

# Magdalena Jitrik

## *Modern Painting*

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### Press Release

Sat on the beach, the farthest point in sight is two miles away. However, one only need mount a horse to double that range, or climb the steps of a lighthouse for the horizon to decide to stretch another 20 miles from our eyes. I have been told that it's not the horizon that moves away, rather it's our point of view that changes. Nonetheless, in a Magdalena Jitrik painting, I do not have to alter my position for the horizon to start to come and go just as the sea does with its waves.

In several of her pictures, Jitrik works on a horizontal line, which implies a proposal of space, as any line that splits a rectangle leads us to comprehend two planes: the vertical, above, the horizontal, below, or in other words, the sky and the earth. Therefore, at first glance, a Jitrik painting projects a space, but one only need look a bit closer for that space to start to change and move in such a way that what was far away comes nearer, and what was nearby moves away. This effect is achieved by playing with the background and the figure.

In *Vivenda* (oil on canvas, 2014), this is clear. There is a kind of spiral in front of a horizon line, giving us the impression that the figure is sat on a *ground*, but the eye soon starts to scan the image and that same ground moves forwards, transforming into a wall, and consequently taking up position on the same plane as the figure. There is, therefore, a distortion of perspective – reminiscent of Volpi – a distortion that manages to constantly modify the space proposed in the painting. Nothing stays still on the canvas, the verticals lie down and the planes stand up, meaning the spectator can change his point of view in relation to the object without moving a centimetre.

Likewise, in this picture, the centre of the figure is a volume – dense – while its end is a plane, a sheet of paper so fine that it dispenses of an outline, adopting its chromatic specificity as its limits. This leads to another characteristic of Jitrik's work, for whereas on the one hand we have a sharp game involving space and perspective, on the other, there is obvious use of a reduced palette, limited colour, which has a definitive function in integrating the different elements, that is, in linking the background and the figure. Indeed, background is a constant issue for Jitrik, it is not by chance that a 2007 exhibition was entitled "Fondo de Huelga" (Strike Background), the logo of which was a flag bearing the word "Fondo" (Background), sometimes in cloth, with the word "Huelga" (Strike) superimposed over its letters. It was a play on words, but nevertheless indicated an aesthetic, formal matter, intrinsic to the work of this Argentinean artist.

Jitrik's works begin as sketches drawn using an automatist method, the same one used so much by Aizemberg, with no prior model or references. Such drawings are the fruit of free experimentation with the pencil, to be developed later with the paintbrush. Jitrik thus resumes a craft that would be precisely that of the modern painter. Hence the name of the exhibition – *Modern Painting* – a title that encompasses solemnity and irony; whereas in the early 20th century modernity was loaded with the future, the avant garde, today it finds itself imbued with the past. Nonetheless, an always

revolutionary past, which is, ultimately, the other peculiarity of Jitrik. Abstract or figurative, Magdalena Jitrik's work always makes references to the Revolution, which consists of knowing that the horizon is where you choose to place it; either at the end of your nose or miles away from it.

Julia Buenaventura

**Link**

[www.galerialuisastrina.com.br/exposicoes/magdalena-jitrik-2014](http://www.galerialuisastrina.com.br/exposicoes/magdalena-jitrik-2014)

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