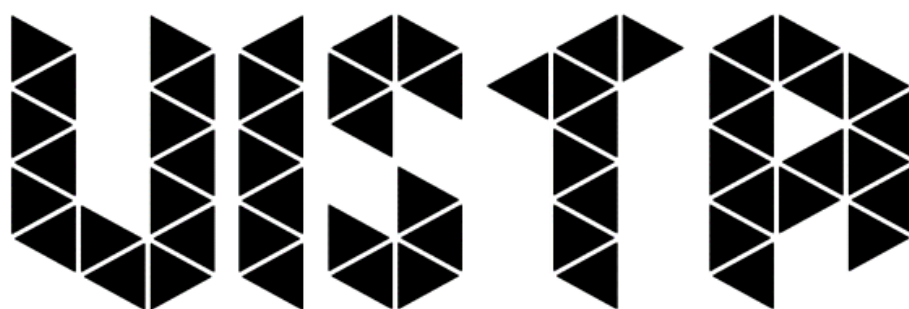




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Vermelho Vivo: Affection, Resistance and Curating as Insurgent Cartography in Lusophone Territories

*Vermelho Vivo: Afeto, Resistência e Curadoria Como
Cartografia Insurgente nos Territórios Lusófonos*

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VERMELHO VIVO: AFFECTION, RESISTANCE AND CURATING AS INSURGENT CARTOGRAPHY IN LUSOPHONE TERRITORIES

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the exhibition *Vermelho Vivo: Amor & Revolução* (Vivid Red: Love & Revolution), curated by Ângela Ferreira (also known as Berlinde), as a large-scale curatorial and transmedia project presented in northeastern Brazil at the Chico Albuquerque Museum of Image and Sound in Fortaleza. The exhibition integrates political memory, aesthetic insurgency, and radical affection across Lusophone territories. Anchored in the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution in Portugal and the 60th anniversary of the military coup in Brazil, the exhibition is conceptualised as an insurgent cartography. It invokes shared histories of anti-colonial resistance, feminist struggle, and emancipatory imagination, spanning contexts shaped by colonial violence, dictatorial repression, and ongoing processes of democratisation. Drawing on decolonial, feminist, and Indigenous artistic practices, *Vermelho Vivo* emerges as a living archive that rejects linear narratives and monumental forms of memory. This article conceptualises curating as a situated, relational, and sensitive practice, understood as a gesture of embodied activism that mobilises images, archives, poetry, and sonic elements to reactivate collective imaginaries and generate critical shifts in the present. Engaging with authors such as bell hooks, Sara Ahmed, Suely Rolnik, Édouard Glissant, and Denise Ferreira da Silva, this text examines affection, desire, and opacity as political and epistemological forces that challenge hegemonic regimes of visibility, knowledge, and representation. The exhibition is analysed as a site of tension between past and future, where memory is not fixed or monumentalised but activated as a field of contestation, attentive listening, and reinvention. Through the articulation of feminist insurgencies, Indigenous cosmologies, and revolutionary legacies, *Vermelho Vivo* positions curating as a critical practice of care and confrontation. The exhibition situates art as a site of active resistance in response to contemporary crises of democracy, ecology, and political imagination.

KEYWORDS

curating, activism, political affects, decolonial aesthetics, feminisms

VERMELHO VIVO: AFETO, RESISTÊNCIA E CURADORIA COMO CARTOGRAFIA INSURGENTE NOS TERRITÓRIOS LUSÓFONOS

RESUMO

Este artigo analisa a exposição *Vermelho Vivo: Amor & Revolução*, com curadoria da autora Ângela Ferreira (também conhecida como Berlinde), como um projeto curatorial e transmídia de grande escala, realizado no nordeste do Brasil, no Museu da Imagem e do Som Chico Albuquerque, em Fortaleza, que articula memória política, insurgência estética e afeto radical nos territórios lusófonos. Acorada na comemoração dos 50 anos da Revolução dos Cravos em Portugal e nos 60 anos do golpe militar no Brasil, a exposição é abordada como uma cartografia

insurgente, que convoca histórias partilhadas de resistência anticolonial, luta feminista e imaginação emancipatória, atravessando contextos marcados pela violência colonial, repressão ditatorial e processos inacabados de democratização. A partir de práticas artísticas decoloniais, feministas e indígenas, *Vermelho Vivo* configura-se como um arquivo vivo que recusa narrativas lineares e formas monumentais de memória. O artigo propõe a curadoria como uma prática situada, relacional e sensível, encarada como um gesto de ativismo encarnado, que mobiliza imagens, arquivos, poesia e dimensões sonoras para reativar imaginários coletivos e produzir deslocamentos críticos no presente. Dialogando com autoras e autores como bell hooks, Sara Ahmed, Suely Rolnik, Édouard Glissant e Denise Ferreira da Silva, o texto explora o afeto, o desejo e a opacidade como forças políticas e epistemológicas capazes de tensionar regimes hegemônicos de visibilidade, conhecimento e representação. A exposição é analisada enquanto espaço de fricção entre passado e futuro, no qual a memória não é fixada nem monumentalizada, mas ativada como campo de disputa, escuta e reinvenção. Ao articular insurgências feministas, cosmologias indígenas e legados revolucionários, *Vermelho Vivo* afirma a curadoria como prática crítica de cuidado e confronto, posicionando a arte como lugar de resistência ativa face às crises contemporâneas da democracia, da ecologia e da imaginação política.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

curadoria, ativismo, afetos políticos, estética decolonial, feminismos

INTRODUCTION: VERMELHO VIVO AND THE POLITICS OF AFFECT

Vermelho Vivo: Amor & Revolução (Vivid Red: Love & Revolution) takes shape as a curatorial and transmedia project situated at the intersection of political memory, aesthetic insurgency and radical affect across Lusophone territories. Conceived in the context of two historical milestones — the 50th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution in Portugal and the 60th anniversary of the military coup in Brazil — the exhibition activates a shared field of struggles marked by anti-colonial resistance, feminist insurgency and unfinished democratic processes. Rather than marking these dates as concluded or monumentalised events, *Vermelho Vivo* proposes memory as a living, contested and affective territory.

The project is based on the understanding that art does not operate solely as representation, but as a force capable of producing political presence and collective imagination. In a global context marked by democratic erosion, historical revisionism, ecological crisis and the growing abstraction of social life through algorithmic regimes, artistic practices emerge as spaces of refusal, reorientation and reinvention. Drawing on decolonial, feminist and Indigenous epistemologies, the exhibition positions curating as a situated and relational practice, mobilising affect, desire and embodied knowledge as critical tools.

This article analyses *Vermelho Vivo* as an insurgent cartography and a living archive that rejects linear narratives and monumental forms of memory. The central argument maintains that curating, understood as a situated practice, can operate as a form of embodied activism, capable of reactivating collective imaginaries and producing critical displacements in the present.

The analysis draws on critical tools that bring together affect, desire, and opacity as political and epistemological forces. These dimensions operate as modes of thought that enable the exhibition to be understood as a field of tension between memory, the body and imagination.

Affect is understood here not as a private or subjective domain, but as a political and epistemological force. Following bell hooks (2000), love is approached as an ethical and political practice grounded in care, responsibility and the willingness to nurture collective growth. Sara Ahmed's (2010) reflections inform attention to the ways bodies, images, and histories orient themselves — or move away — from certain possible futures. In dialogue with Suely Rolnik (2018), desire is understood as a life force rather than as lack, affirming imagination as a material force capable of interrupting hegemonic regimes of visibility and knowledge.

The notion of “opacity”, proposed by Édouard Glissant (1990/1997), is equally central, asserting the right to complexity, contradiction and non-transparency in the face of the extractive logics of colonial and patriarchal visual regimes. By bringing together artistic practices from Portugal, Brazil and Lusophone African contexts, *Vermelho Vivo* constructs an insurgent cartography anchored in shared, albeit unequal, histories. Curating thus asserts itself as a critical practice of mediation, not oriented towards resolving historical wounds, but towards allowing them to remain as spaces of listening, ethical tension and political commitment.

When we were invited to conceive an unprecedented occupation for the Museum of Image and Sound around the idea of freedom, it became evident that red, understood simultaneously as symbolic matter, political force and affective intensity, would constitute the conceptual axis capable of articulating a reflection on the unfinished nature of revolutionary processes. A specific generational experience shapes this perspective: those born in the aftermath of the Carnation Revolution and belonging to the first generation raised in a democracy, inheriting the rupture with decades of dictatorship, censorship, poverty, and silencing. In this context, red emerges not merely as historical memory but as a critical device and a space for experimentation, invoking freedom as a practice continually under construction.

Inspired by the poetic, associative, and anti-hierarchical logic of surrealism, the exhibition presents itself as an open field of relations, rejecting linear narratives and proposing a deliberately unfinished curatorial exercise in which imagination, dissent, and affect remain in continual renewal.

This *Vermelho Vivo* (Figure 1 and Figure 2), of life, truth and courage, is also a revolution, a total installation that pulses like a great organ. This heart vibrates without limits and in complete freedom.



Figure 1. Views of the exhibition Vermelho Vivo, featuring works by Alfredo Cunha and an installation by Hilda de Paulo
Credits. Cesar Barreto



Figure 2. Views of the exhibition Vermelho Vivo
Credits. Cesar Barreto

INSURGENT CARTOGRAPHY: THE EXHIBITION AS A CURATORIAL DEVICE

Curating *Vermelho Vivo* entails traversing affective geographies and insurgent memories inscribed in Lusophone territories, marked by histories of colonial violence, revolutionary hope and aesthetic disobedience. The project is grounded in the conviction that art does not simply reflect the world, but creates friction with it, acting as a spark capable of provoking critical awareness and shifts in perception. In this sense, curating asserts itself as a situated practice, operating in the tension between form and content and bringing together images, sounds and gestures that generate disturbance, openness and critical thought.

If, as proposed above, affect, desire and opacity operate as critical forces that run through *Vermelho Vivo*, the exhibition can be understood as an insurgent cartography that materialises in the exhibition space. Curating is configured here as a device that brings together images, sounds, books and archives, producing frictions between temporalities, territories and experiences.

In this context, the exhibition is not organised as a linear narrative, but as a relational field under constant construction, where different histories and sensibilities come into contact, tension and resonance. The exhibition space thus becomes a site of physical, affective and political displacement, inviting the public to participate actively in the construction of meaning.

Comprising photographs, installations, videos, archival works, performances and an immersive installation, *Vermelho Vivo* proposes a multisensory exhibition journey, in which different artistic languages intertwine to reflect on the ideas of freedom and revolution at a time of urgency and uncertainty about the future. Spanning contemporary artistic production from the early 1970s to the present, the exhibition brings together artists and thinkers from the Luso-Afro-Brazilian geographical space who reconfigure the meanings of freedom, evoke the persistence of emancipatory struggles, and point toward new meanings for existence.

This is a vital movement, made of love and revolution, which invites us to revisit struggles and achievements, weaving stories of courage and transformation into a collective manifesto of freedom and dignity: 50 years after the Carnation Revolution in Portugal, and six decades after the military coup in Brazil, art asserts itself as a link between different historical experiences, celebrating the poetics of revolution. For, in essence, art is poetry and, as Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen (1977) wrote in the poem “Liberdade” (Freedom), “the poem is / freedom” (vv. 1–2).

Walter Benjamin (1936/1992) argued that no work can be politically truthful without being, at the same time, aesthetically legitimate. In the encounter between form and content, art reveals its power, becoming not merely a mirror but a spark that can set consciences alight and move worlds. *Vermelho Vivo* emerges from this principle: the conviction that image, sound, and aesthetic experience can produce critical displacements, activate memory, and open space for political imagination.

The visible has long since become a battleground. What can be seen, what is allowed to be remembered, what we seek to forget. In the darkness of each frame, in the echo of

each projection, the history of those who fought for freedom pulses. If there is something the past teaches us, it is that the future is not built in silence, but in the voices of those who dare to remember. For this reason, *Vermelho Vivo* spans time and geography. It is impossible not to recognise in it the brilliance of the Carnation Revolution, when, in April 1974, courage was clothed in red and blossomed in Portugal, opening paths towards the end of the colonial constraints that still suffocated Africa. The African continent, in turn, bears the mark of centuries of exploitation, but also asserts itself as a territory of resistance, where art and culture are instruments of struggle and reconstruction, where creation, in its multiple forms of expression, has always been a cry and an affirmation, reinvention and survival.

In Brazil, the scars of the military dictatorship, between 1964 and 1985, continue to reverberate. These were two decades of censorship, repression and forced disappearances, a period that cannot be forgotten or downplayed. *Vermelho Vivo* reinforces the need to remember that democracy and freedom are not definitive achievements, but continuous processes of struggle and vigilance. In every projected image, in every light and shadow moving through this exhibition, echoes of a Brazil that cannot forget the years when freedom was suffocated resound. Red emerges as both an alarm and a warning. Remembering is not a passive act, but an ongoing form of resistance.

Today, amid historical revisionism and attempts at erasure, this memory becomes even more urgent. In this space, aesthetics do not rest; they summon. *Vermelho Vivo* moves art out of the comfortable position of contemplation and restores its role as a critical, participatory agent. It asks for more than an attentive gaze; it demands present bodies, awakened minds and voices that rise up.

The first chapter of the exhibition (Figure 3) opens with the founding event of the 25 April 1974 Revolution in Portugal, which ended the Estado Novo dictatorship, in force for 41 years, and inaugurated a process of transition to democracy. This moment is placed in dialogue with the resistance movements against the military dictatorship in Brazil, establishing a transatlantic field of interpretation centred on practices of insurrection, freedom and political transformation.



Figure 3. Views of the exhibition *Vermelho Vivo*, featuring a projection of the film *As Armas e o Povo* (*The Weapons and the People*; 1975) and works by Alfredo Cunha (left) and Evandro Teixeira and Marcelo Brodsky (right)

Credits. Cesar Barreto

This section evokes the euphoria of the Portuguese revolutionary movement that unfolded in the streets of Lisbon through the film *As Armas e o Povo* (*The Weapons and the People*; 1975), made by the Film Workers' Collective. Produced in the heat of the events, the film incorporates interviews with the Bahian filmmaker Glauber Rocha, one of the first Brazilian figures to actively follow the Carnation Revolution. The work captures the mass demonstrations, speeches, and gestures of liberation, as well as the collective dimension of the joy experienced between the early hours of 25 April and 1 May, establishing itself as a landmark of militant cinema associated with the revolutionary process then underway.

These images are complemented by those of Portuguese photographer Alfredo Cunha (Figure 4 and Figure 5), who, at just 20 years of age, found himself at the epicentre of events and produced one of the most significant visual records of the revolution. His photographs do not merely document; they inscribe a lived experience marked by the urgency, risk and intensity of an unrepeatable historical moment.



Figure 4. Views of the exhibition Vermelho Vivo, featuring works by Daniel Barroca (left) and Alfredo Cunha (right), with a television in the centre showing a Portuguese Radio Television broadcast

Credits. Cesar Barreto



Figure 5. Views of the exhibition Vermelho Vivo, featuring works by Daniel Barroca (left) and Alfredo Cunha (right), with a television in the centre showing a Portuguese Radio Television broadcast

Credits. Cesar Barreto

As with the song “Grândola, Vila Morena” (Grândola, Swarthy Town), by José Afonso, broadcast by Radiodifusão Portuguesa in the early hours of 25 April as a signal of the revolution, this chapter is an invitation to remember an event that mobilised a relatively small group of military personnel, many of them still very young, and which culminated in the fall of an autocratic regime sustained by structures of control, censorship and inequality.

Within this exhibition device, the visitor is led to a decisive moment in Portuguese history, when Salgueiro Maia, advancing towards Carmo Square, confronts forces loyal to the regime. The photograph reveals the courage of a solitary man facing the tanks, an act that deeply moved those watching him. Inspired by his bravery, they decided to disobey and did not fire. Unbeknownst to them, at that moment they brought down the regime. It was the end of a suffocating gag and the first breath of a people who, at dawn, filled their lungs with the fresh air of freedom and cried out, “long live freedom!”.

Still in the context of 25 April, this section includes the film *Revolução* (Revolution; 1975), by Ana Hatherly, shot in Super 8 on the streets of Lisbon in the post-revolutionary period. Through a fragmented record and accelerated editing, the artist documents posters, graffiti and visual inscriptions that proliferated throughout the urban space, highlighting the emergence of a plural political language and intensified collective participation.

On the Brazilian side, this section includes works by the photographer Evandro Teixeira, whose images of the military dictatorship in Brazil became emblematic, as well as Marcelo Brodsky’s critical re-readings, Celso Oliveira’s visual practices and records of musical gatherings and protest demonstrations documented by Juca Martins, composing a panorama that brings together memory, resistance and historical reinterpretation.

If, in the words of Brazilian musician and writer Chico Buarque (1978), 25 April was “a beautiful celebration”, marked by a transformative energy and a collective awakening, the question that arises today concerns the persistence of this power in the present: how can this revolutionary impulse be sustained without reducing it to a nostalgic narrative? How can we prevent the revolution from becoming a stabilised object, archived in history, and instead activate it as a critical and imaginative practice in the contemporary world? In the urgency of revolution, the artists who recorded the pulse of freedom are joined by others from the post-25 April generation, who continue to explore the ideals of freedom and democracy. Names such as Nuno Nunes-Ferreira, Daniel Barroca, Catarina Laranjeiro, Patrícia Almeida and David-Alexandre Guéniot question and revisit April, bringing to light narratives that range from archives to family memories, from critique to the deconstruction of reality.

Their practices reflect the profound impact of the transition from an oppressive regime to democracy (Figure 6). The invitation extended to the public, particularly young people, is to imagine what it would have been like to live in a “country planted by the sea”, suffocated by a ruthless police force that controlled every step and spread fear. A place where many were sent to the colonial war to die, return mutilated or carry the burden of a meaningless struggle, contrary to the course of history. And then there was the rumour: something was about to happen. Could that be the moment when the regime

would fall? Today, looking back, can we feel the same urge to take to the streets? Does the idea of freedom still make our hearts race? And, above all, are we free enough to allow ourselves this exercise of imagination?

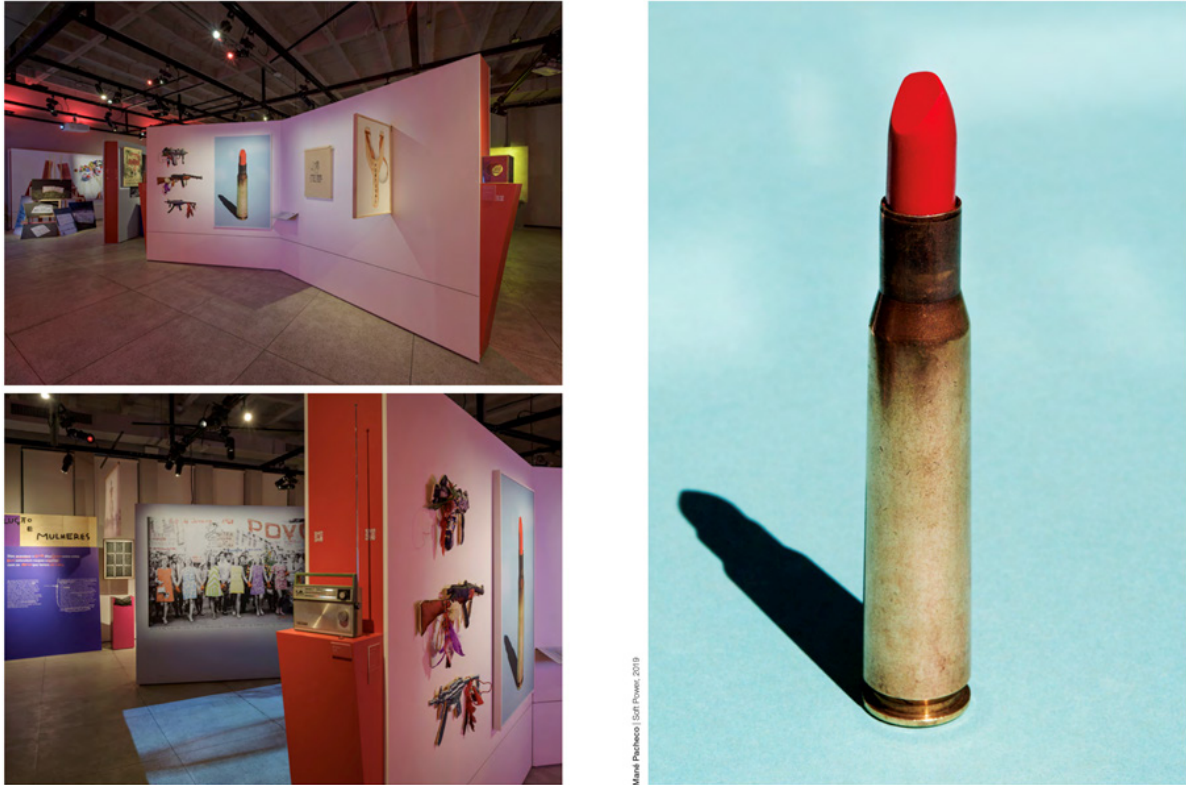


Figure 6. Views of works by Mané Pacheco, Shinji Nagabe and Marcelo Brodsky

Credits. Cesar Barreto

SURREALISM, THAT STUBBORN LIGHT

Vermelho Vivo also emerges as a poetic manifesto, establishing dialogues with other significant anniversaries, such as the centenary of André Breton's (1924) surrealist manifesto. Here, surrealism is not merely remembered as a historical or avant-garde movement, but through its revolutionary principles of freedom, love and poetry.

Under the principle of absolute freedom, and in defiance of any submission of thought to political imperatives, surrealism assumes the role of guardian of the enigma and defender of the ineffable. It is this irrational essence that inspires this disordered, free and unfinished exhibition, conceived to remain alive. In art, one of its deepest contradictions is resolved: although it is always a sum of personal expressions, it becomes the seismograph of the collective circumstances of our space-time.

It is in the unknown and in dreams — where nothing is hidden, and everything is revealed — that truth resides. This principle guided the photographer Fernando Lemos (Figure 7) when he fled the Salazar dictatorship in Portugal to Brazil. It also inspired

figures such as Mário de Cesariny and Ana Hatherly (Figure 8, Figure 9, Figure 10 and Figure 11), leading figures in experimental poetry who challenged the established order. Lemos finds the same impulse in the bold, surreal language of Boris Kossoy, which transcends the boundaries of artistic expression. In this way, artists, with their singular sensibility, can anticipate and listen to what the contemporary world whispers. As oracles of the present, they capture the ineffable and reveal the unsayable.



Figure 7. Luz Teimosa (*The Stubborn Light*)

Credits. Fernando Lemos



Figure 8. Views of the exhibition Vermelho Vivo, featuring works by Fernando Lemos, Patrícia Almeida, David Guéniot and Boris Kossoy

Credits. Cesar Barreto



Figure 9. Views of the exhibition Vermelho Vivo, featuring works by Fernando Lemos, Mário de Cesariny and Ana Hatherly
Credits. Cesar Barreto



Figure 10. Views of the exhibition Vermelho Vivo, featuring a design intervention on the glass windows of the Museum of Image and Sound
Credits. Cesar Barreto



Figure 11. Views of the exhibition *Vermelho Vivo*, featuring the works *Cadernos de Salazar*, by Nuno Nunes Ferreira and Fernando Lemos

Credits. Cesar Barreto

AFRICA, WHERE 25 APRIL BEGAN: THE LIBERATION OF THE FORMER COLONIES AND THE QUESTION OF DECOLONISATION

In this chapter, we address the three moments of anti-colonial resistance in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau, the territories that suffered most from the impacts of the colonial war. Each, in its own way, played a fundamental role not only in the struggle for freedom, but also in anticipating Portugal's democratisation and ending a long Portuguese (and European) expansionist project that sought the myth of *El Dorado* in African lands. As a "foundational moment", 25 April brought profound transformations to Portuguese society: decolonisation, the arrival of the "returnees" in a country in the midst of upheaval, and near-civil-war moments. For the former combatants in this unjust war, Portugal needed to recognise that it owed 25 April to Guinea. For Portugal, the events of 25 April constituted a true liberation and made the self-determination of the African colonies possible. The anti-colonial struggle gained considerable momentum at the House of Students of the Empire and the Centre for African Studies, where leaders such as Agostinho Neto and Amílcar Cabral played prominent roles in organising liberation movements with international support, including support from Nordic countries, the United Nations, the Soviet Union and China. Amílcar Cabral (Figure 12), a central figure in the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde, played a crucial role in mobilising a diverse population comprising more than a dozen predominantly

agricultural ethnic groups and a small bourgeoisie, gaining international recognition. This chapter, one of the most challenging and unresolved, addresses decolonisation and highlights artists such as Délio Jasse (Angola), Vitor Dads Martins (Brazil), and Elaine Pessoa (Brazil).

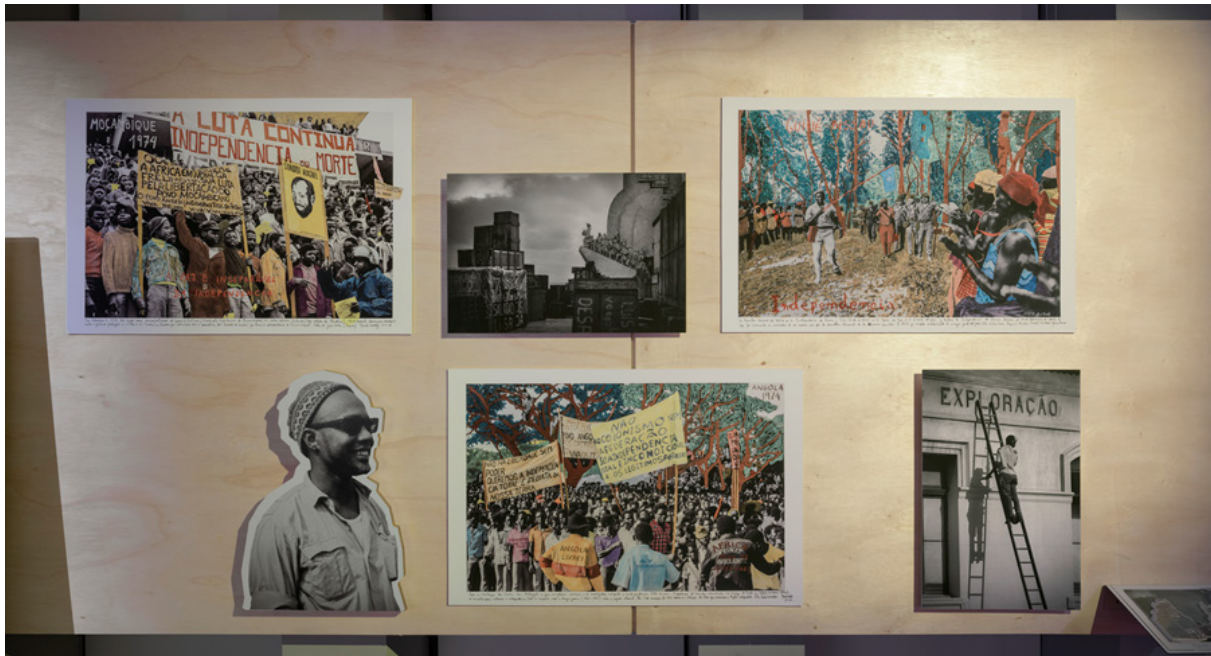


Figure 12. Views of the exhibition *Vermelho Vivo*, featuring works by Marcelo Brodsky and Alfredo Cunha, with an image of Amílcar Cabral prominently displayed

Credits. Cesar Barreto

Their works explore archival materials from the Portuguese colonial period, such as photographs, postcards and official documents (Figure 13). Délio Jasse revisits how images acquire persuasive power, appropriating discarded vernacular materials and shifting the focus from representation to the relationship between the viewer and the colonial photographer's lens.



Figure 13. Views of the exhibition *Vermelho Vivo*, featuring works by Délio Jasse, Shinji Nagabe and Soraya Vasconcelos (left) and Berna Reale (centre)

Credits. Cesar Barreto

Meanwhile, Shinji Nagabe (Brazil, 1975), in the series *Dioramas*, combines the Japanese technique of *oshie* with a Brazilian approach, evoking family memories and exploring identity and resistance as a Japanese-Brazilian and gay man. Soraya Vasconcelos (Portugal, 1976) uses video collage based on images from the Angola/Congo delimitation mission, reflecting on colonialism, power and the ghosts that haunt us.

Here, we do not seek reparation or to attribute blame for the harm caused by colonisation, slavery and exploitation, whose effects still persist in Brazilian society and the Portuguese imaginary, reflecting structural racism. What we truly wish is to celebrate the cultural richness of the peoples who, separated and united by the Atlantic Ocean, continue to express themselves as artists, resist adversity and never abandon the dreams that only freedom can make possible.

REVOLUTION AND WOMEN: THE INSURGENT WRITING OF THE “THREE MARIAS”

The Carnation Revolution constituted a fundamental milestone in the reconfiguration of women’s rights in Portugal. However, half a century later, the promise of equality remains incomplete, marked by gender pay gaps, political under-representation and the persistence of unpaid domestic work. *Vermelho Vivo* addresses this incompleteness by inscribing within its curatorial core the feminist legacies that preceded, accompanied and survived the revolutionary process.

In this context, the work *Novas Cartas Portuguesas* (New Portuguese Letters), by Maria Velho da Costa, Maria Teresa Horta and Maria Isabel Barreno (Horta et al., 1972/1994) — known as the “Three Marias” — assumes a central place. Written under the censorship of the authoritarian regime, the work was quickly banned on the grounds of “offence against morality” and sparked a highly publicised legal case known as the “Three Marias” case. Published under the Portugal’s authoritarian regime, the book — a hybrid of poetry, letters, testimony and political critique — offered a courageous analysis of the colonial war, judicial hypocrisy, sexual oppression and systemic patriarchy.

Its international reception was immediate and deeply mobilising: Simone de Beauvoir, Jean-Paul Sartre, Marguerite Duras and many other feminist voices rose in solidarity. Under the slogan “all women are Maria”, the case triggered a transnational wave of feminist protests, from Paris to New York, transforming the trial into a key moment in the history of international feminism.

The relevance of *Novas Cartas Portuguesas* lies not only in its political content, but also in its hybrid and undisciplined form, which brings together letters, poetry, essay and testimony. By dissolving the separation between the intimate and the public, the work constructs a feminist counter-archive that challenges normative regimes of writing, sexuality and citizenship. After 50 years, its relevance remains evident, asserting itself as a poetic and political document of resistance to patriarchal violence and authoritarian repression.

At the intersection of private voices and public discourse, the book gives form to an insurgent memory that remains open. As Maria Velho da Costa (1978) would later reflect in the recording *Revolução e Mulheres* (Revolution and Women), women have always sustained the continuity of life: they rise before dawn, care for men, animals and children — and yet their work remains invisible, undervalued or romanticised.

Vermelho Vivo invokes this legacy not as a static tribute, but as an active poetic force, incorporating it into the exhibition space as a device for listening, friction and critical reactivation. The writing of the “Three Marias” thus constitutes an insurgent practice that destabilises the boundaries between literature, politics and the body, operating as a form of situated knowledge in which affect and language intertwine as practices of resistance. The exhibition pays tribute to this revolutionary lineage, but also raises a fundamental question: what happens after the revolution? Who continues the struggle in the silence that follows? *Vermelho Vivo* not only acknowledges the historical presence of the “Three Marias”, but also activates their poetic force — a *poiesis* that resists categorisation, blending testimony and irreverence, critique and tenderness. At a time when democratic freedoms are once again under threat, their voices emerge as both warning and incantation, rekindling the political imagination of new generations.

This feminist legacy finds resonance in the work of filmmaker and artist Luísa Sequeira (2023; Figure 14 and Figure 15), whose documentary reactivates the memory of the “Three Marias” through testimony and collaboration. In dialogue with Brazilian director Gilda Grillo — one of the figures responsible for bringing international visibility to the work — an intergenerational bridge of resistance is constructed. These testimonies are not remnants of the past, but living calls to action.



Figure 14. Views of the exhibition featuring a poster of the “Three Marias” and a documentary by Luísa Sequeira

Credits. Cesar Barreto



Figure 15. Still from the film *O Cravo e a Rocha* (*The Carnations and the Rock*)

Credits. Luísa Sequeira

In *Vermelho Vivo*, this feminist dimension does not emerge as an isolated core, but as a force that runs throughout the entire architecture of the exhibition, imbuing it with radical tenderness and an ethics of care. Revolution, in this context, cannot be fulfilled without the liberation of women — not as a metaphor, but as a material condition, lived embodiment and historical task. As bell hooks (2000) reminds us, love and freedom must go hand in hand. And where there is no justice, there can be no peace.

Revolution, understood in this way, does not end with a change of regime: it continues in bodies, languages and everyday struggles.

ECOLOGIES OF DESIRE AND POETICS OF THE BODY

If the previous chapters address memory, the archive, and the genealogies of resistance, this section shifts the focus to the body, desire, and intimacy as political territories. The aim is to understand revolution not only as a historical event or collective process, but as a sensory experience that emerges from the intimate sphere and expands into public space.

This chapter thus illuminates the poetics of revolution that erupt from intimacy — from love, complicity and relationships — and unfold through the voices of the street, articulating a collective dimension of belonging and shared humanity. Inspired by the song “Tourada” (Bullfight), by Fernando Tordo and José Carlos Ary dos Santos (1973), *Vermelho Vivo* invokes an irreverent energy which, in dialogue with the revolutionary spirit of 25 April, contributed to the rupture of censorship regimes and the emergence of new spaces of freedom, expression and dissent.

The “square of freedom” emerges in this context not as an exclusively architectural space, but as a symbolic figure and an expanded field in which the political is inscribed. It is a pulsating space that transcends urban materiality and becomes inscribed in artistic creation, where gesture, the body, and relationships become devices of transformation. In the works brought together here, the artists do not merely respond to their historical moment; rather, they work from within it, imagining possible futures through a situated practice. Their proposals intertwine past and present, intimacy and collectivity, configuring an idea of revolution that manifests itself simultaneously in individual experience and in the multiplicity of public space.

In *Palhaço Rico Fode Palhaço Pobre* (Rich Clown Fucks Poor Clown; Figure 16), artists João Pedro Vale and Nuno Alexandre Ferreira mobilise the world of the circus as a critical device for exploring the relationships between sexuality, class, and normativity. The staging of a parodic marriage between two clowns destabilises the institution of marriage and its heteronormative codes, operating through humour, excess and inversion. In a later iteration, presented at the Serralves Museum, the performance included the celebration of a real marriage between two men, transforming the artistic gesture into a concrete inscription in the field of civil rights. Artistic practice thus asserts itself as a space of visibility and intervention, where the symbolic dimension is articulated with material and political transformations.



Figure 16. Palhaço Rico Fode Palhaço Pobre (*Rich Clown Fucks Poor Clown*)

Credits. João Pedro Vale and Nuno Alexandre Ferreira

The metaphors of the feminine return in this chapter not as fixed essences, but as surfaces upon which historical violence and contemporary forms of resistance are inscribed. Portuguese artist Bárbara Fonte (Figure 17) works with her own body as a site of tension between norm and deviation, visibility and invisibility, control and autonomy. Through video, performance, and installation practices, she exposes the sociocultural mechanisms that shape women's experiences, highlighting how structures of power continually produce, regulate, and inscribe the body.



Figure 17. Views of the exhibition *Vermelho Vivo*, featuring works by Bárbara Fonte

Credits. Cesar Barreto

Her gestures, often anchored in everyday and domestic actions, enact a critical displacement: that which is traditionally associated with the private and the invisible becomes a space of enunciation and resistance. Repetition, restraint and bodily exhaustion emerge as formal strategies that render visible a diffuse form of violence, embodied in routines and normative codes. The body ceases to be merely a representation and asserts itself as a living archive, where layers of experience, memory and discipline accumulate.

By rejecting spectacularisation and insisting on a contained intensity, Bárbara Fonte's work invokes an ethics of attention and listening. Vulnerability emerges not as fragility, but as a critical condition of exposure, capable of destabilising regimes of visibility that have historically objectified the female body. In this sense, the artist reconfigures intimate space as a political territory, where the boundaries between the personal and the collective become porous and unstable.

Within this framework, desire does not emerge as an abstraction, but as a field of contestation and reconfiguration of the body. By reinscribing gestures and temporalities, these artistic practices activate a politics of the sensible that challenges normalisation and affirms the possibility of other forms of existence. Revolution, here, shifts to the micropolitical level, where the body, affect and relationships become central to the production of resistance.

By situating desire as a relational force and the body as a territory of historical inscription, *Vermelho Vivo* proposes an ecology of the sensible that articulates intimacy and politics, individual experience and collective transformation. This chapter thus demonstrates that ecologies of desire do not constitute merely a subjective dimension of experience, but a fundamental field of critical action, where other forms of life, other temporalities and other possibilities of existence are rehearsed.

INDIGENOUS COSMOLOGIES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF COUNTER-ARCHIVES

One of the structuring axes of *Vermelho Vivo* lies in incorporating Indigenous artistic practices, which operate as critical interruptions of colonial regimes of visibility and knowledge. The works brought together in this section do not function as illustrations of identity, but as cosmopolitical devices that reconfigure the relationships between territory, memory, the body and the image.

The practices of contemporary Indigenous artists mobilise the archive not as a stable source of truth, but as a field of dispute, re-enchantment and re-existence. By appropriating colonial images, hegemonic narratives and symbols of Western power, these works produce gestures of counter-mapping that expose the fictionality of official history. The archive is thus reopened as a living space, traversed by ancestry, ritual, spirituality and imagination.

In this context, the counter-archive is not limited to rewriting history, but seeks to destabilise the very regimes of knowledge production that sustain it. Images cease to operate as fixed documents and begin to act as living entities, bearers of memory, presence and relation.

These cosmologies reject the modern separation between nature and culture, subject and territory, human and non-human. Memory is understood as a relational practice, transmitted through the body, orality, gesture and dreams. In this sense, the works presented in *Vermelho Vivo* propose another temporality — not linear, not progressive — that challenges the epistemological foundations of colonialism and extractive capitalism.

In dialogue with the notion of “opacity”, proposed by Édouard Glissant, these practices assert the right to non-transparency, incompleteness and irreducibility. They do not seek to become fully legible within Western codes, but insist on difference as a form of resistance.

As Suely Rolnik (2018) writes, desire is not a lack, but a life force. In this project, desire becomes a driving force for collective imagination, non-linear futures, untameable memories and forms of existence that escape capture. Denise Ferreira da Silva (2022) adds: we owe the past a debt that cannot — and should not — be repaid. Not through a refusal of responsibility, but through an insistence on openness, a refusal of closure, and the preservation of history as a wound through which light can still enter.

The visual field, historically a site of domination, becomes here a space of counter-vision. What is remembered? What is erased? What is reactivated? In every projected image, in every vibration of sound and shadow, the memory of those who dared to love and fight pulses. *Vermelho Vivo* does not retreat into nostalgia: it calls for vigilance and for an understanding of freedom as an unfinished process. Remembering is not a passive gesture, but an ongoing act of resistance.

These insurgent strategies find powerful expression in the works of Indigenous artists such as Denilson Baniwa and Olinda Tupinambá. Their practices are not merely illustrative, but structuring elements of the exhibition’s cosmopolitical pulse, operating as radical interruptions of colonial and patriarchal visual regimes.

Denilson Baniwa (Figure 18) mobilises drawing, installation and digital media to subvert the colonial archive, reappropriating Western symbols and narratives from the perspective of Baniwa cosmologies. In *Ficções Coloniais* (Colonial Fictions; 2020; Figure 19), colonial images collide with Indigenous imaginaries, creating a critical cartography of imposed “truths”. His interventions are simultaneously lucid, ironic and destabilising, operating as devices of counter-mapping and imaginative insurgency.



Figure 18. Views of works by Denilson Baniwa and Olinda Tupinambá

Credits. Cesar Barreto



Figure 19. Ficções Coloniais (Colonial Fictions) by Denilson Baniwa

Credits. Denilson Baniwa

In a complementary vein, Olinda Tupinambá (Figure 20) develops a practice situated at the intersection of Indigenous epistemologies, ecological urgency and female ancestry. In *Ibirapema*, she stages the encounter between a Tupinambá woman and the urban, artistic and forest environment. This is not a narrative of assimilation, but an exercise in dialogue, tension and coexistence. Her films unfold as intimate cosmographies, where memory, water, the body and ritual converge in a poetics of listening — a refusal of dominant forms of language in favour of gesture, rhythm and breath. Her presence transforms the exhibition space into a zone of re-enchantment. Taken together, these practices constitute a counter-archive that seeks legitimacy not through documentation, but through embodied experience. They do not ask for translation; they demand relation. Through them, *Vermelho Vivo* asserts itself not merely as a space of memory, but as a living territory of insurgency.



Figure 20. *Ibirapema* by Olinda Tupinambá

Credits. Olinda Tupinambá

Within this same expanded field, Portuguese artist Miguel Ângelo Marques (Figure 21) presents a series of eight paintings inspired by “Notas Para um Manifesto de uma Arte Ecológica” (Notes for a Manifesto for an Ecological Art), by Alberto Carneiro (1973). Mobilising animist symbols, such as the crystalline sphere and the serpent, Marques dissolves the separation between subject and landscape, invoking a ritual relationship with nature. His works do not represent nature; they incorporate it. In doing so, they reposition ecology as a space of resistance and reflection, in resonance with Indigenous and ancestral forms of knowledge.



Figure 21. Views of works by Rosa Gauditano (left) and Miguel Ângelo Marques

Credits. Cesar Barreto

These artists, among others, do not merely expose the wounds of the present; they invite the viewer to imagine differently. They offer tools, metaphors and talismans for survival in a world in which “progress” is drawing ever closer to destruction. Their collective cry is clear: we must listen to the Earth before it falls silent.

In the final moments of *Vermelho Vivo*, the feminine returns, not as vulnerability, but as an elemental force. The exhibition’s final curves pulse with symbols of protection, resistance and continuity. Nature and ancestry emerge not as a return to the past, but as guiding forces for the future, true bastions of imagination and the construction of what is to come. Because what lies ahead will demand more than dreams: it will demand renewed courage.

CONCLUSION: CURATING AS AN ACT OF RESISTANCE

Vermelho Vivo: Amor & Revolução emerges as a curatorial gesture that claims memory, affect and imagination as active fields of political contestation. By bringing together feminist, Indigenous and decolonial artistic practices, the project shifts curating from an organisational function towards a situated practice of critical mediation, where care and confrontation coexist as inseparable forces.

By rejecting linear narratives and monumental forms of memory, *Vermelho Vivo* proposes an understanding of history as an unfinished process, traversed by fractures, silences and persistent forms of resistance. The commemorative events that frame the

exhibition — the Carnation Revolution, the military coup in Brazil and the processes of decolonisation in Lusophone African territories — are activated not as stabilised landmarks, but as living matter that continues to reverberate in the present. In this context, remembering is not a passive gesture, but an ongoing practice of vigilance, responsibility and imagination, involving an active relationship with the past as a field of contestation.

The article has demonstrated how affect, desire and opacity operate as central political and epistemological forces within this curatorial project. Inspired by scholars who conceive of love as an ethical practice, desire as a life force and opacity as a right to complexity, the exhibition is configured as a space where art does not seek to clarify or resolve, but to create tension, listen and keep the wounds of history open. It is a field where images do not stabilise meanings, but produce critical displacements and reorientations.

The presence of Indigenous cosmologies and feminist legacies highlights the need to expand regimes of visibility and knowledge, rejecting colonial and patriarchal hierarchies that remain dominant. These contributions do not operate as illustrative elements, but as structuring forces that reconfigure the very ways of seeing, knowing and relating. At these intersections, curating emerges as a situated practice of listening and articulation, capable of sustaining relationships between different epistemologies without reducing them to a unifying logic.

In this sense, *Vermelho Vivo* positions curating as an act of aesthetic and political resistance. To curate entails sustaining relationships, creating sensitive alliances and producing conditions for plural futures, without erasing the violence of the past or reducing the complexity of the present. It is a practice that operates in the interval between memory and imagination, between what was and what may yet be, keeping open the tensions that constitute the historical and political field.

At a time marked by crises of democracy, ecology and political imagination, the project claims art as a site of active presence. A space where memory is transformed into action and where affect asserts itself as a critical force for transformation. Within this framework, curating ceases to be mere mediation and becomes a gesture of positioning, responsibility, and involvement. Thus, *Vermelho Vivo* does not merely revisit the past but proposes its activation as a condition for constructing possible futures. In this context, remembering constitutes a critical and ongoing act, inseparable from the responsibility to imagine, sustain and make possible other forms of existence.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Ângela Ferreira (also known as Berlinde; Porto, 1975) is an artist, curator, and photography researcher. Her work focuses on contemporary photographic and curatorial practices, with particular emphasis on photopainting in Northeast Brazil, photobooks, and visual culture in Portuguese-speaking territories. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Interdisciplinary Arts and Poetics at the School of Fine Arts of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and holds a PhD in Art Education, Visual Communication and Plastic Expression from the University of Minho. She also holds a European Media Master's degree in Photography from the Utrecht School of the Arts and has undertaken training in Art Direction, Curatorial Practices, and Law at the University of Minho. She is also co-founder of Nervo — Observatory of Photobooks in Portugal.

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