

Montage and social critique in the work of Portuguese artists in London

E depois eu montei esta cena... era a esperança na revolução.. era o futuro
Teresa Magalhães (Magalhães 2018b)¹

In the epigraph above Portuguese artist Teresa Magalhães describes an untitled painting from 1969, where the montage of the composing elements is central to their meaning. Divided by three colour strips, two of them in red hues and one in blue, the painting directs the viewer's gaze to the diagonal relation between a young woman in a bikini (a symbol of female empowerment and liberation in the 1960s) and a half-open box, which could also represent a tomb. Using the aesthetics of international art movements such as pop art, Magalhães's box connected the feeling of being in a stifling dark box or buried alive with the reality of life under the censorship and the repression enforced by Estado Novo, the dictatorial regime that still prevailed in 1960s-Portugal.² This situation had particular gender implications, as women's social role was framed by a conservative ideology that placed them as subservient elements of the patriarchal family and confined them to the domestic and private spheres. But the painting also expressed the disruptive political attitude and a hopeful dimension recognised by Magalhães in her a-posteriori comment, which are formally suggested within the painting by its colour palette – the blue sky contrasting with the red shades of the sea and the beach –, as well as by the linear perspective created between the two figurative elements, which removes the young girl from the box whilst seemingly waiting for someone to lift the lid. Magalhães thus seemed to foresee the democratic revolution of 1974 and the end to one the longest dictatorships in Europe; in so doing her work ultimately draws attention to Portuguese artists' contribution to that very same political and revolutionary process.

In 1969 Magalhães was already a defiant young woman, who not only did not identify with the academicism dominant at the School of Fine Arts but also was used to

¹ A copy of this untitled painting is available through the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian website: <https://gulbenkian.pt/museu/en/pos-pop/depois-da-pop/>

² Estado Novo lasted for forty-one years (1933-1974). It was ruled mostly by António de Oliveira Salazar (1933-1968), who was followed by Marcelo Caetano (1968-1974) until the Carnation Revolution.

raising an eyebrow in her swinging-sixties-inspired miniskirts (Magalhães 2018b).³ Eager to leave the stifling atmosphere of Lisbon behind and explore the world, she travelled abroad whilst still an art student and visited places like Paris and London. The British capital in particular created a long-lasting impression and impacted the direction of her work, which was then very much influenced by the language of pop art and the hippie subculture, as well as boosted her dissenting attitude in relation to the Portuguese art establishment: '[g]oing to London in 1969 with colleagues from the Art School was also great fun and enriching, since the 1960s were happening there . . . If I'm asked now what my knowledge of modern art in Portugal was in the 1960s, and what relation I had with it, I would say: it was practically non-existent!' (Magalhães 2018a: 218).

The movement of Portuguese artists to other European countries at a time when the isolationist policy of Estado Novo went hand-in-hand with a nationalist ideology had begun around a decade earlier and was possible due to the financial support of the newly founded Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. Created in 1956, this organisation set up a grant scheme shortly after, allowing many artists to study and work not just in Portugal but also, and more importantly, abroad. It was with this help that Magalhães, along with Menez, Paula Rego, António Sena, Bartolomeu Cid dos Santos and João Cutileiro, to name but a few other artists, were working in London since the late 1950s, where they experienced the winds of social change blowing from the English capital and were exposed to countercultural and avantgarde movements that held an important international dimension, their anti-establishment ethos connecting London to other cultural centres such as New York, Paris and West Berlin.⁴ Paula Rego is a key figure amongst this group of Portuguese artists, as she established herself more-or-less permanently in London, whilst still being strongly connected to her country of birth. In the discussion of the impact that the move to London had in the direction of Rego's work and her reception in Portugal, Leonor de Oliveira observes that 'the experience in a foreign and democratic country reinforced a distanced

³ Several of Magalhães's paintings from this period use the motif of the miniskirt, exploring the liberatory symbolism of this garment.

⁴ See Leonor de Oliveira's *Portuguese Artists in London Shaping Identities in Post-War Europe* (2019), which rethinks the cultural and artistic interactions in the post-war Europe through the prism of Portuguese artists' journeys between Portugal and Britain. In her research Oliveira demonstrates how these migrant artists not only broke with dominant aesthetic representations, exploring instead new artistic languages, but also incorporated a critical perspective on contemporary issues, namely the political and social situation in Portugal during Estado Novo.

and critical view on Portuguese politics' (2024: 19). Presenting Rego's controversial exhibition at Sociedade Nacional de Belas Artes, in Lisbon, in 1965 (a particularly harsh and dark period caused by the beginning of the Colonial War in 1961 and the murder of the opposition figure General Humberto Delgado in February 1965) as evidence that 'there was space in the artistic context of the city for confrontational and dissenting attitudes' (2024: 20), Oliveira sees the 'experimental creativity' of Rego's exhibited works as a form of 'political resistance' (2024: 23). In a similar vein, Raquel Henriques da Silva connects Bartolomeu Cid dos Santos's move to London, where he first studied at the Slade School of Art (between 1956 and 1958) and then rejoined this institution as a teaching assistant in 1961, with the 'inventive re-membering of Portuguese history incorporating melancholy, irony, often bordering on mockery' (2007: 34) of the work he exhibited in Portugal and London during this period.⁵

Taking as a starting point the view that the aesthetic experimentation embraced by a new generation of Portuguese artists and cultural agitators whilst living and working in London was intrinsically connected with new forms of political resistance (Oliveira 2024: 23), in this article we will address the impact that the move to London had in the art practice of Eduardo Batarida and Ana Hatherly, who studied in London in the early 1970s and thus before the Carnation Revolution of 1974. Like many other artists of their generation, Batarida benefitted from the generous support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, whose grant made possible for him not only to study at the Royal College of Art between 1971 and 1972, but also to escape the war front, given that since 1961 Portugal was involved in a bloody fight for its colonies against the liberation struggle of oppressed Africans.⁶ As for the poet and visual artist Ana Hatherly, she enrolled in the London Film School (1971-74) and there studied animation, again with the financial help of the Gulbenkian Foundation.⁷

⁵ Bartolomeu Cid dos Santos left for London in 1956, where he studied engraving at the Slade School of Art. In 1958 he returned to Portugal but left again for London in 1961, beginning then his work at the Slade. Between 1961 and 1964 he received a scholarship from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. During this period, Cid dos Santos won several art prizes. On his move to London, the artist stated: 'se os tempos eram propícios aos polícias e aos negreiros, certamente não o eram à criação intelectual, artística, literária ou mesmo científica. Por isso, como muitos outros, me fui embora' (Ribeiro and Santos, 1989: n.p.). In another article, Henriques da Silva, asserts that since the 1950s Portuguese artists and intellectuals stopped participating in events promoted by the state and the majority assumed themselves as opposition to the regime (2009: 13).

⁶ Between 1968 and 1971 Batarida did his mandatory military service, though he was not sent to Africa.

⁷ In studying at the London Film School, Hatherly was following in the footsteps of influential Portuguese directors Fernando Lopes, who joined the school with a grant awarded by the Fundo de Cinema Nacional, and João Cesar Monteiro, who attended the school in 1963 with a grant from the Gulbenkian Foundation. The

Marked by the central event of the decade – the Carnation Revolution on the 25th of April 1974 – the Portuguese art produced in the 1970s witnessed a crescendo of activity, diversification and experimentation, exacerbating tendencies of the previous decade and in articulation with developments witnessed in the international art scene. The period can be defined as a crossing of borders, both in a literal and aesthetic sense and, in fact, ‘Anos 70: atravessar fronteiras’ was the name chosen for an exhibition held at CAM – Calouste Gulbenkian, in 2009-2010, that offered a survey of this decade. In the ensuing catalogue, Henriques da Silva highlighted the high degree of experimentation observed in the works on display, associated with a cosmopolitanism (2009: 11) to which the deterritorialization of many Portuguese artists greatly contributed, whilst Rita Macedo added that ‘O final dos anos 60 e início dos anos 70 corresponde ao regresso de muitos desses bolseiros e ao redesenhar de uma nova conjuntura’ (2009: 19), therefore addressing the impact that these same migrant artists had in the redesigning of the Portuguese art context.⁸ This was a context in which transdisciplinary enquiries coexisted with revolutionary action, the exploration of the body, and an emphasis on a processual perspective of art, which, in turn, was visible in the development of performance, film and video art, forms that, along with photography, moved from the margins to the centre of an increasingly expanded field, to paraphrase one of the seminal essays of that time (Krauss 1979). Framed by the aforementioned transnational context and an expanded field, we propose to discuss traces of cinematographic processes, and in particular that of montage, in Batarda’s and Hatherly’s production and the disruptive potential of this nexus.

Within the more conventional field of painting, the early 1970s were still marked by the language of pop and conceptual art, the latter in conjugation with a renewed interest in

London Film School was a private institution set up in 1957 and entirely dependent on students’ fees. Initially called London Film School of Technique, it changed its name to London Film School in 1969 to avoid being seen as merely providing a narrow technical training, and then again to London International Film School, in 1974, to highlight the transnational and cosmopolitan dimension of its student body. The school reverted to the name London Film School in 2000. See Petrie and Stoneman (2014: 121-140) for the history of the London Film School.

⁸ Unlike other artists living in London, for example, Bartolomeu Cid dos Santos, João Cutileiro and Paula Rego, neither Batarda nor Hatherly exhibited their London works in Portugal before the 1974 Revolution, as they only arrived to London in the early 1970s. Hatherly’s animations have remained largely unknown and Batarda’s London work was first exhibited at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in August 1975. Nevertheless, in a review of this exhibition (Anon., *Jornal do Comércio* 1975) Batarda pointed to the social satire and political references of these works and connects their inherent ambiguity of meaning to the repressive cultural context in which he had lived until recently.

photography.⁹ These movements explored processes of montage, assemblage and collage in tandem with seriality.¹⁰ But the emphasis was generally placed on sameness and repetition, even if sometimes to highlight variation and difference within that same repetition. In the work of Batarida and Hatherly of the same period, these processes are used in ways closer to how they have been used in cinema, particularly within the tradition of avantgarde and experimental filmmaking, from propaganda masterpieces produced in the Soviet Union, to surrealists photomontages of the 1930s and pop art experiments of the 1950s and 1960s, including British animation and experimental cinema of the early 1970s. In this tradition montage is connected to the juxtaposition and condensation of contrasting images or stills in order to create new, unpredictable meanings that have an inherent potential of being subversive or even transgressive of the established order.

The term montage, which derives from the French *monter*, meaning 'to assemble', is defined by the Routledge Encyclopaedia of Modernism as:

[T]he technique of combining disparate images or elements to form a composite work. Montage is related to the practice of collage; however, it differs from collage most fundamentally in the greater emphasis it places on juxtaposition – a technique often used to make a rhetorical point. (Sperling et al 2016)

Though also used in the context of literature and aesthetics, montage is mostly associated with Soviet cinema of the 1920s and Sergei Eisenstein's theories of film editing: '[t]he essence of cinema does not lie in the images, but in the relation between the images', Eisenstein famously wrote (apud Aumont 1992: 146), or, as Andre Bazin later put it, montage is the 'creation of sense or meaning not objectively contained in the images themselves but derived exclusively from their juxtaposition' (1967: 25). Further linked to avantgarde movements of the beginning of the twentieth century, such as Dadaism and Cubism, and even to Surrealism in the 1930s, montage experienced a renewed interest in the early 1970s, when several critics and filmmakers in France and Britain rediscovered the

⁹ In 1969, the Hayward gallery in London, put up pop art; the largest and most comprehensive exhibition in Britain dedicated to the movement, it confirmed its centrality and acceptance in the canon. In 2018, the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian in Lisbon organised an exhibition that explored the dialogue that British and Portuguese artists established with pop art (Vasconcelos and Rosas 2018). See Walker (2002) for a discussion of conceptual and experimental British art of the 1970s.

¹⁰ The relevance of collage and montage also gained visibility within the Portuguese art context. In 1975, the Sociedade Nacional de Belas Artes, in Lisbon, exhibited 'Colagem/ Montagem' as part of a set of 'three exhibitions-enquiries', therefore reflecting the interest in these practices and the growing dynamism of the Portuguese art milieu.

importance of this process within the context of a renewed politicised cinema.¹¹ Montage was then deeply connected to the revolutionary potential that Eisenstein and other Soviet filmmakers identified in cinema. In Britain, filmmaker and critic Peter Woolen dedicated the first section of his influential 1969-volume *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema* to Eisenstein, whom he described as 'the first, and probably still the most important, major theorist of cinema' (2013: 4).

Eduardo Batarda: the multiplication of meaning and the critique of authority

Eduardo Batarda arrived in London in 1971, where he lived until 1974. Enrolled at the Royal College of Art, he learned from Roger de Grey, Peter de Francia and Peter Blake, the latter a prominent figure in the swinging London cultural scene and the pop art movement, responsible, along with his wife and fellow artist Jann Haworth, for the Beatle's 1967 album cover Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. Inspired by Blake's iconoclastic approach to art, Batarda's practice from this period also nods at pop art and popular culture, namely the world of comics, in which he had already shown an interest prior to his move to London. Indeed, heading towards the saturated surfaces (Rosendo 2020: 135) that will dominate his practice of the 1970s, Batarda's earlier work used the language of the comic strip, displaying space broken by disjunct images that were, nevertheless, still contained by separate rectangles (Batarda 2020: 151). This approach was interrupted first by military service (1968-1971) and then, upon Batarda's move to London, by what the artist described as 'uma série de abstrações muito simples mas cómicas' (Batarda n.d.: 10).¹² The depurated, albeit imperfect and fake (Santos 2017: 47), abstractions culminated in the ironically titled *Portrait of Patrick Caulfield: painted in the ridiculous manner of the French School* (1972), where Batarda paid tribute to as much as satirised another contemporary British art exponent whilst engaging in a palimpsestic process of montage within the painting that acknowledged and made fun of a preceding modernist tradition.¹³ [figure 1]

¹¹ According to Vincent Porter (2012: 71), in 1970 the magazine *Screen* commissioned or republished English language translations of theoretical papers written during the 1920s and the 1930s in the debates between formalists and socialist realists in Russia, along with contemporary semiological and structuralist essays that came mainly from France.

¹² Batarda has recently admitted (2020: 30) that he did not have much time to develop his art practice in the late 1960s since he served as a drafted officer in the Portuguese army between 1968 and 1971.

¹³ Batarda's painting seems to quote Caulfield's *Three Roses* (1963). Even though Caulfield is often associated with the pop art movement, his work avoided obvious contemporary imagery and explored traditional art genres such as landscape painting and still-lives. Some examples of Batarda's work from this period are available through the CAM Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian website <https://gulbenkian.pt/cam/en/artist/eduardo-batarda-2/>.

By 1973 Batarda had seemingly returned to the more congested world of comics, producing a mise-en-abyme effect through the multiplication and juxtaposition of images and words, in paintings where texts often doubled as citations (often mixing several European languages) from a wide range of sources.¹⁴ Discovering the rich tradition of English watercolour, he painstakingly and laboriously explored this medium (often in conjugation with Indian ink), displaying his technical skill at a time when this was deemed old-fashioned and bridging the gap between high and low brow culture.¹⁵ Despite being inspired by popular and mass culture, his compositions nevertheless rejected the collage technique embraced by his pop art peers, as well as the sequential format of the comic strip, which typically breaks or fragments the visual surface into panels or boxes so as to differentiate between elements and figures and impose a more linear narrative; instead, his practice revealed technical mastery and explored the disharmony and incongruity of coexisting images, creating, often with sarcastic humour, 'a network of references to art, politics, literature, popular culture and his own life and experiences as a critical commentary laden with allusions and multiple levels of meaning', as highlighted by Mariana Pinto dos Santos (2017: 46). In what can be seen as a dissonant montage, Batarda demanded a complicated process of interpretation from the viewer, who must try and create meaning from disparate dimensions, clues and details, whilst becoming increasingly aware that answers are provisional and interpretative resolutions are deferred.

Batarda's practice of the 1970s has something of the chaotic and egalitarian principle at the heart of Blake's works and their combination of pop culture and fine art, but to fully address the heightened effect of such principle in his work and its deployment of irony and humour we should look elsewhere, namely in the new technical and thematic developments in British cinema and TV of the period. In 1969, the BBC aired the first episode of the sketch comedy series *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, which was adapted into film in 1971 and watched by Batarda with delight in a London cinema theatre.¹⁶ Created at a time when

¹⁴ The citational element in Batarda's work is another characteristic that links his practice of the 1970s to pop art. Similarly to Peter Blake's most iconic works, Batarda's cited references are not exclusive to consumer and mass culture but rather blend them with elements of fine art.

¹⁵ Batarda (2020: 152) mentioned the importance that the discovery and study of English watercolour papers had in the development of his work. The medium of watercolour is particularly associated with Britain in the 18th and 19th centuries, which is seen as the Gold Age of watercolour. See also Barker (2004) the watercolour tradition in British art.

¹⁶ Eduardo Batarda, email message to the author, 26 December 2024. I am thankful to Batarda for his generosity in sharing his memories of the period he spent in London. The Monty Python's comedy sketches were aired on BBC 1 between 1969 and 1974. Their first film was called *And Now for Something Completely*

British culture displayed a tension between coexisting progressive and reactionary tendencies, the Python was:

[P]art of worldwide cultural transformations that increasingly challenged existing social and political institutions, opening the door . . . to more critical, and perhaps cynical, approaches to questions of authority, gender, generation, sexuality, and national and regional identity. (Landy 2005: 19)¹⁷

The Python's surreal sketches were interlinked with animations created by Terry Gilliam, who explored montage and collage techniques in conjunction with cut-out animation in order to create a carnivalesque world where period photos coexisted with bizarre animals and comedic details and addressing elements of popular culture alongside references to fine art. According to Paul Wells:

Gilliam's surreality and absurdity moves Python away from the dangers of a potentially patronising sense of superiority or, indeed, any specific targets, to secure a more open perspective implicitly championing broader ideas about challenging authority and mocking established patterns and expectation. (2020: 95)

The imaginative world of Gilliam mirrors the absurdist-surrealist sketches developed by the other members of the troupe, in which odd characters often following the British tradition of crossdressing go through nonsensical situations with elements of dark comedy.¹⁸ These sketches conveyed an opposition to the rigidity of social rules and authoritarianism and thus possessed a political assertiveness that sometimes is missing from pop art and the countercultural movements that inspired the Pythons in the first place (Mills 2014).

Even though he relied on traditional fine art techniques that confirmed the primacy of painting over new and experimental forms of representation such as film and collage, Batarda shared with the Pythons their ironic humour in articulation with an all-encompassing process of montage that in its juxtaposition of contrasting images

Different, a title taken from a catchphrase of the Python's original show. The Monty Python troupe was made of several elements, one of which being Terry Gilliam. Gilliam was born in Minneapolis, USA, but moved to the UK and became a British citizen in 1968. He started working as a strip cartoonist, eventually developing his practice into filmmaking and animation. Batarda went to see *Monty Python's Flying Circus* shortly after arriving to London at the suggestion of friend and designer José Sampaio Brandão, who at the time was studying at Ravensbourne College with a grant from the Gulbenkian Foundation. Among other design projects, Brandão was the creator of the album covers of some of the most renowned Portuguese musicians, from Zeca Afonso to Sérgio Godinho and Fausto Bordalo Dias.

¹⁷ See also Egan and Weinstock (2020) for a reappraisal of the influence of the Monty Python's comedy output.

¹⁸ For Landy, '[g]ender reversal in the *Flying Circus* is parallel to the series' consistent practice of inverting all roles involving social class and national and generational identities' (2005: 71).

engendered new, unpredictable and absurd meanings that ultimately reflected a mocking disdain for institutional power and despotic ruling; these social elements are alluded to in the military hats spotted in Batarda's paintings from the 1970s, which not only refer to political authority and the militaristic imperialism at the heart of the Portuguese and European colonial enterprise (Rosendo 2020: 138), but also to the power exerted by the gatekeepers of the art canon, particularly when these military hats metamorphose into sailor caps and artist berets. Hence Batarda was problematising the art canon as another realm of exclusion and one that is determined by and in turn determines the political context (Santos 2017: 64). This view demonstrates his engagement with the politics of representation, and thus with radical art and criticism of the period, even if his practice was developed through the more traditional medium of painting and emphasised technical skill. [figure 2]

Batarda explored the nexus between art and politics with humour and wit. His use of disruptive and visual sarcasm (Santos 2017: 56) exposed both the conditions imposed on the Portuguese people by Estado Novo's repressive ideology and the dominance of a conservative approach to art in the teaching of Portuguese art students, which fostered a tacit complicity, internalised by artists over time (Oliveira 2024: 23).¹⁹ In contrast to this situation, London opened up new artistic and cultural possibilities:

[A]s as “influências” iam crescendo, à medida que assistia a aulas em que aprendia alguma coisa . . . que ia lendo o que podia . . . que ia visitando museus e vendo exposições, ou à medida que ia viajando alguma coisa . . . Havia visitas de artistas, havia *pubs*, havia cinemas, havia livrarias. (Batarda 2020: 33)

In the early 1970s Batarda was acquainted with not only more mainstream cinema, such as the Python, but also avantgarde cinema and the so called auteur films that had emerged from the counterculture of the 1960s and gathered real momentum from 1969 onwards, when the boundaries separating this radical artistic sphere and mass culture had become less patrolled, even if temporarily, as the popularity of the Monty Python seems to suggest (O'Pray 1996: 13). These new cinematic discourses, which created exciting alternatives to classical cinema modes, especially within the ranks of experimental cinema,

¹⁹ According to Leonor de Oliveira, Portuguese artists' indifference to the country's political situation was shaken precisely by diasporic artists such as Paula Rego, whose exhibition in Lisbon, in 1965, was both creatively and politically daring. In order to substantiate this argument, Oliveira quotes no other than Batarda, who recalls the shocking impact of Rego's exhibition within the Portuguese art community (Oliveira 2024: 23).

had become one of the most irreverent artistic fields, from a formal and conceptual perspective (Correia 2015: 93).²⁰ Batarda was a regular at the National Film Theatre, the Paris Pullman in Chelsea (where he lived) and the Electric Cinema Club in Portobello Road;²¹ these last two venues were committed to showing American and European art and avantgarde films. As for the National Film Theatre, it held the International Underground Film Festival in 1970, an event dedicated to avantgarde filmmaking, followed by The International Festival of Independent Avant-Garde Film in 1973.²² These two events, which put London on the international avantgarde cinema map (Dusinberre 1977: 90), exhibited works by American, European and British filmmakers such as Malcom le Grice, Stephen Dwoskin and Jeff Keen, key figures in the British avantgarde film scene, some of whom with links to the American underground comics culture and to pop art artists, namely Andy Warhol, whose films were exhibited and drew considerable attention.²³

Some of the qualities of this experimental film milieu are intrinsic to Batarda's work of the early 1970s, which is not only deeply satirical but also increasingly chaotic, albeit not necessarily as a way of reflecting the chaos of modern world, but rather to subvert the gloomy and repressive nature of Portuguese society, the stultifying and conservative characteristics of the art milieu and the blind spots of the Western painting tradition. For example, in *La Peinture qui Coule* series, from 1972, the montage of its visual and textual elements, paradoxically precise and seemingly random, is born out of a tension between tradition and innovation, conformity and resistance, repression and subversion, word and image, and invites the unstructured, wandering gaze of the viewer, who creates an unstable

²⁰ This is a period when film extended and became widely used in the art context (Correia 2015: 18). See O' Pray (1996) and Porter (2012) for an account of the vibrancy and development of avantgarde, underground and experimental cinema in the UK in the 1960s and 1970s.

²¹ Batarda, email message to the author, 26 December 2024.

²² The International Underground Film Festival, in 1970, coincided with the publication of the journal *Afterimage*, issue 2, which was entirely devoted to avantgarde film and which, according to David Curtis (1996: 113), was the first English magazine to make such a commitment.

²³ Despite Warhol being the most cited and well-known name of the period, being mentioned by Batarda in his memories of those days (Batarda, email message to the author, 26 December 2024), Andreia Correia warns of the danger of this focus on a single artist leading to sins of omission: 'Existe um vasto conjunto de filmes realizados por artistas nesta época mas a filmografia de Andy Warhol continua a ser uma das mais conhecidas e é quase representativa do furor cinematográfico que assolou os artistas neste período . . . A grande maioria dos filmes de artistas nesta época continua bastante marginalizada e como não é conhecida, muitos historiadores e críticos acabam por considerar apenas as obras mais apreciadas' (2015: 100).

interpretation set between the lines and revelling in double-meaning. Santos discusses this series in relation to Batarda's cumulative rather than sequential use of comics in order to conclude that 'the rigidity of each detail, which does not allow for any improvisation, contrasts with the way these details interrelate and that rigidity ends up being shattered by the interpretative fluidity that is allowed' (2016: 56). Replacing the narrative principle of the comic strip by a chaotic montage, Batarda invited an interpretative fluidity akin to what is observed in experimental film practices of the period and reflected, in form and content, the variety of influences and experiences he was exposed in his London years.

Santos also delves on the sexual imagery employed by Batarda, for example in *Double Act* (1973), exploring his use of hoses suggestive of masturbating painters and coarsely-depicted female nudes with decaying sexual attributes to highlight that although this dubious and offensive imagery has a provocative rudeness, it is also in dialogue with the place and role of women in the art canon (2016: 56–57). She links Batarda's sexual crudeness to Robert Crumb, an American cartoonist associated with the underground comix movement of the 1960s and creator of Fritz the Cat, a character who went on wild adventures of sexual nature. Fritz the Cat is also mentioned by Batarda (2020: 33), but the films he watched while in London must be considered as a further point of reference for his treatment of sexuality and gender roles, for in that period, as Batarda recently confided, he spent his time at the cinema.²⁴ In addition to the popular sexploitation films of the late 1960s that, whilst soft-core and melodramatic in tone, 'made the sensational body and female sexuality public and visible in distinct and unprecedented ways, tensing it in a constant vacillation between concealment and revelation' (Gorfinkel 2017: 5), the early 1970s saw venues like the Electric sneaking hard porn films in their back-to-back, all-night-long sessions, whereas the Paris Pullman favoured auteur films from the French and Italian Nouvelle Vague. Batarda's memories of those days recollect Bernardo Bertolucci's early films, from *Prima della rivoluzione* (1964) to *Strategia del ragno* (1970) and *Il Conformista* (1970), highly political films that problematise bourgeois society but that also exposed sexual trauma and repressed sexualities.²⁵ Also in this period, Ken Russell released *The Devils*, setting his plot in the Middle Ages, so as to expose the clash between sexual desires

²⁴ Batarda, email message to the author, 26 December 2024. In addition to the Robert Crumb, Batarda's practice is also influenced by American artists who themselves were influenced by cartoons, advertisements and pulp magazines. Such is the case of Jim Nutt, considered part of the unofficial group of artists known as the Chicago Imagists in the mid 1960s, who, like Batarda, created humorous works of skilled craftsmanship.

²⁵ Batarda, email message to the author, 26 December 2024.

and social repression. One of the most popular films at the British box office in 1972, as well as one of the most controversial and censored British films of all times, *The Devils* 'teeters close to the brink of insanity in its depiction of emotional and physical cruelty, and its depiction of power-hungry officials and blood-hungry masses' (Riley 2009: n.p.). Russell's abrupt and fast-paced editing, along with his use of surreal, dreamlike and excessive imagery, courtesy of production designer Derek Jarman (a name that would become associated with countercultural cinema), counterpoised the sink-realism that had dominated British cinema, creating instead unusual associations and releasing the revolutionary potential of juxtaposed and absurd images that shatter any form of authoritarian control. The result is 'an uncompromising transgressive fantasy, an operatic orgy of the forbidden, and a truly anarchic film' (Bradshaw 2011: n.p.), as well as an exploration of repressed sexuality set against political persecution and religious excess. Surely Russell's treatment of women (both in and off screen) suggests the director was a misogynist who revelled in the objectification of his female characters and actresses, but still *The Devils* unsubtly explored a dimension of subjectivity that had remained under the carpet and that was coming to broad daylight with the sexual liberation of the 1970s. This, of course, was in Britain, as sexual politics remained mostly unchanged in Portugal, where a profoundly conservative society, dominated by a patriarchal dictatorship and supported by the Catholic Church, promoted a model of sexuality driven by decorum and the need to procreate.²⁶ [Figure 3]

Set between these two very contrasting social and cultural environments, Batarda created works like the already-mentioned *Double Act*, where he employed the language of underground comics and alludes to popular culture, from music to cinema (here metonymically represented by a saxophone and a film camera), as well as to the sexual liberation witnessed in Britain and its film culture, to satirically denounce the relationship between European imperialism, patriarchal ideology and Western art. The painting is

²⁶ In addition to a conservative, religion-driven understanding of sexuality, the gender politics of Estado Novo relied on an understanding of femininity based on self-effacement, restraint and servitude to men within the institution of marriage. The difference between women's access to citizenship in Britain and Portugal in the 1960s was stark: universal suffrage was granted in the UK in 1918, whereas in Portugal it only arrived with the Carnation Revolution of 1974. Regarding Portuguese women's legal situation, in 1967 the Civil Law kept the husband as the head of the family and the one with full citizenship rights. In that same year, the Abortion Act became law in the UK, legalising abortion under certain conditions, whereas in Portugal, this would only happen in 2007. See also in this context Paula Rego's early work, which was already problematising the use of female bodies in the Western art tradition as well as gender differences in the social sphere.

dependent on a complex montage of clashing elements that, nevertheless, allows the viewer to connect the colonial soldiers to the dripping nose of cubism and abstract expressionism (a recurrent motif in Batarda's work from this period) and the female nudes, whose sexualised bodies are indeed a 'double act', since they serve both the sexual fantasies of the male painter and the imperial dream of colonial conquest through their reiteration of the myth of the primitive. In a process of assemblage, which is both formal and cultural, Batarda was able to satirise the gender implications of European art, at a time when feminist criticism in the visual field was taking its first steps in Britain.²⁷

Batarda's process of montage explored 'sexuality in the field of vision' (Rose 2005) engaging with the role of women and more specifically the female nude in the art canon. In 1977, artist Margaret Harrison observed that the early years of the decade had seen 'the beginnings of a feminist consciousness' and 'a forceful and progressive struggle to write ourselves back into history' (1977: 212). This struggle included the establishment of the first Women's Liberation Art Group (in 1970) and the Women's Workshop of the Artist's Union (in 1972), as well as several magazines and newspaper articles where its authors addressed female experience and exposed patriarchal discrimination. Despite the backlash, there was increasing visibility for women artists, as exemplified in all-women exhibitions such as *Womanpower*, held at the Swiss Cottage library in 1970, and *C. 7,500*, organised by American curator Lucy Lippard in 1974.²⁸ The period also witnessed increasing scrutiny of male artists and their sexual politics. In Griselda Pollock's article 'What Is Wrong with Images of Women' (1977), this British art historian took stock of the activities of women artists since the beginning of the decade and drew attention to the sexual politics of the art world and the visual field. Even if Batarda's work under analysis does not have a clear feminist purpose, the way he satires and corrosively exposes the nexus between the art canon and a patriarchal understanding of gender difference reveals a criticism of gender relations that is in keeping with the transformations he observed in British art and society of the time.²⁹

²⁷ For an analysis of the role played by the female nude in modernism see Pollock (1987), Duncan (1989) and Nead (1992).

²⁸ See Parker and Pollock (1987: 191; 194-199) for the context of these two all-women exhibitions and the backlash that ensued.

²⁹ Even if not providing specific details, Batarda recently mentioned the relevance of feminist criticism while living in London: 'As militâncias mais sérias, víamo-las nos media. Foi um período de fértil ensaística . . . Eu tinha-me por feminista, ou assumia um comportamento compatível. Nunca encarei o meu trabalho como misógino ou sexista. Pelo contrário. Admitindo sempre que, para alguns e algumas, isso não seria absolutamente evidente. Tanto mais que era tudo a reinar. Ou seja, a mangar. Pouco sério.' Batarda, email message to the author, 16 January 2025.

Ana Hatherly: cinema and/ as visual art

In her assessment of Portuguese artists' relationship with countercultural movements of the 1960s and 1970s, Sandra Vieira Jürgens briefly underlines the importance played by films that challenged the status quo in these artists' imagination (2018: 216). It is in that context of intense and iconoclastic experimentation, from both a thematic and a formal point of view, that Ana Hatherly, who was by then already an experimental poet and artist, enrolled at the London Film School (LFS) in 1971. Her inquisitive spirit, averse to dogma and boundaries, could well have dictated her desire to learn more about cinema, but the developments that the medium was experiencing in Britain must also have played a part in her decision to move to London. Dave Allen suggested that 'the "long" 1970s (beginning around 1968) were an extraordinarily varied and fertile period for these new approaches to moving images and laid the foundations for important developments in the following decades' (2011: 35), while Vincent Porter stated that 'The 1970s was a seminal decade for film education. Initially, it appeared to be struggling to survive, but by its end, film education was flourishing both in schools and in higher education' (2012: 62).

Hatherly arrived at the LFS in a period of turmoil, as the school was facing a serious financial crisis, partially due to competition from the newly founded National Film School (which opened in 1971). This nearly led to the school's liquidation in 1974, the year Hatherly left London with a diploma in film animation. Nevertheless, Duncan Petrie highlighted this was a time of intellectual development at the LFS, where the strong influence of a New-realist approach gave way to a more eclectic attitude that encompassed Hollywood and less mainstream figures, as well as an intellectual emphasis on the nature and structure of cinema (2014: 133-134) that extended to alternative approaches to film production developed at art colleges, where film lecturers saw the technological and organisational issues of the cinema industry as barriers to individual creative expression.³⁰ Animation, in particular, was considered an effective way of overcoming these issues because it allowed students to focus their attention on creating atmosphere and the illusion of movement by drawing and painting sequences of individual cells (Porter 2012: 67-68).

As part of her coursework, Hatherly created several animation exercises and short films, including *The Thought Fox* (1972; featuring actors and a voice-over, the film

³⁰ According to Deke Dusinberre, the Royal College of Art, where Batarda was studying, had the largest and best equipped film department in those days (1977: 71).

transposes to screen Ted Hughes's eponymous poem), *Spaghetti Time* (1973; animation) and *C.S.S.* (1974; animation). Upon her return to Portugal, she made *Revolução* (1975), in addition to two commissioned TV documentaries *O Que É a Ciência I* and *II* (1977) and the films *Música Negativa* and *Rotura* (both from 1977 and both focusing on performances, the first by fellow experimental poet E. M. de Melo e Castro and the second by Hatherly).³¹ It is in this period that she also taught cinema at the recently created Ar.Co. art school (established in 1973), where she further explored experimental film techniques with her students.

Rather than a break or a change of direction, Hatherly's cinematic experiences of the 1970s fed on and nourished her ongoing investigation of creativity and the role of the gesture, the relationship between abstraction and figuration, and the syncretism of word and image, aspects that were already central to her experimental poems of the 1960s.³² This is particularly the case of her animated films, in which the artist used draw-on-film, also known as animation without camera or direct animation. Such process consisted in creating the images by drawing or painting directly or gluing and taping objects on film stock, rather than photographing the images or the objects frame by frame with a camera. The emphasis is thus on the gestural (what Hatherly would later call 'the intelligent hand') and the procedural, rather than on narrativity and legibility.

Dusinberre highlighted (1977: 147) that British experimental cinema of the 1970s possessed its specificity, but Hatherly's work is also inscribed in a tradition that almost goes as far back as cinema itself and that has often bridged the gap between cinema and visual art. This tradition remained largely unknown in dictatorial Portugal but would have been available to Hatherly when she moved to London. Artist Ângelo de Sousa referred to the importance of the time he studied in London in 1967-68 for the development of his film experiments in the 1970s and cites an eclectic range of influences:

Quando comprei a minha primeira máquina de filmar, em Londres, não me passou pela cabeça fazer um filme de fundo com história. Em Londres, segue [sic] vários

³¹ Hatherly's films, made while she was a student at the London Film School, are not easily available. A trailer of *Revolução* is available online: <https://www.publico.pt/2015/08/05/video/trailer-de-revolucao-de-ana-hatherly1975-20150805-164153>.

³² Poesia Experimental is a Portuguese movement of the second half of the twentieth century marked by the discovery of concrete and visual poetry. For further information see the Po.Ex digital archive: <https://po-ex.net/taxonomia/transtextualidades/metatextualidades-alografas/rui-torres-breve-apresentacao-da-poesia-experimental-portuguesa/>.

ciclos de cinema no National Film Theatre, onde, além de inúmeros filmes que não passavam em Portugal, vi bastante cinema experimental — americano, alemão, austríaco; vi, entre outros, filmes de Stan Brakhage, Kenneth Anger, Warhol e também alguns filmes dos accionistas de Viena. Se não estivesse ainda convencido de que era possível fazer filmes sem história, talvez esses filmes tenham sido um incentivo para pôr de parte quaisquer dúvidas a esse respeito. (apud Correia 2015: 278-79)

While studying in London, Hatherly was exposed to an incredibly creative environment. She would have come across or heard about important film theorists like Eisenstein and maybe revelled in his discussions of Japanese ideograms and the haiku – one of Hatherly’s favourite poetic forms – as a montage of phrases in the essay ‘The Principle and the Ideogram’ (1949).³³ She could have read Zygmunt Tonecky’s ‘The Preliminary of Film Art’, first published in 1931 in *Close Up*, the influential Swiss film magazine with an international and independent ethos, and take notice of his use of Eisenstein’s concept of montage to investigate abstract film’s power to defamiliarize objects and thus produce a radical reassemblage of spectators’ perceptions, creating critical viewers capable of re-envisioning the world along the way (Robé 2010: 56-57). She could have seen the short animations of Len Lye, a New Zealander filmmaker who lived in the UK in 1926-1944. His *A Colour Box* (1935), a work through which Lye reinvented the technique of drawing directly on film by painting vibrant abstract patterns and then synchronizing them to a popular jazz tune, is an obvious precursor to Hatherly’s montage in *C.S.S.* Hatherly could even have read Lye’s proposition, put forward in his 1936-essay ‘Notes on a Short Colour Film’, where he argues for ‘sensation form’, that is, ‘a direct and immediate impulse-feeling as opposed to the literary feeling that requires a memory background finely filtered through consciousness of realism’ (2020: 226). Correia also mentions other and more contemporary influences such as Canadian Norman McLaren and American Robert Breer (2015: 295). Inspired by their modernist avantgarde precursors, these artists played with the fabric of the film stock and developed projects with strong abstract and sensorial components (2015: 65-66) that are also intrinsic to Hatherly’s intensely physical, embodied and cross-sensory animation,

³³ Hatherly’s interest in Japanese poetry is evident in her ‘tisanas’ (mini prose poems); she was also deeply interested in Chinese calligraphy, which underlines many of her artworks and visual poems.

producing a synesthetic experience that, in turn, elicits a kinaesthetic reaction from the viewer.

Hatherly's films give continuity to both the experimental aesthetics that has characterised the relationship between cinema and the visual arts and the main concerns of her inherently pluridisciplinary work. On the other hand, her practice as a filmmaker revealed dimensions of her oeuvre that had previously remained in the shade. Firstly, her films, where shapes, some geometric, others anthropomorphic, give birth to one another, in a carnivalesque state of permanent flux, emphasise the movement of and in the image. Undoubtedly, movement is a topos that traversed Hatherly's entire art practice, which focused on actions and processes (most patently, the bodily processes involved in writing and reading), and often led to series, exhibited in terms that resembled a cinematic montage, as highlighted by João Pinharanda (2003: 17). Nevertheless, movement became central to her practice in the 1960s-70s, a period when Hatherly created performances, happenings and films and when the cinematic contaminated her experimental writing, as evidenced in *O Escritor* (1975), a book that refers to drawings as 'fotograma congelado na página, cujo significado é posto em movimento pela leitura' (1975: 5).³⁴

Secondly, Hatherly's films renewed her interest in music and allowed her to explore the connection between image and sound acts. The artist was a trained lyrical singer and studied music in Portugal, France and Germany in the 1950s. Music was an intrinsic part of the happenings she created in the 1960s, in collaboration with experimental musician Jorge Peixinho, and of the performances developed upon her return to Portugal in the 1970s; this was the case of *Rotura*, presented at Galeria Quadrum, in 1977, and made into a film with an accompanying soundtrack. In addition to these happenings and performances, Hatherly's animated short films presented sound as a diegetic mode through its combination or even synchronization with the image, in order to create a bodily, synesthetic and kinaesthetic object. Her choice of jazz pieces for the soundtrack of these works is significant, as jazz is a music genre with a higher degree of improvisation and chance, thus producing a more intuitive, spontaneous and irrational experience that matches the visual improvisation, in terms of the laying out of colour and shape, that took place in the film stock. If, as a writer, Hatherly persistently searched for the visual dimension of poetry, in these films she was

³⁴ The connection between Hatherly's performative and cinematic practice is mentioned by Maria de Fátima Lambert, who describes Hatherly's cinema as 'surtos performativos de experimentação cinematográfica' (2004: n.p.).

looking for the visual dimension of music. In so doing, Hatherly also addressed the connection between composing music and composing motion as indeed between sound and movement, connections that were central to experimental filmmaking of the period.

Finally, Hatherly paid careful attention to montage, the process that brings together image, sound and movement. Correia refers to the mastery of montage in Hatherly's films and describes it as a process of cut and paste (2015: 295). Such process is at the centre of the three segments that compose C.S.S.: each segment is introduced by a letter (C for cut, S for silk and S for sand) that points to the material used in that section, which is also accompanied by a specific instrumental soundtrack. The editing is incredibly dynamic and tight, conveying the excitement of the jazz pieces, the vibrancy of the colours and the rapid movement of the changing shapes, and the overall effect is of something simultaneously abstract and organic, an intellectual and physical experience. The non-animated *The Thought Fox* also relies on a carefully devised process of montage, visible in the combination of voice-over and image, the use of cross-cutting (i.e. switching back and forth between scenes shot in outdoor and indoor locations) and a rhythm that is increasingly accelerated. This creates tension and conveys the moment of inspiration and creativity that both Hughes and Hatherly are chasing in their works.³⁵

In April 1974, Hatherly was on her way to Egypt with a stopover in Lisbon. She never got to her final destination as she remained in Portugal to witness the Carnation Revolution and immerse herself in the streets of Lisbon, sharing the feelings of exhilaration and freedom of her fellow countrymen and women. This resulted in a series of collages, precisely entitled *As Ruas de Lisboa* (1977), and a short film, *Revolução* (1975), recorded with an 8mm video camera.³⁶ In this short film Hatherly registered the plurality of the political voices suddenly available in the public space and the participation of the Portuguese people in this important moment of the country's history through a disjunctive montage that juxtaposes revolutionary murals, graffiti and commercial and political posters, presented in rapid succession, with political chants and revolutionary songs. The film records the excitement visible in the streets of Lisbon, offering a plastic, sensorial and

³⁵ Sue Harper and Justin Smith contrast the fluid editing that dominated British editing practices of the 1950s with the increasing rapidity of the 1960s and 1970s: 'Rapid cuts and ellipses, which would have been viewed as non-sequiturs to a previous generation of editors, became the fashionable norm' (2011: 168).

³⁶ In an interview to Correia, Hatherly revealed that the original 8mm film was edited at her kitchen table with tape and scissors and then sent to London to be changed into a 16mm copy. It was then that the soundtrack was added (Correia 2015: 296-97).

emotionally charged urban experience, a powerful image of revolutionary euphoria in the aftermath of the revolution as well as drawing attention to the politics of representation. Correia highlights the similarities between *Revolução* and Hatherly's animation experiments in terms of their cross-sensory, synesthetic and kinaesthetic dimensions:

Os planos aproximados, a montagem dinâmica tornam-no semelhante aos primeiros filmes de animação, particularmente C.S.S., no seu processo de corta e cose. É um verdadeiro filme colagem e de montagem, que é complementado por uma banda sonora também feita da colagem de sons fragmentários de som real, captado nas ruas durante manifestações e comícios, canções revolucionárias e músicas tradicionais do Alentejo e do Minho. (2015: 296)

Merging the avantgarde, experimentalist aesthetics of her film animations with a pop art fascination with popular culture and its appropriation through processes of montage, *Revolução* also explores the connection between material concerns and political intervention that is central to British independent filmmaking of the 1970s.

Despite being political works, these materialist films questioned or rejected realism and a documentary approach proposing instead a radical break with traditional ways of perceiving as a way of opening up a new form of social practice (Knowles 2021: 112). In her analysis of 1970s experimental film practice in Britain, Kim Knowles mentions a climate of DIY autonomy and a correlated creativity in the context of film technology that contrasted with the hegemony of the film industry and that led filmmakers to work with smaller film gauges (8mm and 16 mm rather than 35mm) (2021: 107-108).³⁷ These were considerably more accessible, since they were cheaper and easier to carry, and more immediate, providing a new technological and creative freedom and allowing filmmakers to connect with the exterior world in more direct and physical ways. Hybrid artist Jeff Keen, who was working with film since the mid 1950s, is a particularly relevant reference. He created films that relied on rapid-fire montage and a graphic style, matched by expansive, chaotic and disorderly collages that become the site of humour and delirium. Keen himself defined them as exploring 'violently disconnected and overlapping patterns' suggestive of 'non-linear movement and synthetic vision' (Keen 1977: n.p.). Describing Keen's practice as 'manic

³⁷ Knowles's essay focuses on filmmakers' use of 16mm gauge in 1970s Britain. This film stock has a history of independent, countercultural and personal filmmaking. Hatherly's animations were made using a 16mm stock but for *Revolução* she used a Super 8, which was created in the mid-1960s and then lauded for providing an immediate and direct experience (Durgnat 2019: 49-50).

expanded cinema', DusiBerre highlighted that it shared affinities 'with those who are more rigorously concerned in the formal parameters of cinema: he develops a sense of irony between the word and the image in a way which ultimately challenges the integrity of both' (116-17), whilst for Tom Day, Keen was 'working between the political, the playful and the personal' (2020: 237) through a process of 'sensual overload' (2020: 247) that had its origins in an ambitious approach to rapid-fire montage, animation, painting, drawing, assemblage and live performance, all indiscriminately mixed together. *Revolução* and Hatherly's animations are radical political gestures when seen through the lens of this experimental cinema tradition that delves on its own material existence and that enhances our attention to the surfaces and textures of the actual materiality of film (Knowles, 2021: 111-112), in tandem with the role played by the gesture and the body in the creative process.

In 1970s-London a new generation of radical women filmmakers was also participating in the development of film as a craft-based and experimental practice with which to address their concerns and question a masculine-dominated aesthetic field. To Laura Mulvey, who co-directed with Peter Wollen films that disrupted linear narrative formats, replacing them with a montage of heterogenous cinematic codes and the juxtaposition of speech, writing and image in order to deconstruct transparency and ideology (Helm-Grovas 2021: 34-35), we must add those women who had arrived to film from art schools and who used the medium as part of mixed-media events that developed from happenings and performances, painting and photography. Filmmakers like Lis Rhodes and Annabel Nicolson, associated with the London Film Maker's Co-op, were at the forefront of the expanded field of cinema and would become founding members of Circles: Women's Film & Video Distribution, a feminist organization created in 1979.³⁸ In *Dresden Dynamo* (1971) Rhodes rejected the camera and instead developed a complex montage process that fixated patterned Letratone and Letraset stickers to the film itself, in addition to using filters to create red and blue colours and investigating how images can create their own sound. She was thus, and not unlike Hatherly, interrogating the languages of film and the gestural in a DIY practice that is typical of women's art production. As for Nicolson, in *Slides* (1971) she explored the relationship between the still and the moving image, painting

³⁸ The London FilmMaker's Co-operative was a filmmakers' workshop that was founded in 1966 by Stephen Dwoskin and Bob Cobbing as part of the London countercultural movement. In addition to Annabel Nicolson and Lis Rhodes, the group also included American painter and performance artist Carolee Schneemann, who lived in London in the early 1970s.

and cinema, through an experimental, manual and personal process of montage that moved painting beyond its bidimensional condition, whilst *Shapes* (1970), with its strips of coloured paper and gels suspended from the ceiling and creating a dense environment through which the artist circulated with a hand-held camera, can be considered a predecessor to Hatherly's *Rotura* (1977), an installation-performance produced in the aftermath of the Carnation Revolution.³⁹ Like her British counterparts, Hatherly seems to have intimated the importance of cinema in the development of a female artistic voice, a revolutionary, liberating stance given Portuguese women's muted and withdrawn condition during the dictatorship.

Looking back to his London years, Batarda has recently summed up the impact that this period had in the development of his art practice:

mudanças de condições, tanto qualitativas como quantitativas, determinaram, em geral, novos acréscimos em complexidade, qualidade e output. A quantidade de informação, que foi bem ampliada, foi bem usada: progressos e radical aumento da confiança crítica. Também tecnicamente, a coisa foi exponencial.⁴⁰

London gave Batarda and Hatherly the opportunity to embrace aesthetic practices that otherwise would not have been possible; there they felt at the epicentre of all that was new and stimulated by an artistic network that addressed social changes and the role of visual representation in those changes. In London they also explored the subversive potential of cinema and its juxtaposing technique of montage; this was already present in the avantgarde and disruptive practices of early twentieth century and was then recovered by a new generation of avantgarde artists and experimental filmmakers. These formal experiments would become, in the hands of their Portuguese counterparts, ways of combining subjective experiences, playfulness and satire with a political intention and the desire to overcome the totalitarian ideology of Estado Novo; their work therefore confirm that "as revoluções ocorrem na cultura, antes de encontrarem uma específica concretização política" (Silva 2009: 28).

³⁹ Nicolson has described this work as 'a clear development from my painting, something that I felt comfortable with that I could hold it in my hand. I could respond to the material, it was in my hands rather than in a camera' (apud Sparrow n.d.: n.p).

⁴⁰ Batarda, email message to the author, 16 January 2025. See also interview conducted by Ana Sousa Dias to Ana Hatherly, where the artist reminisces about the importance of the time spent in London to her work. See Ana Sousa Dias, *Por Outro Lado IV*, 2004.03.08. Available at: <https://arquivos.rtp.pt/conteudos/ana-hatherly/>.

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