

Empowerment by Adélia Clavien

Curator Marisa Melo, Gallery UpTime Art - 01/09/20

With the exhibition “Empowerment!” visual artist Adélia Clavien presents us with a new look at the women’s quest for equality. High impact portraits bring women who have stood out in this millennial effort to provide equal rights and opportunities. A daily struggle so that no one is judged by gender, race or creed. Some of these women are famous, but little is said about their activism. Others represent a whole legion of anonymous hardworkers who build, every day, a more equal and less unfair world.



Adélia is fully aware of the global reach of her message, which she has taken to New York, Rome, Montreal, Lisbon, Geneva and other international centers. Her works combine materials such as sand, acrylic, resin and photos printed on the canvas, and here they reveal the chemistry that is present in the success of the women portrayed. From Barbra Streisand to Ella Fitzgerald.

“Empowerment” exhibition aims to raise awareness that everyone, without exception, regardless of gender, is part of this effort for rights and opportunities. What drives this journey is love. So, without making the mistake of fighting violence with more violence, Adélia reminds us that it is possible to fight without leaving aside sensitivity and elegance. But the stories that the portraits tell, make it clear that it is not enough to just show a slogan on a T-shirt. In honoring women who contributed to the cause, Adélia Clavien presents us with the challenge of contributing with actions. Concrete. It is on these actions that the better world we want to build depends on.



"Audrey Hepburn"

To open a collection that speaks of strength and feminine power, Adélia Clavien chose the image of Audrey Hepburn. The actress, muse of Givenchy, made the screen her runway, and became a world symbol of charm and elegance. The starting point for stardom was a very painful childhood during the war.

The difficult start made her never forget those who need help. Audrey alternated Fifth Avenue and the Champs-Élysées with trips to Bangladesh and Sudan, in support of UNICEF and educational and health projects, in support of refugee and anonymous children and families.

Adélia highlights the expressive eyes that captured the cameras and that, far from the spotlight, translated compassion and kindness throughout her life. That made her give up luxury and comfort to really act and build a better world.



"Frida Kahlo"

Adélia gets it right by including Frida Kahlo in her collection. Frida's work and personal life are intertwined and her message remains extremely current. Its impact is felt both in Arts and in the women's universe. According to her, her work was not surreal, because she did not portray dreams, but reality.

An often painful reality. In addition to the polio contracted at age 6, she suffered a serious accident at age 18. It was in the recovery period that she began her career. The vibrant colors expressed pain and passion, with no compromise to the representation of conventional beauty. She has gained international respect and recognition. Her eyebrows became as famous as Dalí's mustaches.



In "*Silent Girl*", not just words are absent. Eyes are not open. Adélia Clavien connects us to the thoughts of this girl who opted for silence. At a time when there is so much discord, and the word has been just another instrument of aggression, the girl chooses silence. A protective silence. Against prejudice and judgment. Preserving good vibrations and energy. To fight and resist, always, but without violence. No space for empty and meaningless discussion. No complicity with backbiting. If there are words to say, let them be peaceful. If her eyes are opened, may it be for a new world, with more joy, more understanding, more love.



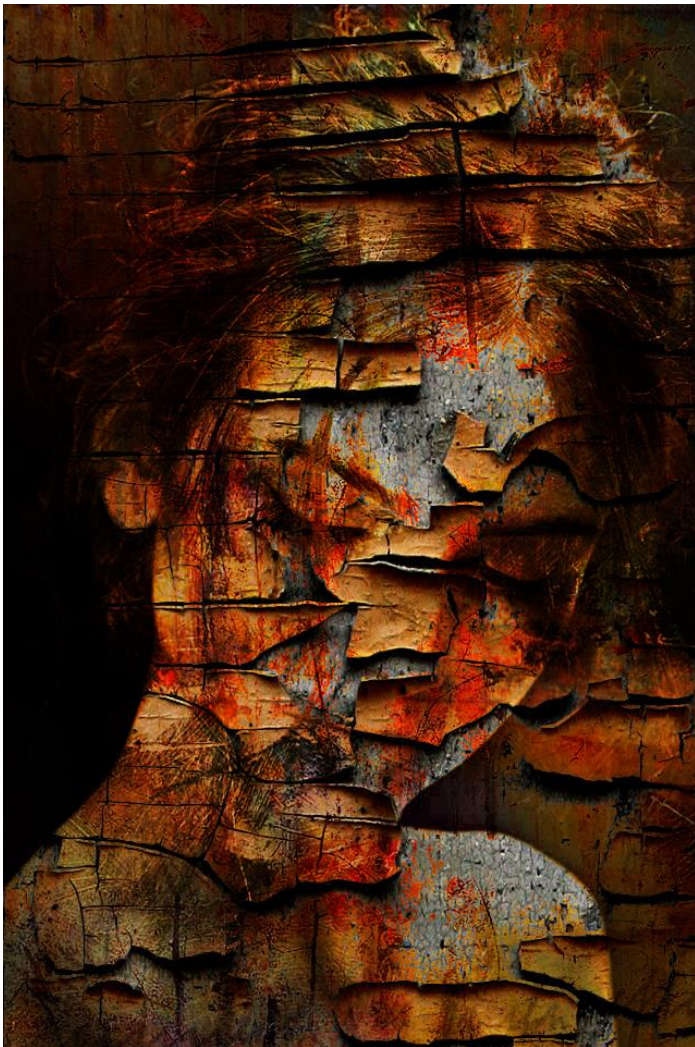
"Romy Schneider"

Among the various artistic manifestations, cinema undoubtedly occupies a very special place. A good movie involves us and we believe that the people on the scene really live that reality. We forget that they have their lives and their problems. Adélia brings us the portrait of Romy Schneider. The interpreter of "Sissi, the empress", had to overcome family conflicts and the challenges in Germany and France until she got the recognition that led her to work with directors like Luchino Visconti and Claude Chabrol.

In her "real" life, Romy supported the women's liberation movement in Europe. And contributed to the discussion of topics such as the objectification of women, lesbianism, and sexual violence. At the time, these topics were treated as private matters, they did not reach the

media. The argument for combating these pioneers was the charge that they preached hatred to man.

In a controversy that continues today, not everyone realizes that the force that promotes this change is motivated by the love and defense of all women our patriarchal civilization tries to reduce to silence and submission.



"The Unknown"

Among so many stars, so many lives full of achievements, so much fame, Adélia Clavien marks the presence of the woman who is not famous. She didn't sing, she didn't dance, she didn't star a movie. Her name is not in the neon or in the news.

She did not donate millions of dollars. Nor did she write a best seller. She wouldn't have time, even if she wanted to. Full-time work, time spent in traffic, dinner, children's lesson, husband's inattention. She thinks that another day is gone. Another day is lost. But it's not like that. She is the unknown heroine.

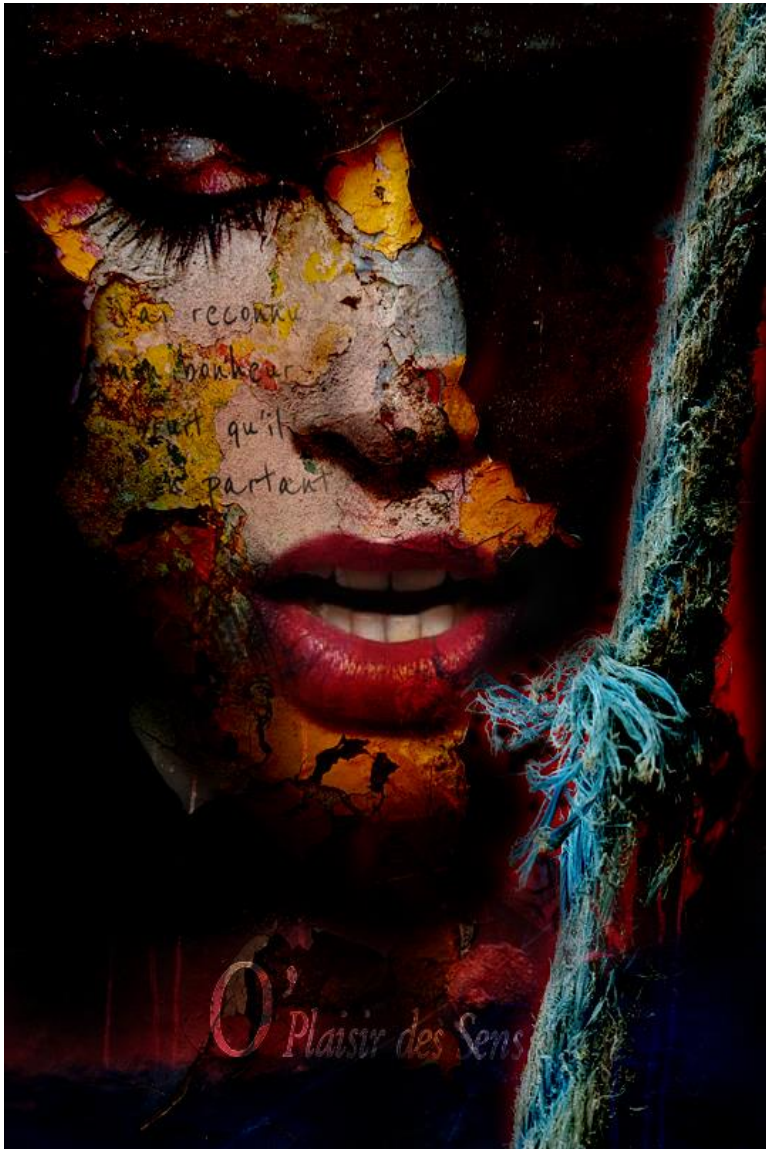
Who plays many roles every day.

Mother, hardworker, she nourishes, shares and believes.

She believes there will come a day when she will be recognized for everything she does.

In which she is not despised, abandoned, disrespected.

Feminine, resistant, tireless, she is the majority in this team of women who keep fighting for a fairer, more equal, happier world.



"Plaisi Passager"! (Ephemeral Pleasure)

There are times when the task seems endless. And the challenges follow. The charges too.

Charges from a society that judges, condemns and seems to have the gift of blocking every loophole, every escape route.

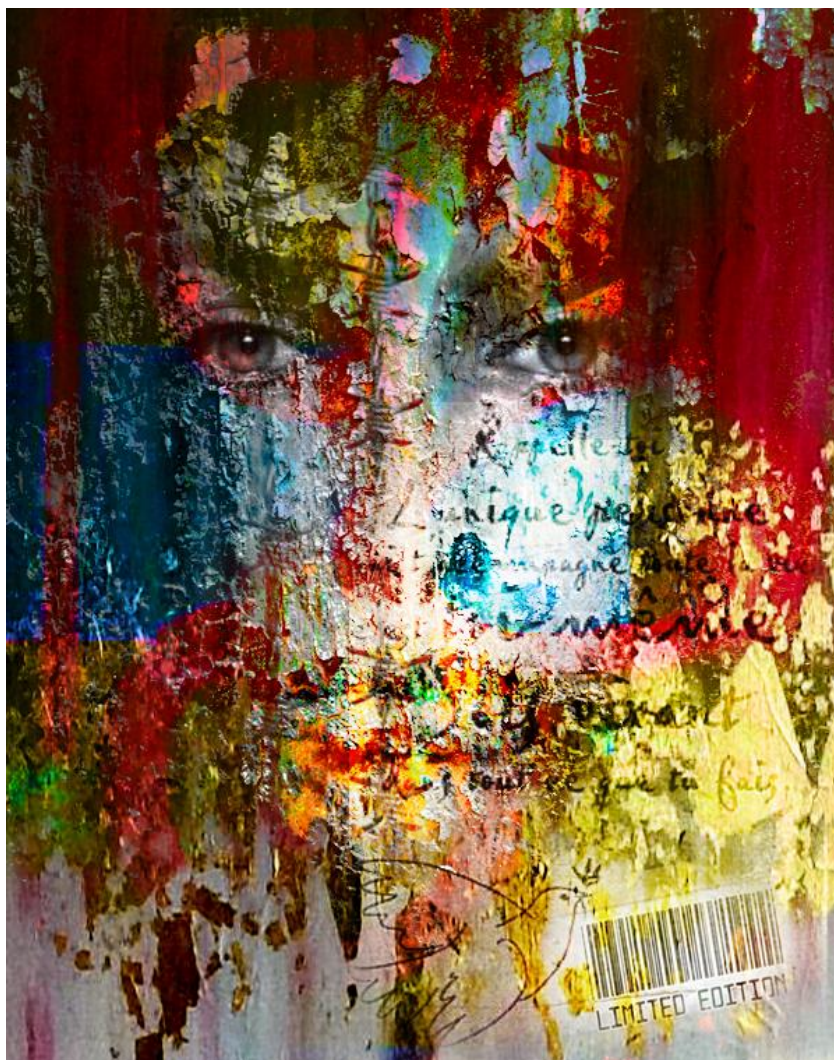
Adélia Clavien's image shows us 24 hours a day are not enough to fix all prejudice, to say all the words of affection, for all the missing kisses and hugs. To serve children, parents, acquaintances and strangers. Even so, love finds a way. A love that insinuates itself in the midst of so many concerns. External pressure tries to reduce the transcendental flame to a passing pleasure. That comes back from time to time, stubborn, to remind us that we are alive.



With "*Barbra Streisand*", Adélia Clavien promotes the integration of three forms of Art: Painting, Music and Cinema. The image presented reconciles colors and words and conveys firmness and hope. From a singer of international fame who was also hugely successful in films and who has exercised her political activism since the 1960s. Barbra Streisand has always actively fought all forms of gender discrimination. Perhaps the most representative moment of this fight is the film "Yentl", where the protagonist is a young woman who needs to disguise herself as a man in order to study. No studio believed that a

woman could direct and manage the production of a film. Barbra, who has never been afraid to fight for her rights since she was a child, ended up realizing that she herself suffered a prejudice similar to Yentl's. In the end, of course, the film happened.

Almost forty years later, much has been done. And much remains to be done. She engages in causes such as the defense of refugees, global warming and freedom of the press. But with each passing day, she is less alone. Thanks to an awareness work that owes a lot to Art. From Barbra Streisand to Adélia Clavien.



"Gold Dreams"

The magic in the work of art is measured by the impact and the connection of the artist's feelings with the expectations of the observer. Usually, we observe the image. Sometimes, it is the image who watches us. In "Gold Dreams", Adélia Clavien combines her

technique of overlapping layers with defined colors and scattered words. And the highlighted eyes follow us and tell a story. The story of the woman who has golden dreams that do not necessarily suggest material wealth. No, dreams are different. Dreams of a world in which there is no place for pain and suffering. Without the claw mark, without the fear of violence, of shooting. The eyes reveal dreams of freedom. And they see a world perhaps distant. Without abuse. Without discrimination. Without objectification. Without contempt. Without indifference. Without limitations, without that barbed wire that society accepts and perpetuates.

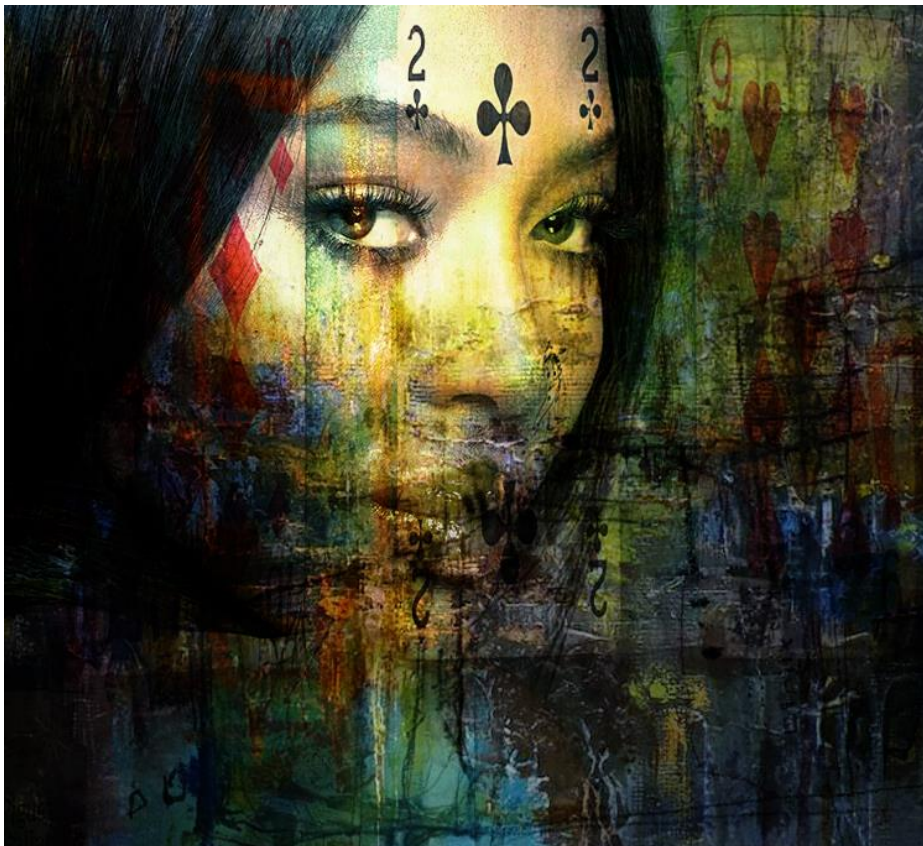


"Mary Pickford"

There are no limits for Art. It can take us to distant countries and also to the distant past. With "Mary Pickford", Adélia Clavien transports us to the time when silent movies were beginning. Pickford began her artistic life at the age of 6, to help her mother when her father, an alcoholic, passed away. At the age of 14 she went to New York, dreaming of a career on Broadway.

When an invitation came to act in the movies (silent at the time), she resisted. Cinema was seen as an art inferior to theater and it was the mother's insistence that convinced her, for the support of the family. Ten years and many films later, the "Sweetheart of America" became the first woman to win \$ 1 million in Hollywood. At the same time, women voted for the first time in the United States.

What movies didn't show was the delicate girl's wit and energy. Mary Pickford was always ready to defend her views. The constant memory of childhood poverty, made her always seek to defend and benefit others. Once again, Adélia Clavien portrays an example of women's ability to break barriers and to know how to reconcile success and compassion.



"Naomi Campbell"

The path to women's empowerment is a long and winding road. And even with all the advances, there are still absurd inequalities. Adélia Clavien brings us the image of Naomi Campbell. One of six models of her generation defined as supermodels by the fashion industry, still she earned less than her white-skinned blue-eyed colleagues.

With African, Chinese and Jamaican roots, she knew she was an exception in the fashion world and always felt the weight of

discrimination. She protested vigorously against the Fashion Weeks producers, who mostly hired only white-skinned models. The same energy she used to support social projects in India, Haiti and Brazil. The causes are intertwined and this Nelson Mandela's friend was an important part of the campaign promoted in London when the centenary of the female vote was celebrated. Because anyone who really seeks to build a more just world understands that any form of inequality must be equally fought.



"Ella Fitzgerald", by establishing herself as "Jazz Queen" showed how far it is possible to go even when all the odds are negative. Born in 1917, she lived in a period when the world was more racist and women were more discriminated than today. This was aggravated by a childhood of great poverty. As if that were not enough, her mother's death was followed by abuse by her stepfather.

Easy to understand why in her interviews she did not talk about childhood and adolescence. Still, the Connie Boswell fan made music her way and shone from the first performance at the legendary Apollo

Theater. Always reinventing herself, Ella indicated paths to Jazz. The image that Adélia Clavien brings us comes with a restrained smile and a look from those who lived through all the pain that makes jazz and blues unmistakable.

Adélia brings the musical element to the context of “Empowerment!” with someone who has overcome huge racial barriers and has always been concerned with providing opportunities for the less fortunate. This partner of Louis Armstrong is another example to follow in the construction of this “wonderful world”.

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