

MAX WIGRAM GALLERY

Luiz Zerbini

Papagaio do Futuro

9th October – 9th November 2013

Private view: 8th October 2013, 6.30 – 8.30 pm

Max Wigram Gallery is proud to present *Papagaio do Futuro*, an exhibition of new works by Brazilian artist Luiz Zerbini.

In Zerbini's second solo exhibition at Max Wigram Gallery, the model of the grid returns as the visual and conceptual backbone of the richly diverse works. *Papagaio do Futuro* comprises figurative and abstract paintings, collages and sculpture, which reference the recurrent themes of temporality, memory, and modernity. With these works, Zerbini resolves the duality between figuration and abstraction, blending nature and architecture, surface and depth, materiality and opticality.

Zerbini's work combines myriad sources, borrowing from the cityscapes of Rio de Janeiro, art history, and pop culture. The cacophony of the tropical metropolis verges on the surreal in the large figurative painting, *Serrote*. Modernist architecture is given a digital makeover in the abstract paintings: pure geometric abstraction is exploded in a pixelated constellation of coloured squares in *Fluxo*, and acquires depth, breaking through the pictorial surface in a mosaic of windows in *Sombra*. The grid re-appears in collages of old photographic slides, some hollowed out, some filled with coloured gels, intervening on a collection of memory. This gesture is mirrored in *Books*, in which thick books devoid of words are stacked in a cube, the outlines of their covers creating a dysmorphic three-dimensional grid. In Zerbini's work, everything is dislocated: the landscape loses its depth, and the grid gains it.

Here the grid bursts out of the pictorial plane and takes over the objects that populate Zerbini's reality. Zerbini collects from this reality not only what he sees, but also its spiritual nature, into what he calls 'bins' of memory - materialised in the abstract shapes of geometry, light and colour. For Zerbini, 'the little coloured rectangles in the paintings seem to be bearers of random information, without a defined meaning. Disconcerting information, able to provoke a feeling of strangeness.' This feeling is embodied in *Books*, and the hollowed out slides in *Retângulos e sombras*: these are empty carriers of information and memory, simultaneously hosting time and no time, they are a place and no place at once. They are the matrix of Zerbini's work, encapsulating opposing impulses and resolving them in works that do not suppress, but embrace multi-directional tensions in a flickering harmony.

Zerbini's exploration of memory points at wider notions of time. Temporality for Zerbini is a multifaceted concept that includes ideas of modernity, the future, the past, and timelessness. The grid thus takes on another role: ubiquitous in the art of the 20th century, it becomes a memento of a future that has gone, it is the emblem of modernity, but it belongs to the past. Conversely, the 'future' of the exhibition's title alludes at a future that, instead, never seems to come. Zerbini however does not surrender to melancholy. The fluidity of his notion of time is discernible in the continuity between his works and exhibitions over the years, which are connected like thoughts in a stream of consciousness. And a positive, electric energy is palpable in the new works, each square or 'bin' referring to a sense of speed, a useless digital speed. These capsules bring with them more data than mere information: they carry memories and emotions, thrill and pulse - instilling new life in emblems of a bygone future.

Luiz Zerbini (b. 1959, São Paulo, Brazil) lives and works in Rio de Janeiro. Zerbini was the subject of the retrospective *Amor*, at MAM RIO, Rio de Janeiro, in 2012. In 2010 Zerbini participated to the 29th Bienal de São Paulo. His work has been part of exhibitions at Centro de Arte Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro, 2012; MAM RIO, 2011; Inhotim Centro de Arte Contemporânea, 2009; IX Bienal Monterrey, Mexico, 2009; Museu do Meio Ambiente, Rio de Janeiro, 2008. His work is held in several collections, including Inhotim Centro de Arte Contemporânea; MAM, São Paulo. Concurrent to his exhibition at Max Wigram Gallery, Zerbini's work will be exhibited at Inhotim Centro de Arte Contemporânea, and as part of group exhibitions at the Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, and *30x Bienal*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo.

For further information, interviews, or images please contact Rebecca Gremmo on rebecca@maxwigram.com