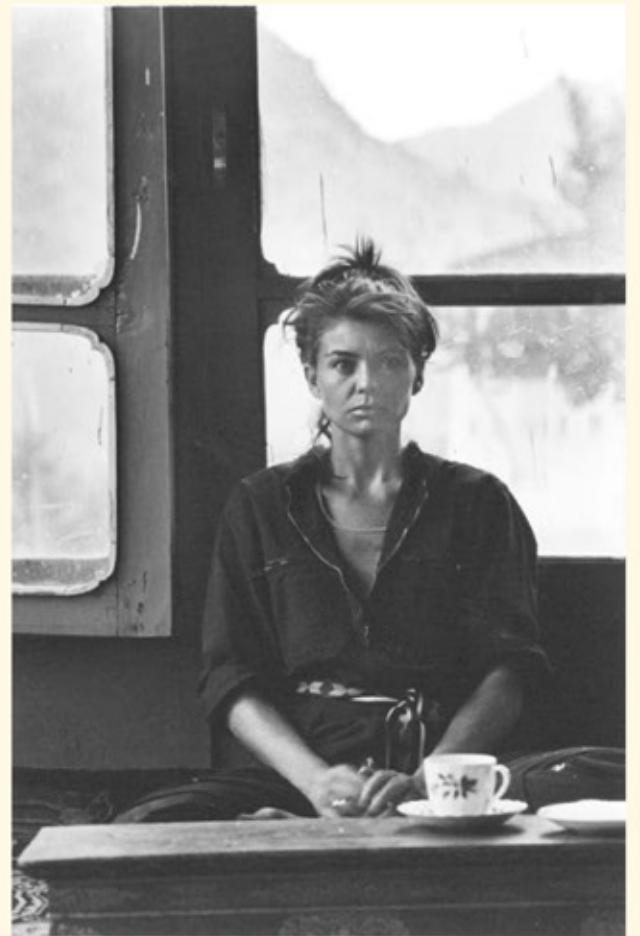


SYLVIA MARTINS

Gli
orI



new york

Just before I came to New York, I met Bob Colacello in Rio, who said I should meet "Andy." I then went to New York to study art, and I needed a visa, so I went to the Art Students' League. It was so much easier back then, coming to America, getting visas. Somehow I ended up at the Factory meeting Andy Warhol. He had a big studio—a less frantic version of the original Factory—down on Union Square, at 860 Broadway, and I got a studio across the street, right on Union Square. So after my studio day was done, I used to go and hang out over there, and quickly met a lot of the art crowd in New York.

There was a mixed group from all over the world around Andy at that time, and I fit in really well. There were some other Brazilians too, it was the right place at the right time, and I was the right age—early twenties—the world was ours! Pretty and funny and lots of friends. There was also the club scene, of course. Being at the Factory and hanging out, you constantly met a lot of interesting people! One of whom was an American actor who Andy thought was going to become very famous. He had just finished this film

Yanks, directed by John Schlesinger. We became really close and eventually moved in together. Most of my friends at the time were artists, or were at least connected to art. I couldn't think about any other way to live—I was always so happy making art. I think just being in New York, you're absorbing all the energy that's around at the time. You don't do it consciously, but it's all there.

Andy was very... well, he could be very vicious with a lot of people, but he was always so nice to me. The guy had a great body, nobody knew that, I mean, I saw him exercise one day and wow! I said, "how can you have such a great figure because you're always at those dinner parties with all those people every night?" And he said, "The secret is always eat *half* of what you have on your plate."

So he influenced my eating habits maybe, but I always went my own direction with my art. I never wanted to paint like Warhol. I would learn how to do things, and then go my own way.

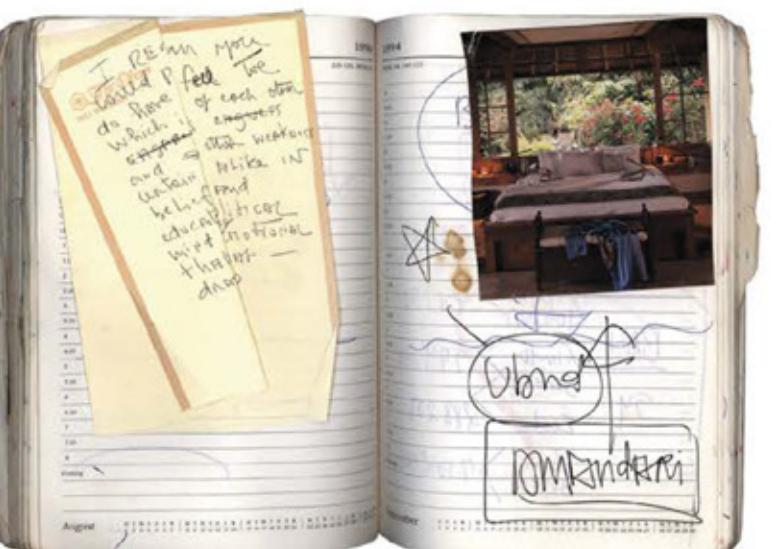
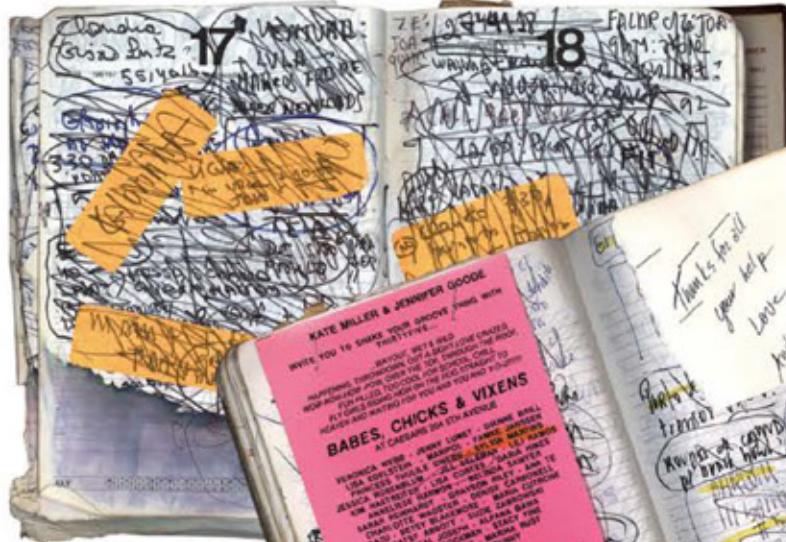
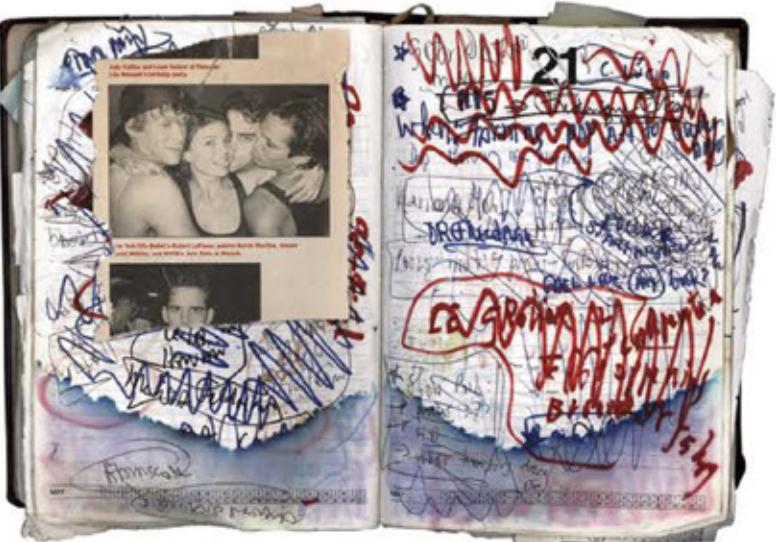
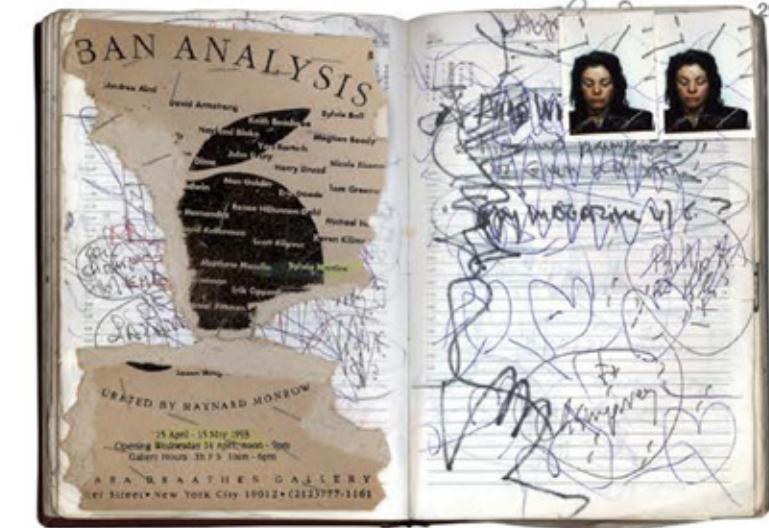
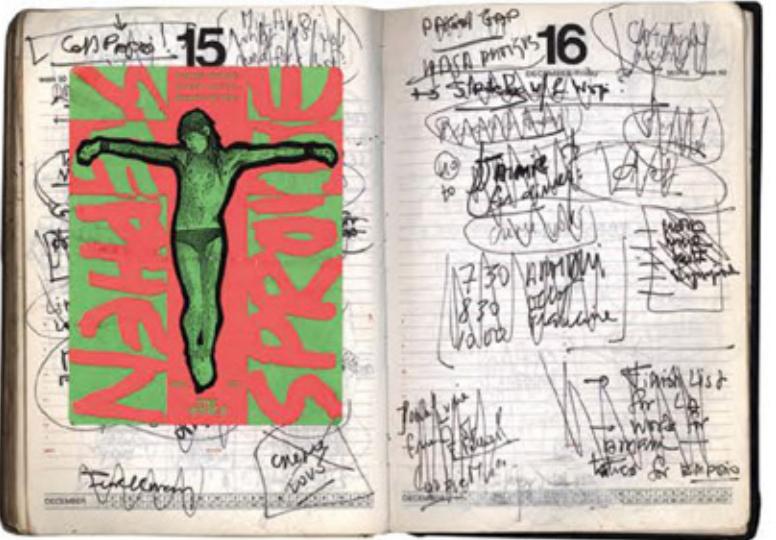
I love painting more than anything. I thought everything was boring but painting. I think painting is the only technique that allowed me to really express myself, or at least release myself. It's almost sexual for me—not literally but that's the closest comparison. My work, even from my early drawings, has always been very sensual, highly charged. I liked abstract painting but I didn't really fit into abstract, or figurative, or any specific style. I just thought that I could try everything. I didn't feel like there were any limits on what direction I might take.

In New York it seemed like everybody sort of knew everybody. You didn't have to be famous to show in a gallery. They actually liked the fact that there was new blood. Some of those galleries were just little tiny store fronts, so there was that kind of 'do-it-yourself' energy.





Estância Cinco Salsos, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, 1987





left: drawings in progress, Tribeca Studio, New York above: Cajun Panache, 1993, mixed media on paper, 16 1/2 x 13 1/2 in | 42 x 34 cm



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Untitled, 1997, oil on canvas, 60 x 60 in | 152 x 152 cm

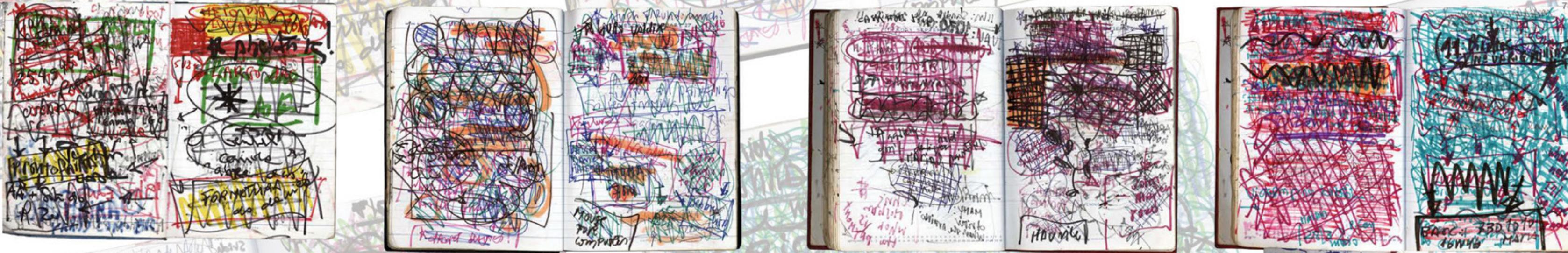


Soho Studio, New York, 2000



Cuba, 2000, oil on canvas, 50 x 50 in | 127 x 127 cm





2000s diary pages



"A natureza discursiva da pintura é útil do ponto de vista da persuasão devido a que constitui uma rede de representações nunca concluída"
Thomas Lawson

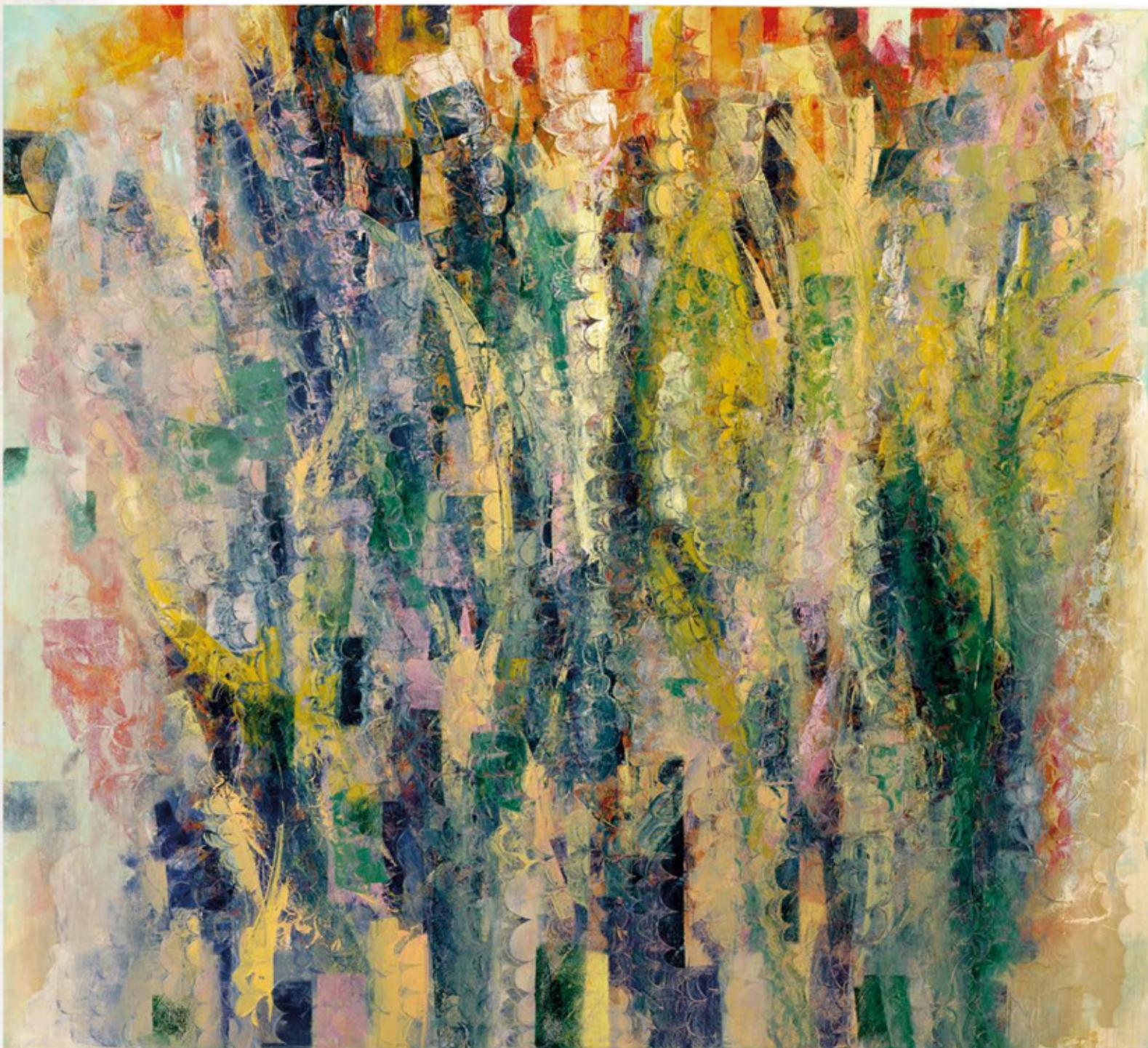
A Aventura Cromática de Sylvia Martins

As cores ainda tem asas, voam, inauguram territórios visuais próprios, antes desconhecidos. O ponto de partida de qualquer quadro que pretenda ser verdadeiro é sempre esse, uma obrigação de ser uma festa para os olhos, como pedia Delacroix. No caso de Sylvia Martins nos encontramos com uma artista que é pintora-pintora, na medida em que estabelece seu discurso apaixonado independentemente do lado móbido da época pós-moderna (que não parece afetá-la). Assim no permanente desenho desta pintura habita uma possessão da matéria da cor, como um ímã de prazer visual. Há algo de evidente imersão nas telas de Sylvia Martins, uma pulsão gestual que não esconde a vibração interna – até um certo eros- cada vez mais manifestada pela textura de uma pintura espessa, com mais corpo, adensada. Na nova série Cachos, a textura se assemelha um pouco ao trama de um tecido enganoso, aparentando muita tinta onde há sobretudo velocidade, ou um movimento que produz relevos. Não estaríamos então dentro de uma natureza morta, ou melhor, dentro de uma natureza selvagem? Assim as tramas, as cascatas, as camadas cruzadas de cores são toda uma floresta pictórica que pede sempre valentia no ataque à superfície. Um mergulho na superfície que continua sendo um atributo da pintura, o que produz uma certa vertigem na visão das telas.

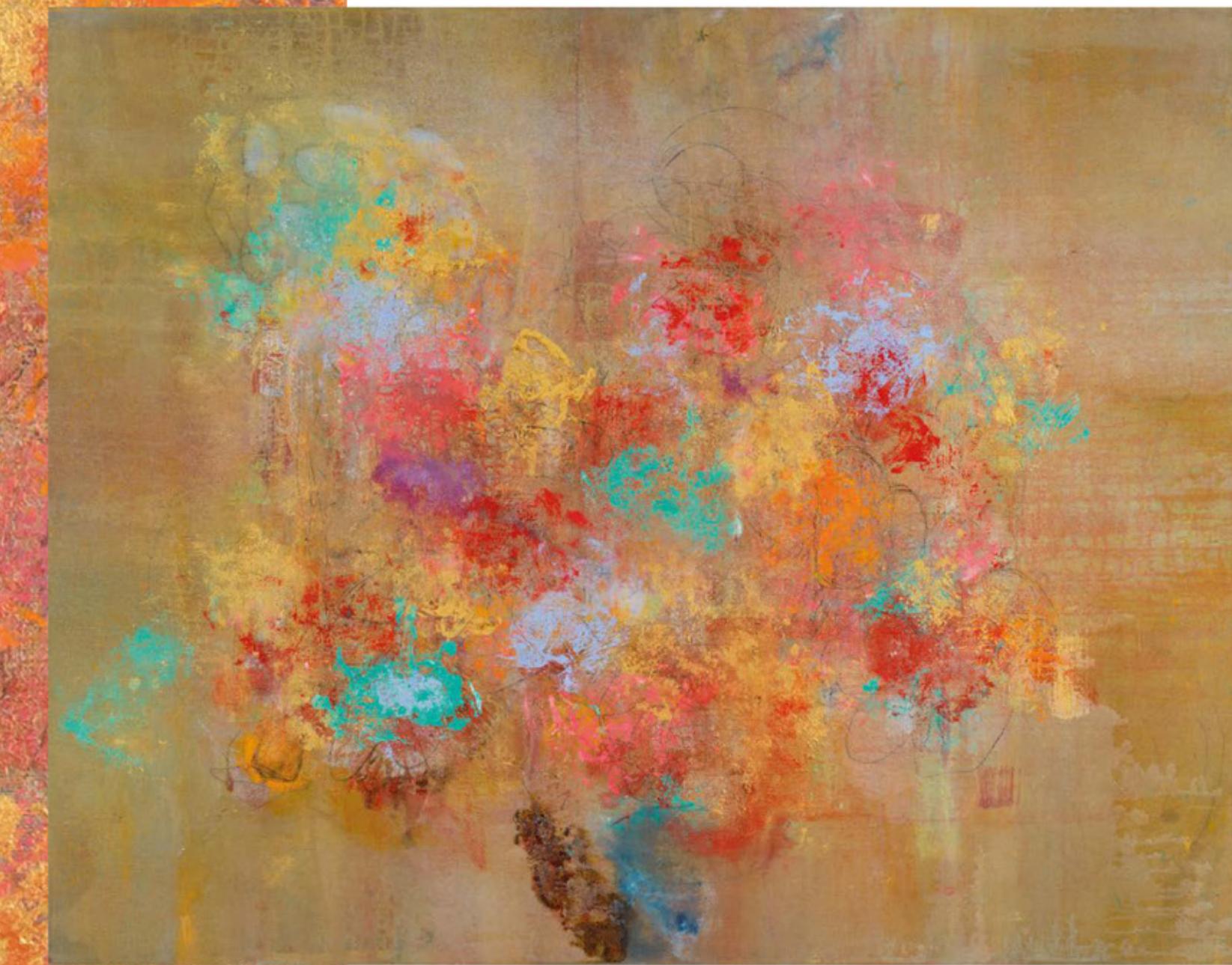
Sylvia Martins parece ter aumentado a lente de seu olhar pictórico, o foco de sua atenção, para telas cada vez mais obcecadas com uma imagem matriarcal que se desenvolve como detalhes ampliados, multiplicados em composições onde a cor –as raízes plurais das cores – atinge sua trama compositiva em alianças tonais, arquitetadas em estruturações espaciais. Esta paulatina aproximação ao olho da pintura tem um elevado canto – uma alegria que raramente se encontra (como acontece também nas maravilhas afirmativas de Cícero Dias ou de Beatriz Milhazes). E talvez um ar de realismo mágico que só se encontra na pintura latino-americana da área hispânica. Aliás, pode-se dizer que o âmago desta pintura tem uma atração por uma imagética atávica a ser descoberta, cernes visuais de uma natureza quase arquetipal, às vezes de uma fractalidade que não chega a ser nunca inteiramente geométrica em seus reflexos. Toda a nova série de Cachos mostra esse itinerário onde a abstração chamada em sua aventura cromática expõe toda uma orquestraçāo de cores (até de planos que querem ser verticais, que insinuariam um pós-cubismo latente, escondido no fundo), dentro de uma linguagem abstrata que não quer ser noturna, e sim diurna, solar, às vezes quente (daí que não seja nada estranho a presença quase onipotente do amarelo, de uma forma ou outra, e até com tons frios). Nas nervuras desta pintura de impulso lírico há uma fé cega na cor, em seu pathos de herança moderna. Talvez por isso a artista não saiba nunca o começo da tela, assim como nós também nunca saberemos onde de fato ela acaba.

Adolfo Montejo Navas

Rio de Janeiro, março, 2004 (Sylvia Martins, Cachos 2004, Centro Cultural Correios e MAM-BA)



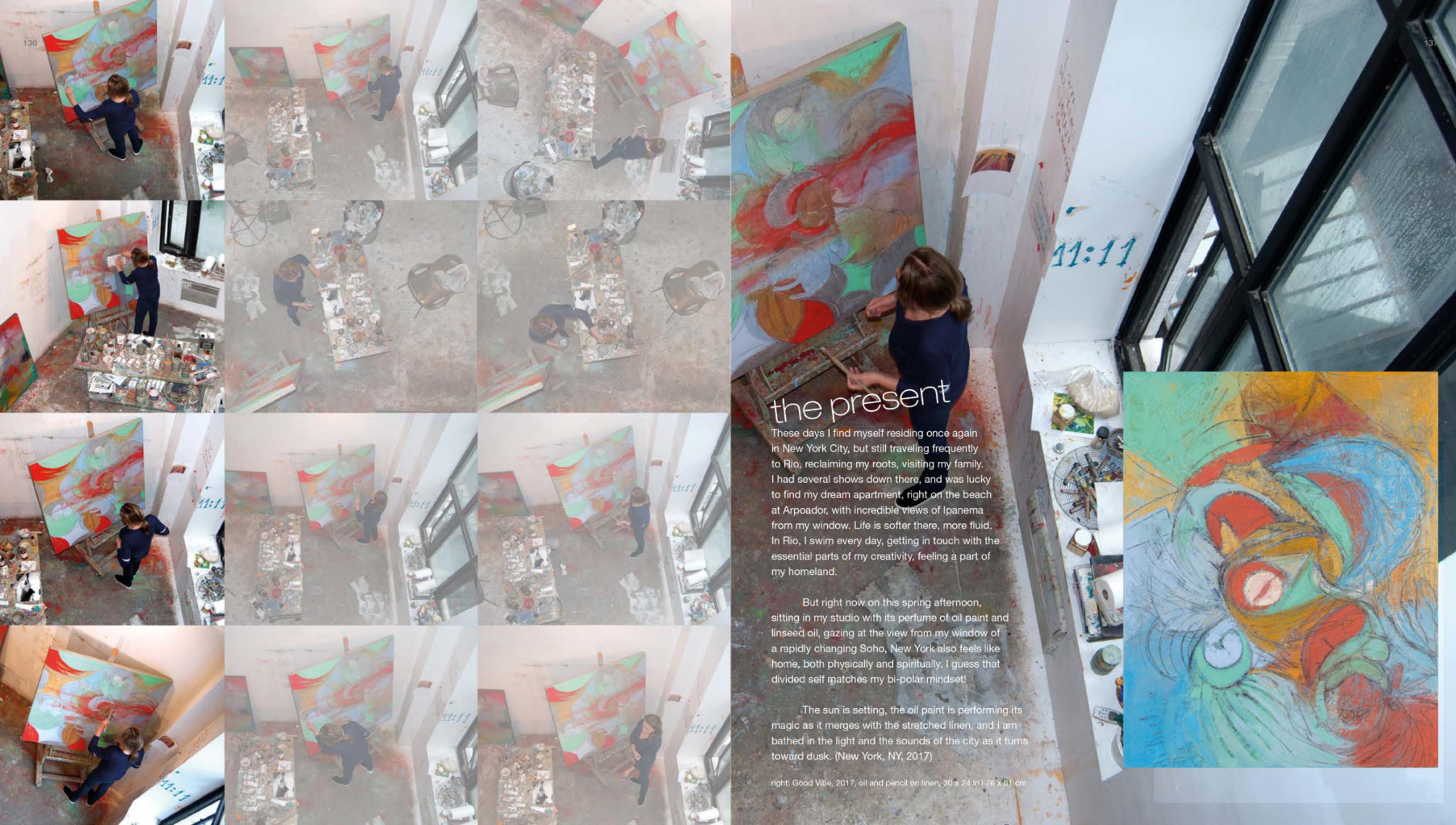
Cachos Selvagens, 2004, oil on linen, 60 x 66 in | 152 x 168 cm



above: La Vista I, 2014, oil and pencil on linen, 40 X 50 in | 102 x 127 cm left: La Vista I (detail)



Rio de Janeiro, 2017, oil and pencil on linen, 35 x 35 in | 89 x 89 cm left: Rio de Janeiro (detail)



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11:11

the present

These days I find myself residing once again in New York City, but still traveling frequently to Rio, reclaiming my roots, visiting my family. I had several shows down there, and was lucky to find my dream apartment, right on the beach at Arpoador, with incredible views of Ipanema from my window. Life is softer there, more fluid. In Rio, I swim every day, getting in touch with the essential parts of my creativity, feeling a part of my homeland.

But right now on this spring afternoon, sitting in my studio with its perfume of oil paint and linseed oil, gazing at the view from my window of a rapidly changing Soho, New York also feels like home, both physically and spiritually. I guess that divided self matches my bi-polar mindset!

The sun is setting, the oil paint is performing its magic as it merges with the stretched linen, and I am bathed in the light and the sounds of the city as it turns toward dusk. (New York, NY, 2017)

right: Good Vibe, 2017, oil and pencil on linen, 30 x 24 in / 76 x 61 cm

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END OF SAMPLE