, the primary colours that characterise the *Humor Negro* series, where little by little, gesture by gesture, mixed and dissolved in different shades, the brown emerges. Black is a presence and material that permeates all her works.

In *Manchê Bom*, we find fragments of resting Black bodies in a symbiosis between human and nature. This imagery is common to many African and afro-diaspora cultures, but nevertheless has little representation in western art history and visual culture. Sara Fonseca da Graça – Petra Preta's practice, like that of other young artists of African descent, in exerting a 'Black Gaze' on the reality around her, challenges the construction and limits of a visual language and narrative and a hegemonic aesthetic.

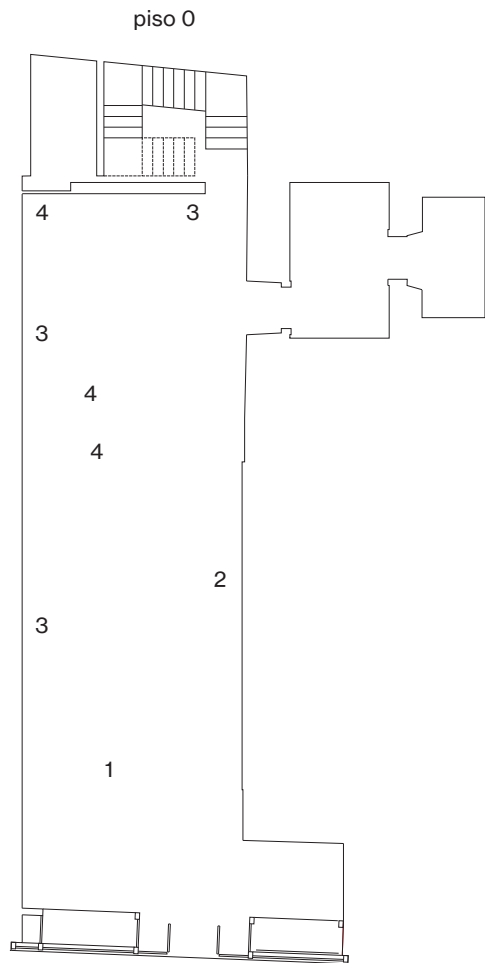
Water, sea, blue, the deep blue of the sea around Cape Verde, saturate the entire exhibition; the sea is Mother, it welcomes and embraces. *É doce morrer no mar...* (It's lovely to die in the sea) sing Cesária Évora and Marisa Monte. Here the artist is not invoking death or the body as resistance, fight, warning.

This is about love.
All about Love.

Sara Fonseca da Graça proposes in this exhibition that we enter the space calmly, submerge ourselves slowly, chew over each moment, remain, be, and as we walk feel each bone and muscle relaxing.

The artist presents images of Black Joy transporting us to a place of possibility and radical imagination, where Black bodies float majestically, sublime and free.

There is a land to which we can return and that, at the very least, is where hope lies.

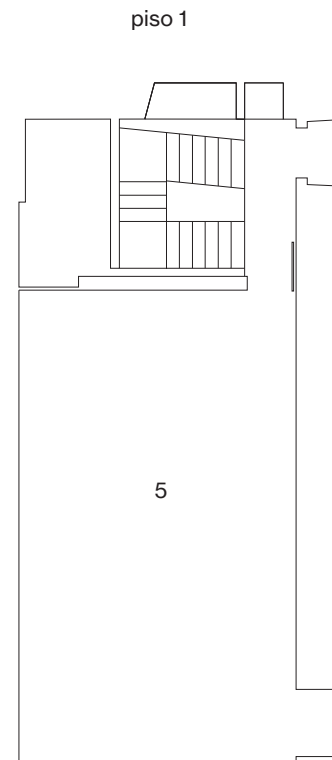


1.
Humor Negro, 2021
 Acrylic on canvas
 Dimensions variable
 6 elements
 Courtesy of the artist

2.
Black Habits, 2020-22
 Watercolour, ink and marker on paper
 29.7 x 42 cm
 5 elements
 Courtesy of the artist

3.
Notas para lembrar que "o prazer é uma medida de liberdade", 2024
 Ceramic
 Dimensions variable
 5 elements
 Courtesy of the artist

4.
Manchê Bom, 2024
 Acrylic, cyanotype, pigment on fabric and sound installation
 Dimensions variable
 4 elements
 Courtesy of the artist



5.
Voltar Para a Minha Terra - as deep as the eye can sea, 2024
 Installation: cut vinyl, acrylic basin, 10 zazange wood islands and modelling clay
 Dimensions variable
 Courtesy of the artist

CREDITS

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GALERIAS MUNICIPAIS – GALERIA DA BOAVISTA

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Free entrance

Guided tours by appointment

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