

Connections

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On this exhibition the work of four very diverse artists are tied together through the notion of connections: between different forms of expression and languages; different histories and cultures; and different countries and places. In all the works a kind of bond, attachment, association or relation is rendered that could be real, imagined, remembered or discovered. As Regi Bardavid states, we would like to believe in an ideal world without frontiers, yet the biggest frontier is not a landmark but the difference in customs, language, culture, a way of thinking that separates us. She has led a nomadic life moving from Egypt to Italy, then to what was Rhodesia, then to Zaire and eventually to South Africa. She went back to Alexandria, her hometown, but there was nothing left of the ways she remembers. What informs her work are these memories as a repository in her subconscious that follows her everywhere she goes. She recreates the world of her childhood, which does not exist anymore.

Lynette ten Krooden's landscapes as mindscapes become vehicles for her symbolic and metaphysical explorations based on twenty-five years of travel and research into fossil life, ancient civilisations, their petroglyphs and cultures. Microscopic and macroscopic aspects of nature are explored and presented as reflections of human communication with the earth, with each other and with their gods. Her travels have taken her to the patterned lave rock of Driekopseiland south of Kimberley to Petra and the Jordanian desert; Timbuktu in Mali up to the Sahara desert, from the lushes Fiji islands to the solemn Uluru rock in Australia; from South to North; and from East to North.

David Udbjorg's series, *Koyannisqatsi*, entails a reflection on the way we spend our lives, and the foolish things that humans do. The title has been derived from *Koyaanisqatsi: Life out of Balance*, a 1982 film directed by Godfrey Reggio that consists primarily of slow motion and time-lapse footage of cities and many natural landscapes across the United States. As a visual tone poem, the film has influenced Udbjorg's work, especially in the way it contains neither dialogue nor a vocalised narration and its tone that is created by the juxtaposition of images and music.

In her essay on Pascual Tarazona's body of work on this exhibition, Karin Skawran explains that his paintings usually 'happen' spontaneously and intuitively. The most recent series of six paintings entitled *Dhow I-VI* (2010/'11), were, however, directly inspired by New Year's Eve 1999. Pascual spent this evening together with a group of friends on a sandbank near Mafia island, south of Dar Es Salaam. They had rented a dhow to reach the sandbank where they were going to celebrate the new millennium. The memories of the star-studded sky, and the feeling of being shrouded in the vast silence of that night with just the waves softly lapping against the sandbank, have been with him ever since.



Lynette ten Krooden, *White gold*, 2011



Lynette ten Krooden, *Survivor*, 2011

Lynette ten Krooden, *Terra nova, terra firm*, 2011



David Udborg, *Solomon*, 2011

David Udborg, *Barbershop*, 2011



Pascual Tarazona, *Dhow I - VI*, 1999 - 2011

Celebrating the Millenium: Reflections on the art of Pascual Tarazona

Karin Maria Skawran

Pascual's paintings usually 'happen' spontaneously and intuitively. The artist seldom has preconceived ideas or defined objectives for them. He frequently only understands their meaning once the works have been completed. The most recent series of six paintings entitled *Dhow I-VI* (2010/'11), were, however, directly inspired by New Year's Eve 1999. Pascual spent this evening together with a group of friends on a sandbank near Mafia Island, south of Dar Es Salaam. They had rented a dhow to reach the sandbank where they were going to celebrate the new millennium. The memories of the star-studded sky, and the feeling of being shrouded in the vast silence of that night with just the waves softly lapping against the sandbank, have been with him ever since. He also vividly remembers the dark silhouettes of the dhows quietly and mysteriously gliding past them. The image of *Dhow II*, dimly rising against a moonlit sky, its light reflected on the waves, perhaps best evokes the evening the artist experienced with his friends. Eleven years later Pascual decided to capture this unforgettable experience in a series of six images of dhows.

The sails of the dhows in each of these images have been centrally positioned and they virtually fill the format. Each one has been rendered to evoke a different mood. *Dhows I* and *V* appear like phantoms moving forward through a softly nuanced haze of mist or clouds, while the colourful *Dhow III* is sharply lit by what could be interpreted as a brightly rising sun. In this image the sail loses its two-dimensionality and begins to resemble a voluminous mountain peak. Its shimmering surface takes on the tactile quality of rocks and crystals. In *Dhow VI*, the deeply glowing red sail, as well as the prow of the boat, have been sharply defined, while the ghost-like form on the right resembles a monumental human figure, evocative and ethereal, emerging from a moonlit background.

Perhaps the most dramatic in this series, *Dhow IV*, seen against an illuminated background of deep reds and oranges, has been set off against a rich purple in the foreground and a light pink shape draped across the dark silhouette of the dhow. In images like these, the viewer is transported to an almost apocalyptic realm.

Whereas Pascual's earlier work was brooding and dark, complex and heavily textured, his more recent images have become lighter, more colourful. At times they seem to metaphorically evoke a transition between this world and the world of the spirit. In almost all of his works the artist aims to render his subconscious and emotive responses to the world around him, and to capture the fluidity and shifting nature of the human spirit. He explores in his images the duality between fantasy and reality, between past and present, the sacred and profane, intellect and pure intuition. Most of his works can be described as 'landscapes of the soul' - in them the edges between the real and the imagined, the objective and subjective, are blurred, creating challenging new perspectives.

For Pascual the creative process is a gradual excavation of his sensual and emotive experiences, and the resulting images consist of a rich layering of these experiences. Just as the artist keeps altering the physical appearance of his paintings over time, they reflect the constant motion of his spiritual vision. In his images Pascual dislocates the viewer from time and space, creating a kind of timeless mythology. The viewer is confronted with a world at once tranquil and lyrical, and at times, tortured and harsh. The artist describes his images as a kind of 'free poetry', in which the irrational and the intuitive play a significant part. There is always a harmonious synthesis between

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emotion and intellect, the irrational and the intuitive. Evocative tactile qualities and subjective colour serve to heighten the sensuous expressiveness in his work.



Regi Bardavid, *Night falls on the bay of Alexandra*, 2011



Regi Bardavid, *Nostalgic Memories*, 2011