ENGLISH VERSION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 145

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 146

PRESENTATION 146

PREFACE 148

"Monsters and beauties: the creative aesthetic of Lenora Rosenfield", by Edward Sullivan 148

ITINERARIES – background and production 150

Porto Alegre (1953–1971) 150
New York (1971–1972) 152
Porto Alegre (1973–1979) 155
Florence (1980–1983) 157
Porto Alegre (1984–1990) 160
Cambridge – São Paulo (1991–1999) 162
New York – Udine (2000–2017) 164

EXHIBITION "ITINERÁRIOS" – part 1 71

CRITICAL TEXTS 169

"The impression I get", by Gerd Borheim 169
"Between two worlds – the Brazilianness of Lenora Rosenfield", by Mario Sartor 169
"Mastery of technique and expression", by Daniela Kern 172
"An amorous dialogue", by Paula Ramos 172
"An oeuvre that is developed is it unfolds", by Francisco Dalcol 173

EXHIBITION "ITINERÁRIOS" – part 2 115

CURRICULUM VITAE 174

INTRODUCTION

When I lived in Florence, I had three addresses. The last one, at 2 Via di Camaldoli, third floor, was the most important one. During that period, I went through very remarkable experiences that were decisive in the directions I would take in my professional career.

The first of these experiences was on my usual way home when I passed by a big house that was always dark. I did not know why, but I was always drawn to it and I always ended looking at it. Its windows were open and there were clothes on the sill, but the lights were always off. I found it even odder when I realised that it always seemed unchanged and untouched, with no sign of people around. It was as if it were a painting framed by the urban landscape. It was always dark, even at night. I became more and more curious. I started to think that that house was a kind of portal into other dimensions, that only I could see it, and that it perhaps did not even exist. At the time I thought I could not enter those dimensions. Today I realise that in my imagination that house – which haunted me – put me in touch with countless different paths.

In this process, I became even more deeply immersed in art, in the memories of the many places in the world to which I ventured alone and in the human universe I conquered by having created so many links with people I met on trains, buses, airports and planes, who became part of my universe of inner and geographical itineraries. Over time, these references settled into my life, becoming the source of a reality in which I started to find substantial elements to develop my artistic work.

The second experience was an immersion in the past. When I lived in Florence, the city was still safe, and although I felt lonely, life there constantly delighted me. At night, I used to go on long bike rides. Once, when I was cycling home very late at night, I decided to stop at the Ponte Vecchio. It was totally deserted, but I stopped anyway. Something seemed very different and I started to sense, emerging from the stones and from the walls, strong vibrations, nearly phantasmagorical energies that invisibly filled the streets. I had a strange feeling and plunged into the moment. I was struck by a past I pictured in my mind, as if I were inside an old painting.

The third experience was right before I returned from Italy to Brazil, when I decided to travel alone for two months through Europe. I wanted to see in person works of art that had long interested me and that I had thus far only seen in books, and also to test my own limits, to see for how long I would endure solitude. I traveled with little money, stayed in boarding houses or rented rooms in family houses. I had no previous information about the places and did not know before hand where I would stay. I always looked for places to stay when I arrived in the morning. In some of these places, like the former Yugoslavia, I did not speak the language. I felt very nervous whenever I walked in a new place for the first time. To calm myself, I went to cafés. I wrote and drew in a diary until I felt ready to look for a place to stay.

I never felt as frightened as during that trip in my entire life. I decided to visit a medieval castle on an island on Lake Bled, near Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia. The transport consisted of a rowboat. The boatman took me through the waters of the lake to the shores of the island. As I disembarked and took a few steps, I turned to speak with him but he was no longer there. I decided to trust my luck and went up the steps leading to the castle. When I reached the top, there were two men drinking idly at a table. I entered the castle thinking there would be a counter to buy a ticket. I did not find anything or anyone there. I was too scared either to enter the castle or to leave it. But since I was already there, I would have to go all the way. I was very scared but I visited the empty castle. After walking around with a pounding heart, I hurried out the door. The two men were still there, drinking at the table... but the little boat was waiting for me to go back. It was, I have to admit, my shortest and most distressing visit ever.

These experiences helped me perfect the relationship between my subjectivity and reality. I learned more and more about how to navigate between different worlds, imaginary and real. Until I experienced those moments, I needed to know better this relationship so that later on I would be able to fearlessly throw myself into the abyss of painting. Painting takes me to that kind of experience, as if I were jumping into an abyss where I am always able to find my way back, which makes me feel more confident as I look at my inner ghosts. Now I know they are inside me, but I do not mind them so much. It was a way of knowing myself better, of becoming less dramatic. I started to paint outside the emotional burden of that theme. That person persists only in the vigorousness of my brushwork, in the colours and smudges. And the procedure used in fresco painting, which I still explore and develop, enabled me to seek, in my own work, new directions and ramifications that are all equally important.

Lenora Lerrer Rosenfield

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe the existence of this book to many people, but especially to my friend Helene Weitzner, who feels like a sister to me. Also to Francisco Dalcol and Viviane Possa, my tireless listeners and interlocutors. I would also like to thank photographer Egidio Pandolfo, for our pleasant sessions with great conversations over coffee cups. I am very grateful to my parents, who gave me freedom, and to my siblings who always encouraged me in the same way. I shall never forget my ancestors represented by my grandparents, who are the first personal archaeological layer I have ever known.

I would also like to thank my descendants, who gave me great challenges and love of a kind I did not know before. I am indebted to my colleague Daniela Kern and Kethlen Santini Rodrigues, who allowed me to see, for the first time, my own story printed in a course completion dissertation. I am grateful to the professors Dr. Edward Sullivan and Dr. Mario Sartor, for revealing new paths to me. Finally, I thank all the people who loved me, who taught me about myself and themselves through knowledge and affection.

PRESENTATION

IITINERÁRIOS presents the personal and professional directions of the artist, professor, and art conservator Lenora Rosenfield, throughout nearly five decades of her artistic work. With a celebratory character, the ITINERÁRIOS Project was organized in two phases that included a large exhibition and the publication of this book.

The first phase of this endeavor was an extensive solo exhibition shown at Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul (MARGS), in Porto Alegre, Brazil, held November 22, 2016 through January 15, 2017. It was curated by journalist, critic and researcher Francisco Dalcol and organized by producer Viviane Possa. The exhibition included selections of Lenora's work from the most significant periods of her career as a painter.

Instead of presenting a chronology of her work as a whole that a traditional retrospective would require, the organizers chose to create crossovers between collections of works that synthesized the different periods of Lenora's art and visual research. This choice allowed the artwork from different times and places to be displayed without any commitment to an evolutionary line and was grouped together using different criteria based on similarity, from formal and visual connections, to more subjective aspects contained within the artist's poetics. By focusing on the gradual development of the visual works and the circularity of poetic research, as well as emphasizing discoveries, nuances and cross-links of thought alongside the material and creative processes, the goal was to organize the artwork in the exhibition space as a panorama with an open and non-prescribed focus, which could then be viewed in any order of preference. In addition to this

awareness, the organizers refrained from providing a definitive reading of Lenora's work, suggesting to the viewers to just absorb the visual impact of her artistic career. Once the character of this presentation was established, the environment was open to create a simultaneously curatorial, critical and a historical contemporary way of thinking about Lenora's art production.

This book is an extension of the ITINERARIOS Project for its second phase. The book was conceived as a continuation of the richness of the exhibition, so as to broaden the understanding of Lenora's art production and career, including several personal and professional contexts that were not addressed in the show. Her career has evolved through many challenging, defining events and time periods concentrating on three different aspects: artistic production, the focus on the exhibition, and her work as an art conservator and professor, which are now included in the book.

Unlike the exhibition, the book has been organized in a chronological order, so as to offer a better understanding of Lenora's personal and professional biography from her birth in 1953 to the present time. Each chapter corresponds to various periods and directions, of searches and encounters, departures and returns, and unique experiences in places and times that notably highlight her professional undertakings, as well as incorporates her various residences in New York, Florence, Cambridge, Udine, and Porto Allegre, of course. The suggestion for the title of this project, ITINERÁRIOS (ITINERARIES) evolves out of all these journeys, events and opportunities that significantly permeate through and have shaped Lenora's personality and professional background.

The book opens with an introduction by Lenora herself, which reflects her feelings as she revisits the memories that a celebratory moment like this provides. Next, there is an essay by Dr. Edward Sullivan, Art History Professor – Institute of Fine Arts, New York University (NYU), who was Lenora's advisor during her doctoral studies as a Fulbright Scholar in the USA. Dr. Sullivan is an internationally recognized researcher, with studies and publications about Latin American art in the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as art from the Iberian peninsula and Caribbean Art (both between the 17th and the 20th centuries). This essay is written especially for this book.

The following pages present a narrative that incorporates biographical and historical references and critiques on Lenora's career, written by Francisco Dalcol. The information is based on interviews, research and documentations that seek to discuss Lenora's artistic production, as well as give insight on her other major professional achievements. It includes her highly significant work as a professional conservator and as a professor at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). All of Lenora's professional endeavors intertwine deeply with each other, and end up complementing her artistic production. It is difficult to highlight or isolate one without giving attention to the others. The texts are accompanied by photographs, reproductions, and documentations that are used to reinforce the biographical character of the book.

Next, there is a selection of critiques about Lenora's artistic production by authors recognized and respected in their fields of expertise and endeavors. They are: Gerd Bornheim (in memoriam), Mario Sartor, Paula Ramos, and Daniela Kern. All of these contributors, at different periods, reflected and wrote about Lenora's work. This section closes with a curatorial text by Francisco Dalcol for the exhibition ITINERÁRIOS.

The next section includes Lenora's extensive curriculum vitae, displaying the breadth of her professional activity and a complete list of her solo and group exhibitions since the 1970s. The list also includes where the collections of her work and restorations are represented. In addition, there are biographical references of researchers and Lenora's own publications, which add to the knowledge and overview about the artist, professor and conservator.

Lastly, the book includes a photograph section, presenting the works from the ITINERÁRIOS exhibition in chronological order, interspersed with images of the installation at MARGS, so as to document their spatial organization reflecting the curatorial project. Other equally significant works have also been included.

As the ITINERÁRIOS Project comes to an end, this book's historical character is highlighted by its publication release taking place after Lenora's retirement as a Professor of Painting at the Institute of Art, UFRGS. As this phase ends, it gives way to the hope of other endeavors and career paths arising from new discoveries and drives. The following pages of this book will attest to so many notable accomplishments, with the prospect of more to come.

PREFACE

Monsters and beauties: the creative aesthetic of Lenora Rosenfield

By Edward J. Sullivan
Professor of Art History
Institute of Fine Arts, New York University (NYU)

The title of this preface to the book "Itinerarios" constitutes a partial reference to the artist's 1995 Masters thesis on the theme of deformity, calamity and its inevitable confrontation with beauty in art. Rosenfield has long aimed to come to a point of encounter of these two forces within the human aesthetic sensibility: the beautiful and the repellant. Much of her work relies on the same struggle that artists throughout the western world have felt since at least the Middle Ages. Her realization that there is no such thing as absolute harmonious unity within a work of art reflects her innate comprehension of the conundrum that has faced all sensitive artists whose works are marked by this conflict and tension. Her paintings and drawings, even in the early years of her development in Porto Alegre and into her later phases when international travel and studies so deeply marked her visual personality, are the result of her grappling with the inevitable traumas of the human condition. There is a deeply felt anxiety within Rosenfield's work that constantly propels it foreword. In observing a wide panorama of her artistic production, which this book and the exhibition that occasioned it provides for us, we receive the gratification of confronting the many dilemmas and solutions she has faced throughout her lengthy and highly productive career.

The notion of the existence of opposing forces within our personalities and, subsequently, within all forms of artistic expression marks the history of art throughout its development. Simply citing some of the most salient examples taken from the landscape of western visuality bears out this claim. An examination of some of the most well known medieval manuscript illuminations reveals images of monsters and demons lurking throughout the margins of the pages that otherwise contain sanctified representations of the saints of the Holy Family. The work of Hieronymus Bosch (a particularly significant touchstone for the development of Rosenfield's art) is in itself a constant and unrelenting battle between the sublime and the grotesque. The same could be said, of course, of the work of Francisco de Goya (whose art was such a great revelation when Lenora saw it in person for the first time in the Prado Museum). While young Goya created serene images of the Spanish countryside in the tapestry cartoons of his early years, the "Black paintings" of his late phase (when France had invaded Spain, causing destruction and turmoil over the course of many years and when the artist – by this time completely deaf as the result of a mysterious disease, accompanied by nightmares) are among the most gripping and dramatic manifestations of inner psychological struggle ever created.

Within the pantheon of late nineteenth and twentieth century artists we must cite at least the tortured yet restrained images of Vincent Van Gogh, who was able to create a world of beauty within the challenges of a state of mental turmoil. Edvard Munch, the German Expressionists and, more recently, artists such as Lucien Freud and Francis Bacon have all south to reconcile the terrors of quotidian existence with the struggle for personal and artistic redemption. I wish to make no comparisons

nor draw any specific parallels with the works of these artists and the paintings and graphic works of Lenora Rosenfield. Nonetheless, all of these artists, and many more, have entered into her stream of her artistic imagination and her creative development and, consequently, she has entered within the flow of the deeply running and swift stream of painters who are innately conscious of their need to merge the terrible with the sublime. Perhaps there can be no better example of such an aesthetic urge than Michelangelo, whose Sistine Chapel frescos entered into the imagination of the Brazilian artist at an early age and have served as a point of reference ever since.

Lenora Rosenfield is the product of a multitude of experiences within and outside her home country. Her youthful travels began to fulfill her desire to concretize artistic forms in her imagination. Instead of being merely content with reproductions in books, or observing the works of local artists in Rio Grande do Sul (of which there were many talented masters including Ibere Camargo, whose art was of particular consequence for Lenora as she began to develop her characteristic expressionistic style of painting and drawing) she began her peripatetic life as a young girl, hardly trained in the world of culture, but nonetheless sure of her destiny as an artist. Italy marked her sensibility in an indelible fashion but, as she recalls in her texts and autobiographical statements, New York was one of the cities that nurtured her curiosity and her desire to be part of the many movements in contemporary art that were developing when she made her first extended trip there in 1971.

The early 70s was, in fact, something of both a chaotic and a dramatic time for the New York art world. Abstract Expressionism of the 1940s and 50s had long been supplanted by such competing trends as later-day forms of Pop, Minimalism, Conceptualism, Neo-geometric art, Performance art and a variety of permutations of feminist art. The frenzied, even anarchic state of art throughout the West in the 70s was, of course, a reflection of the troubled state of the times. The trans-Atlantic traumas of 1968, with student unrest and uprisings in Paris, New York, Mexico City and elsewhere as well as the continuing ordeal of the Vietnam War, created an atmosphere that could be defined as unsettled or even frenzied. For many Latin Americans these situations were made even more acute because of the effects of the military dictatorships that wrecked havoc on the social, political and artistic lives of citizens of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Paraguay and elsewhere.

Lenora arrived in Manhattan during this period of flux. Her training included formal studies at The New School for Social Research, a renowned institution of higher learning that had had the benefit of the expertise of dozens of foreign professors who came to New York fleeing such catastrophic events as the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War and the South American dictatorships. The atmosphere there was lively and stimulating and Rosenfield took full advantage of the instruction offered her. But perhaps, as she has stated, it was her innumerable hours in the great museums (including the Metropolitan, the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim and the Whitney Museum of American Art among others), as well as the literally hundreds of galleries of modern and contemporary art that made a serious difference in the future directions of her art. It is most interesting that among the artists she has mentioned as being of particular interest to her at that time (as a very young and impressionable artist) was Jean Dubuffet. This artist, the initiator of the Art Brut movement (incorporating his interest in the work of children, the insane and untrained artists) was in high regard in the U.S. in the 1970s and Lenora likely saw his two one-artist exhibitions held at Manhattan's prestigious Pace Gallery in late 1971 and early 1972. The vigorous expressive forms of Dubuffet's art were obviously stimulating for the growing strength of the line and color sensibility of Rosenfield's art.

It is, in addition, important to note that during this first and her later sojourns in New York, especially the period from 2002 to 2003 (the time that the author of this text had the privilege of knowing her and spending many hours discussing her art

and other aesthetic subjects), Rosenfield was following in the footsteps of many distinguished Brazilian artists who had spent considerable time in Manhattan, from the beginning of the twentieth century until now. To name but a few, Anita Malfatti had studied at the Art Students League and with the avant-garde painter homer Boss (at his Independent School of Art) in New York and Maine in 1915, returning to Brazil immersed in a radical form of Expressionism that so shocked São Paulo audiences in her solo exhibition of 1917. Candido Portinari was received as a veritable hero in the U.S. in the 1940s and his solo show at MoMA in 1940 was one of several major exhibitions of Brazilian art held there during the decade of World War II. His mural paintings for the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. were also hailed at their completion in 1942. Surrealist sculptor Maria Martins had a highly successful exhibition at the famed Valentine Gallery in 1943. Later, Hélio Oiticica spent some ten years in New York in exile throughout most of the 1970s where he became an integral part of the downtown art scene that developed in so-called alternative spaces. He also took place in the landmark exhibition at MoMA entitled "Information" that is said to have launched the vogue for Conceptualism in the U.S. Very recently, New York has had considerable exposure to Brazilian art with major exhibitions devoted to Lygia Clark (2015), Oiticica (2017) and Lygia Pape (2017). Within this panorama of interest in Brazilian painting, sculpture, installation and performance, the work of Lenora Rosenfield plays a role in this lively Brazilian presence in Manhattan. New York was not, of course, the only foreign venue for the development of her art. Her prolonged residencies in Italy among other countries had equally positive effects on her aesthetic development, but New York seems to have had the most lasting impact.

The art of Lenora Rosenfield is also marked by her care and expertise in the media she uses. This comes in part from her training, in both Brazil and at the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University in fine art conservation. This is an extremely important aspect of this artist's practice and she has made a considerable name for herself as a conservator. Her deep knowledge of the materiality of art has played a considerable role in the choices of colors, paints and supports.

The present book is meant to present a broad picture of the work of this inventive and dedicated artist to a wider public. It is a laudable venture and will certainly allow both Brazilians and foreigners a window into the dynamic unfolding of a career that will certainly give us more surprises and more gratification in the future.

ITINERARIES background and production

Porto Alegre (1953–1971)

A transformative journey
Childhood in the city centre
First art lessons
Scholarship in the USA and a desire to study painting

When she finally entered the long-awaited chapel she had heard so much about, she was struck by a strong feeling she had not known so far. That would happen in the same intensity at least twice throughout the journey. The first time, she felt even paralysed before the apparently infinite number of artworks throughout the endless galleries of the Louvre Museum, in Paris. Now she felt the same thing, this time struck by the grandiosity of Michelangelo's (1475–1564) paintings whose figures and creatures taken from biblical passages seemed alive and suspended in the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican, Rome. "How come I grew up without this?" she thought once again, between surprise and apprehension. In

addition to the large fresco painted by Michelangelo between 1508 and 1512, Lenora was captivated by other works by some of the greatest Renaissance artists, also in the Sistine Chapel, such as Ghirlandaio, Raphael and Bernini.

Lenora Lerrer Rosenfield was only 13 years old and saw first hand some of the most celebrated works of Western art and culture. Although her age did not allow her to deeply grasp the extent of the meaning of the experience, she realised there was something special in what she saw, a value she was going to better understand and which would only increase with time.

She and her brother, two and a half years her elder, travelled through Europe with a group of young people, all from Jewish families in Brazil. The trip was a gift from their grandfather, who wanted his grandchildren to develop an interest in culture, art and humanities from an early age. Some members of their family said it was a waste to give two children a two-month trip to museums, churches, synagogues and temples to learn about history and art from ancient times. It is true that half of it would be dedicated to the origins and traditions of Judaism with an experience in a kibbutz in Israel – and this occurred just a few months prior to the Six-Day War, in 1967. Still, the first part of the trip seemed to correspond to an interest far too adult to satisfy two children.

One could scarcely predict that over time the experience of this childhood trip would not only gradually gain greater importance and meaning in Lenora's individual trajectory, but would also provide some kind of explanation about the paths she would take in her life and work. After all, both the works of the masters in the Louvre and the frescos in the Sistine Chapel bring together Lenora's main interests that would also become occupations: painting, restoration, and art history.

When Lenora returned from the journey – one of the many she would make to Europe, especially to Italy – she wanted to learn more and more about all she had tried to memorise – names of artists, works, places, artistic styles, etc. She wanted to know and understand what characterised one in relation to the other, attempting to fill in the knowledge gap she felt after her discoveries in the Old World. In history classes at Colégio Israelita, an Israeli school in Porto Alegre, she was delighted when she heard her teacher Giselda Fernandes talk about the Renaissance, showing in books what Rosenfield as a child had already seen in person. She started to feel special pleasure in browsing through art history books, that in those days were not so richly illustrated. She tried to understand what differentiated Bosch from painters from the Middle Ages, the style of Rubens in relation to Van Dyck, and so many other connections she was trying to make.

In the centre of Porto Alegre in the early 1960s, Lenora used to go to the school at the Arts Institute on Rua Senhor dos Passos on foot. Her family home, on Rua Coronel Vicente, was just a few blocks away. Her father worked in real estate after having had experience in other businesses. He would later work in civil engineering. He was a descendant of Jews who emigrated from Ukraine, travelling all over world and ending in Rio Grande do Sul. Lenora's mother, a housewife, was also a descendant of Jewish immigrants who left from Poland and Turkey to Southern Brazil. Both met in the Jewish community of Porto Alegre after he moved from Rio Pardo to the state capital. They had one son and two daughters of which Lenora was the middle child. From her grandparents, among many memories, one in particular is the image of her maternal grandfather, the same who had offered his two grandchildren a journey to Europe – a man who certainly took culture seriously. "He sharpened his drawing pencil as if it were a work of art," she recalls.

Lenora had started to attend the children's art school at UFRGS on her own initiative, by asking her mother. There, she started to learn art in classes taught by teachers such as Alice Soares, Alice Brueggemann and Iara de Mattos Rodrigues. Their guidance stimulated the exercise of one's creative and perceptual abilities more than provided strictly technical training. If Lenora focused too much on drawing lines, they told her to focus more on the use of materials. The paint should

be used in its entirety to avoid waste; the paper too. This sense of freedom and discipline would mark her forever.

When not in art school, Lenora would usually stay at home drawing and painting for hours on end. She kept herself so busy that she even tried to convince her mother to let her use her bedroom walls for the same purpose. Drawing and painting already brought her a great satisfaction at the time, making her feel totally in her element.

As a teenager, she thought about carrying forward her ideas that were more and more filled with images, shapes and colours. She decided to take courses in drawing and painting, so she found a newspaper ad and applied. That was when she had practical lessons with teachers such as Jairo Figueiredo, Luiz Carlos Silva and Simão Goldman. In addition to submitting herself to a more technical kind of education, she also started to study art history with greater dedication, soon attending classes taught by critic and teacher Carlos Scarinci.

The first paintings of her career are from this period, made between the late 1960s and early 1970s, such as Barco [Boat] (1969) and Untitled (1970) [see pages 73, 74]. The latter already showed influences from surrealism that would reappear with full force 25 years later, as evidenced by the painting Rosto Mascarado com Plano [Masked Face with Plane] (1995) [see page 87].

Life went on in that way until, at age 17, Lenora decided to apply for an exchange programme to study abroad. The selection was organised by the International Christian Youth Exchange (ICYE), a German organisation that promotes exchange programmes all over the world in which participants work on volunteer projects. Students would choose the countries they would like to travel to but it was not certain they would go to their countries of choice. Lenora chose England, the Netherlands or France. At the end of the selection process, she got a placement in the USA.

At that time, there was a strong feeling of opposition to the military dictatorship in Brazil (1964–85) and to the power of North American imperialism. Therefore, going to the USA was not necessarily a wish. But it was also an opportunity to study art overseas. That had been Lenora's destination of choice from the start, even though she did not admit it during her selection process by ICYE.

Lenora was still in school, but she did not want to be forced to attend high school in the USA. She took a shorter adult education course in order to finish her studies while still in Brazil. She also asked to be legally emancipated from her father. She planned on having greater freedom to devote all of her free time to some art course, especially painting. With a new world to discover and a dream to study art, she departed for the USA in October 1971, at age 18. She wanted to live in New York, the epicentre of the art world during the second half of the twentieth century. She would live there for one year of her youth and be forever marked by tremendous experiences in her artistic education and personal development. She would live in New York once again 30 years later, when she was already a university teacher in Brazil, for a PhD internship at New York University (NYU).

New York (1971–1972)

Discoveries in the art classes at he New School for Social Research
The revelation of Dubuffet's painting
The life in the house of new families
Difficulties posed by distance and homesickness

Lenora is with her new classmates, trying to decrease the anxiety that had taken hold of her as she waited for the beginning of her first painting lesson in New York. Suddenly, a woman crosses the room and begins to take off her clothes. "Why are you doing that? Can't you go change in the restroom?" She asked herself, with the young innocence she had brought from Porto Alegre, and which she would soon lose.

She even thought the scene she had just witnessed could be due to rebellion, something in vogue in those times because of the repercussion of movements for social and behavioural transformation in the early 1970s, like the hippie and feminist movements. But what Lenora witnessed right after arriving in the USA was not exactly a libertarian action; it was an old tradition she had not known until then. Not that it did not exist in Rio Grande do Sul. It was only that, in her 18 years of life, she had not yet had the opportunity to discover it. The woman who crossed the room and took off her clothes was there simply to work as a live model, a person who poses nude before the students, a practice both old and common in figure drawing and painting.

The discoveries did not stop there. In the same class, Lenora learned about acrylic paint, which was already used routinely in the lessons of the famous New School for Social Research, where she was now a student. During her brief experience with painting in Porto Alegre, she had known only traditional oil paint.

When Lenora arrived in the USA in October 1971, she was not sure she would be able to apply for an art school. The idea was to try and look for a course after her arrival and, even if she found one, she would also have to find out if it was even possible for her to be accepted. Thus, it was a mixture of desire and intent. She thought about the Art Students League of New York, but the tuition fee was prohibitive. She also thought about the Parsons School of Design, which she soon gave up due to its emphasis on design. Lenora wanted to study only painting. At the same time, she did not seek, at least at that moment, to be part of an academic environment, but to attend a freer educational institution. That was when she learned that the New School was a "non-standard" school. She applied and was accepted. In the painting course, she had lessons with Joseph Stefanelli, an artist whose previous production linked him to North American abstract expressionism, which became well-known through names such as Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning and Mark Rothko. It was an artistic avant-garde movement that, after World War II, spread from the USA to the rest of the world as an international style. Lenora also studied with Donald Stacy, an artist who was also linked to North American abstract expressionism.

Already in the first lessons, Lenora understood the importance of using live models as a reference, but she was not satisfied with simply copying what she saw, like her classmates who tried to create hyperrealistic images. On the contrary, she sought to reinvent, to do things in a different way, according to what she felt compelled to. A kind of tendency that, many years earlier, the impressionists and cubists had already taken to the extremes of formal research, and that now Lenora was learning from books on art history.

It was during her lessons at the New School that she started to develop a style of figurative painting guided by the use of sharp and broad brushstrokes, whose contours and colours indicated a brief flirt with some works from the first generation of Brazilian modernism. Lenora never forgot a comment she received from her teacher at the time, Joseph Stefanelli, when he saw the paintings "Retrato de Fruta" [Portrait of a Fruit] and "Retrato de Loiro" [Portrait of a Blond], both from 1972 [see page 75]. "You are the new Dubuffet!" he said to her.

She still did not know who Jean Philippe Arthur Dubuffet was, who died a little over a decade later, in 1985. When she looked for books to learn more about him and followed the recommendation of her teacher to visit the Whitney Museum to see Dubuffet's paintings, she did not find the painting she had been making during her lessons so similar or already at the level of the French artist, but she understood that the compliment had come from a teacher who also tried very hard to encourage his students. The comparison could be explained by the way she was using colours and brushstrokes in her early painting.

The alleged reason for her trip to the USA, as has already been said, was not to study painting, although that was Lenora's wish. Lenora was selected for a year-long exchange where she would live in a family home and do volunteer work. It was only when she arrived that she learned about who would

welcome her and where she was going to live. It was a couple with two sons and a daughter who lived in Ridgewood, New Jersey, about 45 miles from New York. As soon as she had settled in her new home, she mentioned her desire to know the Big Apple. Days later, she was already on a bus she would soon frequently take to the island of Manhattan, a trip that took less than an hour. She would never forget the thrill she felt the first time she saw the Statue of Liberty approaching through the window. During that period, her volunteer work consisted of dealing with schizophrenic children, an experience that marked a stage of her personal development. But life started to go not so well with her host family in the USA. The greatest difficulty was with her new mother, by who Lenora did not feel welcome. She then decided to look for another place to live.

Lenora found a new home through an employment agency at the New School. She saw an ad from a family that was looking for a babysitter and applied. It was the home of a psychoanalyst and university professor who needed someone to take care of his children from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. Besides being a Jewish family, their proximity was greater because of art, since he was an collector. Lenora then moved to her new home, now on Lexington Avenue in Manhattan, in the heart of New York. When she was not taking care of the children, she was attending lessons at the New School and exploring the city and its artistic venues beyond the mandatory MoMA, the Metropolitan Museum, the Guggenheim and Whitney Museum. She also fulfilled her commitments as a volunteer, this time working in a public school with young people in a situation of social vulnerability, many of whom were at risk for being exposed to drug use and trafficking.

Her stay abroad took place between 1971 and 1972, a period marked by events of international repercussion such as the Watergate Scandal, the last manned trip to the moon on Apollo 17, the Munich massacre during the Summer Olympics and the release of The Godfather trilogy by Francis Ford Coppola. One of the most successful films at the time was Stanley Kubrick's controversial A Clockwork Orange, which premiered at the end of 1971, remaining in theatres the following year. In Brazil, during the dictatorship, 1972 was the year in which colour television was introduced with reports on the Grape Festival and the Araguaia Guerrilla.

Lenora's stay in the USA ended with a trip across the country during which she visited classmates and people she met during her exchange. It was during that trip that she travelled on the legendary Route 66, a 4,000-km-long highway that crosses much of the US territory, which was immortalised as a symbol of freedom by young people in the 1950s and 60s.

Of the many brought by the trip, one of them involved volunteering with black communities, at which point she understood what it meant to live in a highly racist environment. The task was to encourage black people to vote, a still recent achievement in the USA, occurred only in 1965, following a bill from the previous year guaranteeing equal civil rights. Awareness of the importance of the right to vote also involved an incentive to choose candidates that would represent them, an experience that Lenora would later relate to the important milestone decades later when, in 2009, North American voters finally elected their first African American president: Barack Obama.

The year she lived in the USA was initiatory in many respects for Lenora, with important challenges and achievements. The time she spent far from her family, "at a time when everything seemed distant and time-consuming," as she recalls, required an emotional structure that she had not yet developed. Fear and anxiety, added to moments of solitude in a foreign land, and the progressive homesickness she felt about anything from Brazil, triggered an eating disorder already in the first family home where she lived in New Jersey. Lenora's parents even told her to give up the exchange and return to Porto Alegre. Despite the difficulties and the call of her family, something greater made her stay and not abandon everything: the opportunity to study in New York. The visible consequence when she returned to Brazil twelve months later, in October 1972, was that she had put on 20 kilos.