

crisrina canale: the encounter

curated by luis pérez-oramas | nara roesler new york

september 8 – october 23, 2021



Cristina Canale. *Encontro*, 2021, mixed media on canvas; Courtesy of the artist and Nara Roesler.

Nara Roesler New York is proud to announce a solo exhibition by Brazilian artist Cristina Canale (b. 1961, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), curated by Luis Pérez-Oramas. The exhibition opens on September 8, 2021, marking the artist's first solo presentation in the US, and will showcase a selection of Canale's most recent production.

The artist first rose to prominence in the 1980s as part of the iconic group from Rio de Janeiro known as *Geração 80*, which brought together young artists seeking to break away from inherited artistic practices. Since then, Canale has produced a robust oeuvre characterized by a ceaseless interrogation of painting's potentialities, through elaborate compositions that blur the boundaries between the figurative and abstract. The exhibition delves into Canale's most recent production, presenting a selection of works that reflect upon the intertwinement of portraiture and landscape, suggesting a new symbolist frontier in her production.

In the words of curator Luis Perez-Oramas, 'The deliberate absence of vultus—that is, of facial expressivity—in Cristina Canale's portraits is compensated by the painting's complex chromatic apparatus, as if the architecture of form and color that gives them presence on the painting's surface could supplement their lack of expression. Prodigiously expressive in spite of their faceless faces these portraits remain an enigma that inquires us through the frontality of painting. It is painting that looks at us. Among Canale's most recent works, there are some portraits of particular significance in that they feature a surprising—and novel—lateral dynamism. Faces depicted in profile emerge and mark the laterality of the pictorial field through their action, through their effect: it could be a cloud of breath, the smoke of a cigarette, a gaze that does not meet ours, but that nonetheless summons it. The fact that the portrait's visages do not apprehend us frontally [...] define another dimension for the encounter, particularly activating the edges, their lateral resonance, their potential capability to determine space beyond its material limits.'

Cristina Canale's works posit a dialogue with the tradition of painting by creating pieces that juxtapose and faint contradictions, and perhaps most importantly, propose a new form of unity. As with other artists represented by Nara Roesler, Canale has accomplished utmost success and institutional recognition in Brazil. The exhibition will offer the US audience an unprecedented opportunity to delve into the practice and universe of an important Brazilian painter whose work has continuously proposed new forms of challenging the pillars of her medium and is yet to be fully revealed in America.

Cristina Canale rose to prominence following her participation in the iconic group exhibition *Como vai você, Geração 80?*, at Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque Lage in Rio de Janeiro in 1984. Loaded with visual elements and thick layers of paint, her early paintings have material and textural characteristics that are reinforced by her use of contrasting and vivid colors. After moving to Europe in the early 90s, her compositions soon acquired a sense of spatiality, as she began to incorporate the use of planes and depth, while also adding greater fluidity to her use of colors. Cristina Canale's work is often based on prosaic everyday scenes, sometimes extracted from advertising photography. Her paintings result in elaborate compositions that blur the boundaries between figurative and abstract.

Nara Roesler is a leading Brazilian contemporary art gallery, which represents established and prominent emerging Brazilian and international artists, with headquarters in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and New York. Founded by Nara Roesler in 1989, the gallery has fomented the development and the diffusion of its artists' work through a consistent exhibition program, solid institutional partnerships and constant dialogue with leading curators in the contemporary art scene.

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