

LETTERA D'AMORE

28.02–27.04.2024

CURATED BY
ALBERTA ROMANO

Kunsthalle Lissabon
is thrilled to announce "Lettera d'amore" curated by
Alberta Romano with works by ALICE DOS REIS, TAMARA MACARTHUR, LA CHOLA
POBLETE, LAURE PROUVOST, GIULIO SCALISI, and INÉS ZENHA. "Lettera d'amore" is the first
of a series of three group shows that will celebrate Kunsthalle Lissabon's 15th anniversary.

Dear Kunsthalle Lissabon,

For this exhibition dedicated to you, I would like to address one of the pillars on which you have based your strength, credibility, and international recognition over the years: your hospitality.

I want to do it because that hospitality is the same that, for almost five years, made me feel at home despite the kilometres that separated me from my own.

This year, as you celebrate your 15th anniversary and find yourself in the midst of adolescence, I can't help reminiscing a little about mine, which was spent in a bedroom with aspirations covering the walls, and dreams hung like colourful beaded curtains. Your hospitality, dear Kunsthalle, often made me recall how that little room could make me feel both confident and protected. A teenage bedroom, like Olga Campofreda wrote in "Camerette"¹ is that place where, potentially, everyone can express all the ambitions they have not yet had the courage to express outside, without shame. Being the same place that will give you the strength to realize those dreams, that, up to that moment, were kept inside the walls.

To convey this feeling, I thought of involving the artists who made me feel more at ease and who, through their exhibitions, have explored concepts of intimacy, home, and shelter. I want to think about the shows that felt intimate, not only for me but also for those who experienced them.

For example, I could not help but invite Tamara MacArthur to take part in this exhibition. Each installation they make is like a treasure chest containing a nostalgic and simultaneously childish vein that, once "opened," seems to express the intrinsic need for sharing that the artist has always had. A need that, through the use of simple and often precarious materials, demonstrates all the fragility and desperate search for attention that we all hide within ourselves.

Then my mind immediately flew to La Chola Poblete, who often places herself at the center of her works. The glorious representations of the artist as a diva, a votive icon, or a star ready to embark on a world tour, reminded me of my own adolescent pride. I remember how the posters on the walls of my bedroom inspired me to feel more beautiful or at least confident, unconsciously stimulating me to find a strength in myself that I couldn't yet grasp.

I felt that same strength and determination when I met Inês Zenha. Inês once told me that, in order to feel more protected within the walls they inhabited, they decided to frantically paint them blue. The colour and the shapes born from the necessities finally gave Inês the strength to leave that room, leaving behind only the paintings that remained confined within those walls.

Remaining confined to one's home is also at the centre of Giulio Scalisi's work. In Giulio Scalisi's work, Paul, the protagonist, lives in a dystopian reality where humanity has adopted a predominantly secluded lifestyle. Through the use of sci-fi metaphors, Giulio always invites the viewer to reflect on brutally real conditions of discomfort. Paul's world, in fact, is mainly inhabited by the ghosts that populate our gloomy days of solitude.

With a delicate video installation, Laure Prouvost opens both her own heart and the one of those who will go close enough to hear her voice. She generously invites everyone who passes by to embark on a journey into our ecosystem, while also giving us the opportunity to explore the most hidden sides of our subconscious.

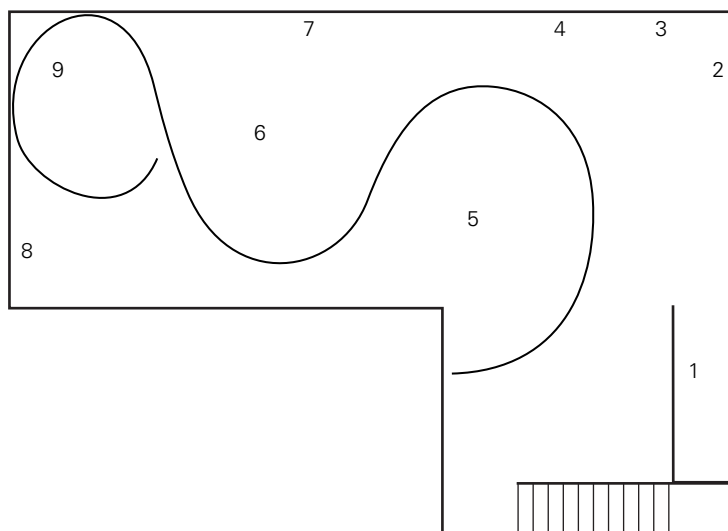
Lastly, I couldn't not include "For a Life Long Disease of Copper" by Alice dos Reis. A fictional interview with the artist's grandmother, played by a digitally aged version of the artist herself. A touching analysis of one's memories through the idealizations of a past that we haven't experienced ourselves, but still has power over us.

The entire exhibition would not have been the same without the precious touch of Carlos Bártolo, who gave shape and meaning to the sense of intimacy that I wanted to materialize in this exhibition.

In short, dear Kunsthalle, while I am thinking about the artists, the works, and the display of this exhibition, I just realized that I had not only invited people with whom working was pleasant and enriching. What I did, above all, was choose different ways of reflecting on strength and self-determination that are often generated by loneliness. That's why I also want to thank you for leaving me alone just enough so that I could become stronger.

Special thanks go to Luís and João who welcomed me into their "home" from day one; to Pedro and Carla who learned to trust me; to Carlos who brightened my time here with his friendliness; to Maria João who made my dream of sharing my working space with children possible; to all the artists and professionals who passed through here and showed me their sincere side; and to Enzo who never stopped reminding me to believe in myself.

Baci baci,
Alberta



1

La Chola Poblete
El dormitorio del pop andino, 2023
 Posters, carpet, cushions, audio 5:17 min

2

Inês Zenha
Reaching for a blue flame - can you hold the water's howl, 2024
 Oil on paper
 55 x 69 cm

3

Inês Zenha
Reaching for a blue flame - our hands are made of rivers and feathers, 2024
 Oil on paper
 55 x 69 cm

4

Inês Zenha
Reaching for a blue flame - I can feel you even when you evaporate, 2024
 Oil on paper
 55 x 69 cm

5

Tamara MacArthur
VIP, 2024
 Fabric, sequins, disco ball, video
 150 x 260 x 150 cm

6

Giulio Scalisi
The Obelisk, 2021
 3D printing, PLA, resin, acrylic paint
 50 x 27 x 16 cm

7

Giulio Scalisi
A landscape for a gentleman, 2024
 Fine print on fine art cotton paper
 125 x 70 cm

8

Alice dos Reis
For a Life Long Disease of Copper, 2021
 HD video 5'50'' color, sound

9

Laure Prouvost
This Means Love, 2020
 squid ink, water, branches, stones, leaves, video
 variable dimensions

exhibition design Carlos Bártolo