

KARIN LAMBRECHT

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PAINING IN ALL ITS DIMENSIONS	Glória Ferreira	3
KARIN LAMBRECHT: ART AND ETHICS	Miguel Chaia	11
INVISIBLE MEMORIES	Agnaldo Farias	25
KARIN LAMBRECHT CHRONOLOGY	Viviane Gil Araújo	45
CRITICAL ESSAYS		61
THUMBNAILS		86

Twelve meters of pure cotton canvas marked by the last gush of blood from a ram, surrounded by twelve drawings on size-A1 paper, with the printed names of the apostles, the entrails and cuts of mutton for domestic use. These objects allude to the fragmentation and dissection of bodies, and the ram to the genealogy of Christ. In a certain sense, it recalls a mural – and, by association, the story of the Last Supper, but transformed into a Resurrection by the indelible mark of blood. *Desmembramento* (Dismemberment), 2000, with its simultaneously minimalist and grandiose look, seems to exalt both form and subject, although not dissociated from one another. The work also indicates possible relationships between a number of moments in Karin Lambrecht's trajectory, from different points in her attention to large scale or monumentality, to the ample and free use of materials such as sand, earth, natural pigments, blood, rain, tablecloths, etc., etc., as a way of resolving questions of surface, color, rhythm, and gesture. Questions of painting, that is to say.

While still a student at the Instituto de Arte da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, UFRGS, Karin took part in a variety of activities with a clear conceptual bent, such as her drawings at ESPAÇO N.O., a concern that, to my eye, will reappear in her future as a painter, and which she will identify as a center of her work.

While her stay in Germany was partially motivated by the death of her father and her desire to find her paternal grandparents, her choices of study – already having received a bachelor's degree in visual arts – were decisive in determining her trajectory. Upon entering the Hochschule der Künste Berlin, in West Berlin (currently the Universität der Künste, UDK), from 1980 to 1982, Karin discovers a kind of painting that was “practically nonexistent”¹ in Porto Alegre, though it was already present in her first solo show, *100 × coração*, at the Escritório de Arquitetura Ceres Storchi e Amigos, in 1979.

Her professor at UDK, Raimund Girke (1930-2002), a highly influential figure in Germany, abandoned abstract informalism in order to explore a reduction in styles and techniques, using a monochromatic palette above all. In the 1980s, Girke chose white as his primary color, augmented by gradations of gray and the gestural use of brushstrokes. His work, much like that of the American artist Robert Ryman, is a continuous experiment on the possibilities of painting. Karin is less interested in effervescent German painting – Salome, Helmut Middendorf, Georg Baselitz – than in her professor's drawings, where personal flux is practically neutralized, but still marked by a tension between sobriety

1. Karin Lambrecht, “Iberê Camargo, lembranças”, in S. Salzstein (org.), *Diálogos com Iberê Camargo*. São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2003, p. 185.

and emotion. Another crucial influence around this period is her study of the history of art and abstract art with renowned scholar of modern art history Robert Kudielka. As the artist has said, "In art, there are mountains like Professor Kudielka and my dear professor Girke; for me, they are mountains."²

On the other hand, equally close to the conceptual side of things, we can see the influence of Joseph Beuys – she had the opportunity to attend one of his talks at the university – and the information she got from London about the Exploding Galaxy³ in the late 1960s, via one of its active participants, Michael John Chapman, her ex-husband and the father of her daughter.

From Beuys, Karin seems to have taken the metaphorical slant of the materials she uses, natural and organic substances such as fat, felt, copper (insulators and conductors of electricity); the reclamation of her spiritual and symbolic dignity in art; the return to the natural world, to religiosity and transcendence – after all, as he said, "How to undertake a process of rehumanizing man?"⁴ On the other hand, lacking a link to a supposed definition of art such as that proposed by the Exploding Galaxy, the artist seems to have assimilated process as an operative element of her praxis.

The period is, however, a "moment of plenitude in painting,"⁵ as Frederico Morais puts it. Countless exhibitions follow one another, affirming the "new" medium: *Pictures and Promises*, 1981, curated by Barbara Kruger, in New York; the Venice Biennale and Documenta 7, 1982, in Kassel; and even a number of Brazilian exhibitions, such as *Entre a mancha e a figura* (Between the Blur and the Figure), 1982, curated by José Roberto Aguilar at the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, MAM-RJ. Karin has the chance to see Zeitgeist Internationale Kunstausstellung Berlin, 1982, curated by Norman Rosenthal and Christos Joachmides and presented at Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin. There, alongside the work of young artists, Beuys' installation *Werkstatt* (Workshop) is displayed. Rosenthal and Joachmides, along with Nicholas Serrota, put together *A New Spirit in Painting* at the Royal Academy of Arts in London, presenting works by Francis Bacon and Gerard Richter. Despite fierce debate, the "zeitgeist" is affirmed by the profusion of painters, marked by figuration and subjectivism. This is the environment surrounding the artist in Berlin.

Back in Brazil and with German experience, the artist tackles the concerns present in her previous work in projects such as those at the festivals of Ouro Preto, in the publication of the album *Relinguagem*, with about forty artists, which would produce forty albums with forty photocopied images; or, in 1980, with the exhibition *A casa e a cozinha* (The House and the Kitchen) at ESPAÇO N.O. in Porto Alegre. Mail art, defined by Julio Plaza as a genre of art in which "what prevails is the spirit of mixing mediums and languages, and (where) the game is precisely to invade other space-times,"⁶ is a pillar of Karin's work. This "space-time structure" still appears in the works of the artist today, as in the use of stamps and writing (the birth of her daughter, for instance, was announced via mail art).

Her work seems not to have suffered the "afflictions" provoked by the return of painting, given its broad pictorial scope, demonstrating that between art and the world there lies porosity, not defined borders. This being the case, it mixes

2. K. Lambrecht, *Montanha*, Oct.-Nov., 2007. Manuscript text.
3. In 1964, David Medalla moved to England, where he co-founded the Signals Gallery in London, focused on kinetic international art. From 1964 to 1966, Medalla also edited the Signals newsletter. In 1967, he founded the *Exploding Galaxy*, an international confluence of multimedia artists, including hippies and counterculture circles, especially the UFO Club and Arts Lab.
4. Joseph Beuys, *A revolução somos nós*, in G. Ferreira & C. Cotrim (orgs.), *Escritos de artistas anos 60/70*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 2006.
5. Frederico Morais, *Entre a mancha e a figura*. Rio de Janeiro: MAM, 1982.
6. Julio Plaza, "Mail Art: Arte em sincronia", in *xvi Bienal de São Paulo* (catalogue), São Paulo: Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, 1981. (reed. in G. Ferreira & C. Cotrim, op. cit.).

languages. Hence the artist's stubborn defense of the genre, even today, despite the games she plays, making painting an "expanded field," to borrow the words of Rosalind Krauss, in which plurality is wrapped up in an organic, harmonious whole, with a strong Romantic-Expressionist slant.

Karin contributes to the exhibition *Como vai você* (How Are You), *Geração 80?*, 1984, at Parque Lage in Rio de Janeiro, with the diptych *Pequenos seres* (Small Creatures). She seems unenthused by the hubbub around the show, however. Though she is a part of *Geração 80*, a nucleus of artists whose work was influenced by the famous opposition between "concept" and "expression", signaling the contradiction between artistic discourse and practice in the 1960s and 70s, Karin's involvement – despite her inflexible stance – with the debate over the death of painting, begun in the early 19th century. With the invention of photography, the death of painting was swiftly announced, as well as the end of its representative function. A small trauma, if compared to a number of other death sentences – beginning with Hegel and the end of art, God and man with Nietzsche, the author, with Barthes, and the history of art, if we listen to Hans Belting, etc. Modernist painting and artistic production itself coexist with this trauma, taken as a strategy by modern vanguards. In 1921, Rodchenko, for example, declared the death of representation with three monochromes: red, yellow, and blue. "It's all over. Basic colors. Every plane is a plane."⁷ Sticking with Russian artists, from 1912 to 1922, a number of concepts are elaborated to define their new praxis; these ideas would lead Nikolai Taraboukine (qualifying Rodchenko's act as "painter's suicide") to proclaim the uselessness of the work of art,⁸ in name of construction as a defining element. Other strategies, among them Duchamp's anathema on retinal art, or American artists' questioning when faced with the incapacity of European art to respond to the feeling of crisis after the World War II, marked painting throughout the 20th century with a sense of mourning, according to Yves-Alain Bois. This activity, the author goes on to say, "does not necessarily become pathological: the feeling of the end, after all, did produce a cogent history of painting, modernist painting, which we have probably been too prompt to bury."⁹ Painting as an element was, in fact, buried, subsuming the arts to become one of their possibilities. As Alberto Tassinari warns us, "The new painting is a painting of survival."¹⁰

In Germany, Karin had turned to investigating color and light, using the morning atmosphere, executing the piece *O caminho do rio* (The River's Path): a cardboard box treated with tempera paints and waterproofed with shellac to float on the Spree River in Berlin in the early morning hours. She also creates objects treated with black and gray paints and soot, left out in the absolute white of the snow of the Berlin winter, where temperatures can drop to 20° C – the beginning, perhaps, of a practice of the survival of painting. On her return, she develops the open-air workshop "Exercícios de Pintura" (Painting's Exercises) in the gardens of the old Museu de Porto Alegre, which includes work with stones and earth, and where the students construct their own surfaces and frames. With Michael Chapman and Heloísa Schneiders da Silva, she develops the project "Três Processos de Trabalho" (Three Working Processes), overseeing the workshop

7. Aleksandr Rodchenko, *Working with Majakovski. Ms.*, 1939. Available at : <<http://leey294.wordpress.com/2011/11/26/the-death-of-painting/>>.
8. Nikolai Taraboukine, *Le Dernier Tableau: Du Chevalet à la machine. Pour une théorie de la peinture*. Paris: Editions du Champ Livre, 1980.
9. Yves-Alain Bois, "Painting: The Task of Mourning", in *Painting as Model*. Cambridge/London: MIT Press, 1990, p. 243.
10. Alberto Tassinari, "Entre o passado e o futuro", in *xviii Bienal de São Paulo* (catálogo). São Paulo: Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, 1985 (reed. in G. Ferreira (org.), *Crítica de Arte no Brasil: Temáticas contemporâneas*. Rio de Janeiro: Funarte, 2006, p. 334).

Exercise/Color/Performance, which mixes artistic reflection and pictorial production. From then on, she traces her own path, taking liberty in her work in terms of treating materials and the pictorial act itself – she deconstructs her canons, starting with the quadrilateral, reorganizing it in arrangements using pieces of scrap iron, objects, and earth from her garden, among other elements. Processes that reveals to be fundamental elements in the critical reception of her work. The materials being used are not simple, formless substrata; rather, they lend their meanings to the work and impregnate it with temporal experience, such as in *Nascimento do tempo* (Time's Birth), where the artist uses industrial acrylic paint and pigments to cover iron and wooden objects, presented at the Millay Colony for the Arts in New York State, where she stayed in 1986. In other works, the layers of paint advance over the objects, and they become impregnated with the pictorial material – this is the case, for example, with *O destino: Mu Bes sein – Es muB sein* (Destiny: It is truly necessary – it must be), 1986, or with *Marco Polo*, 1990. We might locate them somewhere between painting and sculpture, if we conserve the old artistic categories, although they are eminently pictorial, with the superposition of a number of layers of pigment and the direct implication of the body. As Virginia Aita suggests, Karin “takes on the task of remaking the very concept of what it is to paint,”¹¹ affirming its complex nature; alternatively, according to Mônica Zielinsky, she has painting pass “for action, an action that conflates body and thought.”¹²

Her personal experience with nature and the incorporation of the relationship between the organic and the mental come to light in her use of rain, as well as the earth from her garden, as the coauthors of certain works – in the exploration, ultimately, or the constitutive instability of the elements of nature. The materials being used, the artist says, “have memory, they’ve already been used and reused. When I take a piece of scrap iron, I look at it with a painter’s eye, seeking out the stains on its surface, situations that can create new situations. But I always have in mind something undergoing a process of reintegration with nature.”¹³

The animal, beyond the vulgar pejorative reference to an “inhuman” or cruel being, is more than we see: it deserves attention, care, and preservation. It can inspire subjective experiences, emotional states such as suffering in adverse conditions, and feelings of pleasure in agreeable situations. This is the case with *O animal é mais do que vemos* (The Animal is More than What We See), 1983, a billboard displayed in São Paulo during the “Arte na Rua 2” (Art in the Street II) project, overseen by the, MAC-USP, which makes us recall the slaughter of the ram as well as Beuys and his relationship with animals. Invoking a dead hare, as he did, or using a coyote, which he lived alongside for several days in *I Like America and America Likes Me*, seeks to foreground, be it through memory or imagination, the symbolic and ahistorical field of another relationship with nature and animals.

Ester or Ester entra no pátio inferior da casa do rei (Esther or Esther Enters in the Inner Courtyard of the King’s House), 1987, was part of the *Utopia e realidade* (Utopia and Reality) exhibition at the XIX São Paulo Art Biennial,

11. Virginia Aita, *O grão: A textura do tempo ou a fenomenologia do pathos*. Unpublished text.
12. Mônica Zielinsky, “Nexos da matéria”, in *Lugares Desdobrados* (catálogo). Porto Alegre: Fundação Iberê Camargo, 2008.
13. K. Lambrecht apud Roels Reynaldo Jr., “Os nomes e as obras”. *Jornal do Brasil*, Caderno B, p. 4, 1/15/1988.

curated by Sheila Leirner, and was also displayed at Galeria Thomas Cohn Arte Contemporânea in 1988, this time with the construction of a full-fledged courtyard. The work alludes to the story of Esther, which the Jews call the Megillat Esther, or simply the Megillah, which means “scroll” or “written scroll.” A young Jewish woman among the exiles, she risked her own life, violating a ban in order to gain her people’s freedom; her story is one of the historical books of the Old Testament, found in the Jewish Museum in Gottingen, Germany. Karin’s piece, using acrylic paint, scrap metal and photography as its principal elements, makes up a grand installation; more than a theme, it is the elaboration of a dilemma, an abstract, life-or-death question, of an equally current stance being taken on the destruction of nature. Michael Chapman comments the inherently ethical aspect of her painting: “Beyond figures and altars, a vast world is painted on the canvas – vast not merely in terms of its size as a painting, but vast in terms of associations, for me, with the vastness of the human condition, physically and spiritually, in the context of this world.”¹⁴

As palimpsests, her works are supports for drawings, words, alternately in German, Portuguese, or Latin – *conjunctio, conceptio, putrefactio, separatio* – pictorial elements with layers of paint that overlap, pile on top of each other, accept imprints, demanding an almost nomadic gaze, which place us between the abstract and the real, between the visible and that which we can barely imagine. A recurring element in her works, the cross – the most primitive sign of an object in space, with a broad universe of significations and symbologies – declines in a series eternally renewed by forgiveness. In a lovely text on the meaning of the cross, Karin affirms that the “human body that sinks into the mud and the scattered, confused profundities of the subterranean has the ability to rise up and ‘draw’ the cross in that moment when it lifts itself from the ground and crosses the line of earth or of the distant horizon.”¹⁵

In *Entrecruzamentos* (Intersections), the circulation of meanings does not characterize each work, simply a universe in and of itself. Karin hopes that these significations constitute an integral part of the Universe, introducing us to the broader field of her reflections and her ethical, spiritual, and aesthetic choices, which inform her praxis and question logical rules in the desire to engage directly with life and reencounter the original intensity of the world in a mutable, indefinable, paradoxical universe: “This cosmic universe is not a religious, institutional universe.”¹⁶

Morte eu sou teu (Death, I am yours), her pioneering piece with blood, was presented on the parallel institutional circuit created by Frederico Morais at the I Bienal do Mercosul in 1997. On a farm in the countryside of Rio Grande do Sul, the artist collected the blood from the slaughter of a ram for domestic consumption on a damask tablecloth belonging to her maternal grandmother. She associates the rivers “of blood that run in Rio Grande do Sul,” present in every house, with a tablecloth used in many family celebrations, perhaps evoking the saga of her mother’s family, which immigrated just before the World War I – a time that, as we all know, was bathed in blood. The material is not neutral; it carries with it a structure indicating the fact that it belongs to the world of painting; copper

14. Michael Chapman, “Ester ou Ester entra no pátio inferior da casa do rei”. *Gazeta de Sergipe, Arte e Literatura*, 1987.

15. K. Lambrecht, *The Reasons for the Cross*. Text provided by the artist.

16. Id., *Invisible Memories*. Interview with Agnaldo Farias on the occasion of the exhibition *Lugares desdobrados*. Fundação Iberê Camargo, 2008. Published in this book.

wires as conductors of electricity; a needle made of clay alludes to feminine work, as does the tablecloth, or even the prints of the artist's hands. The title, which generally serves as a master of ceremonies, according to Michel Butor, appears as an enigma: *Je est un autre*, à la Rimbaud? A work already tackled by a number of important analyses, including Icleia Borsa Cattani's, *O copo, a mão, o vestígio* (The Glass, The Hand, The Traces)¹⁷ continues to question the relationship between life and death as a part of the nature of living creatures.

Developed over nearly ten years, the series "Blood Records" was displayed at a variety of exhibitions, biennials, and other events. In a number of different configurations, it arranges copper wires and drawings with the prints of entrails, including temporality as a central element, as well as journeys to the countryside of Rio Grande do Sul, Uruguay, and Chile, but also to Israel – confirming the Judaic origins of the butcher's art, passed from father to son and kept eternally the same. This blood, however, as the artist signals, "is not always the blood of death; (it's) as if the blood of death, our whole blood flow, beat together. It's a pulsation, as if one thing depended on the other, as if life depended on death."¹⁸

In the interview *Memórias invisíveis* (Invisible Memories), conducted by Agnaldo Farias on the occasion of Karin's exhibition at Fundação Iberê Camargo, *Lugares desdobrados* (Expanded Fields),¹⁹ published here, she speaks at length about the journey of producing the series "Blood Records", her attention to the Bible, and the spiritual aspects of her work. As for *Pai*, comprising 77 drawings – a reference to the Genealogy of Jesus according to Luke, which takes the gospels as containing the life of Christ, Karin highlights the importance of the form of presenting one's work, the way one looks at it, in order to reveal memory and time. It may be seen as a tunnel if we look at it from one side, thus invoking the image of time that we normally construct in terms of past and future; or in terms of a single temporality: if we face the work straight on, the tube disappears as a temporal metaphor. "All that time becomes a single time, with all those fathers and children. It starts with Jesus and goes all the way to God, all of them, side by side. Actual time, time as we calculate it, is under a lot of stress in our society. It puts us under pressure; if we looked at time from the side, it's as if it all coexisted, but fluctuatingly."²⁰

Eu e você (I and You), 2001, is the register in book form of an action within the context of Areal, a project coordinated by André Severo and Maria Helena Bernardes, who, alongside German artist Rolf Wicker, form part of a small group of people who are present at the moment a ram is slaughtered. Karin associates the photographic register of the participants' hands with the entrails, during the *blood inprinting*, with the interviews given by Bernardes and Wicker in which they recounted their experiences. According to historian and art critic Karin Stempel, "here nothing is staged, no-one is an actor – what's at stake is the comprehension of an experience that becomes visible on the horizon, beyond the dramatization of life, as a reflection, indirect light, a sign, a farewell – the matter is permanently unresolved. What is left is a bloody stain, burning a hole into the day."²¹ There are also the pawprints of cats that walked over the drawings as they were drying, as well as the repeated expression "I and You" stamped

17. Icleia Borsa Cattani, *O copo, a mão, o vestígio*, in E. Chiron (org.), *La Main dans les arts plastiques*. Paris: Cerap/ Editions de La Sorbonne, 1996.

Published in this book.

18. K. Lambrecht, *Invisible Memories*, op. cit.

19. Exhibition at Fundação Iberê Camargo, 2008.

20. K. Lambrecht, *Invisible Memories*, op. cit.

21. Karin Stempel, in A. Severo & M. H. Bernardes (orgs.), *Eu e você Karin Lambrecht*. Santa Cruz do Sul: Edunisc, 2001.

Stempel, although not at Bagé at the time, was familiar with Karin's work, having displayed *Organismo* in the exhibition *Quase nada* at Nassaurische Kunstverein Wiesbaden in December 1998.

onto the paper, which, as stated, accompanied Karin's journey. *Con el alma en un hilo* (With Her Soul in a String), 2003; *Meu corpo Inês* (My Inez Body), 2005; or *Caixa do primeiro socorro* (First-aid Kit), 2005, all made with ram's blood, see the introduction of photographs taken at the time of the slaughter, with the precision necessary to prevent the blood from coagulating. Photographs of Karin's mother and daughter once again remind us of a familial environment, with linen outfits made especially by an acquaintance of hers – anachronistic clothes, as Viviane Gil Araújo observes.²² In other pieces from the “Blood Records” series, there is also photographic documentation as a form of bringing “a fact, an event” to an uncontrollable happening. Besides this, photographs have an important role in the construction of the setup, in the sense of setting the scene for a particular situation.

Karin never abandoned painting, one must note again, and her work with blood is still part of this sphere, as are the allusions to memory, temporality, recurrences, historical and sociocultural facts, and fictional happenings. She brings in her own body as she works on all sides with the canvas stretched out on the ground, using broad strokes. Time and transience, like life and death, are facts of her work. Iberê Camargo is undoubtedly a strong reference in this sense, perhaps out of a feeling of kinship. In speaking of her fellow painter, the artist refers to the unity of the body and painting as one of her main concerns. This unity speaks to the nature of the defining function of art – its ability to exist in, say, a craftsman. “There is no invention in painting,” Iberê told Karin. She says he was referring to the pictorial event itself, to the complexity in the incredibly simple gesture of applying paint to the surface. This is the secret, she claims, to the continued contemporary feel of his work, as Iberê “throws himself into this secret, truthfully, but at the same time the secret is just this: the experience of the person who uses color, forms, and materials, and through them reaches a place where the matter and spirit of the human-painter are united and realize each other in the process of production.”²³

Morte da luz (Death of Light), built on the occasion of the exhibit *Mulheres artistas: Olhares contemporâneos*, (Women Artists: A Contemporary View) curated by Lisbeth Rebolo at MAC-USP, 2007, approaches painting through the combination of “unstable” materials, and via the fact that the process of construction resembles the execution of a pictorial act, albeit carried out by a number of hands. Executed on a 300 × 0.51 cm panel, it recalls a fragment of the Cross. With the attachment of cotton to a more traditional adhesive on a wooden structure, gold leaf was stuck on with honey by USP students. The gold reacts in different ways to the quantities of honey being applied by each of the students. It undergoes a visible evolution – left to sit for years, it would all turn into a somber shade of brown, but the three months that the exhibition lasted are not enough to show the full extent of the process.

The materials, gold leaf and honey, carry their own symbolic weight – around three thousand small sheets of pure gold, 15.5 × 15.5 cm squared, including alloys with other metals responsible for the oxidation process sparked by the wetness of the orange-blossom honey (less attractive to insects). While the use

22. Viviane Gil Araújo, “As vestes na série *Blood Records*, de Karin Lambrecht”, in I. B. Cattani (org.), *Mestiçagens na arte contemporânea*. Porto Alegre: UFRGS, 2007.

23. K. Lambrecht, “Iberê Camargo, lembranças”, in S. Salzstein, *Diálogos com Iberê Camargo*, op. cit., p. 190.

of gold and honey recalls Beuys, however, particularly *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare*, it also evokes Karin's "Blood Records," in terms of the rivers of bloodshed, the artist reminds us, to obtain the gold. In this ephemeral process, given to reconstruction, transforming itself depending on the situation, we see a convergence of a range of her methods, such as the gesture, the body, and the surface. Or, as she puts it, "'Death of Light', for me, underscores all the wet aspects of the physical materials of painting, and the action of the body while painting, as material of form and gesture; honey is to the medium as gold is to color, in this piece of mine."²⁴

In a different sense, *No quarto com Camus* (Camus' Room) is also a possible development of painting today. Presented at her solo show at Galeria Nara Roesler, 2008, in São Paulo, the piece consists of a small bedroom for the French philosopher and writer. In his *American Journals*, commenting on his quick stop in Porto Alegre, Camus jots down, "The light is very beautiful. City ugly. Despite its five rivers. These islands of civilization are often hideous."²⁵ He arrives in the South after having gone through Rio de Janeiro, Recife, Salvador, and São Paulo. He describes endless lunches, dinners, meetings, jaunts, visits to *favelas* (shanty towns) and Afro-Brazilian religious ceremonies, almost inevitably with an extremely French criticism of everything and everyone involved, despite his decision to convince himself, on arriving, to "relax a little for (his) encounter with this country."²⁶ He complains, "What I've obstinately refused all my life, I accept here – as if in advance I had agreed to everything about this trip which I never wanted to undertake in the first place."²⁷ Karin makes him a room in the shape of a cross, with a bed and a nightstand, as well as a metaphysically blue sky – like a Giotto, mingling, as Paulo Reis puts it, "the writer's factual existence with the existential meaning of his work, evoking the sky complicit in Meursault's act (*L'Etranger*) or even Camus' childhood in far-off Algiers."²⁸ Recreating a symbolic warm welcome for the writer, Karin makes time a point of connection with existentialism and dialogues with Camus' reflections on the absurd; like the writer, she moves "gradually toward hope and human solidarity as possible solutions to the drama of the absurd."²⁹

In more recent pieces, such as her boxes, for example, time and culture are intermingled with crosses, possible constructions of civilizations, and strong colors such as blue. Using spiritual and transcendent elements of art and reexamining our origins and history, Karin interrogates the present, our relationship with nature and other men – the malaise of civilization, in short. To quote the artist once more, as her manuscript and published texts reveal a profound reflection on painting itself, "Painters did not invent the universe of the canvas without first having felt and observed the universe at hand."³⁰

24. Id. *apud* Magali Melleu Sehn, *Morte d. luz*. Available at <www.mac.usp.br>. Thesis for ECA-USP, *Preservação de Instalações em Arte*. Text provided by the artist.

25. Albert Camus, *American Journals*, trans. by Hugh LeVick. New York: Paragon, 1987, p. 128.

26. Id., *ibid.*, p. 72.

27. Id., *ibid.*, p. 110.

28. Paulo Reis, *Karin Lambrecht: Pintura, desenho e anotação*. São Paulo: Galeria Nara Roesler, 2008.

29. Albert Camus, *Diário de viagem*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 1997.

30. K. Lambrecht, *Pintura*, 2007. Text sent by the artist.

ON ART ITSELF

1. Even in the light of the variety of mediums and materials she uses, Karin Lambrecht's work is fundamentally centered on situating, thinking, and discussing painting. Through her constant investigations and experiments, the artist seeks to broaden the limits of painting in an effort to concentrate its potential. Karin Lambrecht assumes the permanence of painting, basing herself on the vibrant history of this specific artistic practice in Brazil and abroad.
2. The whole of the artist's work, including the development of her artistic language, is rooted in three broad aspects: the construction and unfolding of structuring planes (surface); the affirmation of the meanings of colors (light); and the controlled elaboration of the areas of brushstrokes (form). These three resources of language in particular, among others, are an organic articulation of her production in relation with available artistic technology, and the concept and sentiments of the person under the circumstances.
3. There is nothing virtual in her pieces. All the elements of the work are immediately present in their materiality and expressivity. Hence the relevance of the very act of creating each piece. This thus provokes a direct struggle from the body to create planes on the surface, add color pigments, include different elements obtained from the environment, and, among other possibilities, even weaken the surface with rips or subtractions.
4. Karin Lambrecht constantly problematizes painting, thus situating herself in the sphere of knowledge-art.
5. These paintings are made up of layers. Layers of colors, densities, fabrics, and even organic and metallic materials such as honey, wax, copper wires and plates, nails, and staples. These overlays are part of a method for expressing multiplicity. On the surface at hand, parts overlap and are juxtaposed, thus creating a new language, one primarily visual and sense-based.
6. Works on paper imply specific processes, as they allow greater physical freedom. They generally contain areas of color accompanied by graphic gestures,

signs, a larger number of words, involuntary marks, and stamps. The drawings often incorporate pieces of other drawings or have smaller pieces of paper glued on to them. Whether in drawing or in painting, we always see a search for an unattainable totality.

7. In her quest to expand the frontiers of painting and drawing, Lambrecht makes use of the three-dimensional, creating boxes/displays and even installations such as those presented at the xxv São Paulo Art Biennial, 2002, the v Bienal do Mercosul, 2005, and at the Museu de Arte Contemporânea at the Universidade de São Paulo, MAC-USP, 2007. The installations unfold in space but leave paradoxical clues as to their nature; they require a head-on examination, much like that demanded by a painting.

8. These “paintings” are visceral – they combine lightness and density, order and disorder, control and freedom, physicality and spirituality, materiality and suspension, brushstrokes and “writing.” These are works, ultimately, born of tensions and clashes.

9. With the exception of the works on paper stamped with animal blood, or a few rare photographs, Karin Lambrecht does not work with representation, perspective, figuration, or volume. The artist sees it as a matter of exploring questions tied to the possibilities of planes and blots, forever seeking the heart of abstract painting. Even in her series “Anitas,” from around 1985, the human figures were flat, silhouettes cut out in blue, white, or yellow, and drawn using the artist’s own body. When there are references to the world at large, these are mediated by words written on the pieces (in Portuguese or German), constituting themselves in indirect, resignified visual signs.

10. One of the characteristics of Geração 80, which the artist belongs to, was innovation in moving painting beyond the surface of the canvas. Karin Lambrecht, like Leda Catunda, Leonilson, Nuno Ramos – and, to an extent, Ana Tavares – made use of sewing, varied materials and industrial objects, directing painting towards something closer to three-dimensionality. This generation blurred the lines between vehicles, mediums, and languages. In this provocative artistic adventure, each builds the parameters of his own language as he goes.

11. Given the emphasis on color, Karin Lambrecht’s painting technology consists in dyeing the canvas so that the paint seeps through the front, coloring the back of the support as well. Front and back are both colored by the pigment in a process in which forms and colors latch on to the fabric.

12. On the reverse of the canvases, there emerge paintings poured out by the work with paint on the front of the fabric. As a consequence of this crossing, the back of the canvas presents a result with no authorship, no subject, and no intentionality, another painting blooming in the shadow of the artist’s will.

13. In the work process, it becomes possible to inlay color and light between the interwoven threads of the canvas, allowing for the controlled creation of dense and/or transparent areas. In this interplay of relations between opacities and openings, the artist creates a Morandian luminosity. This work process also makes it possible for the planes and colored areas to establish strong relationships amongst one another, even as other parts enjoy a degree of self-sufficiency, catching the eye by virtue of their peculiarities. Thus is a visual composition produced, formed by pulsating relationships between units and the whole.

14. The pictorial material in its physicality, alongside sober colors, lends the canvas a certain drama, underlined by the imbalance between the elements holding the painting together, as well as a certain silent clash between the artist and the surface.

15. Karin Lambrecht's art is governed by a kind of constructive will. Each piece is the product of a drawn-out reflexive process, founded on two logics: the concept, born from the history of painting, and the learning process, born of the practice of painting.

16. These pieces, once executed, still bear vestiges of their beginning, their development, and contain questions about other ways they might have turned out.

17. The works retain the records of the actions taken by the artist, making the surface and the plane an archive available to one's gaze. Each work by Karin Lambrecht begs a detailed investigation from a reflective observer.

18. Her paintings occupy a suspended state – they are between emergence and a finished stage. On the canvas, one can see the phases of changes. The plane still contains emergences and formatting, remains and definitions, transparencies and densities, brushstrokes and splatters, painted areas, legible or removed words, and even untouched pieces of canvas. Hence the impression that this is a field marked by flux and movement, a field of utter freedom.

19. There is no transfiguration of the plane, only developments of it, in new pictorial entities defined by the logic of the use of color.

20. The layers of earth marking the surface, and the graphisms, when used, serve to highlight the presence of the plane ingrained into the canvas, or to give personality to a given blot. Strokes, lines, drips, words, and cuts affirm the materiality of colors and help liberate the work from the illusion of depth or perspective.

21. Karin Lambrecht's paintings are constructed with variable densities, provided by materials and colors that puncture through chaos. These visual events are

structured by three coexisting fluxes, which are always under the control of the artist's will: paint, splatters, and forms undertake movements governed by gravitational force, creating happenings that trickle across the plain of the canvas; though the colors and materials strive to retain light, favoring opacity, luminosity persists in showing itself in transparencies, shining through, even in the written sign "luz" (light). These three lines of language, once articulated, either complementary or held in tension, comprise the foundation upon which other resources are added to resolve the work.

22. Around 1993, the artist begins to cut the canvas or remove pieces from it as one of her methods, creating exits to drain the energy of the painting. As if it needed a safety valve. This deliberate move to make an incision in the canvas allows us to see the insistent critique of the illusion of painting; she shows us that painting occurs both outside to in as well as from back to front. The action indicates that the canvas has a physical, insurmountable limit behind it on the wall, reestablishing the physical dimension of the plane. Cutting the canvas also hearkens back to original realism, recognizing that the painting is an artist's intervention on a piece of fabric, a prosaic and fragile material. These rips, generally small ones, may also be seen as a metaphor for an art constructed on the edge of the abyss.

23. While for Lucio Fontana a rip in the canvas is the result of formal rigor, affirming the symbolic destruction of the painting, for Karin Lambrecht, on the contrary, a rip or the removal of small areas of the canvas takes on the expressive sense of a brushstroke, reaffirming the vitality of the painting. However, the two artists share the sense that the rip serves to tear away the pretense, the representation and symbolism that accompany painting.

24. Antoni Tàpies and Karin Lambrecht may also be compared in their constant use of different materials or residues, taking a sort of symbolism from them. Apart from their use of the shape of the cross, they also share the process through which material itself becomes a sign.

25. The artist sees the drawing of the cross as a visual element that simultaneously embodies a memory of the human and the divine. Besides its reference to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus, it also serves as a geometrical form alluding to the division of a plane in four parts, or the intersection of two spatial areas. The cross may even indicate that the human body, with its arms flung open, creates planes on its borders that stretch out to the infinite. In Lambrecht, the cross indicates a meeting between ethics and aesthetics, even offering a first opportunity to recall a connection between Karin Lambrecht and Joseph Beuys.

26. Karin Lambrecht dialogues with Beuys in giving new meanings to materials, a move that precludes any kind of autotelic painting. In this sense, the artist opens up new possibilities for painting, including a variety of fabrics and metals,

as well as wax, honey, clay, and gold leaf. For Karin Lambrecht, these materials are helpful in the process of thinking painting beyond the canvas and the frame; they present themselves as bearers of their own truths, each bringing specific properties, colors, and forms.

27. The blots on Karin Lambrecht's works bear within themselves freedom in the construction of form. Even considering natural differences, we may see in Karin Lambrecht a kind of emphasis given to the colored areas also practiced by Helen Frankenthaler in her surface painting. The two artists share the habit of working on the canvas without preparing a base color beforehand, as is customary. This establishes a direct relationship between the canvas and the pigment, in a process that allows for the creation of blots of pure color.

28. Karin Lambrecht is an artist who, on the sentimental plane, belongs to a constellation formed by Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Barnett Newman, and, in Brazil, Maria Leontina and Iberê Camargo. These artists created a tradition in which art reveals a state of the soul. Karin Lambrecht first met Iberê Camargo when she returned from Berlin to Porto Alegre, in early 1983. The ardor that Iberê dedicated to painting is crucial in Karin's development as a painter.

29. Much like Iberê Camargo, Karin Lambrecht understands painting as a labyrinth in which to lose and find oneself, guided by the movement of the brushstrokes. Both put down layers and layers of paint with different, personal results, obtained in a similar fashion in the somber light of Porto Alegre, favoring the sober and dim colors sprung from iron oxide, earth tones, and surprising blues.

30. The artist's works also allow us to perceive a discharge of energy aligning her with action painting, observable in the artist's vigorous facing down of both the canvas and social reality.

31. Karin Lambrecht undertook a residency with Louise Bourgeois in New York from August to October 1986 as part of a program sponsored by the American government. The two shared a manner of thought based on the internal, personal world, as well as a constant referencing of the memories contained therein. Just like Bourgeois, Karin Lambrecht makes use of fabrics, needles, metals, and wood. The two artists' use of these materials, however, is not merely a formal exercise; the objects are impregnated with lived life.

32. A significant reference for both Bourgeois and Karin Lambrecht is the house, a recurring theme in Karin's work that manifests itself in different ways: in the form of a written sign, in the construction of small three-dimensional units out of paper (the "Aldeias" series from 2011), in her installations and environments (piece at the v Bienal do Mercosul and the "Tenda Penetrável" [Penetrable Tents] project), and in constant returns to her own house and its surroundings. Another aspect shared by the artists is the human or animal body, made explicit in Karin

Lambrecht's work with her use of rams' blood and in the drawings made with the organs taken from slaughterhouses. Using a few signs inscribed on a variety of the artists' pieces, we can construct a flow that summarizes these concerns: "casa" (house), "Santa Casa" (holy house, or asylum), "universo" (universe), "caixa" (box), "circulação" (circulation), "corpo" (body).

33. These two artists move within a circle of affectivities. In Bourgeois, the "blood father"; in Lambrecht, the "mythological father." Karin Lambrecht makes countless references in her paintings and drawings to the history of religion, naming the signs "father," "mother," "son," "Joseph," "Mary," and "Jesus." Karin slides easily from the mythological to the religious, as in her work *Pai* (Father), 2008, in which she uses ram's blood, watercolor, drawings, photocopies and collage, arranged on 77 acrylic sheets. The ram's blood, collected on small fabric crosses, was obtained in Israel. Since then, the artist has produced no other works with blood. *Father* uses the genealogy of Jesus, according to the Gospel of Luke, consisting of 77 names of fathers and sons: Jesus, son of Joseph, Joseph of Heli, Heli of Matthat, Matthat of Levi (...), and Adam, son of God. The slide from mythology to religion springs from the emotional side, as the father is also the earthly, familiar father. Once again, Karin Lambrecht meets up with Bourgeois.

34. Karin Lambrecht's thought and production are shot through with religiosity and religion, immediately verifiable in the use of Christian symbology (historical and archaic) and in the clear references to the figure of Jesus Christ. The divine and the secular are interlaced, developing on the mythological plane and the physical space of the abattoirs. Each piece produced is the result of a ritual of work in the realm of the aesthetic. In this sense, we may sketch another point of convergence between Karin Lambrecht and Beuys when we consider the ritualistic meaning of artistic practice. For Beuys, as for Karin Lambrecht, practice is key as a factor that gives art its meaning.

35. Thinking and working color, with color – these are constant concerns for Karin Lambrecht. The colors in the artist's work are autonomous, generating their own meaning; they do not wish to, nor can they, appear as copies or memories of other beings or neighboring particles. There is an immediate identification between space and color.

36. There is a visceral relationship with nature in Karin Lambrecht. The earth is a great provider of her art – it furnishes the pigments that give off such sought-after colors; it is the mortar contributing directly to the form of some works; it is the soil that the blood of the slaughtered animal falls onto; and it is the territory sustaining and surrounding the artist's house-studio. (Pigment is color-matter, found in its raw form in nature, unlike the color taken from industrialized tubes. In Germany the Kremer Pigmente factory is still in operation, milling stones and transforming them into color particles.)

37. Karin Lambrecht can acquire pigments commercially – Italian *terra de siena*, for example. But she also goes personally to seek out portions of land in a variety of places: digging in her garden, she turns up brown pigments; in the countryside of Rio Grande do Sul, she finds red earth; in the mead-west of the country, she finds orange like earth; in Bahia, from the sea cliffs of Monte Pascoal and Caraíva, she takes pink and white colors; and in Amazonia she finds gray and brown pigments. The color used by Karin Lambrecht is organic matter that, before landing on the surface of the work, surrounds us, and which we tread on. Nature as a generous spectrum, radiating colors.

38. In a large-scale painting from 2011, from the “Territórios d’Areia” (Sand Fields) series, there is a gray blot (surrounded by light blue) made with burnt wood. The artist makes considerable use of mineral pigment, but sometimes the source is vegetable.

39. In early 2011, Karin Lambrecht began the series of paintings entitled “Sand Fields,” dominated by broad, open fields in luminous colors, sometimes complementary, at other times opposed. The series is divided into two sub-groups: “Cisternas” (Water Reservoir) and “Moinhos de Venro” (Windmill). Her journey to Jerusalem in 2010 may have impregnated the artist with the sensations of the desert, or of sheer vastness.

40. Karin Lambrecht works with warm, diurnal, rational colors, such as red, orange, and yellow; and with cold, nocturnal, oneiric colors such as blue, purple, green, gray, and black. Each color generated by the artist is always multiple, plural, unfurling in different shades and ranges.

41. Colors can also describe the phases of Karin Lambrecht’s trajectory. The artist used cobalt-blue pigment heavily in the 1980s and 1990s, an influential period born of a single color. In the late 1990s, the artist shifts to using red. Since the end of the first decade of the 21st century, a few colors have been used side by side in a broader spectrum of pigments. Alongside red, she may now introduce an earth tone so that the former does not dominate the canvas entirely. Or add white, to open doors in the painting. Or bring in a green...

42. At times, Karin Lambrecht leaves her canvases out in the open as a way of preparing or finishing a given piece. In this process, they are dampened by the dew, marked by time and the weight of stones or bricks, and may even retain vestiges of animal footprints. These happenings, born in the open air, are incorporated into the work.

43. Her pieces on paper, boxes, three-dimensional objects or installations are not constructed as studies or stages to prepare for a painting. The projects that Karin Lambrecht develops in these mediums are integrated into the body of her work, duly considering the specificities of each language.

44. These drawings, boxes, and installations are opportunities for striking conquests and for circulating through a hybridity of languages. The artist constantly pushes the limits of the materials she uses.

45. Karin Lambrecht is an artist in tune with her time.

ON ART AND LIFE

46. The suspension of colors, along with radical and dense forms, the composition verging on instability, and the continuous development of planes in paintings allow us to construct an approach to Karin Lambrecht's work based on the critical refinement of her vision of the world, thus establishing an aesthetic of precarious life. Art framed by this critical posture thus opens up the potential for an analysis of the artist's production: an attempt to understand how art may be a form of investigating society, indicating the paradoxes, blemishes, and stumbling-blocks posed to subjects over the course of their lives. In considering both her paintings and the works born of the slaughter of rams, one sees that Karin Lambrecht takes the banality of evil as an affront and correspondingly affirms the value of life. We may comprehend the artist's work from a perspective that considers political and ethical dimensions, perceiving in it a stance that rejects certain established social relations.

47. In a text on Karin Lambrecht, Agnaldo Farias¹ suggests that the artist intersects a political consciousness of the world and a gaze turned towards the hidden aspects of reality, writing that her pieces seem to be rooted in politics and religion.

1. Agnaldo Farias, Icleia Cattani & Miguel Chaia, *Karin Lambrecht*. Porto Alegre: Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul Ado Malagoli, 2002, p. 14.

48. Karin Lambrecht's production may be analyzed following a latent characteristic in her works: observing how her vision is perceived through blood, seen as an aggressive castoff of contemporary civilization. She turns to the scorned leftovers in order to call attention to a structural phenomenon of our times: the annihilation and disappearance of the body as an economic and political fact. Society, in this stage of late capitalism, is saturated with disposable objects, placing human and animal life within the marketing circuit of production and consumption. In this sense, we may understand the ram's death as a metaphor for a society that diminishes the meaning of life.

49. In *Genealogia de Jesus* (Jesus Genealogy), a painting from 2003 inscribed with dozens of names, Karin Lambrecht lays bare this pictorial reference with the symbol of the ram. Both the death of Christ and the death of the ram are Biblical symbols subsequently resignified by secular modernity. Visions and ideas proposed by Karin Lambrecht corroborate this understanding of the precarious life of the modern man, in a sense close to that proposed by Italian philosopher

Giorgio Agamben, who analyzes the meaning of bare lives and banal deaths in the history of civilizations in an attempt to detect the force of sovereign power and occurrences of evil as banalities. The author sees “bare life” as a life that may be killed, having been discarded by power/society, and the concept of *Homo sacer*, a figure from Roman law, refers to a killable life or a bare life that does not deserve to be lived. This person falls into an undifferentiated zone, simultaneously under legal and political control and outside it: “The concept of ‘life devoid of value’ (or ‘life unworthy of being lived’) applies first of all to individuals who must be considered as ‘incurably lost’ following an illness or an accident and who, fully conscious of their condition, desire ‘redemption’ (...) and have somehow communicated this desire.”² Killable life refers to capitalism’s inability to function without turning into a killing machine. Life is constantly exposed to death, being legally and institutionally disposable.

2. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998, p. 81.

50. The meaning that Karin Lambrecht gives her artistic work takes on even greater importance, however, when one understands that her use of ram’s blood implies that this material ought to be collected and used in art as a form of repudiating the very rejection of animal blood by the consumer society. In her appropriation of this vital liquid, the artist seeks to visually express the idea that no life is disposable, as well as communicating her discomfort with the idea of killable life, taking it out of the space of undifferentiation. The act of collecting the animal’s blood is simultaneously aesthetic and ethical. Much like the ritual of slaughtering the ram, the artist’s works allow for the understanding that contemporary man lives time “out of joint,” as Hamlet puts it in reference to events in the kingdom of Denmark. These sensations of discomfort felt by a subject in the world may be perceived in the vision constructed by Karin Lambrecht.

51. On the surfaces of her canvases, natural pigments and colors create forms that fluctuate without being clearly nameable. The compositions of these paintings lend her work a permanent instability. This type of painting may be included within a post-utopian moment, one wary of the progress of excess of rationalism.

52. On one untitled canvas, finished in late 2003, a brown form occupies the middle of a broad space tinged with tentative shades of yellow and ochre. This central figure, 65 × 10 cm, seems small compared to the spread of the canvas, 190 × 155 cm. Nevertheless, it takes on corporeal mass through the dense brushstrokes in oil paint and through the dark hue, which contrasts sharply with the light background. This thick form floating on the canvas becomes wider at the top, defining the form or the profile of a head, perhaps the representation of the basic silhouette of a human being, given weight by the high density of the paint and by the fact that it is surrounded by a narrow aura formed by the spread of the oil. This area reveals the continued movement of this pictorial material, and also of life in a more general sense. The figure is surrounded by signs and symbols, chief among them a diagram of lines and marks begun around the level of the head

and that moves towards the right-hand side of the canvas, ending in a column of words such as “animal” (animal), “plantas” (plants), “vazio” (void), “nada” (nothing), and others that are unreadable. To the left side of the canvas, from behind the yellow and ochre areas, emerges a nearly illegible phrase, written in German: “*Der Stein fällt herunter,*” which, in a literal translation, means “the stone falls down.” Movement is always key in the artist’s works, and one would do well to emphasize the downward motion. This painting allows us to associate the image of the human body to the density of the clay, and its precarious condition of being in the earth. The central figure appears to express the idea of the fallen angel – the fallen man, that is to say, or the abandoned being. The painting shows that this being pulses with life, experiencing the confrontations that span the biological realm, existential condition and historical contingency.

53. In this canvas from 2003 (fig. 52), Karin Lambrecht has created a representation of man in the conditions of fraught contemporary sociability. The form that may be interpreted as the human figure has difficulty remaining on its feet; by its side, small forms are falling apart, to say nothing of the figure’s considerable distance from the horizontal line. This is no longer Leonardo da Vinci’s Vitruvian Man, the man as measure of the universe, corresponding to a harmonious structure of the world. The form produced by Karin Lambrecht recalls the man pressured by external and internal circumstances, turned inward in the face of the vast and silent space surrounding him. In spite of all this, the figure remains straight-backed, erect before adversity, expanding in its aura.

54. Karin Lambrecht’s art fits into a lineage strongly influenced by Goya, who produced a vision of horror with his engravings and paintings, from *El tres de Mayo* (The Third of May), 1808 to the engravings and paintings of his black phase. This line, in which Karin Lambrecht includes herself, takes in artists such as David, with *La mort de Marat* (The Death of Marat), 1793; Picasso, with *Guernica*, 1937; Francis Bacon (in his disfigured, terrifying human screams); and, more recently, in Brazil, Hélio Oiticica, with his series “Homenagem a Cara de Cavalo” (Homage to Cara de Cavalo), 1965-66; Artur Barrio, with the *Trouxas ensanguentadas* (Bloody Bundles), 1969; and *Livro de carne* (Flesh Book), 1978-79; Antônio Henrique Amaral with the series “Campo de Batalha” (Battlefield), 1973; and *A morte no sábado: Tributo a Vladimir Herzog* (Death on Saturday: Tribute to Vladimir Herzog), 1974; Iberê Camargo in his later paintings, and Nuno Ramos, with the installation *111*, 1992. All these artists express a visual take on social and political repression, as well as transmitting a vision of the pain of life interrupted by violent death. This may be the hero or the outlaw, man or animal; the key thing is that the art happens in the gesture that resists the human drama.

55. Much as has been the case for other artists, death is also a constant reference for Karin Lambrecht in the construction of her poetic expression. However, the artist does not work with this subject in the sense of existential paralysis, nor as the meaning of a negative nihilism, but rather as the inevitable vertigo one feels

when being faced by man, affirming the importance of memory in the fleeting temporality of life – much as Shakespeare, recognizing our “way to dusty death,” wrote that “Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player/ That struts and frets his hour upon the stage/ (...) Signifying nothing.” For Karin Lambrecht, death as a natural fact is developed on the philosophical and environmental planes. As for the former, in her works we may glimpse a concern with the subject’s fate, and the enjoyment of freedom in modernity; in the environmental sense, we see in her works an appreciation of the Earth – a precious locus of generation and survival of the human being, and the wellspring of its social relations. In this sense, Iclea Borsa Cattani, in analyzing Karin Lambrecht’s 1997 piece *Death, I am yours* made with ram’s blood on a tablecloth and paper, affirmed that, for the artist, painting “should integrate itself with nature, life, and death as well, since death is part of the nature of living beings.”³

3. Iclea Borsa Cattani, in Agnaldo Farias et. al., op. cit., 2002.

4. Jacob Baal-Teshuva, *Rothko*. Colônia: Taschen, 2003, p. 17.

56. Karin Lambrecht’s work attains a poetic result due to the dramatic elements brought out by expressionist influence, and which allows us to observe the artist’s ties to American Abstract Expressionism. From Expressionism, the artist has retained a sensitivity to the spirit of the age, evoking a stifled cry – not a call to political action, but a sound that reveals the artist’s subjectivity. In this sense, Mark Rothko affirmed that “tragic experience is the only source for art,” as he “tried to make his paintings into experiences of tragedy and ecstasy, as the basic conditions of existence. The aim of his life’s work was to express the essence of the universal human drama.”⁴ Expressionism creates aesthetic circumstances ripe for expressing the (im)possibilities of art and life. Noting the pertinence of this link allows us to hazard a few strategies to deepen the search for tragic feeling in Karin Lambrecht’s oeuvre. Tragedy, as applied to the artist’s works, means that her pieces are connected to the fate of the collective. And the idea of tragedy, necessary for analyzing Karin Lambrecht’s work, is rooted in the recognition that society is wracked by agonizing conflicts and that a number of tensions frequently trouble the lives of individuals. While accompanying and registering the death of the ram makes this tragic vision of the world explicit, this dimension is also visible in the paintings that, from a visual aspect, cannot uphold dichotomies of good and evil, do not demand logical clarity, and recognize that the world is ultimately created by areas of shadow and light.

57. The idea of tragedy in Karin Lambrecht is not connected to a pessimistic or negative conception of life. On the contrary; this tragic dimension is an active response to life, a stance against killable life. As she lets us catch sight of a tragic aesthetic in her works, something close to Nietzsche, she demonstrates that art, in reaching a given degree of knowledge and action, transcends despair or resignation. Karin Lambrecht offers us images born of the tension between fragility and strength, the undefined and the built, and between delicate surface and thick matter. Each work contains the potential for a new balance between visual elements, as if it were possible to overcome a state of war in favor of new, harmonious relations. These tensions and future possibilities are summed up

in blood: a fragile thing when life escapes along with it, but strong when its uninterrupted flow provides life with continuity. This is also the case with the colors used in her paintings, which are always close to earth tones.

58. In a text addressing the contacts she maintained with Iberê Camargo, Karin Lambrecht emphasizes that one of the main concerns during their time together “was that of the unity of body and painting (...). I’m speaking of the unity that is possible when one feels one’s body in one profession, and there is a temporality to that as well, a real time. In painting, one experiences another sort of time, not only clock-time but biological time (as well).”⁵

59. Performances, installations, paintings, and drawings are explicit expressions of the artist’s concern with the body, principally when considering the necessity for permanence in the unity between body and work. Karin Lambrecht’s disquiet in this area becomes a form of resistance, once one sees that the body has become the primary focus of power.⁶ Within the society of control that surrounds us, one invests in it to produce docile people, trained creatures that internalize coercion. In the moment when politics becomes biopolitics, Karin Lambrecht exposes the need for caution with the body. This is a reference to the docile surrender of the body during the slaughter of the ram, or may gesture towards the corporeal presence in the forms floating in visual space, at times radically defined by the mass of paint, at others represented by relatively undefined blots.

60. Karin Lambrecht presents the body with extreme liberty. In some works, she approaches the subject by presenting it directly, such as in the drawings created using the organs of the ram – which are, of course, human organs as well. The heart, liver, lungs, and kidneys leave their recognizable marks on the page, indicating the fragmentation of the body and its fragility when faced with any external power. In other pieces, Karin Lambrecht merely hints at the subject when she uses words or codes displayed as graphic elements in the composition of a piece, hence reaffirming the meaning of the body. In this case, we see words – sometimes explicit, sometimes less so – appear in her paintings and drawings, such as the following: “Subterra. Meu corpo, meu + corpo. Corpo terra” (Underearth. My body, my + body. Body × earth.); “Circulação sanguínea. Energia” (Circulation of blood. Energy); “Caixa. Universo. Aqua-aer: circulatio” (Box. Universe. Aqua-aer: circulatio); and “Putrefatio. Forma deitada” (Reclining Form) (Putrefatio. Prone form).

61. Biopower acts on the human population in the relation it establishes between power and the body – “The body is the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a dissociated self (adopting the illusion of a substantial unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration.” The body – “and everything that touches it: diet, climate, and soil (...) past experience (...) desires, failings, and errors.”⁷ An approach to Karin Lambrecht’s work may also choose the body as a structuring theme of part of the artist’s production, as it has operated since 1990. Karin Lambrecht, in a bare-life aesthetic, uses elements

5. Karin Lambrecht, “Iberê Camargo, lembranças”, in S. Salzstein (org.), *Diálogos com Iberê Camargo*. São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2003, p. 189.

6. Michel Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” (1971), in P. Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1984, p. 83.

7. Id., *ibid.*, p. 83.

within the body (blood and organs) and without it (earth, foodstuffs, animal skins and different vegetables) as work materials and as resources of language, also turning her attention to the events, desires, and conflicts that pass through the body (Christian symbols, alchemical signs, sewn parts, incisions, cuts, and references to art history itself).

62. This *bios* aesthetic is also made explicit in her piece *Coelhos mortos não choram* (Dead Rabbits don't Cry), 1990-91, in which she uses a rabbit skin, an organic material transformed into a canvas, which takes on blots of earth and a coin painted gold. Using this animal skin is the continuation of making use of scrap metal discarded by industrial society.

63. In 1995, taking advantage of a chance opportunity, Karin Lambrecht uses her own blood in a piece displayed at the library of the Goethe-Institute in Porto Alegre. This work, which worked with the genealogy of Jesus, including references to Mary, comprised a series of drawings, photographs, stains, and calligraphy. One of the units was a photograph of a sculpture of an angel on a tomb in the Recoleta Cemetery in Buenos Aires. In handling the photo, the artist cut herself, and stains of her blood were left on the image. Beneath a heavy sky, an angel rises among tombs of dark marble; between the figure and the clouds, calligraphic stains of the artist's blood wend their way around the angel.

64. Karin Lambrecht deliberately used ram's blood for the first time to create the already-mentioned piece *Death, I am yours*, 1997, with repercussions that still affect the artist's work today.⁸

8. Ver análise aprofundada dessa obra no texto de Icleia Borsa Cattani, op. cit.

65. She also transformed the movement of living beings into visual signs – images of handprints or the footprints of dogs and birds on canvases or papers are registered when the work is left out in the open, surrendered to nature, for it to make its contribution to the work.

66. One ought to note that in her pieces, the biological dimension is not only present in terms of the interpretation of the artist's work. It is her art itself that hints toward a philosophical-existential stance with a focus on the relationship with nature – more specifically, the relationship between man and animal.

67. We might indulge in a comparative analysis between Karin Lambrecht's production and the book *Le Animal que je donc suis*, (The Animal That Therefore I Am), by Jacques Derrida, 2008, in order to better outline this aesthetic of the biological. Both linger on the gaze of the animal, reflecting on the loss of unity between nature, man, and animal, and recognizing that slaughterhouses are metaphors for the horrific experiences created in societies. While Derrida's reference is the gaze of a cat, Karin Lambrecht takes on that of a ram. The philosopher and the artist work from the perspective of the animal that sees, the animal that observes. The basis of this sympathetic methodology lies

in the (lost?) unity between man and animal, since the difference is merely nominal, born of a miscommunication: “Who was born first, before the names? Which one saw the other come to this place, so long ago? Who will have been the first occupant, and therefore the master? Who the subject? Who has remained the despot, for so long now?”⁹ The animal has been gazing at us for quite some time, this animal is the other, and this animal allows for a reflection on who I am. The animal’s gaze dissolves our shame at being naked. “The animal, therefore, is not naked because it is naked. It doesn’t feel its own nudity. There is no nudity ‘in nature.’”¹⁰ Karin Lambrecht’s art seeks to lay bare the malaise of civilization. Who is the ram? For the artist, the ram is her, we are the ram. The ram is the animal that therefore I am. Dead rams don’t cry. Ram, I am yours. This aesthetic perception of the world is dispersed throughout all of Karin Lambrecht’s creations, attaining a sort of summary in the main hall, at the xxv São Paulo Art Biennial, in 2002.

9. Jacques Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, trans. by David Wills. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008, p. 18.
10. Id., *ibid.*, p. 5.

68. Just like the gaze of the ram, the gaze of the artist unveils the nudity of beings, the fragility of the world, and the power of art.

69. Even considering the conflicts and pains of the world, Karin Lambrecht’s poetic vision wins out over any given idea or content, guiding the beholder to a process of a return to subjectivity, sinking into a slow time of reflection while not losing contact with the surrounding world. The pieces that Karin Lambrecht has created have the world as a reference, as well as the history of art, characterizing themselves essentially as a discussion of painting and reclaiming art as a form of resistance. In her works, we see an effort to reaffirm the characteristics of painting, a persistent investigation of its nature so as to reaffirm the potential of this language.

70. Though Karin Lambrecht’s work allows for a number of analyses and interpretations, structured around specific themes, what really matters for the artist is the constant search for logic of painting itself.

KARIN LAMBRECHT First of all, I'd like to thank the Fundação Iberê Camargo for their support of my work and the project I presented, with my trip to Jerusalem. This was something that didn't come out of this exhibition, but is truly important as a part of the repertoire of my imagination, and perhaps also within the realm of a desire to go there someday. Of course, I could have done it on my own at some point, but I never wanted to go like that. I thought that if I went there, it would have to be at the right time, I would have to have a very concrete and firm reason, and I believe that with this piece I've put an end to my pieces with blood. At the same time, this allows for a new phase; it's as if I'd created a new field, and a challenge as well, to carry my work forward. But I also would like to say, and I like to say this, as Mônica (Zielinsky) pointed out at the start: I consider myself a painter. I never gave up painting, and my work with blood is part of the same field. If I compare myself with other artists who work with blood, I can point out the differences.

Generally the artists who work with blood do it in a very harsh, aggressive way, like Hermann Nitsch or other Austrians, who are very well known. Everything in Nitsch's work becomes catharsis – or, as he puts it, a “theater.” He often speaks about the verbalization of things. He thinks that it shouldn't exist, that everything is much more closely tied to the realm of impulses. I started working with blood because Rio Grande do Sul is a huge meat market, a lot of the economy is just based on meat, and I've always lived here. I started to look at those rivers of blood, which I think nobody can avoid; it's present in everyone's house. In my first piece with blood, *Death, I Am Yours*, 1997, I used one of my grandmother's tablecloths – a silk tablecloth, one that we always used at Christmas or for birthday parties. I started to reflect that, on these important holidays, the dinner table is always overflowing with blood. This isn't always the blood of death; (it's) as if the blood of death, our whole blood flow, beat together. It's a pulsation, as if one thing depended on the other, as if life depended on death. So not even the vegetarians are free of it. That would be a simple explanation: so I'll be vegetarian, and that ends it. That's not it. It's something much more ingrained. As time went by, I started seeing these bloodstains as shadows. I build my work – I mean to say that I work as a painter, because I look back on all that later, I don't have an idea beforehand, I need to see the results, the materials, the stains, and all of that guides me to my next piece. I started to see that these shadows of the material were like our own shadows. Our shadows are not always metaphysical ones, they can be the shadows of our body, which is a projection,

1. Transcript, edited by Marisa Calage and reviewed by Glória Ferreira, of the discussion between Karin Lambrecht and Agnaldo Farias on 2/9/2009, during the series of talks held around the exhibition *Lugares desdobrados*, including discussions between Felipe Chaimovich and Lúcia Koch, and Elaine Tedesco and Rubens Mano, made available on the site of the Fundação Iberê Camargo (Podcast). This exhibition, with the participation of artists Karin Lambrecht, Lúcia Koch, and Elaine Tedesco, was held at the Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre, from 12/10/2008 to 3/8/2009, curated by Mônica Zielinsky.

and what is left there, around it, is something that belongs to another universe, a universe that is not being here.

I was always very interested by this: this cosmic universe is not a religious, institutional universe. Because I think that when we use the Bible, it seems that it comes tied to religious institutions, but I believe that this universe is much older, and I've seen this: the whole thing belongs to the *gaucho* (person from Rio Grande do Sul). I also chose the ram because of its size; its heart is the size of ours. That is to say, I've never seen a human heart, but you have the feeling that this body looks... as if it were our own, on the inside. I never chose bulls, cows, which would really represent Rio Grande do Sul in economic terms, because the bull doesn't occupy the same place as the ram, Biblically speaking. The ram represents both Christ and Abel. It has the typology of something primordial, with a beginning, something unique, but which at the same time contains all our identities and our subjectivity. That was the reason for choosing the ram. Now I've been working with it for over ten years, and in going to Jerusalem, I saw and started to perceive this ancestral relationship in the form of killing: there's the Judaic ritual, which is not very different from the Muslim one. Portuguese of Jewish stock fled Europe (I also found this out, but I can't recall where exactly), and it says that they came to Brazil, and from Brazil they went to the United States. I think that this was a legacy left in Rio Grande do Sul, which is passed on: it's the trade of the butcher, passed on from father to son, which is always the same. In Israel I went to two abattoirs and I understood what it means for meat to be *kosher*. I spoke with a veterinarian, who told me, "Every time an animal is killed here, the rabbi is present." And he said that the rabbi behaves just as rabbis did two thousand years ago: "when the rabbi says that the meat is good, it is good." So when scientists say that the meat is good and the rabbi disagrees, they go and check and they see that the animal had a tumor or some illness. The rabbi, who's never studied these things, has a kind of knowledge that's passed down from father to son. Rabbis did this in a time when this was fundamental for the survival of a tribe: knowing what they could and couldn't eat. This conversation with the vet also helped to demystify the religious side of it, because there's always a practical element as well. In fact, this draws me in as well – this more direct relationship with everything, with the organism. This organism, that belongs to all of us: animals have it, and we have our own organism. This was a sort of equality that I sought out. But, going back – when I started this project, I never did it with the intention of attacking society, because in art, artists sometimes do that. I actually started out by looking for something, and the deeper I dug, the more this was making this difficult. These are like things that society likes to keep under the rug. The more you bring to light, the more it functions as a direct mirror. I believe that working with blood has something to do with that. It brings something to the table that should never be seen by anyone, really. It's as if I were digging and bringing something up, and I do it intuitively. I never do it as a message, because that would take all the joy out of the discovery. That's not the intention: bringing something that says this or that directly. That's part of the legacy of abstract art: I consider myself an

abstract painter... but where does the abstract predominate? Something comes and has to be there, present, but without saying everything at once... that is to say, I don't know if I can. That's sort of how I work, as if I were seeking something, but not even I want to know exactly what it all means. There will always be a free margin where (it) can rest, where the materials themselves, where all that can exist without being subjected to some kind of control. I don't like to control that, as a matter of fact.

The piece *Pai* (Father) refers to the Genealogy of Jesus according to Saint Luke. The Gospels are actually biographies of Jesus. Saint Matthew interpreted his life one way, Saint John another, and Saint Luke another. If we read all of them, they offer us the same thing: when Jesus was born and how, and then how his life progressed. In the Gospel of Luke, there is a genealogy of Jesus (a lot like how it is in my room in this exhibition). I've been writing since the 1990s. It's like a mantra, or a prayer: it's always father-and-son, father-and-son. The way I've presented it in this exhibition *Lugares desdobrados* (Expanded Fields) at the Fundação Iberê Camargo has an important element, which is memory. Memory and time, because if we look at it from the side you can see a tunnel, a tube, which is how we generally imagine time, like a tube that goes forward or backward. We always think in terms of past and future.

If you look at *Father* straight on, that tube disappears. All that time becomes a single time, with all those fathers and children. It starts with Jesus and goes all the way to God, all of them, side by side. Actual time, time as we calculate it, is under a lot of stress in our society. It puts us under pressure; if we looked at time from the side, it's as if it all coexisted, but fluctuating.

In Israel, other people participated (in my project). I asked for help from the Fundação Iberê Camargo and they answered with wonderful support. There I had a photographer working with me, Yael Engelhart and her assistant, Roy Bergals. Shalom Klieneman, a young filmmaker was working as a guide to make ends meet (he was studying history). Everything I did there was a lesson in Ancient History. Yael was in charge of documentation, because I couldn't do it myself, I was too busy with my work. So I had this little team working with me, and I believe that (in) this project, sort of invisibly, these stains that I brought, as they were from there, must in some way carry a bit of that material. I believe that this was impregnated in a way, just like the stains of Rio Grande do Sul on my work. This memory is invisible, I think, it's not going to be written there, but the fact of my having been there or having done this at other times incorporates something into the work that isn't seen but is still present, and can influence the formalization, so to speak, of the work. That sums it up, I suppose.

AGNALDO FARIAS I wanted to ask you questions, above all, because the idea is for all this to be fairly informal. I'm going to try to carry on the idea of informality as best I can, because I feel that my role here is also represent you all and pose some of the questions that all of us would like to be asking. It's key that this be not just a dialogue with the artist but also, more broadly, a dialogue with everyone. I hope to unlock that process, that's all. In any case, first of all, I wanted to express my

thanks for this opportunity, this privilege, and this honor. Visiting an exhibition of this quality is no small matter. It keeps on working within us, and these works are so potent precisely because they are not easy to grasp. It functions like a sort of vertex, with ballast in the middle, which is Karin's work with earth and blood, and at the start you have a piece that puts you outside it. It's very odd: you enter into a shelter. It's a cocoon, a house within this house, and there's a strong contrast between them because the surroundings are white and have a purity to them. This is fascinating because I believe that it is these constructions, these narratives, these angulations, this interplay of gazes, which make the exhibition something memorable. Not merely the arrangement of this piece in space, but also the ways in which these pieces take on power. They dialogue, they establish a sort of closed-off exchange, and that makes them grow and grow in our memory. We don't quite understand what's happening, but it works.

Very recently, I had the opportunity to put together an exhibition about the 1980s and 1990s,² about the artists of Karin's generation. It was very odd, because when we set up an exhibition, that's the time to translate these ideas into space. So I created a room that was, to my eyes, the greatest moment of the exhibition. It was the last room. I selected the pieces very carefully, but that last room was undoubtedly a room where I wanted to create a problem. I was really going out on a limb, on a proposition. I put Nuno Ramos and Daniel Senise together, whom I see as two different vectors and forces, diverging ones, in a very strong contrast, and before them, next to Nuno Ramos, there was Karin. The idea was also a kind of affirmation, because when I started out, coming from architecture, *Geração 80* was already in full swing. Revisiting those texts and seeing those pieces is very strange, because you, Karin, were at that exhibition, *Como vai você, Geração 80?* (Parque Lage, Rio de Janeiro, 1984). That exhibition was a total hodgepodge. It had everything. It was like one of those impossible buffets, with both *feijoada* and grilled tuna, totally incompatible things, from jokes to more sober and serious pieces. And I have to say that with your work, when I came around it was already 1987 or 1988, and your work most struck me as not belonging to any group. All the others belonged, in one way or another. We have right here the exhibition that just came from São Paulo, luckily for us, by Jorginho Guinle, a seminal artist, an artist who's produced other artists. Fábio Miguez' work in São Paulo, for example, is an oeuvre born out of dialogue with Jorginho Guinle's work: he's dialoguing with modern tradition. There's the works of the Casa 7 group, there's Leda, there's Zerbini, who has a more pop connection. That is to say, there are a number of lines, but Karin's work didn't fit in any of them, it didn't belong in any of these places.

The first question is just trivial: who did you talk with? That's something I've never asked you. Who'd you talk with here in Porto Alegre? And long-distance? Because there are also long-distance conversations, of course. Lygia Clark, for example, wrote that letter to Mondrian, and he was already dead...³ It's quite a feeling. I remember I had one conversation. I was teaching philosophy in high school at 7:20 in the morning to a class of freshmen, just imagine what a challenge that was. I wanted to learn how to teach and I thought that I would

2. Agnaldo Farias, *Geração da virada. 80/90 Modernos-Pós-Modernos etc.* São Paulo: Instituto Tomie Ohtake, 2009. [N. E.]

3. Lygia Clark, "Letter to Mondrian." Part of the artist's diary. Published in *Lygia Clark*. Barcelona, Marseilles, Porto, Brussels, Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Tàpies / Galeries Contemporaines des Musées de Marseille / Fundação de Serralves / Société des Expositions du Palais de Beaux-Arts / Paço Imperial, 1999 (reed. in G. Ferreira & C. Cotrim (orgs.), *Escritos de artistas anos 60/70*, op. cit.).

manage that in a high school – because in college you never learn how to teach, and philosophy, with teenagers, is pretty much the toughest sale possible. I was teaching Descartes' *Meditations*, and there was a kid who sat in the front row, Marcelinho. He wore sunglasses at 7:20 in the morning, came in wearing them, you know what I mean. I was talking about Descartes' *Meditations* and Marcelinho became ecstatic and went, "Awesome! This guy is awesome! Shit, who is this guy? I need to meet this guy!" I was like, "That's cool, Marcelinho. He's been dead for four centuries, but I think you actually have a lot in common with him." And he started reading Descartes, a sixteen-year-old surfer started reading Descartes because of that. So there can be the strangest, craziest intersections. Your field doesn't matter, where you were live and where you were born doesn't matter, these selected affinities are unexpected and unpredictable. You can't account for them... and they're very frequent.

I'd like to know, what was your circle, from the start until you started producing your work, so to speak? The generation of *Como vai você, Geração 80?* is from 1980, 1984, when you hadn't even gone to Germany yet, isn't that right? And when you came back, what was it like afterwards? Did you already have relationships in Germany at that time?

KARIN Before I went to Germany, people, friends of mine... I think they were the initial amalgam, the start. It was at the Instituto de Artes, we even called it our "group," we were young. Heloísa Schneiders da Silva, Simone Michelin, who's in Rio now, Regina Coeli Costa Rodrigues, who's dead now... Heloísa as well. Two friends who both died of lupus, the craziest thing. And Jesus Romeu Galdámez Escobar, also from the Instituto de Artes. We were part of the Centro Acadêmico. Mail art was big at the time, and with mail art came a lot of things from abroad, because we didn't have any of that at the time. There was no information. Porto Alegre was really at the end of the earth, and all those letters that came in brought us bonuses. Many of them were searching for artists who'd been disappeared (by authoritarian governments), there was a strong political side to it. But that's what I remember. Many of the letters coming from Europe weren't like those from South America, which were more political. If I'm remembering correctly, I think that one disappeared artist was Jorge Caraballo from Uruguay, and correspondence in mail art would practically "shriek," "Where is Caraballo?" So, in contrast to what was coming from here, the mail art from Europe was a bit lighter, shall we say. They were tied into another world altogether. I was already interested in painting in Porto Alegre, my friend Heloísa was too, and we often spoke about painting. The figurative tradition was very strong here. It was as if there'd been a breach, we sensed something, but we weren't drawn to it. When I went to Germany, I even thought, "Gosh, everyone's going to France." I still think I'd have preferred Paris, to be honest... but I didn't have a scholarship, I had nothing, and my grandparents were living in the DDR then, on the Communist side, and I had a cousin on the Western side who I could stay with for a while. So I went there, but dragging my feet the whole way. I hadn't even been there for a month when I enrolled in college, and it was all very fast. My professor

took me as a second-year student. I hadn't even done the basic classes, and he said, "Come straight to my office." A huge, lovely room. The university is really lovely, I'd really like to express that someday: how marvelous the university was, the space, everything.

Right after that, I met Michael Chapman, who's the father of my daughter. In our marriage, something happened: He started to get interested in painting, and I started to destroy this idea of timid painting that I had, that came from Brazil. Michael worked with watermelons, with bananas. He was studying with Professor Tajire, who was the experimental professor at the university, and I was taking a class with Raimund Girke, who's practically monochromatic. Michael's whole universe seeped into me and I started to show that in my painting, while I was still in Professor Girke's class. Michael was influenced by Professor Girke's class through me and started introducing a kind of pictorial system into his work. He tried to give a class on three-dimensional, performative work, and started putting that all on the plane. On my side, I started to destroy the same plane, but without entirely leaving the pictorial sphere. The question of color, that all came to the fore. I think that may have been the most influential thing that happened in my life. Nothing else was like that experience. Of course I like Beuys, everyone knows that, but Beuys has a message. The artists of the 1960s had that, ecological, political messages. I never want that; I like my work to be more removed, like painting, painting like Professor Girke's, which is sometimes totally white but never a flat white, there are levels of white, made with brushstrokes. When you look at something like that, it's like it cleans your head out. I like that feeling. I don't know how people look at my work, but I'd hope that they empty their heads, not fill them. I'd like the work to be cleansing. And when you look at a Beuys piece many times, although I do find them extremely mysterious, they get to me, you can't conclude anything when you're looking at a piece by him.

AGNALDO What was the impact like when you came back here?

KARIN Well, I came back, and that's a scar on my life that will never heal. In Berlin I had everything: I had that wonderful professor and a studio at the university. I came back because I thought that it would be better for my daughter; at the time we were very poor, there. We lived in an apartment that didn't even have its own bathroom; there was a shared one in the hallway. So the poverty of the city was rough for us, even though they invested heavily in art at the time. We had some means, but not enough to be comfortable. I had to fight to find jobs, and we ended up going. I came back, and when I landed in the airport with Yole on my lap, I thought, "My life's gone all wrong," and even today I sometimes think, "I should have stayed." At other times, I think that I'm very glad to have come back.

Recently Professor Robert Kudielka visited here.⁴ I studied history of art with him in Germany. For me, it was as if he set me free... I speak so much about the university, but I've never managed to express what it really is. When he gave his talk, I think that everyone here at the Fundação Iberê Camargo saw all his intellectual power and the passion he has for painting. Here, everyone has, you

4. Robert Kudielka took part in the *Moderno no Limite* International Seminar, held on the occasion of the inauguration of the Fundação Iberê Camargo from August 12-14, 2008. [N. E.]

also have a marvelous passion for painting, although it sometimes seems to be a bit scattered, and over there, it's concentrated. Sometimes I think of artists like Professor Girke, or of abstract American painting – Joan Mitchell, for example, those are paintings that have stayed with me.

When I came back, I started building things very slowly. I sent my work to the Salão Nacional do Rio, for example, and Paulo Herkenhoff saw it and invited me to take part in the Geração 80 show. Of course the letter came from Parque Lage, but it was Paulo who suggested that they invite me in the first place, because he had seen my work. The organizers of the exhibition didn't even know me.

AGNALDO And did you get to know any artists here in Porto Alegre in Brazil, artists you felt an affinity with?

KARIN In Rio, I visited Daniel Senise's studio twice, which was on a hill, which he shared with three other artists at the time, I think. One of them was (João) Magalhães, wasn't it?

AGNALDO (Angelo) Venosa, (Luiz) Pizarro, and there was another one...

KARIN And Daniel. None of the others were there, I didn't see them, but I saw that canvas of Daniel's on the floor, in that old-wood studio, a lovely space... Later, I did my first exhibition in Rio with Heloísa Schneiders da Silva, at the Galeria Macunaíma (Funarte, Rio de Janeiro, 25 feb. 1985 to 15 mar. 1995) and almost nobody went on opening day, but magically, Paulo Herkenhoff showed up with Cido Meireles. Just imagine! It was all we could have dreamed of. Their gaze, a few words from them, and things went from there.

AGNALDO I was talking with a friend of mine who's living in London now, Moacir dos Anjos, and he remarked on how respected artists are over there. It's common for you to turn on the tv and see an artist chatting, presenting his or her ideas. People ask artists' opinions and they listen, you know? And here artists don't have that sort of respectability. At most, they become celebrities. Now, being a celebrity does not mean that your work is respected or recognized. I think that your time in Germany must have given you the same feeling.

KARIN It's different, it's totally different. Abroad you see in the newspapers that the Brazilian GDP is on the rise. Great, everyone praises it, but on a day-to-day basis we don't see that. In Europe, people are very poor as well: my daughter lives in London now, and many of her classmates who are a bit older are missing teeth, because you can go to the doctor for free, but to see a dentist you have to pay. There's a shocking number of art students with missing teeth. I find that touching; they don't give up. Their work is what matters – going home, going to the studio, that's all that matters.

AGNALDO It's also odd – I've met with many artists and curators who come from abroad and are taken aback by the fact that, particularly in São Paulo, artists are well-off, but from family wealth. That's interesting because in recent years there's been a certain entry into the market, there are people who make a living with their art, which was hardly common in the 1980s. The people who do that abroad do it because they have no choice. As Rilke puts it, he could only be the way he was, he could be no other way, and he faces that down, there's the difference.

In your work you speak of Beuys, who has this vision of nature as having history, that everything is a tragedy and nature is altered and defiled – altered and transformed by history. That's extremely evident for people who live in Europe because there's no virgin forest there, all the nature is modified, and that modification comes at a very high price. Our circumstances are different, but even so we face a similar problem, which Mônica (Zielinsky), in her curatorship and in her very clear explanation, pointed out: the problem of a loss of origins, of becoming uprooted, losing one's point of reference. Your work, Karin, seeks out an origin, has that as a main concern, and it's very interesting because your trip to Jerusalem is quite odd once you find out what it was for. I didn't know about this; we'd never spoken about it, and you see it, you think, "Oh, of course!" Only after we see it, though – it's not clear before. I can even say that in my case; I saw it wrong, I'm myopic, I have a squint, I don't have the clairvoyance that others have. Having gone to Jerusalem, the Bible, the Gospels, to the genealogy of the Son of God, because the first piece that drew my attention, the piece with earth, *Os sem-terra*, (The Landless), 1988, (a painting with cuts taken out of it, approximately 300 × 300 cm) – made a strong impression on me – there was an association with the landless movement, but it was clear to me that that wasn't the only thing.

I discovered this later, speaking with Karin: it's not just the MST (Landless Movement), it's the problem of the meaning of land, of owning land, of what it means for you to make a mark, an "x," and take it over and let it impregnate you as well. There's an exchange there. And then there's a second moment, which is almost a corollary. It's incredible how far you can take this, how deeply you can penetrate... it seems inexhaustible. It goes farther every time, and there is really no limit to these things. I'm referring to your piece, when you caught the flow of blood from the slaughtered animal and collected all of it on an unrolled piece of fabric. And I believe that that's where blood enters your work. It marks another transition, for me, because you had friction, glue, you had a process of soiling the surface itself with earth. But with blood it's something else, because it's a life ebbing away, and it is because that life is flowing out that you're collecting it from beginning to end. So that's an origin that you have there. Well, in this origin, you go to Jerusalem, and in Jerusalem, there's the story of the ram, Abel... and you go all the way to the figure of God, which is so daring, writing the name of God, because the name itself can't even be pronounced. But there's still the preoccupation with seeking out the origin, the beginning of things, the moment in which we were lost, the moment when there was that fracture, which may be irremediable. When in your work, do you think, did you perceive clearly the idea that you had to seek out the origin of things?

KARIN That's hard to answer. Even in genealogy, of course. When I saw how it starts, and it goes, "Jesus, of about thirty years old, was the son, so was thought, of Joseph," something like that. So I started to see that it's really all about bodies, if you look hard and demystify it. At the top it's all at peace, isn't it? You end up demystifying even God. It's as if the origin weren't a spirit, because within that sequence, as they wrote it back then, even God is part of this earthly nature, although, of course, he's also part of a larger cosmos. Back then, people thought more poetically, we might say, because the Bible is very poetic. There are a couple totally bloody episodes, the story of Isaac, for example – Machado de Assis also wrote about it, (in his novel) *Esau e Jacó* (Esau and Jacob)... Jacob's blessing was a trick: his mother wanted him to assume the birthright of his older brother. The Bible is full of these strained relationships in families, but when it comes to observing the surroundings, all these messages from the heavens come in the form of signs from nature. For example, there's one, I can't remember which... touching water would be a conversation with an angel. Chapter five of John, "The Healing at the Pool," the healing of an invalid at Bethesda. You can imagine the Middle East, that light, how little water there is. So that still water there – and it is still – when it moves, that's important. That comes to them as something impregnated with something cosmic, something magic, something that caused that conversation with the divine.

It was more or less through these conversations, these points, that I always entered the Bible. For example, there's a passage where Jesus finds Lazarus' sister weeping, and he goes to resuscitate him. What I find even more striking is what they call Jesus' internal movements. It's written in the Bible. "When Jesus saw her weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit," something like that. You can imagine a man, seeing all that sadness. We know what a feeling is like, what it can do within us, the changes it brings, and it was more because of these aspects that I started to think about the origin of certain things.

AGNALDO: That makes sense, because that's it; we're faced with a world without questions about origins. You said something like, "people here and everywhere aren't interested in blood anymore, they don't care about that, they don't want to know if (their) hands are clean or not." What's the price of all this that we have? This comfort? Isn't it we who don't want to know? But that's exactly what you're looking for, you're digging up exactly what is behind all of this.

KARIN: Oh, yes! I think that in terms of blood, Brazil is completely closed off. I am Brazilian and I love Brazil, but I can't understand how people nowadays can live in a world of such superficial information. We are bombarded by the tv, newspapers, completely uprooted pieces of news, which are all linked together. We are in the midst of these economic, political, violent tensions. I think that blood is always at the heart of that, in the middle of it. The corruption we never stop hearing about, all this, they are two sides of blood, but it is an integrated flow, in a sense. This blood flow ought to be pure, it ought to be clean, like our

hearts. The problem with death, with accidents, is that they interrupt the flow of blood, is not it? It stops. While it is running, it is marvelous, perfect. It's that blood that I'm looking for. How can I put this? It's not that it's wrong, but it is wrong at the same time. It can be organic, we need that... flesh needs flesh, bodies that eat other bodies. And then there's squandered blood, which is another wrong side of it. The last couple times people said to me, "oh, the sacrifice of sheep, and all," I started to say, "no, it's a slaughterhouse."

I started to move away from the idea of sacrifice, because today, the blood you see running is generally not just from sheep, but also from the people suffering in line at the hospital, accidents, violence, and that blood is wasted. Before, when people sacrificed animals, it was a cosmic dialogue, the blood wasn't wasted. In that tribal context, there was a connection. In our current context, there's no connection, and so it's a waste. We're dealing with disrespect for life. I think that's it.

AGNALDO Before I ask you another question – when did blood become a part of it? When was the moment when you thought, "I'm going to bring this in"? Which piece started it?

KARIN Well, my first piece with blood was *Morte eu sou teu* (Death, I am yours), from 1997, which I even displayed at your exhibition in Rio.⁵ I'd done the piece earlier and it had been in my house for about a year when you invited me to contribute to the show. It's a piece using my grandmother's tablecloths, made around the time of the big foot-and-mouth disease outbreak, around 1997 – which the newspapers really exaggerated. I'd never thought about that – it might seem strange to say this, but it occurred to me when I was at the supermarket. They always sell (the newspaper) *Zero Hora*, and when I went there I saw the clean, packaged meat, and I read the news.

I'd never seen a slaughterhouse before, myself, I don't have any connection to farms. And so when I started to see that, all of a sudden I started to see that meat, and the flow of blood, all that juxtaposed with the horrible news. The way they put it, it was like, "Millions of dollars are languishing in the port at Rio Grande." "The containers are stopped." "Russia rejects Brazilian meat." "China doesn't want it anymore." As if it were a purely economic matter, nothing to do with any organic body.

AGNALDO That's incredible. And the fact that it was in a supermarket is telling as well. Now, another question: just as there's this problem of origins to be discussed, be it with earth or blood, be it where everything starts, who's the primordial man – the first is Adam, that is – there's also the Word, because the word is the foundation. The idea of baptism, the idea of socialism – that as I incorporate a thing by means of words, it's no longer purely a part of nature, it's within me, named.

Text also appears frequently in your work. You might say that one of the principal characteristics of your pictorial work is text, which in principle doesn't belong to the field of painting, you might say, and you don't even worry about

5. *Vista assim do alto
mais parece um céu
no chão.* Parallel exhibit
during the XVI Salão
Nacional de Artes
Plásticas, MAM-RJ,
Jan 13-Feb 15, 1988.

that, you ignore it. Waltercio Caldas once told me: "I never ask myself if what I'm doing is art, because that doesn't matter. What matters is making, and letting out all these investigations, but that question's not important because it's completely unproductive. Who are you answering to, after all?" So, when did words appear in your work? When did you feel like writing?

KARIN Since always, I think, since college. It came through mail art, which was closely tied to conceptual art. I wanted to move away from that side of conceptual art and mail art, but I couldn't give up everything that went with it, like these words. For example, now and then, I need to add a word, but I never want those words to have such a strong impact, separate, individual, within a pictorial stain, like a stain themselves. I wouldn't write red on red. I might write light, and put a red blot. Together, like a sort of calligraphy that's lost in the middle of the painting and doesn't wind up separate, distinct. There's a bit of automatism as well. I write, draw, and then the words come, all together, this art that seems to be a legacy of the 1970s.

AGNALDO Do you usually read poetry?

KARIN Poetry? Not much. I prefer novels, and I read them often. I buy a lot of books about art. I must have over twenty books on Beuys, for example. I like artists' work, and buying and reading novels as well.

AGNALDO There's a great book on this very discussion, a book I was rereading, that has a lot to do with your work: *The Songlines*, by Bruce Chatwin. A great British writer, who passed away, a travel writer who practically reshaped the genre. This book, which isn't quite a novel, takes place in Australia. Chatwin comes into contact with a guide of Russian descent, a guy who serves as the intermediary between the Aborigines and the Australian government, making sure that the government doesn't put its highways, railroads, and other projects over places that are sacred to the Aborigines. It's all very interesting, first of all because the Russian guide defends his position by explaining that Australia was colonized by the English, men from a tiny island who didn't know anything about the desert. He says that's why Australia was colonized on the seacoast, and not into the backlands. "The English stayed on the coast because they don't know anything about deserts. But we understand them, we came from Russia."

Besides this, the most important thing in the story is the explanation of the existence of these sacred places. According to the Aborigines' cosmogony, at first there was only earth. Suddenly it rained, and beings, who were asleep under the earth, rose up and started walking and singing a song that could make everything there blossom up from where it was covered. And once everything there existed, after everything had been sung, those beings went back to sleep and left men with the task of singing things so that they didn't stop existing. It worked like this – if the thing, a stone, a tree, a hill, etc. – stopped existing, the community responsible for it would disappear as well.

From my point of view, this relationship between the Aborigines and the world is much like what you're doing. Your writings and your work give me that sensation. You have the power to magnetize your work with something that goes beyond formal matters: there's something epiphanic in your poetic.

I have to confess that I was a little taken aback when I read the excellent text by Luis Camnitzer, who organized all this fantastic didactic material that you all produced. I worked with Camnitzer at the 1996 São Paulo Art Biennial. A brilliant man, but who wrote about the formalist nature of your work. That got to me because, the way I see it, your work has nothing to do with that. You're not a conceptual artist, either. There's a materiality in your work that would be completely secondary for the conceptualists; I saw the care you took in the execution, and the way you thanked Ceres Storchi, the architect who designed the setup for the exhibition *Expanded Fields*. Your work operates on a mythical plane. Naming, which you use in works like the one on display here, with the words that vary until winding up in the name Jesus, has to do with mantras and litanies, prayers. Once sung, it can turn into a vibration, a frequency. And of course the frequency isn't simply a physical phenomenon. That's your concern, as I see it. But that's it: do you want people to attain a different state from the way they entered the museum, when they see your work? You said, "I want people to empty out their heads, not fill them."

Look, you didn't answer the question... I understand, you may not even have gotten it because I started out talking about the feeling of isolation of a work that's so opposed to everything, to glamor, to what institutions want, to say nothing of what the market wants, because obviously it really doesn't want this. I recall *Zero Hora*, back when we did the 2002 São Paulo Art Biennial, and you had a special room. *Zero Hora*, in an honest move, nothing against them, but they were going to put you on the cover of their cultural supplement: "An artist from Rio Grande do Sul is given a special exhibit at the Biennale." So then a journalist from *Zero Hora* calls me up and says, "Agnaldo, I've got a problem: the editor at *Zero Hora* was going to put Karin on the cover because she has a special exhibit at the Biennale, but then he saw her piece and said that they can't put it on the cover, it's too aggressive". So I called Karin to ask if the piece was really as violent as they were saying. She told me no, that it was ecological. What do you think, is it violent or not?

That's a typical question that certain journalists ask: they have this blameless frankness to them. Well, I told him, "of course it's an ecological piece." And then I had to try to explain to the guy why on earth it was ecological. The problem, it seems to me, is that we eat animals without understanding what that means. There was a time when people, when they sat down at the dinner table, or for lunch, a meal, they would give thanks and hold hands. In some sense, all those deaths were not in vain; it was as if they were part of a larger law. It was an act of contrition. Well, that ritual started to become a mechanical gesture, routine like all the rest, and then it finally disappeared. There are countless vestiges, remains of myths; rituals, of which there are still residues, as banal as putting a ring on your finger when you get married. But people forget the original meaning of these actions. The rituals still exist, but they're not

treated as such. I had my work cut out for me when I was explaining your piece to the journalist, and I think that in the end it didn't make the cover...

KARIN I never knew that!

AGNALDO I never told you? Well, it was very fun, very illustrative. The guy went, "The piece is so violent," and I went, "No, it's not." It's a piece that is very violent, it's a kind of violence – it's understood as being violent, that is, because it's a subject that's dealt with in such a flat, bare, shallow way that it ends up displeasing people. I always thought, and I think it's true, that if curators have any role it's the role of giving a voice. That's all it is: you try to provide a space for these people who are doing work that seems good. It's a way of thanking them, that's all. That's the curator's work, and the professor's as well. The professor is simply the person who thanks people for certain things he's read and thought were extraordinary. The best form of thanks is showing it to others: "read this!" When you're a professor, you're kind of obsessed with the latest thing. The professor's a person who says, "look at this, I just read it, it's fantastic!" That's how I feel. Today, talking with Helena, I said something like, "you haven't read this book? You need to read it, I have to lend you this book." It's become a problem for me, this need to lend, but that's the role. It's a way of saying thank you, especially when you imagine, you feel and you see that the work doesn't have a space of its own. Well, this isn't even a question, but it's the question I pose myself when I see your work. How can you bear to make these pieces? Ok, now it's at the Fundação Iberê Camargo, and being there means recognition, there's no doubt about that. So you've gotten past scraping by. But what was it like before? Were you really tempted to give up and do something else? That's not a good question, I'm sorry, it's a stupid question, but I'm going to ask it.

KARIN I never managed to give up. Sometimes I think I took the wrong path. I still live with my mother, in the house that belonged to my grandmother. If I have anyone to thank, it would be my grandmother as well, because my father and mother were married and lived in that house. My father had a hard life; he died young. I was 22 when he died, and it seems that my grandmother, in the house where we still live, took care of my father the whole time he was sick, took care of my mother, and then she took care of me when I came back with my girl, as a single mother. So I think that my grandmother's house is where I feel most comfortable working. It's strange. I don't have as much financial pressure now that Yole is an adult. In the 1990s, it was just crazy. But when I was in there, it seemed that the pressure was lifted after a while. It always calms me down to paint. And on the other hand, if I'm under a lot of stress, I have to go there. I just drain myself of everything in this world. I think that making art, in my case, may be a way of isolating myself and not integrating. I think that isolation – not social isolation – is you getting involved with that which is really yours. It kind of puts everything from the outside world into a bubble, in the very action of you working with colors, with your project.

AGNALDO That's great! I wouldn't have imagined that. Because the idea of the house as a body, the house that takes care of you, came from your grandparents and supported father, mother, daughter, and granddaughter. The house is a member of the family. It is the family, the story of the family is in the house itself. And then when you're painting... it's odd, because one of the aspects of your painting is that you don't paint in the canonical sense. You don't pick up the brush and paint. It's more of establishing a flow, much more of a vestige, it's more... I sense your hand, because you left a mark, even on the Areal book.⁶ There's a very delicate comment by Maria Helena Bernardes, when she says, "so that was the experience, when we left the papers there drying with the entrails, the monotypes made with the entrails of the slaughtered ram." Sacrificed or slaughtered? Slaughtered. "And there were even the paw prints left by a cat that walked by," which you can see in the photo, clearly. I saw those monotypes, and the cat's prints were really there. So, "what is painting?" It's not just a thing that you create... it's you trying in some way to retain something that's happening, or something that's there. You impress it, just like a house isn't a house. When we rent or we buy a house, the first step is to paint it to cover up what was there before. You can't wipe it out, but you can cover it up. And generally you paint the walls white, or at least you painted them white until recently, and painting something white is also striking because it's all light, and light being reflected from it. It's as if white had no color. I recall that poem by Drummond: "The house was sold with everything, all its belongings, its keepsakes, its sorrows, its miseries, its sorrows, its joys, a house contains all of that."⁷ When did you start to invent this sort of painting, which is not just limited to gestures? Because you've said this, but painting, for you – we have to keep this in mind – isn't just what you do with the brush. Would you talk about that?

KARIN I believe in my actions. And in practice. The canvas absorbs the paint, and it's a series of layers. If we look, it takes in everything, anything, it's a mark. They're like scars: they accumulate, even when you use very little and scrape it off, it's accumulation. In this case, what builds up are memories. The canvas picks up everything as we go; sometimes I'd just work on a canvas using movements. That was back when I worked with slippery materials, like synthetic enamel – it was almost a negation. I consider that an aggressive piece because synthetic enamel is a completely industrial paint, cold, ugly, smelly – it's all bad, in my opinion. But for me, a blot like that was completely necessary back then. I had to have it before me, and I didn't want to get too close to it, I didn't want to put my brush in it too far. It was an aggressive thing, working with that paint. That was in the 1980s. And there's this as well: I sometimes work on a vertical surface, sometimes on a horizontal, and that requires a certain kind of movement. We can't do certain things in certain positions, so we're at the mercy of certain positions of the canvas, and the materials we're using. I have to work another way, sometimes there's that. The brush isn't too important. In my work with rams' blood, I hardly interfere with anything. I have to be practically invisible at the worker's side. Everything has to be. I have to be discreet and act discreetly because for the worker, the presence of someone by his side is aggressive; it's not

6. Karin Lambrecht. *Eu e você*. Documento Areal 1. Santa Cruz do Sul: Edunisc, 2001. Organized by André Severo and Maria Helena Bernardes. [N.E.]
7. The poem is called "Liquidação" and is found in the book *Boitempo* (São Paulo: Record, 1992): "A casa foi vendida com todas as lembranças/todos os móveis todos os pesadelos / todos os pecados cometidos ou em via de cometer/ a casa foi vendida com seu bater de portas / com seu vento encanado sua vista do mundo / seus imponderáveis / por vinte, vinte contos". [N.E.]

easy for him, either. And so these records are the records of that moment. That's all how it is. It's real.

MÔNICA ZIELINSKY First, I want to thank Karin for her comments; then thanks to Agnaldo for his stimulating points and questions. This talk touched on a few profound aspects of your work, which were really brought out by the questions. One of the questions I'd like to ask was almost answered just now, but even though Karin already brought it up, I'd like to hear more about this, and the perspective of someone who speaks about Karin's work.

The question is really for the two of you: in Karin's painting, there are actually two principles that she brought to light towards the end, just now. One is the work of painting as an arena, experiencing one's own body, a solitary work, of clashing with the canvas itself, with the paint, which she just explained. On the other hand, there's the work of painting as a kind of retention – a sort of memory, as she put it, that leaves a record – and so that's a different principle, but it's still painting. As Karin sees it, in the first case there's an almost direct intervention with painting, with the action of painting, and in the second you're a witness, it's the silent work of sharing an experience. My question would be: how do you two, Karin as an artist and Agnaldo as the spectator discussing the artist's work, see this idea of painting in these two senses? The action of the painter-artist before these two visions, the active, proactive one and the artist as witness?

KARIN That's a tough one.

MÔNICA Yes, but it seems to me to be a very important question in your work; in all your interviews and talks you've made that clear, and in this exhibition as well.

KARIN In fact, I don't make that dissociation. Of course, now I'm under pressure, so I'm trying to show you what the moment is like, but within me, it's not so inseparable. I mentioned Hermann Nitsch at the beginning because with him it's the opposite, everyone's forced to work with that body, those entrails, everything. I would never, ever do that because I believe that the ram is killed for us to eat. That's its connection, in that moment: it is going to give life to people. Animals suffer, but they have no rights. Our society has excluded them. I don't know how humans came to be the principal beings on the planet... but, right now, that's what we are. Things could be different, of course. There's a connection in the death of the ram... I like to explain this – I would never take a brush and dip it in blood. Many people told me... they think I paint with blood. That's something I would never do. But I think about that, I have to think about how I'm going to bring everything within me, because a lot of what I see there, I'm sure I won't be able to transmit. When the animal dies, its breathing is silent. It doesn't scream. The countryside is generally quiet. I noticed that when the ram dies, its breathing becomes more and more ragged until it disappears. In that moment, which must be when it really dies, practically, I don't know exactly when it is... many times the birds (I don't know why) on the farm, in the trees, start shrieking

and flying around. These are things that I observe. It's as if there were a world there that observes more than I do. But it's all together. And so when I talk about invisible memories, that's it: I can't bring all that in, but everything I bring into the work, the way of presenting it is settled by my vision as a painter, because I always show a plane of things and I wind up fitting everything into a plane.

AGNALDO I'm just going to respond because it would be rude not to, but after this I'm not going to say anything else. But I understand your polarity. I think that she's posing sort of a false question, in the sense that nobody is exclusively canvas. Nobody is all retention, even when you arm yourself and attack the canvas head on. There's a previous experience you have, which you tackle, and then when you tackle the paper, you're staging everything within it. You're inhabited, you have a plurality within you. But I understand that some people are more extroverted, some people are more discreet, and some will just sound things out, that's the intervention. Even so, even on Rauschenberg's white canvases, which we talked about – the examples are very similar, such as Yves Klein, with the void, or even with his paintings made with rain, which are works linked by that inaction. In Yves Klein's case, it's interesting – this is a judoka, a judo fighter, who fights by using the strength of his opponent. In that inaction, there is action; in this silence, there is presence, although in a different way. I always use an example of a situation in which a person barely does anything, but that little thing that he does is everything. This is perfectly illustrated in Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*, when he shows the duel between two samurai, and when they lift their swords, one is completely frenetic and intrepid, and the other is more contained and stripped-down, held back, as João Cabral de Melo Neto or Graciliano Ramos, and he puts down his sword and says, "I've won." The other one is furious, and he says, "You're a coward, you don't want to fight." And the master, who's watched the whole thing with his disciple, says, "You have won." The disciple says, "No, he's a coward." And the master, "No, he's not a coward, he won the duel." The fighter reacts, and says, "No, let's fight, let's fight!" And the other, "But why? You want to die? All right, since you want to die, let's fight." And they raise their swords and go at each other, and the more contained and stripped-down one kills his opponent effectively. He had already killed him, he was just simply enunciating the result of the duel. And so when we go unarmed, when she simply observe, that is the result of a deep understanding of what's put before us. Everyone, in the end, behaves like they're in an arena, and there are simply different ways of facing off. Kurosawa is a master of that. Wasn't there that movie, *Kagemusha*, where the general didn't move because mountains never move, and that's how he won his battles? On the day he moved, he lost. Sometimes staying in the same place, isolated, sheltered by your own house and with your body expanded... that's where things come out, but it's a way of being. Others need to go out.

Audience Questions

VIRGÍNIA AITA I wanted to thank Karin for her wonderful talk and her very clear answers, and I wanted to emphasize the idea of genealogy, and take it in a more radical direction. A while ago, I visited Karin's studio, and I saw some marvelous paintings, her latest ones, very eloquent, and many were visibly influenced by the great painters. It's hard – I have my suggestions – but naming them in front of the artist is difficult, as well as the way she very carefully privilege the medium, the choice of pigment, how the pigment is filled with narrative and symbolism, and at the same time it has an autonomous value. The very careful choice of a particular color, a new color always has a whole story behind the reason for that color, because while it's impregnated with symbolism, it also has autonomy as a color. And so the presence of painting seems very clear, in Karin's work. The value of painting, of aesthetic quality. But when you speak of genealogy, particularly about the Gospel of Luke, I mean, the genealogy of Christ that winds up at the Father, God the Father, it reminds me of the idea of the law of the father, the ban. There's a limit, there's almost an omnivorous kind of painting that assimilates all these narratives, absorbs all this memory. The memory of painting, but also historic and cultural memory, and, as Karin said, the mythical universe, but it also suggests that there's another kind of excursion at the same time, into other stories. It's always a genealogy of painting itself, almost unconsciously so. It's the attempt to seek out a historical body of painting. It's a memory. That's a question that's always ingrained into it. That attempt to recover the memory within painting, which has a parallel in genealogy with the search in the Gospels, etc., but at the same time it has this side as the craft of painting. This concern always seems to be in the area of painting, and it strikes me as almost imperative. This is a digression, but it seems to me that the idea of genealogy is very tied to the origin. We've already talked about that a bit...

KARIN Virginia Aita is my friend. Agnaldo asked me who I talked to; Virginia comes to visit me now and then, and her visits are always marvelous. Well, I don't even know where to start...

VIRGÍNIA Well, what I'm really trying to do is give greater emphasis to the question of pictorial territory, trying to make this genealogy almost coextensive. In the search for these mythical genealogies, what drives it deep down, the fundamental part, is the search. The fact that you had a foot in Geração 80 lends some flexibility to your idea of rigid time in the lineages from the stories of the patriarchs. You want a genealogy, but a fluid genealogy, it seems. Fluid time, an elective, affective genealogy – something like Malraux's Imaginary Museum, or Danto's style matrix, or the idea of a family of works that dialogue amongst each other, in kinship, with an intimate dialogue that forms a memory – a body stretched out historically. There's the contemporary angle to it, which dilutes the formalist rigidity. I sort of feel this idea of an omnivorous panting. Even the writing in your works, it always

ends up with a pictorial side as well, it comes in and becomes part of the pictorial corpus, it's not autonomous, and I don't know if text comes in that way.

AGNALDO That wasn't a question, but that's okay.

VIRGÍNIA No, it's a question in the sense of giving a more incisive emphasis to this pictorial representation. It seems that Karin is always looking for tradition, it seems that she wants to recuperate the dignity of the craft of painting.

AGNALDO Of course, because everything continues to be made, even though it's in two-dimensional form, on fabric. There's a recurrence there. That's not up for debate, of course, but the fact is that it's on the up in painting, affirming that the whole time. But, in any case, you're the one who has to respond, Karin.

KARIN I don't think it's a question either. I get what Virgínia said, because we talk once in a while and I've already agreed with her on this. It seems like what Agnaldo said, when he asked who I dialogue with, and I said that I never gave up... I think of Joan Mitchell. I recall many paintings I saw throughout my life, I recall them and it's as if they were there in my head, that same impact. I really never gave up on painting. I don't know if that genealogy is rational. It didn't work that way.

PLATEIA Karin, I just wanted to touch on a point you brought up, about your ties to abstractionism. What really struck me throughout your exhibition and in your dialogue with Agnaldo – which brought up all these associations that surround your work – is that they draw you towards the mythic, towards primordial feelings, like gratitude. Being in a sort of communication, in which you create the painting, but at the same time, it seems that you also reclaim abstractionism, in a sense. At the same time, abstractionism was very concentrated on form, the negation of historicity, an affirmation of the two-dimensional, which sort of leaves out the mythical side of things. And so... I don't know if you want to talk about the tension between what abstractionism came to be, at least in terms of its representation in the media, and your abstractionism, which is something much broader, more generous.

KARIN I wanted to say something quick about that: Iberê, for example, would observe, and he would abstract from that observation. I used to visit his studio, and that really stuck with me. Beuys, for example, says, "I don't work with symbols, I work with materials." Those were two very strong impressions. Abstractionism came before, of course. I think I do have an abstract heritage, but of course it's also impregnated with the observation of a reality. At the same time, I also work with materials... when I make a cross, it's generally out of some residual material, or with earth. At the XXV São Paulo Art Biennial, in 2002, there was a cross with blood, so the material... though it was in the shape of a cross, I think that it's more abstract than the symbol of the cross.

PLATEIA For you, when you talk about abstractionism, do you see a big difference in this sense of the material, the cross, naming, the whole thing, like a huge cosmic sounding box where you absorb rhythms? Do you see a difference, for example, within abstractionism, from the way Kandinsky frames it and the way others after him did?

KARIN I read Kandinsky's writings, I can't remember the name of the book, I think it's *Point and Line*... But if I have to choose between Kandinsky and Klee, I prefer Klee, because I think that he was the first painter to really transcend the limits, of the modern, of Cézanne, Van Gogh. They're masters, of course, they're marvelous. But as I see it, Klee went a step further, differently from Kandinsky. Klee touches me more. His painting, when you get up close, is made of lovely material. Kandinsky is more watered-down, there's more distance to him (than Klee), who's more involved, freer. He has periods, animals, squares, figures – they change, almost like dreams. Klee didn't consider himself a surrealist. He was always interested in what he could do with painting, he never wanted to fit himself into the groups of the period. Then he has that phase – no, I won't call it a phase, but where he works with colors and animals, with everything on one plane, they're almost like real animals, but distorted like a surrealist figure; others are planes that form a figure that's lightly hinted at with geometric planes. Then there's the classes he gave, where you don't even have the figurative and the abstract anymore. I identify myself with that...

PLATEIA You spoke about the blood flowing out of the cow or the sheep, and the person who kills the animal and absolves it by eating it. It's a sort of flow that comes and goes. The image that came to me was that painting by Klee, *A man leading a horse*.

KARIN There's a sequence of animals, and a figure leading...

PLATEIA You don't know who's the horse, who's the man, because the human being mingles with the quadruped, that affinity, that brotherhood with animals... it's strange that the image of Klee came to mind.

KARIN I think Klee is lovely.

PLATEIA There's a huge difference. The word abstractionism is completely vague. There's Klee on one side, Kandinsky on the other.

AGNALDO That's why I'm bothered by Camnitzer's use of formalism in relation to Karin's work. It's a false question, I think. It's a problem, because a particular reading of Greenberg wound up making people think that you can make that dissociation, but as you gather material in the discussion – material, history, because material doesn't stand on its own – what exists is what comes from material, and the matter of the symbol. So, you see an analysis from Greenberg

talking about Barnett Newman, for example, but leaving out the fact that Newman called the painting *Adam*. He thinks that human existence is a candle-flame because he's religious. You can analyze a Rothko painting just based on the materiality of the canvas, but you can't forget about what he thought about the atmospheres he constructed. He goes into a field that is difficult to discuss, but, anyway, that issue is there, and it has a religious side to it. Kandinsky was religious, Mondrian, all these abstract artists whom we like to strip of any sort of meaning, they worked with signification, for lack of it. We take out that meaning, in their absence, which they never abstracted. The subject of abstraction... it's poorly posed. I see it this way: Zé Resende arguing that his work has no signification, and his work has an up-and-down crevice that anyone who's read a manual on Freud can understand... That idea that material is just itself, but when you're working with material, you're not just working with it, nobody does that; it has its own meaning, it's loaded with it. And so you don't need to talk about an oeuvre as simple as Beuys', so as not to run up against the old problem of art as a pamphlet, or an illustration. In discussing Karin's work we're already overcoming that, although the problem always persists.

PLATEIA Just to corroborate that idea, there's a saying I like a lot, "The signifier is the material cause of discourse" – just the fact of using blood, wood, and all those fundamental symbols. I think that it was well said, Karin, about the generosity of your work, which allows us to reconnect with fundamental reference points. That generosity is in wanting to or at least opening the possibility for each of us to reconnect and reference these things, working with these fundamental elements. I think that's very important. I just wanted to come into the conversation by agreeing and bringing that to the table.

MÔNICA I just want to wrap this up by emphasizing the broad scope of Karin's work. It's inexhaustible; we could go on discussing it and re-thinking it forever. Her oeuvre opens up new questions, fields of knowledge, new relationships between events, and always brings us back to the roots of this work.

Karin Marilyn Haessler Lambrecht is born in January 1957, in Porto Alegre. Karin's maternal grandmother, Ida Haessler (1899-1989) was of Austrian descent, her parents having emigrated from Vienna to Latvia in 1893 – specifically to Courland, where they lived and worked on the estate of Baron Von Mantteufel. Ida Haessler was registered in Wolhynien, in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lutz, and attended school there until age fourteen. Her family immigrated to Brazil a few months after the eruption of the First World War, arriving in Rio de Janeiro on June 4th, 1914. Karin's maternal grandfather, Max Leopoldo Alfredo Haessler (1886-1941), was from Berlin.

Karin's paternal grandparents were Berliners who came to work in Brazil in 1926, to the region of Goiás, where Karin's father, Egon Lambrecht (1927-79) was born. After two years the family returned to Germany, only to witness the run-up to the Second World War. Karin's grandmother would say that they deeply regretted having returned to Europe; this may have influenced the decision of Karin's father, Egon, who would go back to Brazil at age nineteen.

As a child, Karin learned to speak German with her father Egon, her grandmother Ida and her mother, Hilda Haessler Lambrecht (1918).

With the end of World War II and the division of Germany was into four sectors – English, French, American, and Russian – Karin's paternal grandparents came to live on the Russian side, in the DDR (Deutsche Demokratische Republik), or East Berlin. In their old age they were admitted into a nursing home in Eberswalde, where they would pass away in the mid-1980s.

Karin's maternal grandfather, Max Leopoldo Alfredo Haessler, had studied civil engineering and came to Porto Alegre at the invitation of architect Theo Wiederspahn to teach at the trade school, the Gewerbeschule, which was supported by the Sociedade de Utilidade Pública (Public Utility Society), created by the Sociedade Teuto-Brasileira (Teutonic-Brazilian Society).

When Karin is born in 1956, her grandfather, Alfredo Haessler, has already passed away, but she will live with her parents in the house built by her widowed grandmother – where she still lives today, with her mother, Hilda Haessler Lambrecht.

1963

Karin enters the German school, the Ginásio Evangélico Pastor Dohms, linked to the Martin Luther Evangelical Lutheran Confessing community, in the neighborhood of Higienópolis in Porto Alegre.

1973

At age sixteen, she begins to study art at the Atelier Livre sponsored by the Porto Alegre municipal government. Karin had drawing classes with Clébio Guillon Sória (1934-87), who was interested in questions of scale, Mexican muralism, and its distinct characteristics as public art.¹

Karin Marilyn Haessler Lambrecht applies to study agronomy at UFRGS, but enrolls in her second option: a bachelor's degree in social sciences. After just one semester of classes (this under the military dictatorship), she asks to be transferred to visual arts, where she meets Heloísa S. da Silva. In the Department of Dramatic Arts (DAD), she studied under Carlos Pasquetti, who taught scenography. This encounter would spark a special interest in performing arts and her colleagues in theater, extremely politicized artists.

1. The group that studied with Professor Sória, among them Heloísa Schneiders da Silva (1955-2005) held an exhibition at the hall at the Agência de Correios e Telégrafos in Porto Alegre, on 5/26/1975.
2. Karin Lambrecht, interviewed by the author, 11/2/2011.
3. Id., *ibid.*
4. Id., *ibid.*

1976

Karin, then studying at the Art Institute at UFRGS, takes part in the Ouro Preto Winter Arts Festival, where she participates in drawing workshops led by Glauro M. Pereira, Rosângela de Carvalho Ferreira, and Isabel Cristina de A. Passos.

1977

On her winter vacation, she travels with Heloísa S. da Silva and Maria Helena Salle and another group of friends to visit Heloísa's brother, Alexandre S. da Silva (1948-90) in Argentina. From the Argentine capital, the three friends travel to the Andes in the Mendoza region to Chile/Puente del Inca, in search of a new landscape Karin describes as "like a desire to find the identity of South America and realize a dream of Heloísa's, which was the encounter of man with nature (...) besides experiencing rough life in the Andes (...)."²

1978

Karin travels once again to Ouro Preto and takes drawing classes with Jarbas Juarez Antunes (1936), a renowned muralist from Minas Gerais.

In September of the same year, at the UFRGS Art Institute, she participates in the launch of the *Relinguagem* project – which, according to the artist, was "an artistic moment, contemporary to mail art, in which forty artists participated, producing forty albums with forty photocopied images."³

Relinguagem was shown in the streets with the "coming and going" spirit of mail art. This way of communicating with society was a form of opposition to academic teaching. The first version of the project was organized at the Centro Acadêmico Tasso Corrêa at the UFRGS Art Institute, which served as a sort of og for the students.

That same year, Karin visits Amazônia, Belém, Manaus, Rondônia, and the Brazil-Bolivia border. Before enrolling in college, Lambrecht had lived exclusively in Higienópolis, the German neighborhood in the capital of Rio Grande do Sul. At UFRGS she will spend her time with Heloísa S. da Silva, Jovita Peña Sommer, and Regina Coeli de Freitas Rodrigues (1954-93); among other friends, Karin met Irene Santos, who went with the group to Belém do Pará. According to Karin, the trip was meant to help them "get to know the Brazilian landscape (...) by bus, by boat, hitching rides, by truck (...)."⁴

1979

At age 22, having received her degree in visual arts from UFRGS, she is invited by Vera Chaves to take part in the ESPAÇO N.O.:

“You have to remember that at the time we were under the military regime, where everything was censored – you could feel censorship not only in repressive interventions in politics and power, applied from top to bottom, but the day-to-day was also opaque and glum, uninformed (both with no information and with no intelligent form), traumatized by the dictatorship, phantasmagorical, unenlightened, there was no open, free debate about contemporary art. In Visual Arts all you had were academic and merchandising-related discussions; according to Vera (a member of Nervo Óptico at the time): ‘we weren’t against the market, but against the domination of the market... today I classify my memories of Nervo Óptico as sensory, vivid, formative, that marked me... because they are more than linear registers of historical facts, of the period.’”⁵

5. K. Lambrecht, in *Vera Chaves Barcellos: Le Revers du reveurs*. Capela de Sant Roc, Museu de Valls. Barcelona: 2003.
6. K. Lambrecht, in Salzstein, 2003, p. 190.
7. Interviewed by the author.

In November 1979, Karin’s father, Egon Lambrecht, dies at age 52.

In the same year, Karin Lambrecht has her first solo show, *100 × coração*, at the Escritório de Arquitetura de Ceres Storchi e Amigos in Porto Alegre, presenting drawings and paintings.

1980

With a bachelor’s degree in visual arts (with an emphasis on drawing and engraving), Karin Lambrecht decides to travel to Germany after her father’s death to meet up with her paternal grandparents, living in what was then East Berlin.

Armed with her notebook of drawings and collages, Lambrecht goes to the Hochschule der Künste Berlin, in West Berlin (currently the Universität der Künste, UDK, Berlin) and seeks out the artist and professor Raimund Girke (1930-2002), who agrees to advise her in painting and recommends that she enter as a fourth-semester student.

Later in life, Karin will turn to Girke when speaking of the paintings of Iberê Camargo (1914-94):

“In the catalogue of a solo show by my painting professor in Berlin, Raimund Girke, gave an interview about his work that, for me, recalls the fundamental meaning Iberê gave to painting: ‘what makes me always feel painting as true, or correct, is that I have within me the feeling of finding myself within it, of fitting within it at the same time. Ultimately, this simply means that living and painting are inseparable.’”⁶

At UDK, Karin studies the history of art and abstract art with Robert Kudielka and meets Michael John Chapman, an English student and advisee of Professor Shinkichi Tajiri (1923-2009), who teaches sculpture.

Chapman was 32 and was coming off an intense artistic experience with the group *Exploding Galaxy*. “He also talked a lot about Hélio Oiticica and Lygia Clark.”⁷

The same year, Karin and Michael, then dating, see Beuys be met with boos at the UDK during the Karl-Hofer Symposions on the topic “Überleben Durch Kunst” (Surviving with Art) and George Orwell’s 1984.

1981

During UDK's vacation, Yole Cuíca Kamaiura Lambrecht Chapman is born in Porto Alegre. From December 1981 to January 1982, Karin and Chapman take part in the exhibition *A casa e a cozinha*, where she displays paintings with earth and tempera at the ESPAÇO N.O. in Porto Alegre.

1982

Back in classes in Berlin, Karin announces the baby's birth via Mail Art and receives drawings from Vittore Barone and Robin Crozier in response.

She executes the piece *O caminho do rio*, "a color study with atmospheric morning light and two objects." Karin notes that in the summer the objects were treated with black paint, ashes, and soot, while in the winter she colored them with the snow of Charlottenburg. With this work, she sought to steep herself in the colors of the natural environment and investigate how a pictorial object can interact with nature. The importance of light and color would occupy the artist until her return to Brazil, remaining a crucial point in her work today.

1983

In July, in the old Museu de Porto Alegre (now the Museu Joaquim José Felizardo), Karin Lambrecht directs her first painting workshop. "Exercícios de Pintura" was the name chosen for a workshop conducted outdoors, in the gardens of the manor house at 582 Rua João Alfredo in the Cidade Baixa. The proposal for the project included the use of stones, earth, and the construction of a variety of frames and surfaces by the students themselves.

She takes part in the project *3 Processos de Trabalho*, which conceived of workshops for artistic reflection and discussions about painting, aimed at developing workshops designed by Michael Chapman and Heloísa S. da Silva.

Meetings were held between November and December of that year at the Goethe-Institute in Porto Alegre. The artists divided the practical work up in the following way:

Karin proposed the workshop Exercício/Cor/Fazer; Heloísa, the workshop on Exercícios Gráficos; and Michael, a workshop called Receitas de Arte.

As a parallel event, the Goethe-Institute also hosts the exhibition *Artistas em seu ateliê* as documented by Czech photographer Erika Kiffil, held in the studios of artists across the world.

Lambrecht is invited by Mônica Nador and Luciana Brito to take part in the project *Arte na Rua 2*, supervised by the Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, MAC-USP. This allowed Karin to take part in the Outdoor (Billboard) project, to which approximately 75 Brazilian artists contributed.

1984

In May, Karin Lambrecht presents a solo show at Galeria Tina Presser in Porto Alegre.

Karin Lambrecht and Heloísa S. da Silva create "A Sala", a workspace where they guide reflections and practices of painting. The space was in the basement at 3177 Avenida Protásio Alves, in Porto Alegre. According to Karin, "the loveliest part of that experience was that each of us had a key to the space and used it as a studio..."⁸

8. Interviewed by the author, Oct. 2002.

Around this time, Karin applies to teach drawing and perception at the UFRGS Art Institute. While she is the third-place candidate, she is not chosen.

From July to August, she takes part in the exhibition, *Como vai você, Geração 80?*, a group show at the Escola de Artes at Parque Lage in Rio de Janeiro.

1985

She applies to the Millay Colony for the Arts in Austerlitz, New York. Two recommendation letters were necessary to work as an artist in residence, which Karin Lambrecht received from Iberê Camargo and Paulo Herkenhoff.

In July 1985 she opens a solo show entitled *A fertilidade de Anita* at the Sala Bandeirante of the Museu de Arte Contemporânea in Curitiba.

She is invited to participate in the XVIII São Paulo Art Biennial, with the theme *Expressionismo no Brasil: Heranças e afinidades*, where she occupies the room on "Expressionismo, uma herança brasileira." The show was curated by Stella Teixeira de Barros and Ivo Mesquita. Among other artists, this Biennale also included figures such as Iberê Camargo, Maria Lídia Magliani, Rubens Oestroem, and Xico Stokinger.

Karin Lambrecht and Heloísa S. da Silva inaugurate the exhibition *Os olhos dos gatos que ouvem*. This show garners attention, as Frederico Morais commented:

"Karin and Heloísa: Award-Winning *Gaúchas*⁹ are at Macunaíma:

Funarte's Galeria Macunaíma continues to be a *gaúcho* outpost in the middle of Rio de Janeiro. Now two artists from Rio Grande do Sul, Karin Lambrecht and Heloísa Schneiders, are presenting their work there. Karin took part in the *Como vai você, Geração 80?* show at the Escola de Artes Visuais, and received an honorable mention at the last Salão Nacional. From 1980 to 1982, she lived and studied in Germany. The pieces she will present, starting this Tuesday, are part of the series "Os Comedores de Almas," "Tentáculos das Espirais," and "Fantasmas." Heloísa is a colleague from Karin's studio and, like she, graduated from the UFRGS Art Institute, traveling through the United States and Europe in 1981. Both held solo shows at Galeria Tina Presser in Porto Alegre."¹⁰

9. *Gaúcho* is the term for natives of the state of Rio Grande do Sul.

10. Frederico Morais, "Rio em Festa com a Arte em Cada Canto". *O Globo*, Segundo Caderno, Rio de Janeiro, 2/24/1985, p. 8.

11. Karin Lambrecht, interviewed by the author, 11/2/2011.

Karin recalls that "at the time, Funarte required a critical text, and in the absence of anyone we identified with in Porto Alegre, we invented Laura Ida Rambrosso. Later on, Paulo Herkenhoff, who knew what we'd done, mentions Laura Ida in a text he wrote about my work."¹¹

1986

From June to July, Karin has two solo shows: *Nascimento do tempo* at the Espaço Capital in Brasília, and another at Galeria Tina Presser in Porto Alegre.

Selected as an Artist in Residence through the United States Information Agency (USIA) International Visitor Program, connected to the Millay Colony for the Arts in Austerlitz, NY, Karin travels to the United States. The program includes visits to universities, museums, and American institutions in Washington, New York, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago.

The selection committee included artist Louise Bourgeois, who hands Karin a note arranging a second meeting, where Karin could present slides of the pieces she produced at the Millay Colony.

From September to October, Karin stays at the Millay Colony for the Arts in Austerlitz, New York. Karin travels to Germany and holds the solo show *Quo Vadis* at the Petrus Kirche, featuring work produced at the Millay Colony.

1987

The year begins with the event Connections Project / Conexus, organized by Josely Carvalho and Sabra Moore and held at the Museum of Contemporary Art (МОСНА) in New York. Karin Lambrecht is among the female artists selected to present their works, and she invites Heloísa S. da Silva, Regina Coeli de Freitas Costa Rodrigues, and Lígia D'Andrea.

Karin Lambrecht and Liliana Porter present their works on the theme *Nascimento*. Upon returning to Brazil in November, Karin Lambrecht receives the Prêmio Ivan Serpa in Rio, awarded by the Instituto Nacional de Artes Plásticas, a branch of Funarte.

Around this time, she takes part in the Domingos Críticos (Critical Sundays) – informal meetings in Iberê Camargo's studio, in which artists discuss both day-to-day and artistic issues.

Between September and October, Lambrecht participates in the XIX São Paulo Art Biennial at the invitation of the head curator, Sheila Leirner. When confirming her participation, Lambrecht sent a sketch of the work in progress (fig. 40) and a text to complement the work.

1988

In January, Lambrecht presents a solo show at Galeria Thomas Cohn Arte Contemporânea in Rio de Janeiro.

She spends a few months with her daughter Yole at the home and studio of Simone Michelin in the neighborhood of Rio Comprido in Rio de Janeiro.

Upon receiving an invitation from the Diretoria de Intercâmbio Cultura at the UFRJ Escola de Belas Artes, Karin Lambrecht prepares a painting workshop.

From May to October she takes part in a group show called *Encontro com a pintura brasileira*, at Galerie M. in Kassel, Germany. Among other artists, the group included Enéas Valle, Newton Cavalcanti, and Maria Tomaselli. In the local press, Karin's work made waves: "(...) the works of this young artist mark a full stop within Brazilian art. Abandoning the object, the imitation of the figurative, this Brazilian of German origin breaks definitively with tradition (...)." ¹²

12. Ilona Lehnart, "Stad und Kreis Kassel", trans. to Portuguese by B. M. Kunz. *Montag*, 24/10/1988.

In December, she holds a painting workshop and a solo show as part of the Artista Visitante program in Vitória.

1989

Karin's maternal grandmother, Ida Haessler, dies in Porto Alegre.

In July, the artist holds a solo show at Brasília's Galeria Espaço Capital.

Lambrecht takes part in the *6 × Brasil* exhibition at Galerie Raue in Bonn, Germany, curated by Cláudia Gianetti.

1990

From March to April, Lambrecht holds her first solo show in São Paulo, *Pinturas e objeto*, at Subdistrito Comercial de Arte, owned by art dealers João Sattamini and Rubens Breitman.

In August and October she presents yet another solo show, this time at Galeria Tina Zapolli in Porto Alegre.

1991

She contributes to the *Viva Brasil Viva* show at Stockholm's Kulturhuset, curated by Elizabeth Haglund. At the time, Karin shared the exhibition room with Tunga, although equally renowned artists also took part in the exhibition, including Maurício Bentes, Jac Leirner, and Frida Baranek.

From April to May she presents her work in Caracas, curated by Aracy Aramal. The group show *Brasil la nueva generación* is held at the Fundación Museo de Bellas Artes. Lambrecht contributes with her piece *Os sem-terra*.

Between May and July, she participates in the exhibition *Galáxias* at the Instituto Brasileiro Alemão de Santa Maria in Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul.

In November 1991, the artist takes part in the show *BR 80* at Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, curated by Frederico Morais.

As an invited artist, Lambrecht also participates in the IV Bienal de Havana, curated by Lilian Lanes.

1992

In June, the artist contributes to Centro Cultural São Paulo's program of exhibitions, curated by Sônia Salzstein.

In support of the Amnesty International Calendar, a show is organized with works by Karin Lambrecht, Daniel Senise, Vitor Arruda, and Leonilson, curated by Marcus Lontra, at the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM-RJ).

She is chosen to take part in the Arte Amazonas project (the Goethe-Institute's contribution to the UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio-92). The artists were to develop a piece in an open studio in the city of Belém do Pará, with field expeditions to the Caxiuanã reserve in the Amazon rainforest. The project included 27 artists from fifteen countries, tackling the issue of the devastation of the forest. Among them were Tunga (Brazil), Marina Abramovic (Yugoslavia), and Bill Woodrow (England). This international exhibition was presented at MAM-RJ, the Museu de Arte de Brasília, at the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, the Staatliche Kunsthalle in Berlin, the Technische Sammlungen der Stadt Dresden, and the Ludwig Forum für Internationale Kunst in Aachen, Germany.

In September she holds a solo show at the Goethe-Institute in Porto Alegre.

In October she takes part in the group show at Subdistrito Comercial de Arte in São Paulo.

The artist is invited to take part in the 11th Salão de Arte do Pará, held by the Fundação Maiorana. Paulo Herkenhoff is the chief curator. Artists such as Benedito Mello and Burle Marx are among the participants.

1993

Between April and June, Karin Lambrecht takes part in *Panoramas da Arte Brasileira 1993*, focusing on painting, at the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, MAM-SP.

She participates in the *Acquisição* project at the Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul, MARGS, in Porto Alegre.

From April to July, Lambrecht contributes to the group show *Brasil contemporâneo* at the Curitiba Casa da Imagem.

Between May and June, she participates in a group show at Espaço Namour in São Paulo.

From August to September, she contributes the piece *Diamonds in the Sky, 1992*, to the exhibition *Uma antessala para Joseph Beuys* at the Goethe-Institute in Porto Alegre. This project, curated by Vera Chaves Barcelos, also hosts a traveling exhibition of drawings by the German artist.

Between the months of September and October, Karin holds a solo show at the Universidade Federal Fluminense in Niterói, Rio de Janeiro.

During the same period, she takes part in the exhibition *Encontros e tendências*, a project by Agnaldo Farias and Maria Izabel Branco Ribeiro and sponsored by MAC-USP, and continues with the show *Um olhar sobre Joseph Beuys* at the Fundação Athos Bulcão in Brasília. This exhibition was designed to receive the same traveling array of drawings that had already been seen in Porto Alegre.

The artist produces a piece using approximately a half-ton of earth in the UFRGS Museu Universitário e Videoteca, in Porto Alegre.

In Florianópolis, that December, she presents her last solo show of the year at the Fundação Cultural Prometheus Libertus.

From December 1993 to February 1994, Lambrecht takes part in *Brazil: Images of the 80s and 90s*, a group show at the Art Museum of the Americas in Washington.

1994

When Iberê Camargo dies, Lambrecht is interviewed by the *Folha de S. Paulo*. "He was the greatest Brazilian painter of his generation," she says. "He was also one of the last romantics, an artist in the classical sense of the word: he worked alone in his studio, he never worked on two canvases at the same time, and he sometimes took months to work out a single painting. Everything he produced had a touch of suffering, of anguish."¹³

13. *Folha de S. Paulo*,
Ilustrada, 8/11/1994, p. 5.

From March to September, Karin Lambrecht takes part in the group show *The Exchanges Show: Twelve Painters from San Francisco and Rio de Janeiro*, contributing the piece *Wund*, 1993. The international show was displayed at the gardens of the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, in San Francisco, and moved to MAM-RJ from September to November.

Lambrecht participates in the *Experiências Plásticas* program on the UFRGS campus, along with Heloísa S. da Silva, Lia Menna Barreto, Mauro Fuke, and Michael Chapman. The initiative is documented by filmmaker Marta Biavaschi.

In April and May, the art gallery at Casa de Cultura Mário Quintana, in Porto Alegre, displays works by Karin Lambrecht as part of the cycle of Arte Brasileira e Contemporânea, designed by Gaudêncio Fidelis. Other artists participating included Jac Leirner, Iole de Freitas, Dudi Maia Rosa, and Nuno Ramos.

From April to May 1994, Lambrecht was among the artists selected for the Bienal Brasil Século xx, taking part in the group "Atualidade: De 1980 aos nossos dias," curated by Agnaldo Farias and Nelson Aguilar, at the Fundação Bienal São Paulo.

In May 1994, the artist is added to the Gilberto Chateaubriand Collection at MAM-RJ.

During the month of June, Karin Lambrecht and Heloísa S. da Silva participate in an exhibition of paintings in the Igreja Martin Luther, designed to draw the community's attention to the space:

"An abandoned church becomes an exhibition hall: Karin Lambrecht and Heloísa Schneiders are proposing a new relationship between the spectator and the work of art. (...) 'Museums are generally places of excess,' says the *gaúcha* artist Heloísa Schneiders. 'A church is a place of meditation and silence, where the work of art can really breathe.' (...) She and Karin Lambrecht are displaying two large-scale canvases (...) near Colégio Pastor Dohms, in the neighborhood of Higienópolis in Porto Alegre. Members of the so-called Geração 80, an informal group that arose in the last decade in a movement of rediscovering painting, the artists had hoped for many years to place an installation in a temple. (...) Karin works with paint and organic materials on canvas, such as earth and soot. Heloísa also uses earth and ochre tones that mingle with the walls of the chapel."¹⁴

14. Eduardo Veras. *Zero Hora*, Segundo Caderno, 6/3/1994.

She curates the exhibition *Material e imaterial*, inviting the artists Iole de Freitas (Rio de Janeiro) and Lígia d'Andrea (La Paz). The exhibition takes place during July and August at the Universidade Federal Fluminense's art gallery in Niterói.

She holds an individual show at Galeria Camargo Vilaça in São Paulo.

Lambrecht creates the installation *A cruz e a torre*, to be displayed at the Torreão, in Porto Alegre. The name of the work (The Cross and the Tower) was inspired by the artist's experience; upon opening the window at the Torreão, she spotted the tower and bell of the church of Santa Teresinha in the neighborhood of Bom Fim.

In December, she has a solo show at the Fundação Cultural Prometheus Libertus in Florianópolis in the state of Santa Catarina.

1995

In July, she takes part in *Gesamtkunstwerk*, an exhibition presented by Lambrecht at the Porto Alegre Goethe-Institute. This piece was documented by filmmaker Marta Biavaschi, the resulting film being titled *Actio*.

1996

Diálogos, experiências alemãs, presented from August to September at MAM-RJ, features Brazilian artists who studied and worked in Germany. Besides Lambrecht, Alex Flemming, Antônio Dias, Carlito Carvalhosa, Cristina Pape, José Spaniol, and Lígia D'Andrea participate.

In April, Karin Lambrecht's work is acquired by the collection of MAM-SP thanks to a donation by the Rubem Breitman Collection upon the closing of Subdistrito de Arte. Among the pieces donated are paintings by Paulo Monteiro, Daniel Senise, Beatriz Milhazes, Rodrigo Andrade, and others.

The new acquisitions then inspire the MAM-SP exhibition *Arte brasileira contemporânea, doações recentes*, curated by Tadeu Chiarelli.

From December 1996 to January 1997, Lambrecht takes part in the Eventos Especiais project at Galerias Sérgio Milliet and Lygia Clark, Funarte, Rio de Janeiro.

1997

From April 11th to the 23rd, Lambrecht takes part in the second exhibition at the Igreja Martin Luther, with her friend and colleague Heloísa S. da Silva.

From April to May she has a solo show, *Terra*, at the Goethe-Institute in São Paulo, curated by Agnaldo Farias.

Two solo shows mark the month of June: the first at Espaço Cultural 508 Sul, Brasília, and the second at Galeria Modernidade in Novo Hamburgo, Rio Grande do Sul, the latter related to a project being developed for the I Bienal do Mercosul.

In July, the artist takes part in the group show *Experiências e perspectivas* at the Museu Casa dos Contos in Ouro Preto, curated by Cláudia Renault Brasil. This exhibition is linked to the 29th Festival da UFMG, presenting *12 visões contemporâneas* with pieces by Angelo Venosa, Daniel Senise, Hilal Sami Hilal, Paulo Pasta, and others.

The artist contributes to an exhibition at the Bolsa de Arte de Porto Alegre on the occasion of the I Bienal do Mercosul, the highlight being her 1997 work *Morte eu sou teu*.

From November to January 1998, the artist takes part in the VI Bienal Internacional de Pintura in Cuenca, Ecuador, where she presents *Morte eu sou teu*.

1998

From January to February, the artist is invited to display work in the special hall at the exhibition *Vista assim do alto, mais parece um céu no chão*, at the XVI Salão Nacional de Artes Plásticas at MAM-RJ, curated by Agnaldo Farias.

The Arte en la Calle project, a joint initiative between the municipal governments of Porto Alegre and Buenos Aires, organizes a group show featuring artists from both countries.

She sponsors the (des)Orientação Integrada em Pintura workshop, focusing on contemporary art. Its principal aims included updating, experimentation / laboratory, reflection, and production by the students involved, and would continue from 1998 to 2002.

15. Karin Lambrecht, *Revista Remetente*, only number, Sept 3 to Oct 4, Porto Alegre, 1998.

From September to October, she participates in Remetente.¹⁵ Karin recalls:

“The Remetente project was organized by artists, among them Maria Helena Bernardes... after the exhibition, my piece *Organismo*, from 1998, was taken by Karin Stempel to Wiesbaden in Germany for the exhibition *Quase nada*.”

November 1998 sees the inauguration of *Quase nada* at Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden in Germany, where Lambrecht's piece *Organismo* is presented in the catalogue.

2000

In February, Lambrecht is invited by curator Jacques Leenhardt to participate in the exhibition *Messagers de la Terre* at the Espace d'Art Contemporain at Lycée Agricole Xavier Bernard in Rouillé, France.

In May and July, the artist takes part in the XII Mostra de Gravura in Curitiba, curated by Paulo Herkenhoff and Adriano Pedrosa, at the Fundação Cultural de Curitiba.

The segment on Pero Vaz Caminha's Letter in the exhibition *Brasil: 500 anos*, promoted by the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo and curated by Emanuel Araújo, invites Lambrecht to contribute a piece: her materials of choice are earth from the Caraíva and Monte Pascoal regions in Bahia, ram's blood, paper, oil, and gold.

2001

From March to April, *Messagers de la terre* is also set up at the Galerie Ephémère, Montigni-le-Tilleul, Belgium.

In May, Lambrecht takes part in Areal, a project that will inspire the book *Eu e você*.

From April to June, she takes part in the exhibition *O espírito da nossa época – coleção Dulce e João Carlos de Figueiredo Ferraz* at MAM-SP and MAM-RJ, curated by Stella Teixeira de Barros.

In July, she contributes to the project *Inserções, Caderno T, Bravo*, curated by Angélica de Moraes and Paulo Herkenhoff at the Instituto Takano in São Paulo.

From October to December 2001, she participates in the III Bienal do Mercosul, organized by chief curator Fábio Magalhães.

From May to June she takes part in the exhibition *Espelho cego: Seleções de uma coleção contemporânea*, a show curated by Márcia Fontes at the Paço Imperial das Artes in Rio de Janeiro and featuring the collection of Marcantônio Vilaça (1962-2000).

2002

From March to July, she is invited to exhibit her work at the special hall of the XXV São Paulo Art Biennial, sponsored by the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo and curated by Agnaldo Farias. The British magazine *Frieze* highlights Lambrecht's work.

In April she takes part in the exhibition *Violência e paixão: Um vies romântico expressionista na arte contemporânea brasileira* at MAM-RJ and Santander Cultural in Porto Alegre, curated by Ligia Canongia. Lambrecht presents the 2000 piece *Desmembramento*.

The artist is invited to participate in the Ateliê de Gravura de Iberê Camargo, a project sponsored by the Fundação Iberê Camargo in Porto Alegre.

In August she displays work at MARGS in Porto Alegre, in a solo show featuring the work originally presented at the Sala Especial at the XXV Bienal Internacional de São Paulo.

In June she presents work at Valu Oria Galeria de Arte in São Paulo and takes part in the group show *Os caminhos do contemporâneo 1952-2002* at the Paço Imperial in Rio de Janeiro.

2003

From January to March, she takes part in the exhibition *Pele, alma*, at the Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil (CCBB-SP) in São Paulo, curated by Kátia Canton.

The artist contributes to the seminar that will inspire the book *Diálogos com Iberê Camargo*, organized by Sônia Salzstein.

2004

From April to July, she takes part in the group show *Onde está você, Geração 80?* at the Rio de Janeiro CCBB, curated by Marcus Lontra.

2005

Lambrecht takes part in the exhibition *O corpo na arte contemporânea brasileira* from March to May, at Itaú Cultural in São Paulo, curated by Fernando Cocchiarale and Viviane Matesco. An unconventional exhibition, this multidisciplinary event includes activities with visual arts, theater, dance, cinema, video, journalism, and education.

In the segment "Corpos Subterrâneos," Lambrecht presents the 2003 piece *Con el alma en un hilo*.

From September to October, Lambrecht hosts a solo show at Galeria Nara Roesler in São Paulo.

Within Funarte's Rede de Artes Visuais project, she directs three painting workshops: the first in Salvador, at the Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia; the second in Belém, at Espaço Cultural Casa das Onze Janelas; and the third in 2006 in Recife, at the Museu Murillo La Greca, entitled *Prática e discussão em pintura*. The project is directed by Xico Chaves.

Lambrecht is invited by curator Paulo Reis (1960-2011) and Albuquerque Mendes to take part in the exhibition *Lágrimas* at the Alcobaca Monastery in Portugal. The work on display, *Meu corpo Inês*, 2005, has still not been displayed in Brazil, belongs to the artist's collection, and is currently held at the Galeria Graça Brandão in Porto, Portugal.

"Karin Lambrecht presents an installation that fuses action, painting, photography, and drawing, presented on a stage of immemorial emotions. In this work, the artist takes on the tragic meaning of the body, of being in the world, having a heart, liver, kidneys, lungs – essential organs that inhabit the space of life and provide blood and bile, filter and purify the body, the definitive dwelling of the soul in this world (...)."16

16. Paulo Reis & Albuquerque Mendes, *Lágrimas*. Alcobaca: Alcobaca Monastery, May 14 – Jun 11, 2005.

In the work *Meu corpo Inês*, the persistence of the blood and the vestments is undeniable:

"In the execution of these vestments (...) we see, apart from a recollection of the loose nightshirt (often used by the women of the surrounding countryside when in labor), a reference to the parish priest's habit (in the tradition of Martin Luther King), to work aprons, hospital gowns (...). In using these vestments as part of her work, Lambrecht seeks to substitute the body (...). With the body

revealed through these garments and a variety of procedures, the artist's works speak to the new spaces of painting (...)."¹⁷

Karin participates in the project *Gravura em Metal: Matéria e Conceito* at the Iberê Camargo Studio, creating an engraving for the Clube de Colecionadores de Gravura at the MAM-SP in the Ateliê de Gravura de Iberê Camargo.

From August to September, she takes part in the exhibition *Dor, forma, beleza: A representação criadora da experiência traumática* at Estação Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, curated by Olívio Tavares de Araújo.

She contributes to the V Bienal do Mercosul, entitled *Histórias da arte e do espaço*, in the section "A Persistência da Pintura: Núcleo Contemporâneo." The work presented was *Caixa do primeiro Socorro*, from 2005:

"This piece by Karin Lambrecht demands programmatic distance. Now and then, places where the event of the slaughtering of sheep is repeated, an ancestral routine for the man of the countryside, deaf to the pulsions of the primitive rite he is acting out. (...) The work begins by invoking the mystery that permeates the act, a casual one in the region, but which is transformed into a mournful spasm before the perplexed eyes of the urbanite. Like a mythic narrative, it suspends the positivity of the real."¹⁸

2006

Lambrecht takes part in the exhibition *Manobras radicais* at the CCBB in São Paulo, curated by Paulo Herkenhoff.

She also participates in the exhibition *Mercado de carnes de Belém/Pará*, again curated by Paulo Herkenhoff.

From August to September, her work appears in the group show *9 artistas* at Galeria Nara Roesler in São Paulo.

She takes part in the event *Encontro com Arte*, a roundtable on "Razão e Sensibilidade – as fronteiras, os limites, os opostos no mundo contemporâneo" (Reason and Sensibility – Borders, Limits, and Opposites in the Contemporary World) at Espaço Fumoir da Casa Cor in Belo Horizonte, curated by Paulo Reis.

2007

She contributes to the group show *Anos 70: Arte como questão*, curated by Glória Ferreira at the Instituto Tomie Ohtake in São Paulo.

From May to June, she takes part in the exhibition *80, 90 – Modernos, pós-modernos, etc.* at the Instituto Tomie Ohtake in São Paulo, curated by Agnaldo Farias.

May also sees Lambrecht take part in the exhibition *Mulheres artistas – olhares contemporâneos*, also at the Instituto Tomie Ohtake in São Paulo and also curated by Agnaldo Farias.

She participates in the group show *Coleção Itaú contemporâneo: Arte no Brasil, 1981-2006*, at MAC-USP, headed by chief curator Lisbeth Rebollo.

17. Viviane Gil Araújo, "Série 'Registros de Sangue', de Karin Lambrecht". *ESTÚDIO 1: Artistas sobre outras obras*, year 1, n. 1, 2010.

18. Virgínia Aita, "Pintura/Acontecimento" in Paulo Sérgio Duarte (org.), *A persistência da pintura*. Porto Alegre: Fundação Bienal do Mercosul, 2005.

2008

The artist has a solo show at Galeria Nara Roesler in São Paulo, where she presents the piece *No quarto com Camus*:

“Albert Camus came to Porto Alegre nearly fifty years ago, and this visit is now revisited (...) in an exhibition reliving the brief period spent by the essayist in the city. The artist has produced an installation where time – the essential material shaping Existentialism – also shapes the work of art. The environment is a small bedroom – perhaps the place where the writer jotted down a few lines – in the form of a cross knocked to the ground, where the center is occupied by a bed and a table (...) But it also recreates the intense, metaphysical blue of the skies of Giotto, the seascapes of Cézanne and Matisse, the infinity of Yves Klein, all of them Mediterraneans like Camus. The artist mixes the writer’s factual existence with the existential meaning of his work, evoking the sky complicit in Meursault’s act (*The Stranger*) or even Camus’ childhood in far-off Algiers, with a projection on the wall.”¹⁹

19. Paulo Reis, Karin Lambrecht: *Pintura, desenho e anotação*. São Paulo: Galeria Nara Roesler, Jun. 2008.

From December 2008 to March 2009, the artist participates in the exhibition *Lugares desdobrados*, alongside Elaine Tedesco and Lucia Koch, at the Fundação Iberê Camargo.

Karin Lambrecht receives two Prêmios Açorianos de Artes Plásticas (Azorean Prizes in Visual Arts): she is recognized in “Painting” and “Best Collective Exhibition” for her work in the exhibition *Lugares desdobrados* at the Fundação Iberê Camargo, in 2008.

2009

She presents work at the group show *Metafísica do belo* at Galeria Nara Roesler in São Paulo.

In November, she designs the event “Órbitas dos Anos 80: Exposição e Seminário – Memória e Atualidade.” A strong reference for this project was three exhibitions held at the Goethe-Institute in Porto Alegre: *Gesamtkunstwerk* (from 17th Aug. to 16th Sept., 1995), *Processos de Trabalho e Quartado* (13rd Sept. to 5th Oct., 1990).

She takes part in the group show *Dentro do traço*, that brought together a selection of artists for the project “Artista convidado no atelier de gravura de Iberê Camargo”. In that project, guest artists used the equipment of the studio to create a series of prints and donated part of the works for the Iberê Camargo Foundation, in Porto Alegre.

She also takes part in the XII Leilão de Pratos para a Arte (Plate Auction for Art) hosted by the Associação Cultural de Amigos do Museu Lasar Segall, in São Paulo.

2010

From September to November, Lambrecht takes part in the group show *Ponto de equilíbrio* at the Instituto Tomie Ohtake in São Paulo.

From October to November, the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo and the state government present the group show *Arte e política: Outros olhares* at the Museu de Arte de Ribeirão Preto, MARP, curated by Regina Teixeira de Barros.

She participates in the exhibition *Pintura: Da matéria a representação* at the Fundação Vera Chaves Barcelos and presents the painting *Rumo ao sol*, 1983, first exhibited at the Goethe-Institute in Porto Alegre.

2012

Lambrecht's study group marks the tenth anniversary of studying without advising, having produced studies of Mira Schendel, Clarice Lispector, Merleau-Ponty, Proust, Lygia Clark, and José Resende, among others. Among the group are Lambrecht's friends Virginia Aita, Sandra Ling, and Jane Tucci.

From June to July 2012, Karin Lambrecht presents work in São Paulo, at Galeria Nara Roesler, in the exhibition "Cores, Palavras e Cruzes" curated by Glória Ferreira.

CHRONOLOGY IMAGES SUBTITLES

1. Karin's paternal grandfather working with a bed of roses at the nursing home in Eberswalde, East Berlin, 1973.
2. Correspondence sent by paternal grandparents to Karin's father, Egon Lambrecht. On the stamp, an image of Karl Marx.
3. Ida Haessler (grandmother), Hilda Haessler (mother), Arthur Haessler (uncle), and Alfredo Haessler (grandfather), at the old family house in the neighborhood of Higienópolis, Porto Alegre, RS, December 1934.
4. Karin Lambrecht, Heloísa S. da Silva and Maria Helena Salle, Argentina, 1977.
5. Glaura M. Pereira, Rosângela de Carvalho Ferreira, Karin Lambrecht, and Izabel Cristina de A. Passo, Ouro Preto, MG, 1976.
6. Release of the first edition of the album *Relinguagem*, Porto Alegre, RS, 1978.
7. Egon Lambrecht, 1927-79.
8. Ruins from World War II at the HDK, Berlin, 1980.
9. Michael Chapman and Jill Drower, London, 1968.
10. Taking part in the birth of Yole Cuica Kamaiura Lambrecht Chapman, 1982, mail art.
11. Karin Lambrecht. *Caminho do rio* (The River's Path), 1982, painting-object, East Berlin.
12. Dione Veiga Vieira at the workshop "Exercícios em Pintura" (Exercises in Painting), garden at the manor house in Porto Alegre, 1983.
13. Karin Lambrecht. *O animal é mais do que vemos*, 1983, billboard, 280 x 870 cm, São Paulo.
14. Éliada Tessler, Karin Lambrecht, Salvio Daré (1963-93), Moacir Chotguis, (back) Herbert Bender, Gisela Waetge, and Ricardo Trigo. In the background, a collective painting exercise. A Sala, Porto Alegre, 1984.
15. Poster for the exhibition *A fertilidade de Anita*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Curitiba, 1985.
16. Karin Lambrecht. *Resta pensar em seu vagar e seu encontro*, 1985, synthetic enamel and gouache on canvas, 170 x 315 cm, XVIII São Paulo Art Biennial.
17. Karin and Yole in front of Jonathan Borovsky's work *Running Man*, painted on the Berlin Wall for the exhibition *Zeitgeist* (1982), 1986.
18. Note that Louise Bourgeois handed Karin Lambrecht to arrange a meeting at her house, New York, 1986.
19. Karin Lambrecht. *Quo Vadis* (detail), 1986, painting; pigments in acrylic emulsion on canvas with cut-outs and folds and a clock of scrap iron, APP. 200 x 300 cm, made at the Millay Colony for the Arts and exhibited at the Petrus Kirche in Berlin (work destroyed).
20. Karin Lambrecht. *A garganta*, 1987, painting; pigments in acrylic emulsion and synthetic enamel, and cut-outs in scrap iron on canvas, 240 x 250 cm, private collection.
21. Karin Lambrecht and Liliana Porter. Untitled, 1987, presented at Project/Conexus, collection of the artist.
- a. Karin Lambrecht. *Esther or Esther Enters in the Inner Courtyard of the King's House*, 1987, XIX São Paulo Art Biennial, 1987.
22. Workshop with students at painting studio in Vitória, ES.
23. Karin Lambrecht. *Marco Polo*, 1991, painting-object; table, canvas, little boat, basin, plaster, and pigments in acrylic emulsion on canvas, 70 x 170 x 170 cm, IV Bienal de Havana, 1991.
24. Karin Lambrecht. *O destino: Muss es sein – Es muss sein*, 1986, painting; pigments in acrylic emulsion on canvas with cut-out objects and folds in scrap iron, 280 x 200 cm. Encontro com a pintura brasileira, Kassel, Germany, 1988.
25. Pedro Romero, Kazuo Katase, Karin Lambrecht, Pere Nogueira, Julião Sarmento, Miguel Rio Branco, Marina Abramovic, and Margalho, Marajó Island, PA, 1992.
26. Karin working in the boat garage at the Clube do Remo, Belém, PA.
27. Karin, Caxiuana Park, PA, 1992. (photo by Miguel Rio Branco).
28. *SPLASH* (detail), 1992, pigment, earth, rosebush, metal, and rain on canvas, 290 x 220 cm, Goethe Institute, Porto Alegre, RS, col. Justo Werlang.
29. "Arte brasileira e contemporânea": cycle at Galeria de Arte da Casa de Cultura Mário Quintana, Porto Alegre, RS, 1994.
30. Karin Lambrecht. *Forma deitada* (Reclining Form), 1996, painting, earth, iron oxide, charcoal and dry pastel on canvas, cut-outs and two objects, double cross with dried roses, wheat, and broken glass, 190 x 770 cm. *Pintura e desenho: Projetos especiais Funarte*, Rio de Janeiro, 1996, collection of the artist.
31. Karin Lambrecht. *Morte eu sou teu* (Death, I Am Yours), 1997, ram's blood on towels and drawings, 170 x 171 x 15 cm, Justo Werlang Collection.
32. Karin Lambrecht. *Terra* (detail), 1997, earth stains and rips in cotton cloth, 200 x 1200 cm, Goethe Institute, São Paulo.
33. Karin Lambrecht. Untitled, 1998, urban intervention for "Arte en la calle" project, Buenos Aires.

34. Karin Lambrecht. *Organismo*, 1988. *Remetente* (Sender), Porto Alegre, rs.
35. Karin Lambrecht. Untitled, 1988, study for *Organismo*, collection of the artist.
36. Karin Lambrecht. *Alvo*, 1999, ram's blood on textile, APF. 300 cm high; base 150 × 300 cm. *Messagers de la terre*, Rur'Art, Espace d'Art Contemporain, Lycée Agricole Xavier Bernard, Rouillé, France.
37. Karin Lambrecht. *Con el alma en un hilo* (With Her Soul in a String), 2003.
38. Karin Lambrecht. *Con el alma en un hilo* (With Her Soul in a String), 2003.
39. Karin Lambrecht. *Con el alma en un hilo* (With Her Soul in a String), 2003.
40. Karin Lambrecht. Untitled, 2002, engraving, aquatint, etching, drypoint, 60 × 60 cm, archive of Galeria Nara Roesler, 58/60.
41. Karin Lambrecht. Untitled, 1985, rusted sheet, stained canvas and wood, 102 × 100 × 6 cm, Miguel Chaia Collection.
42. Solo show, Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo, 2005.
43. Karin Lambrecht. *Fragmentos amorfos* (Amorphous Fragments), 2006, earth, oil, chalk, linen, synthetic felt, copper wire, and fasteners on canvas, 183.5 × 192.5 cm, archive of Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, donated by Deutsche Bank.
44. *Exhibition 80/90 Modernos, pós-modernos, etc...*, 2007, works by Nuno Ramos, Ernesto Neto, and (on the ground), Karin Lambrecht. São Paulo.
45. Karin working to set up the piece *Pai*, Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre, 2008.
46. Karin with guide Shalon Klieman and Dr. Maria Cristina Schneider, Way of the Cross, Jerusalem, Israel, 2008.
47. Drawing by friend and collector Justo Werlang for Karin Lambrecht's exhibition room, Porto Alegre, 2010.
48. Same as il. 47.
49. *Lichthaus* (House of Light), 2009. *Órbitas dos anos 80: Memória e atualidade*, Goethe Institute, Porto Alegre, 2009.
50. *Cores, palavras, e cruces* (Colors, Words, and Crosses), 2012, Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo.

CRITICAL ESSAYS

ESTHER ENTERS INTO THE PATIO OF THE KING	Michael Chapman	60
"PA NAM PA NAM" OR THE END OF PAINTING	Christel Fricke	61
KARIN LAMBRECHT AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE JUNGLE	Paulo Herkenhoff	69
THE BODY, THE HAND, THE VESTIGE ON THE WORK <i>DEATH I AM THINE</i> , BY KARIN LAMBRECHT	Icleia Borsa Cattani	72
AND SO ON ON AN INSTALLATION BY KARIN LAMBRECHT	Jacques Leenhardt	78
THE NAMES AND THE WORKS	Reynaldo Roels Jr.	81

The scenario of objects and paintings that Karin Lambrecht is showing in this years São Paulo Art Biennial is derived from the *Book of Esther* in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible. In fact one moment of the story, the point at which Esther enters into the inner patio of the king. If one takes the trouble to read the book of Esther, this moment is a focal point in the story which is told there. It is a dramatic and emotional moment for Esther, because according to the custom of the court of the king, anyone who entered into his presence without permission would either be put to death if the king was displeased, or would be handed a golden sceptre, which meant that their life had been spared. Esther took this risk in an attempt to save her people, the Jewish, who living in this kingdom were being threatened by death by one of the king's favorites, a certain Hamá, who feeling himself slighted by Mardoqueu, a Jew, who would not bow down before Hamá as was the custom, decided to revenge himself upon the whole Jewish race and with the kings complacency, he market a day on which Jews wherever they may live would be put to death, including their children.

Esthers dilemma: The dilemma in which Esther found herself was between sacrificing her people and risking personal doom, in an attempt to save them. She knew not the outcome as she entered. It is this moment, this dilemma with which Karin is working with, in an expansive and in an intimate way. She is not elaborating on a historical moment, but rather is working with the situation in which Esther was in, the trepidation that she felt about what awaits her and her people and the overriding needed to save her world. I think she is using this tale as metaphor for something much greater and more immediate to us today.

Within her scenario there are many positions, images, outlets and inlets on which one can meditate. The idea arises in my mind of a chess situation, a plastic diagram of a world, of figures, of people, of relationships. A red mystic pervades the arena, "der Ort des Geschehens" (o lugar do acontecimento). The photo of a mixed blooded "Bugri" Indian boy, fresh and innocent behind a rust shattered bowl. Behind figures and shrines, a vast world painted on canvas, vast nor only in terms of its size as a painting, but vast in terms of its associations for me with the vastness of the human being, physical and spiritual, within the context of this world.

The transience of the beautiful in general and of fine arts in particular is often spoken of. Art and the beautiful, however, have demonstrated considerable persistence as objects of philosophical considerations and as the basis of theories. These phenomena have not, until now, affirmed themselves successfully against declarations that they have come to their end. From whence comes the strength to survive? Not least, of course, from the fact that both phenomena take on a variety of forms. How many things may be considered beautiful by different people? And how many things may be considered works of art? In relation to the various criteria in play, what predominates is an obvious lack of clarity. What is beautiful? What is a work of art? Aesthetic philosophy tries its best to answer these questions. In truth, however, this discipline has a modest existence at best. We can evidently deal quite well with the multiplicity of criteria for beauty and art, and with the lack of clarity of these criteria. This plurality and lack of clarity may even have an important social function. When it comes to questions of beauty or art, we are more inclined to be tolerant than when dealing with truth or justice. This aesthetic tolerance has a flip side: the indifference with which we face experiences in terms of formulating intersubjective standards for judging beauty (understood in the sense of artistic quality) or art, as well in backing them up. Aesthetic philosophy is equally thankless. If we do not agree with others in terms of the concept of beauty, or in considering a given thing a work of art, we happily appeal to our personal, subjective tastes. We do not wish to impose these tastes on others. We do not seek a consensus as a starting-point, but neither will we tolerate any interference in matters of our personal tastes. As I see it, this is specifically a matter of judging what is a work of art and, relatedly, a matter of criteria for aesthetic, artistic quality. Not merely when it comes to truth or justice, but also when it comes to art, to the artistic quality of a work, we ought to pose ourselves the Kantian challenge: "Have the courage to use your own reason."¹ In our aesthetic judgment of works, we ought not to base ourselves on our own personal taste, nor should we uncritically accept what so-called trendsetters tell us that we should esteem in terms of art. Any ban, or self-imposed ban, flies in the face of the aesthetic understanding of an object as a work of art. Understanding art is above all a question of perception through the senses, and through one's reason; feelings and perceptions play only a secondary role in the matter. But an understanding of art does not dismiss aesthetic tolerance. On the contrary: aesthetic tolerance reveals itself in one's acceptance to undertake an aesthetic reflection on an object; when one shies from the effort of reflection, there lies the threat of aesthetic indifference.

In the autumn of 1999, I visited an exhibition in the city of Porto Alegre, in the south of Brazil, where contemporary southern Brazilian art was being displayed.² I was accompanied by a Brazilian student of philosophy and art theory. Most of the

1. Immanuel Kant, "Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?", in *Kant's Werke*, Bd. VIII, Akademieausgabe, Berlin 1912, S. 33.

2. Exhibition: "Artistas Convidados 1999" Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Casa de Cultura Mario Quintana, Galeria Sotero Cosme, Porto Alegre, RS, Brasil, 11/5/1999 – 1/30/2000.

work on display was, to judge from its exterior appearance, made up of examples of conventional genres: paintings and drawings, mid-sized rectangles, hung on the walls. My companion told me about the artists who had created these works, whom she knew quite a lot about. In one corner of the exhibition room, there was a huge mixture of a variety of objects, including things similar to paintings, which were leaning up against or hung from the wall.

My companion wanted to pass by the corner without looking. She said she didn't like these kinds of artworks, that she thought were worthless. She did not wish to undertake an aesthetic reflection on these objects, but she admitted that they had the status of a work of art. What kind of artwork, in her opinion? We give this type of artwork the label of "installations." Installations are works that do not belong to any of the traditional genres of art, and which are often difficult to preserve and transform into museum artifacts. But what makes an installation a work of art? First, my companion had to fall back on her personal taste. She did not attempt to examine the installation to verify its status as art and try to understand it aesthetically as a work of art. If she let this arrangement of objects pass as a work



of art, it was only due to trust in art as an institution. She knew the artist who had arranged these objects in such a way; she knew that this artist had studied in a known art academy, one recognized in the Brazilian artistic scene and beyond.

Who has not felt the sensation of admiration and uncertainty that comes over a person upon beholding the products of contemporary "art"? How may we know if something is a work of art? Whether an object is or is not a work of art can no longer be seen simply by its external characteristics, just as one cannot easily know if it belongs to a given genre of objects. This means that on first glance we cannot

judge whether something is a work of art or not. To decide whether an object is a work of art or not, we must make it the object of our aesthetic reflection. Here, we should operate under the hypothesis that it is a work of art. This hypothesis may be confirmed or denied during the process of the aesthetic reflection. The confirmation of this hypothesis, in the case of a concrete reflection on a work of art, is much easier than negation; and the hypothesis can never be definitively negated. We have no scale to hold the object up to, as if measuring it with a ruler, to test whether it is a work of art or not.

Reflecting aesthetically on a work of art means trying to understand this object as a free sign, a sign from a system that is still not codified, whose appearance gives us indications of its meaning. The success of this reflection does not depend solely on the given object, its nature and its exterior, but also, and, above all, it depends on us, the subjects of the aesthetic reflection. Aesthetic reflection and understanding of art demand, as with any other reflection, an effort from us – and in this respect, talk of the pleasure of art is deceptive. The pleasure of art is a question of exaggerated taste; and when it comes to understanding art, we should not seek pleasure in exaggerated taste. What does it mean to understand something as a free sign, whose appearance gives us indications of its meaning? I detailed the philosophical response to this question elsewhere.³ Here I will try to demonstrate what I mean by aesthetic reflection, using an example.

Let us return, then, to the mixture of objects in that gallery in Porto Alegre. The institutional setting allows us to hazard the hypothesis that this is a work of art. Now, the form of a work of art should give indications of its meaning as a free sign. How should we understand it? Works of art are, in most cases, artifacts. They are artifacts that have been shaped and produced for a given use, similar in the fact that their appearance gives indications about their functional use. Think of a hammer, for example, or a chair; these are artifacts that were shaped and produced for a given use, and whose appearance allows us to draw conclusions about their functional use. This conclusion is in no means incorrect. But the function for which a work of art was created is not a concrete, determined use, limited to a determined, concrete application (such as hammering or sitting), and rather a simple function as a sign, comparable to the function of a word or a picture.

The best way to study the form of something is to describe it in precise terms. And this is what I did with my companion in Porto Alegre. What are we seeing here, really? Let us start in the middle of the space where the work is installed, in a corner: a piece of cloth is hanging, tied so as to form a sort of bag. The cloth was certainly light grey at one point, but now is very dirty.

There is something inside this bag, but we cannot see it. In exchange, the bag is inscribed: “Form/Licht” (Form/Light). But how can there be form or light in a bag? Obviously not in the same way as a bag might hold flour or potatoes. This was very strange, and my companion considered her original lack of interest justified. But no work of art reveals itself to a fleeting glance. Under the bag, on the ground, there is a rolled-up piece of copper, a kind of rod narrowing at one end, the shape of which recalled a torch or a telescope. Lying on top of it, on the right corner, is a spade with a short, broken wooden handle, shoved diagonally into a pile of dry earth. On this earth are a few dry seeds and dry leaves. To the side, a small plant grows. Between the “bag” and the pile of earth is hanging a massive ball of copper

3. See: Christel Fricke, *Zeichenprozess und ästhetische Erfahrung*, München 2001 (Fink Verlag).

wire, which individual wires come out of, linking this center to the other parts of the installation.

One of these wires leads to the second piece of cloth in this installation. It is attached to the wall to the right, back, hanging from a horizontal beam of wood. This is a coarse, dark grey piece of cloth, a piece of burlap or an old blanket. In the middle, the word "Natur" (Nature) has been written with a piece of charcoal, surrounded by a black border. On the cloth one can see other marks in charcoal that do not form letters, making the piece look dirty. Below the word there is an iron hook, covered with rust and piercing the cloth; and another one, diagonally below it.

Up against the same wall, farther to the left, lean sheets of glass or glass frames. Behind one of them, a piece of cloth has been hung with a smear of honey that has run, and a few golden stains, and one side there are two drawings that, upon closer examination, are plans for the installation.

On the left wall there is a glass frame with a small photo of a similar installation, some elements of which have evidently been reused for the current exhibition, and a plan for this previous installation.

My companion and I took refuge for the first time in front of a small plaque on the right-hand wall. It read:

Karin Lambrecht, "Pa Nam Pa Nam," 1999.

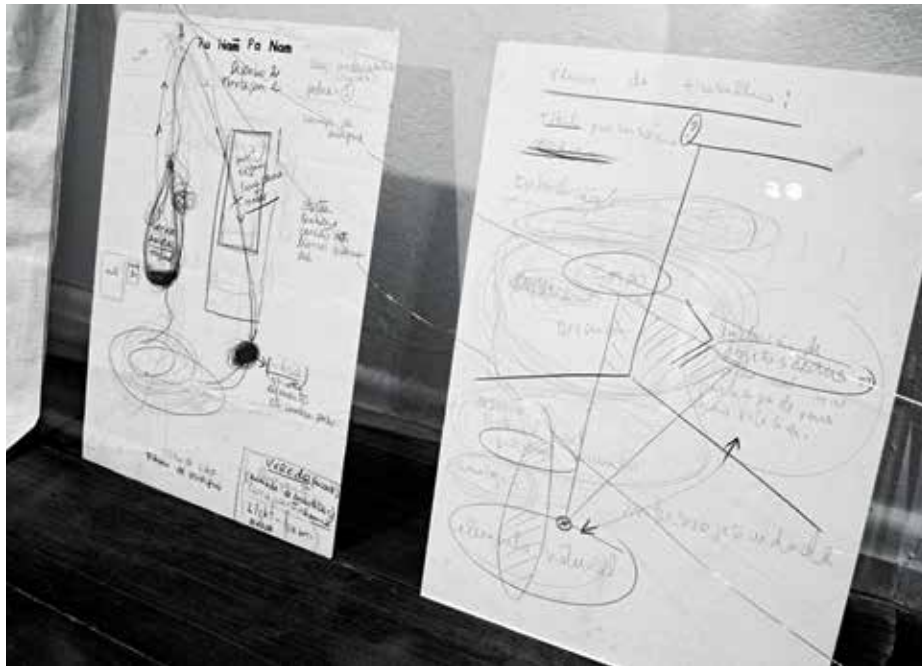
"Karin Lambrecht," that's a German name. Many people who live in the south of Brazil are descendants of German immigrants, and have German names. Is it chance that the letters that we read form German words? Perhaps not. My companion knows that Karin Lambrecht speaks German fluently, studied in Germany at the *Hochschule der Künste*, the art school, in Berlin, and has worked extensively with Joseph Beuys. But what about the strange title she has given her work? A Brazilian would have to consult a dictionary to understand the German words "Natur," "Licht," and "Form" (Nature, Light, and Form) as such. And we Germans – and perhaps some Brazilians as well – would have to consult a dictionary to understand the title of the installation. "Pa Nam Pa Nam" is a word in the language of the Indians who live in the Brazilian region called the "Cerrado," to the east of the capital, Brasília: it means the equivalent of "flight of a large group of butterflies."

With this description, we start to glimpse the potential for an aesthetic sign in these arrangements of objects.

But what is the meaning represented by these signs? It is not unequivocal. We do not ask what unequivocal message the artist wished to convey with this work. If this were an unequivocal message, this installation would certainly not be an appropriate medium for its transmission. It would have been better for her to write a text and make copies of it available for people to take it with them, or publish the text directly in a newspaper or on the Internet. As observers of this work, we should try to read that which we see and describe as clues to follow. Here we should not expect these clues to take us in a completely unequivocal direction; first we have to deal with a labyrinth of clues.

Let us begin again in the middle, this time with the floor.

Seeds, a little plant, dried leaves, distributed across the ground: these are the various conditions in which the life and death of the plant manifests itself, which follow one another in time, not linearly, but rather in circular form. Inherent in every beginning is an end, but every end also contains a beginning. Time and



transience, life and death, the documentation of past conditions in the visible present, remembrances – these might be themes of Karin Lambrecht's installation. Another theme, incorporated through the spade shoved into the soil, seems to be the relationship linking nature and culture, culture understood as the human work that leaves its mark on nature, but which is also subject to natural transience – after all, the spade with its broken handle bears the signs of long use. In fact, the artist had already used the spade in another installation, of which nothing had been left except the spade itself.

Now, what might be the purpose of the coarse piece of cloth hanging back there on the wall?

Could it be that what is hanging here is a doorway leading out of a room, in the center of which lies an extinguished bonfire? Are these remnants of an archaic civilization? This might fit with the title, taken from the language of a people whose way of life still manifests archaic characteristics. But doesn't the piece of coarse cloth hanging from the beam also recall the cross to which Christ was nailed? The rusty nails might mark the crucified man's wounds, then. From this perspective, the piece of cloth might also be seen as a shroud, filthy with streaks of charcoal and traces of dried blood. Marks of a destructive event that, for Christians, also symbolizes the promise of resurrection after death. Christian thinking about salvation has an example in nature, in which death does not mean a final ending, but the transition to another condition, from which new life begins to grow.

But the inscription is not "*Inri*," but "Nature." This is not the Kingdom of the Jews, this is the kingdom of nature.

The inscription "Nature," on the coarse canvas, takes us back to the words "Form/Light" on the cloth hung from the ceiling, tied in the middle like a dirty bag.

This cloth also displays the marks of an event, transmitted in the form of signs of something. "Light" and/or Color and "Form" – are these not the mediums with which painting worked for centuries? Cloth was often a surface for painting.

Paints were placed on the cloth. In a certain sense, this kind of work in traditional painting is a dirty piece of cloth. But what distinguishes a dirty piece of cloth from a work of painting? Is this nothing more than a version of the question, "What is a work of art?", specifically designed for the visual arts? What distinguishes a work of art from another object that is not a work of art, but is similar to the work of art in its external properties – which are so similar at times that they may be confused with one another? Arthur Danto defined this form of the question of what constituted a work of art, and here he may be referring to, above all, Marcel Duchamp, who had posed the question in spectacular form with his *readymades*.⁴

Back to painting and its history, which we have discovered as a theme of this installation by Karin Lambrecht. What did painters paint? Many different things. Work with real objects and the way we see them is just one theme in painting, among many others. But when a painting tackles this subject, it may have a documentary function, being a sign that may remind us of a given event, but possibly also foreground its character as a sign. Karin Lambrecht also belongs to this tradition in painting, with her work "Pa Nam Pa Nam."

This interpretive approach to the work was confirmed when I had the opportunity to ask the artist about the story of its creation. At first she had no specific theme in mind, nothing in particular that she wanted to communicate to the men and women who saw her work. Before all that came an invitation to participate in an exhibition in a town on the outskirts of Brasília. The idea was that the invited artists would come visit the city and create a piece on the spot for the exhibition. Karin Lambrecht accepted the invitation and traveled to the Cerrado. She set out from the town on an excursion through the surrounding nature, accompanied by friends. Much like an impressionist painter generally takes his canvas with him out into nature, she took two pieces of cloth – both large pieces, which are now seen in the installation. She tied one of the pieces into a sort of bag to collect everything that drew her attention during the trip: postcards, honey, and sap of the jatobá, a tree that grows in the region. The bag grew heavier and she grew increasingly tired over the course of the day, finally dragging the full bag behind her as she went. She rubbed the other cloth on the trunks of the trees, which were still covered in soot from a recent forest fire, but which were still standing. Much like an impressionist painter seeks out a subject, she had sought something in this arid, dry landscape that might apply and/or register as a sign on the cloth she had brought to document her impressions of the region. But in doing so she was not guided by the visual aspect of the landscape, by its "light" and "form," but by the material she found there, by "nature" (sooty tree-trunks, jatobá sap, honey) and civilization (postcards).

A piece of cloth upon which are inscribed marks documenting the experiences of a trip, and recalling it – if we understand a painting as something that corresponds to this description, why can we not also understand Karin Lambrecht's installation as a work of painting? This understanding is made even clearer by the fact that she is not the first, nor the only person to attempt to cross the boundaries of the traditional artistic genre of "Painting" in her work. Think of the cubists, for example, who left the naked surface as a method of pictorial expression and began to glue three-dimensional objects, pieces of wood or paper, onto their canvases, or of a painter such as Antoni Tàpies, who used sand and earth as materials to give shape to the surfaces of his paintings – to name just a few.

4. See: Arthur Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, Cambridge, Mass./London, 1983.

Joseph Beuys' work should also be recalled here, especially his technique with the iconography of materials. In the picture frames placed to the left on the back wall, we may find especially clear echoes of Beuys' work, and of materials he used in his pieces. The piece of cloth is stained with honey, and Beuys often worked with honey as a natural material.

Karin Lambrecht uses honey as a kind of paint. She poured honey on the piece of cloth and then hung it so that the honey would sink into it. Then she (like the Byzantine painters of the Virgin Mary) finished off the whole with applications of gold, exemplifying and underlying the precious nature of natural materials, hung the cloth behind a sheet of glass and thus displayed it as a painting. This image merely shows precious natural materials, and their applicability to give shape to a surface. But the planes of this installation also recall the canvases/panels of Joseph Beuys, on which he sketched out these cosmic orders.

And so a kind of reading is produced of this installation, as a somewhat different work of painting, as a work that foregrounds painting and its function as a sign, and thus displays it as a center of natural forces. What meaning may be given, to continue this beginning of an interpretation, to the copper pieces in the installation? Copper wires are used to transmit electricity. This function is clearly being cited. But beyond that, the copper pieces have their own visual appeal.

Among all the opaque and blunt materials in this installation, they stand out and lend it a decorative character. However, this decorative aspect cannot be an end in itself, but must signify yet another traditional dimension of painting as an artistic genre: many traditional works of painting also have decorative qualities – if they did not, they might never have found buyers.

This is merely one proposal for an aesthetic reflection on "Pa Nam Pa Nam," which attempts to make this installation by Karin Lambrecht understood as a work of art, as a free sign, whose appearance represents its meaning. This by no means excludes other ideas for a conclusive interpretation of the work. The men and women who see the installation certainly have their own interpretations, and they cannot consult any encyclopedia to find the meaning of this complex artistic sign. To begin to develop an interpretation, one needs certain cultural competence when it comes to cultural remembrances, cultural memory, without which we would have difficulty in seeing signs in the objects around us. The process of aesthetic reflection is not a matter of subjective, arbitrary associations to an object, but a way of discovering the form of this object as the corporeal shape of a meaning.

The object's form contains its potential as an artistic sign. This is true of all objects, and we may correspondingly transform any object into the subject of an aesthetic reflection. The more aspects of the form of an object may be understood as signs representing meanings, in the process of an aesthetic reflection, the more unified and complex are these various meanings, and the more artistic, the more aesthetically successful this object seems, the less we have the impression of dealing with a piece of dirty cloth, a dirty wall, or an arbitrary jumble of objects, such as we might find in a storeroom of old things. In this sense, the piece "Pa Nam Pa Nam" by Karin Lambrecht is a work of art, a work of considerable artistic and aesthetic quality.

Therefore, there are still works of art of considerable artistic quality – though the end of *artworks* is so often invoked, it appears to have changed very little. The distinction between works of art and objects without an artistic status has not

become obsolete. However, art has seen a liberation in relation to traditional artistic genres. If Arthur Danto speaks of the “end of art,” he is thinking, above all, of the end of an art production confined to the traditional genres of art. This end is impressively documented in Karin Lambrecht’s work “Pa Nam Pa Nam,” which, generally speaking, wishes to be read as a work of painting. Besides this, in this work we can glimpse another modification within Art as an institution, which is of considerable significance for the institution itself, as for the continuation of its history: “Pa Nam Pa Nam” is patently unfit for conservation and museologizing: the work has never left the exhibition in Porto Alegre and was not created to last longer. In this sense, it truly represents transience, which it foregrounds as a sign in multiple ways. Outside the traditional artistic genres, there appear many works that are not preserved for an interested public, and thus will not be available as marks in cultural memory. These works may still relate to traditional genres, and thematize them, but they do not carry on their history in a traditional form, because they admit their own transience. In this sense as well, as Hans Belting wrote, the history of art, understood as the history of development within the traditional artistic genres, is coming to an end.⁵

In eras marked by artistic renovations of this sort, through which the traditional forms of art and their history come to their end, more than ever we are called to exercise aesthetic tolerance. When it comes to art, we ought to make an effort to undertake reflection, not relying on our personal tastes. There is always the lingering suspicion that our taste has a very traditional bent, and takes on new developments in art with a lack of interest, and indifferent.

A tranContribution to the 4th Ulmer Humboldt-Colloquium, on “The Beautiful – Aesthetics as Science?”

5. See: Hans Betting, *Das Ende der Kunstgeschichte*. Eine Revision nach zehn Jahren, München 1995 (Beck).

In κL's remade jungle there live dragons, jaguars, souls, *antas*, and Anitas (is the *anta* an Anita that's lost its it?).

Wild wilderness, from another sort of Flemish tropics by Post
from another family of the neoclassical woods of Debret
from another order of the Romantic landscapes of Rugendas

"Grimm's first lesson to his students was to point the way to the forest (...). There, not in postcards and academic engravings, there was the secret of nature. (...) He could not understand how, faced with the tropics, with such suggestive scenarios, disciples could learn to paint trees, jungles, and water, without atmospheric light."

(Ronald de Carvalho, "Estudos Brasileiros.")

Dragon is the heat of hot red (erupting volcano?)
of the scaly surface (erupting skin?)
of the energetic brushstroke (larva)
of the canvas-skin (κL)

"Deep in the virgin forest Macunaíma was born, the hero of our people. He was jet-black and son of the fear of the night."

(Mário de Andrade, *Macunaíma*)

Method – painting is turning the canvas upside-down. Movement from left to right, and vice-versa. Writing from top to bottom.

Pollock (and what else?). Or just the opposite.

Ñe'e níti to?¹ Where's the clearing? Mahisígë Wihsisami!²

Paintings: wild fruits. Yuhkë – dëhkai pitise!³ Deep in the virgin forest art is born...

1. What's all this?
2. If you don't know, you'll get it wrong!
3. The fruits are sweet.
4. I have tired of running, say the Tukanos of Amazonia.

"Anteaters' tracks," brushstrokes of κL's artist. Trail in the forest. Pieces in the gaze. Fingerprints on your eye. Places where I walked. I step by your step. O'mã ijuhüü waása⁴. Step through time.

"Jiguê didn't suspect a thing and started braiding a cord with curauá fibers. He'd found fresh tapir tracks and wanted to catch the critter in a trap."

(Mário de Andrade, *Macunaíma*)

Karin Lambrecht writing painting

painting writing
 Gesture and time, not resignedly tachiste,
 but within a structure of fields, layer, colors
 that overlap
 accumulate
 condense

KL condenses her time in the structure (the construction of one who was once geometric and still wishes to organize matter, color, gesture, emotions) of this wild order.

Painting is to paint

paint the gesture, not as a representation
 but to capture its energy
 its movement
 its moment

"At first the eye cannot make out clear forms in the immense jungle, only thick masses, outlines of towers, battlements, trenches, vaults, pyramids, columns of green (...). Then, bit by bit, from surprise to surprise, it glimpses the portentous variety of contours, dimensions, colors; - brutal or whimsical configurations, fantastical or grotesque, playful or threatening."

(Afonso Celso, A Floresta Virgem in "Porque me ufano de meu País").

Seeing is knowing

recognizing the path of the hand-brush or
 The turns of the canvas
 knowing that one cannot always recognize the field or
 that one needs a dog for the woods or

(so as not to get stuck the woods with no dog) or
 (more lost than a blind man in a shootout).

Decipher me or I will devour you. Seeing is knowing. To survive, one must understand the devourer of souls. Could this be the *caapora*?

KL: "In RGS engravings were seen as masculine and painting was seen as feminine."

Brush, a gaucho scrawl

Traditionally RGS
 Density Iberê, daughter of Camargo
 blazes her path
 affirms her cultural medium

"1958 Porto Alegre, winter, rain, so much water, a soul wetted by the penetrating humidity, and in this suffocating blockade I saw, for the first time, the future."

(Laura Ida Rambroso, visionary antecedent)

In Brazil, one cannot be a young artist without being “accused” of influences (preferably foreign ones...). *Jungle!*

KL tachiste, neo-expressionist, transvanguard. Who is KL after this? This is not reforestation, the art of lucratively organizing nature. The word will never dominate art. Who managed to imprison the Geração 80 in a concept? This is a job for Tarzan, king of the jungle!

“(...) Indeed, in the Brazilian forest we are faced with masterworks of architecture, sculpture, music, painting, and, above all, of divine poetry.”

(Afonso Celso – op. cit.)

KL: “When I consider a piece almost finished, I go back to charcoal to shake the sensation of a ready-made thing.”

Jungle – experience of the precarious (chassis, painturation, charcoal writing). Jungle without easy limits. This jungle is not in Africa, with its rectilinear borders determined a century ago by the Treaty of Berlin, the city where KL studied. The frame is not straight (always) and the jungle beings inhabit the whole surface of the work of the reconstructed forest. Some have shape in space. Three-dimensionality. The cuts and torsions in the canvas are not born of the obvious, nor of the gratuitous. They are the results of precariousness, limits of the necessary, margins of the instigating, edges of the essential.

Published in Solo show. Museu de Arte Contemporânea do Paraná, Sala Bandeirante, 1985.

A work of art is on the order of presentation¹ and not representation. The artist's body may be present in it through vestiges that mark its passage, but it will also be present in the whole close battle, because of all the clashes that constitute the initiation of the work. And the (artist's) hand, vehicle, instrument, is one of its most frequently presented parts.

In Karin Lambrecht's painting *Death I am thine*,² the body and the hand, in particular, are present in several ways. This work is the first of a series that are to follow,³ using blood as painting materials.

First of all it is necessary to think about the modes by which it is initiated.⁴

SUPPORTS- The painter chose two old damask-like tablecloths to use as a "canvas". The support is not neutral, it is invested with memories of her personal history: the tablecloths belonged to her maternal grandmother who came from Russia. They are worn, darned, and served to decorate many family meetings and feast, throughout three generations. These tablecloths literally served as a "container" for the painting, since they were placed on the ground, one over the other, in a small square wooden stretcher (to which one of them was later fixed). The blood was spilled over them and the top one served as a "filter", retaining the thicker matter. Later the tablecloths were tied to each other and hung on the wall by the frame. Besides this support, Lambrecht also used three sheet of *canson* paper, all of them the same size, that are to be hung, one to the right, two to the left of the tablecloths, on the same wall, without glass or frame.

PAINTING – The artist usually uses oil paints with natural pigments, of which the earth-colored ones are often collected by her from specific sites. This is, therefore, not ready-made material.

She often works outside and leaves the canvas on the ground for days. Varied elements become part of the painting: tree leaves and fragments of bark, dust, rainwater, footprints and bird tracks. From then on they become part of the painting, in an equal situation to that of the materials chosen, since this must become integrated to nature, to life – and to death, because death is part of the nature of living beings.⁵

This specification is important to understand the work discussed here: in this the "*material matter*"⁶ which constitutes the painting is the blood of a lamb that, naturally dehydrated by the passage of time, solidified on the surface, creating the effect of a painting with an irregular texture (thick in some places, diluted in others), with a dark brown tone. This was the first time the artist thought of using blood.

1. In the sense that is understood by René Passeron: "Thus, any work, although one may find there the sign of a manifest wanting to say, through a more profound wanting, which is no longer the discourse (...) the behavior that led it to existence. i.e., art. This is therefore the presentation not of a thing that has already been said, but of saying in itself. Presentation of presenting". R. Passeron, *Pour une philosophie de la creation*. Paris: Klincksieck, 1989, p. 210.

2. *Morte eu sou teu* (Death, I Am Yours), 1997. A set constituted by the following elements: two old tablecloths, tied to each other, imprinted with blood, three paintings on paper, also done with blood mixed with a bit of water, copper wire tied to the cloths and that extends to the ground and a needle-shaped object in raw clay, placed on the ground and through which the copper wire goes.

3. When this text was finished the second set had already been carried out.

4. "The object of poetics is not so much the initiator nor the initiated work, but the initiating conduct. R. Passeron, op. cit., p. 130. The process which leaves the author to his work is initiation: deployment of creative operations, formation

HANDLING – The word is used here in the sense of the Italian *fattura*. The artist did not “paint” the canvas with this blood: she went to an estancia and simply laid the canvas on the ground under the head of a lamb that was about to be slaughtered and sold. The animals, in this “gaucho” region, are killed in a still very primitive manner: the lambs, for instance, are hanged from a tree and their neck is punctured – the blood runs gently until death. The *fattura* was defined by this flow, by the way the blood deposited itself on the canvas: abundant, overflowing, invading all the cloths more than had been expected. The *news* of this invasion was expected by the artist, just as she did not wish to intervene directly with her hand. The only intervention took place the next day, when she used water to remove the excess blood that had deposited itself on a corner of the canvas, so thick that it would not dry. The paintings on paper originated in this second step, when the sheets were deposited under the canvas to protect it at the time of removing the excess blood. Lambrecht observed the work that the water and blood performed on the paper and ‘conducted’ them with movements of her hands. If the material stays the same, the *fattura* is, however, completely different.

The artist never took an interest in the representation, but in her own words, “rather for the matter of the painting”, the matter, i.e., the support, the materials (including the different objects added to the paintings at the whim of her impulses).

The matter of painting is her body, with its genesis and its wearing down process: with its scars, its spots, with all that life can add, and all that she can get from a body.

The artist establishes a very direct parallel between her own body and the body of her works. These are her body doubles, with autonomy, stronger than if they were self-portraits. But it is not a face, a silhouette, but out of flesh, organs, skin and blood.

APPENDICES – There are other elements that compose this work: two copper wires are tied to the tablecloths and go all the way to the ground, where they pass through the eye of a needle made of clay. The latter element, with a very primitive aspect, that keeps the mark of the artist’s fingers, has two contradictory points, this is a pointed object, that may injure, and it is very fragile, because it was made of raw clay. At the same time, the choice of a needle symbolically recalls female work and points to the tablecloths, darned over the years, by the artist’s grandmother and mother. This object, thus, evokes a “women’s story”⁶ and the patient, meticulous work of the female hand.

The copper wires represent energy conductors for the artist, in the lineage of Joseph Beuys whose admirer she admits to being. These wires often prolong the bodies of her paintings like veins, arteries, even umbilical cords. Through these wires, the canvases enter a physical synergy with what surrounds them, especially with the soil, the place to which they are directed most of the time. According to Paulo Herkenhoff, the presence of three-dimensional elements, of knots, of torsions in Lambrecht’s works “are not the result of what is obvious or gratuitous. They are the result of precariousness, the limits of what is necessary, the margins of what is instigating, the edges of the essential”.⁷

and finished non-form, genesis, and even palingenesis.” E. Chiron, n.º 7 x “*Trivium avec centaure, étoiles et danseuses*”, in x, *l’Oeuvre en process. Croisements dans l’art*. vol. 1. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne/CERAP, 1996, p. 15.

5. Interview given to the author, on May 20, 1998.

All quotes between quotation marks, without an indication of bibliographic reference, must be considered part of this interview.

6. R. Passeron. *Recherches Poétiques*, Tome II: *Le matériau*.

Paris: Klincksieck, 1976. Translator’s note for the Portuguese version:

Unlike French, Portuguese does not have another word for “material”, with a more concrete meaning of materials or substance from which something is made, for instance, different from the adjective “material”. Therefore we translated this expression into Portuguese as “concrete material”.

7. Paulo Herkenhoff. *Karin Lambrecht e a reconstrução da selva*. Exhibition catalogue. Curitiba. MAC do Paraná, 1985.

The presence of these appendices in the painting is full of meaning. For Lambrecht, death represents, above all, a change in the energy of beings. A change or, doubtless, an exchange: energy becomes transmuted, it goes from the body to the world at the very instant when the body dies. The blood on the canvas supposedly contains a part of the lamb's energy. This becomes a presence, it becomes an integral part of the flow of life. It takes on body – and the wires lead this energy to earth, doubly symbolized by the soil and the clay needle. However, this, evoking what is female, recalls the process of birth and, therefore, the renewal of the cycle... This idea is explicit in a previous work, in which the artist wrote the terms of alchemy.

conjunctio – conceptio – putrefactio – separation

For her, these words symbolize the cycle of nature, fertility and decay – the return to earth.

PAINTING AS A BODY – AND AS A PLACE WHERE OUR BODIES RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER

On one of the paintings that constitute the work, Lambrecht imprinted the mark of her bloodstained hands. This procedure is not new for her, since she often paints directly with her hand and prints her mark, either at the end on the skin of the painting, or during the process in which she implements the work. In the latter case, the mark often appears slightly erased or even barely visible. However, it is there, almost like a palimpsest. And, on the contrary of footmarks, which may, in her paintings, be submitted to random paths, at the whim of the movements performed for their implementation, the hand is stamped in a completely intentional manner.

The hands play a unique role in this work.

They are almost completely absent on the tablecloths. Lambrecht simply organized the act of painting performed by others: the gaucho who pierced the neck of the lamb, the one that supplied its blood. The painter only intervened later, to remove the excess material from one corner of the support. She delegated the act of initiating the painting to a third person, to other hands; in her own words, “to an old, experienced gaucho, who would see to it that the animal would not suffer much”, and, in fact, she also says, “he hit only once, with a very sure blow”. These other hands were so important to the artist, that she photographed them, bloodstained almost to the elbows, like gloves. Equally, she photographed the lamb and put this photo, instead of the work, in an exhibition catalogue. Certainly, the lamb and the gaucho would form a single entity: the hand that supplies the material, that initiates the work. At that moment the artist wanted to remain passive: she received the material just as she did the canvas. It may be that, just as with the lamb and the gaucho, the canvas and herself formed a singled body.

Lambrecht confesses that two things marked her profoundly: the complete immobility of the animal that submitted without reacting, without fighting, accepting its sacrifice, as though making a gift of itself, and the abundance of blood spilled, that flooded the tablecloth, soaking through it.

Immobility – abundance. On the one hand an excess of matter, an exaggerated amount of “painting”, on the other, the *gift* of the material and the passiveness of the subjects – the lamb, “raw material”; the painter, who only had this “painting” collected, and the canvas that served only as a receptacle.

It was doubtlessly as a reaction that the action in the paintings on *canson* paper was completely different.

In fact, in the works on paper, the presence of the painter's hands is absolute. These paintings were carried out with gestures of the hand on the material, they served as an instrument, as a brush. The vestige of the fingers became visible on it. On one of these works, as previously mentioned, Lambrecht imprinted her hands.

In her own words, "It is the proof that I did it. It is the proof that I passed by there". These are two different ideas. To perform the work includes intentionality, implies being an artist and printing her hands as a creator – in fact, this is so strong for the painter that she never signs her paintings in front, only on the back – on the skin of the painting, the "contact of the artist's flesh", skin against skin, on the mark of the hands, is sufficient".⁸

When it reflects on the mark of the hands as a vestige of passage, another order of reflections is possible. The idea of passage may indicate disappointment at the work. In this case, the mark of the hands may be considered, as pointed out by Georges Didi-Hubermann about prehistorical marks, a dialectical instrument, "able to produce in it the collision of two orders of heterogeneous realities: this is 'a there and a not there, a contact and an absence'.⁹ In other words, it would be a vestige of the passage of the artist. This also probably implies the awareness of the different temporalities: habitually the works survive their author – the vestiges of the artist's passage will thus survive his disappearance, bearing witness that he lived, that he "was there".

"Passing" may also mean the definition of a trajectory, or the delimitation, even if temporary, of a territory. This "passage" during which vestiges were left, certainly evokes another, ancient and constitutive: the path of the forebears' immigration. This question is omnipresent in the artist, as well as in many Brazilians who descend from immigrants: what are the vestiges of my history? Where are they? These questions are closely linked to memory, to affects, and also to the basic question: who am I?

Lambrecht asks herself these questions, she confesses them. The double attribute is present in her paintings, where she very often writes words in Portuguese and in German: sometimes, but not always, these are the same words. We will discuss this point again further on.

It is also important to point out that she went to live in Germany for a few years. Consequently, she took the inverse route to the one taken by her grandparents, but won't it be the same path, that of emigration to a foreign land? Can the works be a way of signaling the passage, of leaving a mark?

- The mark of the hand replaces the signature
- The mark of the hand draws the (double) attribute
- The mark of the hand signals the passage.
- The mark of the hand defines the territory(ies)
- The mark of the hand points.

Lambrecht works with the memory of the body, often writing on the paintings the names of the different parts that compose it, as though, in the painting, the senses

8. "It should be said that the hand prints make something possible in which other marks very often fail: the reported contour or the shadow of a head seen from the front are never *similarity* of the face (...) but the direct application of the hand, its contour or its shadow render it immediately visible, and even recognizable as individuality".
G. Didi-Huberman. *L'Empreinte*. Exhibition catalogue. Paris, Centre Georges Pompidou, 1997. p. 31.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

could also be born from the act of naming. Words such as flow, blood, circulation, as well as parts of the body: kidneys, lungs, heart. The hand is present there in two ways – initially through the act of writing: the gesture, personal calligraphy, sometimes erasures. Next, through a more archaic evocation: naming something presupposes indicating it. The body is not represented in her paintings, save for the very schematic form of the cross, but it is omnipresent in them, by means of this invisible hand that, in naming, points out. However, what has been indicated is not on the canvas but in the bodies of the artist and the observers. Things named, indicated, constitute our bodies.

It is possible that in order for the body to be real, it must be present in art? Should it be recalled in it, named, signified, by its organs, its orifices, its scars, its flows, its blood?

The artist also names places through which the body goes. This is the case of the term in arena (the venue of the event, of sacrifice). Also found is “the field is the body- the lamb is the soul and mind”. Space and body are confounded, the same way as body and soul. The field of the *pampa* may become the body and vice-versa.

This reversibility is present in the body of the work: the needle, placed on the ground, is shaped like an indicator that sends the spectators’ gaze upwards¹⁰ to the path traced by the copper wires. From up down – from down up, the path taken by the gaze is circular and ultimately does not establish a hierarchy, neither between top and down, nor between hand and foot,¹¹ nor between the spirit and the mud (in fact, the needle is made of earth). It should be recalled that Lambrecht always paints on supports placed on the ground itself, and that she walks on top of them, if necessary: she works on every side, initially investing the space in an equal and undifferentiated manner; the upper and lower sides of the canvas are defined only later, over the last layers of paint.

In arena: these words designate the space where the close battle of the painter with the painting occurs.

The painting marks the place. It also delimits the territory – in fact it constitutes it. Painting, (like our bodies when they are ruled by desire or by pain) delimits frontiers:¹² between inside and outside, between I and you, between I and the world.

In a primitive act that is certainly primordial, the hand points out to name. It shows the world, just as it points to parts of the body. It delimits the territories, indicating their limits.

It can also multiply itself in this work: the artist imprints her two hands and paints, rendering visible the gestures of both. Since she writes in three languages, and the same way as in the work, she multiplies herself, taking on several bodies (in fact, four, supports, separated from each other).

The artist’s body is also multiple, occupying different places and changing at every place,¹³ in the place – body of the painting, the words that designate it are deployed, also in three languages. The hand points to several origins, several attributes. Is it possible to have a single body?

The name of things: the title of the whole, *Death I am thine*, is repeated in each painting. On the contrary of the other words, these are printed based on very primitive rubber stamps, with blue ink. Their color and their shape recall rubber stamps with which, in Brazil, the sanitary inspection services mark the pieces of meat, when they leave the slaughterhouse. The title is voluntarily impersonal and

10. When a gesture of indication gleams, its shine will be a pact with the spectator, affecting the whole field”. Jean Lancri, *Olimpia e a questão do modelo*. Porto Arte, v. 6, n. 9, Porto Alegre, PPG em Artes Visuais/UFRGS, May 1995, p. 38.

11. Cf. E. Chiron, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

12. According to Bellmer, dominated by desire or pain, “the image of a tooth is displaced to the hand, the image of sex to the armpit, that of the leg to the arm, of the nose to the heel. Hand and tooth, armpit and sex, heel and nose, in brief, virtual excitement and real excitement are confounded, and superimposed.” H. Bellmer, *La Petite anatomie de l’image*. Paris: Eric Losfeld, 1977, p. 18.

13. “Changing space, I change my skin, I change shape”. Marc Le Bot, *Image du corps*. Aix-en-Provence: Présence Contemporaine, 1986, p. 9.

works with another ambiguity: "Death, I am thine"- well *thine* is a sign of the attribute of a male subject. Who is then, this "I" that speaks?

In this work, *I* is literally another *I*¹⁴ that can very well be both the observer and the blood that fills the space and that returns our gaze. *I* is the lamb that delivers itself and I am the one who resists with my body that defends itself, to the idea of the end. *I* is the artist who keeps out of the frontiers of the worlds, but that creates bodies of painting. *I* is the gaucho for whom the act of painting certainly gave new significance to a gesture performed dozens of times.

Death I am thine. The painter, like the lamb abandons herself to creation, but also to the idea of death. This abandonment performs the role of an exorcism. But, from another standpoint, the blood here presented evokes the violent history of Brazil, in a dialogue with the body of the painter herself, and her questions about her origins and her place in the world. The place of sacrifice – *in arena* – is both the place of invocations, and that of dialogue with life and death, place of energy exchange.

Who, me? The mortal body of the artist, or the hand that creates the work? Do I deliver myself unto you or do I exorcise you by creating. Or can it be that creating by the use of my hands, my eyes, my head, my heart, my whole body, I presentify you and indicate you as a constructive element of my work and my life.

Text published in the book organized by Eliane Chiron. *La Main dans les Arts Plastiques*, Paris, CERAP /Editions de la Sorbonne, 1999. Translated into Portuguese by Sonia Taborda, reviewed by the author.

15. According to the enunciation by Rimbaud "I am another".

AND SO ON

ON AN INSTALLATION BY KARIN LAMBRECHT

Jacques Leenhardt

Too much,
 too much on the front page of the newspapers,
 everywhere, throughout the television programs,
 flowing, obscene.

There is the blood of Ancient History
 the bleeding of the Atreidae
 there is contemporary blood, cutthroat and woodpecker
 the blood of the sacrificial victim,
 always in vain as well,
 the blood of the plotters
 the blood of the
 rest

and still
 it runs in my veins: red
 shines majestically: ruby
 runs in my cup: burgundy
 Is the color of life, of power, of beauty: red;

is also
 the one that wears the red square of Mondrian,
 purple for the prelates and tsars,
 the flag of the Revolution. Red.

But:
 the blood dried black,
 goes alongside death,
 was spilled for naught.

I remember an afternoon in childhood. We were playing "who's the strongest," like always. On the breakneck run that nothing can hold back when one is running it, I happened to pass through a hedge of roses. No hesitation, all at once. But roses are delicate and fear for their freshness. They protect themselves from unwanted visitors. I came out all covered in blood.

Now I was sitting. I wasn't crying. My eyes followed the drops of blood running down my bare legs. No pain, only the fright of seeing that red, slightly viscous and utterly strange substance on my leg.

Blood is the soul of the man, of the alpha male, seen as the deepest part of him by definition, that which only leaves him in times of war or when oaths are sworn. Blood is glorious, or it is not at all. Obstinate denying all visibility.

As I sat on the edge of the path, the situation was far from glorious and my blood ran softly. I gazed on this incongruence without displeasure but also without joy, intrigued. Playing had put me in the paradoxical situation of seeing my body, its most intimate part, exposed to the sun and sweetly coagulating on my skin.

I only learned later that girls carried out this experiment, of the return of the interior to the exterior, and frequently. They knew – or, rather, they learned – the price of this exteriorization. It was dramatic, sometimes, but it was far more profoundly life.

Everything that is hidden will come to light. Apocalypse.

All that is shown in its obscenity will return to night. Apocalypse Now.

How difficult it is to take on blood from an innocent approach! I would not say that this is what Karin Lambrecht has tried to do; this is what she does, almost without meaning to. And this is how she manages to remain far from the unbearable symbolic weight of blood: innocent.

She sought blood where tradition places it: in the veins of the lamb. But she does not propose a theology. She takes it from the breeders, for whom the animal is an object of care, not of sacrifice; of necessity, not of the superfluous consecrated to other worlds. Just as the farmer does not see “landscapes” around him, but fields, seasons, grasses and moons, so the pastor who raises the lamb to sell it does not hamper himself with symbols or rituals. If he cuts the ram’s throat, it is because the flesh should be clean, without skin, entrails, or blood. His work is precise, calm, and silent. As Abraham’s son trusts in his father, the ram knows the breeder’s love. No cry will tear the horizon. The order of life and death will be respected, each gesture expressing the regularity of fate.

What does the artist come to do in this bucolic scene. She comes to shed everything keeping her from seeing this principle of life run sweetly in cosmic harmony. The very idea of making a painting with this red, with the matter that transforms slowly into black, is unbearable to us *a priori*. If blood must be spilled, let it be out of our sight, or in ritualized forms, on the altar or in the cinema.

Karin laid another path to take us there. From the ritual, she preserved, in this installation, the presence of the priestly vestments. Four vestments hang from the wardrobe of the servants’ uniforms and liveries, symbolically accompanying the long flow of the bloody trail that she gathered as life abandoned the ram with the cut throat, across a long white canvas. This is not the tablecloth of a totemic feast. The litany of blood unfolds along ten meters of canvas, pure color, red, scarlet, grenadine, dark, according to its thickness.

This canvas, a seismograph lost in the draining of the world, is simply one moment in an installation with several of them. I wish to speak now of the four white vestments. They are paintings as well. Their frank whiteness has received a baptism of blood, flowing over it and leaving long streaks. This other one is paler: its color is fine, as if the brush had been washed and only applied a watercolor blood. The third surplice is decorated with a hieratic motif. Two circles of color, at their thickest, cover the front, with two faint stars. The fourth is still white,

immaculate. It is as if the priestess had stepped away from the spectacle. This virginity is shocking, but, on the other hand, it may be only because of this that one's perspective can pass lightly over this overly forceful scene. At a slight distance, barely touched, the fourth shields itself, still spared from the violent crudity of contact with life, with the cycle of life and death.

Artists have forever tried to make this connection between art and life, but it was always denied them.

The work as a whole has yet another part: ten drawings – the word is not quite right – rather, ten impressions, each left by a piece of flesh after the slaughter of the lamb, on ten sheets of paper. Each of those who witnessed the birth of the work chose the one he or she liked best and signed the document where the slightly pink impression remains. Each one, no matter the role played, attests to his or her presence with the signature on the document, transforming the dispersion of the lamb's limbs into a collective work.

In the decay of the lamb's life, something difficult to describe as a work of art or as a symbol has been reconstituted with the trail of blood and continued on, even constructing a different life.

In a different form, but life continues, And so on.

The phenomenon is common, and hardly modern: simply knowing things by their names, without ever having come into contact with them. (Some have affirmed that things are nothing, and their names are everything.) Controversies aside, two visual artists are exhibiting work in Rio de Janeiro, who have in common that they are fairly well-known in the circuit, but their works have rarely or never appeared around here: Karin Lambrecht, a 30-year-old artist from Rio Grande do Sul, and José Resende, 42, from São Paulo. The fact is even more curious when we consider that Resende is one of the most respected contemporary Brazilian sculptors of his or any generation, and that Karin has made enough of a name for herself to take part in two international art biennials in São Paulo. Despite all this, José Resende has only exhibited works in Rio three times in the past 13 years, and Karin cannot say even that: this is the artist's first solo show in the city.

Resende's sculptures have been on display since yesterday at the Funarte Galeria Sérgio Milliet, closing out the first part of the *Escultura* cycle sponsored by the Instituto Nacional de Artes Plásticas (previously featured artists were Nuno Ramos, Carlos Fajardo, and Ana Linnemann). At Thomas Cohn, Karin is presenting the works she displayed at the last Biennale, four groups of paintings and sculptures gathered under the generic title *Ester entra no patio interior da casa do rei* (Esther enters the inner courtyard of the house of the king), inspired by the Biblical theme of the woman who risked her life to save her people (in truth, if she did not risk herself, she was threatened anyway: in such cases, it is best to try).

ESTHER, OR ART WITHOUT A PLAN

The story of Esther, who violated an interdiction in an attempt to save her people (and, consequently, herself), is merely a theme: Karin does not dwell on it much while she works, wishing to simply wind up with the "spirit of the thing." One of her principal concerns, moreover, which she hopes becomes evident in her works, is her repudiation of the systematic destruction of nature. But the relationship between the finished work and the theme of Esther, or nature, is "abstract," as she says, and not illustrative. By way of example, we may compare her work to that of another artist, this one quite famous, who has dedicated himself to protesting the devastation being suffered by Brazilian nature: Franz Krajcberg. His sculptures are direct, showing an unmistakable and evident relationship to ecological concerns. The four pieces on Esther make no direct reference to ecology.

"I don't work with previous plans, and it is in practicing my work that each piece develops. That means that the theme is present only indirectly in the work, then, and the relationship established with the material becomes so important."

Previously known as a painter, Karin moved on to working with three-dimensional objects, with no intention of becoming a sculptor; wood, scrap iron, and other objects are “integrated into the painting”:

“The materials I use have memory, they’ve already been used and reused. When I take a piece of scrap iron, I look at it with a painter’s eye, seeking out the stains on its surface, situations that can create new situations. But I always have in mind something undergoing a process of reintegration with nature. Just like a city that, after its destruction, is taken over again by vegetation and animals. My house in Porto Alegre is a bit of that. It was built by my grandmother and it’s currently a stockpile of things that are being put around there, trying to make use of what was already there.”

The four pieces that make up *Esther*, a collection of painted splints and three-dimensional collages with scrap iron, have a semi-ruined aspect to them, something between archaic and futurist, of a dusty and static universe. Some of the three-dimensional pieces take on the dignity of a forgotten idol, precarious but still on its feet. Precariousness, incidentally, is nothing new to Karin’s work; in her previous phase (shown at the penultimate Biennale), she used painting techniques mixing water with oil, making her control over the image largely dependent on the materials and their behavior as they dried: a “precarious control.”

“That was the phase of *A fertilidade de Anita* (Anita’s Fertility), a theme tied to women’s issues and their relationship to live, like *Esther*. There was an ironic, humorous side to the whole thing. But I didn’t worry much about the theme while I was working. It’s still that way now.”

At Thomas Cohn, *Esther* is set up exactly according to the artist’s specifications, each piece on a single wall, thus maintaining the idea of a courtyard – something that wasn’t possible at the Biennale. There, side-by-side on a single wall, the four works seemed like an indistinct mass. Now, duly separated from one another, they take on the impact desired by the artist:

“Even though the relationship between the theme and the work is abstract and indirect, I hope that the spectator can feel what I meant by them. Today I wonder if I managed to transmit everything in my previous works. I think so, and I hope I’ve managed the same thing now, with *Esther*.”

SCULPTURE WITH MATTER AND GESTURES

The nine sculptures by José Resende now exposed at Funarte’s Galeria Sérgio Milliet are the result of work the sculptor has been carrying out since 1985, using leather, felt, cardboard, lead, cloth, and paraffin wax. With these materials, Resende structures situations “expressive” of his relationship with matter (but not expressive of an “inner self,” an element he does not seek in his work). Something else Resende has not sought to do with this exhibition, but which has been relatively common recently, is to create an installation with the pieces on display: instead of stifling the individuality of each sculpture in favor of a coherent whole, he set up his solo show in such a way as to lend each sculpture a distinct character, maintaining a dialogue between them but not budging on any of their particular characteristics.

Resende limits himself to a few simple procedures, always determined by the specific properties of the material he happens to be working with. They are all more or less malleable; in the case of the paraffin, he works with it in liquid form

and then lets it solidify. For the lead sculptures, for example, it is the weight of the metal, or the way it settles upon melting, that determines the structure of the work. The other materials are folded or curled over on themselves and the liquid paraffin is added afterwards. As it solidifies, it holds the other materials in their original position, and the resulting structure is conditioned by the tension between both.

“There is a gesturality in my work, and it brings to light a series of tensions, such as those between the material and the way in which I’ve manipulated it, or even between the notion of space, conceived in accordance with the tradition of modern art of Picasso, Duchamp, and Beuys, and the way in which I use that tradition. But problems of space are always present, even with “wall” sculptures, traditionally the privileged place for painting.”

The tensions apparent in the works of José Resende, in addition to the properties of the materials used and the way in which they have been manipulated, lay bare the very process of structuring the work, the processes necessary to finish it, and the time that each of the stages took. This has to do with working with concrete, with sculptural situations determined by the use of certain materials – this has nothing to do with abstract, generally *a priori* schemes, in which matter serves only to support an idea.

“In the case of the paraffin, for example, it takes on a shape determined by its properties in liquid form, but then it solidifies and maintains its previous form. The transparency the paraffin takes on is also one of the elements of the work: it is the truth of the material.”

Coincidentally or not, José Resende’s works have plenty in common with those by the other artists who participated in this Funarte cycle; all of them do stick out for their discussion of problems of space, but this is mediated by the concrete possibilities of manipulating material. Resende’s work, which is no exception to the rule, is naturally separated from the rest by its specificities. In any case, this seems to be the path chosen by a significant number of contemporary sculptors, who have abandoned *a priori* designs and ideas so as to start to discuss situations born of the intimate handling of matter.

The Funarte cycle will be put on hold for a few months, to be retaken in the second half of the year, featuring a list of names that has not yet been revealed. If the selections continue with the same quality as the first phase, Funarte will be making a decisive contribution to Brazilian sculpture – which, for some reasons that are widely known and others that are not public, has not been receiving the attention it deserves.

THUMBNAILS



Diamonds in the Sky, 1993
ink drawing with typed text
20 x 20 cm
[original lost, reprinted in the
flyer for a solo exhibition at
the Universidade Federal
Fluminense, Niterói]



Montanhas e pedreiras
[**Mountains and Quarries**], 2007
calligraphy work
22 x 14 cm [each]
artist's collection



Words, 1979
photocopy and silkscreen print
20,5 x 13 cm [each]
artist's collection



**Relações entre os seres
vivos vivos** [**Relations
Between Living Beings**], 1980
photocopy and silkscreen print
21 x 30 cm [each]
artist's collection



Cruz elementar
[**Elementary cross**], 2009-12
triangular folds in paper, pencil,
graphite, woodblock cuttings,
sheets of silver leaf and felt
in a voile tent
30 x 30 x 15 cm
Miguel Chaia collection
Galeria Nara Roesler archive
© Everton Ballardin



Cruz elementar
[**Elementary cross**], 2009-12 [detail]
© Fabio Del Re



Legendas para Bergman
[**Subtitles for Bergman**], 2011-12
extracts from the Portuguese subtitles
for the documentary *Bergman Island*
by Marie Nyrerod on sheets of white
tissue paper
135 x 60 cm [each]
Galeria Nara Roesler collection
Galeria Nara Roesler archive
© Everton Ballardin



Mundu [**World**], 2011-12
acrylic emulsion pigments, rain,
stone marks and calligraphy
on canvas
200 x 340 cm
Galeria Nara Roesler collection
Galeria Nara Roesler archive
© Fabio Del Re



Untitled, 2008
pencil and ultramarine pigment
30 x 41,5 cm
artist's collection
[page from the note and sketch book
used in Israel and Jerusalem for the
work *Pai* (Father)]
© Fabio Del Re



Caminho do rio [**River Path**], 1982
colour study; egg tempera pigment
on cardboard box and waterproof
shellac to float on the waters of
the river Spree in Berlin
Karin Lambrecht archive



Untitled, 2001
four white cotton garments
stained with the last blood of
three sheep slaughtered in
three different towns in
Rio Grande do Sul
APP. 130 x 45 cm [each]
Justo Werlang collection
[xxv São Paulo Art Biennial, 2002]
© Juan Guerra



Desmembramento
[**Dismemberment**], 2000
line of sheep's last blood on canvas
180 x 1 170 cm
Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro,
MAM-RJ / Gilberto Chateaubriand collection
© Beto Felicio



Desmembramento
[Dismemberment], 2000 [detail]
© Beto Felício



Morte d'luz [Death of light], 2007
On a screen (set up on a 51 m² wall at MAC-USP) covered in orange blossom honey cultivated by the Bioscience department at USP, are approximately three thousand sheets of gold-leaf measuring 15,5 x 15,5 cm [each] positioned by students from ECA-USP. Honey drips / Gold darkens. In a live reaction, the splendour of gold is gradually consumed by the honey. In an allusion to Joseph Beuys', 1965, *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare*, *Death of Light* also refers to the state of current painting and its physical and pictorial process. This is accentuated by the honey as it exacerbates the almost uncontrollable nature of the material. [ephemeral work]
Karin Lambrecht archive



Untitled, 2003
acrylic emulsion, oil and dry pastel pigment on canvas with stone and rain marks
190 x 155 cm
Miguel Chaia collection
© Romulo Fialdini



Eu e você [I and You], 2001 [detail]
impression of sheep's innards and flesh on canson paper
several sizes
Justo Werlang collection
© Yole Lambrecht Chapman



Lugares desdobrados
[Unfolded Places], 2008
Exhibition at Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre
© Fabio Del Re



Cor te [Cut], 2006
trimmed synthetic felt with acrylic emulsion pigments on canvas
150 x 135 cm
Miguel Chaia collection
© Romulo Fialdini



Territórios d'areia II
[Sand territories II], 2011
pigments and vegetable ash in acrylic, stone marks, dry pastel and rain water on canvas
190 x 365 cm
Galeria Nara Roesler collection
© Galeria Nara Roesler



Krankenhaus: Ser, sentir, mundo [Krankenhaus: Being, Feeling, World], 2011-12
copper, acrylic emulsion pigments, dry pastel, rain and stone marks on canvas
200 x 350 cm
Galeria Nara Roesler collection
Galeria Nara Roesler archive
© Fabio Del Re



Territórios d'areia menor e maior maior [Smaller and larger sand territories], 2011
pigment and acrylic emulsion on canvas
190 x 200 cm
private collection
© Galeria Nara Roesler



Cisterna/Territórios d'areia [Cistern/Territories of sand], 2011
acrylic emulsion pigments, rain and copper on canvas
170 x 150 cm
Banco Itaú collection
© Galeria Nara Roesler



Cruz vermelho cadmium
[Cadmium red cross], 2009
cadmium red copper element in acrylic on canvas
208 x 235 cm
Justo Werlang collection
© Fabio Del Re



Fragmento, cobre e vermelho
[Fragment, copper and red], 2006
synthetic felt, copper offcuts, acrylic pigments on canvas
225 x 200 cm
private collection
© Fabio Del Re



Respiração em fragmentos
[Breath in fragments], 2009
acrylic pigments on canvas
208 x 268 cm
Justo Werlang collection
© Fabio Del Re



Untitled, 1989
acrylic emulsion pigments
on cut canvas
252 x 255 cm
Marcantonio Vilaça collection
© Eduardo Ortega



Marie, 1989
acrylic emulsion pigments
on canvas
200 x 300 cm
private collection
© Fabio Del Re



Emergência [Emergency], 1989
earth and clay on wooden
and canvas structure
113 x 117 cm
Marcantonio Vilaça collection
© Eduardo Ortega



Homem dormindo
[Man sleeping], 1989
earth, charcoal and clay
on canvas with cut
200 x 300 cm
Marcantonio Vilaça collection
© Eduardo Ortega



Engel, 1991
acrylic pigments, synthetic enamel,
paper collage and metal
200 x 132,5 cm
MAM-RJ / Gilberto Chateaubriand collection
© Vicente de Mello



Ester ou Ester entra no pátio interior da casa do rei
[Esther or Esther Enters the Inner Courtyard of the King's house], 1987
four groups of paintings with objects
MAM-RJ / Gilberto Chateaubriand collection
© Vicente de Mello



Terra queimada
[Scorched Earth], 1989
pigments and earth with
carved iron on canvas
300 x 300 cm
Justo Werlang collection
© Romulo Fialdini



Cais [Quay], 1989-90
acrylic pigment on cut canvas,
poem by Fernando Pessoa
engraved on metal sheet
280 x 155 cm
[whereabouts unknown]
© Leopoldo Plentz



Anunciação [Annunciation], 1991
acrylic pigments and
rusted metal sheet on canvas
275 x 130 cm
artist's collection
© Fabio Del Re



2010, 1990
pigments and earth in acrylic
emulsion and wood on folded canvas
333 x 205 x 7 cm
Dulce and João Carlos Figueiredo Ferraz
collection
© Romulo Fialdini



Untitled, 1992-93
pigment from earth from
Verona and ash in acrylic on
cut canvas and wire with key
264 x 230 cm
Banco Itaú collection
© Iara Venanzi / Itaú Cultural



Cruz [Cross], 1990s
dry rose, coal and ash on canvas
83 x 82 cm
Gisela Waetge and Flávio Kiefer collection
© Fabio Del Re



São Matheus e Marie
[St Matthew and Mary], 1993
wooden cupboard, book, earth,
cut and sewn fabric
200 x 300 x 100 cm (area of installation)
[ephemeral object]
Exhibition at MAC-USP, São Paulo
© Romulo Fialdini



Untitled, 1993
earth and Paris blue pigment
on fabric in wooden box
70 x 70 cm
private collection
© Romulo Fialdini



Wim, 1993
painting with tears, earth
and acrylic pigments
215 x 220 cm
Sandra and William Ling collection
© Fabio Del Re



Corpus, 1994
pigment, earth and ash in acrylic
environment, on screen with
copper element
210 x 210 cm
private collection
© Luiz Carlos Felizardo



Untitled, 1994
pigment, earth and ash
in acrylic on cut and sewn canvas
230 x 220 cm
Miguel Chaia collection
© Luiz Carlos Felizardo



Sinais [Signals], 1992
acrylic pigments on canvas
190 x 190 cm
Colección Patricia Phelps
de Cisneros, New York
© Carlos German Rojas



O lago [The Lake], 1992
acrylic pigments, earth and
paper cuttings, wire and iron
on canvas
190 x 140 cm
MAM-RJ/Gilberto Chateaubriand collection
© Vicente de Mello



Ainozama, 1992
rusted iron, earth, pigments,
lacquer and root on canvas
200 x 360 cm (approx.)
Ludwig Forum für Internationale
Kunst Aachen, Germany
© Miguel Rio Branco



Sem título, 1992
[project "Ainozama"]
watercolour
6,5 x 10 cm
artist's collection
© Miguel Rio Branco



[Vento, luz e forma] Elemento,
pano, quase transparente,
quase pintura, porém, um pouco
objeto sólido... sobre as doze
janelas representando os doze
discipulos de Cristo, no projeto
original do arquiteto (Siegfried
B. da Costa) em 1934 [(Wind, Light
and Form) Element, fabric, almost
transparent, almost painting, but
almost a solid object... on the twelve
windows that represent the twelve
disciples of Christ, in the original
design by the architect
(Siegfried B. Costa), in 1934], 1997
pigments, lacquer, gum, tears
and cuts in cotton
300 x 600 cm
artist's collection
[installation *Wind, Light and Form*,
the Igreja Martin Luther,
Porto Alegre, 1997]
© Jochen Dietrich



[Wind, Light and Form] Element,
fabric, almost transparent, almost
painting, but almost a solid object...
on the twelve windows that represent
the twelve disciples of Christ, in the
original design by the architect
(Siegfried B. Costa), in 1934, 1997 [detail]
© Jochen Dietrich



Untitled, 1999-2000
pink earth from Caraiva
(in the south of Bahia) in acrylic
and coal on canvas
270 x 270 cm
Sandra and William Ling collection
© Fabio Del Re



Untitled, 2000
earth from the towns of Santa Rosa
and Santo Angelo [in the region of
the Jesuit Mission settlements],
with acrylic pigment, beeswax
and oil paint on canvas
270 x 270 cm
private collection
© Fabio Del Re



Untitled, 1999-2000
earth from several different regions
in Brazil and acrylic pigment on canvas
270 x 270 cm
private collection
© Fabio Del Re



Desmembramento
[Dismemberment], 2000
line of sheep's last blood on canvas
180 x 1.170 cm
MAM-RJ /Gilberto Chateaubriand collection
© Beto Felício



Desmembramento
[Dismemberment], 2000 [detail]
© Beto Felício



Desmembramento
[Dismemberment], 2000 [detail]
© Beto Felício



Desmembramento
[Dismemberment], 2000 [detail]
© Beto Felício



Caixa do primeiro socorro
[First-aid Kit], 2005 [detail]
sheep slaughter in the metropolitan
region of Santiago
Karin Lambrecht archive



Pai (Father), 2008 [detalhe]
77 small crosses of raw cotton
dipped in the blood of sheep
slaughtered in Deir el Asad,
northern Israel, to commemorate
the Jewish celebration *Succot*
933 x 56.6 cm (approx.)
Justo Werlang collection
© Yael Engelhart



Genealogia de Jesus
[Genealogy of Jesus], 1994
(Lucas 3.23-38)
notes on paper
31,5 x 21,5 cm
artist's collection
© Fabio Del Re



Genealogia de Jesus
[Genealogy of Jesus], 2003
(Lucas 3.23-38)
acrylic, oil and dry pastel
pigments on canvas
282 x 322 cm
Justo Werlang collection
© Fabio Del Re



Pai (Father), 2008
Exhibition *Lugares desdobrados*
[Unfolded Places], at Fundação
Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre
© Fabio Del Re

pp. 147-153
Pai (Father), 2008 [details]
© Fabio Del Re



A casa de São Matheus e Marie
[The house of St Matthew and Mary], 2009
copper, paper folds and cuts
50 x 50 cm
Galeria Nara Roesler
Galeria Nara Roesler archive
© Fabio Del Re



**Por favor mais luz – a criação
do mundo em sete dias,
dependurada** [More light please -
the creation of the world in seven
days, hung], 2009-10
pigments, copper, paper cuts and folds
95 x 60 cm
private collection
Galeria Nara Roesler archive
© Fabio Del Re



Uma provável criação do mundo
[A Possible Creation of the World],
2009-10
seven paper boxes, acrylic pigments
on cut and folded paper, some with
sheets of gold leaf. The work is composed
of seven parts:
1st day expansion
2nd day forgetfulness
3rd day forgiveness
4th day trust
5th day love
6th day passage
7th day rest
Varying sizes
private collection
© Fabio Del Re



A cela dela, a pele dele
[Her cell, his skin], 2012
 copper, charcoal and acrylic
 emulsion pigments on canvas
 60 x 60 cm [diptych]
 Galeria Nara Roesler
 Galeria Nara Roesler archive
 © Fabio Del Re



Perdão [Forgiveness], 2012
 copper, dry pastel and acrylic
 emulsion pigments on canvas
 50 x 59 cm
 Galeria Nara Roesler
 Galeria Nara Roesler archive
 © Fabio Del Re



Janeiro/verão
[January/Summer], 2012
 acrylic emulsion and pastel
 pigment on cut canvas
 63 x 52 cm
 Galeria Nara Roesler
 © Romulo Fialdini



Legendas para Bergman
[Subtitles for Bergman], 2011-12
 translucent tissues paper and sheets
 of silver leaf on tissue paper
 135 x 60 cm [each]
 Galeria Nara Roesler
 Galeria Nara Roesler archive
 © Fabio Del Re



Meu corpo Inês
[My Inez Body], 2005
 mother and daughter with clothing
 and sheep's last blood,
 Alcobaça Monastery, Portugal
 several sizes
 whereabouts unknown
 © Yole Lambrecht Chapman



Meu corpo Inês
[My Inez Body], 2005
 Karin Lambrecht archive
 [detail]



Morte eu sou teu
[Death, I am yours], 1997
 sheep's blood on towels
 and drawings
 170 x 171 x 15 cm [area]
 Justo Werlang collection
 © Fabio Del Re



Morte d'luz [Death of light], 2007
 On a screen (set up on a 51 m² wall
 at MAC-USP) covered in orange blossom
 honey cultivated by the Bioscience
 department at USP, are approximately
 three thousand sheets of gold-leaf
 measuring 15,5 x 15,5 cm [each] positioned
 by students from ECA-USP.
 Honey drips / Gold darkens.
 In a live reaction, the splendour of gold
 is gradually consumed by the honey.
 In an allusion to Joseph Beuys', 1965,
How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare,
Death of Light also refers to the state
 of current painting and its physical and
 pictorial process. This is accentuated by
 the honey as it exacerbates the almost
 uncontrollable nature of the material.
 [ephemeral work]
 Karin Lambrecht archive



Untitled, 1999-2001
 rain marks, beeswax, charcoal
 and acrylic pigment on canvas
 230 x 250 cm [approx.]
 Galeria Nara Roesler collection
 © Fabio Del Re



Animal, 2004
 sheep's blood on white fabric
 and paper
 170 x 50,7 x 126 cm [area]
 © Pedro Andrada



Dia [Day], 2005
 Synthetic felt, paper, charcoal,
 cuttings, linen, honey, gold
 and bee wax
 98 x 74 cm
 Miguel Chaia collection
 © Romulo Fialdini



Caixa do primeiro socorro
[First-aid Kit], 2005
 The last blood of sheep and lambs
 from the urban regions of Santiago,
 Chile and São Borja, Rio Grande
 do Sul, on white sheets and images
 of internal organs, with the image
 of her daughter.
 200 x 800 x 10 cm
 artist's collection
 [installation at the v Bienal do
 Mercosul, Porto Alegre]
 © Fabio Del Re

pp. 184-86
Caixa do primeiro socorro
[First-aid Kit], 2005
 [details]



Noite [Night], 2005
synthetic felt, paper, graphite,
cuts, linen and beeswax
98 x 74 cm
Miguel Chaia collection
© Romulo Fialdini



Untitled, 2008
acrylic emulsion pigments, and
trimmed satin on dark grey linen
145 x 195 cm
Miguel Chaia collection
© Romulo Fialdini



Fragmentos da cruz negra
[Fragments from the black cross], 2006
Drypoint, etching and aquatint
64,8 x 49 cm
collection and edition: Clube de gravura
do MAM de São Paulo
© Romulo Fialdini



Untitled, 2006-07
grey linen and trimmed white cotton
fabric on paper with copper crosses
and linseed oil
150 x 107 cm
Justo Werlang collection
© Fabio Del Re



Untitled, 2008
collage, cuts in satin, oil paint
and linseed oil on Canson paper
300 x 150 cm
private collection
Galeria Nara Roesler
© Ding Musa



Pai, Gólgota
[Father, Golgotha], 2011-12
dry pastel and acrylic pigment
on canvas
61 x 50 cm
Galeria Nara Roesler
© Galeria Nara Roesler archive



Untitled, 2006-07
grey linen and trimmed white cotton
fabric on paper with copper crosses
and linseed oil
150 x 107 cm
Justo Werlang collection
© Fabio Del Re



O quarto de Camus
[Camus Room], 2008
MDF cross set on the ground, with three
central low relief cuts the size of a single
bed, nightstand and desk. The cut of the
cross is reminiscent of a floor plan in that
when it is fitted together it closes in on itself
within four claustrophobic walls. There are
stains of Paris blue pigment on the MDF, and
this is reminiscent of the blue of a fountain
pen. On the left is a MDF panel with drawings
and calligraphy that replicates the page
from the night of 9th August 1949, from the
book *Jornaux de Voyage* de Albert Camus,
which mentions a stop over in Porto Alegre.
There is also letter from Jacques Leenhardt,
that speculates on the anthropologist's
possible feelings over the journey.
A black-and-white cloudy sky is
projected onto the backdrop.
In the dimly lit space, a shaft of light
highlights the writer's calligraphy.
© Galeria Nara Roesler archive



Mundo [World], 2012
dry pastel, charcoal and
acrylic pigment on canvas
50 x 61 cm
Galeria Nara Roesler
© Fabio Del Re



Longe [Far Away], 2009
cuts in satin, synthetic felt, beeswax,
dry pastel and acrylic emulsion
pigments on linen
140 x 190 cm
Galeria Nara Roesler
© Romulo Fialdini



Untitled, 2012
acrylic pigment, dry pastel and
copper cuttings on canvas
64 x 45 cm
Galeria Nara Roesler
© Galeria Nara Roesler archive



Untitled, 2008
pigments and earth in acrylic emulsion,
dry pastel, satin and copper wire on linen
225 x 130 cm
private collection
© Ding Musa



pp. 197-200
O quarto de Camus
[Camus Room], 2008 [details]



Nós [Us], 2012
dry pastel, acrylic emulsion
pigments and rain on canvas
63 x 58 cm
Galeria Nara Roesler
Galeria Nara Roesler archive
© Fabio Del Re



Setembroutubro
[September/October], 2010
 acrylic pigment, copper cuttings
 on canvas
 75 x 73 cm
 Galeria Nara Roesler
 © Galeria Nara Roesler archive



Noite, inverno
[Night, Winter], 2010
 acrylic pigment, charcoal on
 canvas cuttings
 67 x 48 cm
 Galeria Nara Roesler
 © Galeria Nara Roesler archive



Margens [Limits], 2012
 acrylic pigment, dry pastel
 on canvas
 120 x 145 cm [aprox.]
 private collection
 © Romulo Fialdini



Margem do eu
[My Limits], 2011-12
 acrylic pigment, dry pastel
 on canvas
 120 x 145 cm
 private collection
 © Galeria Nara Roesler archive



Noite, verão
[Night, Summer], 2011-12
 copper cuttings, acrylic pigment,
 rain and stone's traces on canvas
 110 x 120 cm
 private collection
 © Fabio Del Re