

EMMANUEL NASSAR

by Stella Teixeira de Barros

The economy of images in Emmanuel Nassar's paintings cannot be translated as a withholding of information. The intentionally ill-defined finishing of the rough figures over a geometrically imprecise, often monochromatic and flat background, brings to light the artist's unique sensitivity in face of the Brazilian popular universe – a bit debauched, irreverent and even simple.

The geometry of Nassar's work discards, through its inexactness, any inheritance of the constructive languages which permeated our century since Malevich and bloomed with abundance in the fifties, especially in Latin America, and find expressive echoes even today. The artist's ill-defined contours deny the rigor inherent in constructivism's architectural concepts and jeer at its standards of geometrization. They propose, instead, a new rule to the game. One which, through ambiguity, disconcerts the exact, severe character of the contours' definition. At the same time, a pseudo-geometry's basic shapes. It resorts, with infidelity, to symmetry, angularity and circumference. The intense, vibrant and unshaded colors of these "constructions" emit violent contrasts of tonality which do not refute the milieu in which the artist lives: Belém do Pará, an important location where the equatorial brightness contraposes the overwhelming green of the forest on one side, and on the other, the mouth of the Amazon and its deafening juncture with the oceanic vastness.

The popular imagery is also a point of reference of the artist, who constantly gathers in from his surroundings. As a support, he uses a traditional canvas as well as sheets of metal or wood. The figuration in Nassar's work impedes any approximation to neo-pop, or, at the minimum, satirizes it. Crude, it often makes itself almost unrecognizable. For this very reason the image harbors a dose of irksome humor. Unveiling the iconoclasy becomes more important than codifying it. In several paintings, the frozen images defy any allusive proposal of movement. Only the artist's initials suggest, with irony and provocation, fragments of the compass card and its dimensioned projections and infinitum.