Who´s that Girl?

Flavia Da Rin, very creatively and exhaustively explores the possibilities offered by the self-portrait in the digital era. With Who’s That Girl?, the Museo de Arte Moderno presents the first retrospective of a twenty year career during which she has been a leading light among Argentine artists of her generation. Da Rin started out on the cusp of the new millennium, when the rapid development of technology saw virtual reality, chats, selfies and avatars begin to change the way in which we represent ourselves, making such concepts far more fluid than in the previous century. Using digital manipulation and enhancement, Da Rin merges self-portraits with complex, extremely expressive scenes. These tools have helped the artist to address a diverse range of issues across her twenty year career as she plays the role of numerous different characters. She explores femininity and social stereotypes, paying homage to women artists left out of canonical narratives of the history of art and reflecting on the difficulties of combining motherhood with an artistic career. Her works are a catalogue of emotions expressed in the faces of different women who are also the artist herself. The power of the images lies in the tension between their personality and the stereotype, between the individual and the universal, the real and the virtual as they ask a series of questions: “Who do I want to be? What image or emotion can I make myself into? Who do I have inside of me, who do I consist of? Does a true self really exist? And who needs to be themselves when they can be so many others?”

Da Rin is the director, set designer and editor of her own work. Although she draws on fiction and modifies her image to the point that she is often unrecognizable, her work is keenly autobiographical, running through the lengthy gamut of emotions and thought processes that she has encountered at different moments in her life. Like a digital native, Flavia Da Rin explores the possibility of forever becoming someone else. With each change of skin she adds to a game of split subjectivities, transforming herself into an image that conveys different desires and fantasies, offering the freedom to be whoever you want to be.

Curatorial text from Who’s that Girl?
Retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art of Buenos Aires, 2019
Who's that Girl? 2019
Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Untitled (Carnival) 2011

From "A Party to Drive the Terror from the World"
C-print
110 x 124 cm.
A party to Drive the terror of the world (2011)

This work evokes a carnival celebration with a nod to the entertainment world and, in particular, to the social rituals of the art world, such as vernissages and fairs. Da Rin investigates the way in which the personality can become an image to be consumed, a commercial product that seeks to achieve the formula of success based on self-celebration. Flavia Da Rin’s work leads one to wonder what or how much of the person is in the work, because in her work the boundary between the body of the work and the body of the artist is voluntarily blurred. As in this series, the artist deals with overcoming that limit, investigating with humor and irony the narrative possibilities of her own image and the extremes that the infinite mutation of her own being can reach.

Wall text from “Who’s that Girl”
Exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art of Buenos Aires

Untitled ((Banquet)) 2011
From “A Party to Drive the Terror from the World”
C-print
101 x 69 cm
Untitled (Corso-Parade) 2011
From “A Party to Drive the Terror from the World”
C-print
174.94 x 151.5 cm.
Untitled (Wigs / Girls & Monsters) 2011
From “A Party to Drive the Terror from the World”
C-print
110 x 109 cm / 48,32 x 50,55 cm
Big eyed portraits

In Da Rin’s work there is a document of time expressed in the technology she used at all times. The artist began working in the early 2000s, in the Fotolog era, when virtual community forums exploded and communication through chats, such as ICQ, began. Between 2001 and 2005, he worked with a 3.1-megapixel digital camera, which only allowed her to perform small and medium-size works or produce huge, but burst-pixelated images. With this medium, she produced the series “Untitled” (2004-2007), where she represented herself as the avatar of multiple emotions, many years before emojis limited the spectrum of communicable emotions to twenty or so hyper-synthetic expressions. From the images emerges a sweetened and hypnotic tenderness, full of attractiveness but also of such an exaggerated beauty in its aestheticization that it can be repulsive.
Untitled 2005
Lambda print
100 x 103 cm
Who's that Girl? 2019

Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Shaved (2009)

“Untitled-Shaved” (2009) investigates the stereotype of the teen pop diva, burned out and squeezed by the market to the point of being put out of order. Girls who reach the peak of fame so fast that they crash and, in a nervous attack, immolate their sensuality by cutting their hair to zero. An iconoclastic act towards themselves that, anyway, does not stop the harassment of the paparazzi to hunt for their image to sell it to gossip magazines.
Who’s that Girl? 2019

Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Untitled 2013
From the “Shaved” series
Lambda print
81 × 80 cm (left) 70 × 70 cm (right)
Untitled 2013
From the “Shaved” series
Lambda print
71 x 116 cm
Who's that Girl? 2019

Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Untitled 2004
Lambda print
100 x 76 cm and variable measures
“The Mystery of the Dead Boy” (2008) is a key work in Da Rin’s career, both because of the theatrical and expressive display of her images, and for having been conceived as an installation to be presented at the Ruth Benzacar Gallery in Buenos Aires. The series is an allegory of the artistic creative process and the ritual of an art opening, represented in different images that are shown as snapshots of a wake: the child who dies is the work that leaves the studio, the evicted mother is the artist who let go her/his work and the paradise of nymphs is beyond, that place of harmony and solitary creativity, far from social rites.
Untitled 2008
From the “The Mistery of the dead boy” series
Lambda print
127 x 120 cm.
Untitled 2008

From the “The Mistery of the dead boy” series
Lambda print
122 cm (diameter)
150 x 254 cm. (previous page)
Untitled 2008
From the “The Mistery of the dead boy” series
Lambda print
100 x 195 cm (each one)
Who’s that Girl? 2019
Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina

In this set of works, Flavia Da Rin reflects on gender conditioning in art history and on the sustainability of an artistic career after motherhood. Here, the artist no longer embodies feminine stereotypes, but rather quotes specific works and chooses her personal genealogy of references to borrow other subjectivities and put herself in their shoes.

In Terpsichore between wars (2014) she recreates the works of dancers and choreographers of the European avant-gardes of the early twentieth century. Artists who revolutionized the language of the body and laid the foundations of conceptual and contemporary art, but who are not yet recognized in canonical chronicles of art history, such as the Romanian Lizica Codreanu (1901-1993), the Germans Valezka Gert (1892-1978) and Mary Wigman (1886-1973), the Italian Giannina Censi (1913-1995), and the American Martha Graham (1894-1991). The bodies with multiple arms, legs, eyes and heads from the Untitled series (2016), created with photos of her children and herself, recall the deformation and recomposition of collages made with magazines and photographs by Hanna Höch (1889-1978), artist belonging to the group of the Berlin Dadaists, and the German-Argentine surrealist Grete Stern (1904-1999). In the same way, the series Burdens of Life (2016) - "Los pesares de la vida" (2016) - and Self-portrait (2016) dialogue with the works of the women artists of the seventies who worked on the complex relationship between motherhood and art such as the Austrian photographer Friedl Kubelka (1946), the Franco-Argentine artist Lea Lublin (1929-1999) and the Viennese artist Renate Bertlmann (1943).
Who's that Girl? 2019
Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires. Argentina
Untitled 2016
From the “Burdens of life” series
C-print
50 x 32 cm and variable measures
Untitled 2016
From the “Burdens of life” series
C-print
50 x 32 cm and variable measures
Who's that Girl? 2019
Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina
Untitled 2016
C-print
104 x 74 cm (approx. each one)
Untitled 2016
C-print
104 x 70 cm
Who’s that Girl? 2019
Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Self-portrait (2016)

Although all the works of Flavia Da Rin are created from her own image, the only work she decides to title Self-Portrait (2016) makes visible the artists’ conflict when trying to reconcile motherhood with their careers. For her production, she investigated the work of feminist artists from the 1970s, such as photographer and filmmaker Friedl Kubelka. In this series of nudes, Da Rin’s body forms a continuum with those of her two little children, who she holds in different awkward poses, as though, trying to keep her balance: the fusion of the bodies is, at the same time, a form of armour, an expression of commitment but also a burden. Here her identity is no longer a self, but an intertwined “we” with no visible face.
Self-portrait 2016
C-print
40 x 28 cm (each one)
Self-portrait 2016
C-print
40 x 28 cm (each one)
Self-portrait 2016
C-print
40 x 28 cm (each one)
Who's that Girl? 2019
Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Untitled (Gert I/II) 2014
From the “Terpsichore between wars” series
C-print
26 x 16,70 cm. / 26 x 17,30 cm.
Untitled (Codreano/Brancusi VII / III) 2014
From the “Terpsichore between wars” series
C-print
24 x 16 cm. / 24 x 16.50 cm.
Untitled (Codreano/Brancusi IV / VI) 2014
From the “Terpsichore between wars” series
C-print
24 x 16 cm. (each one)
Untitled (Codreano/Brancusi I / V) 2014

From the “Terpsichore between wars” series
C-print
24 x 16 cm. (each one)
Untitled (Censi I - VI) 2014
From the “Terpsichore between wars” series
C-print
18 x 13 cm. (each one)
Untitled (Codreano/Delaunay II / I) 2014

From the "Terpsichore between wars" series
C-print
24 x 20 cm. / 24 x 16,40 cm.
Untitled (Graham II) 2014
From the “Terpsichore between wars” series
C-print
30 x 22,60 cm.
Untitled (Wigman máscaras I / II) 2014
From the “Terpsichore between wars” series
C-print
26 x 32 cm. (each one)
Untitled (Wigman escuela I) 2014

From the “Terpsichore between wars” series
C-print
26 × 37,40 cm.
Spirits (2018) and Still Lifes (2012)

There are two series in which Da Rin does not appear in her images. These are silent and nostalgic works that seem to speak of the intimacy of her studio. In still life scenes with airs of advertising photography, “Still lifes-Naturalezas muertas” (2012) featuring wigs, masks and novelty accessories that she usually uses in her work, as though instead of posing in front of a camera she had turned it to photograph the costumes and plastic objects she has in her studio. “Spirits” (2018) consists of a series of print outs altered with watercolors showing hairdos floating as ghostly presences or stereotypical but non-existing personalities. The two series present the objects and costumes that allowed Da Rin to become impersonal, enter and exit herself as a part of a semiotic process of changing identity.
Who's that Girl? 2019
Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina
Cactus Spirit / Lily Spirit / Dry Spirit 2018

From the “Spirits” series
Pencil, Pen and nail polish on printed image
32 x 50 cm (each one)
Jellyfish Spirit / Seaweed Spirit / Coral Spirit  2018

From the “Spirits” series

Pencils, Pen and nail polish on printed image

32 x 50 cm (each one)
Who’s that Girl? 2019
Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina
Bubbles / Drunk  2012

From the “Still life” series
C-print
71 x 52 cm (each one)
Who's that Girl? 2019
Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina
Who's that Girl? 2019
Installation view.
Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina.
A piece specially created for the exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in Buenos Aires. In it, Da Rin returns to foreground an investigation into advertising aesthetics and focuses both on the images with which television series and reality shows are promoted, and on the customization of our online-selves on platforms such as Second Life or Roblox.

Wall texts from Who’s that Girl?, retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art of Buenos Aires, curated by Laura Hakel.

**Untitled-S40 (2019)**

C-print
300 x 454 cm and variable
The Chrysalis Epic

An immersive installation where the genres of video and comic come together, linking their particular ways of connecting images with narration. The work evokes the hypnotic tale of a being, immersed in a lysergic doze, whose wandering dream disintegrates into personalities that can incarnate from sinister children’s tv programs to post-apocalyptic pregnancies and spirits born from foam of the sea, among many others. With this large installation, the artist once again wonders about the multiplicity and mutability of identities, while producing an essay on experiential vastness and the connection between apparently isolated beings.


https://vimeo.com/365322665
Password: crisalida
The Chrysalis Epic 2019

Installation view.
4 x 9 mts video projection and 46 ink jet prints
Ruth Benzacar Galería de Arte. Buenos Aires, Argentina
Cada suceso reverbera en mis ojos
y en mis vísceras.
The Chrysalis Epic 2019
Video Stills
Video: 9:39 min
The Chrysalis Epic 2019

Installation view.
Ruth Benzacar Galería de Arte. Buenos Aires, Argentina
The Chrysalis Epic  2019
Desktop Inkjet prints
29cm x 42cm (each one)
2020 / Ongoing projects

That future that we imagine so much, that we read and debate over and over through speculative sociological and philosophical texts seems to have arrived in its most unexpected costume: a dream of domestic science fiction, not very bright or even glossy. A slow catastrophe to go through. This series of images made in the context of compulsory social isolation decreed from the Covid 19 pandemic in Argentina in March 2020, are periodically shared through the Instagram platform.
Screen caption from Instagram’s Stories, April 24th 2020
Flavia Da Rin was born in 1978 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She studied for five years at the National School of Fine Arts «Prilidiano Pueyrredón», where she specialized in painting. During those years of training, her approach to photography was self-taught and was influenced by the “trash pop” aesthetic that accompanied the so-called “millennium error” or Y2K, the computer crisis of the year 2000 that preceded the last worldwide expansion of Internet. From 2001, she began attending Diana Aisenberg’s workshop and crit. In 2002, her work was selected in the “Curriculum 0” contest (Ruth Benzacar Gallery). Between 2003 and 2005, she participated in the Guillermo Kuitca crits in the framework of the Workshops Program for the Visual Arts of the Ricardo Rojas Cultural Center (UBA-Kuitca). In 2003, she made her first individual exhibition at the Casona de los Olivera and then, in 2004, she exhibited for the first time at the Ruth Benzacar Gallery.

Her work was part of the Busan Biennial (South Korea, 2006) and the Argentine submission to the Cuenca Biennial (Ecuador, 2007). Some of her most outstanding individual exhibitions are: “Who’s that Girl” (a retrospective curated by Laura Hakel at the Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, 2019), Eyes Wide Open (curated by Julien Robson, Speed Art Museum, Louisville, Kentucky, United States, 2008), The Mystery of the Dead Child (Ruth Benzacar Gallery, Buenos Aires, 2008; La Capital Foundation, Rosario, 2011; Cultural Center of Spain, Córdoba; 2012, and MAC – Museum of Contemporary Art, Salta, 2012) and Terpsícore entreguerras, (Ruth Benzacar Gallery, Buenos Aires, 2014). She also worked for design firms such as Cartier and Hermès. Her work is part of numerous public and private collections. Since 2004, he is Associate Professor of the Chair Bissollino, Proyectual Painting IUNA.
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