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The sexualization of Brazilian women: why our women are so harassed abroad

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santarosa.jpg

Letters in luminous neon send the message: "Are you Brazilian? Oh, I love Brazilian women" [Are you Brazilian? Ah, I love Brazilian women]. It could be the phrase of a foreign "friend" that you, a Brazilian woman, met while traveling around the world. But this is the text shown in the work "Brazil", by the visual artist Santarosa Barreto, a direct reference to the sexual annoyances faced by Brazilian women abroad.

The result of an artistic residency in Santarosa abroad, the work was exhibited in 2019 at the São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand Museum of Art (MASP) and, from January 14th, it will occupy its space among the 12 pieces that make up the collective exhibition "Oh, I Love Brazilian Women!", at Apexart in Manhattan, New York. In the exhibition, conceived by curator and translator Luiza Testa, twelve Brazilian artists question the eroticization of the Brazilian female body in the international imagination, stereotyped, objectified and violated by sexually aggressive speeches and acts.

- Brazilian women suffer from harassment both in Brazil and abroad. The difference is that, abroad, there is often a greater sense of insecurity due to the fact that we are in a lesser known environment. Furthermore, the nature of the comments made frequently makes it clear that the harassment suffered abroad has a strong connection with the fact that we are Brazilian women; while in Brazil, it is "only" due to the fact that we are women - says Luiza Testa.

apexart

And it's not just the harassment suffered on that first meeting at the bar, in the circle of friends. Even in private spaces, the subjugation of Brazilian women is manifested in other countries. Another work from the same exhibition, "OurBodies, Ourselves", by artist Juliana Manara, who has lived abroad for years, was based on an alarming statistic: four out of five Brazilian women in London have suffered from an episode of domestic violence.

- The foreign imagination is permeated by the idea of a Brazil fully available both in terms of territory and in terms of women. Something that refers to colonization, slavery and a folkloric and exotic ideal about the country. Foreign men usually believe they have an openness to Brazilian women that, in fact, they don't. In many European countries, Brazilian women are associated with prostitution, as if this somehow authorized sexual harassment. The man sees the body of a prostitute as being public, a woman who believes to be promiscuous or purposefully sensual - adds the curator.

Luiza Testa says that, while researching for the exhibition, she discovered an Instagram account (@brasileirasnaosecalam) with more than a thousand reports of harassment suffered by Brazilian immigrant women. With each post, "dozens more comments endorsing the sentiment, which shows that this is a point that many Brazilian women, unfortunately, identify with", says Luiza, who also spoke with friends and acquaintances and realized that many shared these experiences.

- When looking at the Brazilian artists I already admired, I noticed that many of their works addressed the subject, directly or indirectly. It was not difficult to find works that fit the theme very well, but, above all, that prove the degree of complexity and diversity of Brazilian women, something that immediately invalidates this stereotype - she concludes.

<https://br.noticias.yahoo.com/sexualiza%C3%A7%C3%A3o-da-brasileira-por-que-230906871.html?guccounter=1>