

Rafa Silveiras

*Bloom*

June 21 – August 31, 2024

Opening Friday, June 21, 6–9PM

Peres Projects is pleased to present *Bloom*, Rafa Silveiras' (b. 1984 in Santos, BR) fourth solo exhibition with the gallery and his second in Berlin.

April 26, early afternoon: Rafa and I meet for the first time right outside of the building where his studio is located in former East Berlin. The day is bright and sunny, but as we enter the long ill-lit corridor, it immediately turns dark and humid. One lazy lightbulb, which has probably been there for decades, leads the way in front of us. Rafa opens his studio door and the contrast could not be greater: a vision of vast and wide, tall and white walls, illuminated by lines and lines of fluorescent tubes. There are no windows and the world outside is present only through symbols. The feeling is dry and precise. My eyes go up and down and everywhere else; then straight to his still-in-progress-works. They are unfinished yet vivid. Everywhere – on the walls and on the tables – are inspiration pieces, pictorial worlds in the form of images, labels, contorted shiny metal objects, water tap instructions and books. He offers me sparkling water in a metallic cup. As I drink, it goes down in waves and is cold as metal. Robert Wilson, Henri Matisse, Archigram, Wanda Pimentel, Tarsila do Amaral, Michel Majerus, Eduardo Paolozzi, Marcel Breuer, Bruno Taut, De Stijl and Bauhaus, Konrad Klapheck, the Matschinsky-Denninghoffs – these are loose, visual associations, certainly important sources of cultural developments, without which Silveiras' works would surely look different. We talk a bit about Jac Leirner. It is all about systems, measurements, shiny rulers, typologies, circuits, functions, space, architecture. Inside and outside his works is a blur.

The objects lying around his studio fascinate me: a curved, purple, metallic tangled tube – no idea what it is for, but it could be a keychain; a silver armband; another tangled metallic tubed object, this time big enough to look like a snake, mirroring the entire room around us; a tumble dryer with some aluminum foil resting on top of it alongside a neon orange piece of paper or maybe fabric – I can't tell the difference because of its glowing brightness, it is so bright, but it doesn't matter, it is the contrast for me: of the smooth surface against its metal counterpart; then, on the ceiling, huge chrome-plated ventilation pipes, taking over all above us – Silveiras' large works leaning against the walls, pipes, tangled tubes, conveyor belts and more, all machine-like, reflective, everyday stuff. It is so beautiful how something like metal can distort light and engulf space. Pure reflection and expansion at once. I see images of objects that capture their environments, reflective metallic objects absorbing light from everywhere, fleshy, lively, color-catching instruments and gadgets. This collection of things makes total sense here. They make me conscious of my surroundings, they are spatial arrangements in themselves, bi- and tridimensional simultaneously. Rafa Silveiras is aware of his surroundings.

His latest works are defined by a clear, sharp and reduced vocabulary of color and everyday objects. Assertive compositions of red, green and blue architectures mixed with real-like images of ordinary reflective objects, painted in such a manner they could be photographs, blend with flowers or cloudy shapes of fluids. In his oeuvre, those soft shapes appear as water, air, steam, fire, smell, cream. The tension between the shiny parts and the abstract shapes embodies a tension between physical phenomena and emotional force. These are the parts one can most relate to; one can almost feel, smell and touch the texture of Silveiras' paintings, get close to them in their bubbly, round, full, spherical, sensual waves of sensations. Or they are the tube-like curtains, vertical gradient waves of soft, velvety fabric. Through such parts, his works gain movement and warmth. There is no one in these scenes.

Only a hint of a presence.

Dishwasher, mixer, vase, pipes, silos, conveyor belt – it is obvious, they are there, and they appear against a flat background as if they were stickers. Or is it just such a huge contrast between fore- and background? What – and where – are these places? All of those actions happening nowhere. All of those machines present, doing nothing. All of those inoperative tubes and pipes, connecting nothing, going nowhere. Production, going nowhere. Nonstop comical gadgets, going nowhere, doing nothing important at all. A nonsense explosion. The movement though, is it there or just the idea of it? In Rafa Silveiras' works, movement is always there, the painted objects are private and public, they represent neither male nor female, they are beyond dichotomy, they are gradient and smooth as well as acute.

Who is operating all of this?

Chaos and discipline in unison, a layering of textures and techniques: Rafa uses a wide range of materials such as words, lists of words, sketches, photographs, digital images, as well as photomontage and collage, manifested as paintings. All of it is such a complex construction of language and image. Rafa owns notebooks and notebooks full of those ideas, sometimes already precise, sometimes as loose fragments waiting for further development. The backgrounds, the color block areas, act as if they were infinite digital backgrounds, where shapes can move freely – playful and precise. They appear as walls, doors, large rooms, and furniture. Sometimes the work starts on a computer screen, one can tell. The use of images today is so free and loose, with no filter whatsoever of their veracity. They appear real. Could this be something Rafa Silveiras is paying attention to, like so many other artists of his generation? Manifestation and manipulation, sources and authenticity, the easiness that self performing has become; after all, aren't those self-performing machines?

Who is operating all of this?

Rafa points at a picture he took in some hardware store, pinned on his wall next to his works in progress: inspiration source. It shows the kitchen section, where faucets are displayed randomly on top of a counter. One can see a group of silver pipes connected to nothing, just a hint of a use, coming up from the counter top. For most of us, perhaps just an image of a supply store. For him: composition-worthy material, ready to be used in his future works. It actually looks like those water taps are growing as if they were a field of flowers. Maybe I am seeing it so, because of the blood-red poppy flowers from his paintings. Faucets and flowers against incorruptible colors. What a mood.

It is late afternoon. I leave his studio, get on the tram through the former GDR. Traces of its history are still visible outside, performing resilience in the form of architecture and urban planning. I look out as the tram passes several Plattenbauten and other pre-fabricated buildings. Metallic facades reflecting the sky as well as the surrounding trees take me back to Rafa's paintings. More facades, with panels of bold, flat blocks of color, serve as background for the shiny, metallic cars driving by. Real-life paintings. Some of those buildings, smaller ones, were carefully constructed with details of stone, some of them displaying beautiful reliefs and – even though most portray workers performing labor – some of them also quietly reveal natural elements, such as hay, grapes and flowers. As the tram makes a left turn to a wider street, a tall chimney on the horizon spits a giant cloud of white, foamy, steam, contrasting with the gradient, blue sky, resembling one of Rafa Silveiras' works. A hint of a presence.

–Nuno de Brito Rocha

This is Rafa Silveiras' fourth solo exhibition with Peres Projects and his second in Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include *L'Almanach 23*, curated by Éric Troncy, Le Consortium, Dijon (2023); *Tobogã Vesuvius*, Peres Projects, Milan (2022); *AIRBAG*, Peres Projects, Seoul (2022); *Smoked Ham*, Peres Projects, Berlin (2021); and a solo presentation at The Artists Contemporary Atelier, London (2021). His work has been featured in a number of group exhibitions, including the recent *Real Fake Door*, curated by Oli Epp and Mollie E Barnes, Arsenal Contemporary Art, New York (2023); *The New, New*, Peres Projects, Seoul (2023); *SPRING*, Peres Projects, Seoul (2022); *Monster High*, Olhão, Sao Paulo (2020); *48th Luiz Sacilotto Art Salon*, Casa do olhar, Santo André (2020); and *Mystic Sauna*, AM Gallery, Sao Paulo (2020).

For further information and sales inquiries, please contact [info@peresprojects.com](mailto:info@peresprojects.com) or call at +49 (0) 30 275 950770.

For artist information please contact Nick Koenigsknecht ([nick@peresprojects.com](mailto:nick@peresprojects.com)).

For press and media inquiries, please contact [media@peresprojects.com](mailto:media@peresprojects.com) or +49 (0) 30 275 950770.