

Ana Vieira

The Narrative Structure

EN

narrative, space, and metalepsis

In Ana Vieira's work, narrative is not organized in a linear way, but rather as a condition inscribed within the spatial configuration itself. The works emerge from recognizable situations, often associated with the domestic sphere, creating an initial sense of proximity that guides the gaze and situates the viewer.

This familiarity is quickly disrupted: the elements appear displaced, fragmented, or removed from their functional context, interrupting the narrative continuity. There is no sequence of events, but rather a set of visual clues held in suspension, where meaning remains open and in the process of construction.

In this context, the concept of metalepsis works as a structural operator. By undoing the separation between the represented space and the viewer's space, Ana Vieira's work questions categories such as interior and exterior, representation and reality. These no longer operate as stable oppositions, but instead configure zones of transition.

The observer no longer occupies an external position and is integrated into the very structure of the work. The relationship with the visible loses distance and stability, becoming dependent on position, movement, and the duration of the experience. What is observed is not separate from the observer: it is constituted within the very situation of perception.

Rather than producing narratives, the work operates upon the conditions under which something may be read as narrative. Meaning is neither presented nor concluded; it is constituted as a relation, always in progress. What is at stake is not the interpretation of what is shown, but the way in which the visible is organized within experience.

In *Close Up*, the extreme proximity and optical distortion shift the mode through which the image is read. Detail does not deepen recognition; it alters it. Concave and convex mirrors introduce deformation and discontinuity, intensifying the instability of the visible and preventing the fixation of form as a perceptual totality.

In *Mesa-Paisagem*, the table ceases to function as a support and instead structures a field of appearance. The landscape is neither represented nor framed: it emerges within the exhibition space itself, without a defined exterior. The distinction between object and environment loses definition, becoming dependent on the position of the body in space.

Taken together, the works suspend any stable reading of the image, exposing the processes through which the visible is constituted and destabilized within the very experience of perception.

Antonia Gaeta
Alvito, 21st April 2026

Ana Vieira was born in Coimbra in 1940, spent her childhood and early years on the island of São Miguel in the Azores, and lived most of her adult life in Lisbon, where she died in 2016. She graduated in Painting from the School of Fine Arts (1966) and was awarded the AICA Prize in 1991.

Ana Vieira started exhibiting her work regularly in the late 1960s and established herself as a key figure in Portuguese contemporary art in the decades that followed. Anchored in a critical thinking and an artistic language that explores the limits and the traditional supports of art, particularly painting and sculpture, her practice aligns with the conceptual art movement and is markedly influenced by the exploration of everyday objects, spaces, and situations. Often in the form of installations, Vieira plays with representations of passages, half-spaces and transparencies, creating hybrid territories simultaneously visible and inaccessible, welcoming and hostile. These scenic creations allow for different possibilities for the experiencing of objects, freeing them from their function and inscribing them in a poetic dimension that lies between allegory and simulacrum.

Her work has been the subject of two major retrospective exhibitions, at the Serralves Museum in 1998 and at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's Modern Art Center in 2011, institutions with significant collections of the artist's work. In 2017, the Graça Morais Art Center presented a major posthumous solo exhibition, and in 2020, the Es Baluard Museum, in Spain, dedicated an important retrospective exhibition to the artist's work. More recently, the exhibition "Ana Vieira: Cadernos de Montagem" has brought renewed attention to the work of one of the most iconic artists of the 20th century, studying, documenting, and exhibiting a collection of emblematic works.

Her work has been regularly featured in group exhibitions at national and international institutions, including: MAAT - Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, and EDP Foundation (Lisbon, PT); MNAC - National Museum of Contemporary Art (Lisbon, PT); José de Guimarães Arts Center (Guimarães, PT); Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon, PT); Serralves Museum (Porto, PT); CAV – Visual Arts Center (Coimbra, PT); Berardo Collection Museum (Lisbon, PT); Culturgest (Lisbon, PT); and also MARCO - Vigo Art Museum (Vigo, ES); SESC Pompeia (São Paulo, BR); National Museum of Women in the Arts (Washington, USA); La Monnaie de Paris (Paris, FR); Afro-Brazil Museum (São Paulo, BR), among others.

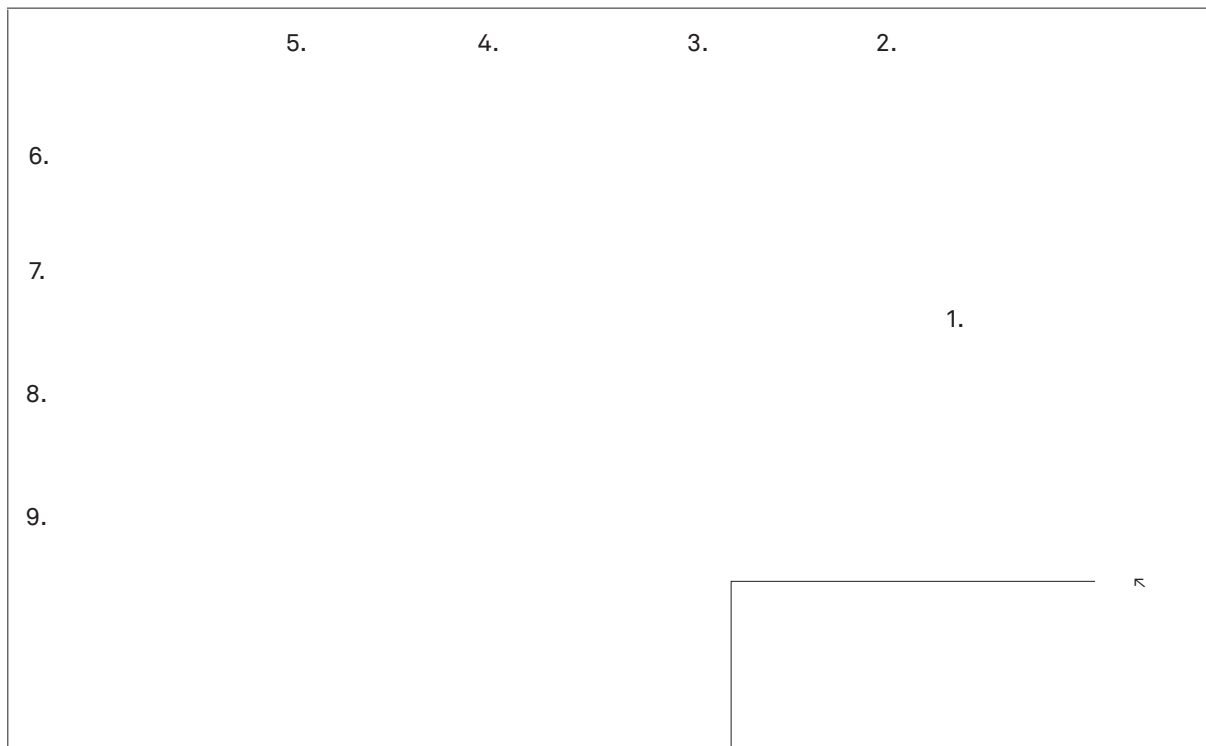
Ana Vieira's work is represented not only in the collections of Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's Modern Art Center (CAM), Serralves Museum, Culturgest, State Contemporary Art Collection (CACE), Contemporary Art Museum - Belém Cultural Center (MAC/CCB), but also in the EDP Foundation, Carmona e Costa Foundation, and Musée Cantonal de Beaux-Arts, Switzerland.

Scientific Advisory Board for the Study of the Estate of Ana Vieira: Antonia Gaeta, Astrid Suzano and Sofia Gomes.
The artist's archival collection is on deposit at the BAC (Banco de Arte Contemporânea).

Antonia Gaeta (Lanciano, Italy, 1978) has a BA degree in Conservation of Cultural Property from the University of Bologna, a Master's degree in Curatorial Studies from the University of Lisbon's Faculty of Fine Arts (FBAUL), and a PhD in Contemporary Art from the University of Coimbra's College of Arts. Antonia Gaeta has developed research projects and exhibitions with various art institutions in Portugal and abroad, and has also published numerous texts in catalogues, specialised magazines and exhibition programs.

For the Directorate-General for the Arts, she served as the executive coordinator of Portugal's official representations at the art biennials of Venice (2009 and 2011) and São Paulo (2008 and 2010). Between 2015 and 2022 she worked with the Treger Saint Silvestre collection, held on deposit at the Centro de Arte Oliva.

In 2019 she inaugurated Verão in Lisbon, a space for experimentation in the visual arts. Since 2022, after completing her studies at the Ricardo Espírito Santo Foundation, she has been working on carpentry-based projects, alongside her work as a curator.



1. Mesa-Paisagem, 1973

Wooden table, fabric, spray paint on fabric, objects (plate, cutlery, napkin ring, napkin, plate, coconut, toy train and plastic palm trees)
94 x Ø110 cm

2. Close-up (05), 2004

White panel, photograph, mirrors, and metal cables
101,5 x 101,5 x 20 cm

3. Close-up (13), 2004

White panel, photograph, mirrors, and metal cables
101,5 x 101,5 x 20 cm

4. Close-up (03), 2004

White panel, photograph, mirrors, and metal cables
101,5 x 101,5 x 20 cm

5. Close-up (15), 2004

White panel, photograph, mirrors, and metal cables
101,5 x 101,5 x 20 cm

6. Close-up (09), 2004

White panel, photograph, mirrors, and metal cables
101,5 x 101,5 x 20 cm

7. Close-up (10), 2004

White panel, photograph, mirrors, and metal cables
101,5 x 101,5 x 20 cm

8. Close-up (11), 2004

White panel, photograph, mirrors, and metal cables
101,5 x 101,5 x 20 cm

9. Close-up (08), 2004

White panel, photograph, mirrors, and metal cables
101,5 x 101,5 x 20 cm