

An abstract painting by Maria Klabin titled 'liquid air'. The composition is divided into two main horizontal sections. The upper section is dominated by dark, swirling colors of teal, blue, and purple, with a large, pale, winged figure (possibly a bird or angel) emerging from the center. The lower section is a vibrant, warm-toned landscape of orange, red, and yellow, populated by numerous small, stylized human figures in various poses. The overall style is expressive and painterly, with visible brushstrokes and a dreamlike atmosphere.

| nara roesler |

maria klabin

liquid air

curated by luis pérez-oramas

nara roesler new york

opening september 7

exhibition sep 7 – oct 15, 2022

maria klabin: liquid air
luis p  rez-oramas

A few years ago, art historian Daniel Arasse asked himself: ‘What to say of sleep and painting? What to say of sleep in painting? What to say of a slumbering painting, of a dream of painting?’

The one who sleeps is not able to return the gaze to the one who observes him. The regulatory contract of every portrait—I look at you while you look at me—breaks and gazes meet in an asymmetrical relationship. Thus, a sudden and unexpected emancipation of the gaze occurs in those who observe the one sleeping.

This exhibition is composed of three distinct groups of works: scenes that represent subjects in a state of sleep, distended bodies collected into themselves, some covered, protected by other bodies also asleep, in the same anamnestic position in which we once found ourselves in the maternal womb; still lifes with half consumed fruits, their segments open, peeled, or still closed in on themselves like an impenetrable mystery, like a hermetic animal, a hedgehog, a fragment; and, finally, huge landscapes populated by strange figures, some with sleeping characters, others with characters keeping vigil, a tense vigil, of figures that observe us from afar or of animals that ignore us; of dreamlike encounters and hugs.

The gaze that lingers on the one who sleeps is similar to that which regiments the representation of still life: in both cases, it opens up to the realm of silence, to a quiet life—a nature coye, in the Old French of Stoics and mystics from the heyday of Port Royal.

Looking at the sleeping body, as well as looking at the remains of vegetables and food, the hermeticism of fruits, is like looking at painting itself: that is, it is looking at what does not look at us, at what only has the power to return its gaze, when our imagination allows it. To look at what can only potentially look at us.

In this way, in every sleeping figure, two extreme scenes converge: the one experienced in the darkness of the mother’s womb, when we were not yet born, and the one we will achieve when we are no longer in life. These are—in the beautiful language of Pascal Quignard—the first and the last kingdoms. The first realm, the one that precedes us, is the source from which everything emerges. The last realm is the virgin field of all that is yet to come.

Perhaps the silent prefiguration of everything comes from sleep: hence the great scenes of Maria Klabin’s landscapes can be interpreted as representations of a dream. From the absolute exteriority of the sleeping person, from the resistance of things in their mute and dead nature, would also come the possibility of representing the liquid air of imagination, in whose dense chromatic presence breathes what is only visible with closed eyes: the dream of painting.



Self portrait 3, 1998
charcoal on paper
19.7 × 14 in
50 × 35,5 cm





Tangerine 3, 2021
oil paint on linen
15.7 × 19.7 in
40 × 50 cm





Tangerine, 2020
oil paint on linen
13.8 x 15.7 in
35 x 40 cm



Untitled, 2022
oil paint on linen
25.6 × 31.5 in
65 × 80 cm





Helena, 2022
oil paint on linen
13.8 × 17.7 in
35 × 45 cm





Cecilia, 2022
oil paint on linen
19.7 × 24.4 in
50 × 62 cm





Bones, 2021
oil paint on linen
31.5 × 37.4 in
80 × 95 cm





Girls, 2021
oil paint on linen
15.7 × 19.7 in
40 × 50 cm





Rosy 2, 2022
oil paint on linen
13.8 × 17.7 in
35 × 45 cm





Apple, 2020
oil paint on linen
15.7 × 19.7 in
40 × 50 cm





Miguel, 2021
oil paint on linen
13.8 × 16.5 in
35 × 42 cm



Liquid Air, 2020/2022
oil paint on linen
82.7 × 124 in
210 × 315 cm





Untitled, 2021/2022
oil paint on canvas
106.3 × 128 in
270 × 325 cm







Landscape with mango tree
(JB Vista), 2021
oil paint on linen
12.6 × 17.7 in
32 × 45 cm





Coconut trees, 2020
oil paint on linen
11.8 × 15.7 in
30 × 40 cm



Tangerine 2, 2020
oil paint on linen
13.8 × 15.7 in
35 × 40 cm







Pomegranate II, 2021
oil paint on linen
7.1 × 9.8 in
18 × 25 cm





Tomatoes 1, 2020
oil paint on linen
7.9 × 11.8 in
20 × 30 cm



Sweet potato, 2020
oil paint on linen
7.9×11.8 in
20×30 cm



Sweet potato 2, 2020
oil paint on linen
7.9 × 11.8 in



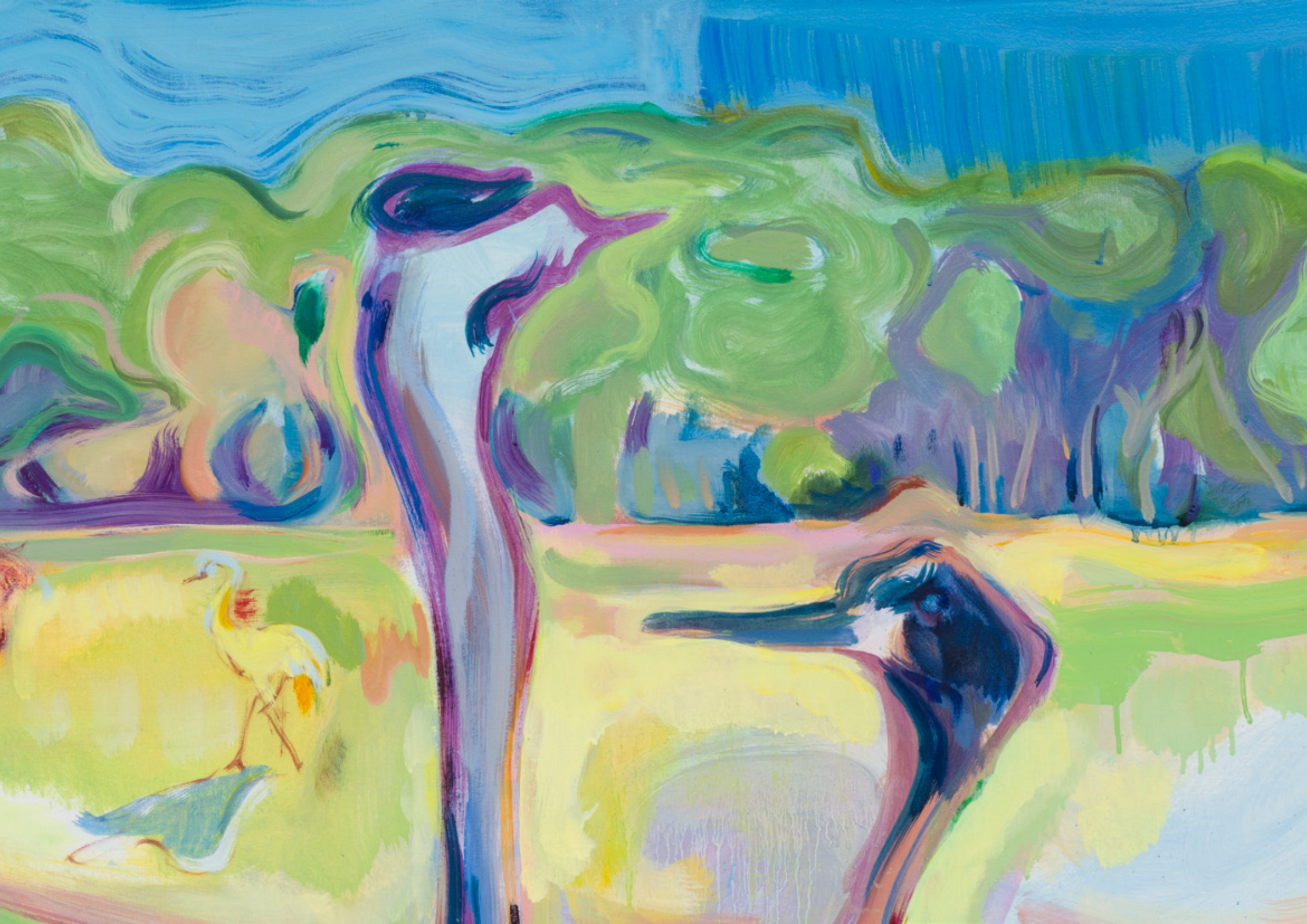
Monkey, 2020
oil paint on linen
102.4 × 159.4 × 1.6 in
260 × 405 × 4 cm





Untitled, 2022
oil paint on linen
102.4 × 159.8 in
260 × 406 cm







Saião #1, 2021
oil paint on linen
19.7 × 15.7 in
50 × 40 cm





Dimitri, 2021
oil paint on linen
78.7 × 43.3 in
200 × 110 cm

maria klabin

b. 1978, rio de janeiro, brazil, where she lives and works

Maria Klabin's work engages with scenes, occurrences, and landscapes that permeate everyday life and thus, have been seen and experienced exhaustively. In dealing with omnipresent elements, Klabin extracts the cadence of their recurrence, seeking to capture the formal rhythm embedded in the repetition, or banality, of their existence. The artist's process lays in constantly producing and assembling drawings, photographs, and annotations, which she draws from her immediate entourage. The accumulation of thoughts and images entwine and come to make sense as a whole, unveiling intriguing relations that form the backbone of the artist's pictorial endeavor. In her own words, Klabin develops her work 'as if writing a story, or a diary, but a diary of things that don't really happen. It's a narrative that could only be told through painting, but that touches themes that seem closer to writers than to painters.'

Maria Klabin oscillates between extremes in terms of the scale of her works, producing both very small and monumental, large scale paintings, depending on the nature of her subject. Her small canvases often serve as support for rapid streams of thought—like writing on paper, perhaps harnessing an unconscious mind—and effectively capturing the rhythm of her surroundings, while her large pieces embody more contemplative, oneiric perceptions. Most recently, Klabin has produced a series of almost mural-sized landscape paintings that depart from fragments of autobiographical elements, distilled from what she describes as an improbable and fluid patchwork of memory, that results in non-objectifiable, enticing yet daunting compositions.

selected solo exhibitions

- *Entre rio e pedra*, Galeria Silvia Cintra, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2017)
- *E o dia havia acabado, quando começou*, Galeria Silvia Cintra, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2014)

selected group exhibitions

- *In Waiting: Works Produced in Isolation*, Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2020)
- *Já estava assim quando eu cheguei*, Ron Mandos, Amsterdam, Holland (2020)
- *Festival de Arte Contemporânea*, SESC VideoBrasil, São Paulo, Brazil (2012)
- *Novas aquisições da Coleção Gilberto Chateaubriand*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2012)
- *Rumos 2005/06 Paradoxos Brasil*, Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil (2006)
- *Além da imagem*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2006)

selected collections

- Instituto Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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