

Ana Holck

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English version: Steve Berg

Ana Holck's works establish themselves by means of a negotiated spatiality. In her case, this extends beyond a discussion – already intrinsic to contemporary art – of operating vis-à-vis the countless variants of the relationship between art and institution, but above all in the very fact that the work executes an effective, albeit subtle, *tour de force* in order to become real. Given that there are always remarkably physical and critical confrontations between a project's intellectual meaning and the contingencies to which objects are submitted once they have entered the field of fact (as is the case with existential space), one might well wonder whether they function as a *system of accidents*.

Such occurrences are identifiable even in her earliest installations, such as *Empena Cega [Blind Wall]* (2001). The artist occupied a space between two buildings (which contained a staircase) with two large strips of adhesive vinyl that made up a soft beam and was subject to collapse (as imposed by the force of gravity). This delicately balanced, temporal and corporal geometry finds its correspondent in a similarly displaced and unstable spectator who is occasionally in motion (as in *Transitante [In Transit]*, 2003) and, at times, prevented from moving at all (*Quartirão [Block]*, 2004). There is patently no place (or, better yet, there is no such thing as *the place*) from which he may definitively elucidate the work or himself. *Elevados [Elevated]* (2005) and *Rotatória [Rotary]* (2003 and 2008) represent a twofold activation of this problem. In the first of these this is so on account of the vortex-like movement engendered by the installation, which revolves and distorts the boundaries between ceiling and floor (an effect that had previously been rehearsed in *Transitante [In Transit]*), creating a weft within (and around) which the spectator moves, so that his frequent repositioning plays with the boundary between the (optical) point of view and the (bodily) point of reference. A similar problem presents itself in *Rotatória [Rotary]*, albeit in a different sense: the trajectory here is an infinite one, creating the

paradox of a work that moves without ever leaving its place, giving rise to a dynamic that is analogous to the progression of Ravel's *Bolero*. Yet another strategy of the artist's work is recognizable here: the interspersing of the logic of installation with the logic of objecthood.

Pointing out this intersection has a particular meaning in her work. If the motivating discussion of "post"-modernism is born from what might be called a hybridization of categories, what can we say of an approach that crossbreeds plural languages? Ana Holck's propositions signal the unique conjugation of her works' autonomies with the specificity of the spaces they appropriate. There is no point in distinguishing whether it is the place that becomes sculptural or the intervention that dissolves itself in the place; it is the interchange between them that is key. The consequence of this is perceptible in the way that a perspective of (art) history becomes poetic material and takes on a subjective spatial malleability (which is recognized in *Fuga [Fugue]* (2004), executed in the former Ministry of Education building). In it, Holck has added various gradations of solar control film to one of the glass façades. The movement of opening the building's windows created a rhythm of passages of light both inside and outside the building. Were we to examine the history of the aforementioned space in objective terms, we would realize that this multiple tribute to the epochal team of Brazilian architects involved in the Project, to Le Corbusier and to Mondrian also speculates about a circumvolution and compression of that space in a field lying somewhere in between three-dimensionality and pictorialism. Fixed upon a single element (glass – consider its importance to the spatial organization of painting ever since perspective), Corbusier's systems (the glass pane and the brise-soleil) and layers of paradigms that founded the opacity of the pictorial field once again make use of devices that are simultaneously installational and sculptural.

This is neither citationism nor emulation, but reflection on the conceptual and material temporality of contemporary art. The same thing happens in *Contra-muro [Counter-mure]* (2009), in which the walls of the room are filled by a brick wall that is built little by little yet erodes when its conclusion is imminent. Previously (as occurred in *Impedimento [Impediment]* (2003) and *Quarteirão [Block]*) there was an incidence of the spectator's "redundance" – his desire to "enter" the work had to be stimulated by a physicality of the gaze, which was obliged to pierce [the] barriers in order to move across the room. Now this

duplicity befalls the corporeality of image as well as that of space: it is an “x ray” of the white cube (independent, even if the projection occurs upon a brick or a prestressed concrete wall). Let us compare it to *Rotatória [Rotary]*. Both works are based on the idea of the loop. However, unlike the former work, *Contra-muro [Counter-mure]* moves the space toward the spectator. Its dynamic, also dissimilar to earlier projects, is no longer an immediate confrontation of gravity but a clash with its fictional double – the fall of the image – which takes on an instigating weight.

A final note on other series such as *Canteiro de Obras [Construction Site]* and *Pontes [Bridges]* (both 2006): they may be understood as spatial designs and as images. The rending of the modern grid (which has always been of interest to the artist) navigates between the cubic volume of the “models” in the *Pontes [Bridges]* series and the constrictivist grid recorded in the photographs of the civil engineering projects in which the artist has carried out interventions. Both put other modulations of the spectator’s aforementioned optical condition to the test – through the way he must move across that space as well as the way they point to another inversion of the system of accidents which, in this case, refer to the art work’s very itinerary. These drawings are *conclusive* rather than projective. They are born as assessments or inspections, as an internalization of the object of that space which was once external and must now confront the *exteriority of the image*, an installation space that now becomes more objectual than sculptural, concentrated in plexiglass or light boxes. Notes for a critique of disenchanted (albeit indispensable and active) reason.

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