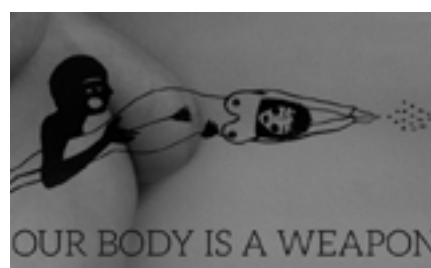
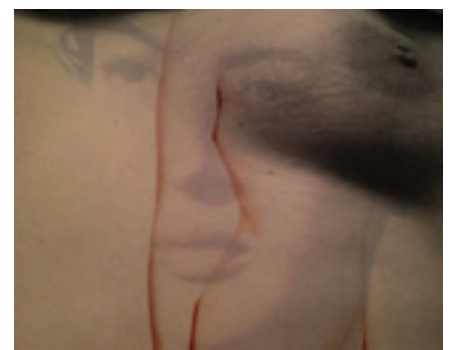


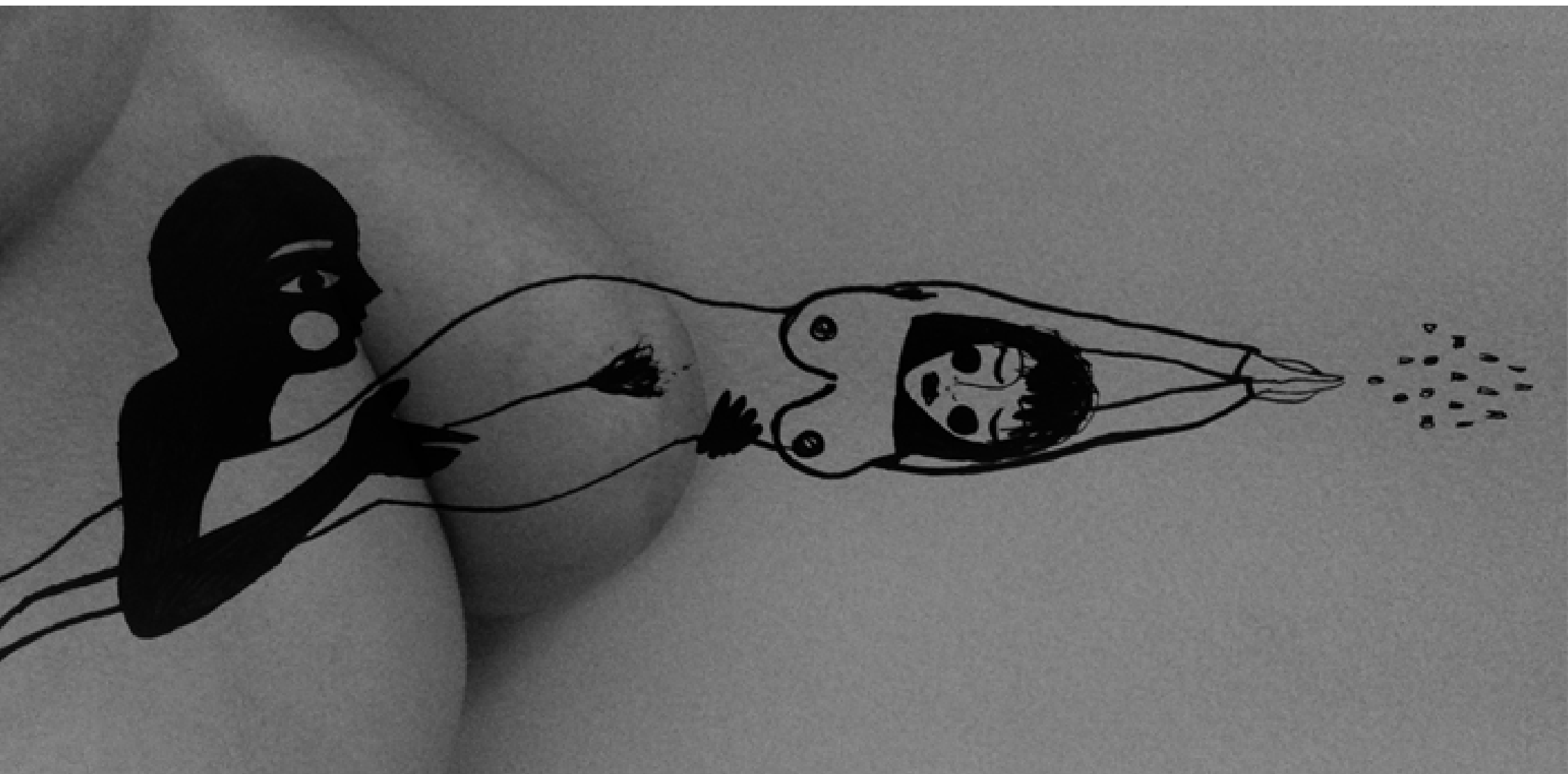
Master's student in Social
Anthropology, Universidade Federal de
Goiás, Goiânia, Goiás, Brazil.

SOPHIA FERREIRA PINHEIRO

BODILY INSERTIONS: THE BODY (IS) A FLAME







OUR BODY IS A WEAPON





SOPHIA FERREIRA PINHEIRO

BODILY INSERTIONS: THE BODY (IS) A FLAME

In this visual essay, my body is my research field. I gradually paid more attention to my body when I started my research at the Federal University of Goiás, working with Visual Anthropology and gender studies with indigenous women. Maybe this essay is the way in which I can fully express myself, as the translation of a profound experience I felt in my field work¹.

I was at the Guarani-Mbya village called Koenju, (located in São Miguel das Missões, Southern Brazil), together with Patricia², in her mother's back yard. We were talking, when suddenly her niece Luana came. Luana was 2 years old at the time. She was very sweet and loving and started to caress Patricia. Like a cat, Luana slowly climbed Patricia's legs, while talking in Guarani, laughing and playing. Luana then laid down in her lap, raised Patricia's shirt and started to suckle her breast. Until today it is hard for me to describe this scene. I am torn between writing about Patricia's calm expression, swinging back and forth with a light playful mood, or if I write about Luana's closed eyes and her smile nibbling Patricia's nipple.

I do not intend here to be fixed in contextualizing that moment, what would be a long process, but to describe how I reacted to that event but to tell you about the heat rising in my body and my blushed face, as I witnessed that scene. Few seconds seemed like hours and before I could rationalize and think about the context of that situation, thus regaining my

1. Remember, in this visual essay my body is the field.

2. Patricia Ferreira, is the protagonist of the research to develop in this master. Patricia is the most active indigenous filmmaker in the *Video Nas Aldeias* project. For more, see Pinheiro (2015a; 2015b).

consciousness after the light trance which I was experimenting, Luana came to me, and with her small and delicate hands, tried to raise my shirt and expose my breast. Meanwhile Patricia laughed loudly, as also other people around us. I said to Luana, “oh dear, I can’t. I am wearing a bra!” This acknowledgment was a relief, but I suddenly grew sad, by the realization of my own shame. In which troublesome ways my body defended itself from fully experiencing that playful moment? Why I felt so disturbed to witness a small child sucking Patricia’s breasts? Was because they bore no milk? What is the nature of these unspoken rules, imprisoning my will and casting an utterly senseless shame: shame of my body, of my bare breasts. The shame of having them sucked by a child who isn’t even “mine.” The overwhelming shame of feeling new sensations, to be disturbed in my expectations... what kind of impregnable borders are these? Why I censored myself?

After that experience, I felt I finally entered my own body. Between some political statements through “visual orgies”, it’s my wish to highlight the ones who empower the body. The veins in the body draw the maps of each place where we dwell, they limit our living territories, invisible under the skin. The skin, our biggest organ, also powerfully feels. The whole body is a pleasure zone. Indeed, I found always disturbing to assign the heart as the main emotional center, because is the skin who shivers and bristles, sending to the brain our basic sensations, like feeling hot and cold to the touch, as also the pulsating, intense ones, like the sexual arousal.

When the body surrender the “sweet embracing of myself”, the empty space between the bodies is the frontier, the inexorable border. The exact moment when people react to my presence, the confrontation moment – also a border. The human border, our body as a weapon, resistance and subversion. Are all bodies borders? To possess, beside the tension, the lust for the frontier. “We dont have our skin anymore”, says a Mexican peasant woman, as she joins a form of resistance (invented by themselves), by using their naked bodies as a *lieu* of political and social struggle, portrayed in Clarisse Hahn’s movie *Los Desnudos* (2012)³. They fight naked, reclaiming their land. *Body* and *Field*. Two words which coexist in themselves.

The images in this essay are from my *Body*. My body mediated through artistic languages like photography, drawings and juxtapositions. I expressed, through these images, some of my living processes, experienced during the field work.

translation

Sophia Ferreira Pinheiro
and Igor Karim

text received

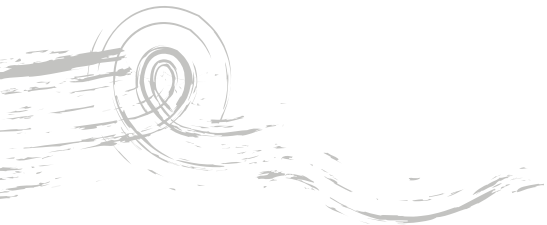
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text approved

09.01.2016



3. More information about the film at < <http://www.clarissehahn.com/los-desnudos> >



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SOPHIA FERREIRA PINHEIRO

M.A. in Social Anthropology from the Federal University of Goiás and B.A. in Visual Arts. Bach. Graphic Design by FAV / UFG. Made academic mobility for a year at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro in Visual Communication – Design (2011/2012) and academic mobility for a month in Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul. (2015) at the Visual Anthropology Center (Navisual / UFRGS) and the Indigenous and Traditional Societies Anthropology Center (NIT / UFRGS). Conducted scientific research funded by the Brazilian Nacional Research Center Entitled: Hybrid Narratives by the FAV / UFG (2013). Co-founder of the *FAKE FAKE collective* (2008), a collaborative collective of visual artists. It is currently coordinator of the project *FAKE FAKE ilustraciones* as Extension Project FAV / UFG. Member of the IMPEJ – Center for Indigenous Ethnology (PPGAS / UFG) and the AntropoCine project – Film and anthropology Debate cycles. (PPGAS / UFG). Visual thinker, interested in poetry and visual policies, processes of creation and anthropology art and arts.