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**COLD AMERICA
GEOMETRIC ABSTRACTION
IN LATIN AMERICA (1934-1973)**

2011

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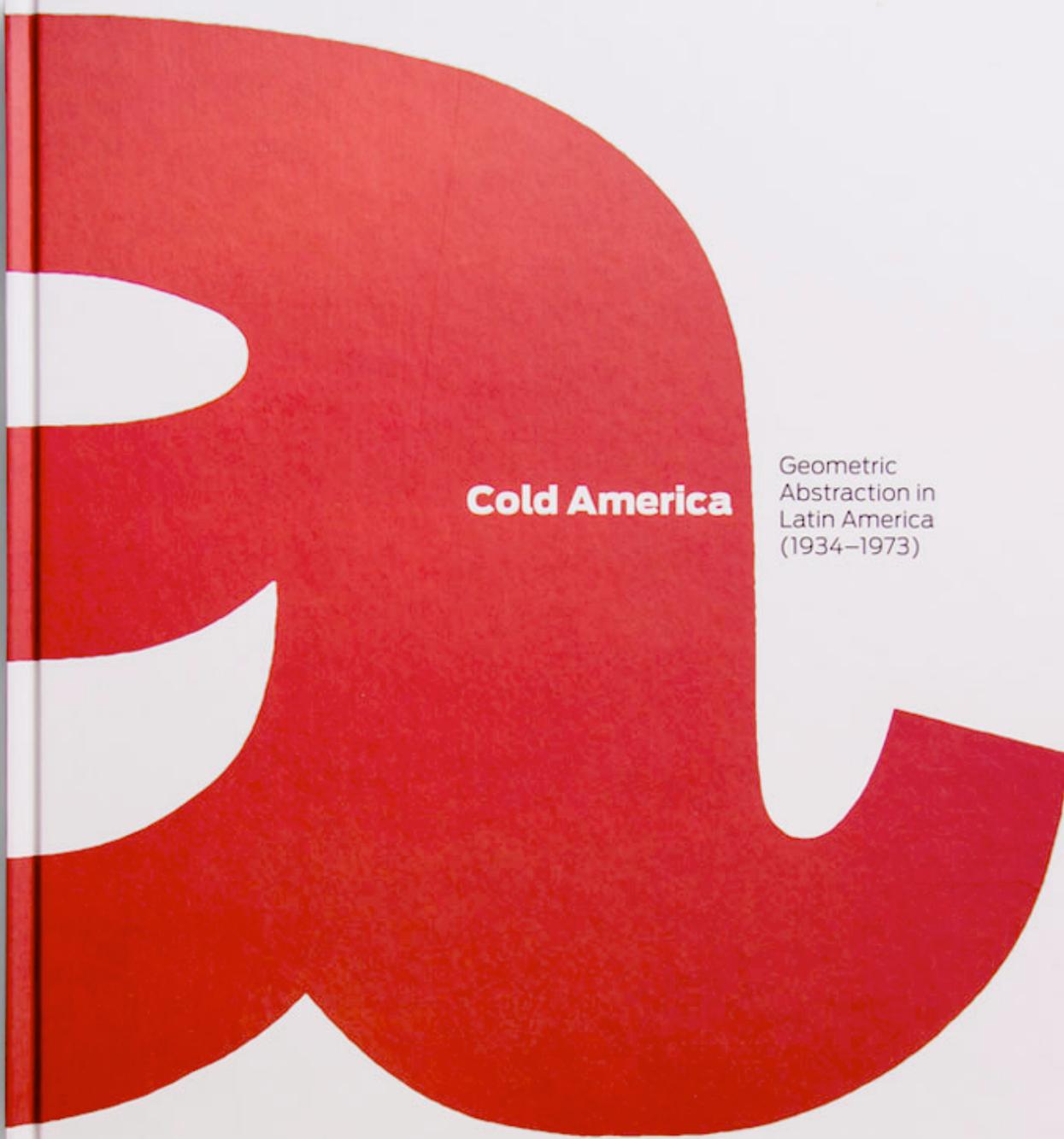
Cold America: Geometric Abstraction in Latin America (1934–1973) sets out to reveal the complex and fragmented history of geometric abstraction in Latin America and the way in which it renovated and also differed from European abstraction. Painting, photography, sculpture, and architecture are represented through approximately 300 works, some never before viewed outside their country of origin, by 64 artists from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Mexico, in a time frame defined by the dates in which two pivotal figures returned to Latin America from Europe: 1934, the year in which Joaquín Torres-García settled definitively in Montevideo, and 1973, when Venezuelan artist Jesús Rafael Soto traveled back to his native city of Ciudad Bolívar to inaugurate the museum that carries his name.

With a selection of historical documents and texts by Osbel Suárez, Ferreira Gullar, María Amalia García, Michael Nungesser, César Paternosto, Luis Pérez-Oramas, and Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, *Cold America* offers a vision of a Latin America that differs from the usual stereotype: it does not point to a hasty and clichéd identification of the continent with the intense heat of spontaneity, or to an association with the notion of the indigenous and with that of the tropics and the Caribbean. The works of these artists shows a Latin America measured in terms of objectivity; a geometrical, constructivist, and elemental America that moved between the rational and the sensível, gravitating towards modern utopias rather than local color: a Latin America that gave rise to a fascinating and surprising abstract art.



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Cold America

Geometric
Abstraction in
Latin America
(1934–1973)

Cold America

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Abstraction in
Latin América
(1934–1973)



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This catalogue and its Spanish edition are published
on the occasion of the exhibition

Cold America

Geometric Abstraction in Latin America (1934–1973)

FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH
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Another America

FOREWORD

For the third time in three years, the Fundación Juan March devotes an exhibition to modern and contemporary art in Latin America. *Cold America: Geometric Abstraction in Latin America (1934–1973)* follows in the footsteps of the show dedicated to Tarsila do Amaral and Brazil (Madrid, 2009) and the first retrospective of Venezuelan artist Carlos Cruz-Diez held in Spain (Cuenca and Palma, between 2008 and 2009).

The present exhibition sets out to chart the complex and fragmented path of geometric abstraction in Latin America so as to reveal the way in which it renovated and also differed from the constructions and inventions produced by European geometric abstraction. The result is a map—of which the English and Spanish editions of this catalogue form part—that shows how practices that originated in the Old World informed abstract art in Latin America, but were also modified, reinvented, or even overcome by the pioneers of geometric abstraction in Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and Cuba, and by prominent artists in Mexico and Colombia.

The works on display were loaned by private collections and museums in Europe, the United States, and Latin America, in what represents the largest effort to date to bring together select pieces from renowned collections in order to offer an overview of the various tendencies that made up Latin American abstraction. From the outset, this project was driven by the idea of providing the European audience with the first panoramic view of those trends—a presentation which, despite not being exhaustive, is indeed detailed and rigorous. This goal is as ambitious as it is necessary: in effect, until now, geometric abstraction in Latin America had only been treated as a chapter in exhibitions that focused on the more general aspects of Latin-American art. In other cases, projects of this nature resulted in excellent shows that were, however, restricted to outstanding private collections. Held for the most part in museums in North and South America, these exhibitions typically concentrated on South American geometric abstraction and the representative cases of Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela, which, nonetheless, exclude other countries.

Cold America: Geometric Abstraction in Latin America (1934–1973) offers a specific yet overarching view of abstraction in Latin America, incorporating Cuban as well

as expressions of Colombian and Mexican abstract art to the narrative of the project. Painting, sculpture, photography, and architecture are represented through the nearly three hundred pieces on display, some never before viewed outside their country of origin. The exhibition brings together a total of sixty-four artists from the above-mentioned countries and also features artworks by Germán Cueto (Mexico) and Leo Matiz (Colombia). Showcased too is the work of several European artists who paved the way for abstraction, geometric art, and the architectural and geometric applications of both styles: Josef Albers, Alexander Calder, Victor Vasarely, Max Bill, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Traveling through the countries represented in the exhibition, these artists left a mark thanks to both their art and skill, inspiring a number of Latin-American artists, some of whom lived in Europe, and in Paris in particular, from the 1950s onwards.

The Fundación Juan March has organized the exhibition with guest curator Osbel Suárez. As evidenced in his essay and chronological notes, from the early stages of the project Suárez suggested a specific time frame defined by the dates in which two artists returned to America from Europe: 1934, the year when Joaquín Torres-García settled permanently in Montevideo following his European (and North American) tour, and 1973, when Venezuelan artist Jesús Rafael Soto returned to his native city of Ciudad Bolívar to attend the opening of the museum that carries his name.

Together with Osbel Suárez, a number of renowned artists and experts on Latin-American art have collaborated on the exhibition and its accompanying catalogue. Contributions include Ferreira Gullar's essay on the dialectics between concrete and neo-concrete Brazilian artists and César Paternosto's account of the Madí deconstruction of the frame, María Amalia García's distinctive approach to the Brazilian and Argentine art scene and Luis Pérez-Oramas's to Venezuelan constructivism, and Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro's study of the similarities and differences between abstract art on both sides of the Atlantic. This collection of essays adds to the narrative of the exhibition by presenting an impressive body of textual evidence. The catalogue is completed with a total of sixty-four up-to-date biographies of the artists featured

“... it is important to clarify that, in the language of art, these so-called geometric forms lose the objective character of geometry in order to become vehicles for the imagination.”

Neo-concrete
Manifesto, 1959

in the show, as well as an illustrated chronology and a selection of historical documents, some never before published. Printed here almost in their entirety, the importance of these documents—mainly texts, manifestoes, and letters—cannot be understated, as they are pivotal in understanding geometric abstraction as a plural phenomenon that took place in Latin America between the 1930s and 1960s. Published in both English and Spanish, these documents offer a comprehensive selection of texts that is not only useful but in many cases essential for a complete overview of the activities carried out over the course of four decades in five different countries by a number of artists featured in the exhibition, as well as theorists, poets, art critics, and academics.

Executed between the dates that mark the beginning and end of the exhibition, the artworks (and documents) on display draw a chronological and geographical line that also tells a story of artistic and intellectual endeavor, as fascinating as it is unknown. In effect, a new artistic language was invented in Central and South America over the course of four decades. And while it contained references to abstract and concrete art, constructivism, neo-plasticism, or even suprematism, this new style eventually transcended European trends and at the same time imbued them with a personal flavor. •

Using words that apply to most of the artists included in the exhibition, in 1988, Venezuelan artist Alejandro Otero described what he referred to as “the European period”: “I had to emphasize our responsibility as men of other latitudes by forcing them to include our particularities: we represent the Western hemisphere in its unity and multiplicity. We were on the brink of two worlds, one that was coming to an end, fighting to survive, and a second that embodied new possibilities.”

The narrative of this exhibition begins in Uruguay, Joaquín Torres-García’s homeland, with the artist’s relentless commitment to a constructivist style of art. •

It continues with proposals put forward by artists such as Rhod Rothfuss and Carmelo Arden Quin, who, in a daring gesture, attempted to break away from the frame-window and vigorously supported the disjunction between painting and the natural world. This phase is followed by the Madí group’s singular take on constructivism and geometric abstraction, leading to what is known as perceptism and inventionism. •

“... we can accomplish it all... and not change what is our own for what is foreign (which is an unpardonable snobbishness), but, on the contrary, make what is foreign a thing of our own.”

Joaquín Torres-García,
1935

“A painting should be something that begins and ends in itself. Without interruption.”

Rhod Rothfuss, 1944

“To subvert the until now preponderant values of expression, representation, and magic... To cause a great “madic” commotion affecting reality... To create a spirit that is mathematic, cold, dynamic, cerebral, dialectic.”

Madí Movement, 1946

During this period, two concrete art groups emerged in two cities as different from one another as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. As the 1960s approached, abstract and geometric painting produced by artists in Rio de Janeiro acquired a warm, organic, “sensível” quality. •

While living in Paris, Venezuelan artists Alejandro Otero, Jesús Rafael Soto, and Carlos Cruz-Diez evolved towards abstract art in the 1950s. Meanwhile, in Cuba, geometric abstraction—even less popular than the abstract trends of other countries and soon affected by the triumph of the Revolution—was practiced by the internationally renowned artist Sandu Darie, a central figure of the movement, and by two women: Loló Soldevilla and Carmen Herrera. •

The chronological scope of the exhibition encompasses the work of several painters and sculptors, as well as—perhaps less well-known—photographers and architects. From the start, this project has been intent on giving abstract photography a prominent place within the show and has thus included works by, among others, Gaspar Gasparian, Leo Matiz, José Yalenti, Marcel Gautherot, and Haruo Ohara. Architecture is also well represented in the show. As a means to accomplish the “integration of the arts” (a proposal put forward by Carlos Raúl Villanueva that recalls the postulates of Le Corbusier), unparalleled architectural projects were conceived and realized in Latin America: Niemeyer’s Brasília, Mies van der Rohe’s building designs for Cuba, or Villanueva’s University City of Caracas, a project that attracted a number of geometric abstract artists. •

The interface between European and American geometric abstraction sets the stage for the exhibition. In the early twentieth century, European abstraction, or, using an expression coined by Wilhelm Worringer, the “abstract urgency” (Abstraktionsdrang) felt among European artists awoke them from a spell that had driven them to empathy and expressionism. Abstract art is ultimately regarded as a tendency that withdrew from representation and naturalism, producing elemental, independent artworks based on objectivity and geometry. •

Abstraction requires distance from immediate, sensorial, and physical stimuli as well as from our material surroundings. If it were possible to measure the temperature of the distance associated with objectivity, we would find it is probably far from high temperatures and closer to the low degrees of reflection,

“... we did not come to Paris to study diplomacy, nor to acquire some “culture” for our own personal interests. We came to confront problems, to struggle with them, to learn to call things by their name.”

Los Disidentes
Manifesto, 1950

“It is useful to recall... that, just as lions should not be in zoos, paintings and sculptures should not be shut away in museums. the natural environment of wild animals is the jungle. the natural environments for works of art are squares, gardens, public buildings, factories, airports: all the places where man perceives man as a partner, as an associate...”

Carlos Raúl Villanueva,
1957

where purely natural and specific experience rises to the level of objectivity. •

Such is the meaning of the metonym used in the title *Cold America: Geometric Abstraction in Latin America (1934–1973)*. At last, in this case the part that represents the whole is Latin America and refers to a concept that differs from the usual stereotype: it does not point to a hasty and clichéd identification of the continent with the intense heat of spontaneity, or to an association with the notion of the indigenous and with that of the tropics and the Caribbean. In spite of obvious differences between the artists—due to generation gaps and the personal and historic circumstances that determined their work as well as the styles that prevailed in each country—the works on view prove Latin America can in fact be measured in terms of objectivity. This was a geometrical, constructivist, and elemental America that moved between the rational and the “sensível,” gravitating towards modern theories rather than local color. In short, an America that gave rise to a fascinating and surprising type of abstract art. •

The works on display become part of a poetic narrative of geometry and rationality composed of assembled and essential elements. These forms of art led to new and extremely rich variations of style and, by the late 1960s, they had either evolved or co-existed with other discourses and practices concerned with organic and sensorial qualities or political and conceptual ideas. Already in 1946, Argentine artist Kosice referred to these tendencies as “intuitionist movements” that, in his own words, had conquered: “Hence the triumph (despite all the unfavorable conditions) of instinctive impulses over thought; of intuition over consciousness; of the revelation of the subconscious over cold analysis, the rigorous study and examination on the part of the creator of the laws of the object to be constructed; of symbolism, hermetism, and magic over reality; of metaphysics over experience.”

Naturally, a project of this scope would not have been possible without the effort, collaboration, and assistance of a number of individuals, institutions, and the artists who took part in the exhibition, with whom we have shared many memorable moments. We wish to use these pages to warmly thank them for their dedication. The project has concentrated on several different aspects: presenting an extensive yet consistent selection of works, giving architecture and photography a promi-

“... what is ours in particular is the absolute value we place in the form of something, independently of what it might represent. The same holds true for structure or construction: it ceases to be a mere scaffold on which to arrange things in a certain order; it takes their place and becomes the work itself.”

Joaquín Torres-García,
1931

“... the old is ... all the varieties and hybridizations of naturalism ...”

Ruptura Manifesto, 1952

“... We practice a joyous technique. Only exhausted techniques nourish themselves on sadness, resentment, and secrets ... To a precise aesthetics, a precise technique. The aesthetic function versus ‘good taste’. The white function.”

Inventionist Manifesto,
1946

nent place within the show, and incorporating Cuba, for the first time, to the historical account of Latin-American abstraction. Nevertheless, perhaps the most distinctive feature of the exhibition lies in its aspiration to present an overview of Latin-American abstract tendencies, a narrative to which both private and public collections have contributed. For this we thank the three private collections that have worked more closely on the project. In addition to their generosity in loaning the pieces, they have graciously accepted to let the historical and conceptual nature of the show prevail over the presence of specific artworks of their collections.

The main aim of the exhibition—that of presenting a comprehensive, orderly, and systematic account of geometric abstraction in Latin America—implies a certain lack of familiarity. Unawareness of this subject, though unaccounted for, comes as no surprise. In a letter addressed to the architect Carlos Raúl Villanueva in 1963, artist Alejandro Otero expressed his views on two exhibitions of Latin-American art held in Europe: “. . . a complete panorama of our reality seen through visual images . . . has seemed to me to be very necessary and useful for when the first exhibition of Venezuelan painting is held in Europe. The reason is obvious: the lack of information about what we are—from the point of view of the cultural orbit within which we are inscribed (which is none other than Western culture)—leads us to be viewed as hailing from exotic lands from which they expect to be surprised by some type of originality or other. Their disappointment is great when they find that our expressive language is the same as the Europeans’ and it is not strange that they should take us for snobs, or at best, for imitators . . . Once this mistake has been rectified nobody will be able to deny that we have our own accent. We can at least aspire to this, and this exhibition tends to highlight that notion.”

We, too, hope to highlight this accent and, as Gyula Kosice wrote to Sandu Darie in 1955, trust that “. . . the time will come for the critical judgment about the aesthetic convergence of a particular group of artists, who, across many latitudes, define a style. In a universality.”

Fundación Juan March
Madrid, January 2011

essays





**Geometric
Abstraction in
Latin America
(1934–1973):
Round Trip
Voyages**

OSBEL SUÁREZ

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odernity in Latin America should not be understood as a uniform phenomenon but rather as a disparate and erratic process with periods of contraction and expansion which preclude simplistic, unequivocal analyses. Indeed, rather than modernity in the singular, in the case of Latin America one might suitably speak of multiple *modernities*, whose temporal divergences and gaps are so pronounced that they have virtually become a trait of our modern identity.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, in cities like Buenos Aires, Havana, or São Paulo, this heterogeneous, contradictory, and

eminently urban modernity gave birth to an intense cultural production that sought its foundations in that which was local and indigenous as a means to discover the universal.¹ It is no coincidence that these countries (Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Venezuela, Cuba, Mexico) became the destination for significant numbers of European émigrés whose presence in America would have major historical and cultural repercussions in the life of these countries. Nor is it fortuitous that the cities most closely tied to modernity lie on or relatively near the Atlantic seaboard, in regions that were most favorable for commercial and cultural exchanges with Europe. Another aspect that characterized Latin America's burgeoning modernity was its restriction basically to the capital cities; these countries' inland territories, in contrast, continued stubbornly to cling to cultural modes and practices deriving from their postcolonial status.

The moment at which the debate around geometric abstraction developed in Latin America coincided precisely with a period of transatlantic voyages, back and forth between America and Europe, by the protagonists of this story, exchanges that would decisively influence their future artistic practices. At the time, gazing towards Europe was *de rigueur*, constituting another feature that identified us as "modern." Like the regions in Latin America in which modernity was championed, however, Europe likewise offered its own specific space for the modern, and the majority of the Latin American intelligentsia turned toward that epicenter of the avant-garde: Paris, and none other, was the city to which all roads led, the city that received and in turn irradiated outward a cultural dialogue whose repercussions were greater than that which any other European city could offer. Madrid, capital of the former empire that had colonized the Americas and the standard-bearer of the common language that identifies us—with the notable exception of Brazil, of course—likewise could not resist the cultural tug from the French capital.

Members of the intellectual classes and of the enlightened bourgeoisie therefore embarked upon their pilgrimages to Paris, forging connections that in time produced definitive changes even in the architectural profile of Latin American cities. During the presidency of Gerardo Machado, for instance, the urban makeovers of Jean-Claude Nicolas Forestier arrived in Havana. This architect, town planner, and landscape architect, a disciple of Georges Eugène Haussmann, had already carried out work in

Buenos Aires. Forestier drew up a Master Plan for the Cuban capital, which led, however, to the completion of only a few works resulting in a fragmentary stage design of urban monuments. Nonetheless, it allowed for the preservation of the historic center of the city, the integration of the most emblematic buildings into the urban fabric, and the creation of various green spaces within the metropolitan center. By the same token, though they lie outside the scope of this essay, Le Corbusier's successive trips to Latin America, which represented an important source of inspiration for the Swiss architect and painter [FIG. 1], should be evaluated in terms of modernity's multifarious entry into Latin America. The Curutchet House, designed by Le Corbusier and built in La Plata, Argentina, between 1949 and 1953,² includes an important work by Enio Iommi in white cement, inspired by the Möbius strip [FIG. 2], the original sketches for which appear in the present exhibition. Le Corbusier also sketched and wrote about Rio de Janeiro and, together with Josep Lluís Sert and Paul Lester Wiener, devised a regulatory plan for Bogotá and worked in Montevideo.

Once the initial phase of modernity in Latin America had passed—a period in which artists searched among the local in order to find its universal dimensions, when the indigenous or rural spheres (and later the urban) were viewed as necessary to differentiate ourselves from the rest of the world as the bearers of a unique history and a unique way of narrating and interpreting the past—Paris nevertheless continued to be the place of "enlightenment" to which one perforce traveled and from which one returned (whether permanently or temporarily) with experience and knowledge that later would bear fruit in the New World.

Two return journeys—one definitive, the other transitory—provide the chronological boundaries for the present exploration of the twists and turns of geometric abstraction in Latin America. The first is Joaquín Torres-García's return to Uruguay in 1934 [FIG. 3]. The second is Jesús Rafael Soto's return in 1973 to his birthplace, Ciudad Bolívar (Venezuela), to inaugurate the first stage in the construction of the museum that bears his name, designed by Carlos Raúl Villanueva. The idea of creating a museum in Ciudad Bolívar was not new; Soto had announced such a plan in 1960 when he received the National Prize in the Plastic Arts, though the project would not be undertaken until thirteen years later.

Significantly, these two return journeys originated in Paris, though Joaquín Torres-García left Europe via the southern Spanish port of Cádiz shortly after his brief and bewildering experience in Madrid. The Uruguayan artist's return marks the beginning of our tale, though it is true that for Mario Gradowczyk, abstraction in Latin America began a year earlier, with Juan del Prete's exhibition in Buenos Aires.³

I. A Return that Marks the Beginning

Torres-García's return to Montevideo carried a symbolic charge that can be characterized (beyond the strictly pictorial) as an earnest desire to adopt modernity as his credo. There is in addition a certain mystical element to this return, as evinced by the painter's studies on religion, anthropology, and pre-Columbian cultures. After more

PAGES 14–15:
Sandu Darie
Detail of *Untitled*, 1950s
Mixed media on card
33.9 x 61 cm (13 ¼ x 24 in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas
Artes de la Habana

than forty years outside his country, the consequences of his return might have been uncertain, but his methodicalness and the enthusiasm with which he took up his work anew in Uruguay allowed him to complete his autobiography (which, narrated in the third person, concludes with his arrival in Montevideo), paint some of his most emblematic works, write several books and manifestos, found the Asociación de Arte Constructivo, and publish his review, *Círculo y Cuadrado* (a continuation of the Paris-based constructivist journal *Cercle et Carré*—Circle and Square).

The inaugural issue of *Círculo y Cuadrado*, the mouthpiece for the Asociación de Arte Constructivo that appeared in 1936,⁴ features an article by Torres-García in which the author explains the origin of the journal. According to the painter, he had the opportunity to visit an exhibition of works by Salvador Dalí at Galerie Goemans on rue de Seine at the end of 1930. The exhibition produced such a negative reaction in him that that same afternoon, in a conversation with Theo van Doesburg, he remarked on the need to do something diametrically opposed. “In transplanting [this effort] to our milieu here,” Torres-García explains in reference to the creation of the magazine in Montevideo, “it is immediately apparent that it cannot have the same objective it had then in Paris. Yet its purpose is equally combative insofar as we cannot accept naturalistic, representational art, believing it to be today an error; [the review] must serve to bring to light a structured art, whether it be from here or from abroad.”⁵

The last part of Torres-García’s text outlines his recognition of a difference that allows him to reconcile his apprenticeship in Europe with the specificity of what is indigenous to the Americas:

Something else remains to be explained. We do not forget that we are in the southern hemisphere. We have inverted the map, and the tip of America points toward our North Star, our goal. While these lands once had their own indigenous tradition, today they find themselves in a new reality about which we cannot and should not be indifferent. Furthermore, if we do not wish to sever our ties with Europe (for it is there that we learned, and we have much to learn), neither do we wish to do so with Central and South America. As long as our art fails to offer, within its universality, a character of its own, we will not have achieved that rootedness in the land that will allow our art to live with and like everything else.⁶

It is no coincidence, therefore, that a series of lectures on pre-Columbian art by the ethnographer Rafael Fosalba and an exhibition of Andean textiles at the Ateneo in Montevideo should have served as a pretext for the second article of the first issue, likewise signed by Torres-García. I am almost certain that the painter César Paternosto refers to this text in his seminal essay, *Abstracción: El paradigma amerindio* (Abstraction: The Amerindian Paradigm), required reading for an understanding of “the emergence of an abstract art that flourished thanks to the symbolic-structural analogies of the aboriginal arts, that is, of the *only* original arts in the hemisphere: abstraction, in fact, that can be identified as *of America*” (Paternosto’s italics).⁷

In August 1936, the second issue of *Círculo y Cuadrado* appeared, now welcoming annual subscriptions in America, Spain, and the rest of Europe. Most noteworthy

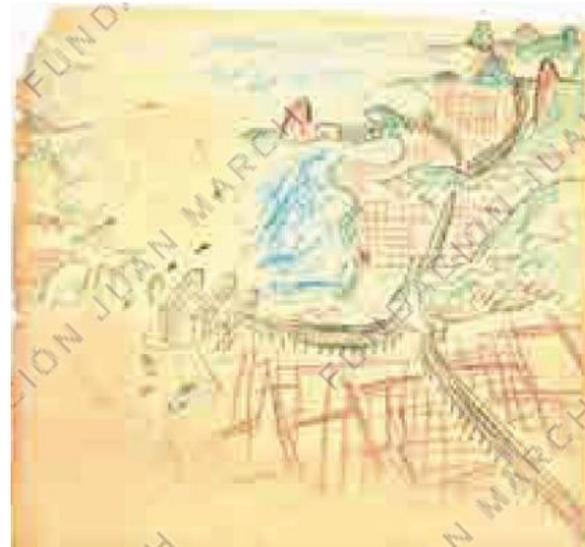


FIG. 1. Le Corbusier, sketch with aerial view of the bay of Rio de Janeiro, with buildings and highways over the port. Chalk and pastel on paper, 73.1 x 76.7 cm (28 ¾ x 30 ¼ in.). Collection Fondation Le Corbusier Paris

FIG. 2. Enio Iommi, sketches of a sculpture for the Curutchet House in La Plata, Argentina. Collection Jorge Virgili, Madrid

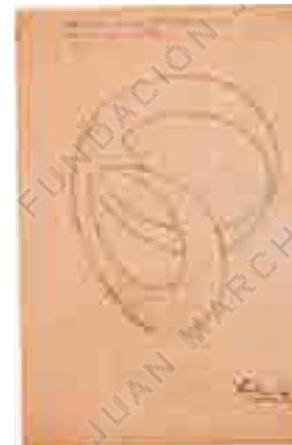


FIG. 3. Joaquín Torres-García, *Self-portrait*, 1920. Oil on cardboard, 42 x 27.5 cm (16 ½ x 10 ¾ in.). Fundación Francisco Godia, Barcelona

in this issue are a brief text by Piet Mondrian titled “Como se generó el neoplasticismo” (How Neo-Plasticism Came into Being) and another by Torres-García in which he greets international abstraction as a “return to the truth.” In February 1937 the third issue was published, with a reproduction on its cover of one of Torres-García’s *mad-eras* (wood sculptures), together with a text that is worth quoting here:

The great step ahead taken by the modern plastic arts is precisely this: form, even when its origin might be found in reality, no longer seeks to be *representational*, but *form in and of itself* and color, independent of anything else. In this way, a new order in the plastic arts has been created, whose purest expression is so-called *abstract art*. Abstraction in our language does not mean *non-figurative* but rather, more accurately, *synthesis*. For this reason, in its absolute sense, form (apart from representation) can find a deeply human expression.

Nearly identical in format to its French predecessor, *Círculo y Cuadrado* emblematically respected the typography and dimensions of *Cercle et Carré*. Indeed, the review was presented as the “second series” of the journal published in Paris five years earlier and in this light it must be viewed as a point of contact between Uruguayan and European artists. For the first time in any publication in Latin America, the journal provided the focal point for an open, sustained debate around abstract art. This debate (and the review’s link to the French publication) was facilitated by the inclusion of texts in both Spanish and French.

Even so, Torres-García’s thinking had evolved significantly since the first issue of *Cercle et Carré*, which appeared in Paris in March 1930 and included his now classic essay, “Vouloir construire,” in which he celebrated the synthesizing spirit of the artist and the absolute value of form. During those years in Paris, Torres-García united two aims that stood practically in opposition to each other, with scant possibilities for reconciliation: abstraction and figuration. In the words of Cecilia de Torres, “by placing symbols within a geometric structure, he could express a meaning lacking any narrative. He called this style ‘constructive universalism.’”⁸

The Uruguayan master’s poetics found a reorientation in his native country when he discovered in the motifs of Incan civilization the roots of Latin American identity [FIG. 4]; but that poetics grew diluted in the works of his many followers, who managed to pervert it to the extent that it came to be perceived as *indigenista* (i.e., promoting indigenous American culture), something that had always been alien to Torres-García.

II. Buenos Aires, or the Order of the Concrete

In the proto-history of geometric abstraction in Argentina, the beginnings of a new path in representation is marked by the work of Juan del Prete and Esteban Lisa (who remained outside the commercial mainstream), by the revolutionary contributions of the Madí movement, and by the appearance of the single-issue magazine titled *Arturo*.

The present exhibition adopts Mario H. Gradowczyk’s recommendation in one of his texts that Lisa’s work should be exhibited “alongside the members of the abstract avant-garde of the ‘40s and ‘50s” in order to analyze the solitary work of a self-marginalized intellectual in the context of a larger artistic collectivity.⁹

Esteban Lisa’s “territory” excluded the public arena, and he created a path—a universe?—that alternated between his work as a librarian and postman and his classes as a drawing instructor. Beginning in 1935, Lisa painted figures from a limited geometric repertory, in bright colors whose intensity diminishes toward the edges of the painted surface. He always painted these on cardboard, in small formats and occasionally working on both sides of the support. In this period, one perceives a certain rhythmic sequencing and emotive use of color that distances Lisa from the approach adopted soon afterwards by the Argentine concrete artists. Given that the dogma of concrete art demanded the elimination of any sign of lyricism, Lisa’s oeuvre can be situated in that “interregnum” where artists seized upon geometric form, which nevertheless was always characterized by a certain degree of primitivist nostalgia, making Lisa’s paintings a perfect antecedent to the geometric rigor that would later characterize the poetics of artists in the Southern Cone, before they began to delve into the principles of the Swiss artist and designer Max Bill.

The peculiarity and contradictions of *Arturo* magazine themselves indicate the timid path towards geometric abstraction in Argentina. Neither *Arturo* nor the Madí movement should be especially associated with geometric abstraction. The commitment of the magazine and the Madí artists responded more to a perceived need for invention in the broad sense, rather than to any particular artistic tendency, although the majority of the participants in these two projects ended up adopting approaches to representation in their works that relied on the canon of geometric forms.

Gyula Kosice, in his recently-published autobiography [FIG. 5], explains the origin of the name of the magazine:

Searching in the dictionary for a word that might have something to do with “art,” I found by chance *Arturo* (i.e., *Arcturus*), which is the name of one of the most brilliant stars in the heavens, in the constellation Boötes. Its name derives from the Greek, *Arktouros*, from *arktos* (bear) and *ouros* (guardian). The resonance of that childhood memory of the brilliant heavens which I saw for the first time when I was three, when I crossed the Atlantic Ocean, surely lies behind that choice. Edgar Bayley enthusiastically supported that decision, as did Rod Rothfuss, and the group accepted the title.¹⁰

In any case, regardless of Kosice’s personal anecdote, that single issue of *Arturo* betrays an earnest desire to break with the past and defend non-figurative art, marking a turning point toward geometry. The most innovative contributions to the journal were Rothfuss’s theoretical text on the irregular frame and Tomás Maldonado’s woodcuts on the cover, which could fall under the category of abstract expressionism and would seem almost to provide a counter-discourse to the ultimate aims of the publication. Curiously, in 1944 (the year *Arturo* appeared in print), Maldonado illustrated Elías Piterberg’s *Tratado de amor*, in which his drawings take on a markedly geometric

FIG. 4. Torres-García with his family, Montevideo, 1942. From left to right: Augusto, Olimpia, Torres-García, Ifigenia, and Manolita

FIG. 5. Front cover of Kosice, *Autobiografía*. Buenos Aires: Asunto Impreso Ediciones, 2010

FIG. 6. Front cover of the review *Arturo* Buenos Aires, 1944

character that leaves no doubt about their possible classification. In 1948, together with Aldo Pellegrini and Enrique Pichón Rivière, Piterbarg edited the only two issues of the magazine *Ciclo*, for which he worked again with Maldonado, who was commissioned to design the first issue.

Arturo [FIG. 6], with its single run of barely five hundred copies, had scant repercussions in the local milieu, at least initially. According to Gyula Kosice, copies of the review were distributed among bookstores on Avenida Corrientes and Avenida Santa Fe in Buenos Aires and through the cultural missions of some American and European embassies, when that continent was still bleeding from the Second World War. *Arturo* should be understood as a starting pistol's shot, the beginning of a collective action whose epicenter was Buenos Aires and that resolutely adopted a position against the figurative tradition—a foundational act from which later associations would emerge, with platforms whose features were more in line with the postulates of concrete art.

It is not useful, however, to include the Madí movement within the category of concrete art in Argentina. Nelly Perazzo affirmed as much in 1983, in her essential study, *El arte concreto en la Argentina*. Perazzo agrees with Kosice when she excludes Madí from her book, "because it is a completely unique phenomenon. Its explorations in every field mix fantasy, inventiveness, and playfulness with characteristics that are completely different from not only the work of the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención

in our country, but also from what we can regard as the orientation of international concrete art." Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro makes a similar claim when, apropos of Madí's significance, he argues that it "represents the first truly avant-garde movement in the field of the visual arts in Argentina. And when I say avant-garde, I am referring to the transgression of a particular *model* of artistic production, not to a *style*."¹¹

Madí was technically versatile, but its ideology and its energetic spirit are perhaps more thought-provoking than what it actually produced in the plastic arts; it is to this that its tremendous capacity to appeal to critics and academics to this day may be attributable. Since it offered a relatively open artistic space, we associate it with vitality, surprise, and amazement, and the desire in art and poetry to eschew descriptive representation; but it did not seek to impose a geometrically pure order.

There were many adversities that little by little wore down the Madí movement: the partial dispersal of members of the group; the schism provoked by Carmelo Arden Quin's split with the movement; the disappearance of the group's review, which had served as a cohesive element for the movement (the *Madí* journal published seven issues, the last of which was a double-issue); the pointless, steady, and prolonged dispute between Kosice and Arden Quin; and the long visit to Paris undertaken by Kosice, who was more focused at the time on promoting his own work.¹² Thus, the exhibition organized by the Museo de Arte Moderno in Buenos Aires in 1961 to

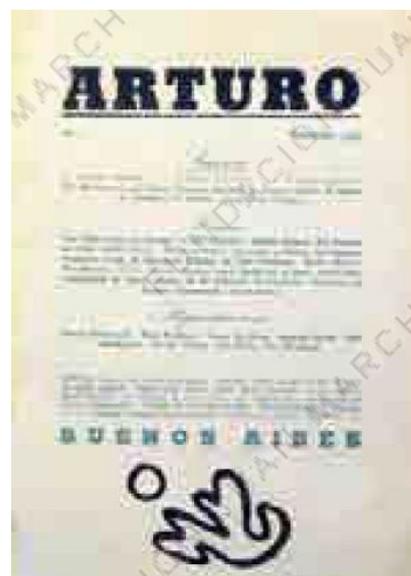
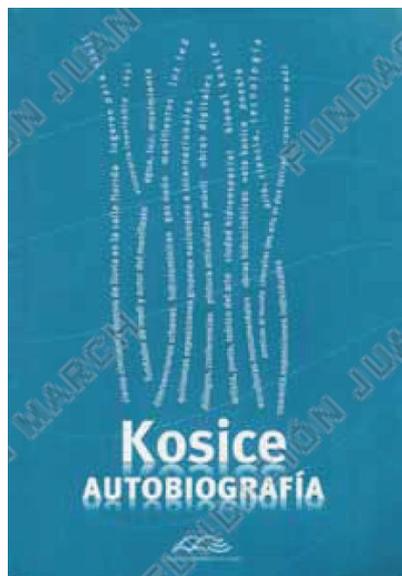


FIG. 7. Tomás Maldonado in his studio on Calle Cerrito, with the work *Cuatro temas circulares* (Four Circular Subjects), 1953



FIG. 8. Page 3 of the first issue of *Nueva visión* (year 1, no. 1, December 1951) featuring an article on the architecture of Antonio Bonet

FIG. 9. Interview with Raúl Lozza by the critic Abraham Haber in issue no. 7 of the journal *Perceptismo*



commemorate the fifteen-year anniversary of the movement's founding can be seen not only as an homage to Madí but also as its obituary.

The most interesting and multifaceted creator and the person who contributed the most lucid and committed ideas to the visual arts in Argentina in the first half of the twentieth century, definitively focusing the debate around concrete art, was Tomás Maldonado [FIG. 7]. In 1945, the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención was created in Buenos Aires, and the group delivered the obligatory founding manifesto as part of their first exhibition on March 18, 1946, at the Salón Peuser. Its members were, among others, Alfredo Hlito, Lidy Prati, Manuel Espinosa, Enio Iommi, the Lozza brothers, Alberto Molenberg, and Claudio Girola. Subsequently, Gregorio Vardánega, Juan Melé, and Virgilio Villalba joined the association. Maldonado, whose house had become a requisite meeting place for impassioned discussions about the forms and content of modern art, was the indisputable leader and ideologue for the group and its short-lived journal. Five months after the inaugural exhibition, in August 1946, the association's magazine appeared, and in December of the same year, in a more modest publication than the first issue, its second and last issue came out under the title *Boletín de la Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención*. In this second issue, the group clarified (if there were any doubts about the matter) that this movement had nothing to do with Madí.

Maldonado and the other members of the association adopted the credo that the "abstract" and "concrete" belonged to the aesthetic categories of Marxism, which had surpassed the classical concept of "figuration." One can thus comprehend the ardent proclamations and manifestos that the group emitted against everything it considered reactionary and bourgeois. The word "invention" is not gratuitous and is tied to eminently social aspirations: concrete art would lead, they thought, to a transformation of the world.

In the third issue of the review *Contrapunto*, in April 1945 (before the creation of the association), in response to a question about the direction in which painting was evolving, Maldonado replied:

I believe that painting is evolving toward the concrete, which has dialectically surmounted abstraction. Abstract art has been purified in a real, material sense, that is to say, it has become CONCRETE ART. In this new stage in its development, the "abstract" tendency has completely divorced itself from any commitment to idealist thought and tends toward an objective aesthetics, that is, an aesthetics based on INVENTION rather than on copy or abstraction. Concrete art does not abstract; it invents new realities.

In 1948, Maldonado traveled to Europe and met Max Bill, Bruno Munari, Gillo Dorfles, Richard P. Lohse, and Georges Vantongerloo, among other artists connected with the defunct Bauhaus and with concrete art. According to Maldonado, this trip marked the end of the movement's heroic phase when it was most audacious and experimental, and, I would add, it marked the beginning of the mature period of design, the graphic arts, and typography in Argentina.

Upon his return to Buenos Aires, Maldonado turned especially towards design and typography. He collaborated on the review *Ciclo* (Cycle), which appeared in only two issues (November-December 1948 and March-April 1949) and served as editor for *Nueva visión* (New Vision), whose first issue appeared in December 1951, continuing through the beginning of 1957. *Nueva visión* represented the last of the major projects Maldonado managed to undertake before leaving Argentina, unable to resist Max Bill's urging him to join in the new project that was being forged in Ulm.

Certain "deficiencies" in the design of the first issue of *Nueva visión* were immediately remedied by Maldonado in the subsequent issues. The cover photograph was eliminated, design was minimized, and only one flat color was used on the cover, which changed with each issue. The first opens with a text about the Catalan architect Antonio Bonet (in exile in Argentina since 1938), focusing on the spas he was designing in Uruguay [FIG. 8]. The issue continues with a now classic text by Maldonado from his period before Ulm, "Actualidad y porvenir del arte concreto" (The Present and Future of Concrete Art). In this article written in the spirit of a manifesto, the artist reviews terminology related to the "concrete" and settles accounts with critics who view concrete art as elitist and contrary to art that is more socially relevant and "understandable." The issue closes with another text by Maldonado, homage to Vantongerloo on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday.

The second and third issues appeared in a double volume in January 1953. Of note in this volume is the text by Alfredo Hlito, Maldonado's most faithful fellow-traveler at the time, "Significado y arte concreto" (Meaning and Concrete Art). The fourth issue reports on the text "Educación y creación" by Max Bill, which surveys the history of various schools of design, focusing on the Bauhaus and concluding with the Ulm School of Design. Referring specifically to Ulm, Max Bill argues:

The school aims to direct the enterprising spirit of young people, cultivating their sense of responsibility as members of society, so they work to solve important social problems and engage in the forms of living in our technological era. Instruction is based both on the study of concrete tasks taken from practice and on the indispensable teaching of theoretical issues ... The school very freely juxtaposes workshops, laboratories, and studies for collective work.

This issue includes Walter Gropius's speech on his seventieth birthday as well as the essay "Problemas actuales de la comunicación" (Current Problems in Communication) by Maldonado.

The fifth issue appeared in 1954, with an advertisement for the book *Max Bill*, also by Maldonado. To mark the exhibition of the Artistas Modernos de la Argentina group at the Museu de Arte Moderna in Rio de Janeiro, this issue includes reproductions of various works by Alfredo Hlito, among them *Formas y líneas en el plano* (Forms and Lines on the Plane), also in the present exhibition [CAT. 56]. The issue also records the Acquisition Prize won by Hlito at the Second São Paulo Biennial. The sixth issue opens with a lengthy article on the Curutchet House, designed in Argentina by Le Corbusier, and includes a photograph of the sculpture created by Enio Iommi for the ground floor

of the building, the original sketches for which likewise appear in the present exhibition [see FIG. 2]. Finally, a brief note on page 43 announces Tomás Maldonado's joining the faculty of the School of Design (Hochschule für Gestaltung) at Ulm, as professor of Visual Communications in the Department of Visual Creation.

Following his appointment to the faculty of the college and his move to Switzerland, Maldonado directed the journal from Ulm. The seventh issue thus opens with an extensive report on the Ulm School of Design signed by Max Bill, followed by a text by Maldonado and a third by the Swiss-Bolivian concrete poet Eugen Gomringer, who at the time worked as Bill's secretary. Maldonado's text is titled "La educación social del creador en la Escuela Superior de Diseño" (The Social Education of the Artist in the Hochschule für Gestaltung), and in it, one might perceive clues to the future split between Maldonado and Bill, one of the most notorious consequences of which was Bill's resignation from the college in 1956, barely two years after the arrival of the Argentinian:¹³

In certain specific cases, the difference between continuing a tradition and surpassing it, between going along with the past and turning against it, might not be completely clear. The Hochschule für Gestaltung is a good example. In one sense, it continues in the spirit of Bauhaus; in another, it surpasses that tradition. It follows Bauhaus to the degree that it aims to prolong an attitude regarding creative work that, thirty-five years ago, Bauhaus's inaugural manifesto formulated for the first time; it surpasses Bauhaus insofar as that same attitude must now confront radically different circumstances. The Bauhaus attitude indeed persists in the Hochschule, but the nature of the new factors with which it must now engage have significantly altered its original sense. In other words, while it is true that the attitude persists, it is no less true that its significance in the past can no longer be the same. Furthermore, not all the points of view maintained by the pioneers of the former Bauhaus remain valid for our generation. At present we are living with problems that they, in their era, were ignorant of or could barely intuit. On the other hand, problems that were formerly considered fundamental have now lost their relevance for us.

The eighth issue of the journal includes a report on Josef Albers's pictorial work and a text by Alfredo Hlito on space in painting. Most noteworthy in this issue is an extensive study on two works from Richard Neutra's period in North America. The dossier on the architect also includes his lecture given at the Ninth Pan-American Congress of Architects, which took place in Caracas in 1955.

The ninth and last issue appeared after a delay, in 1957, and makes no reference to the disappearance of a journal that had become a paradigm for modern design and architecture.

Interestingly, if we exclude its attention to architecture in Argentina, *Nueva visión* hardly considered the significant changes that were taking place in the field of architecture in Latin America, with the sole exception of occasional rare reviews, such as the article on the construction of the Museu de Arte Moderna in Rio de Janeiro.

In the successive chapters of our tale of Argentina in the 1940s, with its schisms and configurations of new spaces for artistic experimentation, one movement has a very particular profile: *perceptismo*, whose founder and principal theoretician was Raúl Lozza. Lozza's earliest career focused on drawings of a political nature and later turned toward surrealism. He was a member of the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención, which he left in order to dedicate himself completely to his perceptist doctrine, which he expounded in a manifesto. The perceptist manifesto is, like the other manifestos from the period, a war cry, a "gesture" that defends its unique stance with a certain radicalism—the need in the end for words to illustrate the purpose of painting, as if painting itself were not wholly autonomous and capable of standing on its own.

The movement managed to publish seven issues of its official organ, *Perceptismo*, in less than three years (October 1950–July 1953). The seventh issue of *Perceptismo* [FIG. 9] included an interview with Lozza by the critic Abraham Haber. Lozza characterized his principal contribution to painting in the following terms: "The conquest of total, absolute planarity, by means of the functional unity of FORM and COLOR. This objective reality has been achieved through the consideration of the structural field." Nelly Perazzo presents the key elements of the movement when she explains that

... its essential quest pertains to the relation that exists between quantity (that is, the surface and size) and the quality of the color-form, which is designated *qualimetría* ["qualimetry"]; the objective is to exalt color as a flat plane. Once the qualimetry has been determined, the spatiality of the color is cancelled out, and it begins to function in a "coplanar" manner. The "field" (a concept taken from physics) on which the color-forms play is the architectural wall, with which they constitute an inseparable entity, since the various elements have no interest by themselves but rather in terms of their interrelationships.¹⁴

Within this dynamic succession of artistic movements, perceptism took a step forward, eager to distance itself from other associations in the region. It called for a timid deconstruction of the work of art, embracing an aesthetic that sought in science its *raison d'être*. This aesthetic posed the challenge of creating a new work in close dialogue with the wall—which took on new functions, beyond that of merely being a place to hang the work; and it produced transformations in the way a work of art was received in that polarized yet energetically active artistic front that inspired Buenos Aires's engagement with art and made possible there a fragment of Utopia.

III. Brazil: Two Cities and a Biennial; Art, Photography and Concrete Poetry

Following the model of the Venice Biennale, on October 20, 1951, one of the events that most decisively introduced concrete art to Brazil took place: the Bienal de São Paulo. The aim of the exhibition was to bring together in a single, large-scale exhibition space the artistic work of Brazil and the rest of the world. It achieved, from its

earliest installments, an enormous impact that placed the country—and in particular the city that hosted the exhibition—in a central position on the international artistic circuit, making the Bienal de São Paulo the most important such event outside the centers of cultural hegemony. It also played a determining role in geometric abstraction's subsequent dissemination, exhibition, and organization as a movement in Brazil and made clear that country's connections with other Latin American nations through their successive contributions to the exhibition.

The prizes awarded at the first Bienal suggest the weight of geometric-abstract currents throughout the continent. Max Bill (whose work had caused a great impression when it was exhibited a year before in the Museu de Arte de São Paulo) won the first prize in International Sculpture for his *Dreiteilige Einheit* (Tripartite Unity), Ivan Serpa won the Best Young Painter prize for his work *Formas* (Forms), and Antônio Maluf won the poster contest.¹⁵ Abraham Palatnik, following lengthy discussion by the jury, received an honorable mention for his cinechromatic apparatus. This machine, the first in the series, titled *Azul e roxo em primeiro movimento* (Blue and Purple in First Movement), was built by taking apart a fan and using the motor that moves the blades. The rhythm of the cinechromatic apparatus is slow, and it employs dozens of light bulbs that turn on and off in a repetitive pattern according to settings determined by the artist.¹⁶

While the First Bienal was certainly crucial in providing a haven for geometric abstraction in Brazil and even beyond its borders, the second edition was no less influential. At the end of 1953, the Second Bienal opened its doors in its new permanent location at Parque do Ibirapuera in a building designed by Oscar Niemeyer. This edition dedicated several of its halls to the work of Piet Mondrian, Alexander Calder, and Walter Gropius.

The Bienal de São Paulo—to this day the largest artistic event in Latin America since its inauguration—was fundamental from the outset in strengthening Brazil's cultural industry. Its development and location brought to the fore the latent rivalry between the two cities that were competing for supremacy as symbols of modernity: Rio de Janeiro, which was the capital of the country until 1960 (the year the seat of the national government was transferred to Brasília), and São Paulo. In Brazil, aesthetic differences in concrete art also took on this geographic dichotomy, with a more dogmatic commitment to the precepts of the concrete art movement in São Paulo in contrast to Rio de Janeiro's embrace of more innovative experiments in *neoconcretismo*.

In 1952, only one year after the First Bienal, and in the context of the first exhibition of concrete art in the Museu de Arte Moderna in São Paulo, Grupo Ruptura was officially created. At the inauguration of the show, the manifesto of the same name was issued and distributed, following the wake of earlier manifestos in declaring war on any attempt at figurative representation. Under the slogan of "continuity no longer," the manifesto was signed by Waldemar Cordeiro, Geraldo de Barros, Leopoldo Haar, Lothar Charoux, Anatol Wladyslaw, Kazmer Féjer, and Luiz Sacilotto.

Ruptura represents the first association of concrete artists in Brazil. They exemplified a conceptual rigidity that manifested itself in works that were closely tied to the concept of the "product," something that distinguished them from Grupo Frente, who, in contrast to the artists from São Paulo (proponents of Max Bill's poetics), treated the assumptions of concrete art more loosely and freely.¹⁷

Nevertheless, the rise of *neoconcretismo* produced the most surprisingly hybrid artistic manifestations in 1950s Brazil, in its recuperation of the sensorial and its rejection of the militant rationalism of orthodox concrete art, something that seemed called for after the latter had nearly monopolized the contemporary art scene for a decade.¹⁸ In a particularly shrewd analysis, Ronald Brito characterizes the movement as “the culmination of the constructivist mindset in Brazil and simultaneously the agent of its crisis.”¹⁹ Neoconcrete art, with its critical re-reading of the Brazilian milieu and its return to color, awakens the slumbering viewer with the aim of making him or her an entity with agency and a participant in the work of art. This dynamic pointed in two directions, including not just the spectator: the work of art itself promoted this dialectic.

Brazilian photography and poetry found their own space within the experimental milieu in which painting was developing, offering a critical output that was markedly different from what the previous generation had produced. Literary concretism emerged almost simultaneously in Europe and Latin America, a significant fact in itself, in that it made the movement one of the few (and one of the first) that escaped the frustrating lag with which cultural movements that originated and derived their authority from Europe had previously arrived in Latin America.

Brazilian writers of concrete poetry, who at first leaned strongly Marxist, openly supported the recent Cuban Revolution with two concrete poems: *Estela cubana* (In the Wake of Cuba) by Décio Pignatari and *Cubagramma* by Augusto de Campos. When I asked the latter about the paradoxical situation that two concrete poems were published in 1962, when the movement had practically run its course and the island’s visual discourse tended to take inspiration in models linked to a new figurativism and pop art with epic pretensions, Campos replied:

The Cuban Revolution, in its heroic stage after the fall of the tyrant Batista, was received with enthusiasm by Brazilian intellectuals.

We lacked, it is true, detailed information about the problems and misfortunes of modern art in Cuba.

However, in the early years, even intellectuals like Cabrera Infante who afterwards became bitter enemies of Fidel Castro were at the time supporters of the regime.

I received, for example, the journal *Casa de las Américas*, founded in 1959, where I read texts by Cortázar on Borges.

In the eighth issue of *Casa de las Américas* (September-October 1961), there was, among other articles, a text by the poet Nicolás Guillén that highlighted a statement by Fidel himself in his “Palabras a los intelectuales” (Words to the Intellectuals), where he guaranteed freedom of artistic expression.

Another text, signed by Edmundo Desnoes, “La pintura cubana” (Cuban Painting), referred favorably to the work of constructivist artists, emphasizing the pioneer of concrete art, Sandu Darie, and even reproducing one of his paintings as an illustration.

There, as in Brazil, figurative art dominated at the time, although the creation of the MASP (Museu de Art de São Paulo) and the MAM (Museu de Arte Moderna), the biennials in São Paulo (the first was in 1951), and the militancy of concrete painters began to reverse the situation. In the review’s thirteenth issue (July-October),

one could read praiseful references to Joyce and Pound. Issue 17–18 (March-June 1963)—the last one I received, in an opened envelope, a victim of Brazilian police censorship—included an article by Ernesto Sábato, “En torno a Borges” (On Borges), and a long interview with Cabrera Infante, who was at the time very optimistic about the future of literature in Cuba. In “Función de la Crítica Literaria” (The Function of Literary Criticism), Antón Arrufat, basing himself on Engels, defended difficult art that was not politically committed. Regarding music, Juan Blanco, in his article “Seis meses de música y danza en Cuba” (Six Months of Music and Dance in Cuba), quoted the “Plan de Trabajo para 1963” (Work Plan for 1963) drawn up by the Dirección General de Música del Consejo Nacional de Cultura (State Office of Music of the National Council for Culture): “to bring to light and promote the dissemination of music from all periods and styles, without distinction, provided an appropriate minimum of technical proficiency.” What else could we have imagined?

Given the evidence, we had the hope that an unprecedented socialist experiment would develop on the island, which was also the belief of respected intellectuals of the caliber of Sartre and de Beauvoir, who had traveled to Cuba in 1960. Fidel himself, in spite of the excessive repression of the earliest stages of the Revolution, had manifested his support for a democratic regime.

We did not receive information about the particular vicissitudes suffered by painters who were exponents of concrete art in Cuba, but we did receive information in general about restrictions placed on artists and writers, based on Stalinist authoritarianism (an intransigent enemy of modern and avant-garde art), as the Cuban regime became more and more radicalized.

I must emphasize that our poems were conceived between 1960 and 1962, the year in which the United States began its disastrous trade embargo against Cuba, which was directly responsible for the connection between the island and the USSR.

And I should add that we wrote these poems inspired by Mayakovsky’s claim that “there can be no revolutionary art without a revolutionary form.” We aimed, for this reason, to create participatory poetry without abandoning the formal values of invention and the avant-garde. For that very reason, these texts, especially Décio Pignatari’s, contain complex references and new processes of composition, both of them keeping within the basic project of concrete poetry, which goes back to Mallarmé’s last poem, “Un coup de dés” (A Throw of the Dice, 1897), which, on the fulcrum of two centuries, anticipated modern poetics and, in my opinion, continues to be the threshold of the new poetry, anticipating the latest technological changes and poetics of digital language.

Today I would not write the same poem in homage to the Cuban Revolution, since the initial regime, which seemed generously socialist, now has radicalized and become a dictatorship, as repressive as any other, limiting freedom and democracy, which, despite all its defects, is still the least harmful of regimes for a humanity that centuries of history have shown is led predominantly by ambition and egotism—“manunkind,” in E. E. Cumming’s words. Nonetheless, the United States continues to contribute to the perpetuation of the regime, maintaining for nearly half a century its senseless economic blockade.

This all contributes to the fact that these poems—though they are inseparable from their era (1960–62)—preserve a certain ethical and poetic value, in part because of the personal risk their political commitment implied in Brazil at the time. I recall that, because of both poems, *Cubagramma* and *Estela cubana*, our publisher, *Revista dos Tribunais*, refused to print the second issue of the review *Invenção*, edited by the concrete poets, even after the entire issue had been typeset, arguing that it did not accept “poems by communists” (which we weren’t, nor had we ever been). The journal was in the end printed by Masao Ohno, who wished immediately to acquire all of the material that had been typeset. On March 31, 1964, a military coup d’état brought an end to democracy in Brazil, and as the police state became more and more authoritarian, the second issue of the journal was withdrawn from circulation and began to be distributed clandestinely.

The *Cubagramma* poem, on loan for this exhibition, appeared in a limited run, in 1962, withdrawn along with the second issue of *Invenção*, in whose pages it also appeared. As for *Estela cubana*, also published in the book-journal *Noigandres* 5 (1962), that poem has been republished, always as an insert, in all the editions of the book *Poesia pois é poesia* (Poetry, Well, is Poetry), which since 1977 has collected the poetic oeuvre of Décio Pignatari.

Three more issues of the journal *Invenção* appeared, in 1963, 1964, and 1967, and it never ceased to provoke the dictatorial regime. The military men in charge, however, were more concerned with the texts and behavior of popular musicians, who had a significant presence on television and in concerts and whom millions of Brazilians could see.²⁰



Fig. 10. Poem by José Lino Grünewald reproduced on page 29 of issue no. 2 (year 1) of the journal *Invenção*, 1962

The journal *Noigandres* should be understood as the mouthpiece that gave visibility and presence to the concrete poetry movement in Brazil, initially comprising Décio Pignatari (b. 1927 in Jundiaí, São Paulo) and Augusto de Campos (b. 1931 in São Paulo) and his brother Haroldo (São Paulo 1929–2003), who were later joined by Ronaldo Azeredo (Rio de Janeiro, 1937–2006) and José Lino Grünewald (1931–2000), “our man in Rio,” as Pignatari called him, to stress Grünewald’s *Carioca* origins in contrast to the majority of concrete poets who hailed from São Paulo. *Noigandres* found its logical continuation in the emergence of *Invenção*, of which five issues were published and which itself represented a compendium of the best and most avant-garde graphic composition in Brazil in the 1960s [FIG. 10].

The central concern of concrete poetry was language, and its exponents proposed a new spatial syntax, which they found in the poetry of Mallarmé and Ezra Pound, two of its main precursors. The word in the works of these two poets underwent a definitive transformation, becoming a multidimensional element that affected not only the language of the poem but its visual qualities as well, conferring markedly plastic qualities on their compositions. This transformation in the “surface” of the poem led to the exhibition of concrete poetry in spaces that up to that point had been limited to the exhibition of painting, drawing, and sculpture.²¹ This first phase of concrete poetry, in its use of space and typography, approached the postulates of the first manifestations of minimalism almost ten years prior to the development of that movement.



Fig. 11. Views of the Aula Magna hall at the University Campus in Caracas. Photographs by Paolo Gasparini. Archivos Fundación Villanueva

To this day, the best and most precise characterization of concrete poetry continues to be that offered in 1958 by Décio Pignatari and Haroldo and Augusto de Campos in the text “Plano-piloto para poesia concreta” (Pilot Plan for Concrete Poetry), published originally in São Paulo in the fourth issue of *Noigandres*, in which they present the graphic space as a structural agent. The poem is understood as an object in and of itself, with the aim of producing the phenomenon of meta-communication.

Photography in Brazil in this period found in Geraldo de Barros its most unique and characteristic representative among all those photographers who, in the main associated with photography clubs, were exploring another way of understanding the object of photography. They accomplished a radical turn in redirecting the gaze toward decidedly abstract constructions in order to question photography’s traditional link to pictorialism. With his Rolleiflex camera, which allowed him to take several exposures, Barros developed a novel approach to composition and rhythm, placing him in the vanguard in opposition to previous trends.

Thomas Farkaz (who, together with Barros, had founded in 1949 the program of study in photography and the photo lab at the Museu de Arte de São Paulo), German Lorca, Gaspar Gasparian, Haruo Ohara, and José Yalenti, along with José Oiticica Filho, likewise managed to situate their photography on a conceptual plane in which they could defend its self-referentiality with a complex output that was marked from the very beginning by its conspicuously experimental aims.²²

While the history of nineteenth-century Latin American photography has been thoroughly mapped out by scholars and critics who have managed thereby to grant it canonical status, the construction of a definitive image of experimental photography in Brazil is still underway, and the achievements of photographers working in the 1950s continue to await their own scholarly and critical legitimation.

IV. Carlos Raúl Villanueva, the Integration of the Arts and the Caracas-Paris Axis

The integration of the arts is a commonplace in discussions of the Ciudad Universitaria de Caracas, the most Pharaonic work Carlos Raúl Villanueva ever designed. It is without a doubt the most successful and organic of all the architectural projects in Latin America that sought to embody the communion of the arts on major university campuses. Neither the fusion of murals and architecture on the main campus of the Universidad Autónoma de México nor the Escuelas Nacionales de Arte in Havana (designed by Ricardo Porro, in collaboration with the Italian architects Roberto Gottardi and Vittorio Garatti) managed to create an urban space that so thoroughly represented the aim of designing an architectural organism in perfect symbiosis with the plastic arts.

The idea of integrating the arts in architecture was much debated in Europe after the Second World War; Le Corbusier, as architect, painter, and critic, was one of the main proponents of the notion. Villanueva adopts these postulates when he argues that: “... within this synthesis, architecture, given its adherence to issues of functionality, currently bears the responsibility of defining general concerns from the outset: outlin-

ing from the very beginning the guidelines of the structure in which the events of a plastic nature will take shape²³”

It is to Villanueva’s undeniable credit that he could create for Caracas a space unique in Latin America, representative of a corpus belonging to a part, at least, of modernist architectural thought (given that some in the modernist school opposed the principles of “integration,” considering it to be mere ornamentation): on the campus one may find works by Jean Arp, Victor Vasarely (who also created a series of prints titled *Venezuela*, with texts by Guillermo Meneses that address the continuous dialogue between the French and Venezuelan capitals), Antoine Pevsner, André Bloc, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Wifredo Lam, and Fernand Léger. Among the Venezuelan artists invited to contribute their works to the campus were Alejandro Otero, Pascual Navarro, Mateo Manaure, Francisco Narváez, Miguel Arroyo, and Omar Carreño. Alexander Calder’s monumental work for the Aula Magna [FIG. 11] brought to a close the most sustained and successful collaboration with plastic artists enjoyed by any Latin American architect in the twentieth century, making Villanueva not only an obligatory reference in the continent but also one of the most influential leaders of transformations in the art world in his country in the 1950s.

The relationship between the exponents of geometric art in Venezuela and its representatives in the French capital can serve as a pretext for a history of the developments in art in Venezuela after the second half of the 1940s; it offers keys to understanding the complex art scene in Venezuela, one which perhaps more intensely than any other experienced the effects of crisscrossing transatlantic voyages. A curious fact supporting this claim may be found in various texts from the period that number at fifteen the Venezuelan painters based in Paris who defended geometric art around 1950.

Jesús Soto, Carlos Cruz-Diez, and Narciso Deboung made Paris their permanent home, but in addition, Alejandro Otero, Pascual Navarro, and many other geometric artists from Venezuela were frequent visitors in the French capital. Likewise, it was symptomatic of this situation that in Paris Los Disidentes (The Dissidents) drafted and issued their manifesto (*Manifiesto del No*) and the journal whose title shared their name. The third paragraph of this declaration emphasizes the origin of its signatories, Venezuela, and offers a defense against accusations of evasion and of creating depersonalized art, from those sectors that demanded socially committed figurative art.

Venezuelan geometric artists, whether in Caracas or Paris (with government grants or by their own means), shared something in common with the concrete artists from Argentina, namely, the idea that the new art had a profoundly transformative role in society: they shared a fascination with Utopia.

V. The Brevity of Concrete Art in Havana: Departures and Returns

Although the geometric art of Carmen Herrera [FIG. 12] undeniably marks the beginning of experiments with abstraction in Cuba, her name continues to be familiar only among specialists in the subject, for her work remains largely forgotten, exiled from the halls of museums and the curricula of universities. Carmen Herrera is to painting

FIG. 12. Carmen Herrera
in Cuba, undated.
Archivo Museo Nacional
de Bellas Artes, de la
Habana



in Cuba what Clara Porset is to design, and the two have shared a similar fate: excessive scorn from official quarters. It is high time for a revision of histories and criticism that can provide both of them a place in debates about modernism that, according to the rigorous nature of their work, they both deserve.

Carmen Herrera has not enjoyed better fortunes outside of Cuba either. Her work, almost all of it produced in the solitude of a humble apartment in New York, has hardly received to this day, now that the artist is in her nineties, the recognition that it deserved six decades ago. Her recent inclusion in exhibitions in major galleries and prestigious museums leads one to conclude that art history is partial and fickle, and merit is not always the ultimate reason for recognition. Lacking hardly any contact with the contemporary movements in Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela, Herrera's circle was limited to the group of Cuban artists residing in New York (Jesse Fernández and the esteemed geometric artist Waldo Balart, who now lives in Madrid), which leads one to imagine that her art would have more in common with the compositions of Barnett Newman and Ellsworth Kelly than with her Latin American contemporaries.

Herrera married the American Jess Lowenthal in 1939 and at the age of twenty-two moved to New York, where she resides today, receiving visitors with lucidness despite arthritis that confines her to a wheelchair. A brief stay in Paris was followed by her return to Manhattan where she worked in private on an oeuvre that at times engages in a dialogue more with minimalist art than with geometric abstraction.

Clara Porset [FIG. 13], together with Lina Bo Bardi, is today considered one of the pioneers of industrial design in Latin America. She was born in Matanzas, Cuba, on May 25, 1895, and studied in New York and Paris. In the summer of 1934, Porset



FIG. 14. Josef Albers
giving a lecture at the
Universidad de La Habana,
Havana, 1952. Anonymous
photograph. Courtesy of
the Josef and Anni Albers
Foundation

FIG. 13. Clara Porset
ca. 1915

attended classes at Black Mountain College, where she met Josef Albers. Invited by Porset, Albers visited Cuba in 1935, where he gave a series of lectures at Havana's Lyceum. (Albers would return to the island on several occasions, one of them being 1952, when he taught several classes in the Architecture Department at the University of Havana [FIG. 14].) After the Cuban Revolution, Porset, who had close ties to the Left and who was at the time residing in Mexico, returned to Havana, where she designed several projects for the new revolution: furniture for the Ciudad Escolar Camilo Cienfuegos, for the Escuela Nacional de Arte, and for the Escuela de Artes Plásticas (the work of the architect Ricardo Porro).

Porset's sympathies for the initial phase of the Revolution and her ties to causes in defense of the less fortunate have not served her for much; nor has her work in Mexico, where beginning in the 1940s she developed the furniture for the creations of the architect Luis Barragán (who designed the furnishings for the Pierre Marqués hotel in Acapulco); nor has the fact that she was the artist who best understood the relationship between design and commitment to social causes. Carmen Herrera and Clara Porset are two key figures for understanding the arrival of abstraction in the early stages of modernism on the island. In Porset's case, it was her connection with the experience of Bauhaus that made her a visionary in the field of design in Cuba. Neither the urgency nor the radicalness of the new national project begun in Cuba in the early 1960s justifies today the empty (and forbidden) terrain left by the absence of Clara Porset and Carmen Herrera from the island's cultural spaces.

VI. An Exchange of Letters between Sandu Darie and Gyula Kosice

The correspondence between Sandu Darie and Gyula Kosice consists of twenty-seven letters, twelve penned by Darie and the other fifteen sent by Kosice to the Cuban painter born in Romania. Their fascinating exchange began with a letter sent from Havana on November 27, 1949, and ends with a final letter from Cuba dated July 25, 1958. This correspondence, astonishingly constant over the course of nearly a decade, remained unpublished and its existence was practically unknown. It has been housed at the Museo de Bellas Artes in Havana ever since the arrival of the painter's bequest to the museum, shortly after his death. This is the first time it has appeared in print.

In the first of the letters, Darie remarks that he has received news of the *Madí* movement through Jean Xceron, the North American abstract painter of Greek origin, and he asks Kosice for a copy of the journal *Arte Madí Universal*, as well as information about the group's latest work. Barely two weeks later, Kosice replies, flattered by the Cuban painter's interest, informing him that both the inaugural and the second issue (issues 0 and 1) were already out of print. He inquires whether there are painters on the island "who are fighting for the same general aims as your and we are" and invites Darie to collaborate with the magazine.

In the following letter, dated January 13, 1950, in Havana, Darie responds emphatically that there are no painters in Cuba interested in non-representational art and remarks on the acquisition by MoMA in New York of one of his paintings, through Alfred

Barr, Jr. In the letter dated January 30, 1950, Darie writes, "On my own, a long time ago I arrived at many of the same conclusions as *Madí*, and in my studio there are a number of objects that would bear a clear kinship with those of your group." Further on, he says, "In renouncing the charm of surrealism, one must also renounce the hermetic language pre-fabricated by poets, manifesto-manufacturing prophets, occultists and quacks, who conceal sources of inspiration and historical evolution, producing useless prose necessary only for uncouth, affected painters."

In his next letter, from August 28, 1950, Darie presents Kosice three of his latest works known under the general label of *transformable structures* and indicates that among his speculations in the plastic arts is "the idea of initiating the division of the rectangle, of considering the variation of triangles as painting-forms in a continuous space. My spatial structures are organized under an orthogonal rhythm, and the aggregated elements compose and suggest the prolongation of the plane into the distance where it is no longer possible to imagine the end ... toward the infinite."

In Kosice's reply, he invites Darie to collaborate on the magazine *Madí*, and, in a subsequent letter (both were written on Madinemsor letterhead but are undated), Kosice informs him that in the fourth issue of the journal they have published two photographs and a brief text taken from a catalogue sent by Darie from the exhibition that took place in the Havana Lyceum. (This must refer to the show held from October 9 to 20, 1950, in which Darie exhibited his "pictorial structures.")

In the letter dated March 26, 1951, Darie records for his friend two curious quotes from his recent trip to New York, where he had participated in a group exhibition at the Rose Fried Gallery. The first of these is "the turn of phrase of a very charming American woman [that] Rothfuss will probably find amusing: 'The frame is an architectural offense.'" The second is taken from a letter sent to Darie by the critic Clement Greenberg: "The painter-sculptor of the future will have to be a carpenter." I have not been able to find the original letter from Greenberg in the archives of the Cuban museum.

On January 13, 1952, Kosice writes, "we also have taken the liberty of including you among the representatives of our journal abroad, given your friendship and your position at the vanguard of non-figurative art." Darie thanks him for the shipment of the fifth issue of *Madí* and remarks on the unexpected arrival from another source of the second and third issues of the magazine *Perceptismo*, a comment that receives no response from the Argentinian artist.

In the following, undated, letter from Kosice, he celebrates the appearance of the Cuban *Noticias de Arte* (Art News), "a fundamentally important publication from every point of view, above all for the education and guidance of young people avid to see their age and their art strengthened, above all in Latin America, where there are very few magazines that operate in essentially this direction." And he offers to collaborate.

On June 3, 1955, Darie writes to Kosice about his joint exhibition with Martínez Pedro (which took place between April 25 and May 10 in the Pavilion of Social Sciences at the University of Havana). From this point forward, Kosice frequently sends greetings to the Cuban geometric artists Luis Martínez Pedro and Mario Carreño as he signs off each letter.

Kosice's last missive is dated June 29, 1958, in Paris and is written in French. Almost a month later, on July 25, Darie responds in a handwritten letter, though it is possible that what the archive houses is a draft and not the final version of the letter in what proves to be an indispensable series of documents for the study of Cuban participation in the *Madí* adventure.

In a recent visit to Buenos Aires, in a conversation with Kosice in his workshop on Calle Humahuaca, I asked about the intense epistolary relationship he had developed with the Cuban painter over nearly ten years and the reasons why that correspondence ended for no apparent reason. "It was in Paris," he told me, "where I concentrated all my energy, and in those years I completely lost touch with him."

VII. The Early 1950s

If we exclude the work of Carmen Herrera, in the first half of the 1950s there are three foundational names with which one might sum up (even at the risk of a certain reductionism) the world of geometric abstraction in Cuba: Sandu Darie, Luis Martínez Pedro, and Mario Carreño. It is no coincidence that the three decided to join as editors of one of the publications that most assertively defended the introduction of abstraction into the artistic panorama of Cuba, the magazine *Noticias de Arte*.

In this journal, which lasted for only a short period, Carreño was in charge of the section on the plastic arts, Enrique Labrador Ruiz coordinated the literature section, Mario Parajón edited the section on theater, and Nicolás Quintana the section on architecture. The list of collaborators included important intellectuals of the caliber of the critics José Gómez Sicre, Joaquín Texidor, and Jorge Romero Brest, writers like José Lezama Lima, and artists such as Cundo Bermúdez, Gyula Kosice, and Felipe Orlando.

The first editorial presented the publication's objectives:

It is our aim that *Noticias de Arte* not be "just another magazine," but rather the echo of a pressing need in our artistic milieu, which demands a publication that can present, in a succinct and carefully selected manner, the different and varied intellectual activities that give shape to the sensibility and future of contemporary thought. *Noticias de Arte* does not propose to "fill a void," as some new publications are wont to pompously declare, but to contribute modestly, according to its means, to the widening of our cultural horizons and, without the prejudices that might tarnish the free expression of thought, to disseminate any cultural manifes-

tation from this country or from abroad that reflects the concerns animating the constant creative activity of artists today and always.

Beginning with the first issue, the review threw itself into events that had a direct connection with matters pertaining to Latin American and in particular with non-figurative representation. Thus, the issue reports on the First Bienal de São Paulo; reviews the fifth, and latest, issue of *Madí*, which included a contribution by Sandu Darie; and reflects on the text by Abraham Haber, "Lo objetivo y no objetivo en el arte" (The Objective and Non-Objective in Art), which had shortly before appeared in the journal *Perceptismo*. This first issue also comments on Walter Gropius's resignation as Chair of Architecture in the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University and includes documents from the lawsuit between Mies van der Rohe and Edith Farnsworth over Farnsworth House, together with photographs of this architectural icon of the modernist movement.

To summarize here the successive issues of the journal, nowadays a rarity appreciated by bibliophiles, would prove tiresome, but it is worth highlighting the special issue (year 1, issue 11, October-November 1953), devoted entirely to the Cuban contributions to the second São Paulo biennial, and the text "La pintura abstracta" (Abstract Painting) by Mario Carreño, published in the eighth issue (May) of that same year.

Another journal that is indispensable in the analysis of the transformations that the field of architecture and eventually the plastic arts as well underwent in the 1950s is *Arquitectura*.²⁴ In April of 1949, the magazine reported on Walter Gropius's visit to Havana [FIG. 15] (with an excellent cartoon caricature of the founder of the Bauhaus by Heriberto Portell Villa) and published a conversation with the German architect along with Joaquín Weiss's introduction of Gropius at the Architects Association. The May issues in 1949 and 1957 also present news on Gropius's work. The January 1959 issue devotes an in-depth report on the Architects Association's Gold Medal in 1958, awarded to the Alfred Schulthess House designed by Richard Neutra, with the collaboration of the Brazilian landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx.²⁵

Neutra's work in Havana is little known, both within and outside Cuba, given its location (an exclusive residential district with limited public access) and the building's new role as the Swiss embassy after Schulthess left Cuba following the nationalization of Banco Garrigó, where he served as vice-president.

Another of the projects in Cuba by architects directly connected with the Bauhaus was Mies van der Rohe's design for the headquarters of Bacardí in Santiago. The present exhibition displays several original plans and collages from this project that was never carried out [CAT. 220]. (The pieces are currently housed at MoMA in New York.)

FIG. 15. Sandu Darie and Walter Gropius in Havana, 1949. Archivo Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes



FIG. 16. Back and front cover of the catalogue of Luis Martínez Pedro and Sandu Darie's joint exhibition at the Pavilion of Social Sciences, Universidad de La Habana, Havana, 1955

It is closely related to other, later projects by Mies in which the use of orthogonal grids and open floor plans is repeated in a very similar fashion.²⁶

The creation of the group Los Once (The Eleven),²⁷ associated with informalist abstraction more in line with the new trends in painting in New York than with the old European orthodoxies, and the joint exhibition of Luis Martínez Pedro and Sandu Darie in the Pavilion of Social Sciences at the University of Havana between April and May of 1955—which carried no particular title but subsequently became known as the *Primera exposición concreta* (First Exhibition of Concrete Art) [FIG. 16]—are events that indicate a determined reorientation toward geometric abstraction, a clean break with earlier practices in pictorial representation, entrenched under the banner of a Cubanness that had become a cliché.

VIII. The Return of Loló Soldevilla

In 1956 Dolores Soldevilla, better known as Loló, returned to Cuba from Paris, where she had maintained an intense personal and professional relationship with the Spanish painter Eusebio Sempere, with whom she shared an exhibition in 1954 at the University of Valencia—a period which still awaits detailed examination by critics and which could shed much light on the production of both artists.

On March 22, 1956, Soldevilla organized the show *Pintura de hoy: Vanguardia de la escuela de París* (Painting Today: The Avant-garde of the Parisian School), in the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Havana. Under that vague title she included a well-chosen list of European and Latin American artists,²⁸ and it became one of the first exhibition spaces for some of the most outstanding names in non-figurative art, particularly in geometric abstraction. The painter Mario Carreño, as adviser for plastic arts at the Instituto Nacional de Cultura, wrote the text for the exhibition brochure.

The painter and critic Pedro de Oraá presents Loló [FIG. 17] as having a determining role not only in the creation of the group *Diez Pintores Concretos* (Ten Concrete Painters) but also in persuading a noteworthy number of



FIG. 17. Dolores Soldevilla next to several of her works in 1950. Archivo Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes

young painters to adopt abstraction, both informalist and geometric, though not all of them would attempt to form a group but would follow their own individual paths. From among them, Alberto Menocal and José Rosabal approached our group and eventually joined. Zilia Sánchez, who very early on stood out in opting for geometric abstraction, remained independent, though not antagonistic to the concrete artists, with whom she maintained a cordial relationship.²⁹

Loló Soldevilla and Pedro de Oraá traveled to Caracas in the first half of 1957 and exhibited their work, respectively, in the Centro Profesional del Este and in the Sardo Gallery. When they returned to Cuba, they founded the Galería de Arte Color-Luz [FIG. 18], which became a sanctuary for artists who followed the trend of geometric abstraction. On October 31 of that year, the gallery held its inaugural exhibition, titled *Pintura y escultura cubana 1957* (Cuban Painting and Sculpture 1957), in which a sizeable group of painters and sculptors participated, representing various tendencies, though the majority of them worked in the field of abstract art.³⁰ The poet José Lezama Lima wrote the inaugural presentation, whose baroque prose is worth quoting:

It is no longer a matter of discovering a blue background for the stellar yellow of our foregrounds, of finding sacred icons from among the peasantry, or rainbow-colored transom-windows like a paradoxical peacock in purple or orange. This now awaits: a mystery that becomes a secret, a seed that turns into a spark. Between the real and the invisible, a flash of light. And the proof of this act of penetrating fire is in that analogue which searches already for the unknown (with an urgency that almost consumes it), with that which it can show as completed and hoarded away...³¹

Loló's presence and the appearance of the gallery were vital in the creation of the group *Diez Pintores Concretos*. There are hardly any surviving photographs of the whole group, which lasted, like so many others, for only a brief time. (Though there are no manifestos or record for the group's founding, its members agree that it was created in 1958 and its disappearance coincided with the closing of Color-Luz gallery, around which almost all its activities had developed.) In 1961 the gallery closed its doors in the face of pressures resulting from the Revolution, which condemned to a death sentence anything that implied private property. Several of the group's members abandoned the country permanently. In contrast, Loló, like many others, embraced the revolutionary cause and joined the National Institute of Tourism as a toy



FIG. 18. Views of Galería de Arte Color-Luz and Loló Soldevilla in the gallery, Havana, 1957. Archivo Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes

designer. Later, she became an editor for the official newspaper *Granma*. She abandoned her luminous bas-reliefs and the small-format celestial bodies that linked her tenuously with the work of Sophie Taeuber-Arp, turning instead to larger-format works with titles that celebrated the revolutionary epic. One of her defining works, donated to the Museo de Bellas Artes in Havana, underwent a radical transformation when she re-baptized it as *Homenaje a Fidel* (Homage to Fidel).³²

IX. A Conversation with our Abstract Painters?

The criticism around abstract art in Cuba takes on a fairly regular form following the various reprintings after the Revolution of the polemical essay by Juan Marinello, *Conversación con nuestros pintores abstractos* (Conversation with Our Abstract Painters), which appeared for the first time in 1958. In his text, Marinello remarks in the first paragraph that the idea for such a dialogue had tempted him for some time, making it clear that the debate around abstract art in Cuba had its origins in the last phase of the republican period, while the ideological and cultural discourse of the nascent Revolution dealt geometric abstraction a final blow, given its shifting preferences for a certain kind of figurative or pop art with didactic aims. Between these extremes, concrete artists in Cuba could find scant support in a movement which some joined enthusiastically but that privileged modes of representation whose codes were more easily identified with the new directions that characterized the Revolution.

Marinello [FIG. 19] focuses his attack on the work of European artists (Paul Klee, Piet Mondrian, Kasimir Malevitch, Theo van Doesburg) but avoids naming a single exponent of abstract art in Cuba, although the communist intellectual's first approach to the theme of abstract art in Latin America is through a polemic between the Venezuelans Alejandro Otero and Miguel Otero Silva a year earlier, in 1957. The dispute to which Marinello refers—perhaps the most important debate about abstract art that ever took place in Venezuela—began with Alejandro Otero's criticism of the jury's decision in the eighteenth celebration of the Salón de Arte Nacional, which awarded prizes to the works of Armando Barrios and Eduardo Gregorio. For Otero, the jury was "composed of an overwhelming majority of partisans of a single tendency, which openly contradicts the spirit of the Salón," declarations he published in the pages of *El Nacional* on March 20, 1957.

For Marinello:

The painter Alejandro Otero Rodríguez inserts his undeniable discursive gifts in a rhetorical stream that leaves him nowhere to hold on. Following Kandinsky closely, he attempts to save abstractionism from its mortal reactionary sin. Kandinsky had written, with his habitual vagueness, that "the artist's total freedom is limited by



the inner necessity of the work of art." ... Otero Rodríguez is wandering along the same path. He claims that "painting has always been a witness of a mode of being in the world, and abstraction, as much or more so than any other approach, discovers and affirms it," with which he attempts the extraordinary, namely, the humanization of the abstract. Like other officiants of his faction, he attempts to lead the goal of *integration* that abstractionism proclaims toward a positive totality of mankind. Our faith lies in the total man, he says. And from this prefabricated perspective, he affirms that "we abstract painters engage in a dialogue with mankind and we participate in his drama, not as observers, but as integral participants in his drama and his being."

Marinello goes on to say, "Only in a society split into antagonistic classes can abstract art appear; and only in the decisive stage of the struggle between two social classes—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in our times—can there be a movement that bases its excellence on isolating itself from general comprehension." It is evident that in the end, this biased, Marxist viewpoint on the social function of art had repercussions on the future development of concrete art in Cuba, despite the fact that a significant portion of the artists tied to geometric abstraction held deep sympathies for the Left, with some even temporarily joining the Communist Party, of which Juan Marinello was also a member. However, what this Cuban intellectual disparagingly called "geometric distraction," whether in Havana or Caracas, never enjoyed his sympathy; he found a precedent for his arguments in the zeal of Miguel Otero Silva, and one may observe their continuation in Marta Traba.

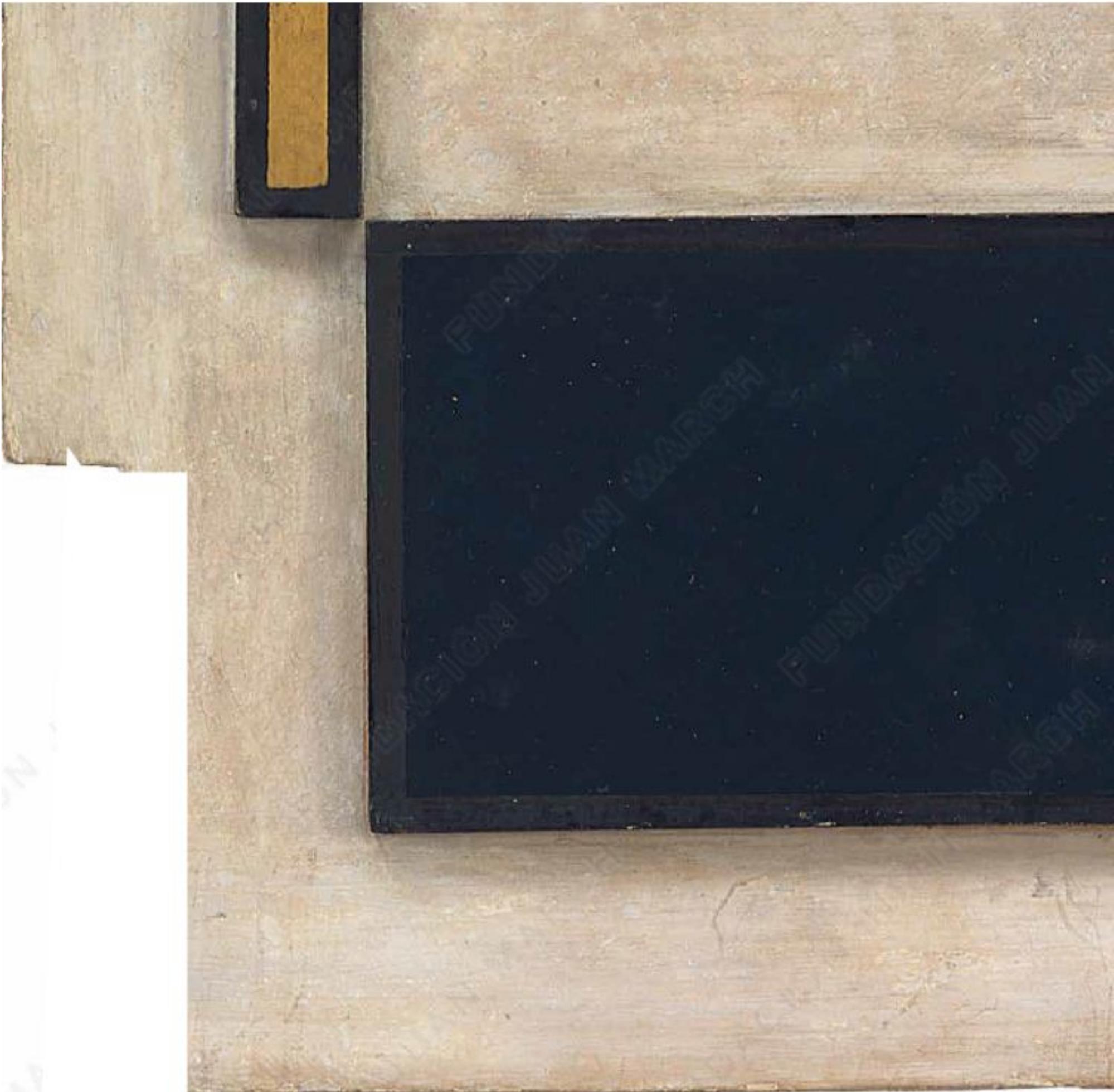
The renewed vindication of a nationalist ideology relegated geometric abstraction to a narrowly marginal position, identified as it was with elitist and bourgeois art, and viewed as a legacy of the past essentially unable to satisfy the social demands that the Revolution, as a new dogma, now imposed. The disappearance, for all intents and purposes, of abstract painting from the island was not accompanied by the major debates that did emerge in other spheres of cultural activity; thus, unpolemically, almost silently, its light grew weaker and weaker in the first half of the 1960s. And yet, with the passage of time, this period has proven in retrospect to be one of the most fascinating, and least familiar, chapters in the history of geometric abstraction in Latin America.

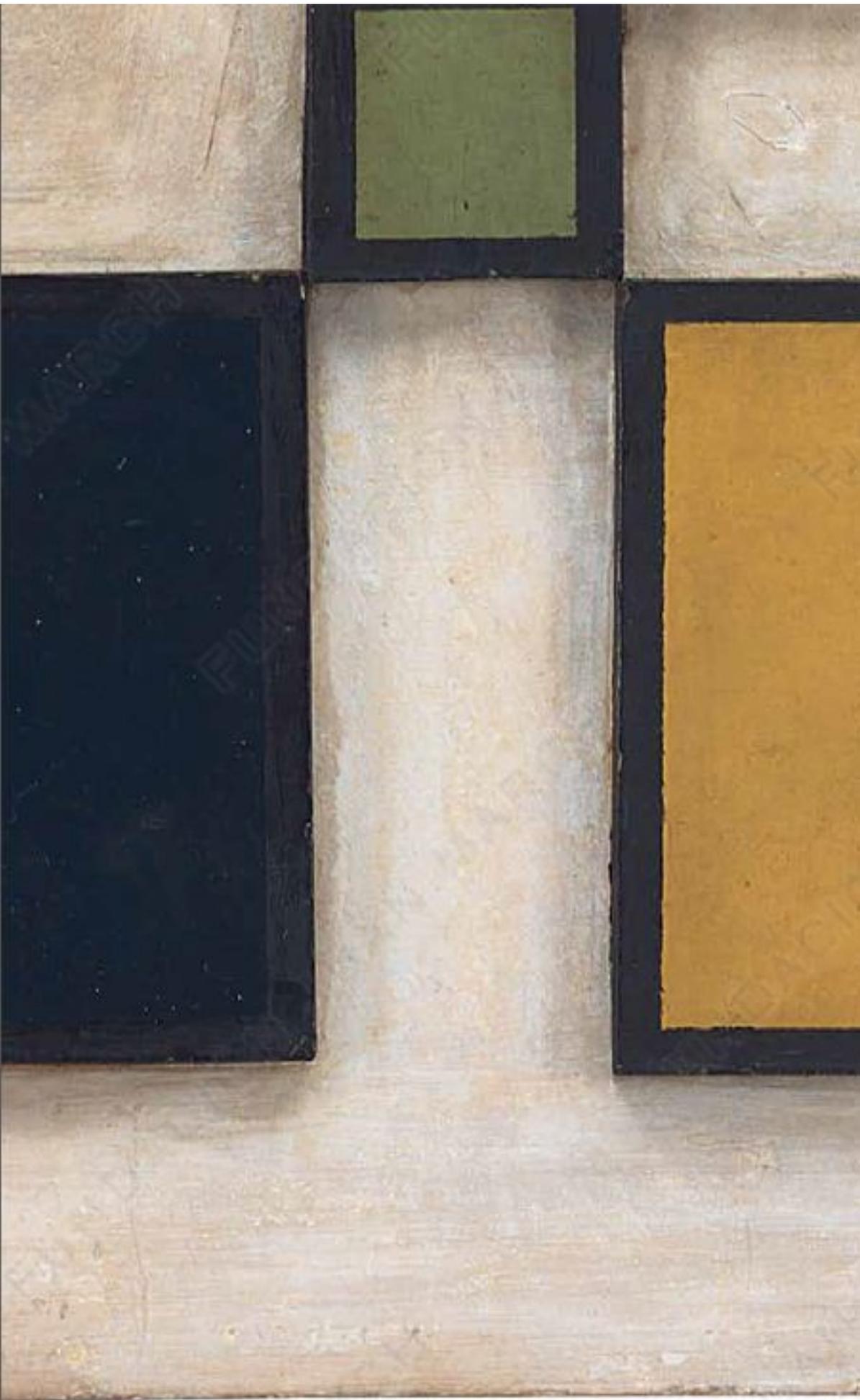
ENDNOTES

- 1 For an in-depth study of modernity in Latin America, see Hugo Achugar, "Modernidades latinoamericanas," in *Alfredo Boulton y sus contemporáneos. Diálogos críticos en el arte venezolano 1912–1974* (New York: Museum of Modern Art; Caracas: Fundación Cisneros, 2008).
- 2 One of the most thorough studies of this case can be found in Jorge Francisco Liernur and Pablo Pschepiurca, *La red austral: obras y proyectos de Le Corbusier y sus discípulos en la Argentina: 1924–1965* (Bernal: Universidad Nacional de Quilmas; Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros, 2008).
- 3 Mario Gradowczyk, *Arte abstracto: Cruzando líneas desde el Sur* (Buenos Aires: Editorial de la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, 2006), 89.
- 4 Seven issues of *Círculo y Cuadrado* were published, plus an extraordinary volume that brought together issues 8, 9, and 10.

FIG. 19. Juan Marinello (at right) and caricaturist Juan David at a Unesco session, Paris, 1966

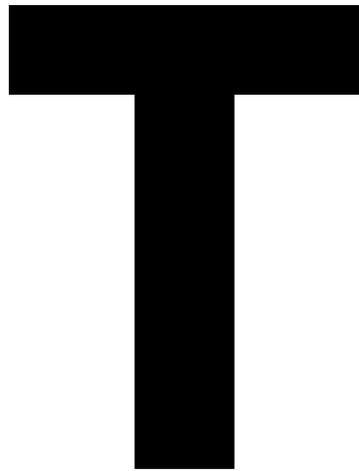
- 5 *Círculo y Cuadrado* 1 (May 1936). Mouthpiece of the Asociación de Arte Constructivo.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 *Abstracción: el paradigma amerindio* [exhibition catalogue, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels; Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Valencia] (Brussels: Société des Expositions du Palais des Beaux-Arts; Valencia: IVAM, 2001), 25.
- 8 In Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, ed., *The Geometry of Hope: Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection* (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin, 2007), 226.
- 9 ESTEBAN LISA de 'Arturo' al 'Di Tella' [exhibition catalogue] (Buenos Aires: Galería Ruth Benzacar, 2002), 5.
- 10 Gyula Kosice, *Autobiografía* (Buenos Aires: Asunto Impreso, 2010), 26.
- 11 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "Buenos Aires: Rompiendo el marco," reprinted in *The Geometry of Hope*, 231 (in Spanish).
- 12 At the end of 1957, Gyula Kosice received the news from the French embassy in Buenos Aires that he had been chosen for a year-long fellowship in Paris.
- 13 In the Spanish newspaper *El País* from January 31, 1980, in an interview with Juan Manuel Bonet, Max Bill offered his version of this split: "I resigned in 1956 and left definitively—taking with me half the college—the following year. The tensions were the product of the actions of two groups, the group led by the Argentinian Tomás Maldonado and the conservative group, which defended the decorative aspect of design. Maldonado proposed a more technically advanced approach that surpassed what was creatively possible. I proposed a much more cautious approach: no foolishness, careful development of projects, working from a solid foundation, not with ideas up in the air. Maldonado was also very arrogant, with an incredible desire to always play an important role. A great bluffer, really, with all his jargon that was supposedly creative. I left when maintaining the alliance between Maldonado's group and the conservative group became oppressive, when it was no longer possible for me to work in peace there."
- 14 Nelly Perazzo, *El arte concreto en la Argentina en la década del 40* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1983), 112.
- 15 There are three different versions of the poster that Maluf designed for the first Bienal de São Paulo. They basically differ in the background color: one with a white background, another red, and a third black. A fourth design, with a blue background, was never printed.
- 16 In Luiz Camillo Osorio, *Abraham Palatnik* (São Paulo: Cosac and Naify, 2004.)
- 17 Grupo Frente developed under the leadership of Ivan Serpa. Their inaugural exhibition took place in the Galeria do Ubeu in 1954. Its initial members were Carlos Val, Ivan Serpa, Aluiso Carvão, José da Silva Costa, Décio Viera, Lygia Pape, and Lygia Clark. Later César and Hélio Oiticica, Franz Weissmann, Abraham Palatnik, Elisa Martins, Rubem Ludolf, and Enric Baruch joined the Rio group.
- 18 The *neoconcretistas* published their manifesto in 1959, signed by Ferreira Gullar, Amílcar de Castro, Lygia Pape, Lygia Clark, Franz Weissmann, Theon Spanudis, and Reynaldo Jardim. In one of its paragraphs, the manifesto proclaims: "We do not consider the work of art to be either a 'machine' or an 'object' but as a quasi-corpus, that is, as an entity whose reality is not exhausted in the external relationship of its parts—an entity that, while it may be broken down into its component parts, only completely manifest itself in a direct, phenomenological approach. We believe that the work of art exceeds the material mechanism on which it rests, not because of some supernatural virtue, but by transcending those mechanical relationships (which the Gestalt objectifies) and by creating for itself a tacit signification (Merleau-Ponty) that emerges in it for the first time. If we had to search for a metaphor for the work of art, it would not be found in the machine or the object taken objectively, but (following S. Langer and W. Wleidé) in living organisms. This comparison, however, would still not be sufficient to express the specific reality of the aesthetic organism."
- 19 Ronaldo Brito, *Neoconcretismo: Vértice e ruptura do projeto construtivo brasileiro*, Temas e Debates 4 (Rio de Janeiro: FUNARTE; Instituto Nacional de Artes Plásticas, 1985.)
- 20 I contacted Augusto de Campos via email on October 14, 2010, and received his response the following day, likewise via email.
- 21 For a study of the inclusion of Brazilian concrete poetry in museum and gallery spaces, see João Bandeira, "Palabras no espaço: A poesia na Exposição Nacional de Arte Concreta," reprinted in the catalogue *Concreta '56, a raiz da forma* (São Paulo: Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, 2006), 121–41.
- 22 Helouisa Costa and Renato Rodrigues da Silva, *A fotografia moderna no Brasil* (São Paulo: Cosac and Naify, 2004), offers a thorough and illuminating panorama of photography in Brazil, beginning in the nineteenth century and following with an analysis of modern experiments in photography until the decline of the photo club phenomenon, making their book an essential resource for understanding the historical complexity of modern photography in Brazil.
- 23 *Arquitectura* 306 (Havana, January 1959).
- 24 The beginnings of the magazine *Arquitectura* go back to 1917, though its name has varied somewhat over the course of the many years it has existed. Currently it appears once every three months under the title *Arquitectura Cuba*.
- 25 The most thorough study of the Schulthess House, since 1961 the official residence of the Swiss ambassador in Cuba, is Eduardo Luis Rodríguez, *Modernidad tropical: Neutra, Burle Marx y Cuba: la casa de Schulthess* (Havana: Ediciones Pontón Caribe, 2007), published by the Swiss embassy in Cuba. I should like to thank Marianne Gerber, the Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Switzerland in Cuba, for the gift of several copies of this publication.
- 26 I am referring, in particular, to the project Mies designed for the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin.
- 27 The group Los Once initially included Hugo Consuegra, Agustín Cárdenas, Viredo Espinosa, Tomás Oliva, José Antonio Díaz Peláez, Guido Llinás, Fayad Jamis, Antonio Vidal, José I. Bermúdez, Francisco Antigua, and René Ávila.
- 28 At the exhibition one could see works by Jean Arp, Auguste Herbin, Sonia Delaunay, Alberto Magnelli, Victor Vasarely (author of the drawing printed on the cover of the exhibition brochure), Jesús Soto, Wilfredo Arcay, Omar Carreño, Jean Dewasne, and Eusebio Sempere, among others.
- 29 Quoted from responses to an unpublished questionnaire sent by the author to Pedro de Oraá, who replied on May 10, 2010.
- 30 Among the artists who participated in the inaugural show at the Color-Luz gallery were Wilfredo Lam, Sandu Darie, Hugo Consuegra, Cundo Bermúdez, Pedro Álvarez, José Mijares, Pedro de Oraá, Loló Soldevilla, and Wilfredo Arcay.
- 31 *Pintura y escultura cubana 1957* [exhibition catalogue] (Havana: Galería de Arte Color-Luz, 1957). Lezama Lima's text was titled "Nueva Galería."
- 32 *Homenaje a Fidel*, a seminal work by Soldevilla signed in 1957, is published with the title *Silencio en diagonal* (Diagonal Silence) on p. 184 of Óscar Guzmán Hurtado, *Pintores cubanos* (Havana: Ediciones [R], 1962), which leads one to believe that the opportunistic change in title was made after the year that book was published.





**Irregular Frame/
Shaped Canvas:
Anticipacions,
Inheritances,
Borrowings**

CÉSAR PATERNOSTO



he publication in 1944 of the magazine *Arturo* in Buenos Aires signaled the birth of a genuine avant-garde within the art languages broadly known as 'geometric abstraction'. I am not referring exclusively to Latin America—where a critical historiography has already ascertained that this has been the most progressive trend among the modern art developments—but also to Europe, the birthplace of these movements, which at that time was living through the devastation of the Second World War, and where art practices had, for the most part, come to a halt. Although early and valuable manifestations of geometric abstraction had taken place in both margins of the Río de la Plata during the previous decade—including works by

the members of the Asociación de Arte Constructivo (Association of Constructive Art) founded by Joaquín Torres-García on his return to Montevideo and experiences by Juan del Prete and Esteban Lisa in Buenos Aires—these, however, lacked the forceful renovating impetus of the young artists that emerged in the art scene of the 1940s, who, in the words of Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, enacted "the transgression of a model."¹

Amazingly, the emergence of this movement in the far-away South American capitals of Buenos Aires and Montevideo, which already displayed a European influenced cosmopolitanism—heavily indebted to French cultural influence—appeared to symmetrically repeat the creative explosion of the Russian avant-garde, which had also occurred in the periphery of Europe at the outset of the First World War and in a cultural environment heavily conditioned by the Francophile Russia of the Czars. The political and social circumstances show another intriguing parallelism: in Russia the avant-garde preceded and was coincidental with the early days of the revolution, while in Buenos Aires the abstract movement took shape at a time when workers started rallying in support of the then Colonel Perón, the polemical figure that was to dominate the Argentine political scene until his death, three decades later. What's more, the appearance of the Peronist movement became, in fact, a watershed in the Argentine political scene. I will not go beyond pointing to the coincidence of these traumatic social and political circumstances here, because while the Russian avant-garde allied itself with the revolution (until it was drastically wiped out in the 1920s by the rising Stalinism), in Buenos Aires many of the young artists embraced a Marxist ideology (following the Russian ideological model), a move that was foreign, if not inimical, to the popular fervor that Perón's figure had originated—a diffuse motivation into which the disenchantment with the traditional parties and the feeling that long unfulfilled social demands were being met spontaneously coalesced.² This illustrates the complexity of the cultural strains shaken by the tumultuous political events of those days; episodes that brought to the fore the manifest divorce of the Argentinean *intelligentsia* (the Eurocentric cultivated elites) from the social and economic conditioning that made possible the rise of a populist leader.³

The appearance of the single—and legendary—issue of *Arturo* dates from the brief moment in which the whole movement of young abstractionists presented a united front. Or, if there were already fissures, they were not yet apparent. The following year the movement fragmented into several factions, thus giving rise to a long and tumultuous history of ideological or aesthetic confrontations, mutual recriminations over authorship, and the ensuing antedating of works. In a first instance Gyula Kosice, Carmelo Arden Quin, and Rhod Rothfuss launched what was to be known as the Madí Group, while Tomás Maldonado, accompanied by his wife Lidy Prati as well as several students of the School of Fine Arts—Alfredo Hlito, Enio Iommi, Claudio Girola, Alberto Molenberg—and artists Manuel Espinosa and the Lozza brothers, formed the group known as Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención (Concrete-Invention Art Association). Later on, Arden Quin broke with Kosice and Rothfuss in order to promote his own version of Madí art, which he was to continue in Paris, where he moved in 1948. On their part, the Lozza brothers branched out from Concreto-Invención and conceived, in theory and practice, another innovative variant of geometric abstraction known as *perceptismo* (perceptism).

Sticking to the available documentation, I would like to study the emergence of the pictorial entity known then as the "irregular frame" (*marco irregular*) first proposed by Rhod Rothfuss in the essay "El marco: un problema de la plástica actual" (The Frame: A Problem in Contemporary Art) and published in that single issue of *Arturo*, which defined a pictorial methodology that was, as a matter of fact, adopted by *all* members of the movement without distinctions until, at least, 1946. If the 'irregular frame' later lost visibility, it represents, nevertheless, a definitive landmark in the practices that stress painting's *objecthood*: I am thinking of the Brazilian Willys de Castro's *Objetos ativos* [CAT. 155–158] of the 1950s, or the shaped canvases that appeared in the United States just about the same time, in the late 1950s and early 1960s—two entirely unrelated proposals, though.

In his theoretical tracts,⁴ Rothfuss maintained that a painting only arrived at its self-referentiality when the "background" (*el fondo*), that pertained to naturalism, was eliminated. In the final paragraph of the above-mentioned essay, he states: "A painting should be something that begins and ends within itself. Without interruption." Traditional painting appeared to the viewer as a "window" opened but to a fragment of reality; hence Rothfuss affirms that even in cubism and non-figural painting the canvas's formats, not only the rectangular ones, but also the regular formats of the circular *tondos* or the oval ones—which, incidentally, were introduced in modernist painting by the cubists—seem to interrupt the continuity of a larger plastic theme. "This only disappears," he says, "when the frame is rigorously structured according to the composition of the painting; that is to say, when the border of the canvas is made to play an active role in the artistic creation."

Rothfuss proposed, therefore, that the inner structure, the composition of the painting should determine the polygonal shape of the perimeter, that is, what he termed the "structured frame." A method that, in turn, he distinguished from the inverse approach, in which one proceeded in a centripetal fashion, from the exterior to the interior of the work, and which he named "cut out frame" (*marco recortado*).

It is impossible to find a proposal as radical as this in the field of geometric abstract painting of the time either in the Americas or in Europe. And it was not until the 1960s that the American historian Michael Fried suggested an analogous concept, “deductive structuring,” to characterize Frank Stella’s works of the early 1960s, in which the monochromatic bands run parallel to the non-orthogonal or polygonal canvas structuring.⁵

In spite of the active role that Rothfuss confers to the *canvas border*, the essay’s title, as much as its content, refer to the *frame* (it is obviously presumed that in the end, that canvas border would end up framed), unlike the denuded *shaped canvases* that appeared much later in the United States (Ellsworth Kelly, Frank Stella, Kenneth Noland, *et al.*) As I see it, Rothfuss accepted the age-old practice of *framing* paintings—even if this was not essential to the medium but just a utilitarian accessory—in order to emphasize the radical modification inflicted to the *traditional* rectangular pictorial space. If paintings in altars already had frames, beginning in the seventeenth century, when easel painting was consolidated—the portable artifact that *defines the Western pictorial medium*—the use of frames is definitely established: they show a conspicuous craftsmanship (carved wood, gold leafed) and were often manufactured in large, imposing sizes. If the frame was conceived for utilitarian reasons, it also performed a visual function: it served to isolate the “window” of traditional painting from the surrounding space, which could be a velvety wall or a no less elaborate set of furniture. In other words, that limiting yet transitional function came to reinforce the *co-real* virtuality of traditional painting.

Carlos María (Rhod) Rothfuss (Montevideo, Uruguay, 1920–1969) surely was the most elusive and enigmatic figure of this whole artistic generation,⁶ even though it is fairly well ascertained that at the time he joined the avant-garde movement in the mid-1940s, he not only had a formal artistic education, but he was also a budding artist and an art teacher.

I have already pointed out that Rothfuss’s theoretical conception of both “structured” and “cut out” frames can be placed in the year prior to the publication of the magazine *Arturo*, that is, 1943. However, the majority of his “structured frame” works, which we could call his “classic pieces” [CAT. 33, 34], have been dated 1946 or later.⁷ Only three works have been identified as having been realized prior to these. One of them, *Sin título (Arlequín)* (Untitled [Harlequin])—a decidedly cubist composition⁸—has been dated 1944 [FIG. 1]. A second work has been classified by Agnès de Maistre as “a key inscribed into a polygonal picture.”⁹ It is evident that these two works would exemplify what Rothfuss later called the “cut out frame”—that is, a cutting from the outer edges inward—since the plastic subject of these pieces is not in keeping with the structure of the support. In fact, there is a manifest discrepancy between Rothfuss’s conceptualization of the “structured frame” that appears in the *Arturo* essay—a theoretical elaboration that, as I anticipated, should date from 1943 or earlier—and his pictorial work of that time. The third work is reproduced in *Arturo*: it is an undated work that goes by the title of *Plástica en madera* (Art Work on Wood) and which de Maistre calls *Guerrero azteca* (Aztec Warrior). It has anthropomorphic features and betrays a more than superficial knowledge of Joaquín Torres-García’s

FIG. 1. Rhod Rothfuss, *Sin título (Arlequín)* (Untitled [Harlequin]), 1944. Oil on canvas, 175.9 x 83.8 cm (69 ¼ x 33 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros





FIG. 2. Charles Green Shaw,
Polygon, 1936.
Oil on canvas, 68.6 x 40 cm
(27 x 15 ¾ in.).
Newark Museum Collection

wood reliefs (more on this relationship in a moment).

How did Rothfuss arrive at that conception of the “irregular frame” As we shall see, there is no easy answer to this question.

There are several known precedents of non-orthogonal supports in modern painting. To begin with, Mario Gradowczyk and Nelly Perazzo¹⁰ quote examples by Giorgio de Chirico, Jean Arp, Christian Schad, Eric Buchholz, El Lissitzky, László Peri, Charles Green Shaw, and Balcomb Greene as other artists that occasionally employed a polygonal support. And I say “occasionally” because unlike Rothfuss, who sustained his practice with a lucid theoretical formulation, no such pronouncement is known on the part of these artists (excepting Charles Green Shaw who, in New York in 1933, began a series of paintings on irregular supports which he dubbed “plastic polygons” and that he directly associated in his writings¹¹ with the New York skyline—for him, skyscraper silhouettes were the symbols of the dynamic American modernity: sometimes he depicted the buildings literally besides cutting out their silhouettes; on other occasions he merely alluded to them by means of the contour of the polygonal perimeter of the canvas) [FIG. 2]. Neither has research been carried out into whether Rothfuss ever got to know the experiences of these artists, a necessary element of judgment in order to gauge the proposal of the Uruguayan artist.

The Hungarian artist László Peri, who had migrated to Berlin, exhibited some works of irregular contours at the Galerie Der Sturm in a show held together with Moholy-Nagy in 1922.¹² The following year, 1923, he participated in the *Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung*, where he sent works of irregular geometric shapes that had been realized in cement painted red and black [FIG. 3], a medium with which Peri was familiar since he was a sculptor and stonemason.

What I am trying to convey is that Peri’s reliefs were forms thought out *from the normative of the sculpture medium*; after all, the relief—inevitably linked to the wall and architecture—precedes by millennia the appearance of easel painting in the West, the art object which happened to be Rothfuss’s conceptual focus. This does not mean to say that had Rothfuss seen those forms or *spatial constructions*—as Rowell calls them—they could very well have fired his imagination. Indeed, Tomás Maldonado had a book by Arp and Lissitzky, *Die Kunstismen* (1925), in which one of Peri’s reliefs is reproduced.¹³ If Rothfuss saw them,¹⁴ how is it that he ended up conceiving the ‘irregular frame’ in paintings still indebted to cubist aesthetics? Would it not have been more logical that after seeing Peri’s works he approach a straightforward abstraction? Everything appears to indicate that Rothfuss first arrived at the conception of the “irregular frame” on a theoretical plane, and that the artistic execution of these conceptual postulates required an arduous maturing process in order for him to shed, once and for all, the cubist language or figurative allusions.

On the other hand, it should be noted that Maldonado—the owner of the above-mentioned book—only acknowledged Peri’s works around 1946, when he wrote the essay “Lo abstracto y lo concreto en el arte moderno” (The Abstract and the Concrete in Modern Art);¹⁵ before then, in 1944, he produced a linocut of automatist conception and other vignettes of a freewheeling abstraction and biomorphic forms for the cover of the magazine *Arturo*. In fact, the works of the young artists reproduced in that leg-

FIG. 4. Joaquín Torres-García,
Planos de color (Planes of
Color), 1929. Oil on panel,
28 x 22 x 2 cm (11 x 8 ⅝
x ¾ in.). Private collection,
Germany



FIG. 5. Joaquín Torres-García,
Madera Planos de Color
(Wood Construction with
Planes of Color), 1929. Oil
on panel, 42.2 x 20.3 cm (16
⅝ x 8 in.). Carmen Thyssen-
Bornemisza collection
on deposit at the Museo
Thyssen-Bornemisza



endary single issue of the magazine—with the exception, perhaps, of some drawings by Lidy Maldonado (Prati, after the divorce)—respond to the conventions of European abstraction known until then. The insistent and programmatic *inventionism* exposed in the texts went, as a matter of fact, far beyond the praxis.

There are two other works that anteceded Rothfuss's "irregular frame" and that could possibly be considered as a direct influence: I am referring to two wooden pieces by Torres-García executed in 1929. The Uruguayan master had arrived in Paris in 1926, whereupon he had immediately embarked on a process of anxious updating of his work. It was a moment of agitated and fluctuating artistic experiences—"primitivist" paintings as well as others of cubist persuasion were produced at the same time as the notable constructions with painted wood that embody some of his most salient achievements, namely the *objets plastiques* which often reflect the neo-plastic grid.¹⁶ It was in the midst of this frenzied working context that Torres-García produced the wood pieces to which I am referring. One of them, *Planes of Color* [FIG. 4], belongs to a private collection in Germany, while the other, *Wood Construction with Planes of Color* [FIG. 5], is part of the collection of the Baroness Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza.

Both works evince a Mondrianesque grid and date from the year in which he met the Dutch artist. However, the support is no longer a conventional rectangle for, as Torres-García proceeded to cut the pictorial plane out following the logic of the grid, he went, at least momentarily, much further than Mondrian. In fact, both works clearly anticipate the polygonal shape of the pictorial plane following the inner composition of the painting, or "structured frame" in Rothfuss's words. Unfortunately these experiments by Torres-García had no follow up; on the whole, these two works appear as one of the many avenues the artist was exploring¹⁷ until he finally developed his own idiosyncratic brand of constructivism at the beginning of the following decade.

Certainly Rothfuss could have seen these works: there are two photographs of Torres-García in his studio in Montevideo in which he appears surrounded by wooden pieces and Pre-Columbian objects. Hence, it is possible to infer—as Cecilia de Torres does—that the artist held these works in great esteem. And, even though the wood compositions I am referring to do not appear in these pictures, they could very well have been hanging on another wall of the studio. Moreover, it is well established that not only had the works arrived in Uruguay when Torres-García left Europe, but also that both Rothfuss and Arden Quin visited Torres-García's studio in 1943 and 1944.¹⁸ Again, if Rothfuss saw these works, how come he did not embrace a more abstract conception? Or did he perhaps see them and only thought of them in terms of theory rather than praxis?

During the 1945–46 time span, the practice of the "irregular frame" was generalized in both shores of the Río de la Plata. In 1946, however, Buenos Aires witnessed the beginning of a series of experiences involving the treatment of the pictorial plane that took as a springboard a criticism of the seminal idea of the irregular or shaped frame. In the above-mentioned essay from 1946, Maldonado states: "We re-initiated an in-depth study of the 'cut out' frame or picture [concluding that] this methodology spatialized the plane: the floodgates were open and the space penetrated into the plane." Even though he writes in the first person plural, it is well

known that Alberto Molenberg,¹⁹ Raúl Lozza, and Oscar Núñez initiated the "separation of the constitutive elements of the picture from the space without abandoning its coplanar disposition."²⁰ Thus, the picture was abolished as a container." Not without sound reasons, Maldonado characterized this modality as "the greatest discovery of our movement."

In any event, there are a couple of works that pre-announce the coplanar mode: one of them is Lidy Prati's *Concreto* from 1945, an oil on wood that belongs to a private collection [CAT. 48]. It appears as a fresh and inventive deconstruction of 'a Mondrian' in which the frame has been done away with. The other, even more striking work I have in mind is Manuel Espinosa's *Untitled* [CAT. 43], also from 1945, an oil on wood of polygonal contours whose pictorial plane has been pierced through by two triangular cuts that offer a view of the supporting wall. This work was not framed either and I consider it of extreme importance because, as I see it, it is one of the first examples—if not *the* first—in which the pictorial plane was literally *opened*, a practice which, starting from different conceptualizations, would later be carried out by Lucio Fontana in Italy when he punctured holes (*buchi*) or inflicted cuts (*tagli*) to the canvas in the late 1940s and 1950s, or like the openings presented by Frank Stella's shaped canvases of the early 1960s.

It was in 1948, when Maldonado returned from Europe (where he had met Max Bill and Georges Vantongerloo), that he articulated the doctrinarian turnaround: back to the rectangular picture, he called out. A return that meant the—in my view—unfortunate abdication of the most creative and innovative experiences carried out by this group. Next, they started emulating or paraphrasing the concrete art of its 'pope', namely, the Swiss Max Bill: the group's affiliation with the established Max Bill aesthetics gave it the definitive respectability and decorum that not only in Argentina, but in all of Latin America, is gained by any artistic movement backed up by hegemonic models.

Thus the inventiveness of the irregular or shaped frame, followed by the coplanar painting, as well as Kosice's sculptural forms executed after the publication of *Arturo*—mainly his *Röyi* wood piece (1944) with articulated members whose position could be manually modified by the viewer—as well as those he constructed with neon tubes—which, even when dated in 1953, as Pérez-Barreiro does based on the available documentation, long predate subsequent experiences by Stephen Antonakos, Chryssa, and Bruce Nauman in the United States²¹—all of these path-breaking experiences remained in semi-darkness until relatively recent times.²²

FIG. 3. László Peri, *Three-Part Space Construction*, 1923. Painted cement, 60 x 68 cm (23 5/8 x 26 3/4 in.) [part 1]; 55.5 x 70 cm (21 7/8 x 27 1/2 in.) [part 2]; 58 x 68 cm (22 7/8 x 26 3/4 in.) [part 3]. Lehmbbruck Museum, Duisbug, Alemania. Inv. 2911/1987.



Although I am forced to drastically synthesize the narrative that follows, it is important to follow the footsteps of the “irregular frame” after its arrival in Europe, for the achievements of the geographically-distanced Rio de la Plata avant-garde abstractionists were presented in Paris towards the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s, at a time when the French capital was still holding on to the last vestiges of its traditional hegemony. That is to say, they “were seen” in Paris, but the reactions before the works of these unknown South American artists—when they were taken into account at all—were mostly of a benevolent paternalism.

However, beyond a handful of disoriented critics, they were also seen by an artist whose work pioneered the development of what was later called the “shaped canvas” in the United States. I am referring to Ellsworth Kelly.

In 1948, Kosice sent a numerous representation of Madí art to the Third Salon des Réalités Nouvelles. In the well-known photograph of the Argentinian pavilion [FIG 6], it is possible to see a crowded display of “irregular frame” works (the ones by Rothfuss occupy the central area).

Arden Quin too had arrived in Paris in 1948.²³ There it took him no time to reconstitute a Madí group under his aegis and in 1950 he exhibited under that title at the Galerie Colette Allendy with Gregorio Vardánega, a group of Peruvian artists (among them the notable late poet and avant-garde artist Jorge Eielson), and the French Roger Desserprit. From then on he became closely associated with a group of young Venezuelan art students (Alejandro Otero, Mateo Manaure, Rubén Núñez, and Narciso Debourg). The following year, Otero, this time together with Jesús Soto, Guevara, and Núñez, took part in the exhibition *Espace-Lumière* organized by Arden Quin at the Galerie Suzanne Michel, which also included Jack Youngerman, a close friend of Kelly's.

In August of the following year, the Galería Cuatro Muros in Caracas organized the *Primera Exposición Internacional de Arte* (First Exhibition of International Art) in which, together with Alejandro Otero, Jesús Soto, Narciso Debourg, Rubén Núñez, and Mateo Manaure, Arden Quin, Jack Youngerman, and Ellsworth Kelly also appeared.

The exhibition *Ellsworth Kelly: The Years in France, 1948–1954*²⁴—which originated at the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume in 1992 in Paris and later that year traveled to the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C.—could have been the occasion to highlight this momentary interaction between artists from North and South America. Nevertheless it turned out to be a missed opportunity: the essays as well as the chronology did nothing but reinforce the *official* story of Kelly's art, obviously a North American production that, by now, appears to have been carved in stone for posterity. In fact, the historical scope of his connection or familiarity with the South American artists has been reduced in the chronology²⁵ to a brief citation of the exhibition at the Galería Cuatro Muros in Caracas. So brief, in fact, that it fails to mention the South American artists participating in the show, in spite of the fact that it was celebrated in Caracas (!). In short, all of these texts restate the already well-known basic tenets of Kelly's abstraction: the search for, and adoption of, ‘ready made’ motifs in empirical reality,²⁶ appropriations all of them that were executed on either wood panels or canvases of *regular, rectangular formats*.

FIG. 6. Display of Madí irregular frame works selected to represent Argentina at the Third Salon des Réalités Nouvelles, Paris, 1948



That is why it is so intriguing that in the spring of 1950 Kelly produced *Window V*, a work that is generally considered the first in the sequence of North American “shaped canvases.” This work was realized on a modest-sized wood panel shaped as an airplane wing, with horizontal black bars on a white background. According to Kelly, this piece was also inspired by a play of light and night shadows projected on the wall of his room. Therefore, if the appropriation procedure that Kelly followed was analogous to all of the preceding ones, why did he opt for a *cut-out support* in this case, whereas all the others had been developed on regular formats? Because in May of the same year, 1950—precisely in the Parisian spring—Arden Quin had exhibited his works on *découpé* panels in the Galerie Colette Allendy. Had Kelly seen this exhibition before he started to work on *Window V*? Or did he operate independently, albeit simultaneously? In truth, this cannot be ascertained here beyond the shadow of a doubt. Yet, I cannot stop from being intrigued by the appearance of this (single) cut-out panel work in Kelly’s French output of that time.

In any event—and to conclude—I think it is quite evident by now that, as I anticipated at the beginning, during the period that goes from the mid-1940s to 1950, in the remote capitals of Buenos Aires and Montevideo, there was an effervescent and unprecedented impetus to radically renovate the acquired tradition of geometric abstraction. The first among the rare exceptions we find in Latin American art in which the reception of the dominant models becomes critical and transformative, that is to say, when the influence is returned as a creative metamorphosis. The evidence cannot be contested, but rewriting the hegemonic narrative of the modernist canon is another story.

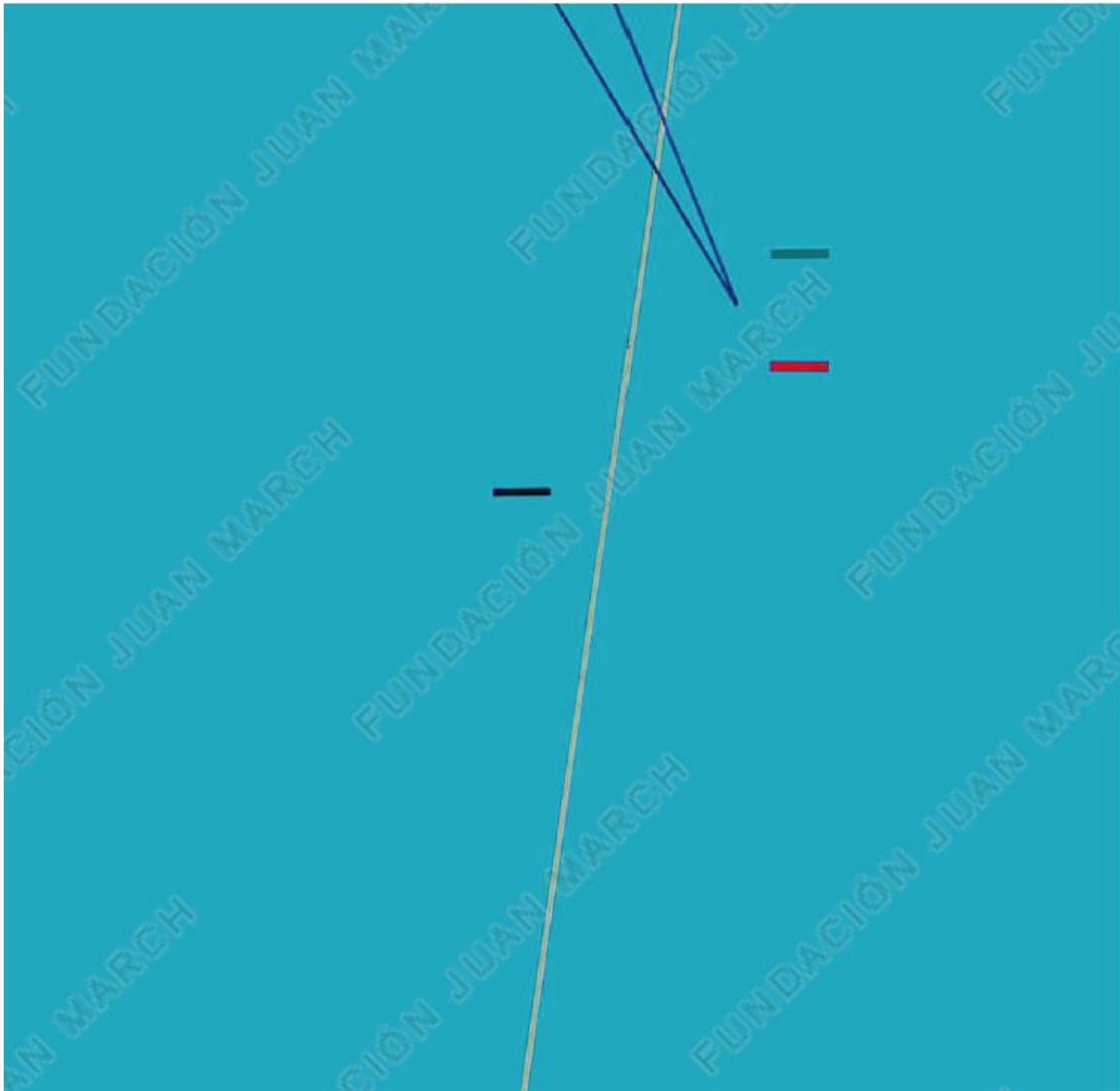
New York 2002-Segovia 2010

ENDNOTES

- 1 See Pérez-Barreiro’s “Buenos Aires: Rompiendo el Marco” in Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, ed., *The Geometry of Hope: Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection* (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin, 2007), as well as his “The Negation of All Melancholy,” in David Elliot, ed., *Art from Argentina, 1920–1994* (Oxford: The Museum of Modern Art, 1994). See also Agnès de Maistre, “Les groupes Arte Concreto-Invencción et Madí,” in *Art d’Amérique Latine 1911–1968* (Paris: Éditions du Centre Georges Pompidou, 1992). These texts are foundational of a rigorous historiography on the subject.
- 2 Counteracting those popular marches, there were others, no less vibrant, summoning vast sectors of the middle class and students that opposed Perón’s politics by exaggerating to the hilt his former fascist sympathies, thus brandishing the flags of “liberty and democracy.” I clearly remember a photograph (published by the daily *La Nación*) that spoke volumes on the Argentinean cultural fracture exacerbated by the outburst of Perón’s massive following. There, in the front row of the rally, marching arm in arm, were Spruille Braden (the United States ambassador whose intrusive and bullying behavior is memorable), conservative and Radical Civic Union politicians, and socialist (the flamboyant Alfredo Palacios, most conspicuously) and (Stalinist) communist leaders. (It might very well be that I was behind them, among the rallying students, in my teenager years).
- 3 For a revealing and updated study of the subject, see Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason* (London - New York: Verso, 2005). Laclau confronts the deep-seated pejorative view that the term “populism” has acquired in the light of European or North American liberal democratic discourses stating that, precisely, populism enlarges and guarantees the meaning of a true democracy by being immediately receptive to the needs of the masses. In an interview published in Buenos Aires’s *La Nación* in 2005, he concludes with a statement I fully endorse: “Peronism represented an enormous step forward for the participation of the masses in the political system. Maybe it was not the best one. One imagines it could have adopted more democratic forms, but it was what was historically possible ... The oligarchic regime (of *openly fraudulent* origin, I might add) which existed before seems to me no better.”
- 4 According to the title page and contents, *Arturo’s* publication is dated “summer of 1944.” Therefore, it is possible to ascertain that if it came out around February-March of that year (the austral summer, unlike the northern one, straddles between two years: it starts on December 21 and ends on March 21 of the following year), Rothfuss had, at the very least, the whole of the previous year, 1943, to think out—and practice—a type of painting that broke with the centuries-old tradition of the rectangular canvas. In a later essay, “A propósito del marco” (A Propos of the Frame), published in issue 4 of the *Arte Madí Universal* magazine (Buenos Aires, 1950), Rothfuss maintains that he had already attempted to overcome the problem of the orthogonal frame or “window” in 1941.
- 5 See Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
- 6 According to Mario Sagradini, Rothfuss authored his own “obscurity” for, quite determinedly, he kept a low profile, avoiding the friction of the “warring” artistic factions and shunning all kinds of media exposure. See his “Rhod Rothfuss: Un fantasma recorre Madí” (A Ghost Walks through Madí) [exh catalogue], in *Arte Madí* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 1997).
- 7 Pérez-Barreiro has concluded that, in what respects Rothfuss’s oeuvre, barely ten or so of his paintings, a small number of drawings, and a sculpture that can be indisputably attributed to him have survived. See “The Negation of All Melancholy” (reprint Edition Galerie von Bartha, Basel, 1994), 9.
- 8 A work that today belongs in the Patricia Phelps Cisneros Collection, it was first illustrated in the catalogue of the exhibition curated by Mario Gradowczyk and Nelly Perazzo, *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953* (New York: Americas Society, 2001), 135.
- 9 She is referring to the first exhibition held by the whole group at the house of the noted psychoanalyst Enrique Pichon-Rivière in Buenos Aires (October 8, 1945). She rests on the testimony of Arden Quin (whose indiscriminate use she later deplored, given the artist’s deliberate refashioning of historical facts) and points to the photograph in which the exhibitors appear together as the only documentary support. According to de Maistre, the painting appears in the background between Pichon-Rivière and the dancer Renate Schottelius, but the polygonal frame is not clearly visible.
- 10 Mario Gradowczyk and Nelly Perazzo, *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata*, 52
- 11 See Charles Green Shaw, “The Plastic Polygon,” *Plastique 3* (Paris, 1938), cited by Mary Kate O’Hare in “Constructive Spirit: Abstract Art in South and North America, 1920s–50s,” central essay in the catalogue of the exhibition of the same name (Newark: Newark Museum, 2010),

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- 20 and plate 4. Here it is worth noting that in the Société Anonyme Collection, formed by Katherine Dreier (more often than not following the advice of Marcel Duchamp), there is a work by László Peri—to whom I refer below—titled *Room (Space Construction)*, dated 1920–21, realized on a support with a polygonal frame. In it, the formal arrangement, which does not coincide with the shape of the perimeter, suggests an architectural space (the “room” of the title). One would be inclined to suppose that Shaw got to know Peri’s work, since the Société Anonyme Collection was repeatedly exhibited in New York, starting in 1920. As far as I am concerned, in Peri’s work, as much as in Shaw’s, the open figural allusions indicate a scarcely elaborate conviction regarding the meaning of an abstract, self-referential painting. As we saw before, Rothfuss’s proposal was, in this sense, impeccably cogent.
- 12 According to Margit Rowell, Katherine Dreier acquired two works by Peri at the Galerie Der Sturm for the Société Anonyme (one of them must have been the one I already mentioned). See Margit Rowell, *The Planar Dimension: Europe 1912–1932* (New York: The Guggenheim Museum, 1979), 135.
- 13 Mentioned by Margit Rowell, *The Planar Dimension*, 135. On the contrary, it is impossible—and I find it improbable—to assert that images of Charles Green Shaw might have arrived at that time at Río de la Plata. It was only in 1956 that Gyula Kosice organized at the Galería Bonino in Buenos Aires an exhibition of international geometric abstraction featuring works by some of the members of the American Abstract Artists, the group to which Shaw belonged—although his work was not exhibited in that show. I understand that before that date, in the 1930s and 1940s, the exchange of information on the arts was made almost exclusively with Europe from both North and South America, rather than between the countries of the Americas.
- 14 It is quite possible, since there had been a friendly relationship between the artists: both participated in the meetings at the now disappeared Café Rubí in Buenos Aires, the lively exchanges from which emerged the idea of the publication of *Arturo* (it is estimated that these meetings took place around mid-1943).
- 15 *Revista de Arte Concreto-Invencción* 1 (Buenos Aires, 1946).
- 16 This whole fascinating creative process has been shown for the first time in the splendid exhibition *Joaquín Torres-García: Constructing Abstraction with Wood*, curated by Mari-Carmen Ramírez and held at The Menil Collection in Houston (2009); the uniqueness of these “plastic objects” was finally the subject of a specific theoretical study, adequately treated as “seminal”—albeit not “central”—within, though somehow foreign to, the modernist canon.
- 17 In fact, up until the Houston exhibition, both works had remained in relative obscurity. Mario Gradowczyk illustrated the one in the German collection in his essay “Torres-García: un constructor con maderas,” in the catalogue of the show *Aladdin Toys: Los juguetes de Torres-García*, IVAM Centre Julio González, 1997; and I exhibited the piece belonging to the Baroness Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection in *Abstraction: The Amerindian Paradigm*, the exhibition I curated for the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels and the IVAM Centre Julio González in Valencia, 2001, in whose main essay I anticipated the critical evaluation that I make here.
- 18 The catalogue raisonné of his wood pieces, compiled by Cecilia de Torres, is in the last stages of preparation. I also owe her this information extracted from Torres-García’s diary: “March 17, 1943: visit of Rothfuss and disciples ... May 7 and 9, 1944: visited by Arden Quin and Rothfuss ... May 15, 1944: visit of Rothfuss.” These dates are critical, for the visits to Torres-García’s studio are made precisely around the time of the theoretical and practical gestation of the first “irregular frame” works.
- 19 According to Pérez-Barreiro, Molenberg’s *Función blanca* from 1946 was the first coplanar work.
- 20 That is to say, geometrically cut-out shapes hang separately yet remain on the same virtual plane, while the supporting wall appears in between.

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- 21 Regarding the use of neon tubes, in the above-mentioned essay by Mario Gradowczyk and Nelly Perazzo there are references to pioneering experiences by László Moholy-Nagy and the Czech artist Zdenek Pesanek carried out in the 1920s and 1930s. However, there is no inquiry into whether Kosice might have known these experiences.
- 22 It has been only in recent years that several exhibitions have brought to the attention of the mainstream historical consciousness the achievements of these South American artists. Among them, I would like to mention the already cited *Abstract Art from the Río de la Plata: Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, held at the Americas Society in New York in 2001, which, as its title indicates, was limited to artists from Buenos Aires and Montevideo. Instead, *The Geometry of Hope: Latin American Abstract Art From the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, curated by Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, then curator of Latin American art at the Blanton Museum, University of Texas in Austin, and which later traveled to the Grey Art Gallery, NYU, showcased a more comprehensive view of South American geometric abstraction in 2007. And more recently (February 2010), *Constructive Spirit: Abstract Art from South and North America, 1920s–50s*, held at the Newark Museum in New Jersey and curated by Mary Kate O'Hare, presented a comparative view of abstraction across the Americas. A propos of this, Holland Cotter, of the influential *New York Times*, said “the South Americans ... take the prize for inventiveness.” More than sixty years had to pass before such an assessment was possible.
- 23 1948 is also the year of the arrival of Ellsworth Kelly to Paris, as G.I. bill recipient. When he arrived in the French capital his most admired artists were Picasso and Max Beckman, and one of the first things he did was to travel to Colmar to see Grünewald's *Isenheim Altarpiece*, which he saw as related to those modern masters. Indeed, not only upon his arrival in France but also during the first long months of his stay his work was unabashedly figurative and he appeared disdainful of contemporary art (abstraction); so it is highly improbable that he might have taken an interest in seeing the *Réalités Nouvelles* exhibition of 1948 (or so we are led to believe). See the chronology in the catalogue of the exhibition of his years in Paris, mentioned ahead.
- 24 Yve-Alain Bois, Jack Cowart and Alfred Pacquement, eds., *Ellsworth Kelly: Les années françaises, 1948–1954* (Paris: Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, 1992); *Ellsworth Kelly: The Years in France, 1948–1954* (Washington, D.C.: The National Gallery of Art, 1992).
- 25 A true disillusion, it has been compiled, to a large degree, on the basis of the artist's recollections as told to Ms Nathalie Brunet. Yve-Alain Bois, Jack Cowart and Alfred Pacquement, eds., *Ellsworth Kelly: Les années françaises, 1948–1954* (Paris: Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, 1992); *Ellsworth Kelly: The Years in France, 1948–1954* (Washington, D.C.: The National Gallery of Art, 1992).
- 26 Such as grids that stem from tiling arrangements; or shadows cast by railings on a stairway; or stonework lay outs; or window configurations (as in the well-known *Window: Museum of Modern Art Paris* from 1949) and the like; or a parallel line on which Kelly worked, that is, the use of chance to arrange square pieces of colored paper in grid compositions.
- 27 By express wish of the author, many of the words which would normally appear in brackets are presented here in italics. [Ed.]





**Magazines,
Exhibitions,
and Biennials:
Snapshots
of Abstraction
In Argentina
and Brazil**

MARÍA AMALIA GARCÍA

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hotography is a recording of times past: the fact that the subject of a photographic image once stood before the lens is beyond question. A fraction in time and space, photography is in reality the imprint left by a single, brief moment. These are the scraps of information a snapshot provides. Previous or past events are not reflected in a still picture, nor are the photographer's or the subject's intentions. The full meaning of an image can only be grasped once it is bound within certain limits, that is, when it is contrasted with other sources. This essay will therefore use two photographs as a starting point in the study of events surrounding the II Bienal de São Paulo, organized by the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP) in 1953. Reconstructing the context

in which these pictures were taken will shed light on a crucial episode in the history of Argentine-Brazilian relations and abstract art.

In the first photograph **[FIG. 1]**, Gyula Kosice, leader of the Madí group from Buenos Aires, stands proudly outside Argentina's exhibition section. Behind the young, ground-breaking artist it is possible to see several of the panels that organize the different areas of the exhibition space located in the massive grounds of Parque do Ibirapuera, designed by Oscar Niemeyer for the occasion. Kosice has his back turned to the sign reading "Argentina," and his work, *Levitación en espiral* (Spiral Levitation), stands right behind him, framed by Julián Althabe's sculptures. Kosice's pose and expression seem to convey his satisfaction given this important achievement; the photograph, taken on such a noteworthy occasion, denotes a certain sense of pride.

The second photograph **[FIG. 2]** was taken inside the Argentine exhibition section and shows two works in the display by Lidy Prati, *Vibración al infinito* (Vibration to Infinity) and *Referencia sensible de un espacio definido* (Sensitive Reference of a Defined Space). Brazilian art critic Mário Pedrosa and Argentine painter Miguel Ocampo appear to be observing the works along with the concrete artist and a mutual friend. Ocampo's abstract paintings also represented Argentina at the biennial. The Argentine representation, sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Perón's government, intended to summarize the development of contemporary art in Argentina by selecting a large number of abstract artists to represent the country.

The Argentine delegation was housed, together with other American countries, at the Pabellón de los Estados (Pavilion of States) **[FIG. 3, 4]**—one of the buildings forming the architectural complex designed by Niemeyer, in which a dynamic and flexible interplay of ramps created extraordinary interior spaces. The Argentine exhibition site and the adjacent Uruguayan section, together with the wide selection of works by young Brazilian artists located on the lower floor, all bore witness to the large number of projects at the biennial linked to abstract art. Moreover, these three exhibition galleries attested to the variety of non-figurative styles practiced in the local art scene. An overview of these galleries highlighted the widespread popularity abstraction had

gained among South American artists. Abstract art was in the process of becoming synonymous with modern art.

Artistic exchange between Argentina and Brazil accelerated in 1953, a crucial year for cultural and institutional relations. A shift in debate among Argentine-Brazilian intellectuals was triggered by the involvement of Argentine inventionist artists in the II Bienal de São Paulo. While intellectual circles focused their discussion on abstract art, at an institutional level the event represented an opportunity to reinforce cultural exchange between both countries. For all that, what exactly was so important about the Argentine representation sent to the II Bienal? What is the significance behind Kosice's satisfaction, Prati's joy, and Pedrosa's contemplative delight? These modern artists had experienced late success in Argentina. Therefore, the recognition achieved at the show—an opportunity to encounter international forms of modern art—may have signaled the triumph of abstract art over the artistic agenda drawn out by Perón's cultural program. On the other hand, the event proved Argentine abstract-concrete initiatives dominated the local art scene, becoming a discursive practice in the mid-1940s. From that moment on, this feeling of anticipation prompted numerous examples of concrete art in Argentina.

The launch of the journal *Arturo: Revista de Artes Abstractas* [CAT. 63, 64] in 1944 marked an important moment in the abstract art debate in Buenos Aires. Carmelo Arden Quin, Rhod Rothfuss, Gyula Kosice, and Edgar Bayley were on the editorial board of the first and only issue of *Arturo*. In addition to its cutting-edge supporters, the periodical featured pieces by "renowned avant-garde artists" who had played an active part in renewing the arts during the early twentieth century. Contributors included Joaquín Torres-García, Vicente Huidobro, Murilo Mendes, and Maria Helena Vieira da Silva. It also featured reproductions of works by Wassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian. The magazine's red cover was designed by Tomás Maldonado, while the interior vignettes were created by Lidy Prati. Her project was based on what the journal defined as *invencionismo* (inventionism), a new approach to the aesthetic experience from a conceptual viewpoint. *Invencionismo* favored independence and inventive qualities over descriptive elements. Similarly, the artist's capacity to discern new forms of artistic invention was emphasized. Although the group *Arturo* began to disintegrate practically at the same time it came into existence, the magazine represented a cluster of ideas in the making at an embryonic stage. *Arturo* marked the beginning of abstract-concrete art in Argentina, as confirmed by both the history of local art and the groups that derived from the magazine, such as the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención (Concrete-Invention Art Association, AACI), the Madí group, and *perceptismo* (perceptism).¹

Although literary and artistic circles had supported these trends since the mid-1940s, the incorporation of abstract art in Buenos Aires's institutional framework led to a certain degree of conflict. Tension arose between abstract artists and Perón's administration on account of the government's cultural agenda—distanced from innovative proposals—and the Minister for Education's statements at the Salón Nacional exhibition in 1949 condemning abstract art. In line with artists' perception of the situation, art history has perpetuated a negative image of Perón's cultural policy, bent on refusing to accept or even persecuting modern ideas.² However, as Andrea Giunta has

FIG. 1. Gyula Kosice in the Argentine exhibition section of the II Bienal de São Paulo. Behind him, *Levitación en espiral* (Spiral Levitation, 1953) by Kosice, and *Espacios asimétricamente cruzados* (Asymmetrically Crossed Spaces, 1953) and *Pintura espacial* (Spatial Painting, 1953) by Julián Althabe. Arquivo Histórico Wanda Svevo. Fundação Bienal de São Paulo



FIG. 2. Lidy Prati, Mário Pedrosa, Beba Dari Largaúa, and Miguel Ocampo. Behind them, *Vibración al infinito* (Vibration to Infinity, 1953) and *Referencia sensible de un espacio definido* (Sensitive Reference of a Defined Space, 1953) by Lidy Prati.



FIG. 3. View of Alexander Calder's exhibition in the Pavilion of States, II Bienal de São Paulo, 1953. Arquivo Histórico Wanda Svevo. Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

FIG. 4. Pavilion of States. Arquivo Histórico Wanda Svevo. Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

pointed out, Peronism did not ban or systematically eliminate artworks, as happened in European regimes, but used a group of Argentine abstract artists at the II Bienal de São Paulo to political effect in order to present the country to an international audience.³

Argentina had not been represented at the I Bienal held two years earlier, in 1951. On that occasion, the Peronist administration showed no interest in sending an Argentine delegation to the Brazilian event. Neither did the Ministry of Foreign Affairs collaborate with the Instituto de Arte Moderno in Buenos Aires, which, on its part, had made an initial selection of works. In this sense, Argentina's official involvement in the II Bienal signaled the formation of new cultural and political alignments. It also highlighted the effect of the chance taken by the Brazilian state and middle class in terms of its artistic strategy.⁴ Abstraction and internationalism were now key elements in the fight for cultural hegemony in the region.⁵

Argentina's long-lasting cultural supremacy appeared to be fading, while Brazil slowly secured its position as a model for South American countries thanks to a strong cultural administration program that yielded new museums and a biennial dedicated to the fine arts. A complex mechanism of cultural strategies was set into motion in São Paulo. The Bienal made international art accessible to local artists and a wider audience while promoting Brazilian art at a favorable time in terms of international interest. Moreover, it profited from the symbolic significance of the city, represented by modern entrepreneurs and the National State. In short, the event defined Brazil's position in the region and established its cultural, political, and economic hegemony.⁶

Vanguard artists in Buenos Aires were amazed by the events taking place in Brazil, which differed greatly from the situation in Argentina. Brazil became a point of reference for these creators, a place in which to carry out a modern project in Latin America. The interchange of ideas with Brazil was very appealing to Argentine artists, since Perón's government was not open to this kind of concepts at first and private institutions, unlike those in Brazil, were not able to define a convincing program. And while the possibility of putting forward modern projects increased in Brazil, all Argentine artists could do was read about these activities in magazines.

The constant exchange of ideas between the inventionist avant-garde and Brazilian artists dates back to the foundation of *Arturo*. Poet Murilo Mendes and artist Maria Helena Vieira da Silva contributed to the issue following Carmelo Arden Quin and Edgar Bayley's trip to Rio de Janeiro, prompted by their inquiry into new approaches to modern art. Also playing a part in this interchange of ideas was Carlos Drummond de Andrade's article "Invencionsimo," first published in *Correio da Manhã* on December 1, 1946, and featured the following year in the magazine *Joaquim*, printed in Curitiba. Thanks to this network of artists, art forms produced by inventionist groups from



Buenos Aires made their way to the poet Drummond de Andrade, who wrote a critique on the “nova idéia de Buenos Aires.” As noted in *Joaquim*, AACI artist Raúl Lozza joined a young generation of Brazilians in their opposition to José Bento Monteiro Lobato’s reactionary attitude. Kosice, on the other hand, came into contact with dodecaphonic composer Hans-Joachim Koellreutter and published his pieces, as well as correspondence in which they discussed matters related to dodecaphonic composition [FIG. 5], in the magazine *Arte Madí Universal*. Like Maldonado, Kosice gave lectures on Madí art as part of a course in modern art organized by the musician in Teresópolis.

The first institutional exchange between these two countries in the field of abstract art occurred in the late 1940s. In 1949, the exhibition *Do figurativismo ao abstraccionismo* [FIG. 6] marked the opening, on both sides of the border, of two reputedly modern institutions: the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP) and the Instituto de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires (IAM) [FIG. 7]. The latter developed strong ties with the MAM-SP and the Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP). The IAM held a series of lengthy negotiations with the MASP to take to Buenos Aires the exhibition on Swiss concrete artist Max Bill previously held at the São Paulo museum in March 1951.⁷ Economic-, transport-, and customs-related difficulties hindered and ultimately prevented the show from traveling to Argentina.

New bonds were built throughout the 1950s. In 1951, Tomás Maldonado took up Koellreutter’s invitation and traveled to Brazil with his then-partner Lidy Prati. They visited the MASP in São Paulo with Pietro Maria Bardi, who showed them Bill’s works prior to the opening of the exhibition. While in Rio, they met with the concrete avant-garde: art critic Mário Pedrosa and artists Geraldo de Barros, Abraham Palatnik, Almir Mavignier, and Ivan Serpa [FIG. 8]. In addition to the Argentine representation sent to the II Bienal in 1953, an exhibition focusing on the Group of Modern Artists from Argentina was held at the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM-RJ). The group was formed by concrete artists (Maldonado, Alfredo Hlito, Prati, Enio Iommi, and Claudio Girola) and independent abstract creators (Sarah Grilo, José Antonio Fernández Muro, Miguel Ocampo, and Hans Aebi). The lectures given by Maldonado and art critic Jorge Romero Brest—author of the catalogue—had a profound impact on Rio’s art scene.

Romero Brest was instrumental in establishing artistic relations between both countries. His association with the cultural milieu in Brazil dated back to the 1940s, following his involvement in anti-totalitarian cultural publications. In subsequent years, Brest wrote the book *Pintura Brasileira Contemporânea* (Contemporary Brazilian Painting), published on the occasion of the exhibition *Veinte artistas brasileños* (Twenty Brazilian Artists), curated by Marques Rebêlo and held in Argentina in collaboration with Emilio Pettoruti, director of the Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes de La Plata.⁸ At the time, his preoccupations as an art critic focused on defining Argentina’s artistic role within the broader context of Latin-American modernity.

However, towards the end of the 1940s, an event ignited a powerful shift in Romero Brest’s critical viewpoint. During his third visit to Europe, he came into contact with prominent abstract artists and began to exchange correspondence with Max Bill, Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart, and Léon Degand, among others. Furthermore, a

growing number of pieces relating to constructivism and geometric abstraction were featured in Brest’s magazine, *Ver y estimar* (See and Appraise). In 1951, he was invited to the I Bienal de São Paulo as a member of the jury. As a representative and promoter of Argentine concrete art, he sealed his commitment to the cause by awarding the Prize for Sculpture to Max Bill for *Dreiteilige Einheit* (Tripartite Unity) [FIG. 9]. He was again invited as member of the jury to both the II and VI Bienal (1953, 1961), and he gave a series of lectures in Rio and São Paulo. Brest’s active role in the Brazilian art scene endorsed its presence in the international scene. His progressive ideas were a source of legitimation for Brazilian institutions, which saw in his discourse the confirmation of their postwar initiatives supporting modern art. With the exception of Mário Pedrosa, who was pivotal in the reception and inclusion of abstract art in Brazil, art critics were reluctant to the idea of institutions promoting this sort of rhetoric.⁹

Nonetheless, relations were restored following Jorge Romero Brest’s position as administrator of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de Buenos Aires (MNBA) after the fall of Perón’s government at the hands of the self-proclaimed “Revolución Libertadora” (Liberating Revolution). Important achievements during Brest’s administration included five exhibitions on Brazilian art and architecture at the MNBA and one exhibition on Argentine art at the MAM-RJ, held in 1961.¹⁰ Of all these shows, *Arte moderno en Brasil* (Modern Art in Brazil) was the most important in political terms: the exhibition saw the doors of the MNBA re-open under the new military government in June 1957.

Arte moderno en Brasil was an Itamaray strategy aimed at gaining influence in the continent. The show summed up thirty-five years of Brazilian art, from the Semana del 22 proposals to the latest tendencies in abstract art. The front cover of the catalogue and exhibition poster featured a composition of small orange and green squares by Ivan Serpa [FIG. 10]. Through this show—which traveled to Rosario, Santiago, and Lima—Brazil had high expectations of kindling interest in Brazilian art in neighboring countries. The continuous exhibition projects Brazil sought to stage outside its borders, as well as the widespread coverage they received, are further evidence of the country’s quest for cultural hegemony. The construction of Brasília under the government of Juscelino Kubitschek in 1956 is an indisputable sign of the effects modern art and architecture had on Brazil’s political and economic program following the Second World War. On a regional level, Brazil’s cultural administration was regarded as a model in neighboring countries. A new cultural-political map had been drawn out on South American soil: plans of cultural supremacy were thwarted for Buenos Aires, the “Paris of South America,” as the country on the tropical side of the border was crowned leader of modern art.

FIG. 5. “Carta abierta de H. J. Koellreutter” (Open Letter by H. J. Koellreutter), *Arte Madí Universal* 4 (October 1950)



ENDNOTES

- 1 Nelly Perazzo, *El arte concreto en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Gaglianone, 1983); Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, ed., *The Geometry of Hope: Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection* (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin, 2007); María Amalia García, *Abstracción entre Argentina y Brasil. Inscripción regional e interconexiones del arte concreto (1944–1960)* (PhD diss., Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Universidad de Buenos Aires, forthcoming).
- 2 Nelly Perazzo, *El arte concreto en la Argentina*, 121–22; Nelly Perazzo, *Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Invencción, Arte Madí, Perceptismo*, exh. cat. (Buenos Aires: Museo Sívori, 1980), 10.
- 3 Andrea Giunta, *Vanguardia, internacionalismo y política. Arte argentino en los años sesenta*, ch. 1 (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2001).
- 4 Aracy Amaral, *Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo. Perfil de um acervo* (São Paulo: Techint, 1988).
- 5 María Amalia García: “La construcción del arte abstracto. Impactos e interconexiones entre el internacionalismo cultural paulista y la escena artística argentina 1949–1953,” in *Arte argentino y latinoamericano del siglo XX. VII Premio Fundación Telefónica a la investigación de la historia de las artes plásticas en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Fondo para la investigación del arte argentino [FIAAR]-Fundación Espigas, 2004), 17–54.
- 6 For a discussion on the São Paulo biennials, see *Bienal. 50 años 1951–2001* (São Paulo: Fundação Bienal São Paulo, 2001); Paulo Herkenhoff, “A Bienal de São Paulo e seus compromissos culturais e políticos,” *Revista USP* 52 (São Paulo, 2001–2002): 118–21; Francisco Alambert and Polyana Canhête, *As Bienais de São Paulo: da era do Museu à era dos curadores 1951–2001* (São Paulo: Boitempo, 2004); Adele Nelson, “Monumental and Ephemeral: The Early São Paulo Bienais,” in Mary Kate O’Hare, ed., *Constructive Spirit: Abstract Art in South and North America, 1920s–50s* (Newark: Newark Museum, 2010), 127–42.
- 7 María Amalia García, “Max Bill on the Map of Argentine-Brazilian Concrete Art,” in Mari Carmen Ramírez and Héctor Olea, eds., *Building on a Construct: The Adolpho Leirner Collection of Brazilian Constructive Art at the Museum of Fine Arts*, Houston (Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 53–68.
- 8 Raúl Antelo, “Coleccionismo y modernidad: Marques Rebêlo, marchand d’art,” in *Epílogos y prólogos para un fin de siglo. VIII Jornadas de Teoría e Historia de las Artes* (Buenos Aires: CAIA, 1999), 136–37; Patricia M. Artundo, Mário de Andrade e a Argentina: um país e sua produção cultural como espaço de reflexão (São Paulo: EDUSP-FAPESP, 2004).
- 9 Aracy Amaral, *Arte para quê? A preocupação social na arte brasileira 1930–1970* (São Paulo: Nobel, 2003), 229–63; Otilia Arantes, *Mário Pedrosa. Itinerário crítico* (São Paulo: Scritta, 1991).
- 10 The following exhibitions were held at the museum: *Arte moderno en Brasil* (Modern Art in Brazil), June 1957; *Arquitetura brasileira* (Brazilian Architecture), October 1958; *Israel visto por Portinari* (Israel Seen through Portinari’s Eyes), May 1959; *Roberto Burle Marx y arquitectos asociados* (Roberto Burle Marx and Associated Architects), November 1961; and *Wladyslaw*, September 1963. The latter was dedicated to the graphic work of Anatol Wladyslaw, a member of the Ruptura Group.

FIG. 10. Cover by Ivan Serpa for the exhibition catalogue *Arte Moderno en Brasil*, MNBA, June 1957

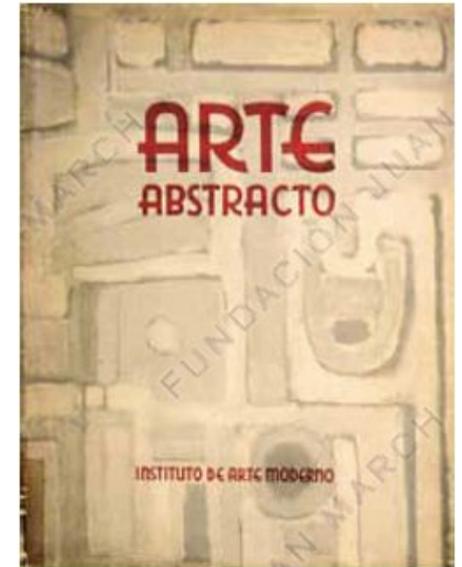
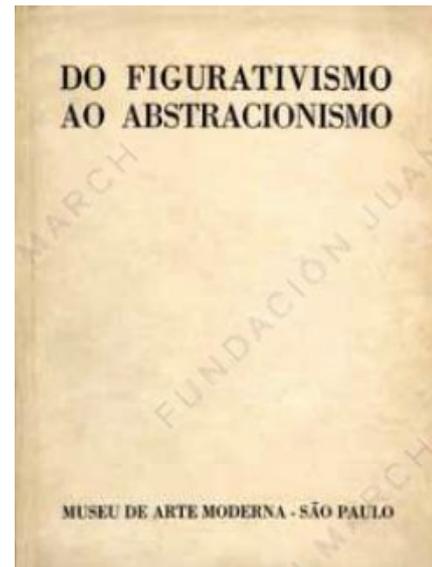


FIG. 6. Front cover of *Do figurativismo ao abstracionismo*. São Paulo: Museu de Arte Moderna, 1949

FIG. 7. Front cover of *Arte abstracto* Buenos Aires: Instituto de Arte Moderno, July 1949



FIG. 8. Group photograph taken at Mário Pedrosa’s studio, Rio de Janeiro, 1951. From left to right: De Barros, Palatnik, Pedrosa, Prati, Maldonado, Mavignier, and Serpa

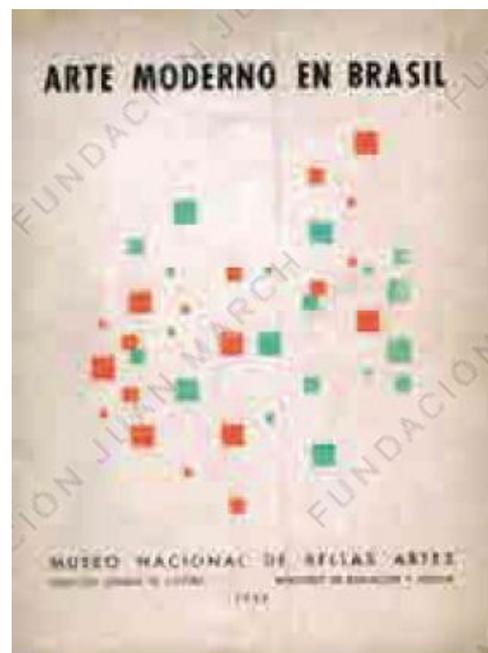
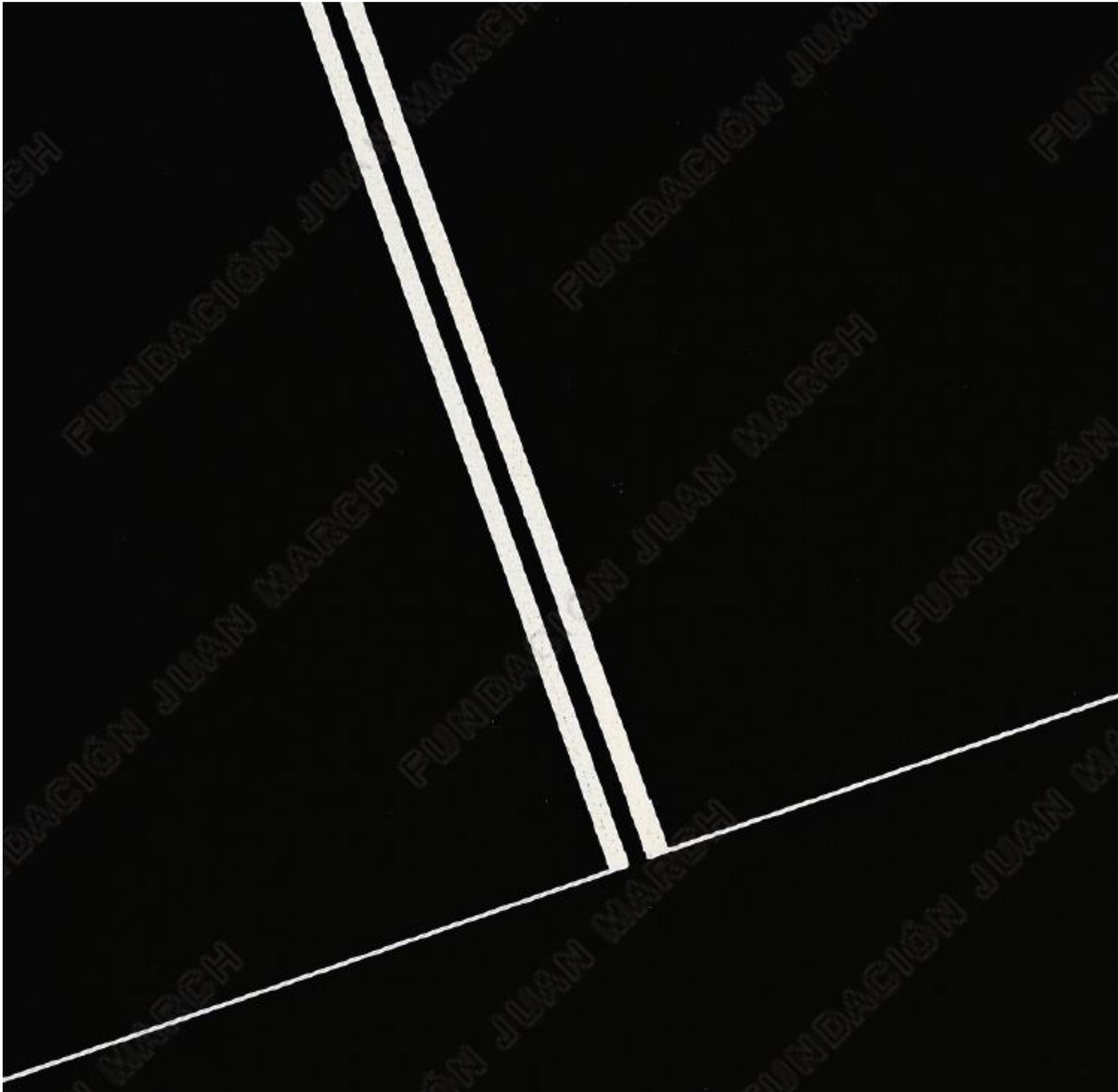


FIG. 9. Max Bill, *Dreiteilige Einheit* (Tripartite Unity), 1947–48. Stainless steel, 100 x 90 x 117 cm (39 3/8 x 35 3/8 x 46 1/8 in.). Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo





From Construction to Deconstruction

FERREIRA GULLAR

Today a part of Brazil's art history, concrete and neo-concrete art have been the subject of much reflection and many a publication, including surveys of their role in art history. For specific reasons, critics and art lovers usually associate these two movements as if one was a variant of the other, when in fact they are contradictory and conflicting.

In a way, neo-concrete art could be regarded as anti-concrete, if it is taken into account that it emerged from the negative dialectics of concrete art. Notwithstanding, the former would not have existed without the latter, precisely because the very expression "negative dialectics" implies involvement with what is denied. In fact, when concrete art emerged in Brazil in the early 1950s, it brought about a break with the modernist tradition, whose hegemony had been intact since 1922. This rupture consisted in posing to the Brazilian artist new questions related to artistic conception and artistic language, leaving aside the outdone values imposed by modernism. In the place of national or regional themes and instead of a figurative language, a rational, universal theme and a new geometric language. These were the new proposals which, turning the issue of form into the very subject of the work of art, would trigger a radical aesthetic process that culminated in their negation. The emergence of concrete poetry contributed to this in a decisive manner, extending to the literary field proposals similar to those of the concrete movement in the plastic arts. Here, the negative dialectics of the concrete vision also generated the search for new aesthetic solutions, which directly influenced the path of neo-concrete art. This will be clarified further ahead.

The presence of "concrete" ideas in Brazil came about with a resumption of the cultural exchange with Europe, which had been interrupted by the Second World War from 1939 to 1945. The end of the conflict heralded a wave of optimism and renewal that was reflected in the arts. The Max Bill exhibit in São Paulo, in 1949, established the first connection with the Ulm group, heir to some of the ideas of the Bauhaus and, particularly, the concepts established by Van Doesburg in his *Manifesto of Concrete Art*, published in 1930.¹ This new connection ended Brazilian art's long dependence on the School of Paris. In São Paulo, Geraldo de Barros and Waldemar Cordeiro, among other artists, embraced the new artistic experience which, in Rio de Janeiro, under the influence of Mário Pedrosa, mobilized young artists such as Ivan Serpa, Almir Mavigner, and Abraham Palatnik. From the outset, however, there were differences between the São Paulo and the Rio groups, the latter proving more eclectic, as witnessed by the composition of the Grupo Frente, which brought together artists of geometric as well as figurative or abstract-impressionist languages, and even naïve painters. São Paulo's Ruptura group, on the other hand, was more coherent in its concretist option. This might explain the factional development of concrete ideas in each of these two groups. But this rift would only become evident at a later date, when the birth of concrete poetry infused new vigor into the movement, giving rise to the *I Exposição Nacional de Arte Concreta*, opened in São Paulo in December 1956, and transferred to Rio de Janeiro in February of the following year. The display of the works of the two groups in a single exhibit revealed the differences between them.

At that point, the disparities among the works themselves were still subtle, being more evident in the texts accompanying the exhibit, both in relation to the plastic arts and to poetry. In the plastic arts, the geometric language was common to all works, but demonstrated a more objective elaboration in the *paulistas* (São Paulo group). In poetry, the differences between the *paulistas* and the *cariocas* (Rio de Janeiro group)

were greater, with a preponderant formalism prevailing in the elaboration of the poems of the first group, while the *cariocas* were more spontaneous, perhaps because they were less certain about the new poetry. And it was precisely among these poets that the estrangement occurred, a few months later, triggered by an article written by Haroldo de Campos, in which he announced the mathematical method for the future elaboration of concrete poetry. The group from Rio de Janeiro considered that this undertaking was not viable, and decided to break off with the group. Indeed, the *carioca* attitude already announced the path their experiences would take, relying primarily on subjectivity and the body rather than on objectivity and the mind. This was the first sign of what would later become known as neo-concrete art.

Here it should be observed that the generic designation of "*paulista* group" and "*carioca* group" did not reflect the individual characteristics of the artists that comprised them. In point of fact, it must be said that not all São Paulo concrete artists were in agreement with Waldemar Cordeiro's theses. Just as one should not confuse Fiaminghi with Sacilotto, or Nogueira Lima with Cordeiro, one should definitely not ignore the particular paths taken by Lothar Charoux and Willys de Castro. The *carioca* group was also made up of very distinctive personalities, such as Amilcar de Castro and Franz Weissmann, Palatnik and Carvão, Lygia Pape and Decio Vieira, Hélio Oiticica and Lygia Clark. Precisely for this reason, as time went by, each one of them gave a particular direction to his or her work. Lygia and Oiticica developed the expressive potentialities latent in neo-concrete ideas to the full. Palatnik, more akin than his colleagues to the technological features of mechanics, sought from early on to replace virtual movement with real movement in his work, creating the *aparelho cinecromático* (Cinechromatic Machine) displayed at the I Bienal de São Paulo in 1951.

In keeping with Max Bill's conception, which had a considerable amount of influence on all Brazilian artists, concrete art explored formal and chromatic variations without either symbolic or emotional implications. It freed itself from all subjectivity and advanced the pure pleasure of seeing, as if the eye was captured by the two-dimensional surface of a painting, with no other alternative than to travel across those two dimensions, moved by the energy of the field of vision. Charoux was the artist who best explored these possibilities, stressing line over color. One of the future alternatives of this language would be the optical art of Vasarely. Another option was explored by Josef Albers with his virtual cubes, which inspired Lygia Clark to create her modulated surfaces. Some of Weissmann's sculptures of that time used serial forms, also examining optical effects; this was not the case with Amilcar, who was more radical in his adoption of the essential form, in his case the two-dimensional plate, which he simply cut and folded. Amilcar's experience was more independent from imported concretism than that of his colleagues, and already contained the seeds of a drive to outdo optical effects, as well as to explore the void, as testified by Bill's sculptures. This same radicalism, which turned the two-dimensional plaque into the main element of his sculpture, prevented him from progressing further, as did Lygia and Oiticica. Unlike them, Amilcar, instead of giving in to seeking the new for the sake of the new, preferred to explore all the possibilities of the path he had chosen. Less inflexible, Weissmann also adopted the virtual characteristics of the concrete language in his dialectic exploration of the plane and empty space, adding color to this dialogue.

It is common knowledge that concrete painting derives from the constructive avant-gardes of the early twentieth century, which appeared as alternatives to the figurative language disassembled by cubism. The task faced by some painters, such as Malevich, consisted in imbuing with spiritual content a non-figurative language which, further, was not attached to any imaginary of metaphysical reference; in other words, how to transcend the play of formal relations and mere visual colors. Kandinsky tried to provide an answer in his book *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*; and Malevich in suprematism, which intended to express the "sensitivity of an object's absence." Such

concerns led him to paint white on white, and then to proceed to his suprematist architectures, built with colored plaques in a three-dimensional space.

This same type of problem presented itself to the concrete movement, and particularly to Lygia Clark, who tried to overcome the two-dimensionality of the canvas with virtual Albersian volumes. Following this, when faced with a blank canvas she adopted an attitude even more drastic than Malevich's: instead of working the canvas as a virtual space, she attacked it in its materiality: cutting it, stuffing it, and then deconstructing it and transforming it into what she called a *bicho* (creature), which was a tree-dimensional object that could be handled, built with articulated plaques and hinges, which slid over one another.

To better understand what happened in neo-concrete art we need to turn to the work of the [concrete] poets, who were not limited to the "verbivocovisual" (verbal-vocal-visual) compositions of the São Paulo group, but rather chose other paths that assigned greater value to the book than to the page as the vehicle for the poem. This led to the birth of the *livro poema* (book poem), created by me in 1959, and whose influence on the unfolding of the entire movement was decisive, by introducing the participation of the spectator (in this case, the reader) in the work of art, which is a particular trait of neo-concrete art. This is an aspect that critics have failed to address, precisely because the "book-poem" was scarcely publicized and rarely shown to the public. However, if we give it some thought, nothing is more logical than to deduct that this participation should have been born from the book, which could itself be handled. From the "book-poem" I moved on to "spatial poems"—"object poems" built of wood—which forced spectators to use their hands to discover the hidden word under a cube or under a plaque. Subsequently, I invented the *Poema Enterrado* (Buried Poem), which consisted of a room built underground, accessible via stairs; inside the room-poem there were loose cubes inside one another, with only one word, revealed through the handling of the cubes. This poem was built in the house of Hélio Oiticica, who was filled with enthusiasm by it, seeing that poem as a step forward in neo-concrete experience: manual participation was substituted by corporal participation, since the "reader" was induced to walk into the poem. From this poem came the stimulus that led Lygia and Hélio to future experiments with "relational objects" and the labyrinths of the "*caes de caça*" [hunting dogs] project.

The influence exerted by poets on artists, and by artists on poets, was a constant in the neo-concrete movement. The group members met frequently at Mário Pedrosa's or Lygia Clark's apartment in order to find out what each was doing, talk, and exchange ideas about the work in progress. There is no doubt that, without this continuous interchange, neo-concrete art would not have had the same scope of proposals and achievements. Most of the fundamental ideas of the movement, expressed in the Neo-concrete Manifesto and the *Teoria do não-objeto* [Non-object theory], were a product of these meetings and discussions, but also—and fundamentally—from the reflection about the works produced. Unlike most avant-garde movements, whose theories intended to serve as guidelines or pledges for the future, the theory of the neo-concrete movement came after the works, arising from them, even if, after being conceived, it naturally influenced artistic creation. It derived from the very nature of the movement, based more on creative intuition than on precepts and formulas, which explains the variety of new accomplishments and proposals espoused by the group.

And yet, the importance of the theory factor in the development of neo-concrete art should not be underestimated, since without it Lygia and Hélio would hardly have broken the limits of the canvas or undertaken an adventure that would lead them to experiences that had nothing to do with issues pertaining to the plastic arts themselves. I believe that the new rupture started when Lygia decided to put aside the traditional tools of the painter (inks, brushes, and canvases) and the conventional behavior of the artist (to create compositions of forms and colors) in order to use ply-

wood plaques, paint pistols, liquid paints, and instead of painting, materially charging at the picture, turned into the object of the painting. At first, she stuffed the support and created *casulos* (cocoons), and then abandoned the picture and built, with metal plaques, a new, three-dimensional object in real space, but which was not a sculpture, since it was born from the painting, from the crisis of pictorial language, from the deconstruction of easel painting, and which I named "non-object."

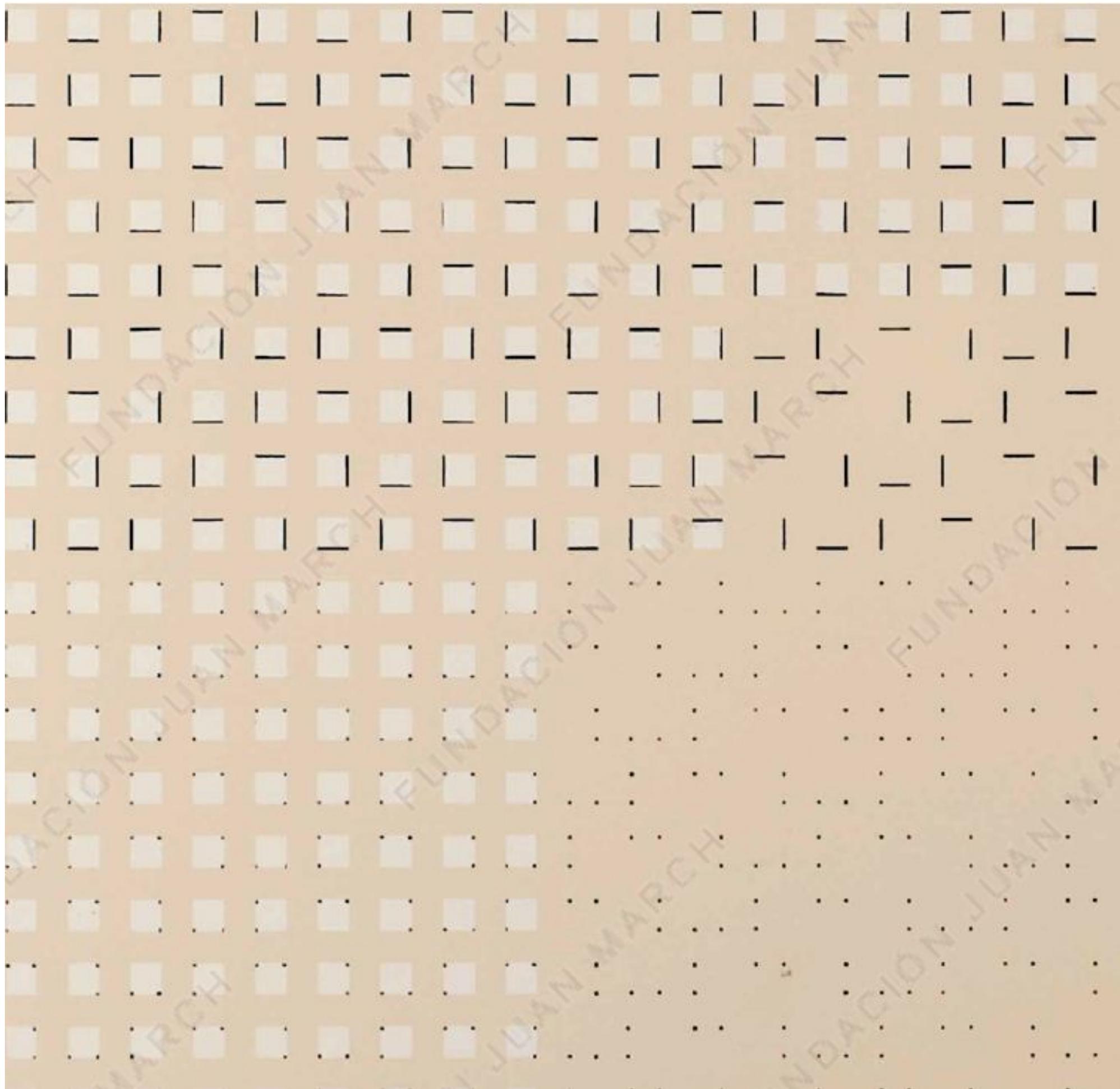
Hélio did not follow the same path as Lygia when he exchanged the canvas for constructions of painted wood (overlapping planes that created hidden spaces) suspended in space, and which he named *contrarelievos* (counter-reliefs), in reference to the suspended constructions created by Vladimir Tatlin in Russia in the 1910s. The next step was the creation of *bolides* (meteoric fireballs) and *ninhos* (nests), followed by the *parangolé*, with which he exceeded the limits of the plastic language to enter the field of happenings. I believe the *bolides* were Hélio Oiticica's borderline creations where, joining rational shapes (cubes) and rags, in a reference to viscera, he reached the critical point of contradiction that impelled neo-concrete art (body and mind, reason and sensation) and, not outdoing it, escaped by discarding it. The *parangolé* is essentially this; a leap toward gratuitous action, the dance of a shape in space. Oiticica freed himself from making [things], freed himself from object-works, and became the instigator of sensations.

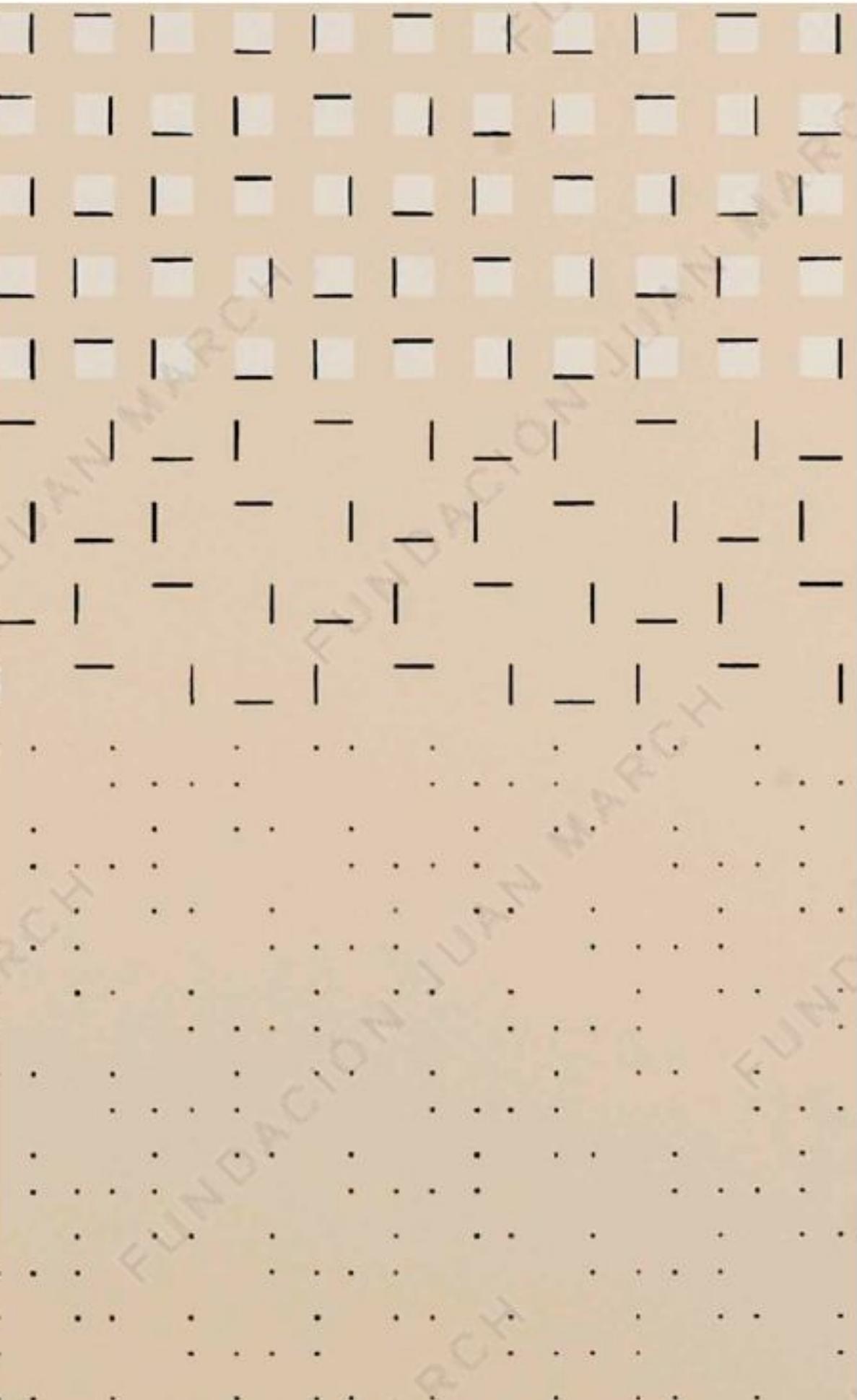
While it is true that concrete painters, both in São Paulo and in Rio, found in the concrete vocabulary their own expression—of which I note the innovations of Willys de Castro with his *objetos ativos* (active objects); Aloisio Carvão with his *culo-cor* (cube-color); and Palatnik with his *quadros-móveis* (mobile-paintings)—it was with neo-concrete art that the Brazilian constructive experience of the 1950s and 1960s led this new language beyond the limits up to then observed by the avant-garde. Already the *Teoria do não-objeto* (1959), by proposing this new designation for neo-concrete works, ratified the obsolescence of names such as painting, sculpture, and even "work of art" to designate the new creations of the group. This was a confirmation and, at the same time, an indication of the potential changes that could be brought about by the new proposals, especially as far as the poets and Lygia and Oiticica were concerned.

In poetry, the neo-concrete experience practically came to an end after the *Buried Poem*, while most sculptor painters of the group deepened in their own search, exploring the path that each had found, but still maintaining the traditional support. Lygia and Oiticica, on the other hand, completely abandoned traditional means and procedures to venture into uncharted terrain. With her "relational objects," Lygia gave up creating works of art—objects for contemplation—to invite people, instead, to handle certain objects, such as masks, gloves, tubes, etc. which, according to her, owing to the unusual character of the experience, would provoke repressed or subconscious impulses in them, revealing their deep inner self. She called this experience the "structuring of the self." With his *parangolé*, Oiticica intended to arouse in those who used it a new perception of the body and of the moving cape.

The neo-concrete movement produced works of art and a theory which have come to be recognized as significant contributions to contemporary art.

Revised and corrected edition of the original translation from the Portuguese made by Agnes L. Velloso, published in *Arte concreta e neoconcreta, da construção à desconstrução / Concrete and Neo-concrete Art, from Construction to Deconstruction* (São Paulo: DAN Galeria, exhibition catalogue October 4 – November 4, 2006). [Ed.]





**Notes on the
Constructivist
Art Scene
in Venezuela,
1950–1973**

LUIS PÉREZ-ORAMAS

Geometric abstraction is on the verge of becoming a Latin-American stereotype, a sort of symbolic umbrella term used to identify, in an unresolved and unsatisfactory manner, a fraction of a continent and a period of time. In a similar vein, this is what happened with muralism in shaping an idea of Mexico, or what continues to occur in certain dominant cultural scenes that, driven by exoticism, link carnival, *tropicália* (tropicalism), and *antropofagia* (cannibalism) to the imaginary of Brazil.¹ The stereotype of geometric abstraction is suspect in more than one way. On the one hand, there is the problem of its limited scope, since this art movement only flourished with a significant degree of stability and symbolic relevance in a small number of countries in Latin America. On the other, this stereotype is also questionable when it serves the purpose of restoring the myth of universalism, frequently used to justify the practice of non-objective abstraction. As a result, those who exploit the beauty of this aphasic rhetoric in order to build a collective stereotype tend to ignore its tacit political and anthropological implications, which were and continue to be embodied by the geometric abstract art forms produced in these countries.

All artistic forms involve politics—often to their regret—and, consequently, all forms of politics reveal, withhold, or disguise the politics of form, even when they do not intend to do so. Any discussion on the subject should therefore begin by taking into account this chiasmus between the forms of politics and the politics of form. Within a framework that recognizes such theoretical and historical implications, one should also assess to what degree the languages created by Latin-American artists, based on the modern abstract and non-objective art practiced by European and American artists during the second half of the twentieth century, were merely a repertoire of “ornaments” or, on the contrary, a rich grammar of “alter-forms.”

It has been stated—and this has been yet another stereotype subject to public controversy in Latin America—that geometric abstraction was a way of evading urgent social and political issues in the countries where it flourished. This point of view, which stems from the most basic aspects of ideological reductionism and is far from the battlefield of the abstract artist, tends to entail an impoverishing, petty logic, a simplistic and Manichean mind, capable of opposing “deaf” abstract art to “eloquent” figurative art. But it is a well-known fact that visibility is impossible without figures and that all visual arts require a skilful use of such figures, even—and especially—when the artwork is not mimetic, that is, when the visual structure created by the artist does not rely on representation.

This petty idea of Latin-American geometric abstraction as a vast repertoire of ornaments disguises an unfounded contempt for the notion of “ornament,” paramount in understanding any type of symbolic strategy that has taken place in the “long-drawn-out course” of the history of art. Those who stigmatize the historic events linked to geometric abstraction in Latin America fall prey to a historicist, Eurocentric, and often unnoticed form of fundamentalism according to which shapes must be original, thus avoiding the risk of being a mere derivative of form. This position rejects the multiple layers of temporality that come with the resurgence of form, as forms survive (while living within) a process of continuous deformation and are altered by the passage of time and change of place in their unavoidable transformation into “alter-forms.”²

These “alter-forms”—understood as altered forms of modernity, or, as in this case, an altered constructivism—flourished in certain parts of Latin America during the twentieth century and served as “symbolic agents” in the fulfillment of collective expectations referred to modernization. In other words, their “symbolic location” on the broad map of what is known as the modern Latin-American project, from the realm of utopia to the cautious coordinates of the infrastructure where it materializes, took place (in a play of words) “in place of modernity.” Therefore, these forms—works, interventions, or projects—did more than just materialize. They responded to indicative strategies that, as an anthropological “deixis,” pointed towards the goal of achieving modernity, or at least embodying it by means of symbolic forms, either as a viable expectation or as a collective wish.

Therefore, it is necessary to determine the historic role these “symbolic agents” played in the early manifestations of geometric abstraction in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Cuba, and Venezuela in the twentieth century, for there is no doubt they made up the first constellation of American non-objective art.³ To what extent were these artistic forms agents of change, and hence more than just mere elements of style within a context of collective and social challenges, as occurred with social realism or *indigenismo* in other corners of the continent? Like *indigenismo* and social realism, geometric abstraction too was a “deixis” that pointed towards, if not identified, a specific narrative of modernity; a narrative that would eventually flourish in certain communities and countries in the form of a solid grammar of visual art forms.

In this day and age and with the somewhat nostalgic certainty the ruins of the modern project provide, one of the anthropological and social functions of non-objective abstraction becomes clear: this art movement made modernity accessible—or



FIG. 1. Central area of the Covered Plaza, Universidad Central de Venezuela. Photo: Paolo Gasparini, 1985–90. Archivos Fundación Villanueva, Caracas

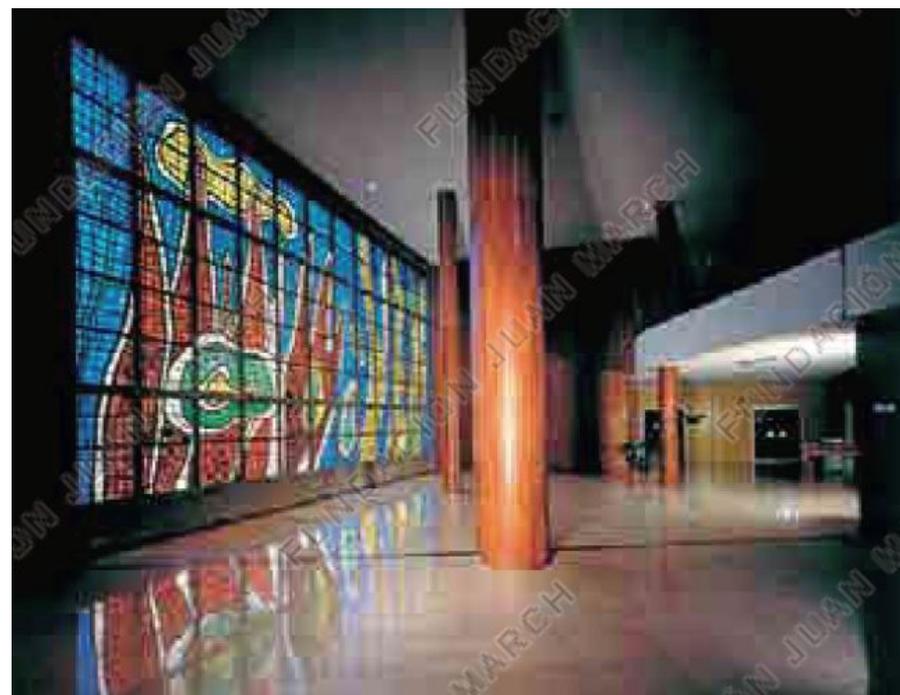


FIG. 2. Stained glass window (1954) by Fernand Léger at the Library of the Universidad Central de Venezuela. Photo: Paolo Gasparini, 1985–89. Archivos Fundación Villanueva, Caracas

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Detail of CAT. 174 (p. 241)

at least grounded a “symbolic illusion” of modernity—in those countries where it flourished as a dominant form of art.⁴ Such was the case of the constructivist tradition that emerged in Venezuela, between the creation of the Taller Libre de Arte (Free Art Studio) in the late 1940s and its transformation into a “kinetic academicism” in the early 1970s.

Understanding non-objective abstraction’s anthropological role requires a change of perspective on our part. We must cease approaching the constellations of Latin-American geometric abstraction from a typological point of view, as a formal typology or an artistic model, in order to view them from a “topological” angle. The different aspects of geometric abstraction then become a system of *topoi* or “topologies,” that is, constitutive elements of space (as well as historic spatiality), apparatuses of place (or concepts of place), and key operators in the historical construction of “modernity’s place” and therefore of “modernity as a place.”

With the purpose of contributing to the amendment of this view, I will begin by suggesting an ideological chronology of geometric abstraction in Venezuela consisting of four distinct, fundamental chapters—emergence, legitimization, acclaim, and deconstruction—each of which is marked by an agglutinating event.

The first chapter or “emergence” of geometric abstraction coincided with the founding in Caracas of the Taller Libre de Arte in 1948 and the staging that same year of the first exhibition of abstract and non-objective art in Venezuela. Most of the works on view belonged to the Argentine groups *Madí* and *Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción* (AACI).⁵ During their time at the Taller Libre de Arte, artists Carlos González Bogen and Omar Carreño produced the first geometric-abstract works of art on Venezuelan ground [CAT. 171]. This period of “emergence” also saw the rise in Paris of the group *Los Disidentes* (The Dissidents) in 1950, and the execution that same year of the first non-objective, genuinely abstract works by Alejandro Otero and Jesús Rafael Soto, who lived in France at the time. This period came to an end when several of the above-mentioned abstract artists were invited to take part in Carlos Raúl Villanueva’s protean project for the university campus of Caracas. In this *cit  radieuse*, architect Villanueva aimed at achieving the modern ideal of a complete synthesis of the arts [FIG. 1, 2, 3, 4].

This project, executed throughout the 1950s, as well as the presence of Alejandro Otero in Caracas, marked the beginning of the second ideological period in the

Venezuelan constructivist art scene, that of “legitimization.” The magnitude of a civic project such as the *Ciudad Universitaria* entailed “legitimized” the repertoire of geometric abstract art. Furthermore, this “legitimization” was not only realized in functional or formal terms, it was fundamentally an ideological recognition, made possible by the number of artists who contributed to Villanueva’s project. Together with avant-garde artists from Europe such as Jean Arp, Alexander Calder, Victor Vasarely, Fernand L ger, Anton Pevsner, and Henri Laurens, young Venezuelan creators, mainly from the Taller Libre, also partook in the project. These artists included Otero and V ctor Valera, Pascual Navarro, Gonz lez Bogen, Alirio Oramas, and Mateo Manaure. Soto and Cruz-Diez’s absence from Villanueva’s venture is as symptomatic of the complexity of our story as it is of the obliteration of these details by those who define geometric abstraction in exclusively kinetic terms. The invention and execution of Alejandro Otero’s typology *Coloritmos* (Colorhythms) [CAT. 182–184] in the late 1950s brings the period of “legitimization” to an end.

The third period in the constructivist art scene in Venezuela, during which it achieved critical “acclaim,” began in the 1960s, a time when geometric abstraction was condensed to, if not absorbed by, kinetic art. During these years there was a shift in political power in Venezuela and a new democratic regime was established, but not without difficulty as it faced opposition on two fronts: from right-wing military groups on the one hand, and a Castro-influenced armed guerilla on the other. This period was marked by armed conflict but also by hope and stability, particularly for a bourgeois democracy that aimed to strengthen a growing middle class. Throughout this decade J s Soto, Alejandro Otero, and Carlos Cruz-Diez—three important figures in the constellation of Venezuelan constructivism—established or experimented with (as was the case of Otero) optical and kinetic effects. Towards 1968, once the armed conflict was over and these artists, who had been living between Paris and Venezuela, returned to their homeland, the left-wing guerrilla was pacified and partially assimilated by the democratic government. With the end of warfare, state authorities began promoting large-scale civic projects, which were commissioned to artists such as Soto, Otero, Cruz-Diez, Manaure, Lya Berm dez, Gert Leufert, and Gego (Gertrude Goldschmidt). Geometric abstraction finally left the *hortus conoclusus* of the university campus and grew to be a dominant, monumental presence in the urban fabric of Venezuelan cities well into the 1980s. These public projects can be understood as a sort of abstract “muralism,” devoid of narrative yet able to convey, by means of the

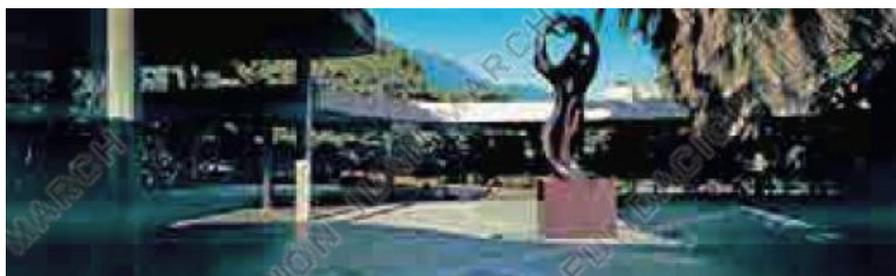


FIG. 3. View of Henri Laurens’s *Amphion* (1953), Covered Plaza, Universidad Central de Venezuela. Photo: Paolo Gasparini, 1985–89. Archivos Fundaci n Villanueva, Caracas



FIG. 4. View of the Aula Magna Hall, Universidad Central de Venezuela, with Alexander Calder’s *Acoustic Clouds* (1952–53). Photo: Paolo Gasparini, 1985–89. Archivos Fundaci n Villanueva, Caracas

prodigal force of optical variation featured in their civic friezes, the spectral figure or the “kinetic illusion” of Venezuelan modernity.

The final period in Venezuelan constructivism began towards 1973 and ended with the agonizing and unsuccessful outcome of a state project. The fact that symbolic components of constructive abstraction and kinetic art had been appropriated by younger generations of artists, who transformed them into formal instruments of sarcasm, irony, and even allegory, is a symptom of this decline. The repertoire of constructivism thus ceased to be a promise of modernity, nor was it a formal or optical marvel, but rather the pretext for representing a “mangled” concept or substance, thus leading to geometric abstraction’s “deconstruction.” Roberto Obregón and Eugenio Espinoza, Alvaro Sotillo, Sigfredo Chacón and Rolando Peña, Antonieta Sosa, Héctor Fuenmayor, and Víctor Lucena were among the first generation of artists to dismantle the Venezuelan constructivist art scene. They identified with Gego’s quiet presence in the Venezuelan milieu, and it was precisely her fascinating invention entitled *reticulárea* (reticular area) that transformed abstraction—a type of abstraction that until then had been indifferent to its specific location in space—into a “discreet” locus, a “specific site,” furthermore dismantling the rational, logocentric, and illusionist assumptions of kinetic art [FIG. 5].⁶ Many, if not all, Venezuelan contemporary artists have either emulated or followed in the footsteps of this generation and their deconstructive legacy.

FIG. 5. Gego (Gertrud Goldschmidt), *Reticulárea* (installation), 1969. Stainless steel wire and aluminum tubes. Variable dimensions. Collection Fundación de Museos Nacionales. Permanent installation, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, 1997

An overview of the history of Venezuelan constructivist abstraction has been outlined in the above “ideological chronology.” I would now like to explore some inevitable considerations regarding this subject. Successions of events in time are not as important as their ability to construct contexts, which leads to the often contradictory complexity events are

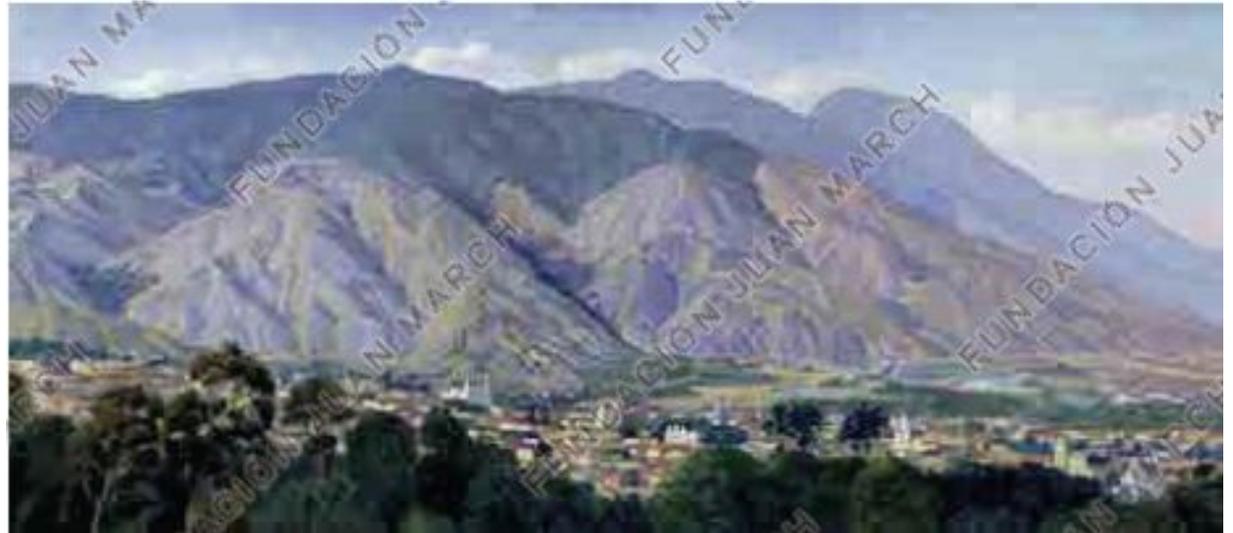


FIG. 6. Armando Reverón (Venezuela, 1889–1954), *Paisaje blanco* (White Landscape), 1940. Oil on canvas, 65.5 x 88 x 2 cm (25 ¾ x 34 ⅝ x ¾ in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros. Photo: Mark Morosse

FIG. 7. Manuel Cabré (Venezuela, 1890–1984), *Vista del valle de Caracas desde el Calvario* (View of Caracas Valley from El Calvario), ca. 1927. Oil on canvas, 64 x 143 cm (25 ¼ x 56 ¼ in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

known for. Emergence, legitimization, acclaim, and deconstruction are biased terms, and their meaning, regardless of the context described here, is indebted to ideological connotations. The fact that one of the richest abstract, non-objective American art movements appeared in Venezuela in the late 1940s indicates there was a breeding ground for emerging artists.

Also, one must not forget only “surreptitious” manifestations of modernity were possible in Venezuela before 1940. The country lived under brutal political repression during the late nineteenth century, a situation that did not change until the death of the dictator Juan Vicente Gómez in 1935. In the words of one of the most lucid victims of the regime, this was a time of “Andean brutality, a dreadful epic of silent agonies, of hunger and torture.”⁷ Social issues in Venezuela were tainted by the backwardness of the country and its anachronistic elite, circumstances only comparable to the hardships the Caribbean country endures at present, in spite of having been the first country to set in motion the history of Latin-American emancipation in 1810, with its independence from Spain.

But behind the humiliating and despicable acts carried out by this obscure regime (which intellectuals willingly supported, with only a handful of exceptions), an extraordinary event took place. Indifferent to Venezuela’s tragic history, one painter, a hermit living on the fringes of the city and its moral and civic norms, built a primitive hut for both himself and his partner, a modern house in the Adamic sense of the word.⁸ There, Armando Reverón was capable of executing a painting so delicately touched by light it was freed from the laws of this world (and therefore from the norms of representation).

Reverón opened a door to new possibilities in modern art thanks to his melancholic and dramatic monochrome landscapes and the contours of his idyllic figures, which revealed the precarious material condition of painting [FIG. 6]. In 1948, modern Venezuela discovered the richness of its own folklore and traditions while experimenting with democracy for the first time in its history. That same year, a young generation of artists identified with Reverón, an odd character whose work became an obsession to them, a challenge to overcome even at the peak of their artistic maturity.⁹

Together with Reverón, whose artistic superiority went undisputed, a number of artists were also working at the time, among them Antonio Edmundo Monsanto, Luis Alfredo López Méndez, Rafael Monasterios, César Prieto, Manuel Cabré, and Pedro Ángel González. Their modest yet moving landscapes of Caracas were crucial in instructing the first group of constructivist artists in the art of landscape. The young artists were taught not to represent reality but to organize nature in synthetic and analytical forms, which could then become the backbone of a composition and the starting point of a sequence of patterns. The possibility of creating a new form of modern art is particularly appreciated in these master’s landscapes serially depicting El Ávila Mountain [FIG. 7]. Similarly, Reverón’s radical, synthetic compositions and his indifference towards the world of art gave rise, quite unexpectedly and even unwillingly, to the first significant outcome of Venezuelan modern art.

With these precedents, which are strictly of an ideological and structural nature, different versions of modernity began taking shape in 1940. The Taller Libre de Arte and Los Disidentes contributed to this process and marked the outset of a genuine

constructivist art scene. It must be pointed out, however, that constructivism was not the only form adopted by the modern project in Venezuela, but just one of many sides to the “modern coin.” An additional side can be found in social realism and in the many forms of “indigenismo” which brought to light the richness of the nation’s cultural and racial diversity. Several of these works were executed by artists who, at one moment or another, also strived to create constructivist and non-objective compositions, resulting in some fascinating contradictions.¹⁰

In this sense, interpreting Villanueva’s legitimizing project for the Ciudad Universitaria de Caracas as a purely constructivist scheme is a stereotyping mistake [FIG. 6]. This historical coordinate should be construed as a battlefield, a site where different, and sometimes conflictive, views of modernity were played out. Though the 1948 master building plan of the campus remained poised between a classical and “Beaux-Arts” style, the 1952 building program, influenced by Le Corbusier, was completely modern. The university campus, which is among the most brilliant of the modern “radiant cities” and also one of the few to be entirely concluded, remains an open-ended question, an unsolved problem in the history of Venezuela’s modernity. The visual arts played a paramount role in the development of the project. While the exteriors display numerous non-objective and constructivist elements, figurative and allegorical works were placed at strategic points in the interior of the complex. As a result, there is a contrast between the explicit manifestation of fundamental plastic elements in the constructivist works and the conspicuous, allegorical elements of the figurative pieces, emblematic of the history of Venezuela. Although the relevance of this project was, in theory, confirmed by the presence of several renowned international artists alongside young Venezuelans who, for the first time, displayed a coherent constructivist repertoire of signs in a public space, it is only fair to say that most of these “legitimizing” works were not executed in a non-objective, abstract style.¹¹ Furthermore, with the exception of the young Otero, who played a crucial part in Villanueva’s project, the leading artists in the university campus project were not those who would come to dominate the third period of constructivist abstraction, namely Soto or Cruz-Diez, but mainly Víctor Valera—one of the first artists to arrange his murals in proto-minimalist patterns—as well as Navarro, Oramas, Manaure, and González Bogen. Soto’s absence from the university campus project—albeit belatedly explained as a gesture of unwillingness to collaborate in the project due to its association with the dictatorship—is significant in more ways than one. Soto had been active in Europe but, unlike Valera and Otero, had not yet worked on large-scale civic projects in Venezuela.¹² Cruz-Diez, on the other hand, was a graphic designer whose paintings were inspired by social realism. However, he did not achieve success until the mid-1960s, when he adopted an abstract-constructivist repertoire.¹³

As in the rest of the world, the 1960s in Venezuela were agitated years. Constructivist art enjoyed great success and acclaim in the country, though under the form of kinetic art. It was during this time that it transformed into an “academicism” and infused more traditional and even anonymous, folk-like forms of art across the nation. However, neither democratic stability nor constructivist art’s final success came easily. Challenging it there was, on the one hand, Art Informel, a tendency with which Soto, Otero, and

Cruz-Diez briefly “toyed” during their stays in Paris, while in Venezuela the movement was enthusiastically represented by the group Techo de Ballena. On the other hand, a group of neo-figurative artists expressed their disapproval, often in a controversial way, towards the dominance of constructivist art.

However marginal these alternative movements could have seemed vis-à-vis the triumph of constructivism, certain key ideas took shape on their ideological boundaries which, in reality, would inform the budding Venezuelan contemporary art scene. They shaped the emergence of kinetic art’s “deconstructive” generation of artists through concepts such as time conceived as a subjective entity, a notion unfamiliar to kinetic art; a newfound interest in the body as a social type that defined the early work of artists Claudio Perna, Milton Becerra, and Pedro Terán; and a move to the forefront of accidental, precarious, or “dirty” elements—new features utterly unrelated to kinetic art’s impeccable and transparent aesthetic principles.

Toward the end of the decade, artists as diverse as Alejandro Otero and Jacobo Borges produced an intervention in Caracas’s public space entitled *Imagen de Caracas* (Image of Caracas, 1968). This ephemeral event coincided with the democratic regime’s brief success and was held on occasion of the 400th anniversary of the founding of the city. For the first time in the history of Venezuelan art, large-scale images in movement were displayed alongside kinetic structures of equally monumental size. Having worked with her partner Gert Leufert on various large-scale, urban interventions, Gego produced her first version of *Recticulárea* (1969, see **FIG. 5**). The conclusive impact of this piece on the constructivist art movement in Venezuela and its long lasting influence through time thanks to the multiple installations and additions made by the artist between 1969 and 1981 cannot be understated. *Recticulárea* was definitely installed at the Museo de Bellas Artes of Caracas in a gallery of modest proportions. And yet within this room, the idea behind most constructive works—visual structures according to a specific regulatory plan—vanished amid the “rhizomic” conditions of Gego’s masterwork, leaning towards a randomly generated form in which points transformed into knots, as if they were stains floating in the air. Inside this juxtaposed reticulate structure, notions of centrality and symmetry disappeared, while the netlike formation grew like an organic graft and became visible as a shadow against an impeccable white surface.¹⁴

Gego’s reticulate structure implicitly manifests a series of beliefs that in turn serve as its structural foundations: unpredictable germination localized and contained occupation of space, supremacy of shadows, use of opaque structures, absence of all notions of centrality, the uncertainty of structural origin, and precarious stability. These principles contradict the poetics of constructivism, notably as they were condensed into the fascinating optical effects of kinetic art. It can also be argued that *Recticulárea*, with its fractal, accidental pattern and its organic and unplanned structure, stands as a symbolic form of resistance against the “planning expectations” of developmentism that dominated Venezuela’s ideological (and also political and symbolic) program throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and which were efficiently and convincingly translated into aesthetic terms by kinetic art.

Jesús Soto was not only the leading artist during this period of expectations, he also stood for the international acclaim achieved by Venezuelan constructivism. His works gained popularity both inside and outside the country in the 1960s.¹⁵ Soto stated he wished to compensate for the lack of (organized political) structures in Venezuela with the structural outcome of his work, thus conveying through his oeuvre “an idea of what this country should someday be.”¹⁶ Beyond Soto’s somewhat vague assessment of the country’s situation, this statement clearly reveals abstract constructivism served as a symbolic—and maybe allegorical—surrogate for expectations regarding modernity. For over half a century, these collective expectations sustained certain aspects of the country’s developmentist official drive. Yet from a current standpoint, it becomes obvious these assumptions were merely “historical illusions.” This does not imply modernity was unattainable; Venezuela did not idealize its historical circumstances more than the next Western country. And yet, despite the fact that the closer Venezuelan society came to this illusion of modernity the more quickly it seemed to fade, the inner strength of this ideal served as a driving force that strengthened public faith and hope in the country’s future. These expectations were expressed symbolically by constructivist artists in their repertoire of forms and structures, a modern legacy awaiting interpretation. However, in the late 1970s, emerging Venezuelan artists revolted against constructivism’s illusions and kinetic art’s in particular. With this came a new period that only anticipated the age of disillusion to come, and whose distinctive features and principles are to this day the backbone of contemporary Venezuelan art.

IV. There was a certain component in this “illusion” that would unknowingly connect the collective and unresolved ideal of modernity to the immediate and visually enticing effects of kinetic art, and the work of Soto and Cruz-Diez in particular. Their pieces were, for the most part, conceived as operators of optical illusions and, despite the artists’ call to systematic dematerialization, the outcome of their work was in line with the classical and humanistic principles of illusion. Light is refracted before the spectator’s eyes in the form of bodiless steam into a mass of color in the works created by Soto. For Cruz-Diez, on the other hand, color materialized outside the limits of its support, somewhere between the viewer and the “painting.”

Certain questions arise from these hypotheses: if these kinetic works of art can no longer be materially regarded as paintings, to what extent do they rely on the humanistic presupposition that “painting” is the ideal support for representative art? What exactly takes place where “dematerialization occurs” and what is the political meaning or purpose of this event? What role does transparency play—a feature Soto began researching at the start of his career—vis-à-vis the opaque Venezuelan anthropological and political background?

Finding answers to these questions today is an almost impossible task, more even in a study as brief as this. However, some can be sketched out: Venezuela’s program for development was triggered by the collective goal of reaching modernity and chiefly by the establishment of a democratic government in 1958. It appears the program revolved around two notions, two concepts that have been key in modeling

national political and symbolic constructs: donation and promise. That said, what can be defined as donation and promise in the illusory yet magnificent artistic repertoire of optical effects that condensed and eventually put an end to Venezuela's abstract-constructivist adventure during the twentieth century?

In 1935, Venezuela woke up to the nightmare of its past. Venezuelan society either could not or ignored how to conceive its nineteenth-century history in any way other than as a sequential account of involuntary and stigmatizing tragedies, tainting the country with "dirty" images. With the purpose of contesting such a blemished historical past, Venezuela's collective modern imaginary fabricated the idea of an innocent nation and a primitive, Adamic citizen—a country cursed by a history of which its citizens were only victims now appeared to be blessed by nature and the fresh kindness of its innocent inhabitants.¹⁷

In general terms, the national modern project consisted in transforming the donation of natural blessings and the *mestizo* racial type into a source of social energy that could be productive to the country's development. A "gift" is not returned, a "donation" does not expect to be paid back, and what was "given," understood as a material source of energy, could only survive as a promise or as vision of emancipation. Nevertheless, the variety of art forms this rhetoric generated throughout the twentieth century in Venezuela should not be underestimated, even now, as a supposedly revolutionary (yet once again anachronistic) regime dictatorially transforms them into caricature and sarcasm.

Among the most compelling and symbolically productive of these art forms is a body of work created by those artists who reduced the language of the visual arts to basic elements, to the lowest level possible of "phenomenological donation." These objects of art were slashed to their geometric, constitutive underpinnings: line, point, plane, or volume, with the purpose of representing—there is no other term for it—their transformation into fabulous optical machines. Such are the principles of kinetic art. The fact that these machines were displayed at locations crucial to the modern, and modernizing, project—urban sites, iron mines, oil fields, or hydroelectric plants—allows us to interpret them as the materialization of a vast allegory of modernity. They can therefore be conceived as forms of muralism, albeit devoid of narrative, bearing the promise of Venezuelan modernization.¹⁸

An "ideal vision" materializes before the viewer or, more specifically, between the viewer and the work, when confronted with these pieces. An illusory figure appears and, as most illusions do, vanishes once the spectator comes to a halt. The misleading nature of kinetic optical devices is revealed to the viewer as he approaches them. Much can be said on this distinctive feature of kinetic art and its persisting ideological stance that holds painting as a privileged support for ideal scenes, a theory that continues regulating its effects even though the material conventions of painting have been superseded by its devices' structural specificity. Hence an urgent question must be addressed: if a form of politics hides behind a politics of form, what are the ideological implications of concepts such as transparency and dematerialization when confronted with hypotheses regarding modernity as a mirage?

As early as 1952, Jesús Soto composed one of his *magnum opus* in Paris. *Rotación*

(Rotation) not only represents a world of possibilities or an *aleph*, but also condenses and anticipates the late work of this superb Venezuelan artist. Behind its seemingly straightforward composition lay complex problems and persistent, or surviving, concerns related to the humanistic tradition of visual representation. The result is one of the most brilliant and fruitful "alter-forms" in Venezuelan abstract constructivism.

As the artist himself pointed out,¹⁹ *Rotación* [CAT. 174], 1952, describes the virtual rotation of a square moving from left to right on the picture plane. The potential features of this phenomenon, or Soto's manner of expressing it in visual terms, is linked to one of his intellectual preoccupations. Before dematerialization became a recurrent theme and the mythical origin of conceptual art, Soto had shown interest in dematerializing the art object by means of optical effects. It therefore comes as a surprise to see Soto tentatively "materializing" the object in an effort to "materialize dematerialization," putting at risk his initial goal of producing an immaterial work.

In *Rotación*, the width of the picture plane's material support varies in relation to the vertical wall on which it hangs, the upper edge being wider than the bottom one [FIG. 8].

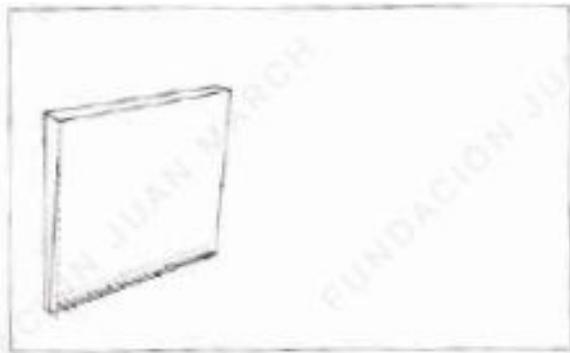
The square's imaginary rotation takes place on this tilted surface. Soto creates a sense of virtual motion by permuting one of the edges and tracing a black line that makes its way around a number of white squares arranged from left to right, like words in a text or the hands of a clock moving clockwise. But at a specific point, the white squares fade from the background and all that remains is a rotating black trace outlining them while it continues moving from left to right. In a third episode, the rotating line is reduced to the representation of its limits, two dots moving in the same direction as the line. The square's rotating motion concludes with three simple parallel lines formed by aligned dots. This final episode occurs in the lower area of the plane, specifically where the inclined surface becomes thinner as it approaches the wall.

There is an additional, apparently invisible, aspect in *Rotación* that has important implications: the square's illusory rotation exposes two different states of motion that are not illustrated. This occurs beyond the right side of the work and therefore is not represented on the work's surface.

The event that occurs in *Rotación* has much in common with mimetic art, wherein the representation of an object transcends the boundaries of the painting's material support. For the spectator can only see a fragment of the scene and is required to imagine the event depicted in the painting taking place outside the painting itself, in the same space shared by the viewer himself (what I refer to as "spectatorial environment"), a virtual margin that exceeds the representation's physical support [FIG. 9].

In *Rotación*, the outcome of representation (as it was understood within the humanistic tradition, that is, as a fragment of the vastness of a universe that can be represented) continues materializing outside the limits of the work. Hence, in this work by Soto there is an existential approach towards space or, more specifically, towards the notion of visible space in art and its organic association to "phenomenological" space, where we, as spectators, live, and where events occur regardless of our actions and, ontologically speaking, have little to do with us—time, movement, the passage of time, life and death, or the never-ending, unconscious, and mandatory rotation of existence itself.

FIG. 8



In a brilliant reading of *Rotación*, Ariel Jiménez has underlined its metaphysical implications, suggesting the possibility of a sublime dimension.²⁰ However, the absence of two distinct states of motion from the work itself only points to no more—and no less—than the “difference” between the device that is used for the representation and the real world. In other words, this caesura in the representation’s rotating motion, this imperceptible “syncope,” does not imply the illusory motion has been interrupted. On the contrary, it suggests the representation on the surface continues to take place beyond its limits, in the space that resides outside the artistic object. Therefore, rather than signaling a representation of what is unrepresentable, the work is a metonymy for the universe (or at least the portion of reality it expands to)—a fragment in which all things that transcend the limits of the work are condensed. More than a “sublime” presence, it indicates something *hors-champs*, a reality that takes place outside the viewer’s range of vision, extending beyond the conventional limits of the support.²¹

FIG. 9



Rotación was a seminal work, not only for Soto’s career but for constructivist abstraction and Venezuelan kinetic art in general. More importantly, the aspects mentioned above highlighted the persistent presence of a system rooted in traditional humanistic modes of representation that dominated and even generated images in spite of the non-objective techniques applied. This explains the superimposed structures in the work, the first being the weft of rotating squares. As described above, they move clockwise, from left to right, becoming more schematic as they progress and finally concluding in a string of dots in the lower corner situated over a monochrome background. The second structure refers to the variety of paint layers, where four grids are superimposed creating four “figural” patterns.

FIG. 10



This matter has not been treated in depth and, in my view, is of paramount importance: the grid of white squares is arranged on the left and upper side of the work in uneven strips in terms of both width and length (the sequence of white squares on the left side is thinner and does not reach the lower edge of the surface). A potential square is detected in the inner vertex of this structure, where the strips bisect forming a right angle (this square is a figure consisting of sixteen white squares, capable of expressing all phases of the rotating motion on each of its sides).

Three strips of various widths are added to the grid stretching over the entire surface from top to bottom. The first, consisting of rotating lines, is wider than the other two; the second is formed by double rotating dots, whereas a succession of dots indicates the presence of the third and thinnest strip [FIG. 10].

FIG. 11



Rotación's structure requires a close reading. There is a logic behind these "figural" grids, as the main "theme" of the work is precisely the virtual rotating motion of the square. The figurative signs applied by Soto to suggest or describe this rotating motion (namely lines, double dots, and successions of dots) are inscribed in both the grid of white squares and the monochrome, homogenous, neutral background. These signs therefore play a part in the representation of the square as well as in the area deprived of its presence [FIG. 11]. Soto has underlined the importance of these two contrasting "backgrounds" or "luminous resources" ("a white square on a virtually white background"). The fact that the last line of dots is situated on a blank area located on the thinner, lower edge of the support is quite significant. Rather than signaling the "dematerialization" of the lower portion of the work of art, I believe the line signifies a "literalization" of distance, a materialization of the breadth involved in the artist's description of rotating motion through a succession of dots.

Or in the words of Jiménez, "it appears as though the subject of representation has found resonance in the body of painting." In this case, "representation" must be understood as the "materialization" of "distance" figured as the work's thickness reduces its material density and, under no circumstances, as a metaphor for the dematerialization of the object. Only in this manner can I understand Soto's remarks on the string of points on the lower edge of the work: "[the points] represent the sum of all previous movements ... and they are the orthogonal projection of the lines that previously rotated around the white squares. Therefore each point either represents or intends to represent the end of a line projecting onto the space perpendicular to the picture plane ..."²²

This process leads to two results. On the one hand, the viewer can imagine a square rotating in space *ad infinitum* while an abysmal distance is opened. Secondly, the orthogonal projection of dots on the lower side of the surface can be reconstructed as lines perpendicular to the picture plane. But this double reading of *Rotación* as a temporary narrative or design to which an architecture of "figural" grids has been incorporated brings forth the presence of a virtual "figure" on the work's surface. The "figure" we are referring to is the potential volume of a (rotating) square located on the picture plane, specifically on the lower right corner of a quadrant that covers the upper left angle of the work.

The specific location of this square is not haphazard; it indicates the direction of the dots' orthogonal projection.

In other words, this "figure" is situated within a structure that makes possible its projection onto space according to the mechanisms of perspective. Despite its poten-

tiality, this figure requires a "point of view" given by the picture plane and through which a "local" coordinate occupied by a hypothetical spectator is inferred. This figure [FIG.12] is situated in the upper left quadrant, at the right angle's inner vertex, where the succinctly configured distance represented by the sequence of dots opens to the spectator. The fact that the figure is not in the center of the picture plane indicates that Soto has deliberately produced in this work a potential oblique rather than a centered perspectival projection.

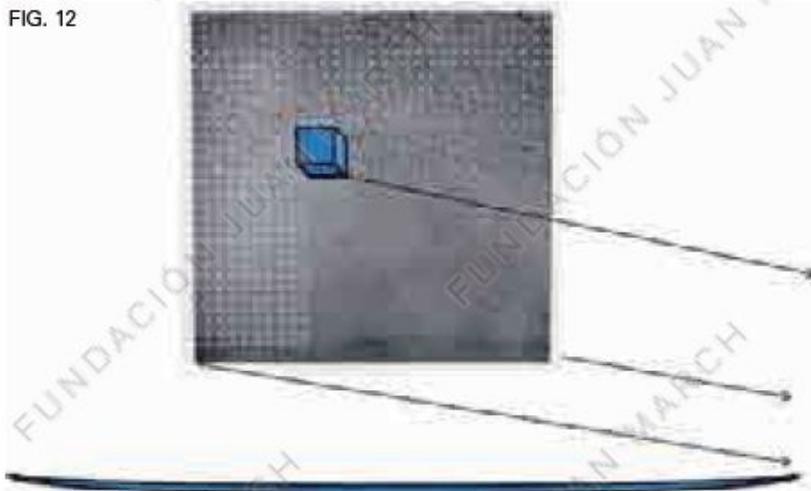
If this is the case, then Soto must have dismissed the idea of representing space in terms of perspective and opted for literally "materializing" space by reducing the support's width, thus projecting the point of view onto a place coinciding, in a justified and conventional downward movement, with a diagonal coordinate situated to the right, in front of the picture plane.

Bearing this in mind, it becomes obvious there is a relationship of mutual dependence between the sixteen white squares situated in the upper left quadrant and the last dot in the non-depicted lines on the lower right angle of the picture. It appears as though *Rotación* could "pronounce words" in a "figural" sense. The last dot, the last period in the sequence, puts an end to the "description" of the scene triggered by the rotating motion. The viewer can then imagine the rotating square is at the farthest point from the scene, it is the farthestmost "object," the last infinitesimal sign visible. Its overwhelming distance from the viewer's body is only emphasized, or "literally" indicated, by the fact that it is located outside the support, in a "real" space adjacent to the work itself [FIG. 13].

The last rotating square represented in the work is not, strictly speaking, situated on *Rotación's* surface. Yet the viewer may imagine it occupies a real location adjacent to the edges of the support. This is the result of the scheme described by Soto whereby this particular rotating square is positioned farther from the viewer's body, in the second phase of unrepresented motion. Following Soto's own account of *Rotación*, one might be inclined to imagine the square projecting onto space. In this case, it must be concluded that a point can only exist in space as volume, and therefore, regardless of the square's invisible or imperceptible qualities or its distance from the spectator, it can only be conceived as a virtual cube in space.

The conclusions drawn from this study are essential to understanding Soto's entire body of work: *Rotación* inverts and "literalizes" mechanisms of perspective, which at the same time are canceled out by the art work itself. In a conventional representation of space, wherein linear perspective and a vanishing point are used, the farthestmost objects are situated in the upper area of the picture plane rather than on the lower

FIG. 12



Schemes of Jesús Rafael Soto's *Rotación* (Rotation), 1952, manipulated by Luis Pérez-Oramas

FIG. 13



FIG. 14



side, as is the case in *Rotación*; hence the “inversion” [FIG. 14]. In regards to “literalization,” when Soto places the square formed by aligned dots and represented from an infinite, orthogonal viewpoint, the support becomes thinner and therefore appears to be moving away from the viewer’s body and sinking into the wall. However, the work inspires the viewer to picture himself as a speck in space (situated on the outer right side of the picture plane), while superbly transforming points into virtual volumes and occupying the space that precedes the picture plane: the spectator’s body. As with all reliable mechanisms of perspective, the body becomes a point and the points become virtual bodies.

Rotación thus focuses on the viewer’s virtual presence. And like an extraordinary theoretical machine, its orthogonal projection inspires the viewer to imagine the spatial structure of the scene. Yet due to the work’s geometric and non-objective nature, it is reluctant to represent the *point of view* that enables the spectator to reconstruct in a coordinate location the potential representation. This focal point is in fact located in the vertex of the projection, on the outer right side of the picture plane.

The vanishing point is absorbed by the material qualities of the support, specifically where the picture becomes so thin it is mistaken for the wall. Furthermore, the focal view is projected diagonally in front of the work, as in most oblique perspectives. Here, one can envisage an overarching vision expanding outwards as the viewer is transported to the farthest point imaginable. *Rotación* therefore generates a place for the spectator, a space conceived as incommensurable distance, a farness so great vision cannot see or perceive but only carry out analytical experiments.

Rotación does not attempt to create a projection of an infinite or uncharted place, similar to God, as suggested in Jiménez’s enthusiastic metaphysical reading. Instead, it puts forward a theory based on a specific coordinate of vision situated perpendicularly on one side of the picture. From here the spectator can move around the work, shifting from left to right and vice versa. The work of art anticipates a dynamic form of perception linked to “muralism” and its reliance on oblique perspective, a particular type of vision set into motion by kinetic art’s large-scale friezes and also more modest works.

A vanishing point does not refer to a point in infinity, nor is it a coordinate equivalent to the unrepresentable figure of God. Several visual experiments related to vanishing points did indeed anticipate an idea of infinity until a proper concept was formulated by Desargues in the seventeenth century. But strictly speaking, a vanishing point can only signify distance, or the farthest point perceivable, hence where the representation ends. Though infinitely far, a focal point signifies a specific place where figures are depicted even as small specks. Due to geometric principles, the viewer’s body is also reduced to a small point, an expressible logarithm, from where the scene is perceived at the risk of jeopardizing our fluctuating and relative density in favor of clarity of vision.

Rotación does not evoke God’s infinite presence but rather the result of our rupture from infinity, our immersion and vanishing in spatial finitude. As vision loses its perceptive qualities and becomes a purely analytical task, our body becomes an illusion fading into an incommensurable distance as it transforms into a point, a unit of

geometry. The dematerialization of vision is directly related to the creation of a prodigious mechanic device capable of generating programmed, precise, and predictable images. Years later, in 1968, spectators' bodies would fade into Soto's *Penetrables*, appearing and disappearing as mirages able to perceive, however, the rugged quality, the *asperitas*, of their skin immersed in the plastic weft of strings that constitute the structure of these dense, efficient environmental artistic devices. The "political" key to understanding both the prodigy and misery of the Venezuelan constructivist art scene can be found in the fascinating contradictions present in Soto's work and other representative forms of kinetic art. Politics of form strived for an ideal of dematerialization but, as in an act of denial, only managed to suggest it through material, or materializing, mechanisms.

As Ariel Jiménez pointed out, *Rotación* made it possible to see Soto's entire body of work addressing the spectator's space with a clarity of vision previously unknown, thus anticipating "the possibility, the will, the hope that painting will have an impact on us, its viewers."²³ But what impact does this picture have on us? What does it produce on us when we see it? *Rotación* forces us to embody distance, as our body becomes a small point from where to perceive other bodies projecting into infinity. The picture produces a mirage and re-produces us as a mirage. Constructivist abstraction in Venezuela, and kinetic art in particular, were strategically confined to a complex process that relegated them to historical mirages. The fact that these forms of art came about "in place of" modernity has, to this day, important implications in the understanding of the country. The ideological dimension of concepts such as "transparency" or "dematerialization" as opposed to the narrative of modernity as illusion, argued here, must also be addressed. Or in other words, the forms of politics generated in Venezuela by these politics of form. These forms intended to produce their own optical mirages, and as in *Rotación*, they led to both a theory and a place for our bodies to fade as an illusion. This is, perhaps, because underlying their fascinating ability to seduce is a bitter ideal of modernity. An ideal that required, as a prerequisite for its materialization, "disposing of a body," our body, and was therefore doomed to fail, to encounter genuine, material resistance and shatter against the *asperitas* of history.

ENDNOTES

1 This debate dates back many years, at least to 1934, when Joaquín Torres-García returned to his hometown of Montevideo and paved the way for his constructive universalism, in which two forceful and modern myths overlapped: the concept of universal art and the possibility it may derive from archetypes and primitive forms. Since then there have been several attempts to formalize and also differentiate neo-constructivist art forms yielded by Latin-American artists from those produced by Europeans or Americans. Examples include Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro's *Geometría de la esperanza* (Geometry of Hope), written for the Colección Cisneros (2006), as well as the curatorial efforts of Roberto Pontual (*Geometría Sensible*, 1978); Federico Morais (*Vertiente Constructiva*, First Mercosul Biennial, 1997); Mary Schneider, Ariel Jiménez, and Luis Pérez-Oramas (*Geometric Abstraction: Latin American Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Cambridge: Harvard University Art

Museums, 2001); Ariel Jiménez (*Paralelos*, 2002); Mari Carmen Ramírez and Héctor Olea (*Inverted Utopias*, 2004); Juan Carlos Ledezma (*The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, 2006); Osbel Suárez (*Lo[s] Cinético[s]*, 2007); and Mary Kate O'Hare (*Constructive Spirit*, 2010). These endeavors have tended to focus on the tensions that arise from geopolitical issues (the politics of isolation vs. domination). As a result, the true nature of the problem has often been overlooked, namely the conditions required for the emergence of modernity in the extended field of its "survival," regardless of the first manifestations of avant-garde art.

- 2 Due to the limited extension of the present essay, a consistent argument on this subject cannot be treated in-depth. I have not proposed a historicist or formalist viewpoint, but rather an anthropological approach to the history of art in line with Aby Warburg's understanding of the Renaissance or persistence of forms (*Nachleben*) through concepts such as "ritual" (the function of ritual as a regulating instrument in the production of symbolic objects), or *Pathosformel* (the topology of figures, or the position of figures as the result of a collision of feelings and forms), and mainly through the notion of "transitional form" (formal solutions and underlying ritualistic practices or symbolic automatisms, which serve as a bridge between the spheres of art and life). I have outlined the possibilities of applying Warburg's theories to the field of American modernity in the following works: "Gego, retículas residuales y modernidad involuntaria: la sombra, los rastros y el sitio," in Mari Carmen Ramírez and Theresa Papanikolas, eds., *Questioning the Line: Gego in Context* (Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts, 2003), 94ff.; "Some Notes on Image and Text in the Latin American Collection of the Blanton Museum," in Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, ed., *Blanton Museum of Art: Latin American Collection* (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin, 2006), 71ff.; "An Atlas of Drawings," in *An Atlas of Drawings: Transforming Chronologies* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2006); and "Caracas: A Constructive Stage," in Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, ed., *The Geometry of Hope: Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection* (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin, 2007), 83ff.
- 3 See Luis Pérez-Oramas, "La colección Cisneros: Del paisaje al lugar," in Mary Schneider, Ariel Jiménez and Luis Pérez-Oramas, *Geometric Abstraction*, 39ff.
- 4 This was not a distinctive feature of Latin-American geometric abstraction, and can be appreciated in most avant-garde movements. In other words, trudging through modernity collectively, due to the impossible conclusion of the modern project, was not a prerogative of Latin America. However, materializing the symbolic coordinates of modern utopia more convincingly and coherently than in Europe—at a time when Europe was consumed by the apocalyptic flames of its modern wars, which not only burned to ashes millions of bodies but also the ideals and expectations of early modernity—was a prerogative of America.
- 5 The Taller Libre de Arte (Free Art Studio) was established as a cultural association. Its founding members, most of whom graduated from Caracas's Escuela de Artes Plásticas in 1945, had worked under painter Antonio Edmundo Monsanto, who introduced them to the rudiments of avant-garde art and cubism in particular. With painters, critics, and poets among its members, the group did not share a coherent style and their work transcended the visual arts. Prominent members included Oswaldo Trejo, Mateo Manauere, Marius Sznajderman, Dora Hersen, Narciso Deboung, Carlos González Bogen, Alirio Oramas, Perán Erminy, Rubén Núñez, Alejandro Otero, Pascual Navarro, Ramón Vásquez Brito, Virgilio Trómpiz, and Luis Guevara Moreno, among others. Following the establishment of the Studio, several artists

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- left for Paris and founded the group Los Disidentes (The Dissidents). Alejandro Otero's coffee pots were the focus of the second abstract art exhibition in Venezuela, held at the Museo de Bellas Artes in 1949. Although Otero would join the non-objective art movement in 1951, these oil paintings did not follow this style, as they synthesized the principles of perception.
- 6 The ideological principles of Venezuelan geometric abstraction were "pristine" forms, "impeccable" structures, conceptual resistance to manifestations of "patina," and a fixation with "transparency." In 1973, contemporary artists from Venezuela began to dismount these principles and represent them as "stains," though not necessarily in the style of Tachisme. They continued to create abstract or constructivist-abstract compositions albeit focusing on expressing the corrosive power of time and concept. Víctor Lucena and Roberto Obregón contributed to this process. In their work, corrosive or phenomenal traces of temporary existence dismount the conceptual and logocentric stability inherent to constructive abstraction, resulting in extremely deconstructive effects. Nonetheless, the late work of Gego is undoubtedly the most significant exception to the ideology of transparency and constructive impeccability.
 - 7 José Rafael Pocaterra, *Memorias de un venezolano de la decadencia* (Madrid: Edime, 1956), 1224.
 - 8 Joseph Rykwert, *On Adam's House in Paradise: The Idea of the Primitive Hut in Architectural History* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1981).
 - 9 This was the case of Alejandro Otero, who organized an exhibition of Reverón's work at the Taller Libre. In spite of Otero's attempt to move away from Reverón's ideas, his synthetic and monochrome paintings from 1951—possibly the most radical example of abstract art in America at the time—are only comparable to Reverón's white landscapes executed between 1926 and 1940.
 - 10 Artists such as Otero and Cruz-Diez were fond of social and indigenous figurative art during their youth, whereas Vázquez Brito, González Bogen, Guevara Moreno, Manaure, and Navarro followed their own winding paths between lyrical or non-objective abstraction and different styles of figurative art.
 - 11 With the exception of Pevsner and Vasarely's work, as well as Calder's celebrated *Acoustic Clouds* on view at the Aula Magna, the "legitimizing" interventions provided by the European avant-garde were semi-figurative, allegoric, symbolist, or simply in line with lyrical abstraction, as was the case with Léger and Calder. Although the Ciudad Universitaria de Caracas was the first platform for the promotion of Venezuelan art, it was not the first constructivist intervention of significance to take place during the 1950s. Several works from the late 1940s deserve mentioning: in the Acoustic Shell of Bello Monte, Otero translated his early post-Mondrian experiments into a mural structure. The architectural complex Centro Simón Bolívar deserves special attention. Cipriano Domínguez designed the towers, where Carlos González Bogen executed a massive ceiling mural, the first large-scale mural in Venezuela to incorporate constructivist and non-objective elements, a distinction it held well into the 1970s.
 - 12 Soto's statement, according to which he declined to cooperate on Villanueva's project due to its association with the dictatorship, contradicts the fact that he accepted an important commission from the government during those years. The commission, a large-scale mural, was exhibited in the Venezuela Pavilion at the 1958 Brussels World's Fair. Belatedly, as if hoping to pay a debt or atone for a previous mistake, a statue belonging to Soto's series *Estructuras cinéticas* (Kinetic Structures, 1956–57) was placed in the gardens of the School of Architecture. Although this piece was not foreseen in Villanueva's initial scheme, there can be no doubt of the architect's interest in persuading a young Soto to join his project, as appreciated in a letter written by Soto in 1953 in response to Villanueva's invitation—a document recently discovered by Osbel Suárez in the Fundación Villanueva archives. Likewise, there is a scale model of a mural intended for the university whose location, to my knowledge, has not been identified.

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- 13 With the exception of a brief non-objective episode in 1954–55, Cruz-Diez clearly expressed his political opposition to pure abstraction and sought a form of art that moved towards greater social engagement. His first abstract works, consisting of organic and manipulable structures, date from 1956. Following these works, he began conducting in-depth research on constructivist art, the outcome of which was his first *Physichromie* in 1959.
- 14 For a broader analysis of *Recticulárea* as critique of the constructivist tradition in Venezuela, see Luis Pérez-Oramas, “Gego, Laoconte, las redes y la indecisión de las cosas,” in *Gego. Obra Completa 1955–1990* (Caracas: Fundación Cisneros, 2003), 299ff; “Gego y la escena analítica del cientismo,” in Mari Carmen Ramírez and Héctor Olea, *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin-lugar: 1918–1968 [exhibition catalogue]* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2000), 245ff.
- 15 Soto’s success as one of Venezuela’s leading official artists owes much to Raúl Leoni’s presidency (1964–69) and Rafael Caldera’s first term as president (1969–74), during which Soto participated on large-scale projects such as the Venezuela Pavilion at the 1967 Universal exhibition in Montreal and the Museo Soto in Ciudad Bolívar, founded in 1973. Both complexes were designed by the modern architect Villanueva, in whose university campus project Soto had not taken part. In addition to Alejandro Otero, whose public sculpture was concluded on occasion of the 400th anniversary of Caracas’s founding, mention must be made of Mateo Manaure, whose urban interventions on buses, pedestrian walkways, and bus stops marked the end of the 1960s. Carlos Cruz-Diez yielded important works in the 1970s, including spectacular interventions at the José Antonio Páez Hydroelectric Power Plant and at the Maiquetía International Airport headquarters. He also redesigned Plaza Venezuela, Caracas’s new city center. Although Cruz-Diez’s masterpiece, the machine rooms at Raúl Leoni Hydroelectric Power Station in Guri (1983), was produced outside the chronological limits of the present essay, it must be noted that this installation represents the climax of abstract constructivism and is also a sign of Venezuela’s modernization.
- 16 Ariel Jiménez, “Conversaciones con Jesús Soto,” *Cuadernos de la Fundación Cisneros* 6 (Caracas, 2005), 107.
- 17 For a discussion on these ideas, see Luis Pérez-Oramas, “Inventar la modernidad en tierra de Adán: Alfredo Boulton, Armando Reverón y Bárbaro Rivas,” in Ariel Jiménez, *Alfredo Boulton y sus contemporáneos. Diálogos críticos en el arte venezolano 1912–1974 [exhibition catalogue]* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 324ff.
- 18 Kinetic art often requires a shift of position in the spectator that is analogous, in terms of structural function, to the visual reading involved in narrative and figurative works of art. For an analysis of the political implications of this phenomenon, see “La hipoteca del ornato en las artes visuales venezolanas,” in Luis Pérez-Oramas, *La cocina de Jurassic Park y otros ensayos visuales* (Caracas: Fundación Polar, 1998), 253ff. For an interpretation of the meta-physical implications of this phenomenon in the work of Jesús Soto, see Ariel Jiménez, “Un ámbito de luz. Por un Soto barroco,” in *Soto* (Caracas: Fundación Soto, 2007), 33ff.
- 19 Ariel Jiménez, “Conversaciones con Jesús Soto,” 55–58.
- 20 Ariel Jiménez, “Un ámbito de luz,” 34.
- 21 This reading coincides with the artist’s own viewpoint: “at that moment I was attracted to the idea that I did not have to represent everything that was suggested in the work, it could continue in any direction.” Ariel Jiménez, “Conversaciones con Jesús Soto,” 58.
- 22 Ariel Jiménez, “Un ámbito de luz,” 36, and “Conversaciones con Jesús Soto,” 57.
- 23 Ariel Jiménez, “Un ámbito de luz,” 36.
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**Invention
and Reinvention:
The Transatlantic
Dialogue in
Geometric
Abstraction¹**

GABRIEL PÉREZ-BARREIRO

A

ny discussion of art produced in Latin America, perhaps especially within the tradition of geometric abstraction, seems condemned to engage with questions of context and locale, and by extension, the thornier issues of originality and derivation, or invention and copy. However much we may wish to reclaim and recover an under-recognized contribution to art history, and to level the geographic and cultural playing field against centuries of Eurocentrism, we are obliged as historians to examine the suppositions and mechanisms through which images generate interpretations. To ignore this is to fall into the trap of expanding the repertoire of available images without questioning the reason

for their prior exclusion, or simplifying this into a narrow political project of vindication and visibility, in which the "other" is valued *qua* periphery, thereby involuntarily reinforcing the validity of the "center" through binary opposition. In this essay, I would like to take a case study involving the relationship between European and Argentine artists of the 1930s and 1940s, specifically through a group of works by Alfredo Hlito, Georges Vantongerloo, and Richard Paul Lohse, to analyze how images and ideas travel through time and space, and how we try to attribute meaning according to the interface between artistic intention, context, and history.

The term invention means many different things: discovery, contrivance, fabrication, creation. Which of these terms we use tends to depend ultimately on a moral position, a feeling of entitlement to use a particular idea or concept, and is therefore related to a sense of intellectual or cultural property, or even propriety. If we consider that an invention belongs absolutely to its inventor, then any subsequent elaboration is a form of usurping, of unauthorized use. If, however, we believe that culture is necessarily dynamic and dialogic, then the reinvention of forms and ideas becomes a positive factor and the very engine of artistic development. These issues are particularly acute in art and entertainment law, where they translate into related issues of copyright protection and financial liability. But they are also important issues in art history, where a tracing of the genealogy of ideas and images is part of how we structure history and generate meaning.

If we were to try to reduce conventional art history to an equation, it might look something like this: intention + context = content. If we isolate each of these elements we can see that they are constructed in very different ways. Intention, at least since modern art, can be deduced from artist statements, writings, contemporary debates, and of course from evidence of the works themselves. The biggest challenge here is to determine the distance that inevitably exists between the stated intention and the finished work. Context, in comparison, is almost entirely determined by the historian alone. How, where, and why we decide to delimit context is, like the relative value of invention, a largely ideological decision. In the case of Latin America,

this question of context has been one of the fault lines along which different approaches and ideologies have formed. For some, Latin America is a context in its totality, constructed separate from and in opposition to a so-called "West" (Europe and North America). The most complete articulation of this model was the 2004 exhibition *Inverted Utopias* where all production connected to Latin America (even if not produced within its borders) was inevitably the reversal of a central model.² In this model Latin America is necessarily a place of difference, a contemporary El Dorado where art will do all the things it doesn't do elsewhere: full of the eternal promise of the real and the oppositional. For others, context is national, coinciding with political borders and nationality, so that, for example, Torres-García will always be an Uruguayan artist wherever his work was produced, even if most of his adult life was spent outside that country. In this model nationality is about so much more than just physical location: it is an unalienable DNA that the artist will carry around for all of his or her life, a cultural force field that will protect artists from undue influence from or on the specific context in which they happen to find themselves. And then there are those who define context according to the particular place and time in which works are made, regardless of where the principal actors happened to have been born. This was the model I pursued partially in the exhibition *The Geometry of Hope*, where cities constituted the units of context.³ But this model is also limited as the true cultural geography of artworks consists of a combination of physical contact and coincidence, and also virtual networks, influences that travel via publications, discussions, letters, magazines, and so many other mechanisms that create a web of influences and debates that supersede a city's limits. Then, of course, there is the model that entirely de-contextualizes the work in favor of a purely formal analysis, which has the advantage of often being closer to

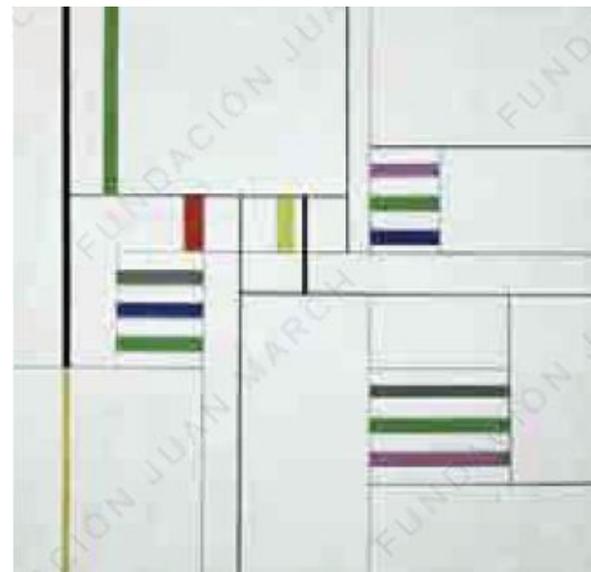


FIG. 1. Argentina. Alfredo Hlito, Ritmos cromáticos III (Chromatic Rhythms III), 1949. Oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm (39 3/8 x 39 3/8 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

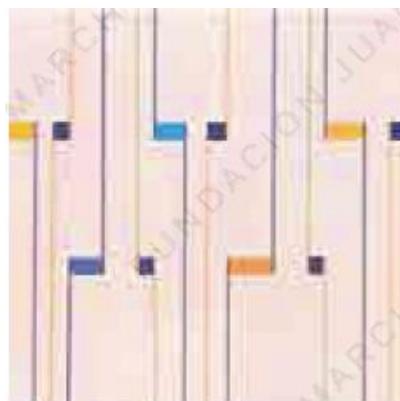


FIG. 2. Argentina. Alfredo Hlito, Ritmos cromáticos (Chromatic Rhythms), 1947. Oil on canvas, 70 x 70 cm (27 1/2 x 27 1/2 in.). Private collection

the artist's stated intention at the expense of a more complex historical study. What is clear is that context can mean many different things, and that the configuration of these things will inevitably have an effect on the reading of an artwork and therefore on its place in art history.

Before this becomes too abstract, I'd like to propose the following conundrum: four works produced by three different artists in three different contexts [FIG. 1, 2, 3, 4]. Without attributions and dates, it is near impossible to guess which was painted in Paris in 1937, which in Zurich in 1945, and which in Buenos Aires in 1947 and 1949. The works are so similar in style, format, and technique that they are virtually indistinguishable, even to the trained eye. One of the first issues here is how we view relative distance. In other words, if these were works made in quattrocento Italy—one in Florence, one in Venice, and the other in Ferrara and a decade apart—we would comfortably consider them to be examples of the same phenomena: the Italian Renaissance, even if the temporal and relative physical distances are comparable.⁴ However, by the time we get to modernity, and particularly where Latin America is involved, we tend to be more fussy about absolute chronology and geography, and draw a line between some artworks and others, and that line usually falls neatly between Europe and Latin America. That binary division does a number of things. First of all it allows us to establish hierarchy: earlier and European correspond to 'origin' or 'cause', while later and Latin American correspond to 'copy' or 'effect'. As soon as we have done this, there will be those on either side who start to construct positions: on one side those who snobbily reinforce their ideas of cultural supremacy, and on the other those who reclaim a political position of difference, making the other embody ideas of ethnic and cultural identity, or even see one as the inversion of the other. Of course this simplistic division also creates another important blind spot: the relationships *within* contexts, by reducing Latin America and Europe to two monolithic blocks, when there are important national, cultural, and historical differences within those borders.

The question of context and Latin America/Europe is further complicated by the implicit universalism of abstract art in general, and the inscription of this tradition within a region (Latin America) that has often been considered too "backward" to participate fully in anything other than folkloric or magical realist art. Up until the 1990s Latin American abstraction was generally dismissed from international discussion of Latin American art for being too cosmopolitan, too internationalist, and therefore not 'Latin American' enough (whatever that may mean). In Latin America itself the story was often different. For example, to take the case of Alfredo Hlito's homeland, Argentina, these abstract works of the 1940s were often interpreted as a triumphant moment in which Argentina "caught up" with the rest of the world. To quote Jorge Romero Brest, for instance: "The first attempt to overcome the hybrid nature of Argentine art was with the Argentine concrete artists of the 1940s, because they frankly accepted the dogma of Max Bill, Georges Vantongerloo, and did things as well as they did."⁵ Of course this model is just as passive as the facile rejection of internationalism, in that the work is judged only in terms of its stylistic similarity to a model; in this case judged negatively from abroad and positively at home.



FIG. 3. Switzerland. Richard Paul Lohse, *Konkretion I* (Concretion I), 1945–46. Oil on Pavatex, 70 x 70 cm (27 ½ x 27 ½ in.). Richard Paul Lohse-Stiftung, Zurich



FIG. 4. Belgium, active Paris. Georges Vantongerloo, *Fonction-composition* (Function-Composition), 1937. Oil on board, 56 x 78 cm (22 x 30 ¾ in.). Kunstmuseum Basel



FIG. 5. Argentina. Juan Melé, *Marco recortado n° 2* (Cut-out Frame no. 2), 1946. Oil on plywood, 71.1 x 50.2 x 2.5 cm (28 x 19 ¾ x 1 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



FIG. 6. Argentina. Raúl Lozza, *Relieve n° 30* (Relief no. 30), 1946. Oil on plywood and metal, 41.9 x 53.7 x 2.7 cm (16 ½ x 21 ¼ x 1 ⅛ in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

So what do we do with works like this that are so close to their model? Again, it depends largely on what we *want* to do with them. One option is, as we have seen, to dismiss them as derivative or praise them as evidence of being up to date, which is essentially the same thing. Another is to take this similarity as the justification for a true internationalism. In this case we would ignore the physical and temporal location of the works and see them as different expressions of a shared artistic language that crosses national and temporal borders. Implicit in the modern project is the notion that there is an absolute perceptual and mathematical code that once all the trappings of traditional art (perspective, illusion, etc.) have been removed would show the bare naked and essential elements of art, and certainly our three artists, Hlito, Vantongerloo, and Lohse, would have subscribed enthusiastically to that idea. However, this aspiration, that according to its own logic would have created a single unified artistic style, had quite the opposite effect. As John Elderfield pointed out in a brilliant essay for the Dallas Museum of Art in 1972: "Proponents of a utilitarian geometric style had found it easy to cull from these [formal] sources a vocabulary of 'meaningful' elements whose significance could be rationally explained, but well nigh impossible to create a theory which would order their arrangement ... Ultimately it is the composition of elements and not the elements themselves that has greater impact."⁶ Elderfield's point is that personal taste is an inevitable factor even in an art that aspires to overcome it, and that there is no absolute order in the universe that will show us *how* to make artworks. Personal taste is not only an inevitable result but perhaps even a cause of the ideologies that led to abstraction in the first place, and it is here that we can go beyond the surface to look in greater depth at the works.

These three artists aspired to an art that was "concrete," meaning that rather than being the result of a deductive process of abstraction from a model, the elements of art would mean nothing other than themselves. As the most extreme form of anti-representation, concrete art marked a difference from artists like Mondrian, Malevich, or Kandinsky, for whom abstraction was at some level a metaphoric representation or even an allegory of a higher spiritual order. For the concrete artists, inspired by the Art Concret manifesto of 1930: "The painting should be constructed entirely from purely plastic elements, that is to say planes and colors. A pictorial element has no other significance than itself and consequently the painting possesses no other significance than itself."⁷ However, this "no other significance than itself" can mean a number of things, and these things can even reveal significant differences in intent.

For the Argentine artists of the 1940s, the search for an objective, non-representational language of art was inseparable from their political agenda. As sympathizers of the extreme left, the members of the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención (including Alfredo Hlito) founded in 1946 had declared their intention to rid art of all vestiges of illusionism in order to make it an effective weapon in the class struggle. Through this lens, objectivity was a moral imperative designed to push back against centuries of art at the service of the ruling class that had used illusion (i.e. deception) as its main resource. Of course to try to recover a communist geometrical abstraction in the 1940s was nothing if not naïve and uninformed, and the artists were duly expelled from the Communist Party, but not before a very fertile period full of intense debate,

exhibitions, manifestos, and events. In 1944 Rhod Rothfuss had published an article in the magazine *Arturo* [CAT. 63, 64] which laid out the structured or irregular frame as the most advanced development in international abstraction. Following his lead, Maldonado, Hlito, Prati, Melé, and many others worked through a variety of formal solutions that built on this idea of a structured frame [FIG. 5]. In late 1946, as the result of intense political/aesthetic debates, they developed the Coplanar as the definitive solution for an art that no longer contained any residue of illusionism by separating the forms in space [FIG. 6]. Somewhere in late 1946/early 1947 two things happened that were determining for the group: on the one hand they were expelled from the Communist Party, and on the other their formal solution turned out not to be as absolute as they had hoped. The result of this crisis was that many artists stopped working, while a small group reconfigured around a return to the regular frame, creating works like the ones with which we started [FIG. 7]. About this same time Maldonado traveled to Europe and came into direct contact with Vantongerloo, Max Bill, and other European artists, and started a relationship that would lead to his permanent move to Europe in the 1950s and a long career as professor, philosopher, and designer. Maldonado returned to Argentina full of information about postwar European art and started to develop an international network of exchange through magazines like *Nueva visión* [CAT. 79], which reported on contemporary developments in art and architecture. While Maldonado, Hlito, and others were gradually moving the formal and ideological allegiance closer to Europe, the Madí artists, who had also sprung from *Arturo* magazine, were developing in quite different directions, with a more anarchic and irreverent philosophy. Although sharing the same roots, Madí and Arte Concreto-Invencción artists in Buenos Aires were quite different in character and production, and by 1947 there was almost nothing in common between them.

So back to our original question, following Maldonado's contact with European concrete art, were the Argentines merely "accepting the dogma and doing it just as well" as the Europeans, as Romero Brest had suggested, or are there any significant differences between these works? I would argue that there are in fact important varia-

tions of approach due precisely to the unique antecedents in either case, and these antecedents are certainly contextual. If we return to the 1930 Art Concret manifesto and its call for an art that does not signify anything external to art, we can understand this in one of two ways: either the presentation of the pure elements of art (color, line, shape) are important as a sign of an absolute truth, or they are meaningful only as plastic elements. In other words, art's search for purity is either a moral and philosophical parallel to a broader search for truth, or it is a mere formal exercise. The first position can be encapsulated in Johannes Kepler's seventeenth century statement *geometria est archetypus pulchritudinis mundi*, or geometry is the archetype of the beauty of the world.⁸ While for Kepler geometry was proof of God's existence, it's a short leap to replace God with dialectical materialism, theosophy, or any other neo-platonic system in which math is a metaphor for a deeper truth about the universe. However, that same insistence on the pure elements of art can also be read as a call for art for art's sake, and can therefore be playful and unencumbered and nothing to do with anything but itself. At the end of the day the question lies in whether art is a metaphor for a cosmic or social order or if it really exists just for its own perceptual sake, without aspiring to any consequence outside the artistic sphere. The argument also divides along political lines; the implicit materialism of the formalist position being either a denial or an affirmation of a utopian social project. For the Argentines, who had adopted the term concrete art from the outset, the crusade for art's autonomy was a direct equivalent of the battle for social justice and a key weapon in a broader political struggle. The geometric order represented in the works was a symbol of the new social order that would be collective, objective, and rationally structured. In 1946 Edgar Bayley made this point in the pages of *Orientación*, the organ of the Argentine Communist Party: "The artists and writers engaged in the concrete art movement base their aesthetics on an awareness of the world and the means through which it can be transformed. In all ages artistic style has corresponded to the manner in which productive forces were organized."⁹

In mid-century Europe, in contrast, the implications of concrete art were rather different, and this may be partly due to the direct experience of war, from which Argentina was spared. While Van Doesburg's pre-war concrete works [FIG. 8] were certainly indicative of a hard-edge geometry reduced to its starkest elements, by the time the movement's principles were adopted in Switzerland or Paris the emphasis had become looser and more playful. Max Bill, the leading figure in the postwar recovery of the concrete art project, spoke of the need "to represent abstract thoughts in a sensuous and tangible form."¹⁰ Despite his reputation as a strict taskmaster, Bill's work was surprisingly sensual, and works like *Tripartite Unity* [FIG. 9], famously awarded the first prize in the 1951 Bienal de São Paulo, is anything but a severe and harsh expression of geometry, yet it is geometrically perfect. Bill's explorations of curves, Moebius strips, and his series of variations on a theme gave concrete art a more lyrical and playful character. Largely unencumbered by an ideological or political project (he was Swiss after all), his works explored formal relationships largely for their own sakes. Bill's influence on a group of European artists was huge, albeit one that is largely overlooked in European and North American accounts of art history.



FIG. 7. Argentina. Tomás Maldonado, Desarrollo de un triángulo (Development of a Triangle), 1949. Oil on canvas, 80.6 x 60.3 cm (31 3/4 x 23 3/4 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

Ironically, it was in Latin America that this brand of concrete art was given new life and a renewed legacy through the dialogue between Bill, Lohse, Vantongerloo, and others with artists across the Atlantic, north and south.

Given this fundamental ideological difference between the Swiss and the Argentine artists, we might ask ourselves why the works look so similar. What I think was happening is that both groups were working in the same formal vocabulary, but with different intentions and diverse backgrounds. One helpful tool here is to look at the artists' sketches, although very few survive, as these give us some helpful insights into the working process. If we look at the Swiss works [FIG. 10], we see a concern above all with color, and more specifically with variations between colors. In these sketches we see relatively simple geometrical structures which serve to create harmonic chromatic variations. Most of the annotations refer to the specific sequence through which colors are set up to interact and mix. One of the results of this is that many of these works implicitly continue beyond the limits of the frame, as fragments of a larger series extendable beyond the artwork itself. If we look at a sketch by Hlito [FIG. 11] we can see almost the opposite process, where the geometric composition is more important than the colors and the relationships. In this sketch Hlito starts by dividing up the frame according to the divisions of half and of the golden mean. Although not all of the forms coincide with the underlying web, there is clearly a concern to relate the composition to an elementary system, and also to place it in dialogue with the frame.

Now if we go back to Hlito's drawing and look at the colors, we can see that the first attempt is to use the three primaries and black, as if in reference to Mondrian. By the time we see the finished work, however [FIG. 12], these have shifted to green, purple, and grey. I am not sure exactly why these changed, and the issue of color is still a great unexplored area in these Argentine works, but what does seem clear

from this sketch and the finished painting is that Hlito's concern was above all with compositional geometry and with the structure within the frame, while many of the Swiss works were concerned with chromatic relationships and serial sequences beyond the frame. In other words, one establishes a relational and lyrical system while the other tries to create a rigid system of stable relationships. Rosalind Krauss has written on the grid in modern art, and identifies two main schools: the grid as self-contained structure, and the grid as the implicit continuation beyond the frame. She writes: "The within-the-frame grids are generally more materialist in character ... While beyond-the-frame examples often entail the dematerialization of the surface, the dispersal of matter into the perceptual flicker or implied motion."¹¹ This analysis would certainly explain the difference between Hlito's within-the-frame grid, with its materialist basis and communist history, and the implied sequence of the Swiss works with their greater interest in perceptual issues over politics. However, before this becomes too neat, there is an important exception among the Argentines: the work of Lidy Prati [FIG. 13], which fully explores series and sequences that imply continuity outside the frame. It is, however, an almost unique case, and coincidentally she was probably the less committed to revolutionary politics of the group.

What may underlie these variations in approach are the different histories from which these works evolve. For the Argentines the frame was *the* dominant issue since the proposal of the irregular frame in 1944, and although by 1947 the artists of the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención had been expelled from the Communist Party, they still maintained a belief in the utopian and absolute values of geometry. In contrast the Swiss had witnessed the ravages of extreme ideology close up, and saw in the same history of geometric abstraction the potential for seriality and variation, for art as a pattern and fragment of a sequence rather than a self-contained visual manifesto connected to a political system. As María Amalia García puts it beautifully when describing Bill: "The plastic-mathematical concept that Bill was proposing did not refer to a cold numerical idea but rather to the human capacity for managing relationships."¹²

So if we have seen how apparently similar works can have diverse intentions shaped by contextual factors, this also begs the question of how ideas flow between different contexts, and how that information is then understood. To go back to 1944 and the magazine *Arturo* referred to before, we have a fairly typical scenario in Rhod Rothfuss's article "The Frame: A Problem in Contemporary Art" (featured in the documentary section of this catalogue), which was so important for the 1940s generation in Buenos Aires. Rothfuss's article traces a line from the French Revolution and Cézanne, through cubism, futurism, Kandinsky, and Mondrian, to the present day. This exercise of writing a genealogy with oneself at the end was in itself fairly typical of the modern project, and is part and parcel of the character of a manifesto. In this case, the frame was the central question, with Rothfuss arguing that none of his artistic predecessors had fully managed to break away from the centuries-old tradition of composing within a rectangle, and that his own work was the resolution of this issue. He illustrated the article with two works other than his own: a Kandinsky and a Mondrian, two artists he criticizes for limiting themselves to a regular frame, the

FIG. 8. The Netherlands.
Theo van Doesburg,
Arithmetic Composition,
1930. Oil on canvas, 101 x
101 cm (39 ¾ x 39 ¾ in.).
Kunstmuseum Winterthur

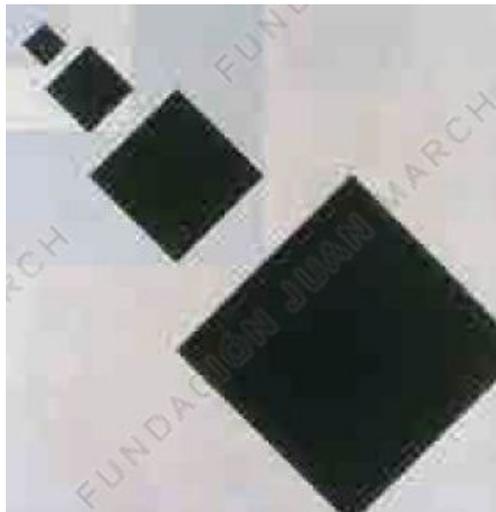


FIG. 9. Switzerland. Max Bill, Dreiteilige Einheit (Tripartite Unity), 1948–49. Stainless steel, 114 x 88.3 x 98.2 cm (44 7/8 x 34 3/4 x 38 5/8 in.). Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo

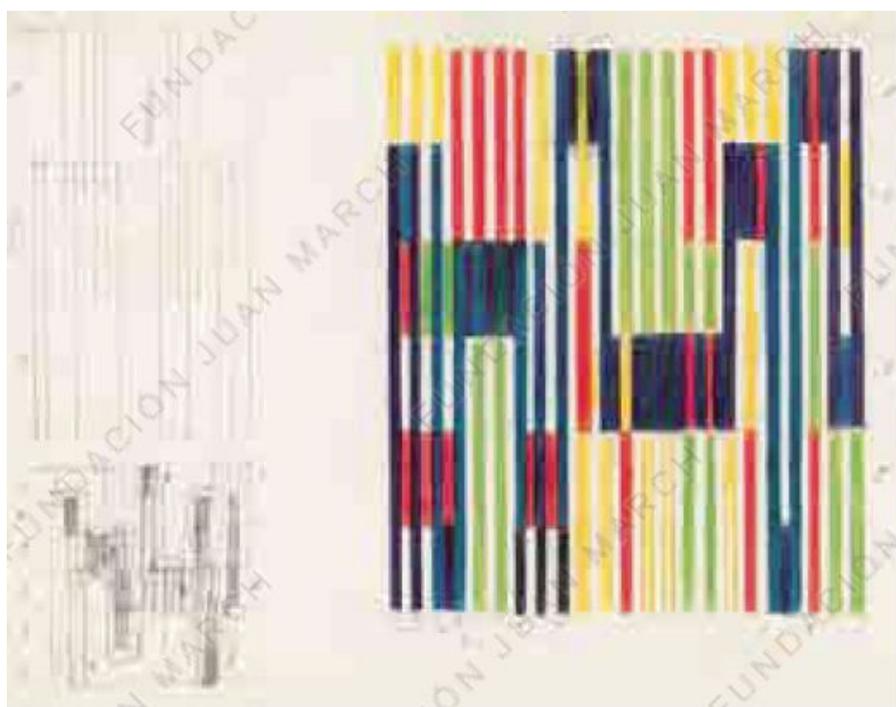


FIG. 10. Switzerland. Richard Paul Lohse, Reihenelemente in rhythmischen Gruppen (Linear Elements in Rhythmic Groups), 1945. Pencil on paper, 21 x 27.5 cm (8 1/4 x 10 3/4 in.). Richard Paul Lohse-Stiftung, Zurich

FIG. 11. Argentina. Alfredo Hlito, Dibujo preparatorio para Ritmos cromáticos III (Study for Chromatic Rhythms III), ca. 1949. Ink and colored pencil on paper, 15.2 x 15.9 cm (6 x 6 1/4 in.). Private collection

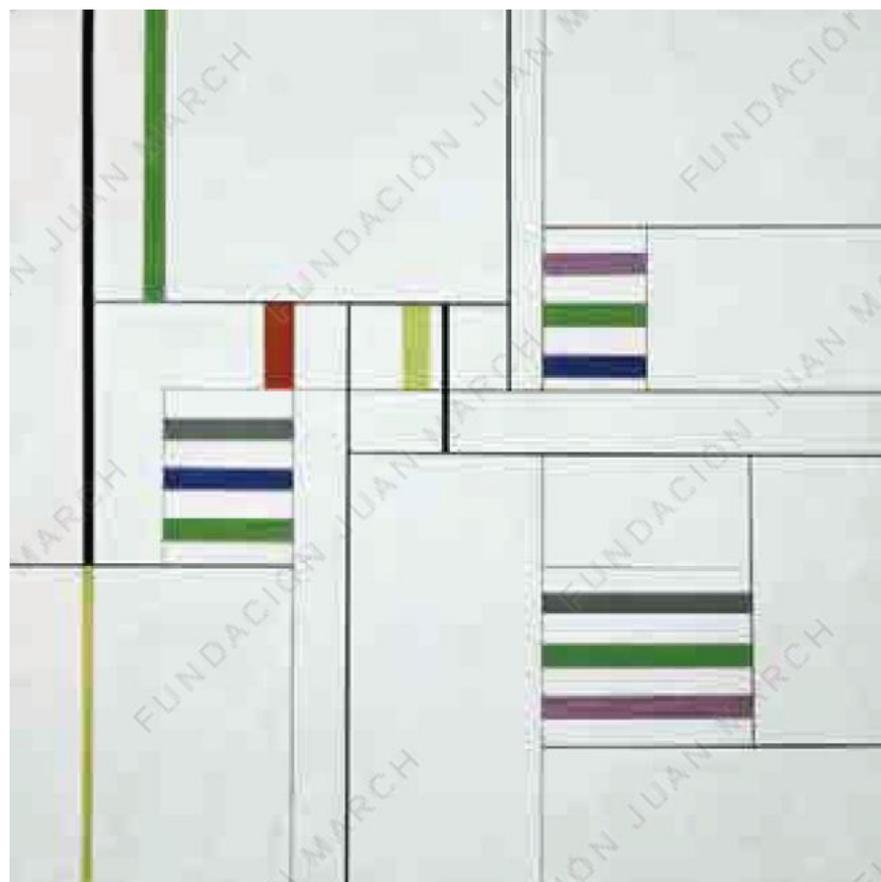
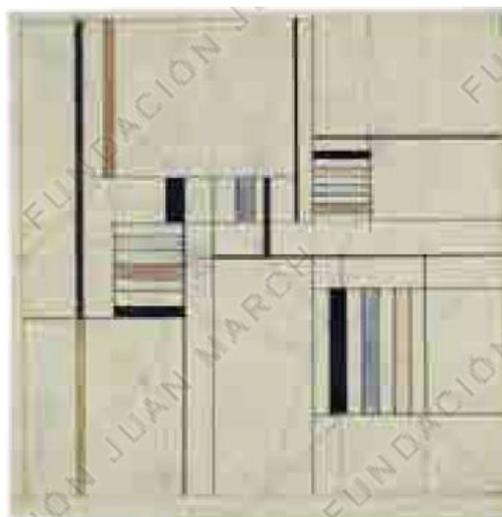


FIG. 12. Argentina. Alfredo Hlito, Ritmos cromáticos III (Chromatic Rhythms III), 1949. Oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm (39 3/8 x 39 3/8 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



implication being that had they known better they would have wanted to break free. I'd like to concentrate on the reproduction of the Mondrian. All the discussions of the period in Argentina refer to Mondrian essentially as a concrete artist, in the sense that his reductive geometry was seen, as it was by so many, as the end game of the abstractionist project by reducing art to its most basic elements. When images are reproduced like this in a magazine, not only are the colors and forms flattened, but the images are also detached from their own discursive context, and that is how they can come to be resignified elsewhere. Had the Argentines read Mondrian's texts and known more of his specific activities, they would have known that his work was far from concrete art as they understood it, far from Russian constructivism, and yet he did aspire to an environmental art expanding beyond the frame. By seeing the crudely printed image without a broader understanding of his project, context, or writings, the young artists read him as they could, in relation to their own interests in the frame and in terms of an evolutionary project toward a Marxist artistic language.

In 1953, Alfredo Hlito traveled to Europe and came across his first real Mondrian painting. The effect was traumatic and instant. He later wrote: "I realized that Mondrian's painting was not what I had imagined. He worked every painting, I saw that his white backgrounds—that we had thought were painted entirely flat—had black lines that were like valleys."¹³ When we see the 1940s paintings of Hlito, Maldonado, and his colleagues in Buenos Aires, the painted surface is invariably flat and pure, with the artists consciously trying to eliminate any vestige of the human hand from their work, which they wanted to have as close to an industrial finish as possible. When looking at the magazine reproductions of Mondrian's work it is easy to come to the conclusion that he was doing the same, and that his paintings were equally severe and harsh, when in fact they are marked by hesitation and by quite conscious brushwork. What happened in 1953 was that Hlito suddenly realized the difference between his reading of the reproduction and his encounter with the original. Even if he did not necessarily research the artist's production extensively at this point, he was able to read the image in painterly terms as the result of a more intuitive and tentative process than the strict deductive process we saw in his own work earlier. The effect was so strong that he abandoned hard-edge geometry altogether and became a central artist in a movement called "geometría sensible" or sensitive geometry, which was posited in the 1960s and 1970s by the Brazilian critic Roberto Pontual as a Latin American response to hard-edge abstraction. It is tempting when looking at where Hlito went to think that he once again misunderstood Mondrian, but of course the point is not to make a value judgment but to understand the process of creative misreading that seems to intensify when the physical distance between a phenomenon and its reading is greater. What we have in Hlito's case is an artist who first reads Mondrian through reproduction and comes to one conclusion, then reads him as a painter and comes to another, entirely different one.

So to go back to where we started, we might ask ourselves why Vantongerloo and Lohse also painted in flat and perfect planes when they must have seen Mondrian's

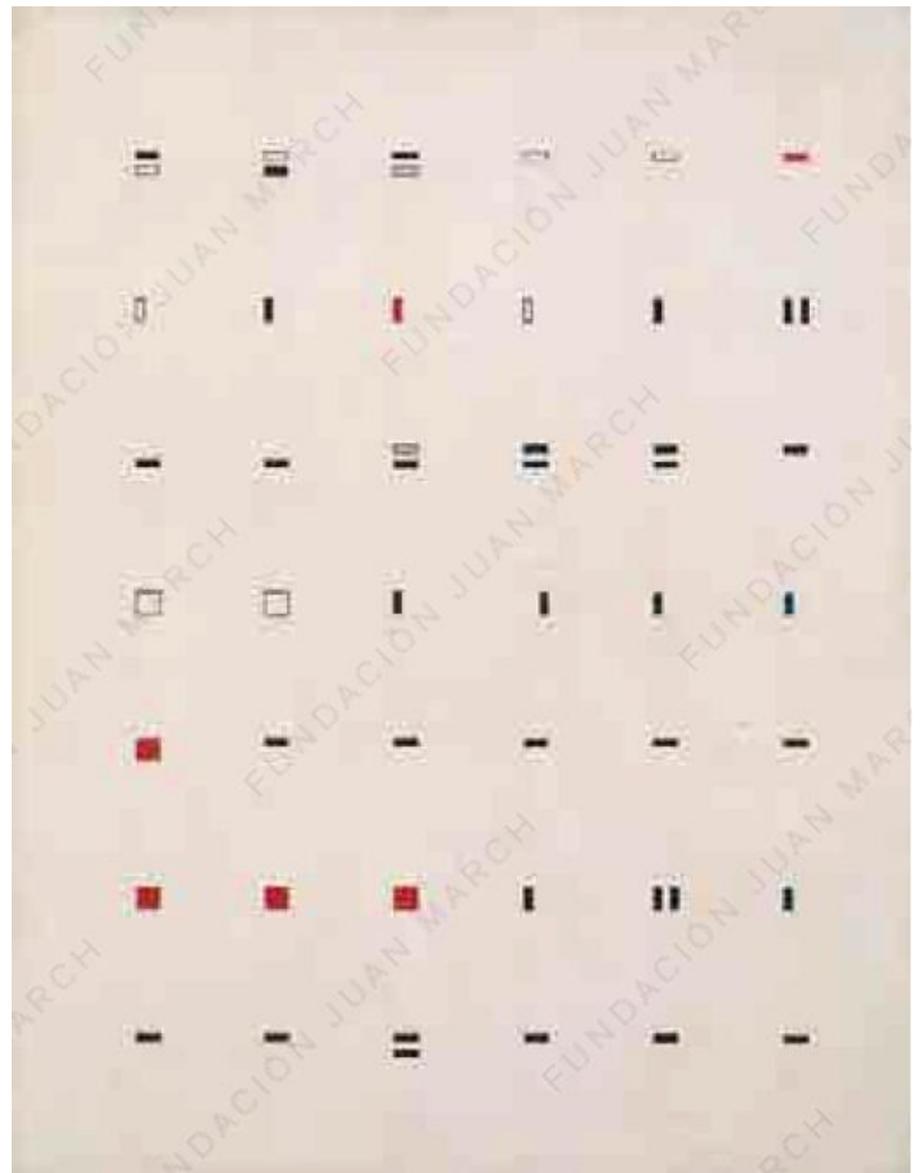


Fig. 13. Argentina. Lidy Prati, *Composición serial* (Serial Composition), ca. 1948. Oil on hardboard, 75.3 x 55.8 (29 5/8 x 22 in.). Malba – Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires

work close up, which destroys our hypothesis that the distance between Europe and Latin America was the determining factor in why they read Mondrian a certain way. Surely they had seen the originals, the difference is that they would also, like Hlito in 1947, have been looking for a pure expression of geometry and the articulation of grid within which to create serial variations. In 1953 Hlito saw the imperfections of Mondrian because he was already at some deep level dissatisfied with the concrete art project and looking for his identity as a painter, just as so many would continue to see Mondrian as an inspiration for the most diverse artistic projects. At the end of the day none of these interpretations is any more or less valid than the other; all we can say with some certainty is that to create, an artist must read and interpret his or her predecessors. The intention with which we started the discussion will inevitably shape what they see as much as what they then create. Perhaps context boils down to, rather than geography, nationality, distance, or borders, a question of reading seen through a lens of desire.

- 12 María Amalia García, "Max Bill on the Map of Argentine-Brazilian Concrete Art," in Mari Carmen Ramírez and Héctor Olea, eds., *Building on a Construct: The Adolpho Leirner Collection of Brazilian Constructive Art at the Museum of Fine Arts*, Houston (Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 61.
- 13 Alfredo Hlito, *Escritos sobre arte* (Buenos Aires: Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1995), 205–6.

ENDNOTES

- 1 This essay is a reworking of a paper presented at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, on April 15, 2010, under the title "The Reinvention of European Abstraction in Argentina 1944–1950." I am grateful to Mary Kate O'Hare for her helpful readings of the early drafts.
- 2 Mari Carmen Ramírez and Héctor Olea, *Inverted Utopias: Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*. (Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004). This exhibition was first presented in 2000 under the title *Heteropías* at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid.
- 3 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, ed., *The Geometry of Hope: Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection* (Austin: Blanton Museum of Art, University of Texas at Austin, 2007).
- 4 I am grateful to Luis Pérez-Oramas for this comparison.
- 5 Jorge Romero Brest, "La crisis del arte en Latinoamérica y el mundo," in Damián Bayón, ed., *América Latina en sus artes* (Mexico City: UNESCO/Siglo XXI, 1974), 94.
- 6 John Elderfield, *Geometric Abstraction 1926–1942* (Dallas: Dallas Museum of Art, 1972), n. p.
- 7 Quoted in Gladys Fabre and Doris Wintgens Hötte, eds., *Van Doesburg and the International Avant-Garde: Constructing a New World* (London: Tate Publishing, 2009), 187.
- 8 Quoted in Ernst Peter Fischer, *Beauty and the Beast: The Aesthetic Moment in Science* (New York: Plenum Press, 1999), 7.
- 9 Edgar Bayley, "Sobre Arte Concreto," reproduced in Nelly Perazzo, *Vanguardias de la década del 40* (Buenos Aires: Museo Sívori, 1980), n.p., and in this catalogue.
- 10 Quoted on *Tate: British and International Modern and Contemporary Art* (accessed December 1, 2010).
- 11 Rosalind Krauss, "Grids," in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985), 21.

works on display

The section devoted to the works on view includes both artworks and historical documents in various formats (mainly magazines and manifestoes) arranged by date and geographic location: Uruguay, Germán Cueto's Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Leo Matiz's Colombia, Cuba, and a final coda on the historical context of Europe during the 1970s. For comparative and contextual reasons, illustrations of works and documents not on view at the exhibition are also featured in this section. Entries for these illustrations are not preceded by a "[cat.]" reference.



Uruguay

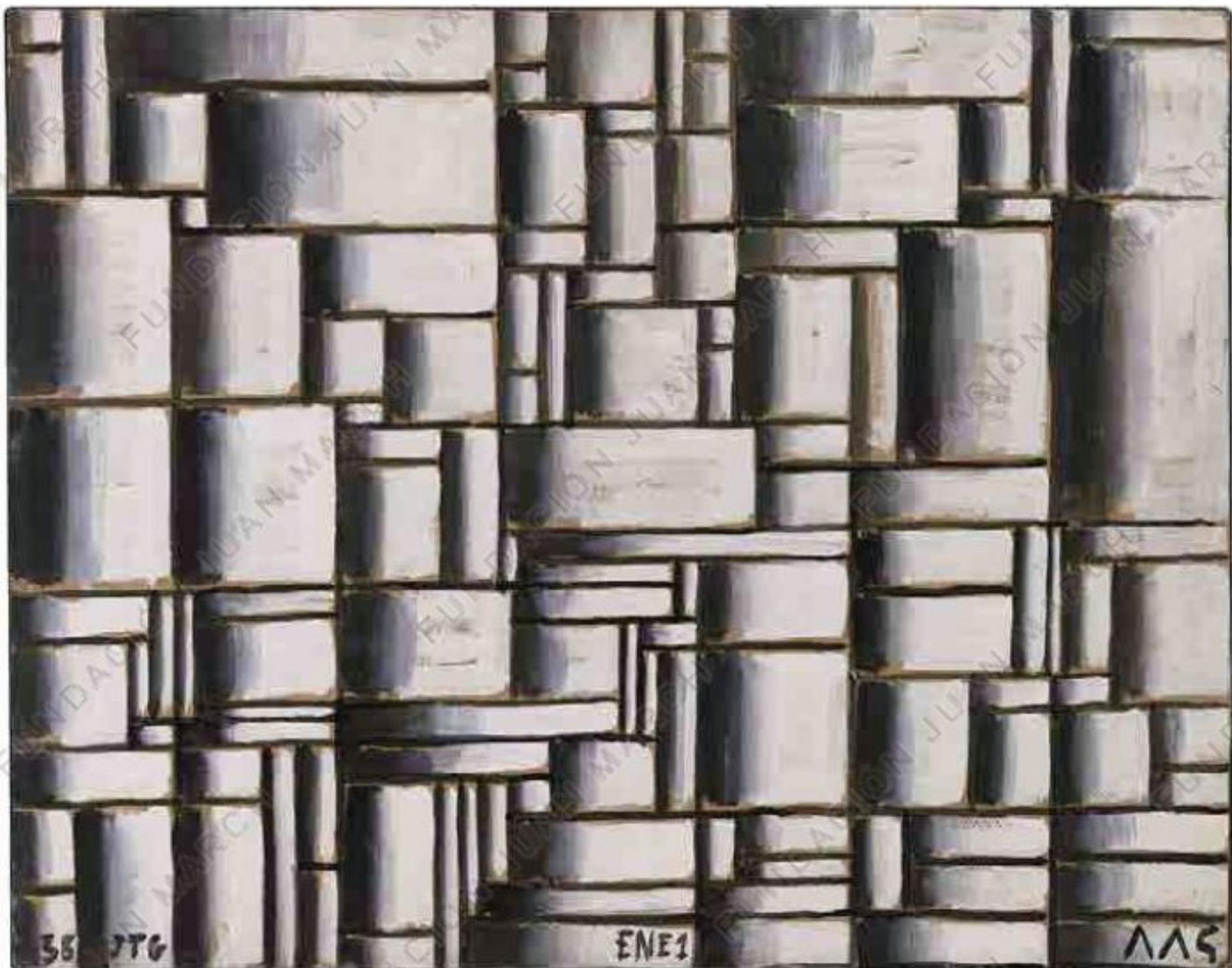
CAT. 1
Joaquín Torres-García
Construction in White and Black, 1930
Painted wood
48.9 x 35.6 x 8 cm (19 ¼ x 14 x 3 ⅛ in.)
Colección Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza
on deposit at Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza
Madrid (CTB 1999.18)



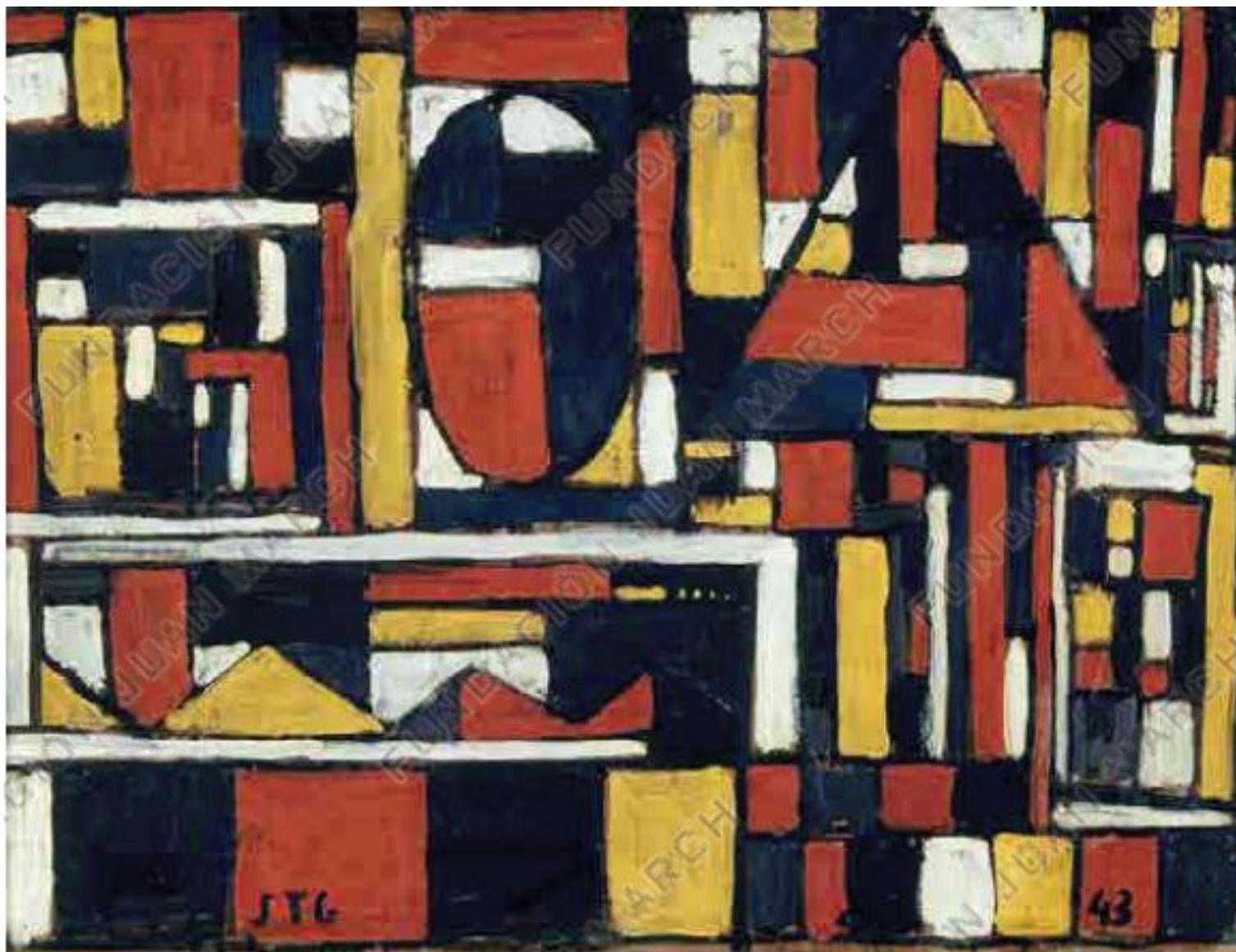
CAT. 2
Joaquín Torres-García
Untitled, 1930
Oil on canvas stretched over plywood
73 x 60 cm (28 ¾ x 23 ⅝ in.)
Centre Pompidou, Paris.
Musée national d'art moderne/
Centre de création industrielle
Donation, 1993 (AM 1993-58)



CAT. 3
Joaquín Torres-García
Construction in White and Black, 1938
Oil on paper mounted on wood
80.7 x 102 cm (31 ¾ x 40 ⅞ in.)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Gift of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros
in honor of David Rockefeller, 2004 (331.2004)



CAT. 4
Joaquín Torres-García
*Constructivist Construction
with Geometric Forms*, 1943
Oil on cardboard
52 x 69 cm (20 ½ x 27 ¼ in.)
Centre Pompidou, Paris.
Musée national d'art moderne/
Centre de création industrielle
Donated to State by the artist's family in 1956
allotted in 1956 (AM 3415 P)



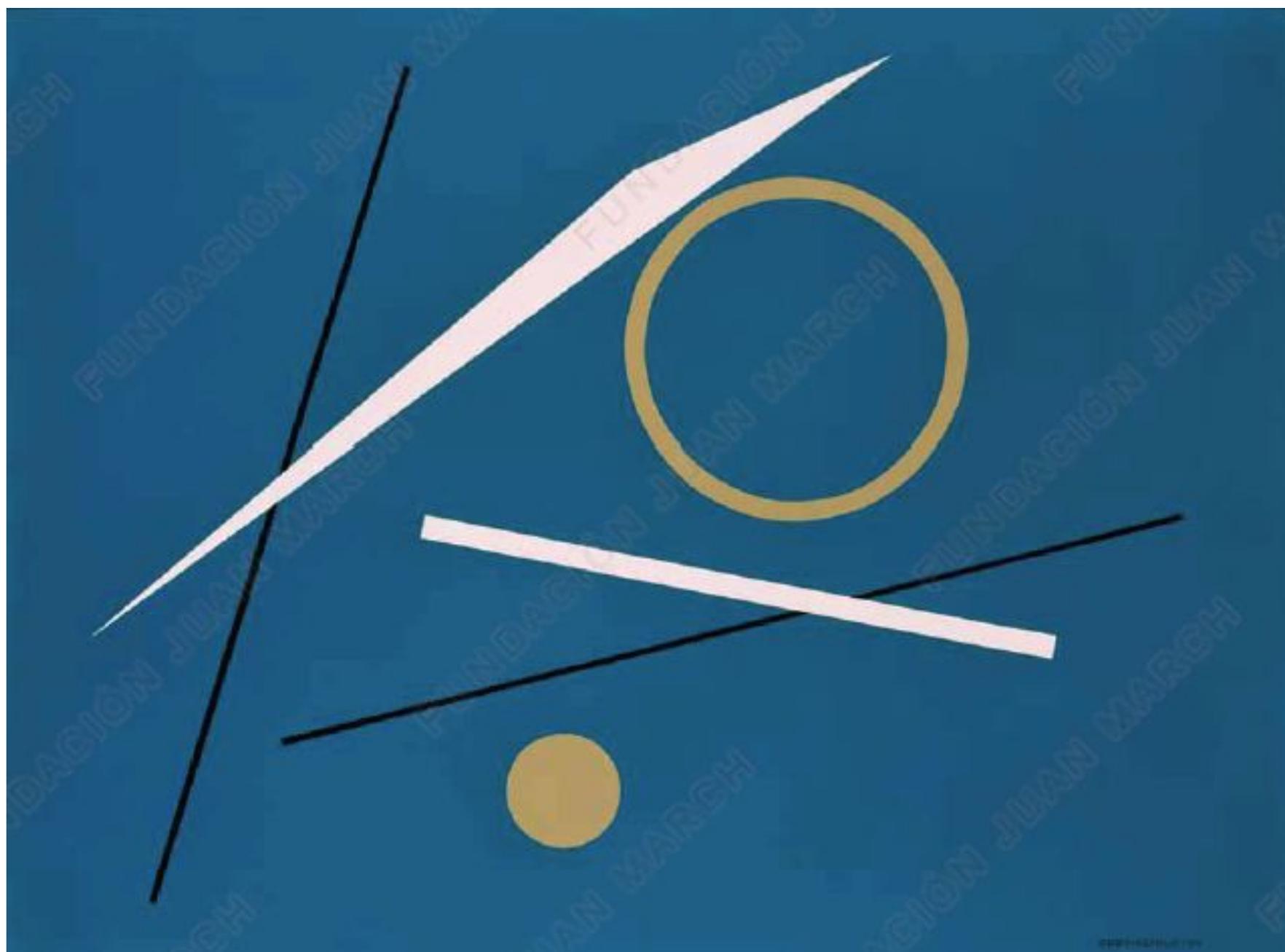
CAT. 5
José Pedro Costigliolo
Untitled, 1947
Gouache on paper
19.3 x 15.5 cm (7 7/8 x 6 1/8 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



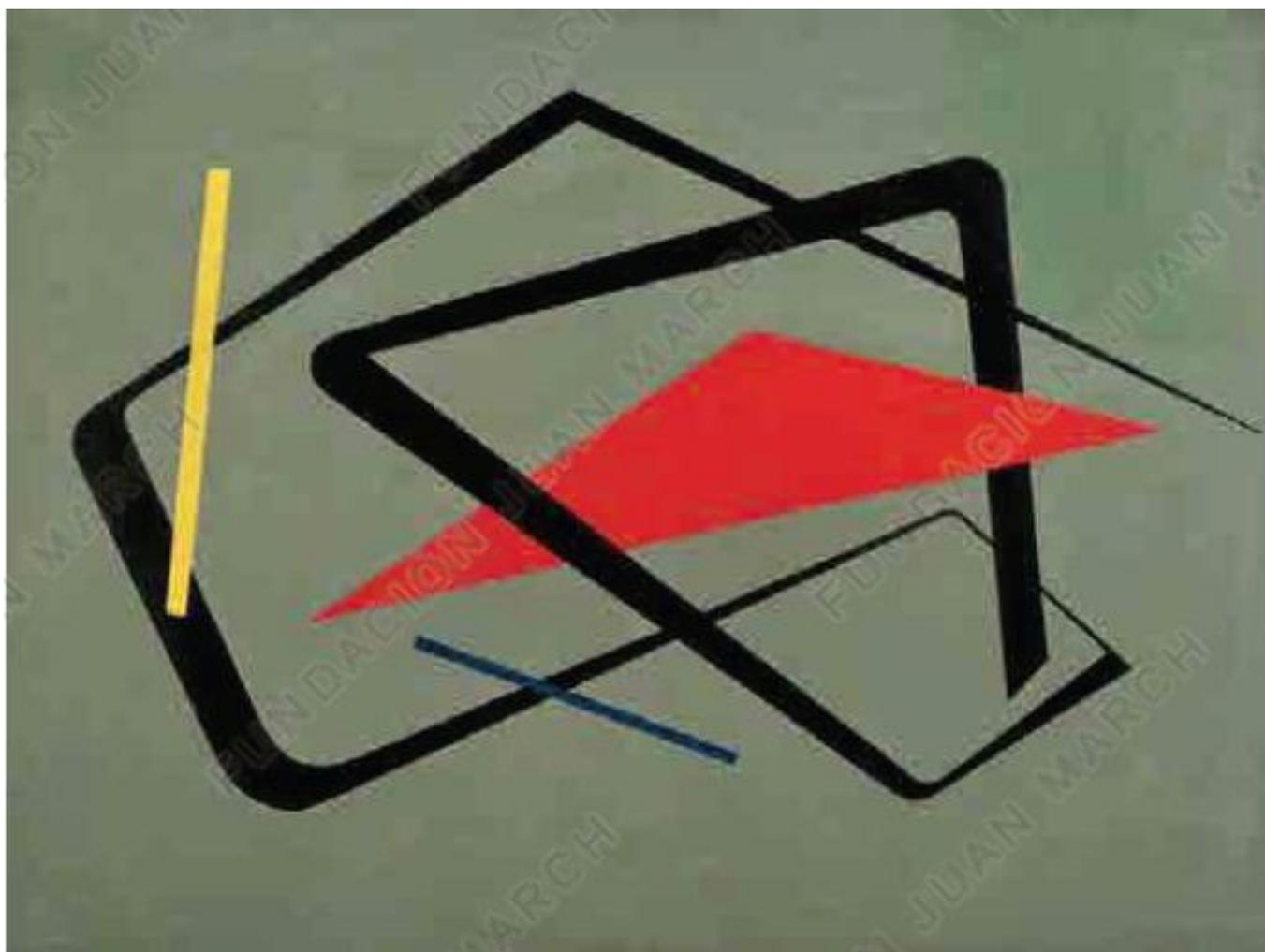
CAT. 7
José Pedro Costigliolo
Composition, 1958
Ink on card
85 x 61 cm (33 1/2 x 24 in.)
Museo Nacional Centro de
Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (DE00709)



CAT. 6
José Pedro Costigliolo
Composition, 1953–54
Lacquer on metal
70 x 92 cm (27 5/8 x 36 1/4 in.)
Museo Nacional Centro de
Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (AD03428)



CAT. 8
María Freire
Untitled, 1954
Oil on canvas
92 x 122 cm (36 1/8 x 48 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 9
María Freire
V.N.A., 1957
Lacquer on wood
162 x 112 cm (63 ¾ x 44 ½ in.)
Museo Nacional Centro de
Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (AD03427)



CAT. 10
María Freire
Composition, 1958
Ink on card
77.8 x 61 cm (30 5/8 x 24 in.)
Museo Nacional Centro de
Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (DO00592)



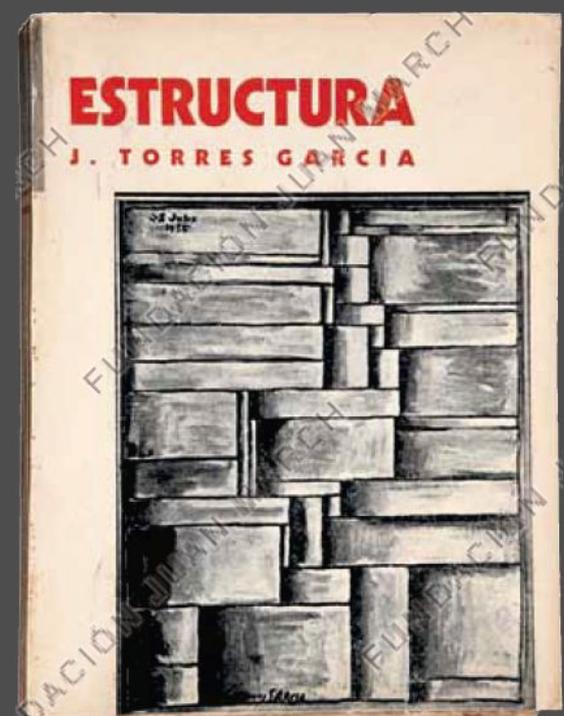
CAT. 11
 Torres-García: obras retrospectivas
 y recientes desde 1898 hasta 1934
 Montevideo: Amigos del
 Arte, June 1934
 Catalogue of Joaquín Torres-García's
 first exhibition in Uruguay
 16.5 x 12 cm (6 1/2 x 4 3/4 in.)
 Collection José María Lafuente



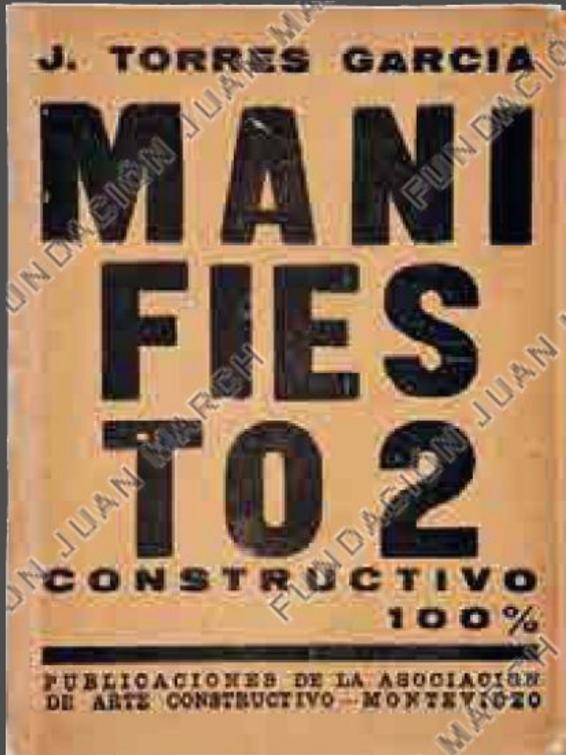
CAT. 12
 Joaquín Torres-García
 Manifiesto 1
 Montevideo: Asociación de Arte
 Constructivo, August 1934
 Printed paper
 32.5 x 20.5 cm (12 3/4 x 8 1/4 in.)
 Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 13
 Joaquín Torres-García
 Estructura
 Montevideo: Biblioteca Alfar, 1935
 Book
 20 x 15 cm (8 x 6 in.)
 Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 15
Joaquín Torres-García
Manifiesto 2
Montevideo: Asociación de
Arte Constructivo, 1938
Printed paper
19 x 14 cm (7 ½ x 5 ½ in.)
Collection José María Lafuente

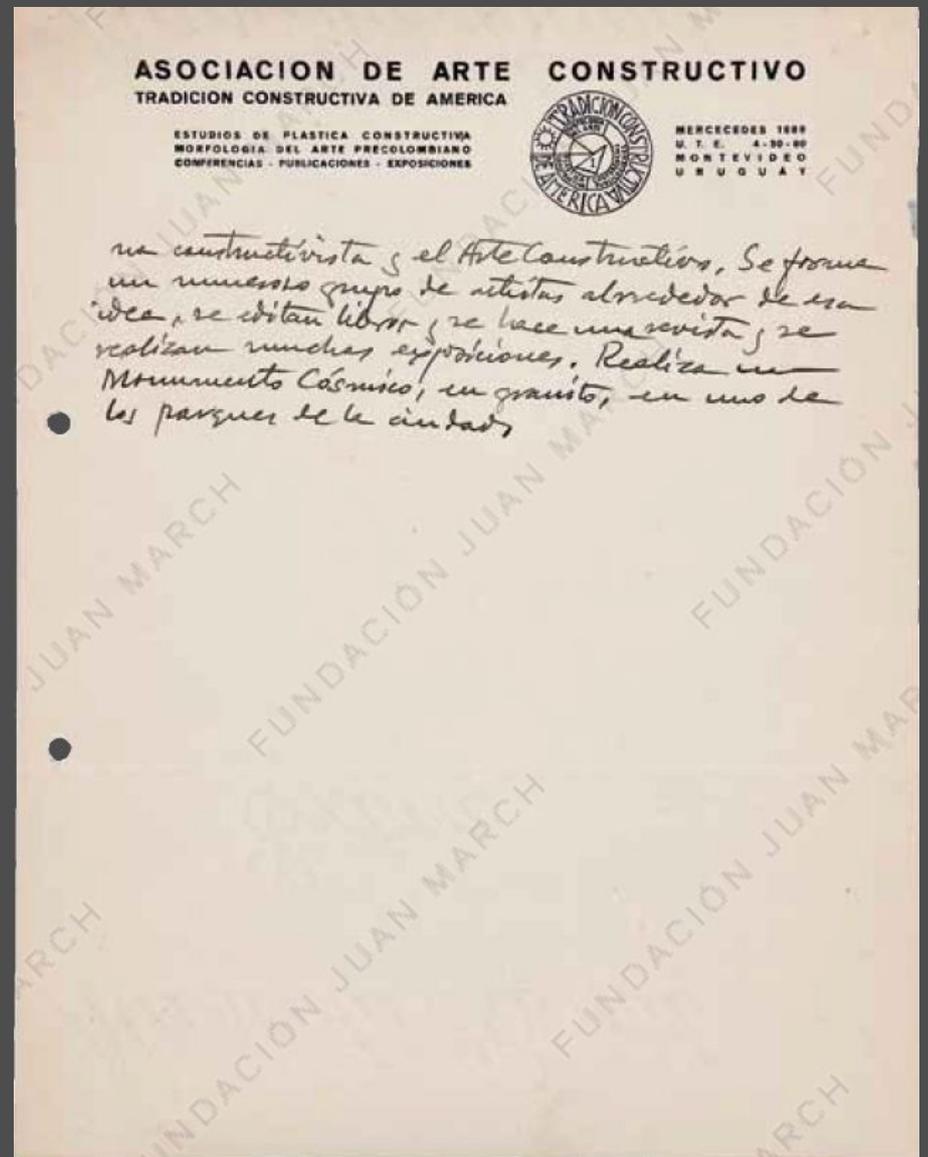
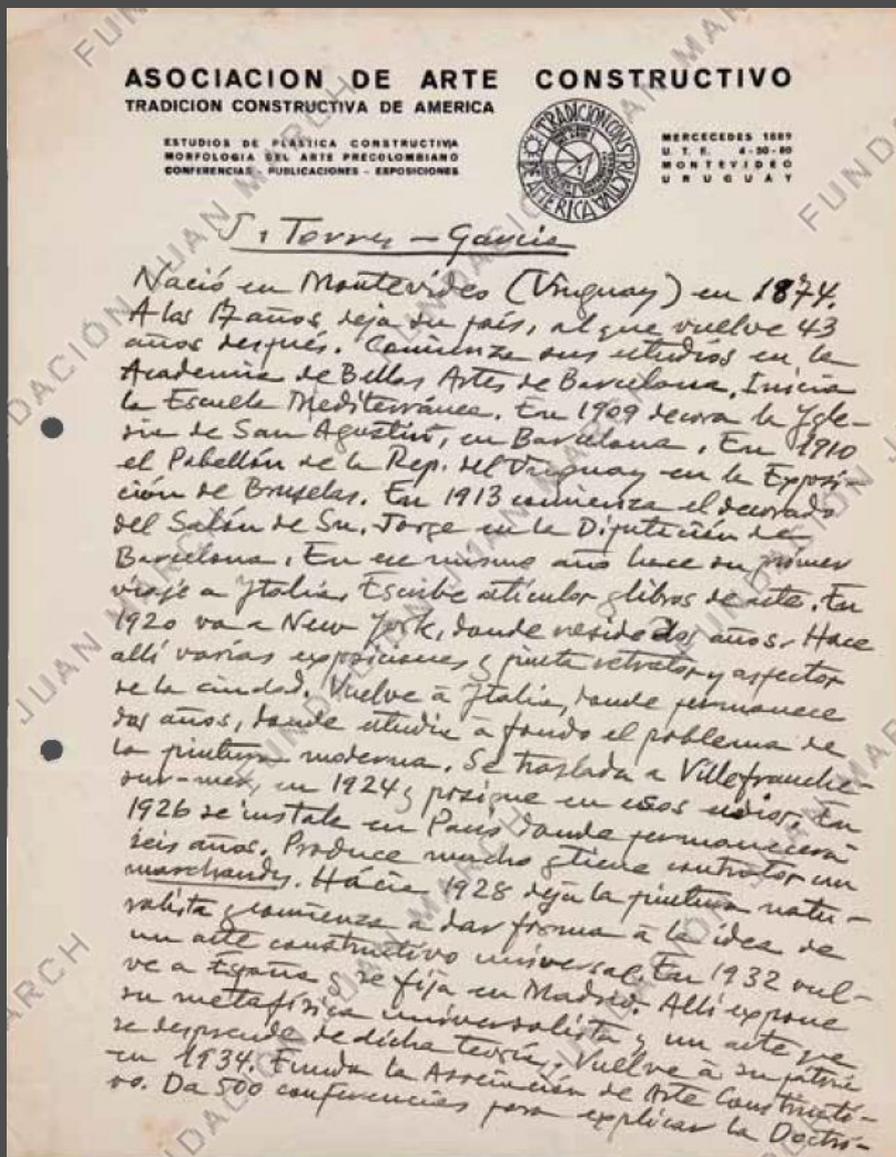


CAT. 16
Joaquín Torres-García
*La tradición del hombre abstracto:
doctrina constructivista*
Montevideo: Asociación de
Arte Constructivo, 1938
Book
21 x 16 cm (8 ¼ x 6 ¼ in.)
Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 17
Joaquín Torres-García
*Metafísica de la prehistoria
indoamericana*
Montevideo: Asociación de
Arte Constructivo, 1939
Book
19.3 x 14.4 cm (7 ⅝ x 5 ¾ in.)
Collection José María Lafuente

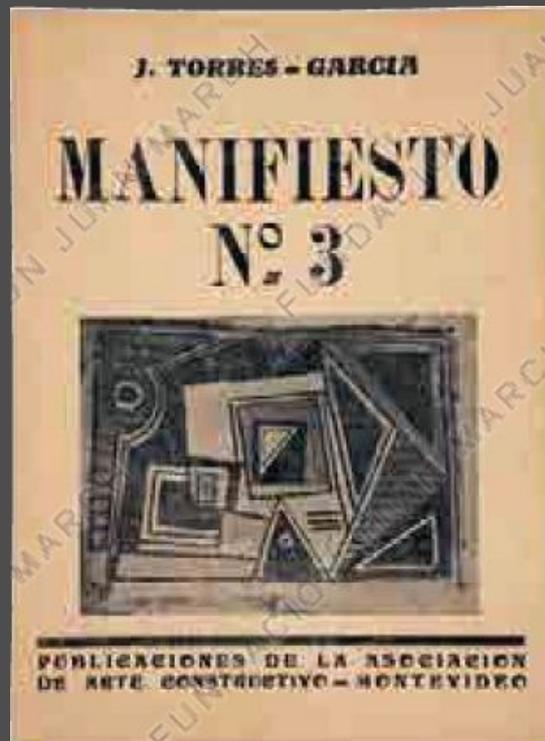




CAT. 19
Joaquín Torres-García
Historia de mi vida
Montevideo: Asociación de
Arte Constructivo, 1939
Book
18 x 14.5 cm (7 1/8 x 5 3/4 in.)
Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 20
Joaquín Torres-García
Manifiesto 3
Montevideo: Asociación de
Arte Constructivo, 1940
Printed paper
19.3 x 14 cm (7 5/8 x 5 1/2 in.)
Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 21

Joaquín Torres-García

Lo aparente y lo concreto en el arte. Montevideo:

Asociación de Arte Constructivo, 1947-48

Pamphlets comprising texts of lessons given

by Joaquín Torres-García at the Faculty of

Humanities and Sciences, Montevideo

21 x 16.5 cm (8 ¼ x 6 ½ in.)

No. 1, July 1947

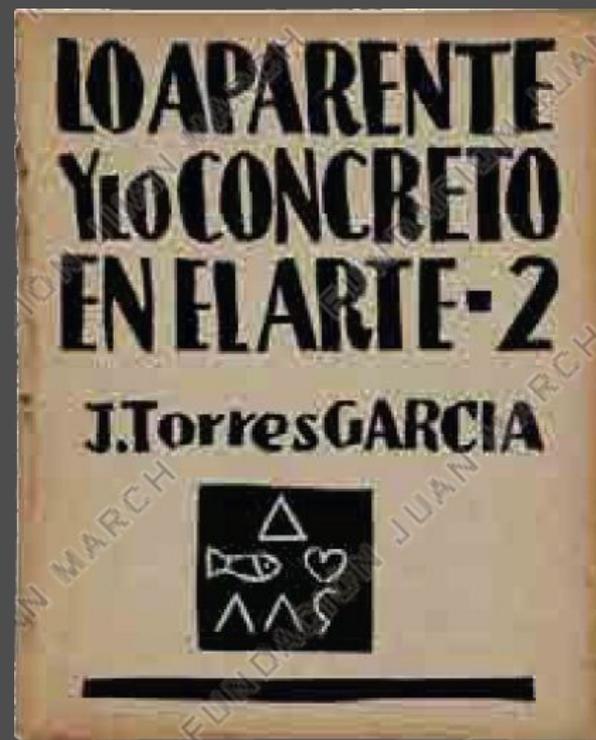
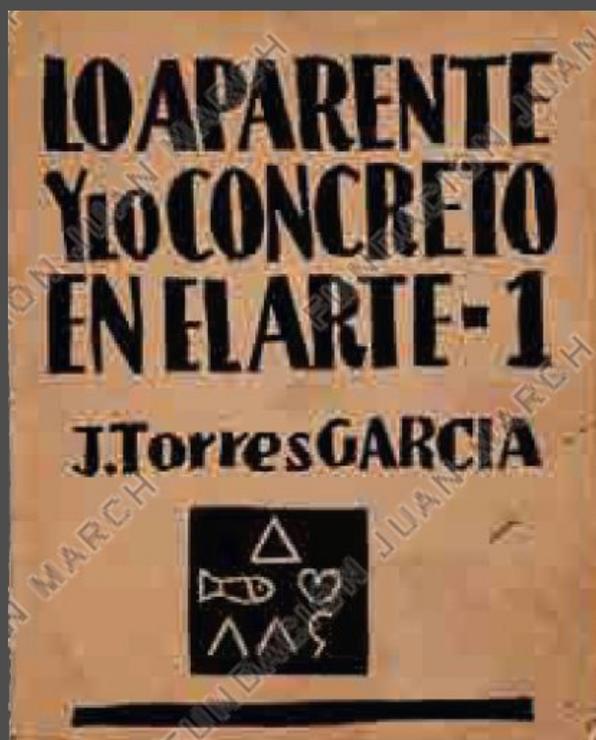
No. 2, August 1947

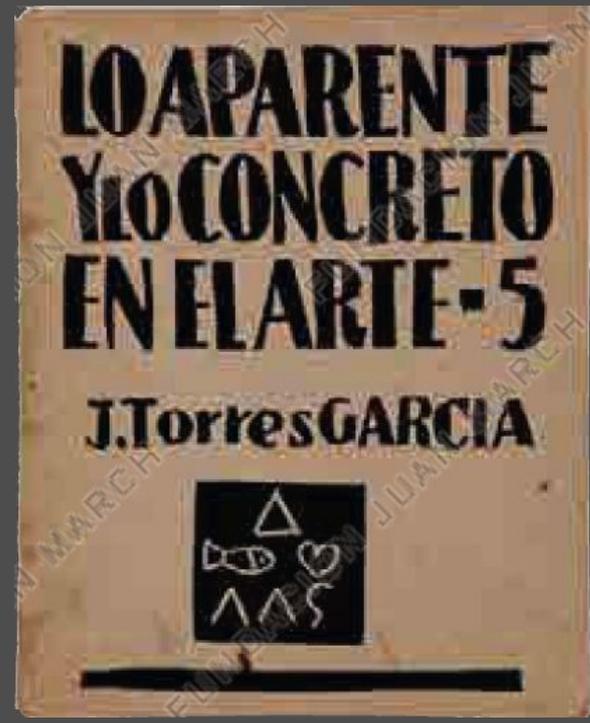
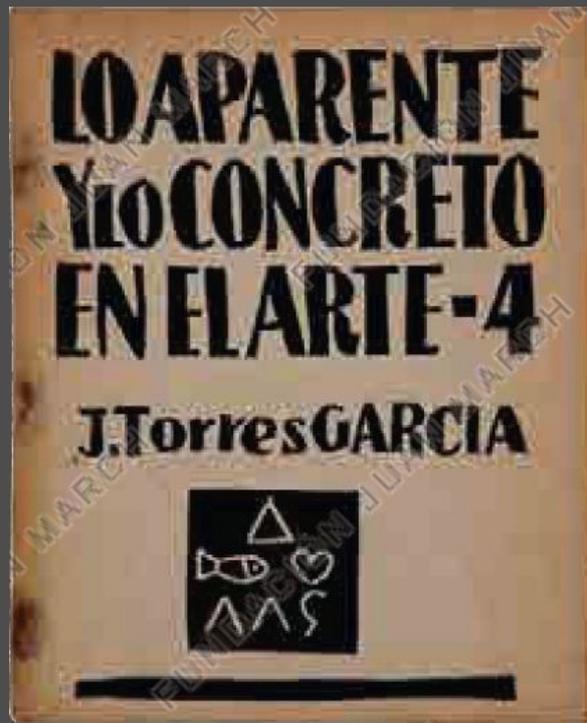
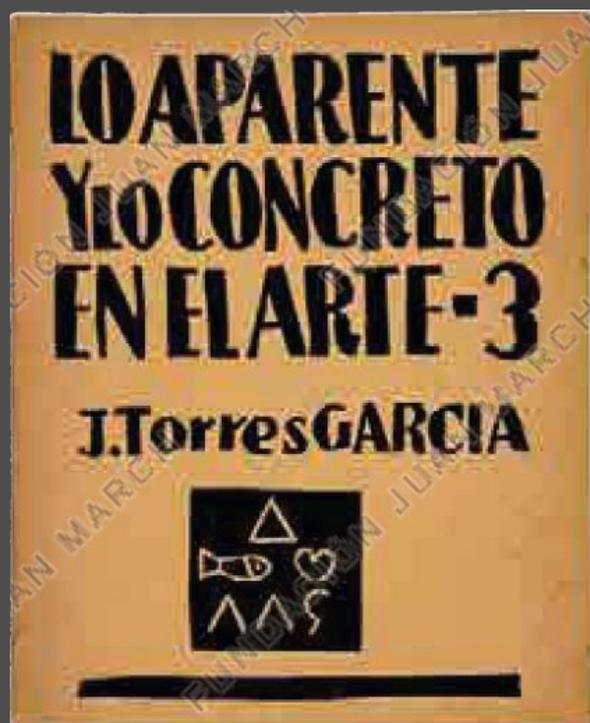
No. 3, October 1947

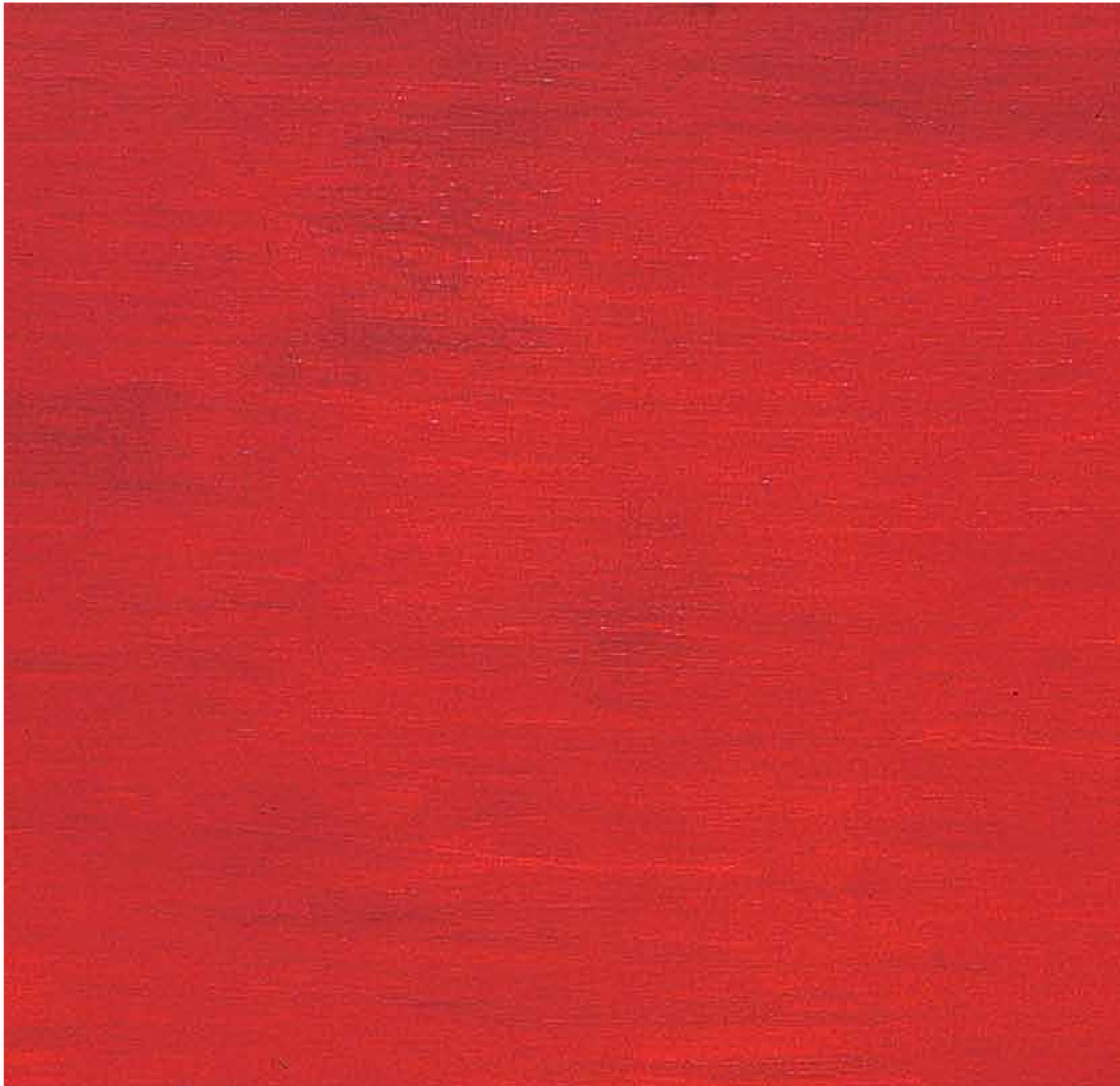
No. 4, December 1947

No. 5, February 1948

Collection José María Lafuente







Mexico

CAT. 26

Germán Cueto

Stockholm: Svensk-Franska Konstgallerie, 1954

Exhibition brochure

21 x 13.8 cm (8 ¼ x 5 ⅜ in.)

Courtesy Freijo Fine Art

Galería de arte y proyectos

CAT. 27

Germán Cueto

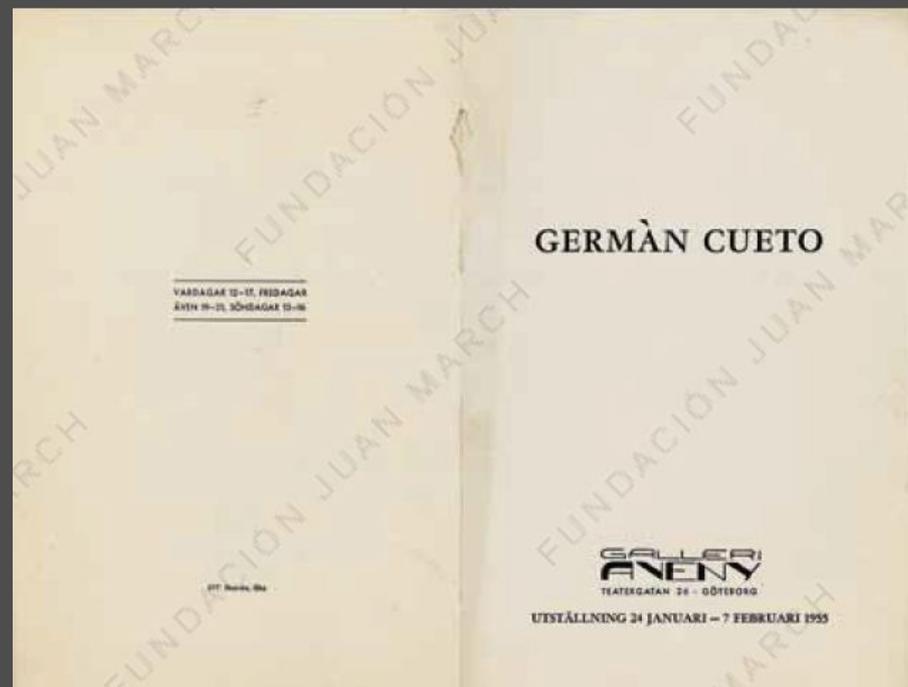
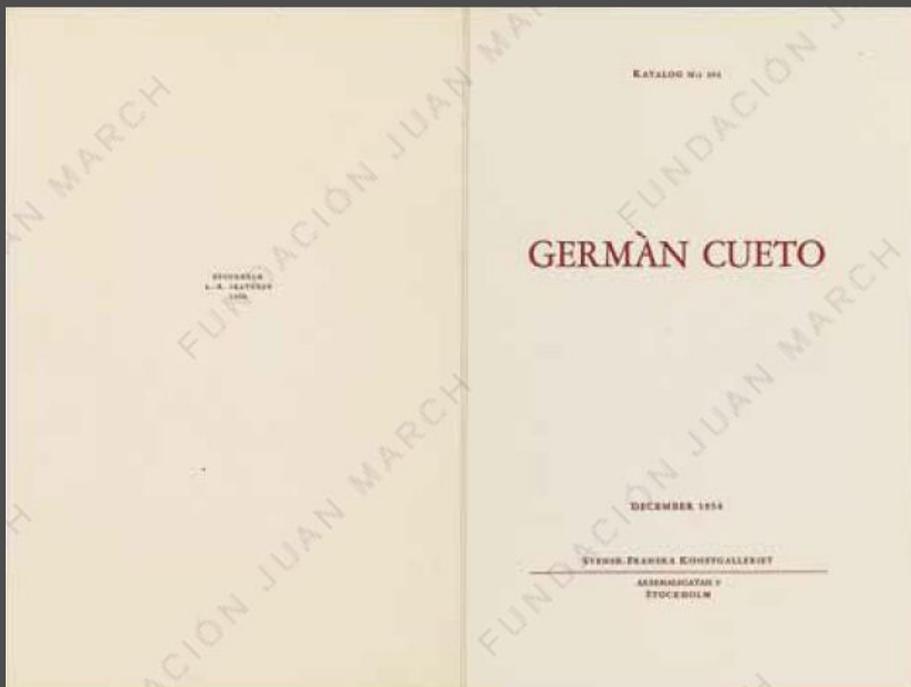
Göteborg: Galleri Aveny, 1955

Exhibition brochure

21.2 x 14 cm (8 ¼ x 5 ½ in.)

Courtesy Freijo Fine Art

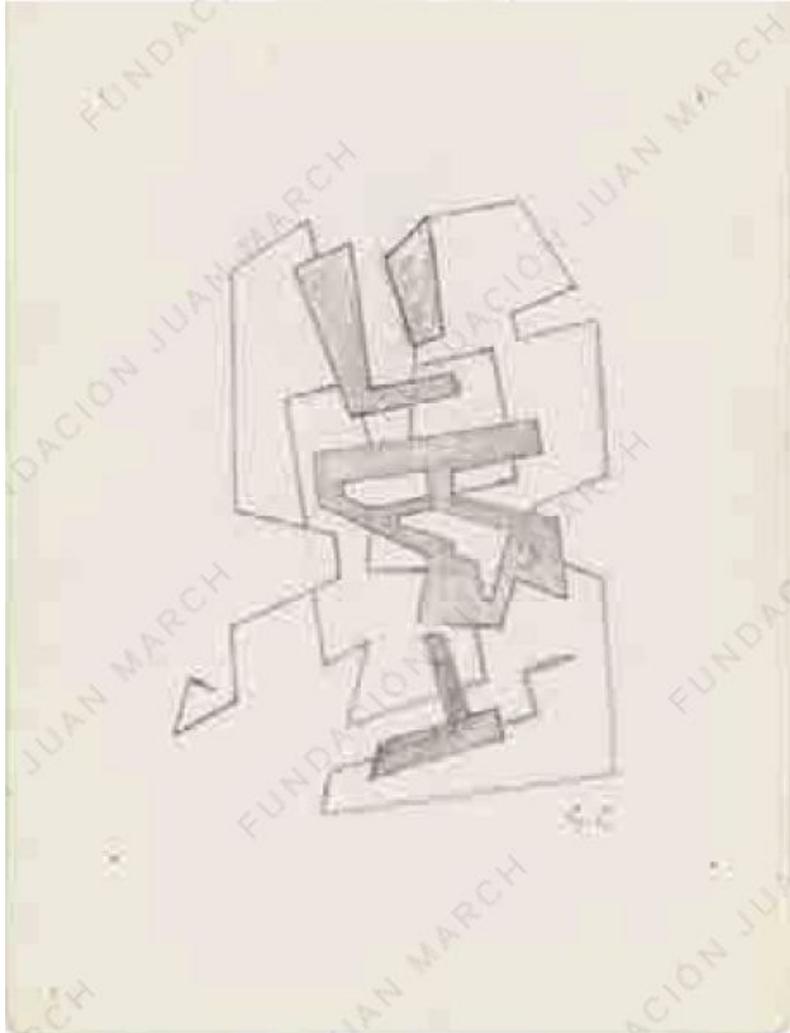
Galería de arte y proyectos



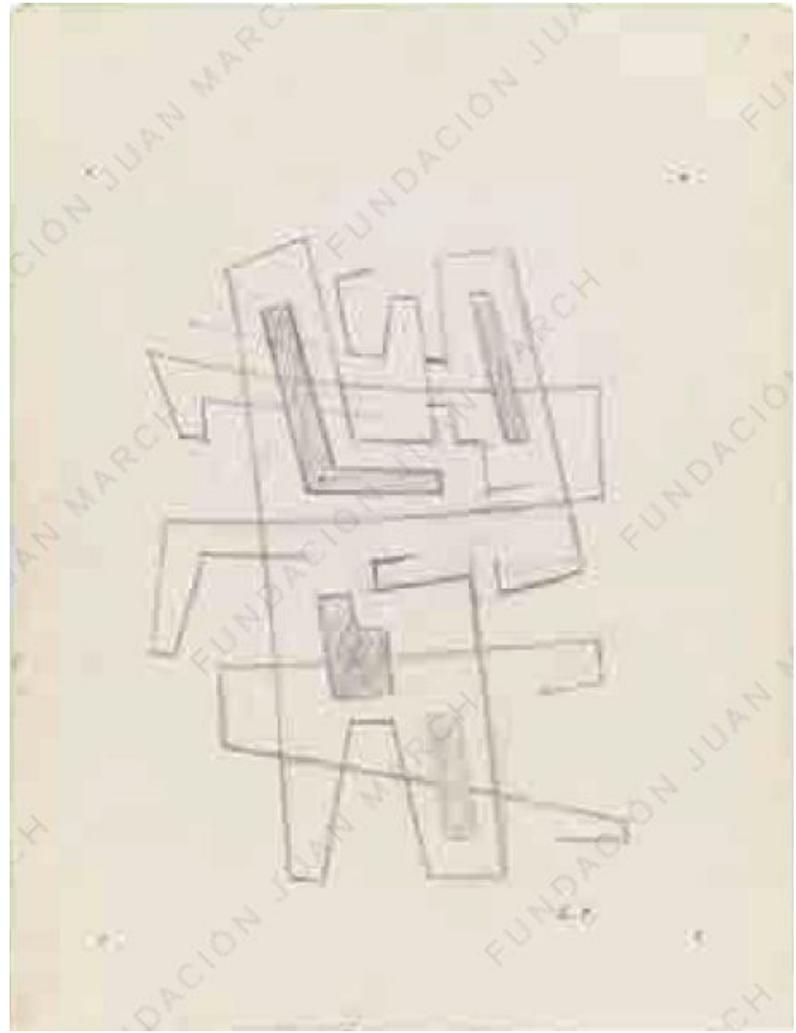
CAT. 22
Germán Cueto
Planes (Homage to musician
Silvestre Revueltas), 1940
Oil on wood
40 x 50 cm (15 ¾ x 19 ¾ in.)
Private collection. Courtesy Freijo Fine Art
Galería de arte y proyectos



CAT. 23
Germán Cueto
Geometric Form, 1944
Pencil on paper
31 x 23.5 cm (12 1/8 x 9 1/4 in.)
Collection Freijo. Courtesy Freijo Fine Art
Galería de arte y proyectos

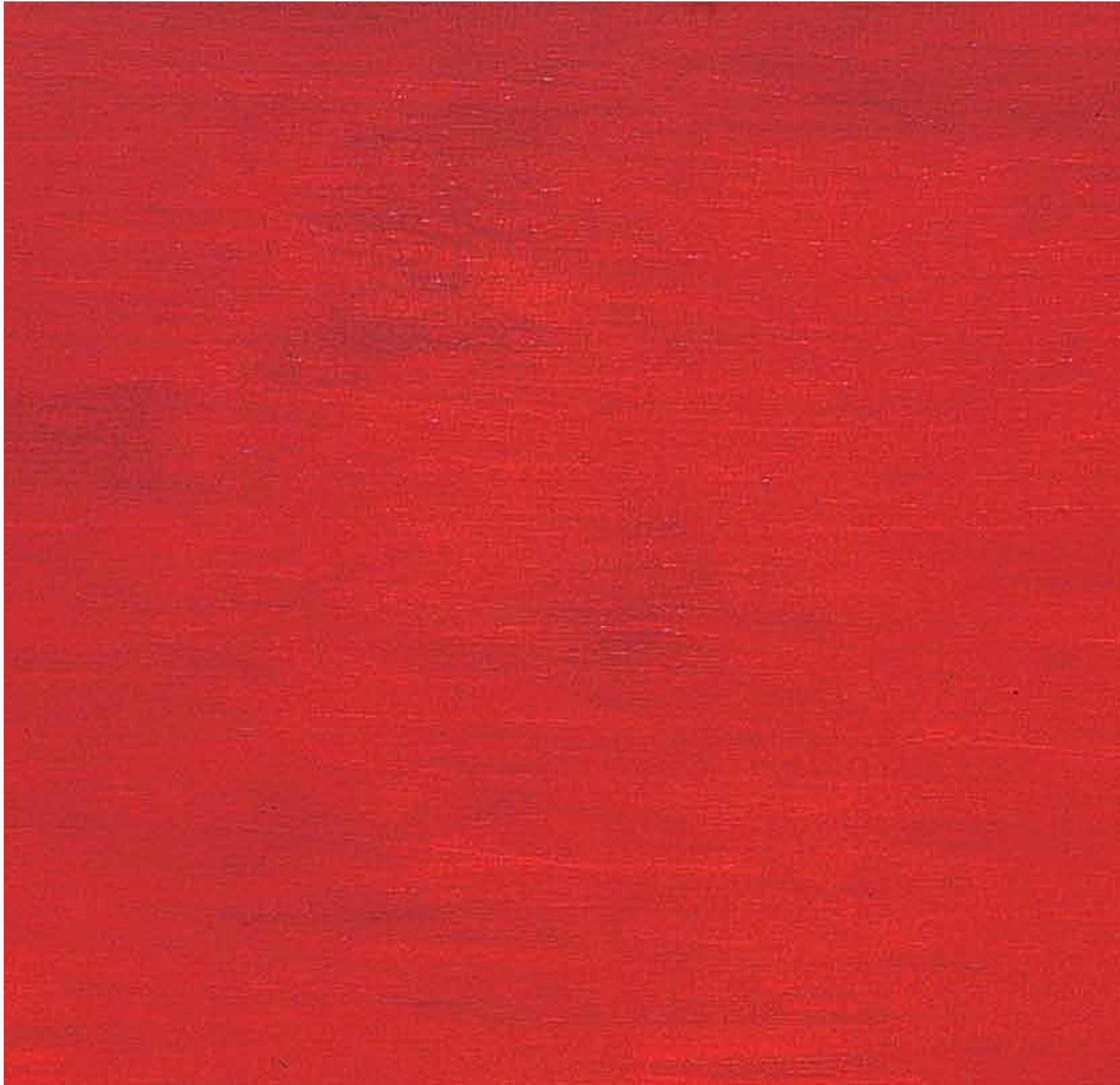


CAT. 24
Germán Cueto
Abstract Form (Sculpture Study), 1944
Pencil on paper
31 x 23.5 cm (12 1/8 x 9 1/4 in.)
Collection Freijo. Courtesy Freijo Fine Art
Galería de arte y proyectos



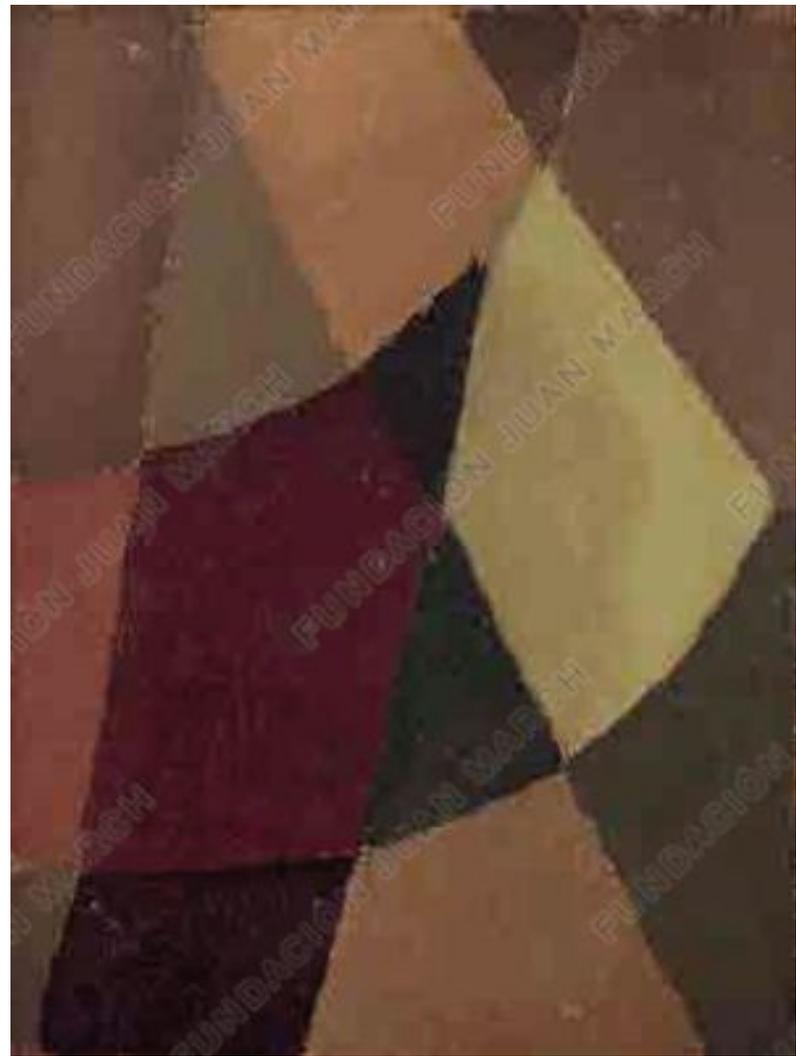
CAT. 25
Germán Cueto
Estela, 1950
Ceramic (stoneware)
24 x 18 x 4 cm (9 3/8 x 7 1/8 x 1 5/8 in.)
Collection Freijo. Courtesy Freijo Fine Art
Galería de arte y proyectos





Argentina

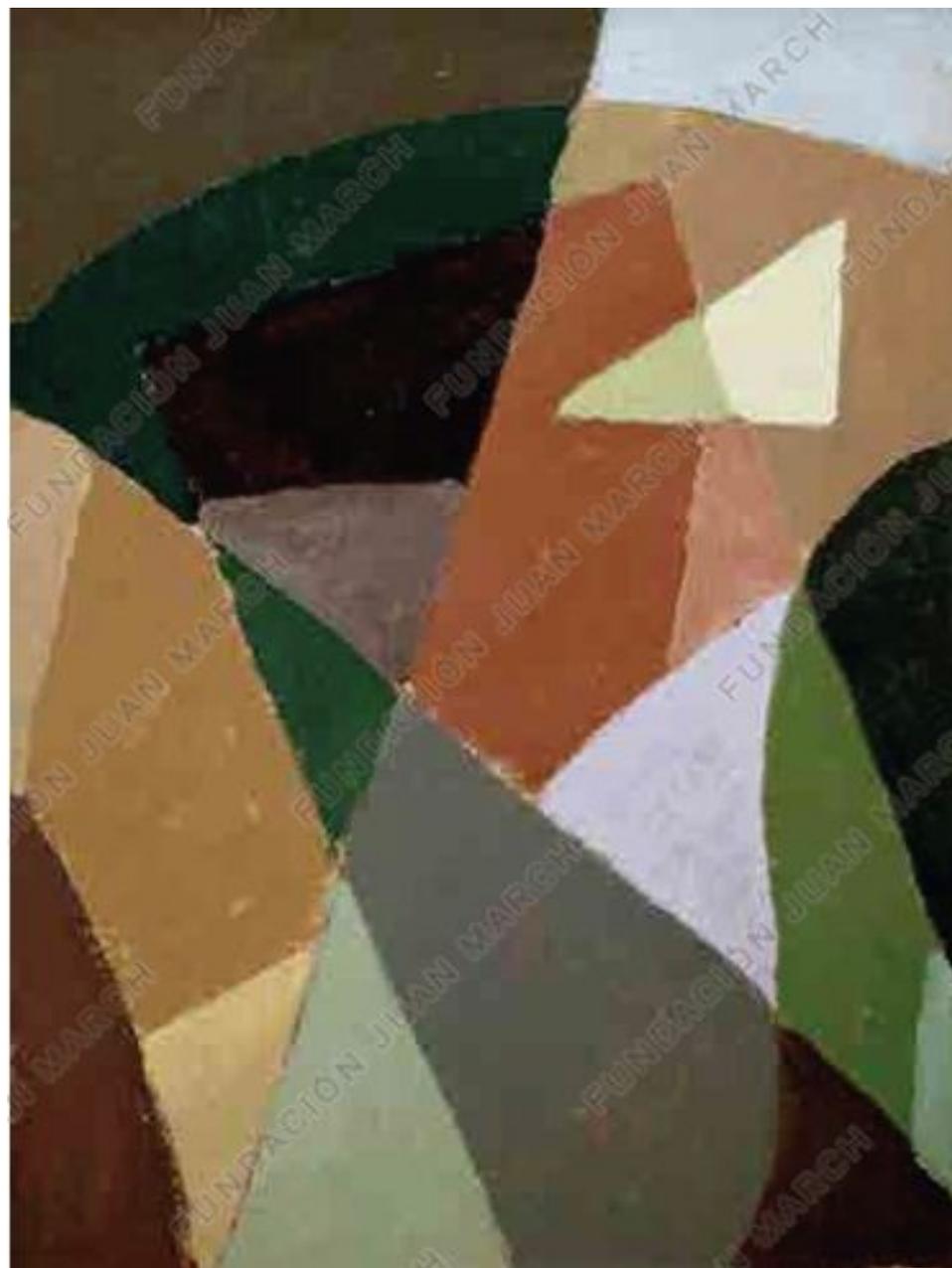
CAT. 28
Esteban Lisa
Composition, ca. 1935
Oil on cardboard
30 x 23 cm (11 ¾ x 9 ½ in.)
Collection Jorge Virgili, Madrid



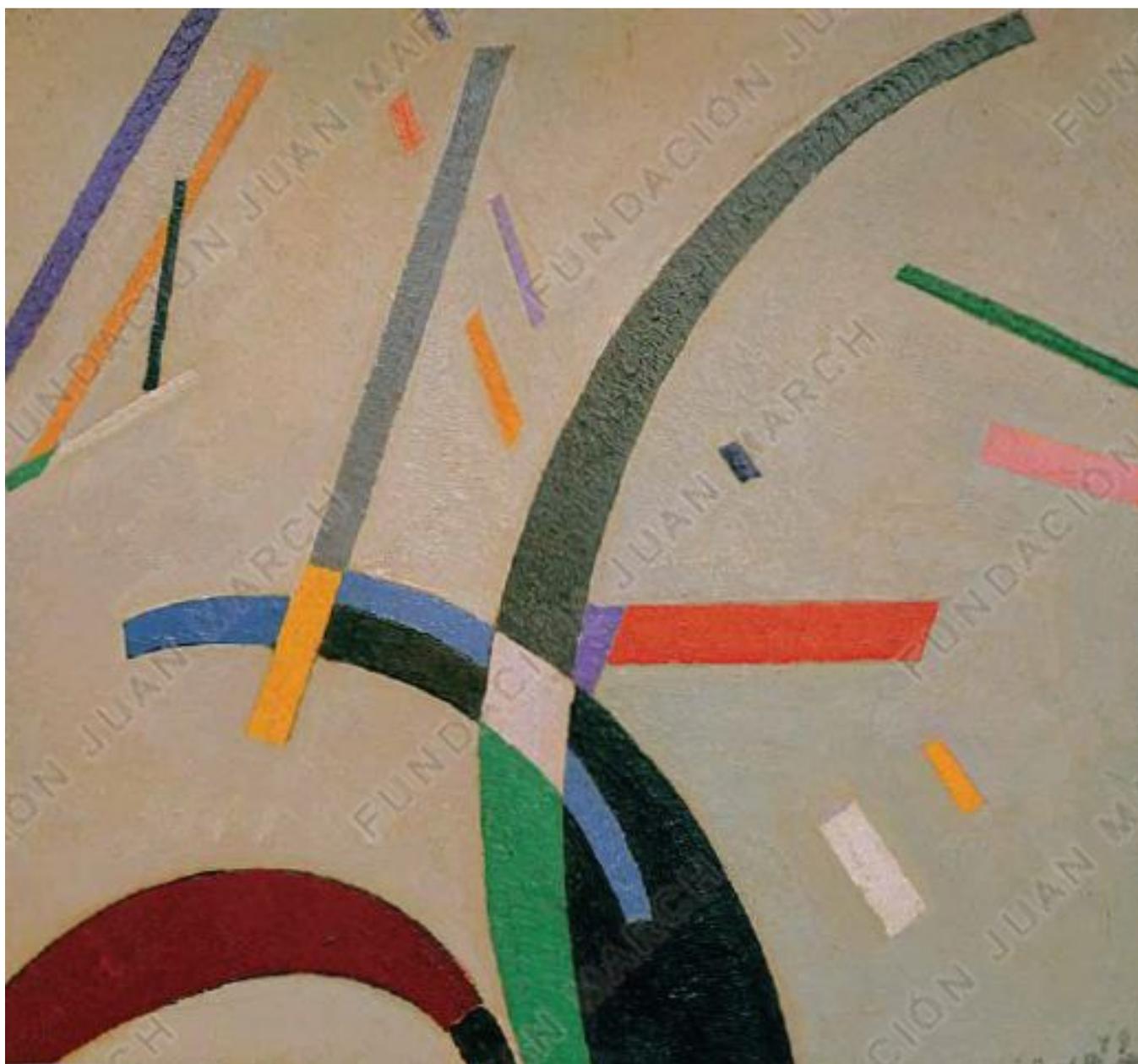
CAT. 29
Esteban Lisa
Composition, ca. 1935–40
Oil on cardboard
30 x 23 cm (11 ¾ x 9 ½ in.)
Collection Jorge Virgili, Madrid



CAT. 30
Esteban Lisa
Composition, ca. 1935–40
Oil on cardboard
30 x 23 cm (11 ¾ x 9 ½ in.)
Collection Jorge Virgili, Madrid



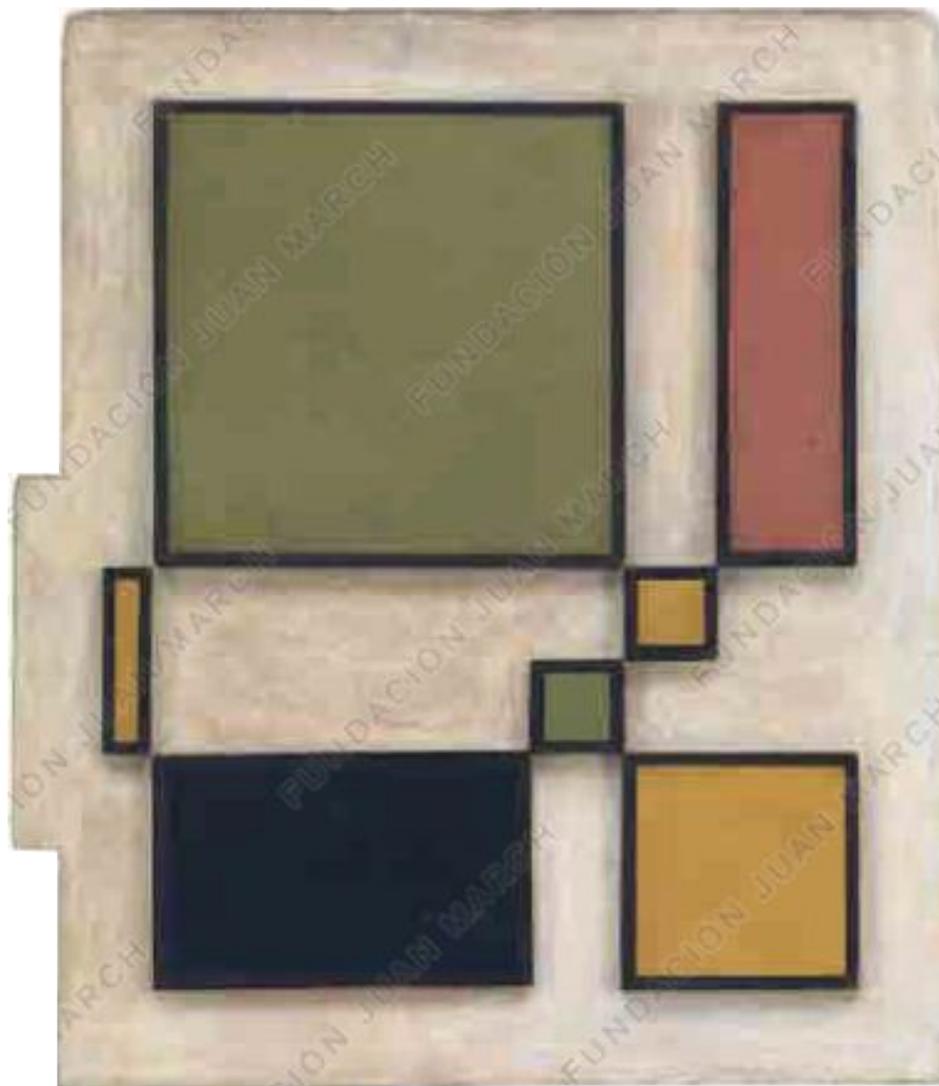
CAT. 31
Juan del Prete
Composition with Geometric Elements, 1949
Oil on cardboard
39.5 x 43 cm (15 5/8 x 16 7/8 in.)
Private collection



CAT. 32
Juan Bay
Composition, 1950
Oil on plywood
48 x 38 cm (18 7/8 x 15 in.)
Private collection



CAT. 34
Rod Rothfuss
Yellow Rectangle, 1955
Paint on wood
37 x 30 cm (14 5/8 x 11 3/4 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 33
Rod Rothfuss
3 Red Circles, 1948
Enamel on wood
100.5 x 64.2 x 1.5 cm (39 5/8 x 25 1/4 x 5/8 in.)
Malba - Fundación Costantini,
Buenos Aires (2001.142)



CAT. 35
Carmelo Arden Quin
Untitled or Composition, 1945
Oil on cardboard and lacquered wood
39 x 30 cm (15 3/8 x 11 3/4 in.)
Malba - Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires (2001.03)



CAT. 260
Carmelo Arden Quin
Untitled, 1959
Paper
31 x 21.7 cm (12 ¼ x 8 ½ in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 36
Gyula Kosice
Mobile Articulated Sculpture, 1945
Bronze strips, chrome patina
65 x 53.5 x 51 cm (25 5/8 x 21 1/8 x 20 1/8 in.)
Private collection



CAT. 37
Gyula Kosice
Liberated Planes and Color, 1947
Enamel on plywood
70 x 55 cm (27 5/8 x 21 3/4 in.)
Private collection



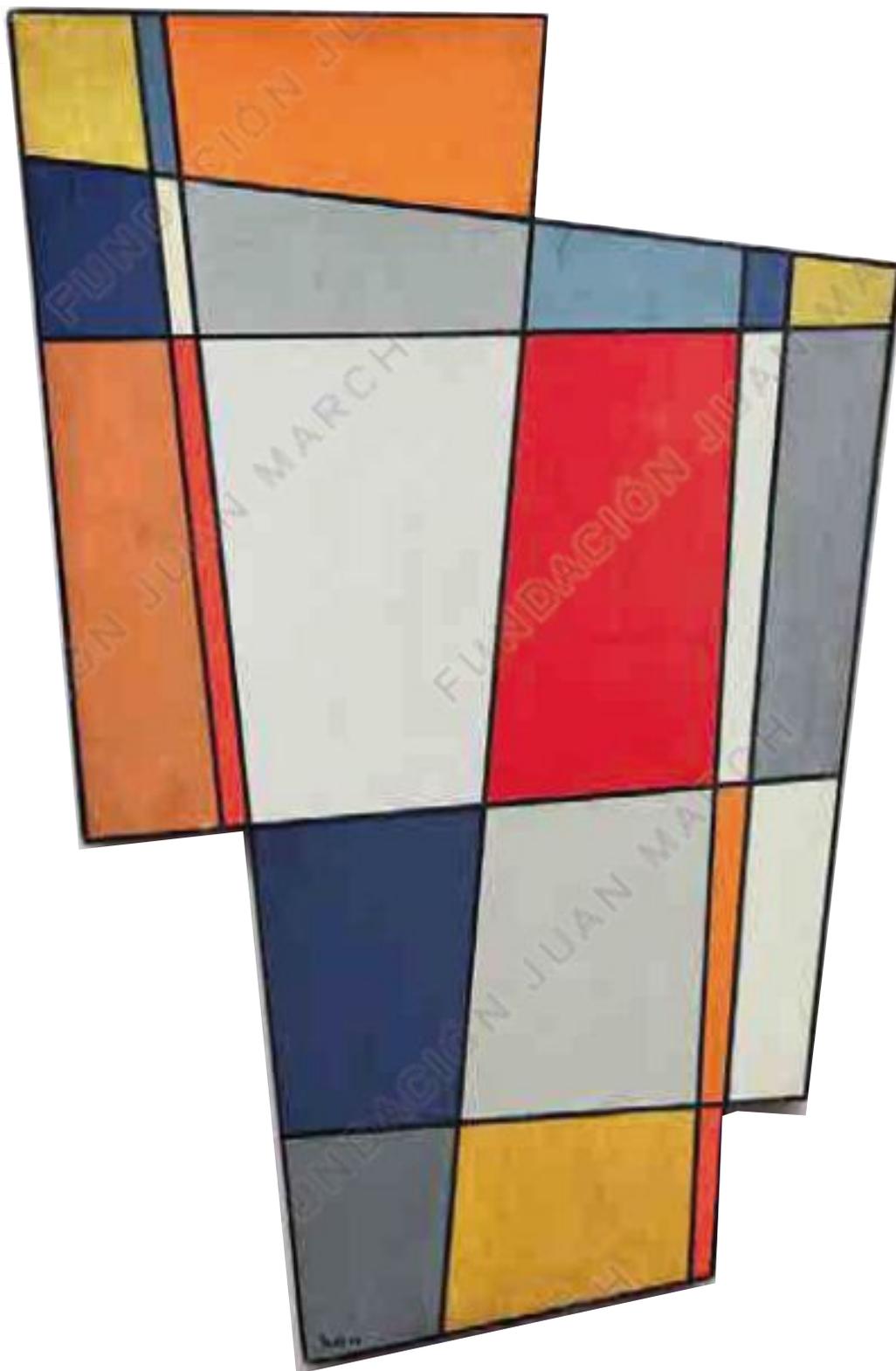
CAT. 38
Martin Blaszko
Madí Figure, 1946
Bronze, green patina
70 x 31 x 14.4 cm (27 5/8 x 12 1/8 x 5 3/4 in.)
Private collection



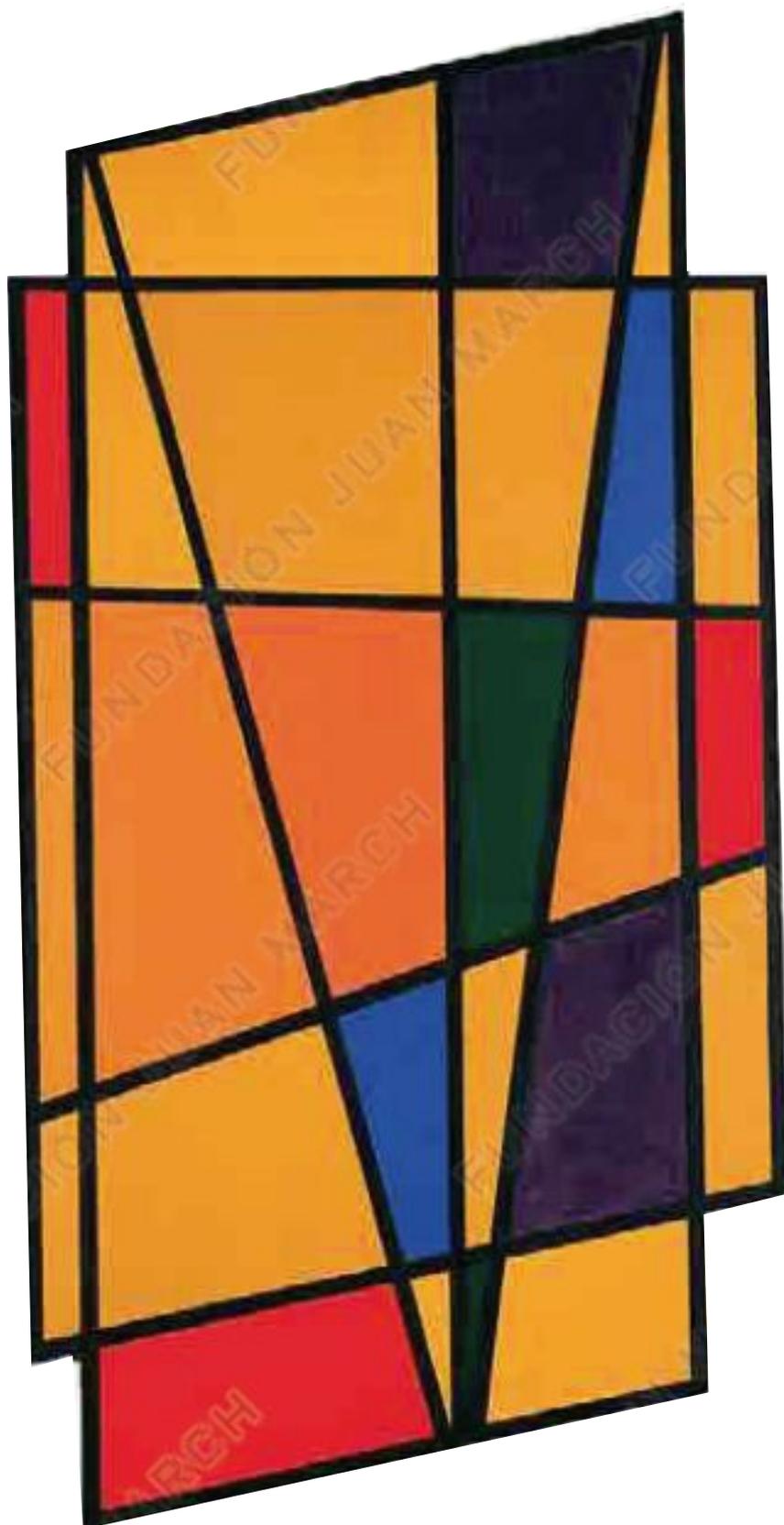
CAT. 39
Martín Blaszkó
Madí Column, 1947
Painted wood
75.5 x 20.5 x 9.3 cm (29 3/4 x 8 1/8 x 3 3/4 in.)
Malba - Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires (2001.39)



CAT. 40
Juan Melé
Cropped Frame no. 3, 1946
Oil on wood
85 x 55 cm (33 ½ x 21 ¾ in.)
Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires



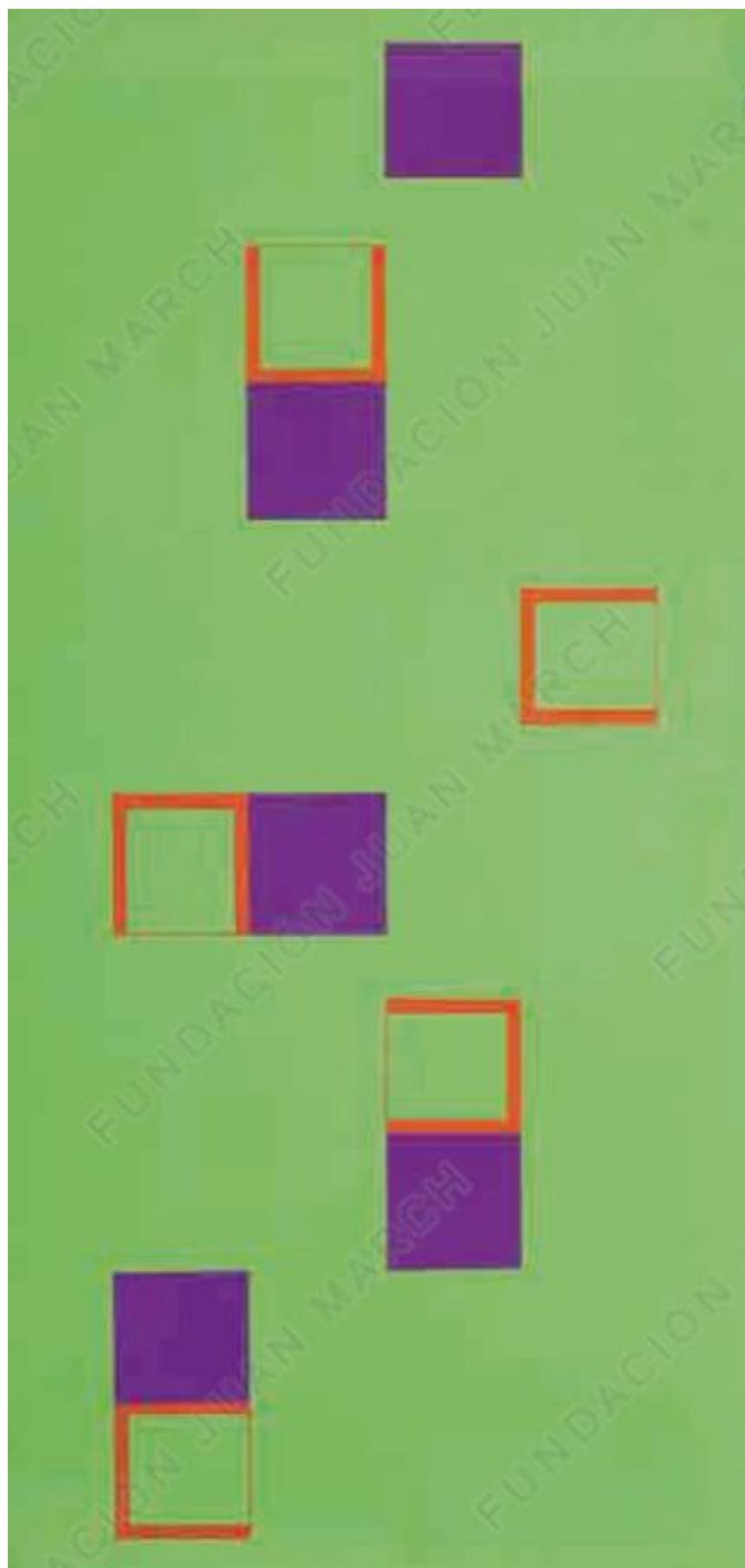
CAT. 42
Manuel Espinosa
Painting, 1945
Oil on chipboard
88 x 47 cm (34 5/8 x 18 1/2 in.)
Private collection



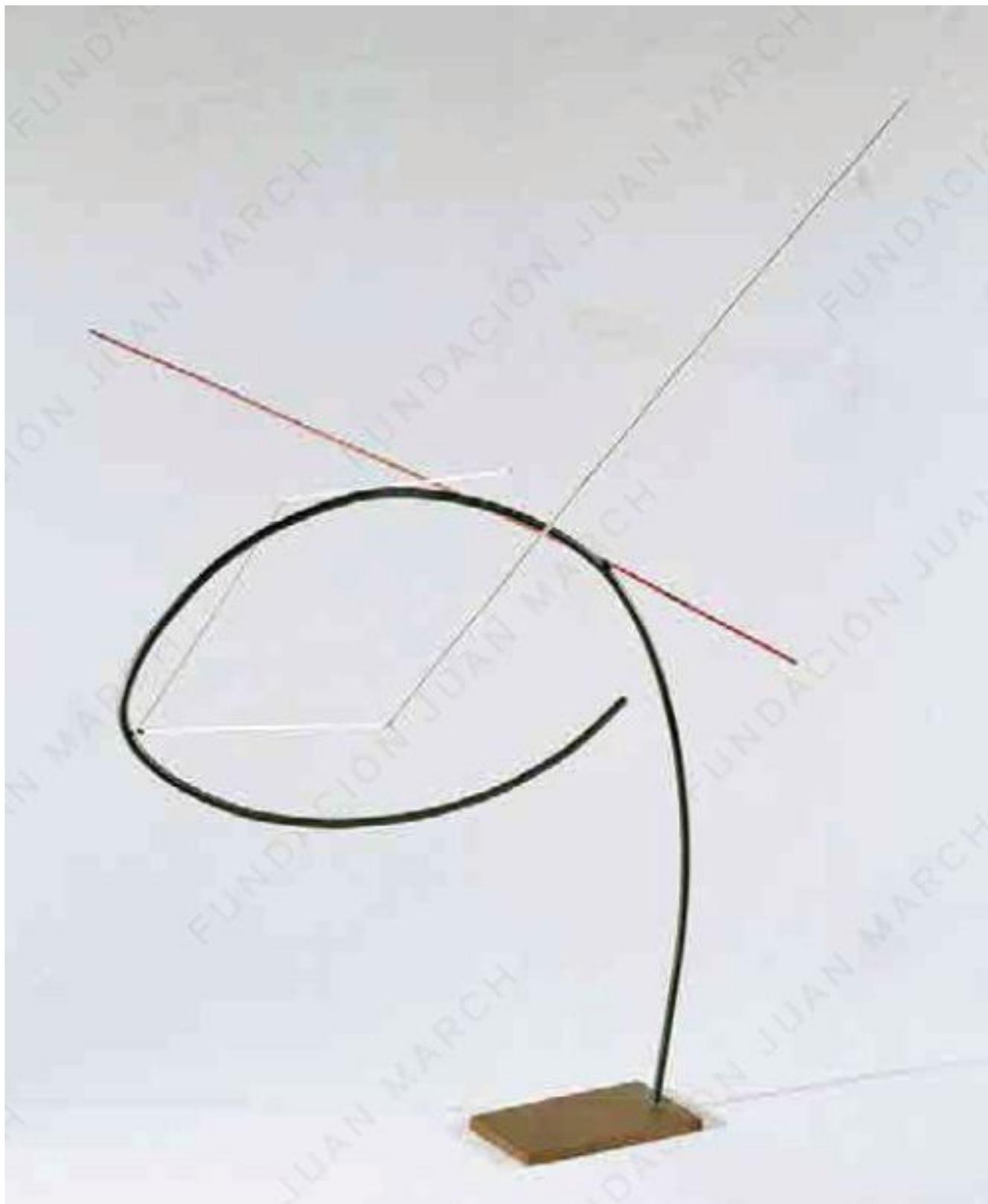
CAT. 43
Manuel Espinosa
Untitled, 1945
Oil on chipboard
55 x 60 cm (21 ¾ x 23 ½ in.)
Museo de Artes Plásticas
Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires



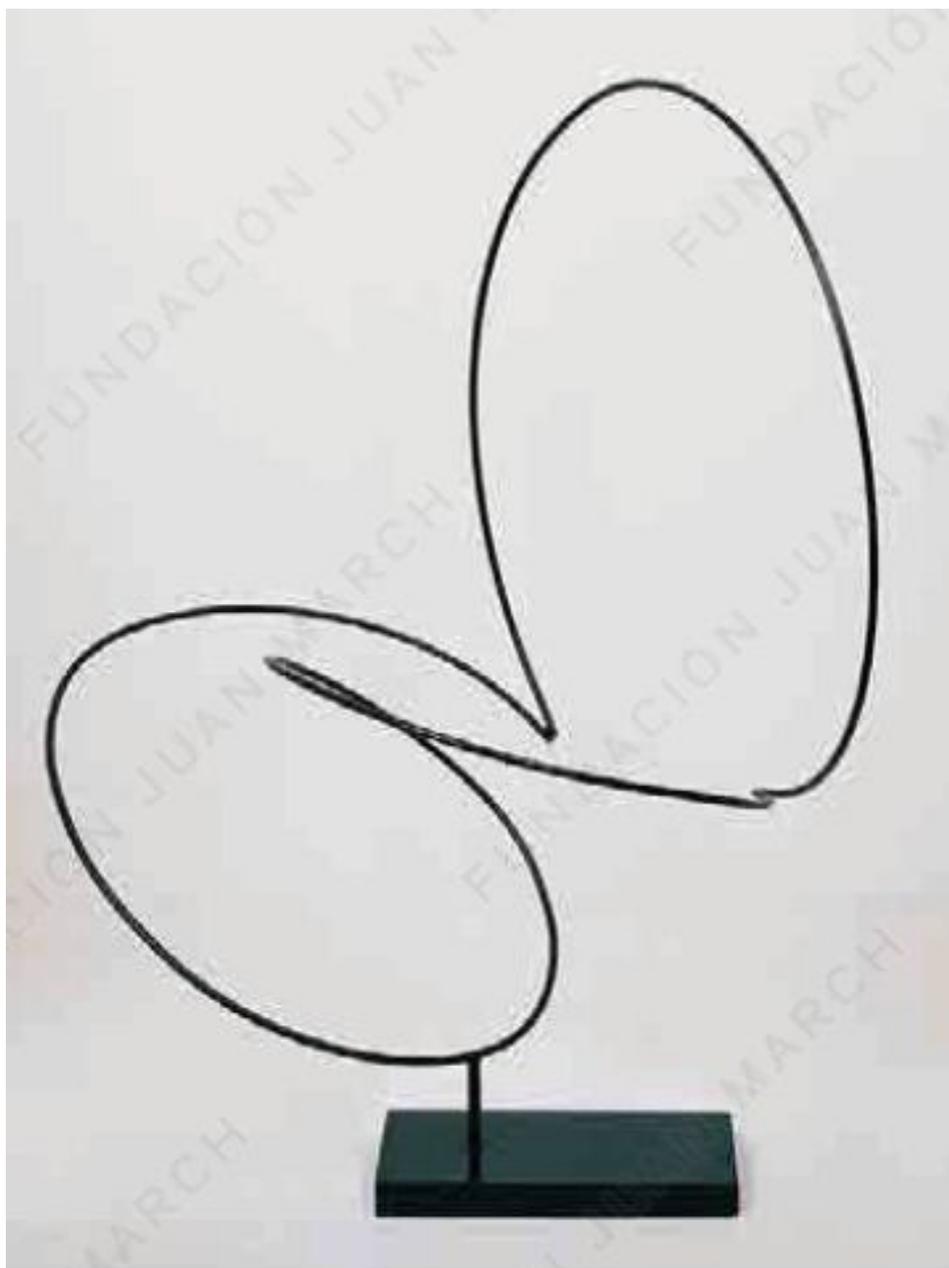
CAT. 44
Manuel Espinosa
Untitled, 1950
Gouache on paper
69.8 x 33.3 cm (27 ½ x 13 ¼ in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



CAT. 45
Enio Iommi
Opposing Directions, 1945
Polychromed iron and copper
87.5 x 84 x 63.5 cm
(34 3/8 x 33 1/8 x 25 in.)
Private collection



CAT. 46
Enio Iommi
Interrupted Continuity, 1948
Enamel on metal over black granite base
62.3 x 45 x 32 cm (24 ½ x 17 ¾ x 12 ⅝ in.)
Malba - Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires (2001.98)



CAT. 47
Enio Iommi
Linear Rhythm, 1949
Steel wire and stone
62.6 x 33.5 x 48.4 cm
(24 ⅝ x 13 ⅛ x 19 ⅛ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 48
Lidy Prati
Concrete or Untitled, 1945
Oil on plywood
62 x 48 cm (24 3/8 x 18 7/8 in.)
Private collection



CAT. 49
Lidy Prati
Untitled, ca. 1945
Mixed media on canvas
39 x 39 cm (15 3/8 x 15 3/8 in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



CAT. 50
Lidy Prati
Infinite Vibration, 1953
Synthetic enamel on canvas
40 x 50 cm (15 3/4 x 19 3/4 in.)
Collection Raul Naon



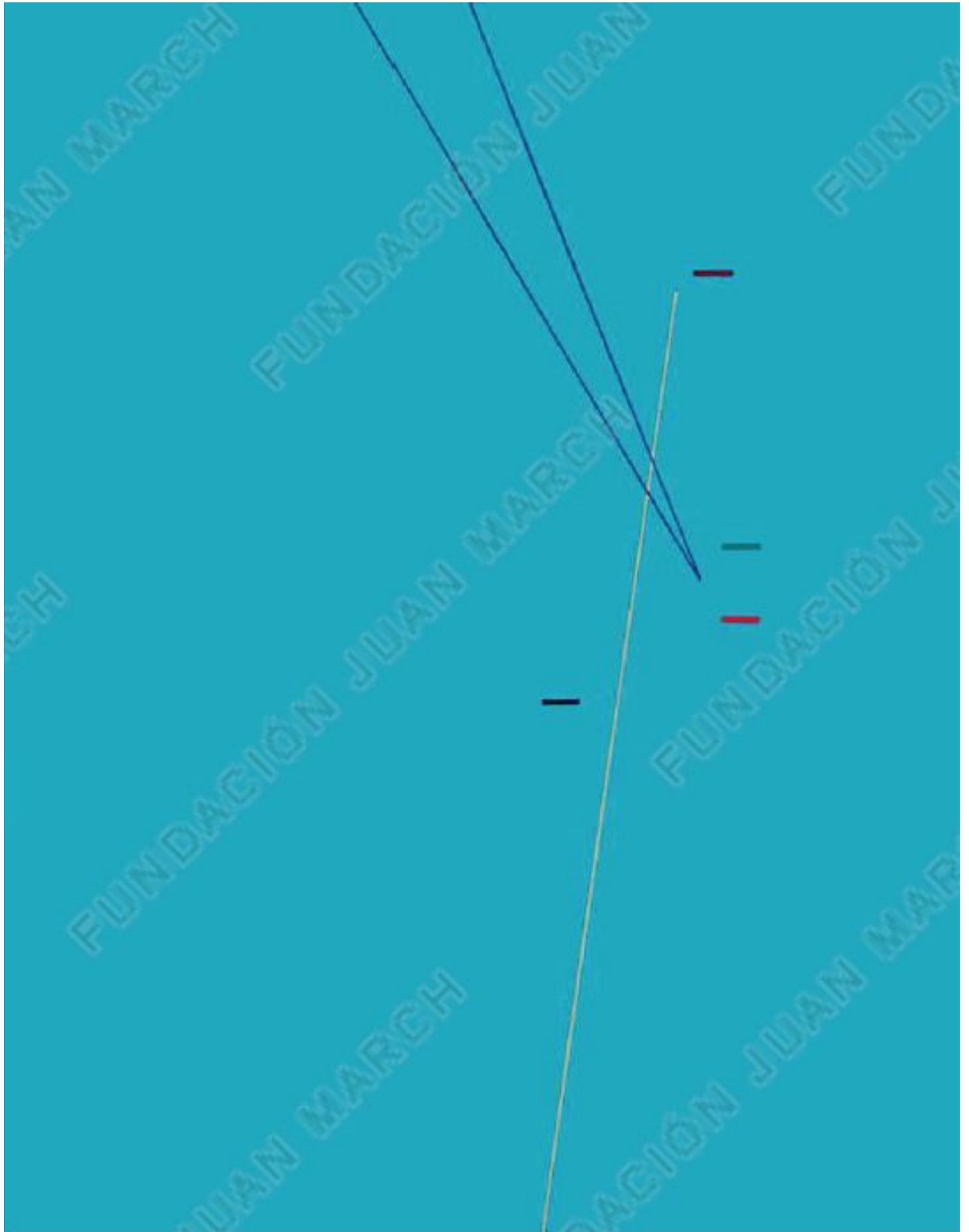
CAT. 51
Tomás Maldonado
Untitled, 1948
Oil on canvas
100 x 70 cm (39 3/8 x 27 5/8 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 52
Tomás Maldonado
Tensions of Mathematical Origin, 1950
Oil on canvas
100 x 70 cm (39 3/8 x 27 5/8 in.)
Collection Raul Naon



CAT. 53
Tomás Maldonado
Untitled, ca. 1950
Oil on canvas
110 x 85 cm (43 ¼ x 33 ½ in.)
Museo de Artes Plásticas
Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires



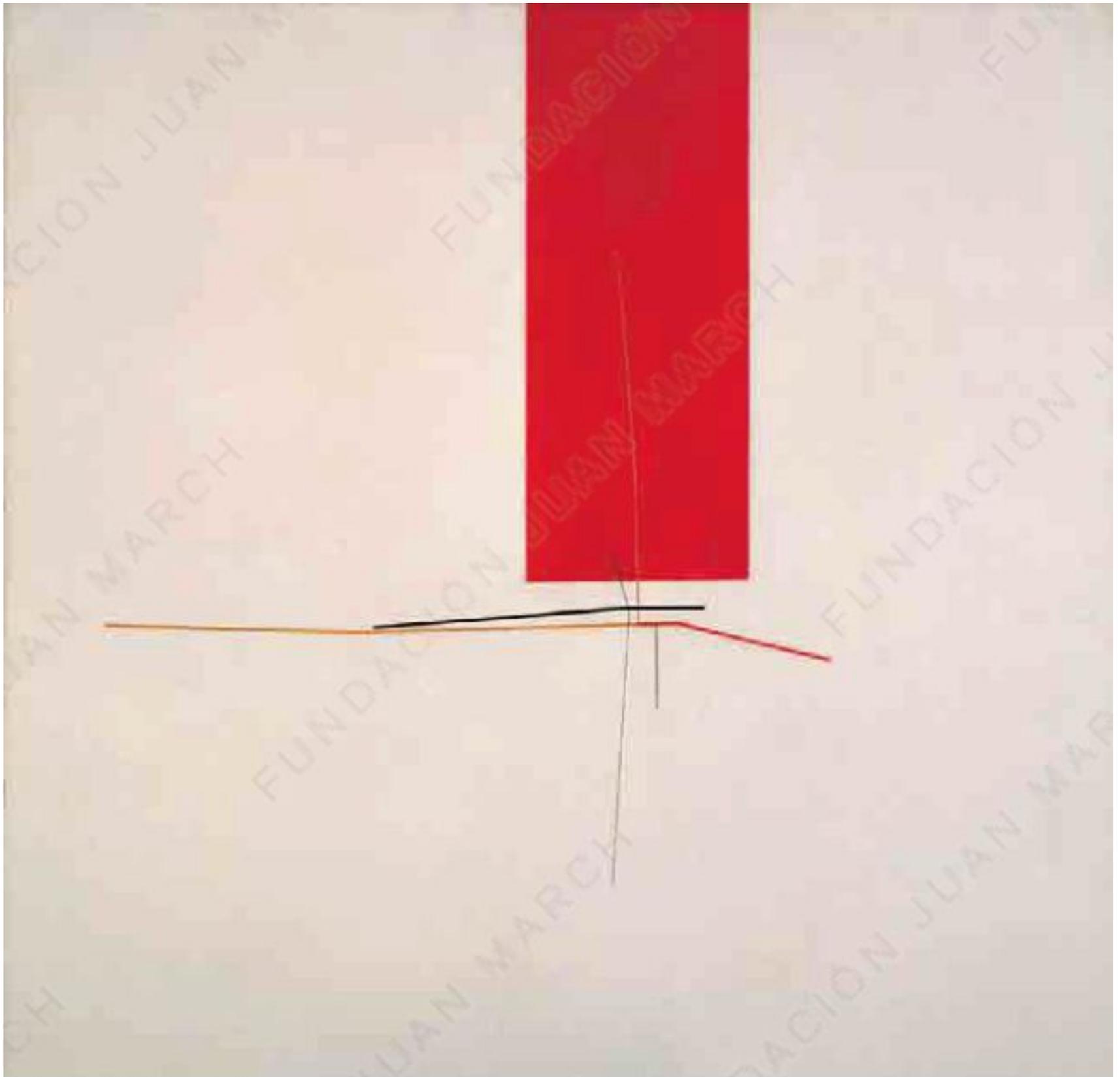
CAT. 54
Tomás Maldonado
Theme on Red, 1953
Oil on canvas
99.5 x 100 cm (39 1/8 x 39 3/8 in.)
Private collection



CAT. 55
Alfredo Hlito
Linear Construction, 1952
Oil on canvas
100 x 72 cm (39 3/8 x 28 1/4 in.)
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (AD03243)



CAT. 56
Alfredo Hlito
Forms and Lines on the Plane or Painting, 1952
Oil on canvas
100 x 100 cm (39 3/8 x 39 3/8 in.)
Private collection



CAT. 57
Alfredo Hlito
Derivation of the Square, 1954
Oil on canvas
55 x 45 cm (21 ¾ x 17 ¾ in.)
Galería Guillermo de Osma, Madrid (664)



CAT. 61
Luis Tomasello
Untitled, 1956
Oil on wood
70 x 60 cm (27 5/8 x 23 5/8 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 58
Raúl Lozza
Painting no. 21, 1945
Oil on plywood
55.6 x 45 cm (21 7/8 x 17 3/4 in.)
Private collection



CAT. 41
Juan Melé
Coplanar no. 18, 1947
Oil on canvas
47 x 50 cm (18 ½ x 19 ¾ in.)
Collection Raul Naon



CAT. 59
Raúl Lozza
Sketch 184, 1948
Graphite on paper
84 x 63 cm (33 ¼ x 24 ¾ in.)
Collection Raul Naon

CAT. 60
Raúl Lozza
Perceptist Period
Painting no. 184, 1948
Polished enamel on wood
122 x 122 cm (48 x 48 in.)
Museo de Artes
Plásticas Eduardo
Sívori, Buenos Aires





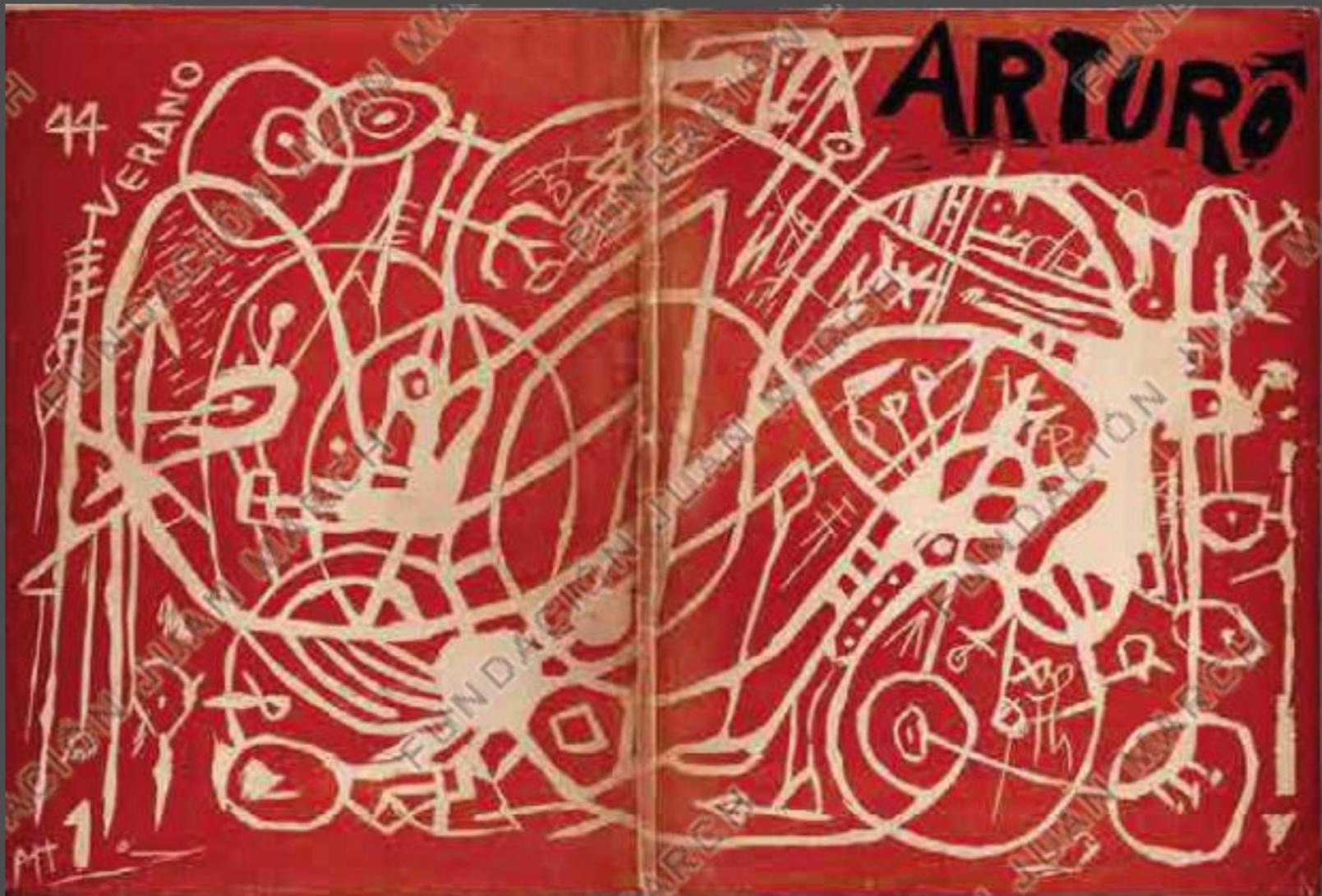
CAT. 62
César Paternosto
The Sweetest Skin, 1970
Acrylic emulsion on canvas
150.2 x 150.2 x 9.6 cm
(59 1/8 x 59 1/8 x 3 3/4 in.)
Junta de Andalucía - Centro
Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville (CE0442)



César Paternosto
Sequential, 1972
Acrylic on canvas
137.2 x 203.2 cm (54 x 80 in.)
Collection Albright-Knox Art Gallery
Buffalo, NY. Donation
Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1972



CAT. 63 and 64
Arturo 1, Buenos Aires,
summer 1944
Front and back covers by
Tomás Maldonado
Magazine
27.5 x 20 cm (10 ¾ x 7 ⅞ in.)
Collection Raul Naon



CAT. 65

*El caballero invisible. Anónimo
español del siglo XVII.* Buenos

Aires: Ediciones UBU, 1944

Contains 4 illustrations by Rod

Rothfuss, hand-colored by the artist

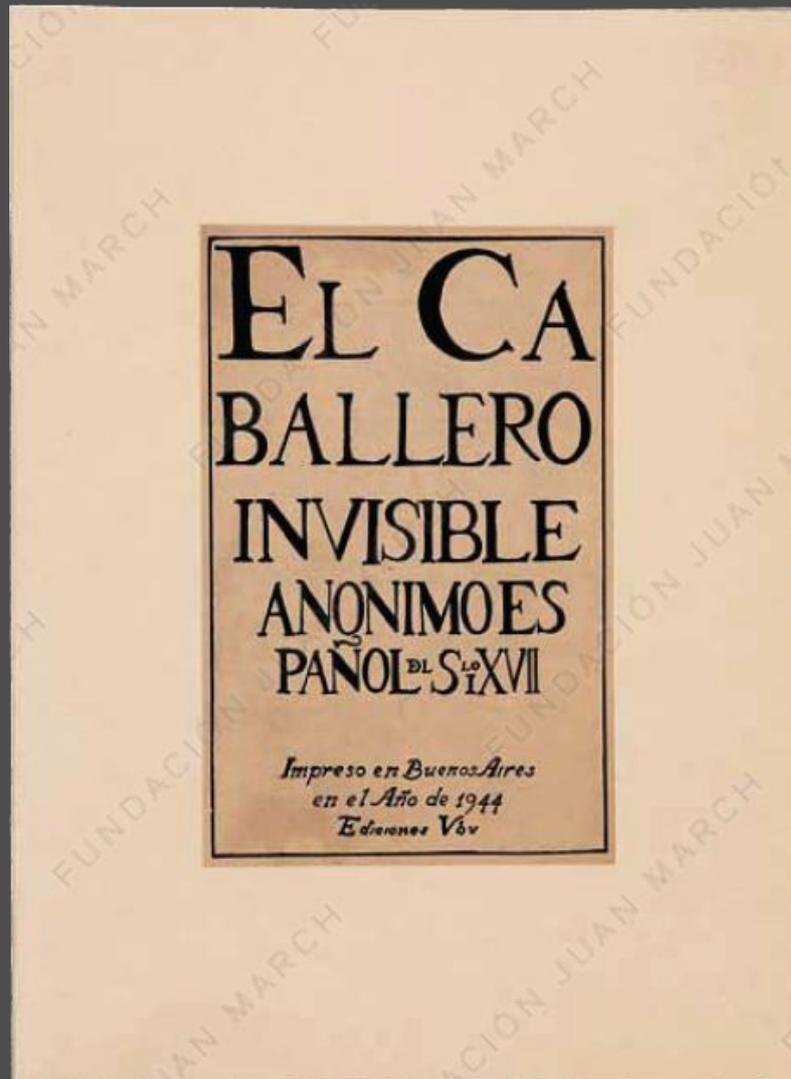
(lithographs highlighted with gouache)

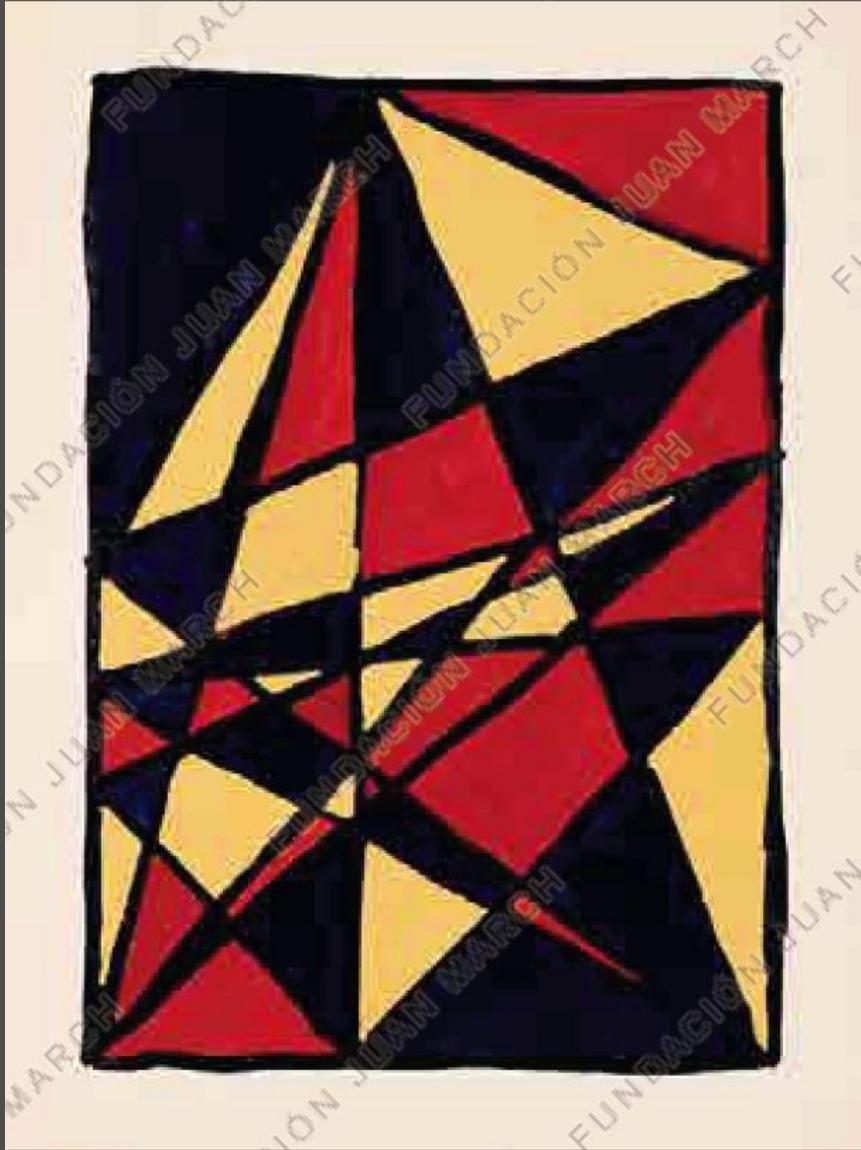
Artist book

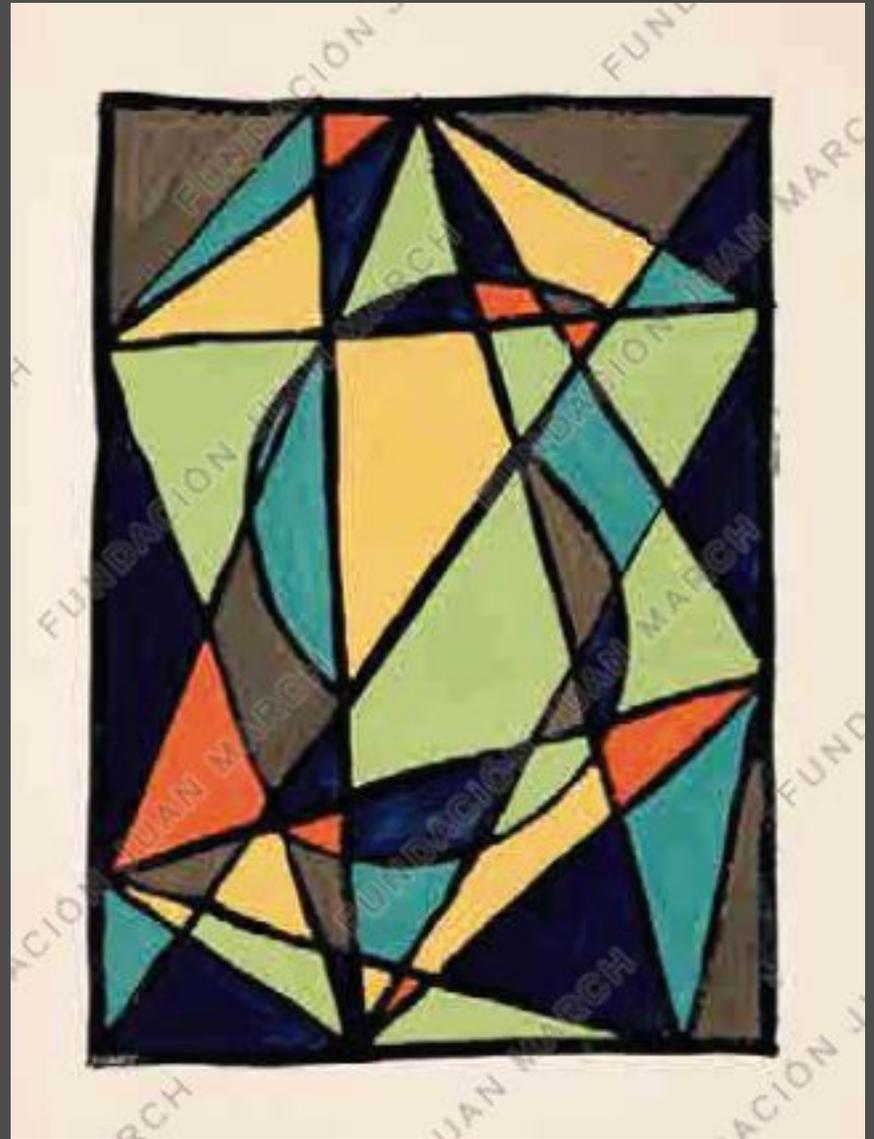
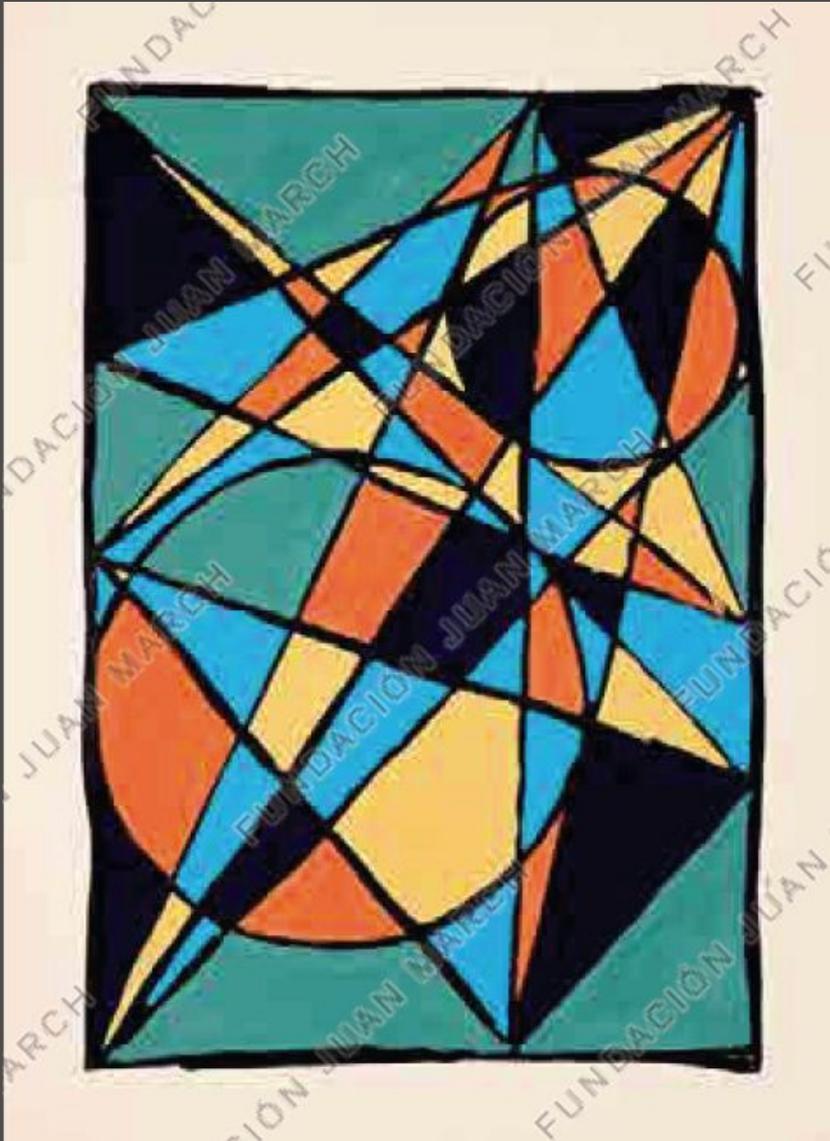
Edition: 50/100

34.5 x 25.5 cm (13 5/8 x 10 in.)

Collection José María Lafuente







CAT. 66

Elias Piterbarg

Tratado del amor. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Cenit, 1944

Illustrations by Tomás Maldonado

Book

27 x 18.5 cm (10 5/8 x 7 1/4 in.)

Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 67

Invención, 1945

Magazine

20 x 14.5 cm (7 7/8 x 5 3/4 in.)

67.1. No. 1, Kósice

67.2. No. 2, Bayley

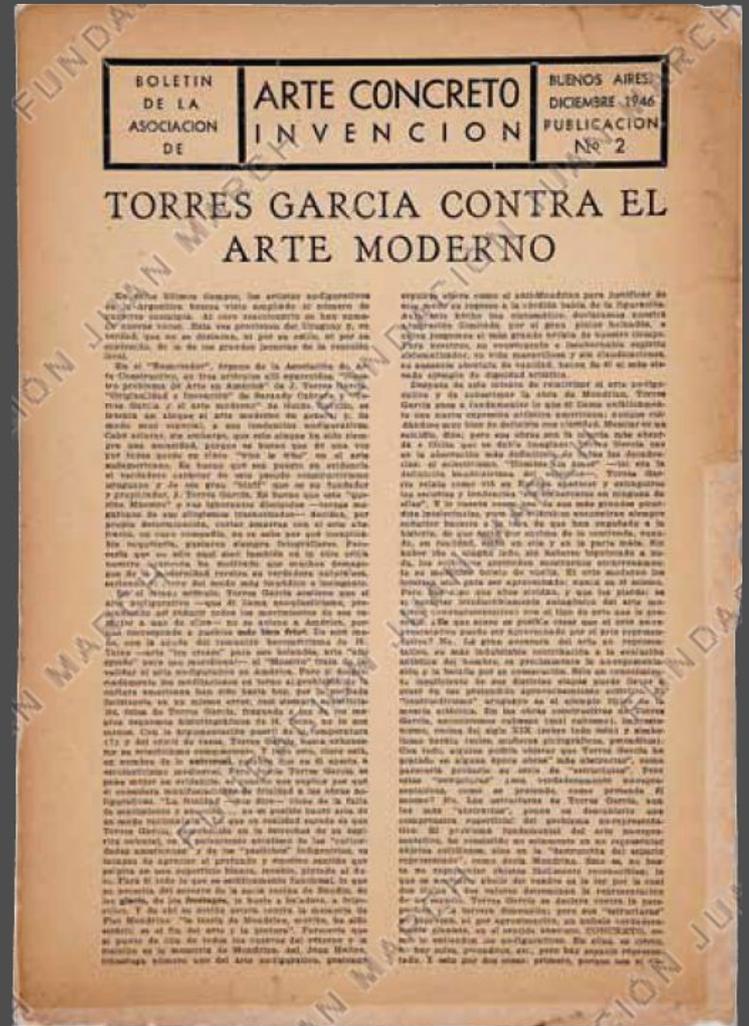
Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 68
 Arte Concreto Invención 1
 Buenos Aires, August 1946
 Magazine
 31.7 x 22 cm (12 ½ x 8 ¾ in.)
 Collection Raul Naon



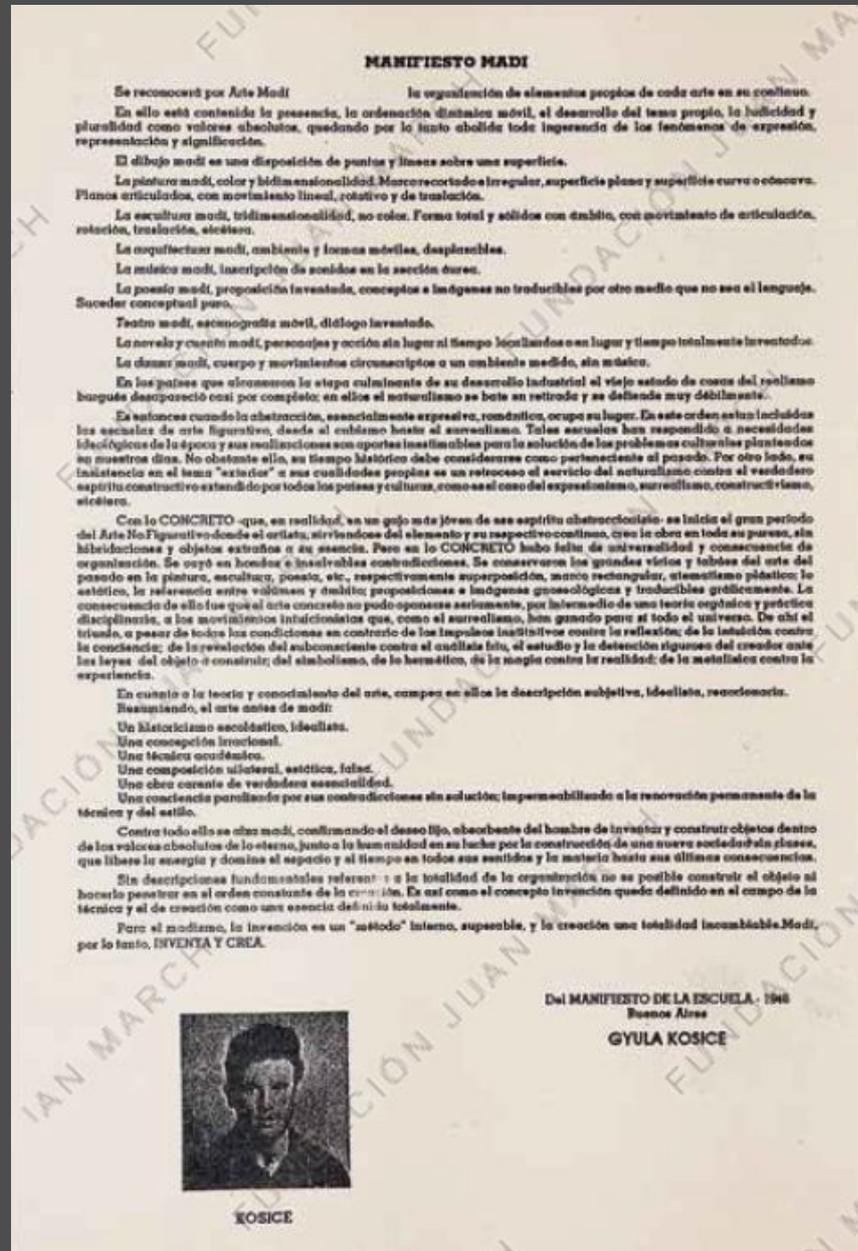
CAT. 69
 Boletín de la Asociación de Arte Concreto
 Invención 2
 Buenos Aires, December 1946
 Printed paper
 31 x 22.5 cm (12 ¼ x 8 ⅞ in.)
 Collection José María Lafuente



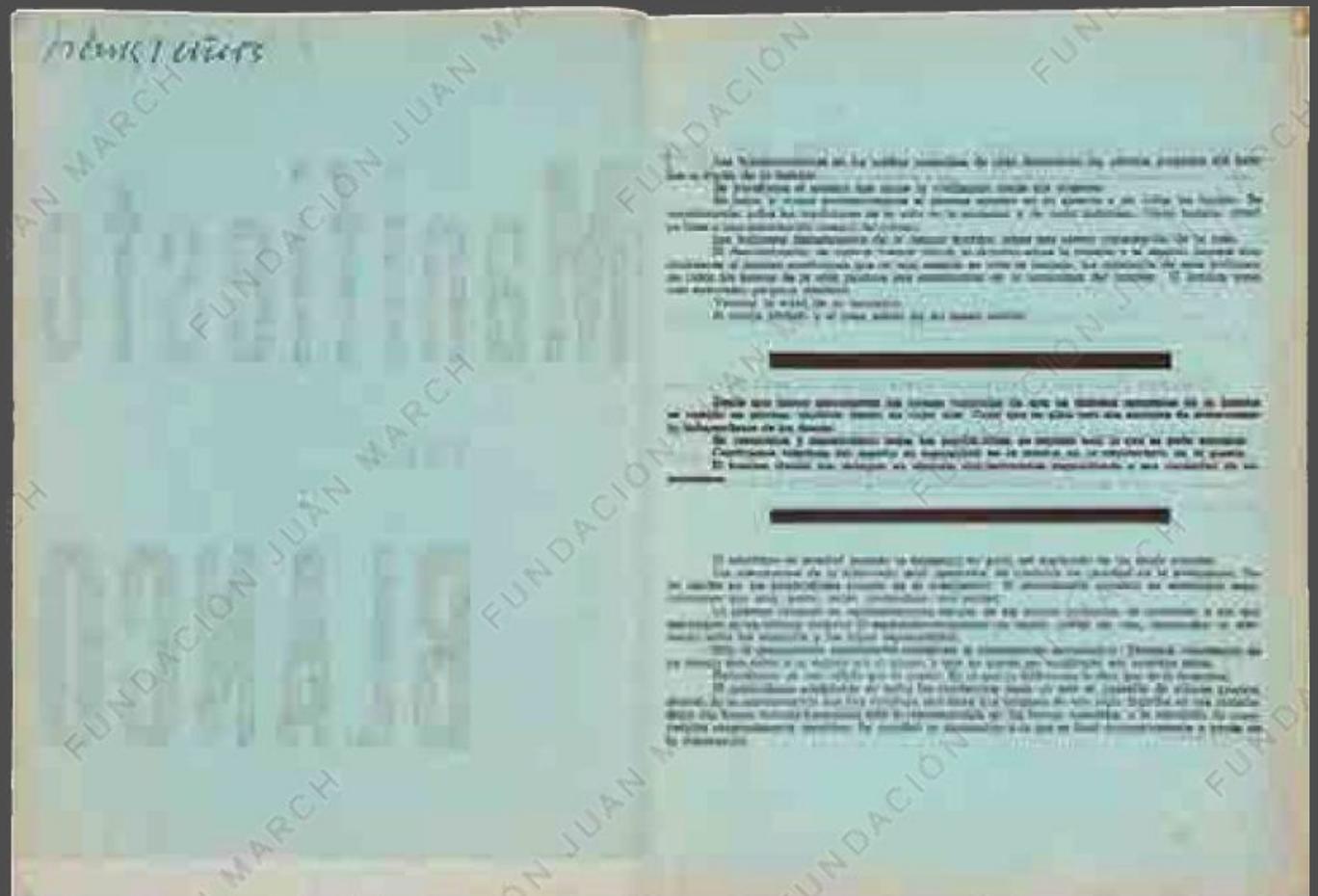
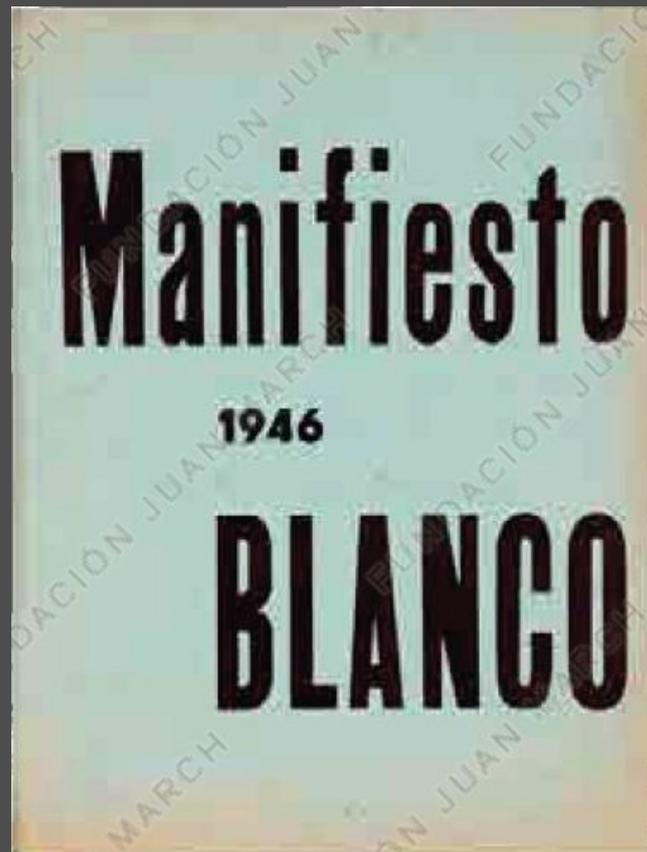
CAT. 70
 1ª exposición de la Asociación
 Arte Concreto-Invención, Buenos
 Aires, March 18–April 3, 1946
 Catalogue
 22 x 12 cm (8 ¾ x 4 ¾ in.)
 Private collection



CAT. 71
 Manifiesto Madi
 Buenos Aires, June 1946
 Printed paper
 25 x 17 cm (9 ¾ x 6 ¾ in.)
 Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 72
Lucio Fontana and students
Manifiesto blanco, 1946
Printed paper
23.5 x 17.7 cm (9 ¼ x 7 in.)
Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 73 and 74

Arte Madí Universal, Buenos Aires, 1947–54

Magazine

73.1 y 74.1. No. 0, 1947

31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.)

74.2. No. 2, 1948

31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.)

73.2 y 74.3. No. 3, 1949

31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.)

73.3 y 74.4. No. 4, 1950

31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.)

74.5. No. 5, 1951

23 x 19 cm (9 1/8 x 7 1/2 in.)

73.4 y 74.6. No. 6, 1952

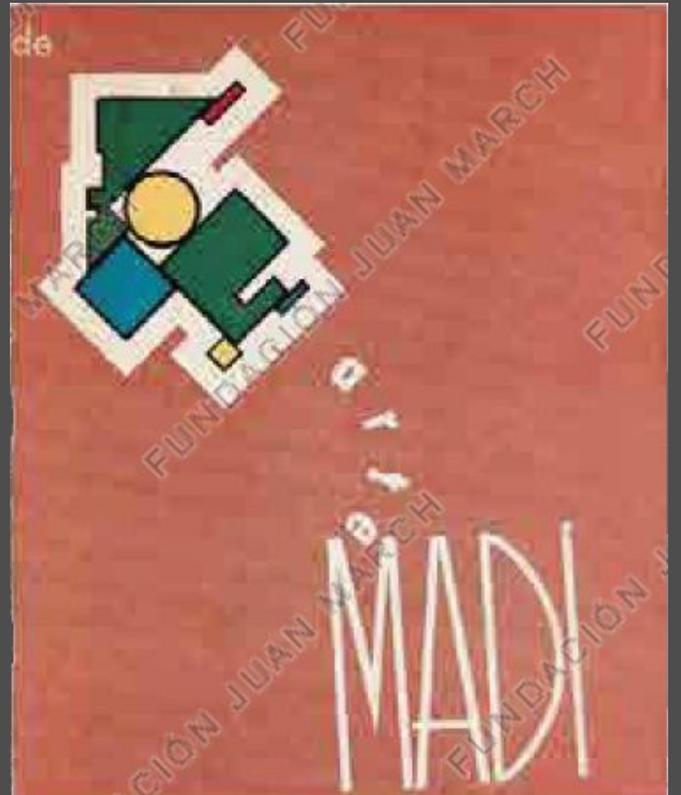
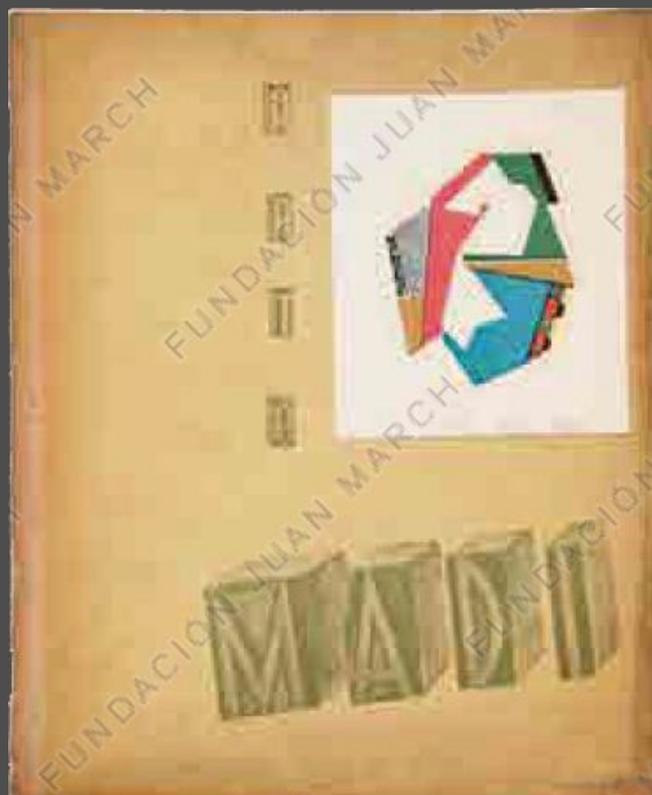
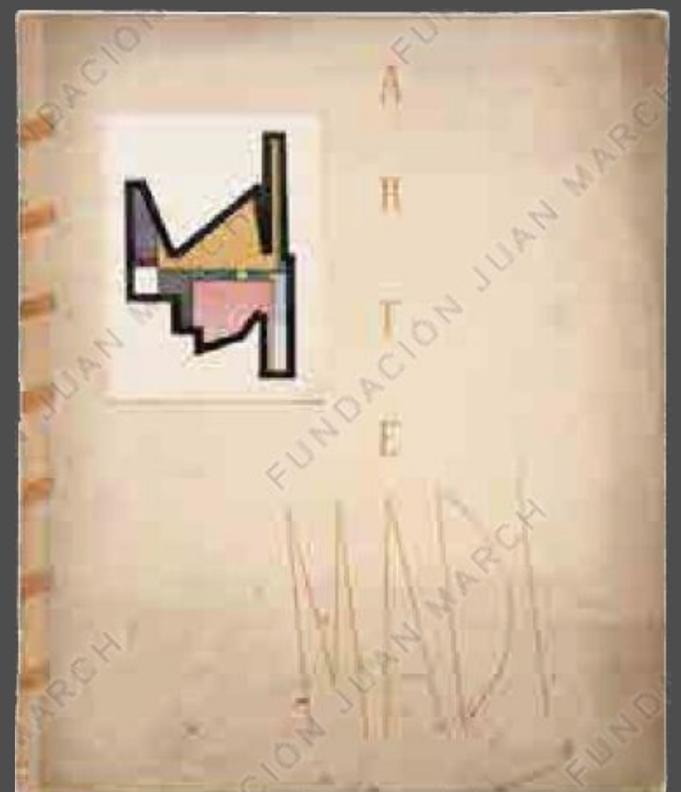
23 x 19 cm (9 1/8 x 7 1/2 in.)

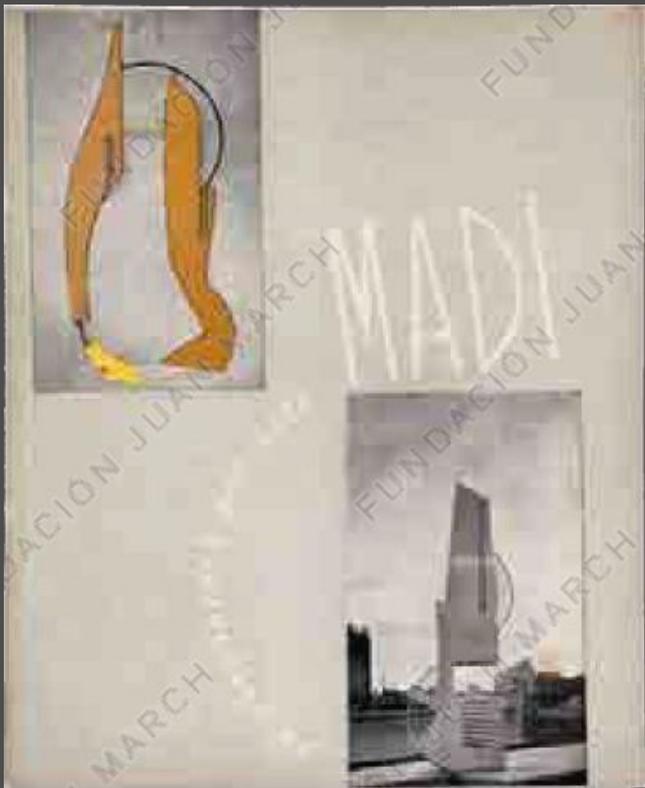
74.7. Nos. 7–8, 1954

23 x 19 cm (9 1/8 x 7 1/2 in.)

Collection Raul Naon (CAT. 73)

Collection José María Lafuente (CAT. 74)





PERCEPTISMO

TEORICO Y POLEMICO
 Eduardo Aizua, Santiago de los Caballeros, 1923
 Número 1 (Septiembre - Octubre 1923) - 110 páginas

2

Resumen: Este número de la revista "Perceptismo" contiene un artículo de introducción de Eduardo Aizua, titulado "Perceptismo y polemica", donde se plantea la necesidad de un nuevo lenguaje artístico que trascienda las limitaciones del arte tradicional. El artículo discute el papel del artista como creador de una nueva realidad perceptiva, influenciado por las teorías de la Gestalt y el constructivismo. Se mencionan a artistas como Kandinsky y Mondrian como referentes de esta nueva corriente.






PERCEPTISMO

TEORICO Y POLEMICO
 Eduardo Aizua, Santiago de los Caballeros, 1923
 Número 1 (Septiembre - Octubre 1923) - 110 páginas

3

Resumen: Este número continúa la discusión teórica sobre el perceptismo. Incluye un artículo de Aizua titulado "El problema de la percepción", que explora cómo el ojo humano percibe el espacio y el color. Se analizan ejemplos de obras de arte que buscan provocar una percepción activa en el espectador. Se mencionan a artistas como Mondrian y Kandinsky.






PERCEPTISMO

TEORICO Y POLEMICO
 Eduardo Aizua, Santiago de los Caballeros, 1923
 Número 1 (Septiembre - Octubre 1923) - 110 páginas

4

Resumen: Este número presenta una crítica a las corrientes artísticas de la época, como el cubismo y el futurismo, desde la perspectiva del perceptismo. Aizua argumenta que estas corrientes aún están limitadas por la representación de la realidad física. Se propone un arte que se base en la percepción directa y no en la imitación de la naturaleza. Se mencionan a artistas como Mondrian y Kandinsky.






PERCEPTISMO

TEORICO Y POLEMICO
 Eduardo Aizua, Santiago de los Caballeros, 1923
 Número 1 (Septiembre - Octubre 1923) - 110 páginas

5

Resumen: Este número aborda el tema de la "percepción del espacio". Aizua discute cómo el arte puede manipular la percepción del espacio tridimensional a través de líneas y formas planas. Se analizan ejemplos de obras de arte que crean ilusiones de profundidad. Se mencionan a artistas como Mondrian y Kandinsky.






PERCEPTISMO

teórico y polémico
 Eduardo Aizua, Santiago de los Caballeros, 1923
 Número 1 (Septiembre - Octubre 1923) - 110 páginas

6

Resumen: Este número trata sobre la "sociedad y arte". Aizua discute el papel del arte en la sociedad y cómo el arte puede influir en la percepción social. Se analizan ejemplos de obras de arte que reflejan o critican la sociedad. Se mencionan a artistas como Mondrian y Kandinsky.






PERCEPTISMO

la vanguardia del arte concreto
 teórico y polémico
 Eduardo Aizua, Santiago de los Caballeros, 1923
 Número 1 (Septiembre - Octubre 1923) - 110 páginas

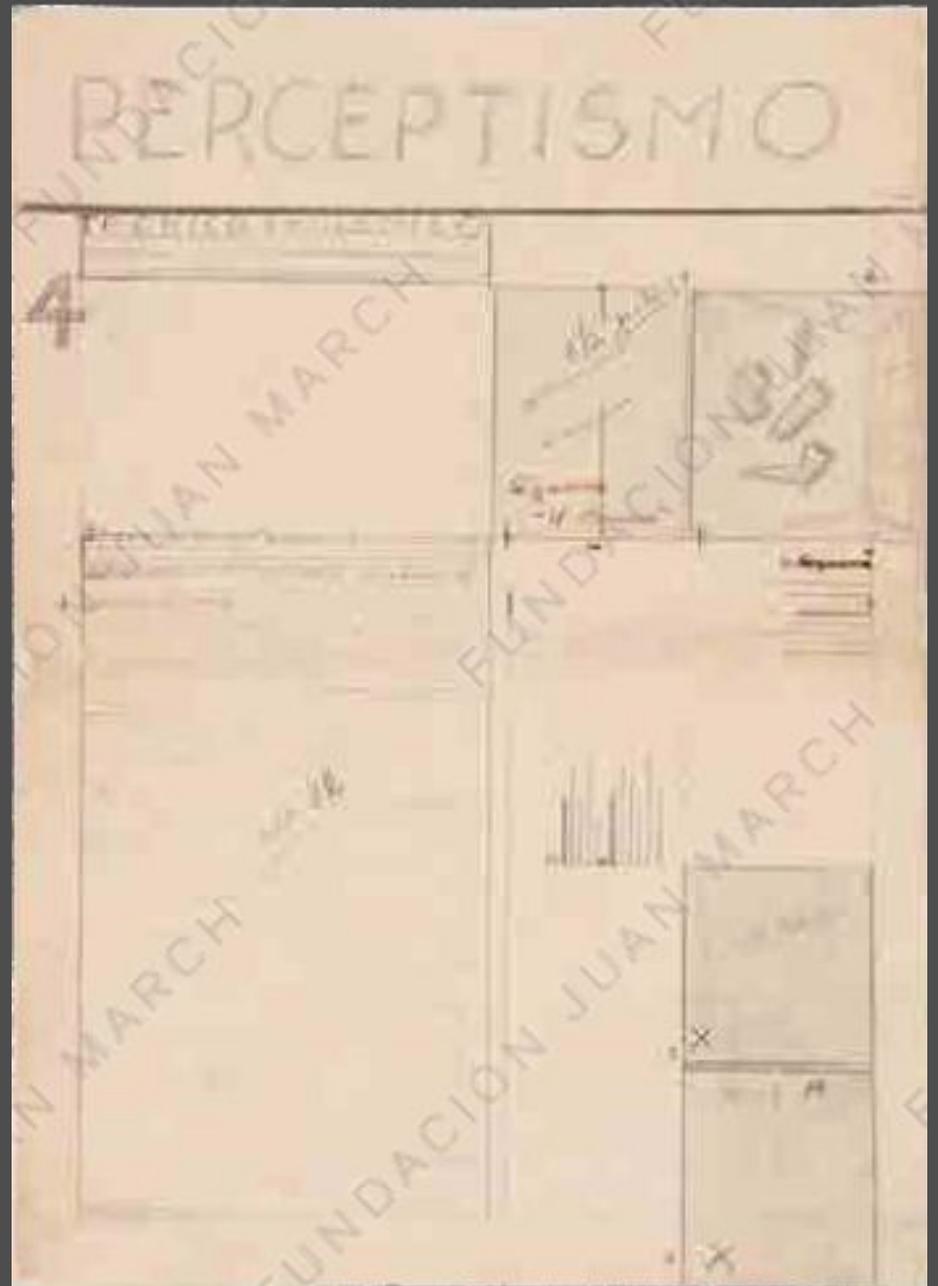
7

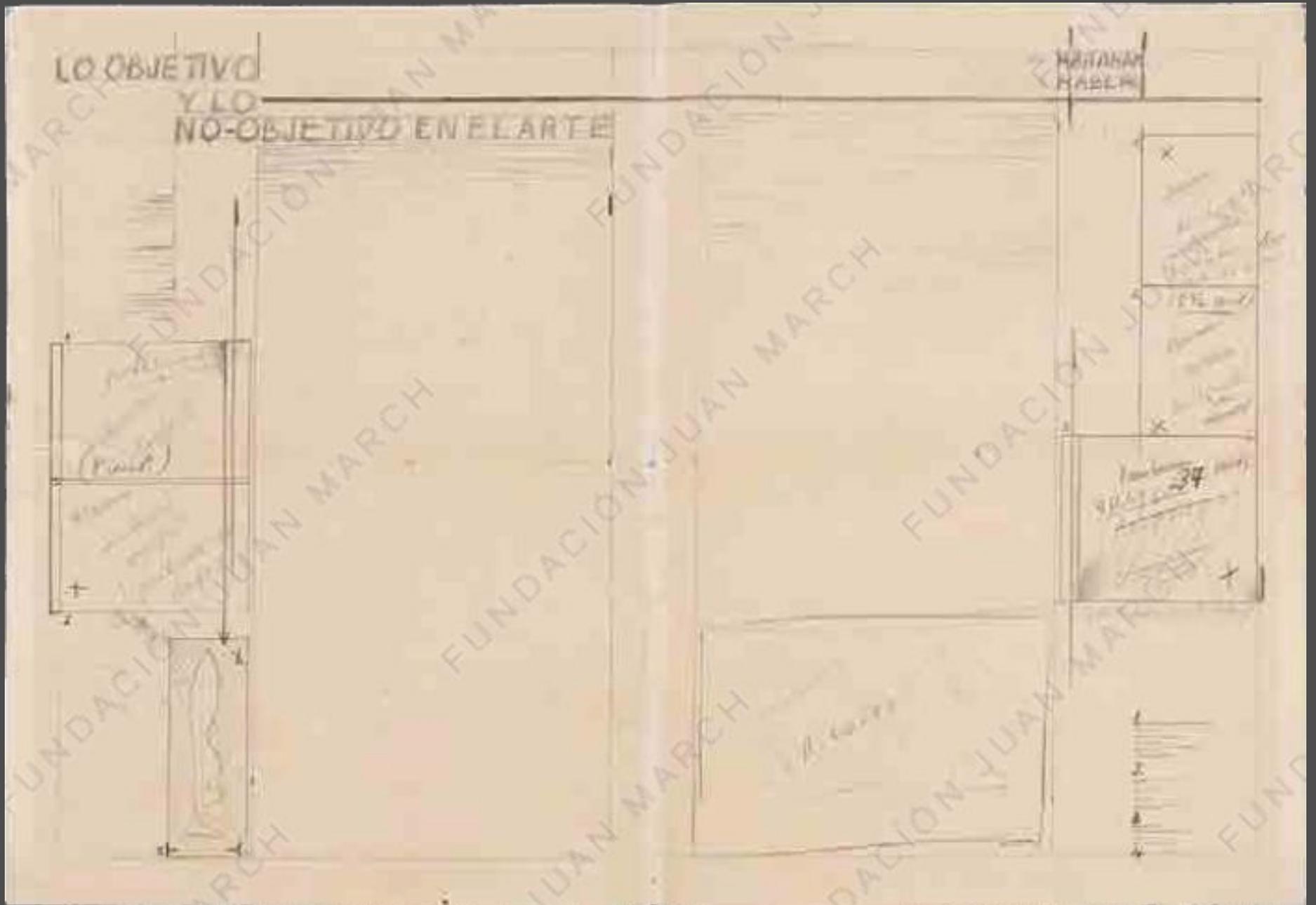
Resumen: Este número se centra en "la vanguardia del arte concreto". Aizua discute el arte abstracto y su relación con la percepción. Se analizan ejemplos de obras de arte abstractas que buscan provocar una percepción directa. Se mencionan a artistas como Mondrian y Kandinsky.



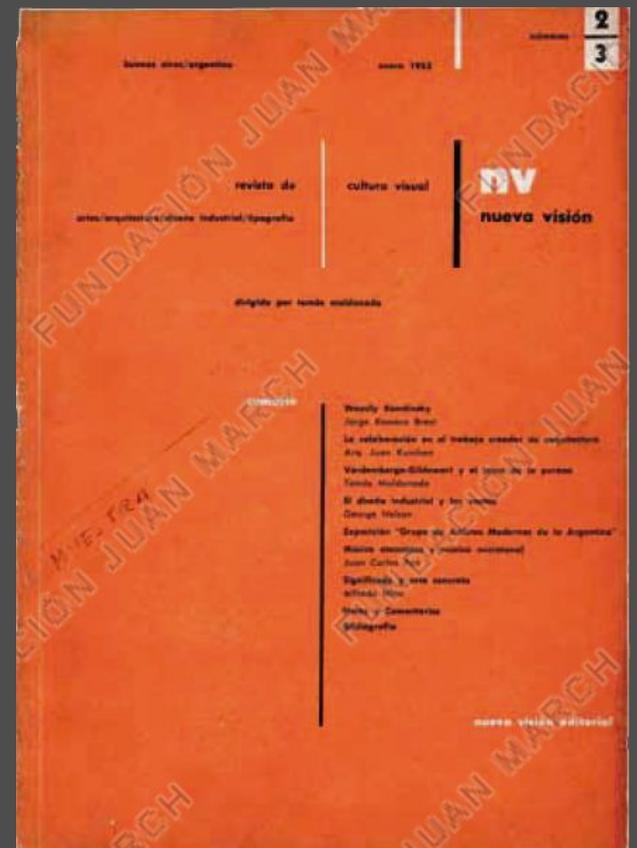


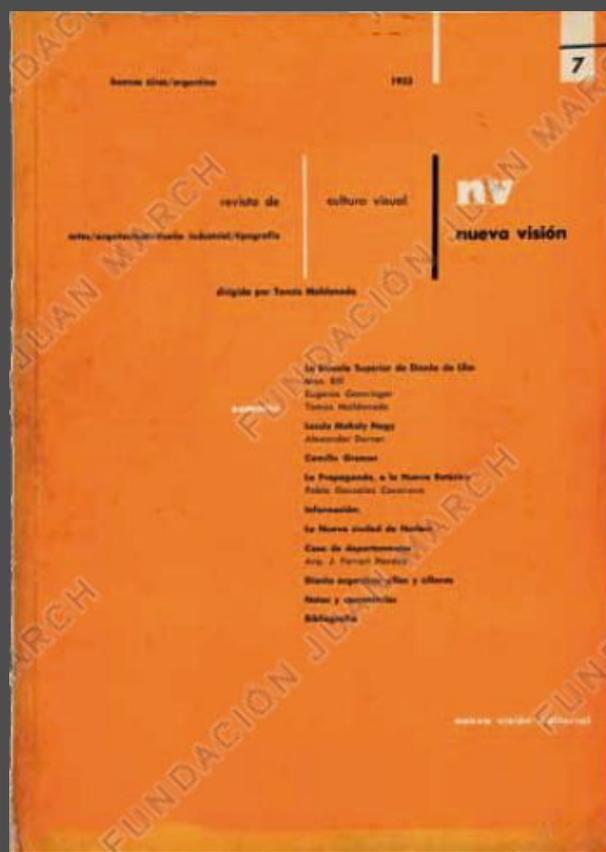

CAT. 78
Original sketch for magazine
Perceptismo 4, 1952
Pencil on paper
41 x 29.5 cm (16 1/8 x 11 5/8 in.)
Collection José María Lafuente



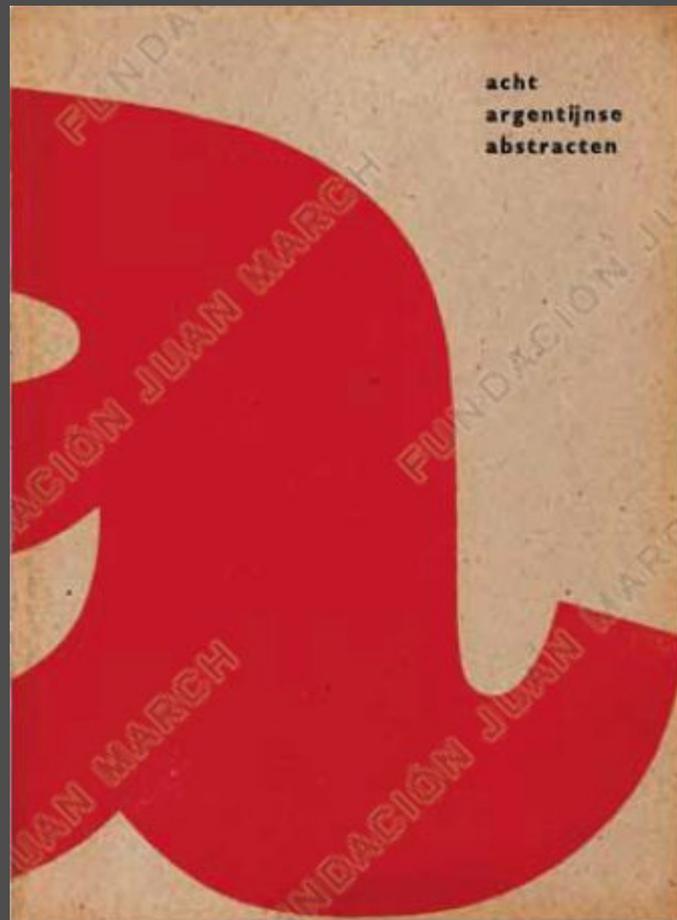


CAT. 79
Nueva Visión. Magazine de cultura visual, Buenos Aires, 1951–57
 30 x 21 cm (11 ¾ x 8 ¼ in.)
 79. 1. No. 1, December 1951
 79. 2. Nos. 2–3, January 1953
 79. 3. No. 4, 1953
 79. 4. No. 5, 1954
 79. 5. No. 6, 1955
 79. 6. No. 7, 1955
 79. 7. No. 8, 1955
 79. 8. No. 9, 1957
 Collection José María Lafuente





CAT. 80
acht argentinse abstracten.
Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1953
Exhibition catalogue
26 x 19 cm (10 ¼ x 7 ½ in.)
Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 81

acht argentijnse abstracten

Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1953

Exhibition poster

52 x 76 cm (20 ½ x 30 in.)

Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 82

a. Buenos Aires: Editorial Nueva Visión, 1956–58

Envelope and publication

82.1. No. 1, August 1956

38 x 28 cm (15 x 11 in.)

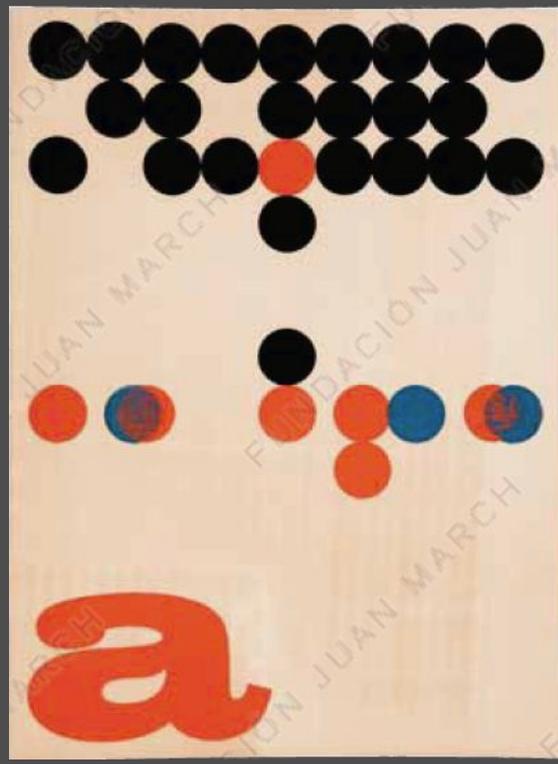
82.2. No. 2, March 1957

38 x 28 cm (15 x 11 in.)

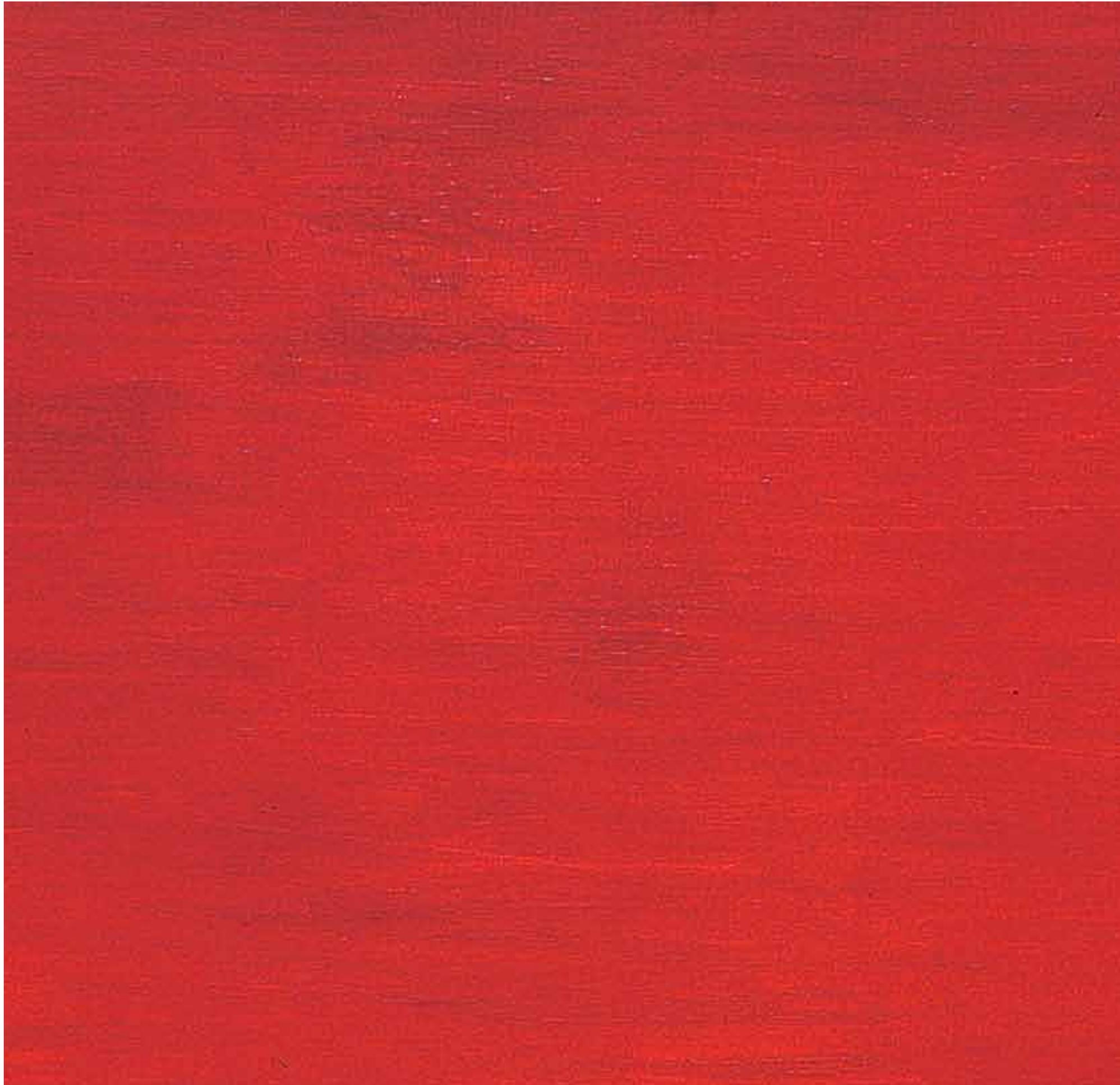
82.3. No. 3, March 1958

32 x 28.5 cm (12 5/8 x 11 1/4 in.)

Collection José María Lafuente

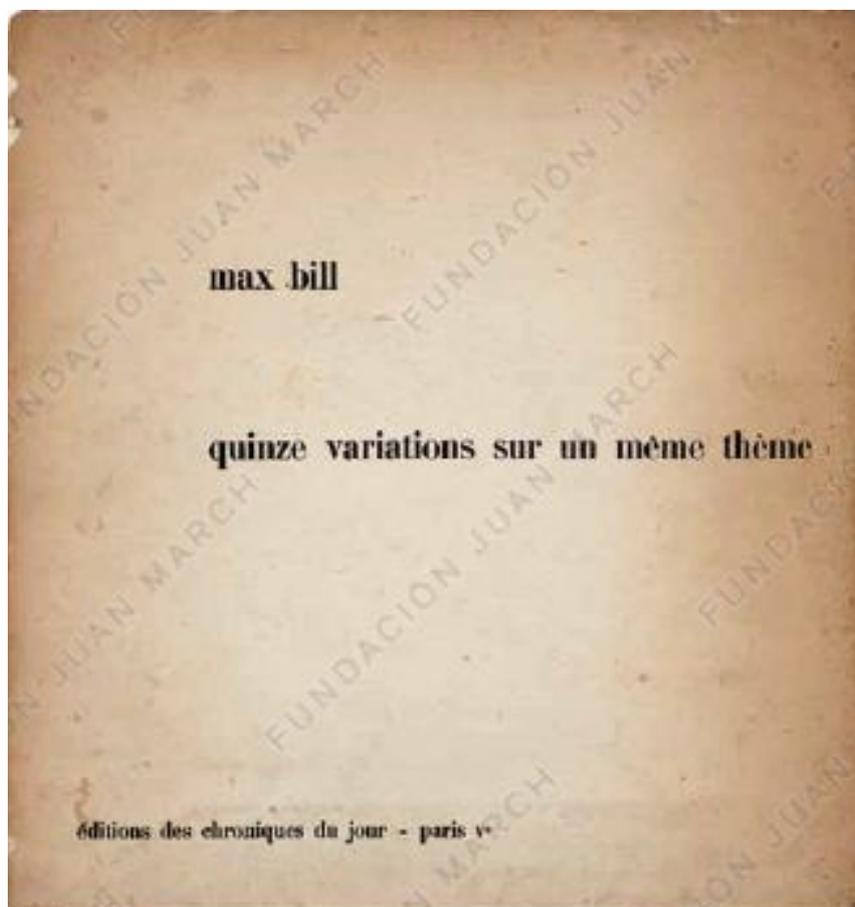


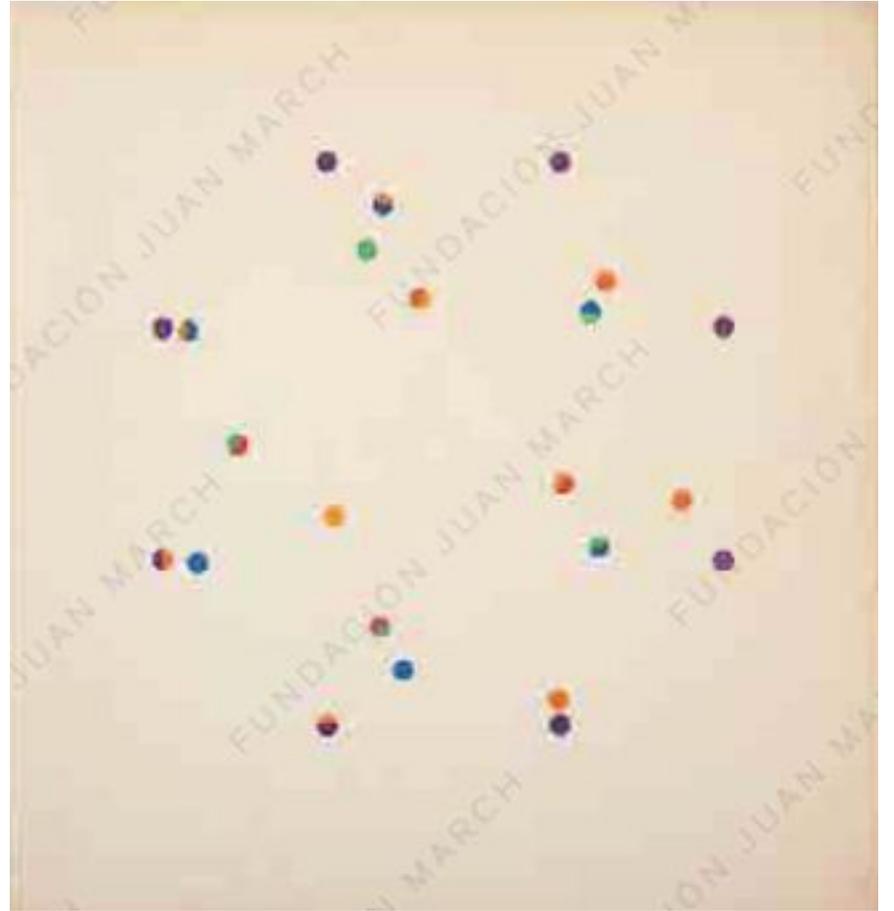




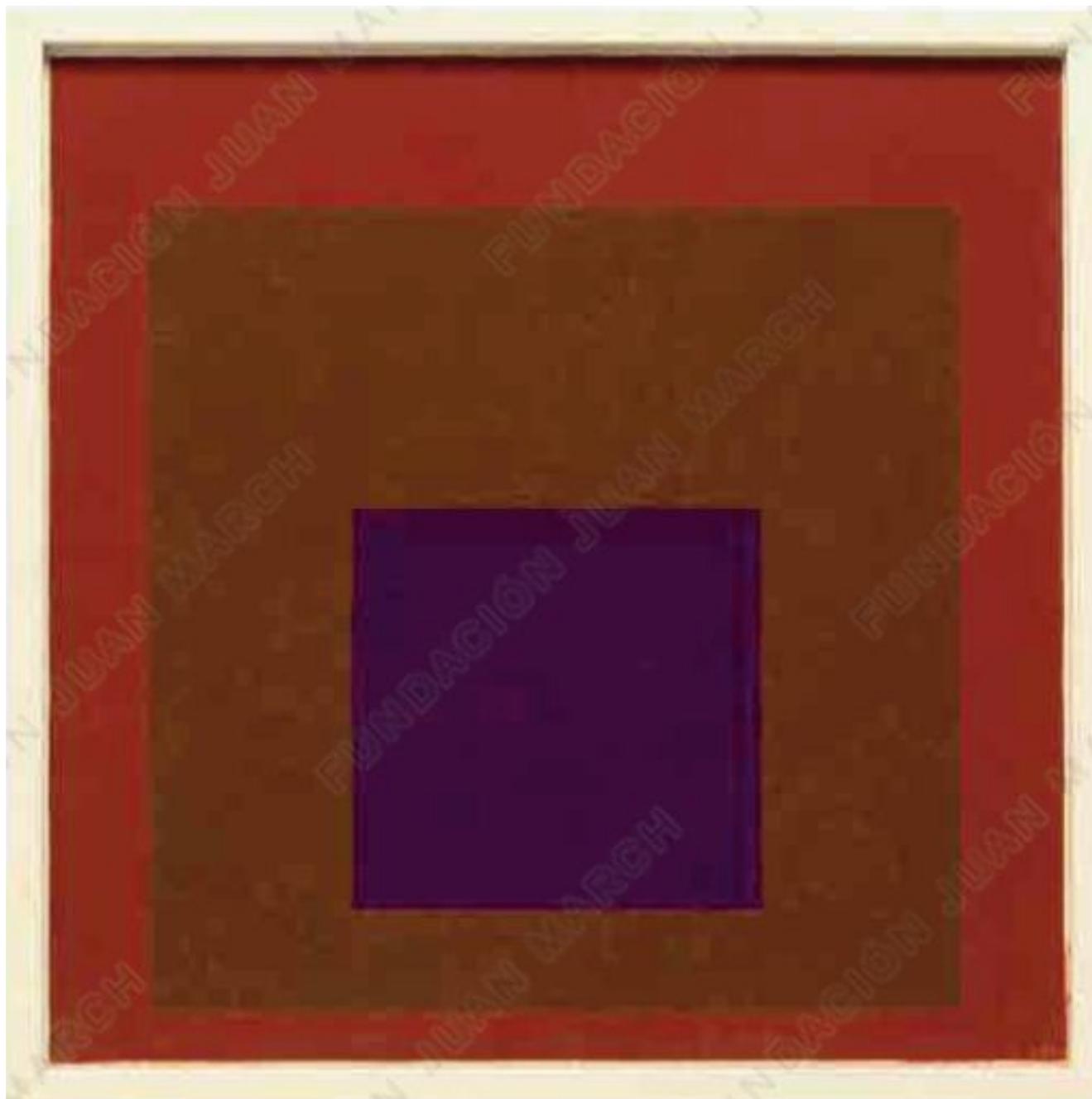
Brazil

CAT. 83
Max Bill
Quinze variations sur un même thème
Paris: Éditions des Chroniques du jour, 1938
83.1. Portfolio of silkscreen prints
83.2. *Thème*
83.3. *Variation 1*
83.4. *Variation 3*
32 x 30.8 cm (12 5/8 x 12 1/4 in.)
Dan Galeria, São Paulo





CAT. 84
Josef Albers
Homage to the Square: Study for Nocturne, 1951
Oil on wood
53.4 x 53.2 cm (21 x 20 7/8 in.)
Tate, London. Presented by The Josef
and Anni Albers Foundation, 2006 (T12215)



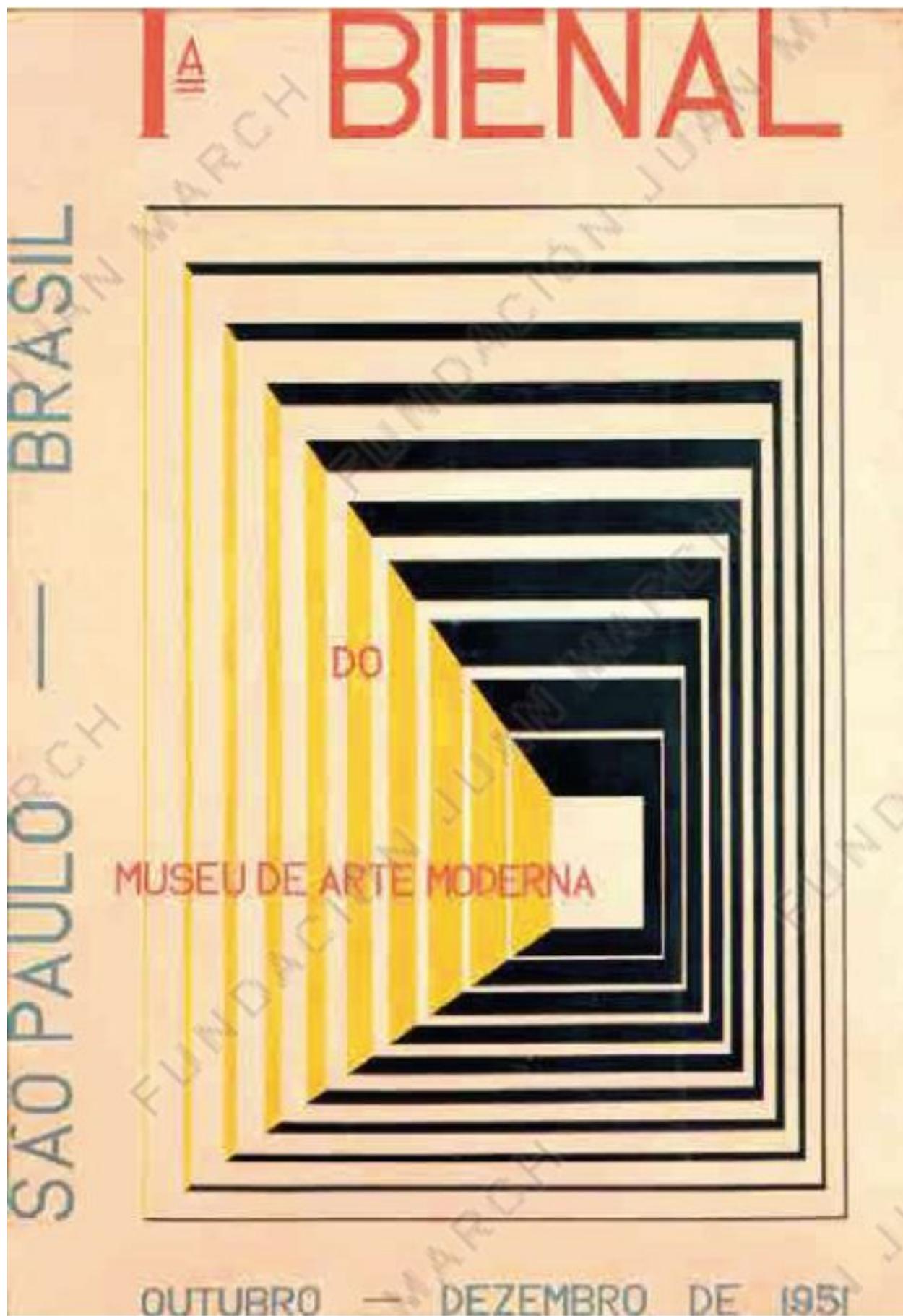
CAT. 85
Waldemar Cordeiro
Untitled, 1949
Oil on canvas
73.5 x 54.5 cm (28 7/8 x 21 3/8 in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



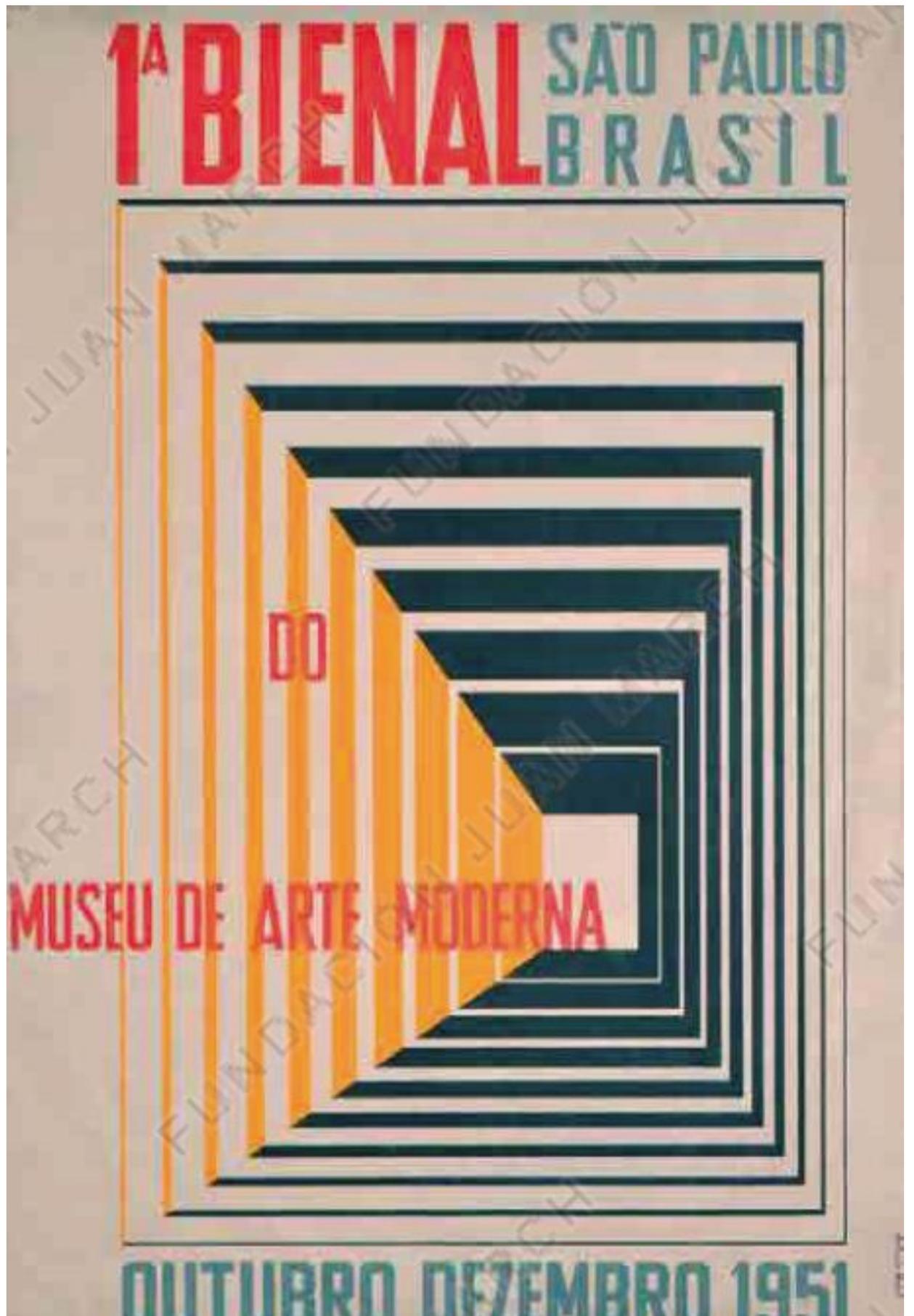
CAT. 86
Waldemar Cordeiro
Visible Idea, 1956
Acrylic on plywood
59.9 x 60 cm (23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 87
Antônio Maluf
Poster Study for I Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil, 1951
Gouache on cardboard
98.3 x 65.6 cm (38 ¾ x 25 ¾ in.)
Collection Rose Maluf



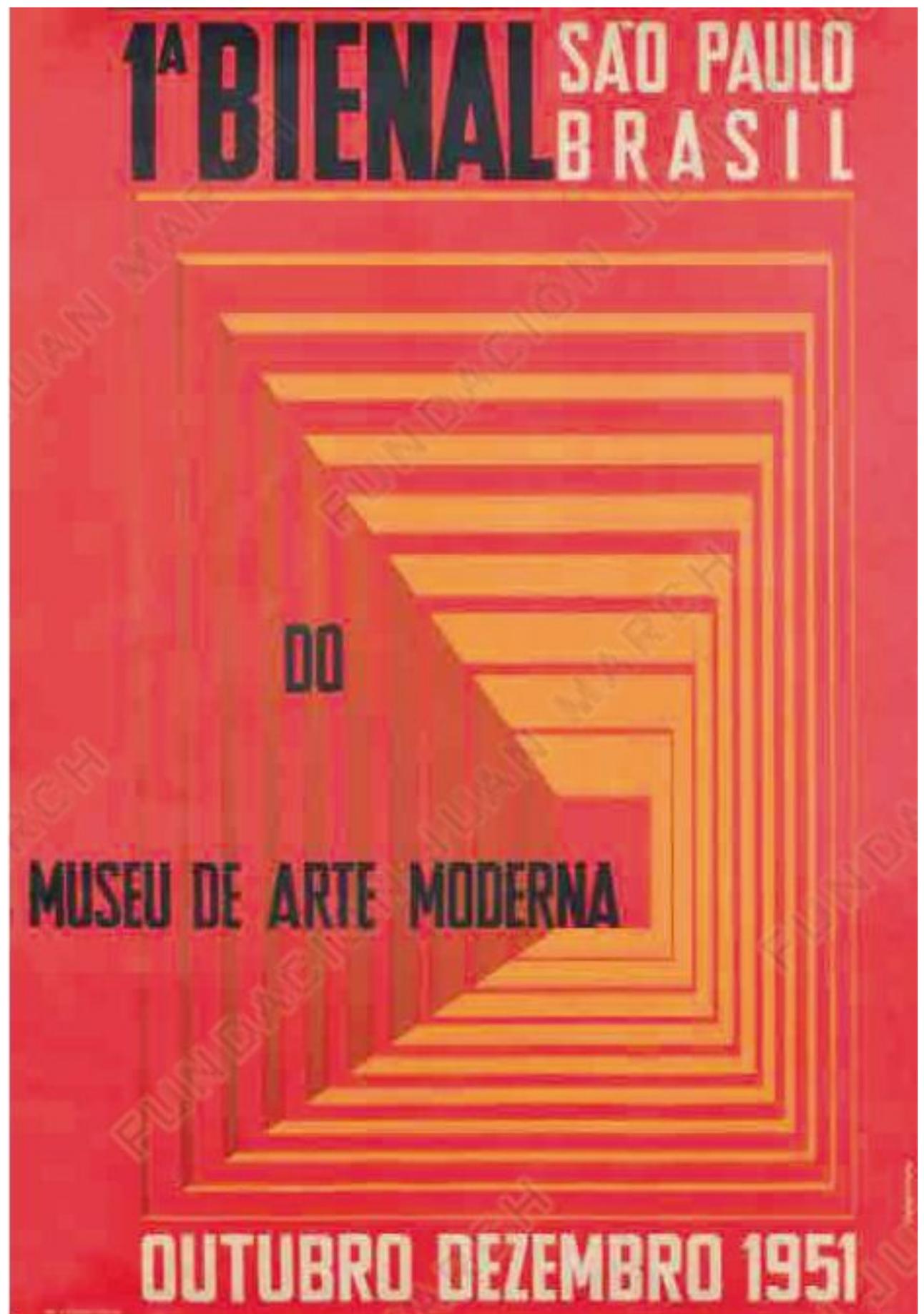
CAT. 88
Antônio Maluf
Poster for I Bienal de São
Paulo of the Museu de Arte
Moderna, São Paulo, 1951
Lithograph
94 x 63.5 cm (37 x 25 in.)
The Museum of Modern Art,
New York. Gift of the Museu de
Arte Moderna de São Paulo,
1951 (576.1951)



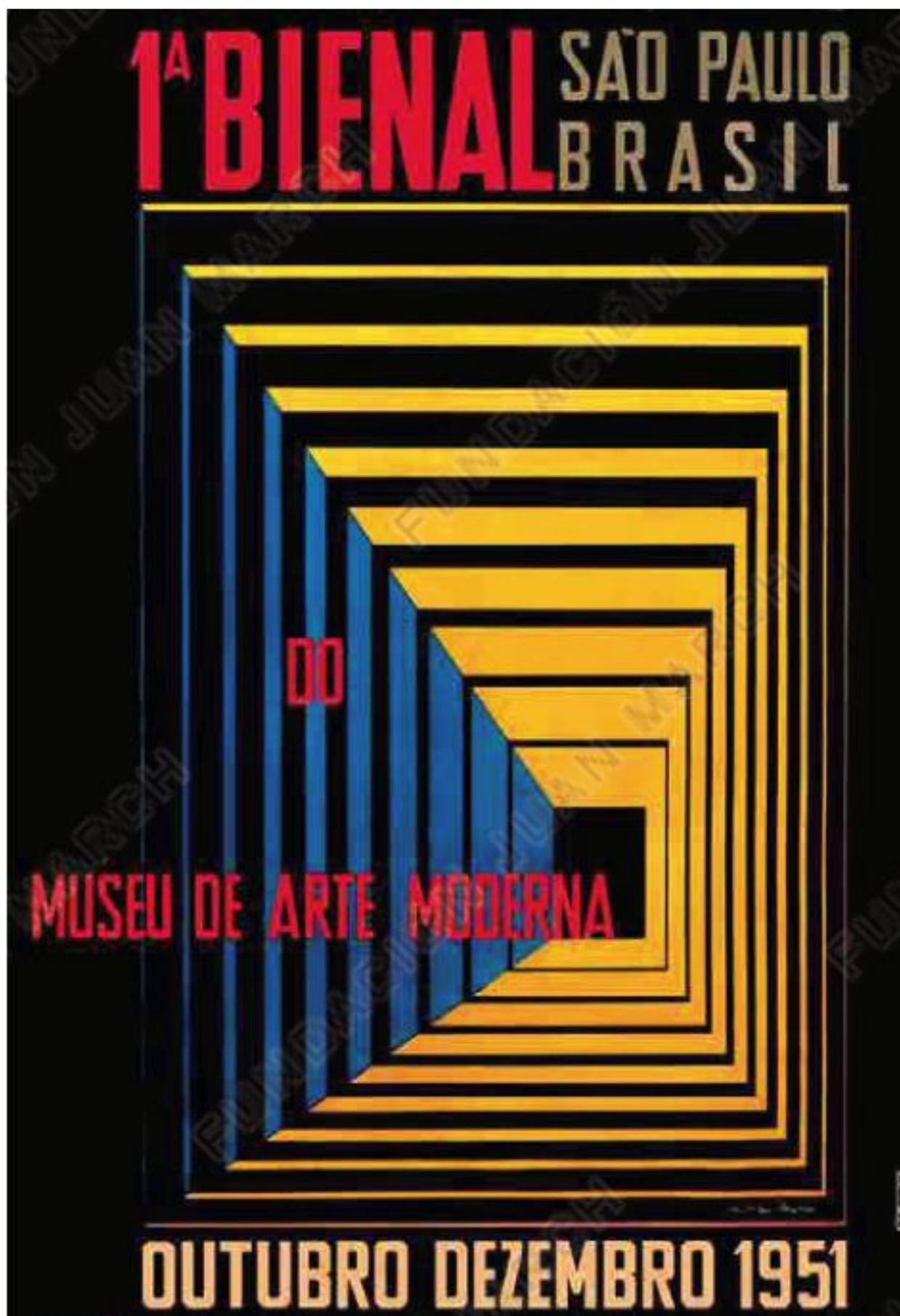
Antônio Maluf
Blue version of the poster for
I Bienal de São Paulo, 1951
Offset
93 x 63 cm (36 ½ x 24 ¾ in.)
Private collection



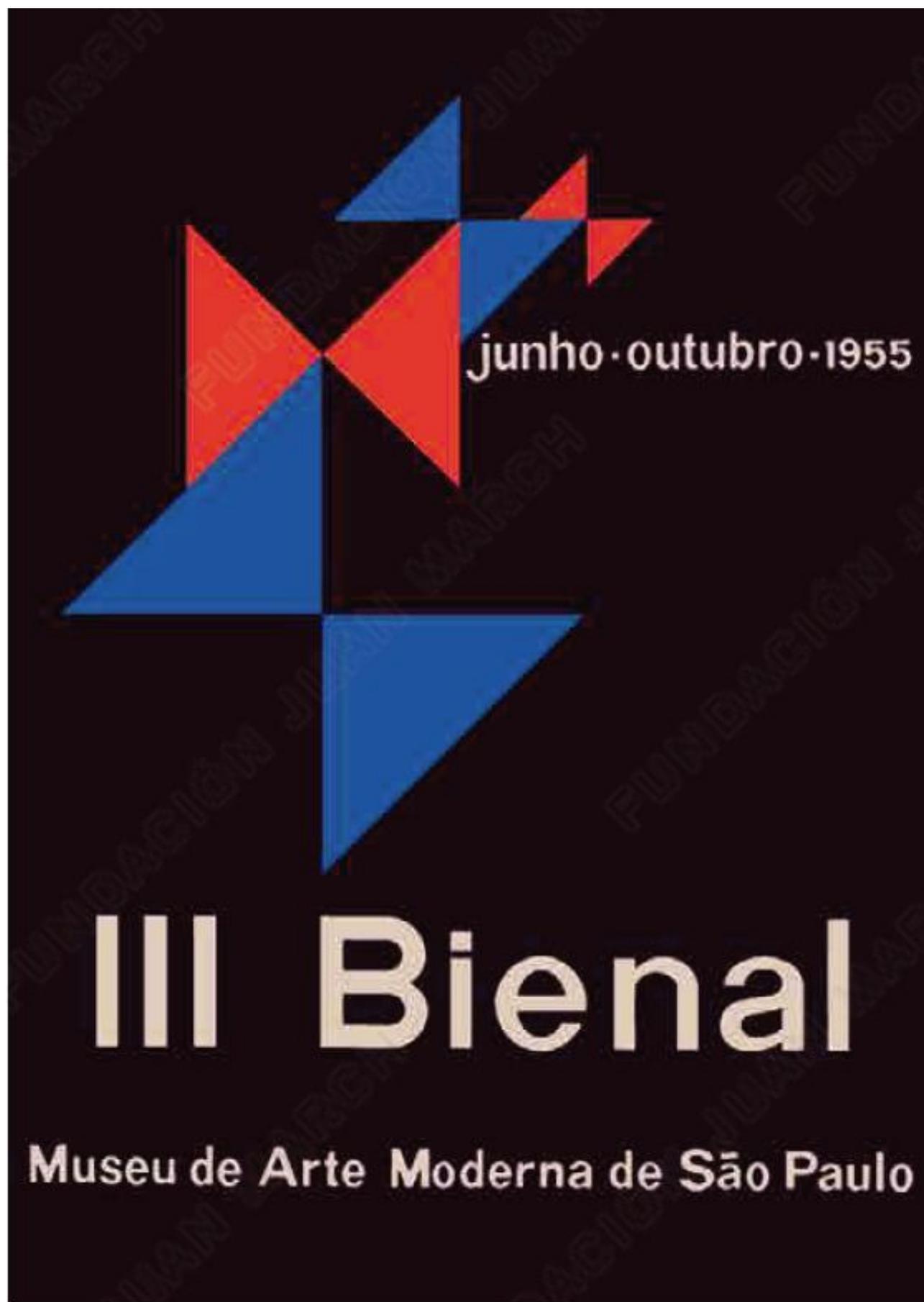
Antônio Maluf
Red version of the poster for
I Bienal de São Paulo, 1951
Offset
93 x 63 cm (36 ½ x 24 ¾ in.)
Private collection



Antônio Maluf
Black version of the poster for
I Bienal de São Paulo, 1951
Offset
93 x 63 cm (36 ½ x 24 ¾ in.)
Private collection



CAT. 89
Alexandre Wollner
Poster for III Bienal de São
Paulo of the Museu de Arte
Moderna, São Paulo, 1955
Digital print, 2010
96 x 64 cm (37 ¾ x 25 ¼ in.)
Private collection



CAT. 90
Alexandre Wollner
Poster for IV Bienal de São
Paulo of the Museu de Arte
Moderna, São Paulo, 1957
Digital print, 2010
96 x 64 cm (37 ¾ x 25 ¼ in.)
Private collection



CAT. 92
Geraldo de Barros
Station of Light - SP, 1949
Vintage silver-gelatin print
30.7 x 30.2 cm (12 1/8 x 11 7/8 in.)
Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo
Sponsored by Petrobras (2001.027)



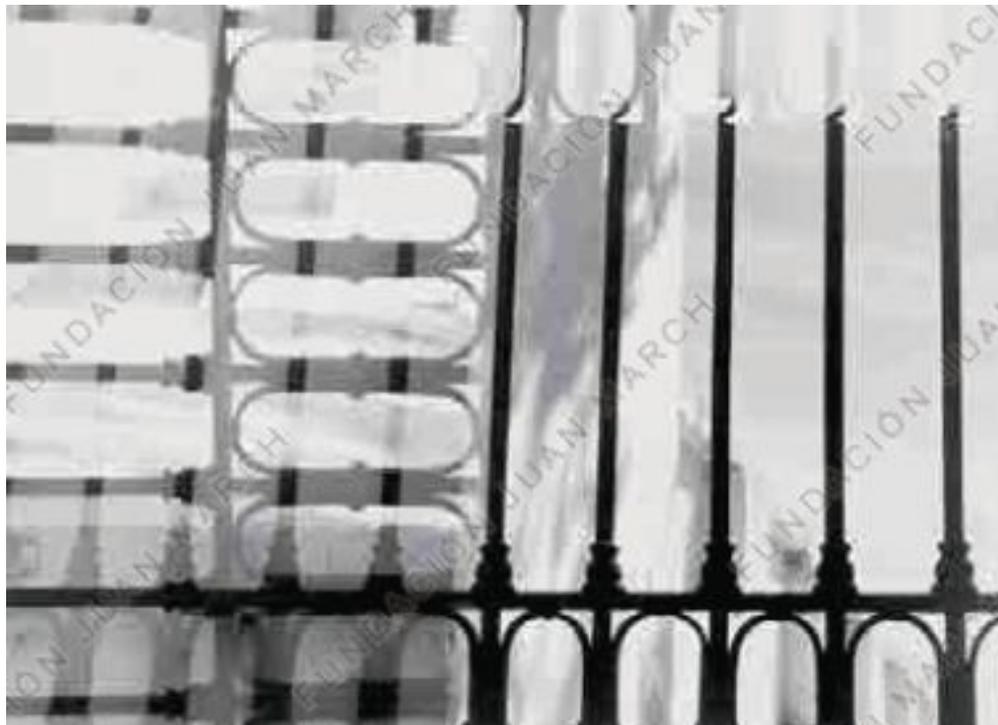
CAT. 93
Geraldo de Barros
The Birds - RJ, 1950
Vintage silver-gelatin print
30.1 x 40 cm (11 7/8 x 15 3/4 in.)
Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo
Sponsored by Petrobras (2001.031)



CAT. 94
Geraldo de Barros
Photoform, São Paulo, 1950
Vintage silver-gelatin print
40 x 30.1 cm (15 ¾ x 11 ⅞ in.)
Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo
Sponsored by Petrobras (2001.032)



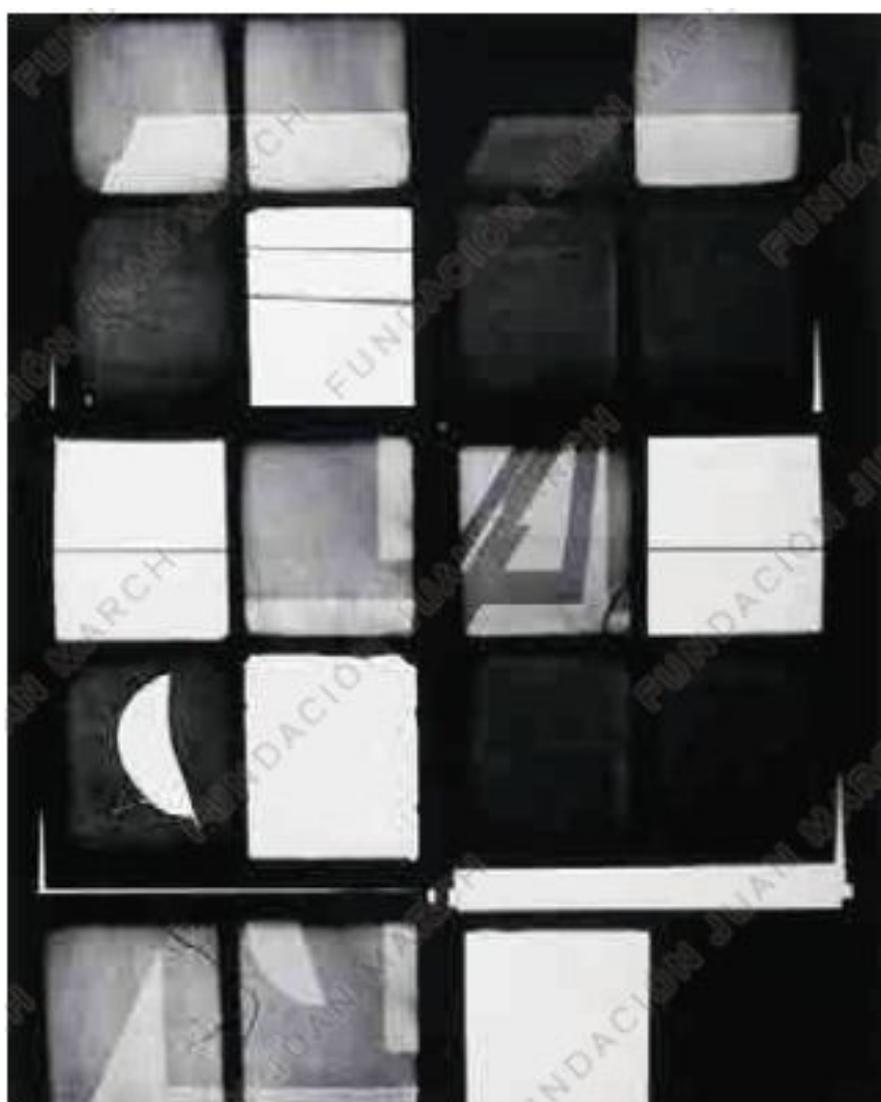
CAT. 95
Geraldo de Barros
Untitled - Seville - Spain, 1951
Vintage silver-gelatin print, 1970
30.1 x 40.2 cm (11 ⅞ x 15 ¾ in.)
Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, on loan
from Eduardo Brandão and Jan Fjeld (CM2006.032)



CAT. 102
German Lorca
Crossed Curves II, 1955
Silver-gelatin print
43.8 x 44 cm (17 1/8 x 17 1/4 in.)
Museu de Arte Moderna de São
Paulo. Gift of the artist (2006.152)



CAT. 103
German Lorca
Homage to Mondrian, 1960
Vintage silver-gelatin print
57.8 x 46.5 cm (22 3/4 x 18 1/4 in.)
Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo. Acquisition
of Núcleo Contemporâneo MAM-SP (2002.083)



CAT. 97
Thomaz Farkas
Roof Tiles. Recortes series, São Paulo, SP, ca. 1945
Silver-gelatin print
30 x 40 cm (11 ¾ x 15 ¾ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 98
Thomaz Farkas
Recortes series, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, ca. 1945
Silver-gelatin print
31 x 30 cm (12 ¼ x 11 ¾ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 99
Thomaz Farkas
Ceiling of Ipiranga Cinema, São Paulo, SP, ca. 1945
Silver-gelatin print
28 x 27 cm (11 x 10 ½ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



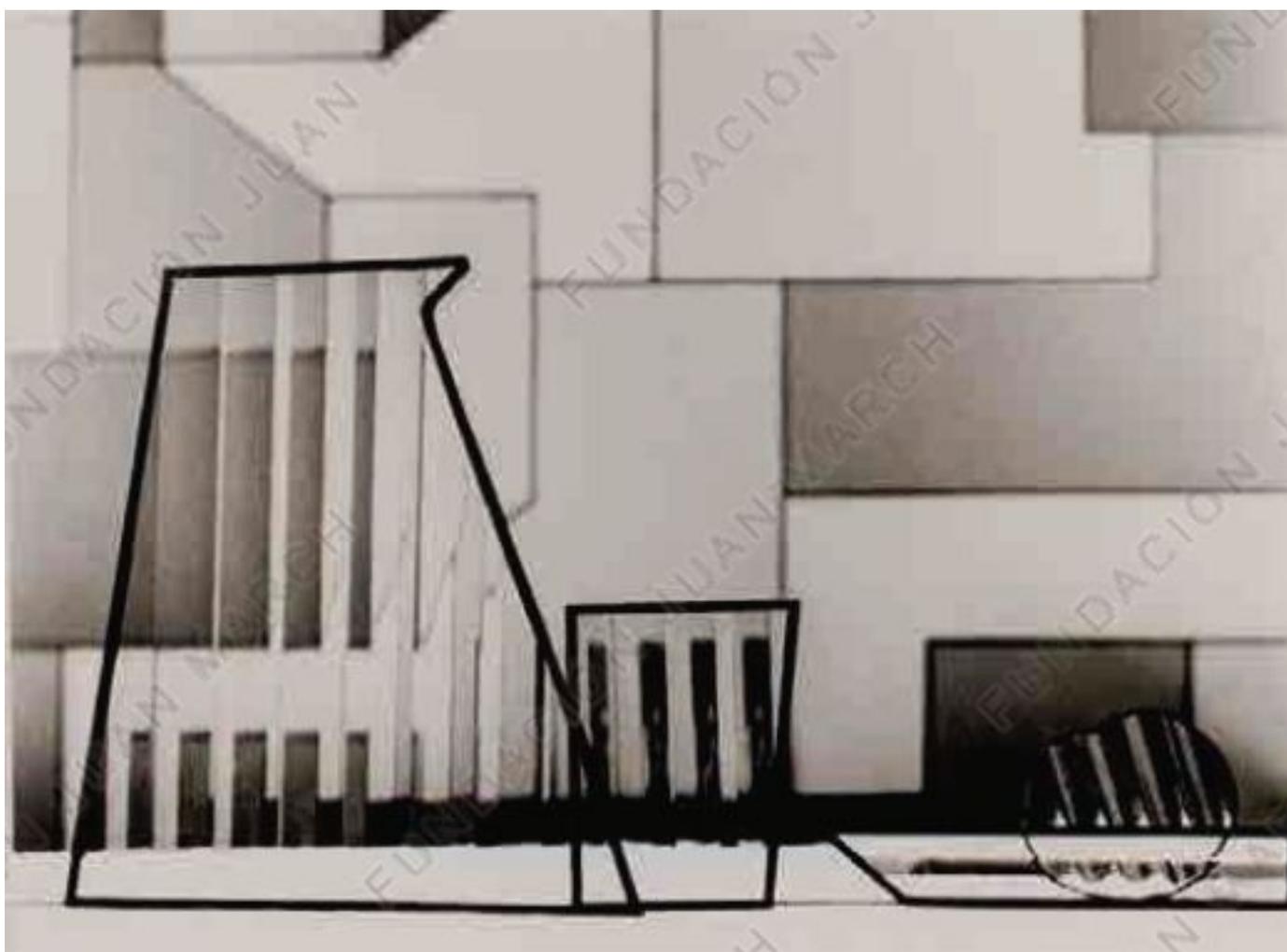
CAT. 100
Thomaz Farkas
Recortes series, ca. 1945
Silver-gelatin print
29.7 x 30.5 cm (11 ¾ x 12 in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 101
Thomaz Farkas
Canopy of Pampulha Casino, Belo Horizonte, MG, ca. 1949
Silver-gelatin print
31 x 30 cm (12 ¼ x 11 ¾ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 96
Gaspar Gasparian
Cubist Composition, ca. 1950
Vintage silver-gelatin print
30 x 40 cm (11 ¾ x 15 ¾ in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



CAT. 104
Haruo Ohara
Cyclone. Londrina - PR, 1957
Silver-gelatin print
30 x 40 cm (11 ¾ x 15 ¾ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 105
Haruo Ohara
Marcha. Terra Boa - PR, 1958
Silver-gelatin print
30 x 31 cm (11 ¾ x 12 ¼ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 107
Haruo Ohara
Composition, 1964
Silver-gelatin print
45 x 45 cm (17 ¾ x 17 ¾ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 106
Haruo Ohara
The Drought. Tres Bocas Factory Dam, Londrina, PR, 1959
Silver-gelatin print
30 x 40 cm (11 ¾ x 15 ¾ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



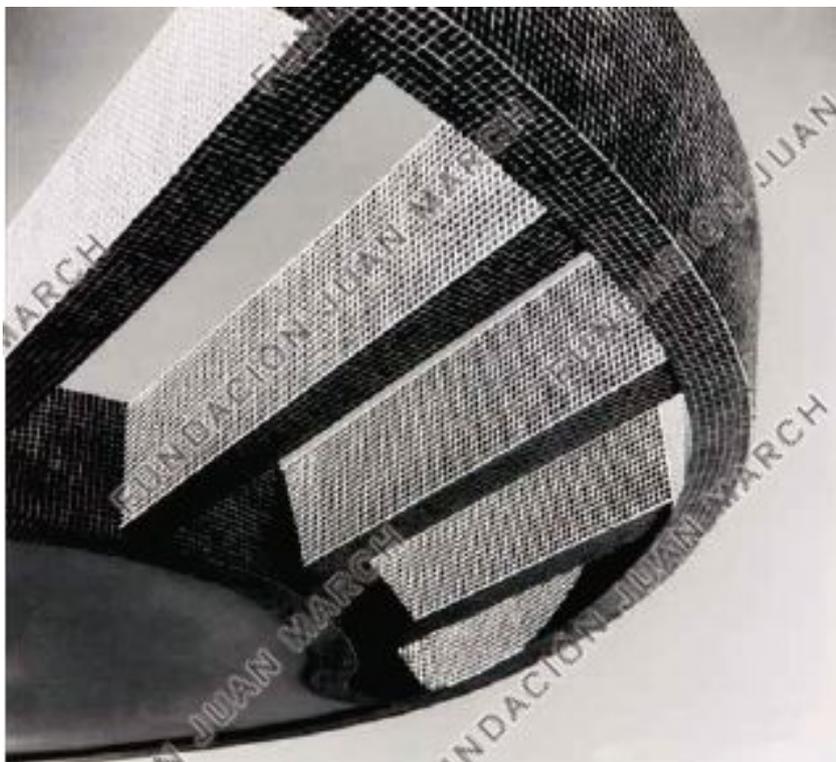
CAT. 108
Haruo Ohara
Originality. Londrina, PR, 1969
Silver-gelatin print
45 x 45 cm (17 ¾ x 17 ¾ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 109
Haruo Ohara
Abstract, House on Rua São Jerônimo, Londrina, PR, 1969
Silver-gelatin print
40 x 29.5 cm (15 ¾ x 11 ⅝ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 110
José Yalenti
Architecture no. 7, ca. 1960s
Inkjet print on cotton paper, 2006
Reproduction of an original, unique print
41.5 x 44.9 cm (16 ¼ x 17 ¾ in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



CAT. 111
José Yalenti
Fasciceiro, ca. 1960s
Vintage silver-gelatin print
37.5 x 47.2 cm (14 ¾ x 18 ⅝ in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



CAT. 113
Marcel Gautherot
Detail of Metallic Structure of Ministries,
Brasilia, DF, ca. 1958
Silver-gelatin print
31 x 30 cm (12 ¼ x 11 ¾ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles, Rio de Janeiro



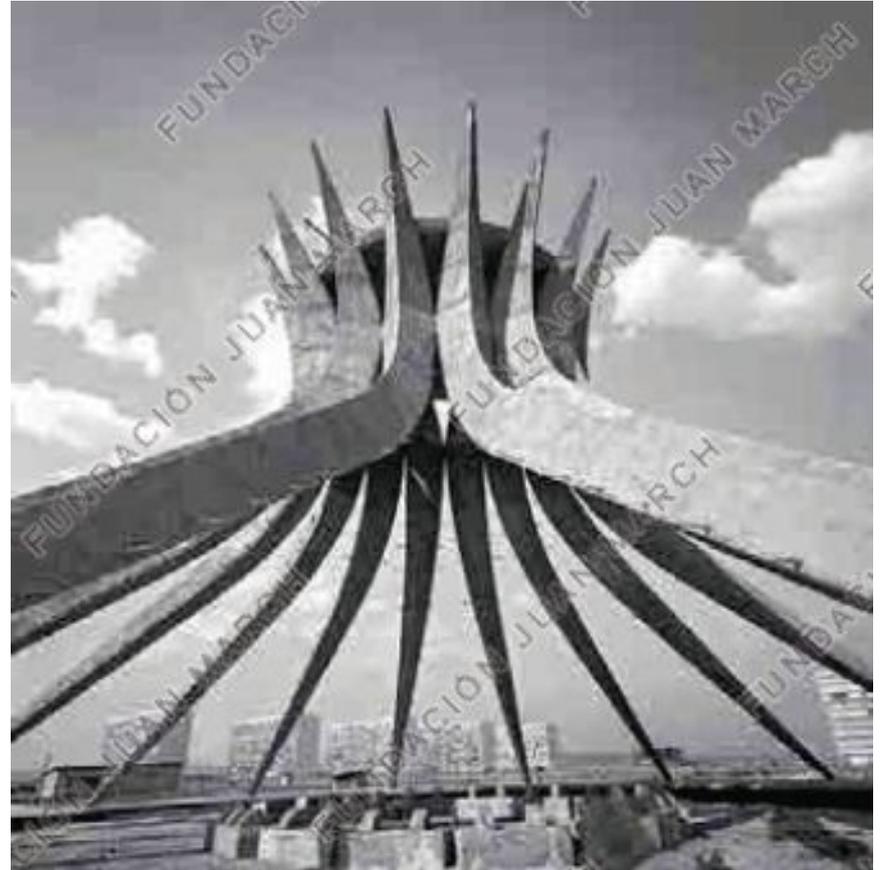
CAT. 112
Marcel Gautherot
Ministry Buildings, Brasilia, DF, ca. 1958
Silver-gelatin print
31 x 30 cm (12 ¼ x 11 ¾ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles, Rio de Janeiro



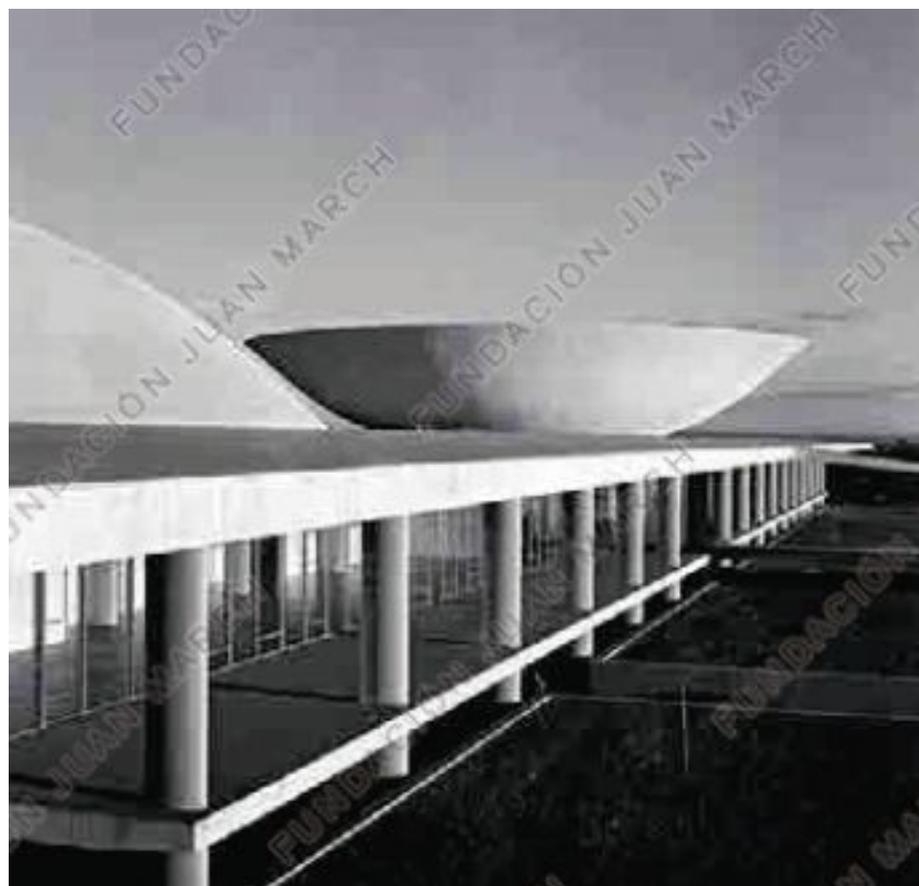
CAT. 114
Marcel Gautherot
*Detail of Metallic Structure of
Ministries, Brasília, DF, ca. 1958*
Silver-gelatin print
31 x 30 cm (12 ¼ x 11 ¾ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



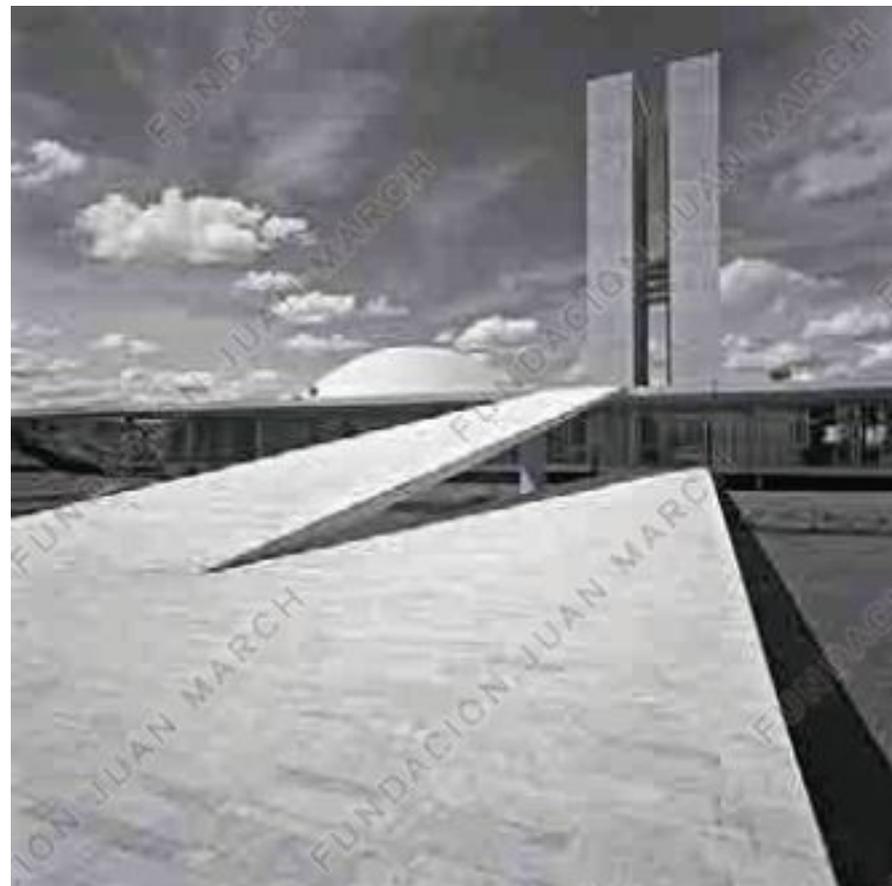
CAT. 115
Marcel Gautherot
*Metropolitan Cathedral of Nossa Senhora
Aparecida with Ministeries Esplanade in
Background, Brasília, DF, ca. 1960*
Silver-gelatin print
47 x 47 cm (18 ½ x 18 ½ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 116
Marcel Gautherot
Palácio do Congresso Nacional, Brasília, DF, ca. 1960
Silver-gelatin print
47 x 47 cm (18 ½ x 18 ½ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



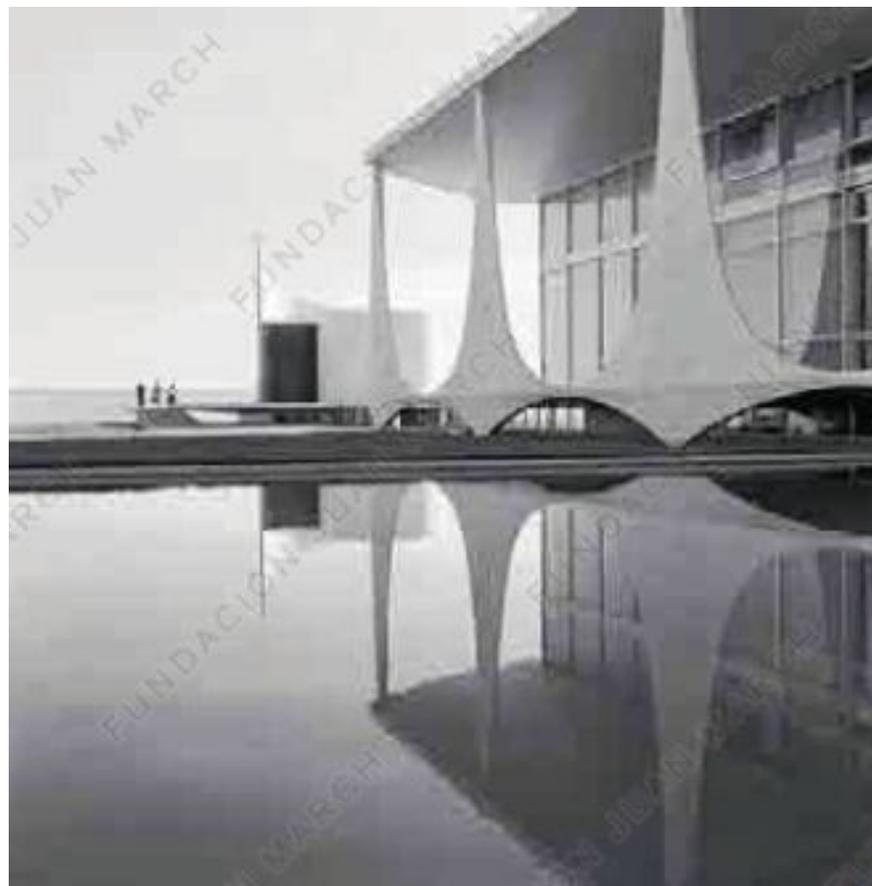
CAT. 117
Marcel Gautherot
Palácio do Congresso Nacional, Brasília, DF, ca. 1960
Silver-gelatin print
47 x 47 cm (18 ½ x 18 ½ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 118
Marcel Gautherot
Palácio do Congresso Nacional, Brasília, DF, ca. 1960
Silver-gelatin print
47 x 47 cm (18 ½ x 18 ½ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



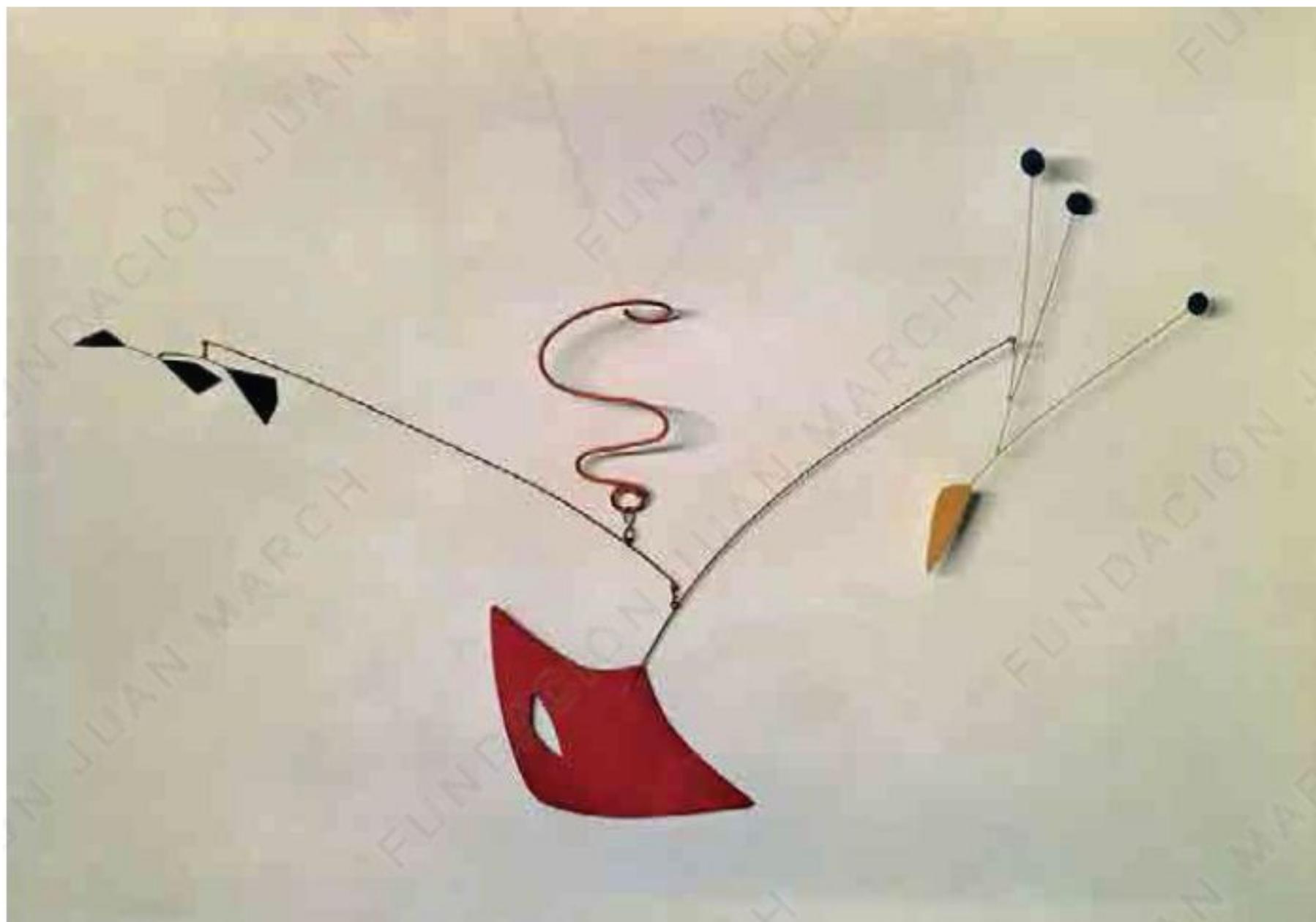
CAT. 119
Marcel Gautherot
Palácio da Alvorada, Brasília, DF, ca. 1962
Silver-gelatin print
47 x 47 cm (18 ½ x 18 ½ in.)
Instituto Moreira Salles



CAT. 122
Ivan Serpa
Untitled, 1954
Oil on canvas
116.2 x 89.5 cm (45 ¾ x 35 ¼ in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 120
Alexander Calder
Red Angel Fish Mobile, 1957
Painted metal
102 x 148 x 58 cm (40 ¼ x 58 ¼ x 22 ¾ in.)
Private collection



CAT. 123
Alfredo Volpi
White and Red Concrete Composition, 1955
Tempera on canvas
54 x 100 cm (21 ¼ x 39 ⅝ in.)
Collection Rose and Alfredo Setubal



CAT. 126
Alfredo Volpi
Triangles – Black Background, ca. 1970
Tempera on canvas
136 x 68 cm (53 ½ x 26 ¾ in.)
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte
Reina Sofía, Madrid (AD02513)



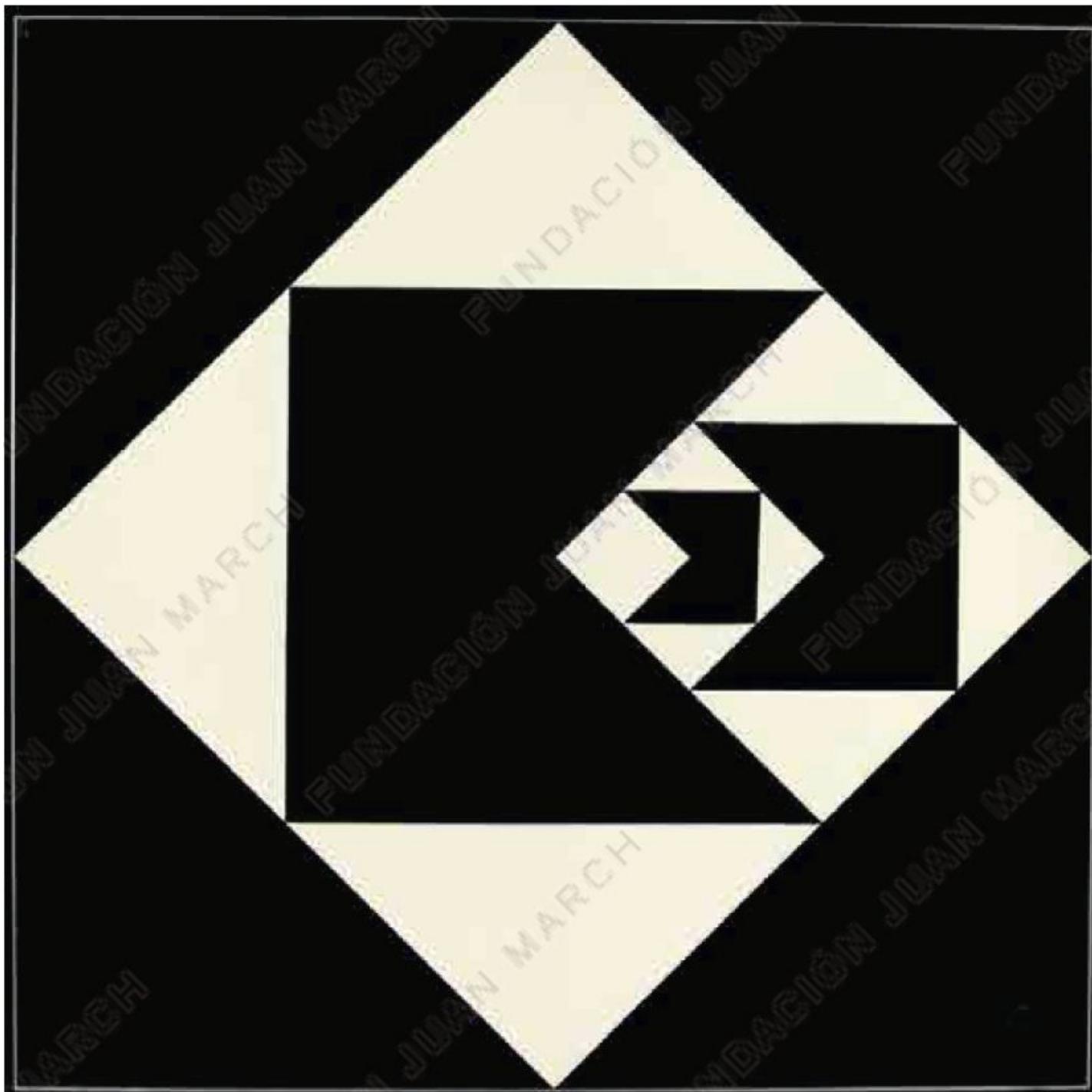
CAT. 124
Alfredo Volpi
Façade with Flags, 1959
Tempera on canvas
116 x 72 cm (45 ¾ x 28 ¼ in.)
MASP, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis
Chateaubriand, São Paulo (1237 P)



CAT. 125
Alfredo Volpi
Façade IV, 1960
Tempera on canvas
72 x 48 cm (28 ¼ x 18 7/8 in.)
Fundação José e Paulina
Nemirovsky, São Paulo (153)



CAT. 121
Geraldo de Barros
Diagonal Function, 1952
Lacquer on plywood
62.9 x 62.9 x 1.3 cm (24 3/4 x 24 3/4 x 1/2 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 128
Amílcar de Castro
Untitled, n. d.
Cut steel
29 x 30.5 x 20 cm
(11 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 12 x 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.)
Fundação José e Paulina
Nemirovsky, São Paulo (145)



CAT. 127
Franz Weissmann
Composition with Semicircles, 1953
Aluminum
81 x 64.7 x 56.1 cm
(31 7/8 x 25 1/2 x 22 1/8 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 129
Judith Lauand
Spatial Construction with Triangles and Straight Lines, 1954
Synthetic paint on chipboard
45 x 45 cm (17 ¾ x 17 ¾ in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 130
Judith Lauand
Concrete 18, 1956
Synthetic paint on chipboard
30 x 30.2 cm (11 ¾ x 11 ⅞ in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 131
Hermelindo Fiaminghi
Circles with Alternating Movement, 1956
Paint on chipboard
60 x 35 cm (23 5/8 x 13 3/4 in.)
Museu de Arte Moderna de
São Paulo. Acquisition of Banco
Bradesco S. A. (1999.026)



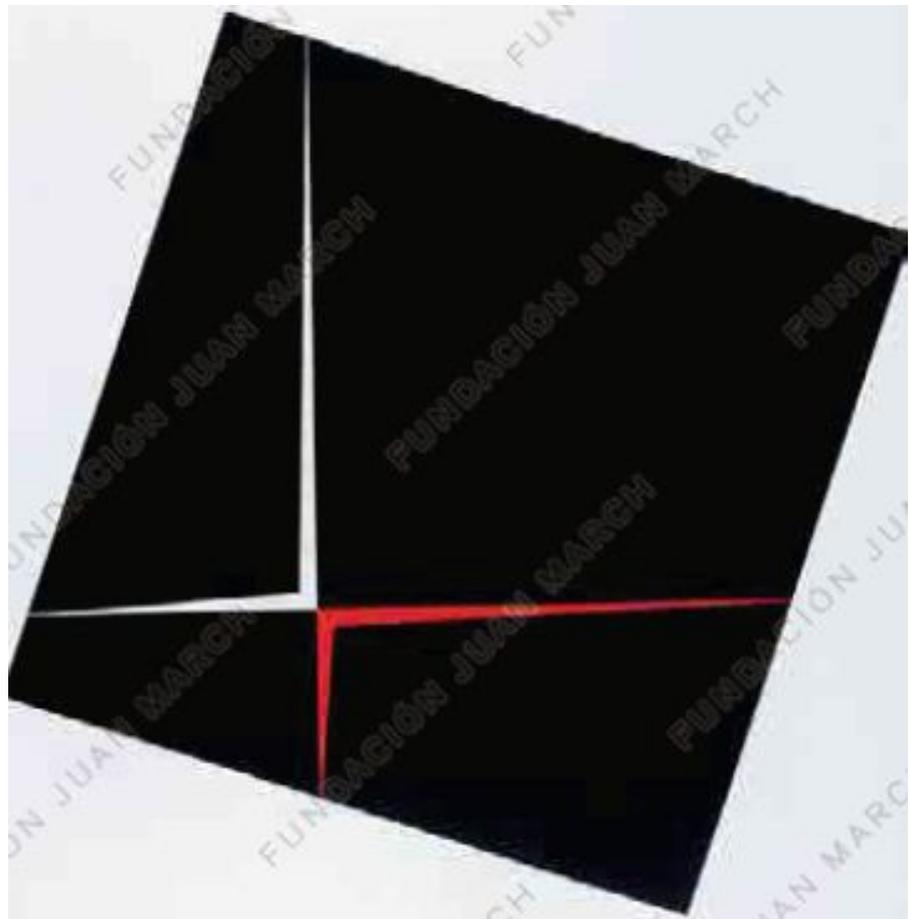
CAT. 132
Hermelindo Fiaminghi
Alternating 2, 1957
Lacquer on chipboard
61 x 61 cm (24 x 24 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 134
Hércules Barsotti
Black/White, 1959–61
Oil and sand on canvas
50 x 100 cm (19 ¾ x 39 ⅞ in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 136
Lothar Charoux
Re-established Equilibrium, 1960
Gouache and acrylic on paper
50 x 50 cm (19 ¾ x 19 ¾ in.)
Collection Glaucia and Peter
Cohn, São Paulo



CAT. 133
Hércules Barsotti
Black and White II, ca. 1959–60
Ink on paper
21.5 x 9 cm (8 ½ x 3 ½ in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



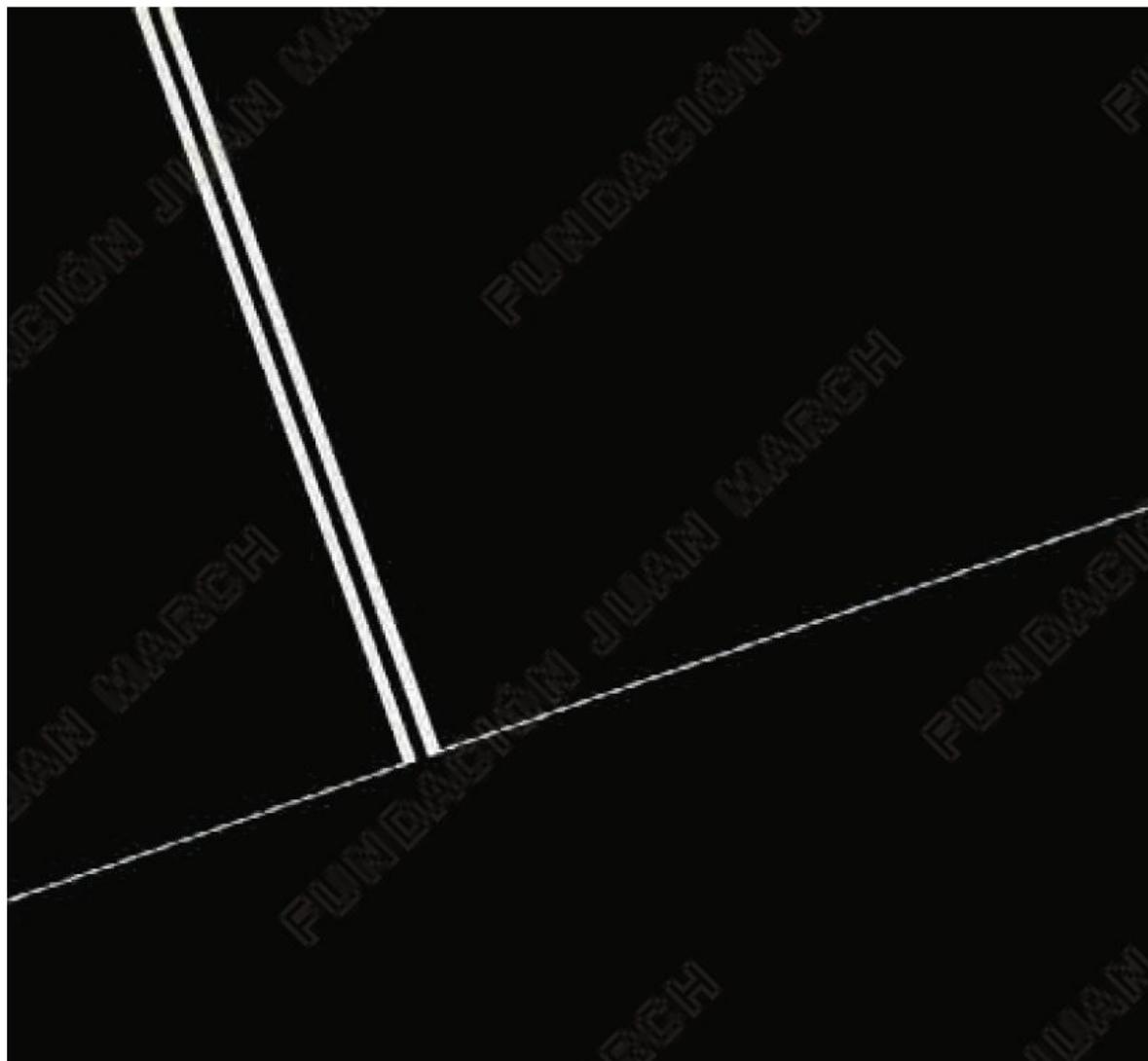
CAT. 135
Hércules Barsotti
Project III, n. d.
India ink on paper
9.5 x 9.5 x 4.2 cm (3 ¾ x 3 ¾ x 1 ¾ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 138
Lothar Charoux
Rhythm, 1970
Oil on canvas
100 x 35 cm (39 ³/₈ x 13 ³/₄ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



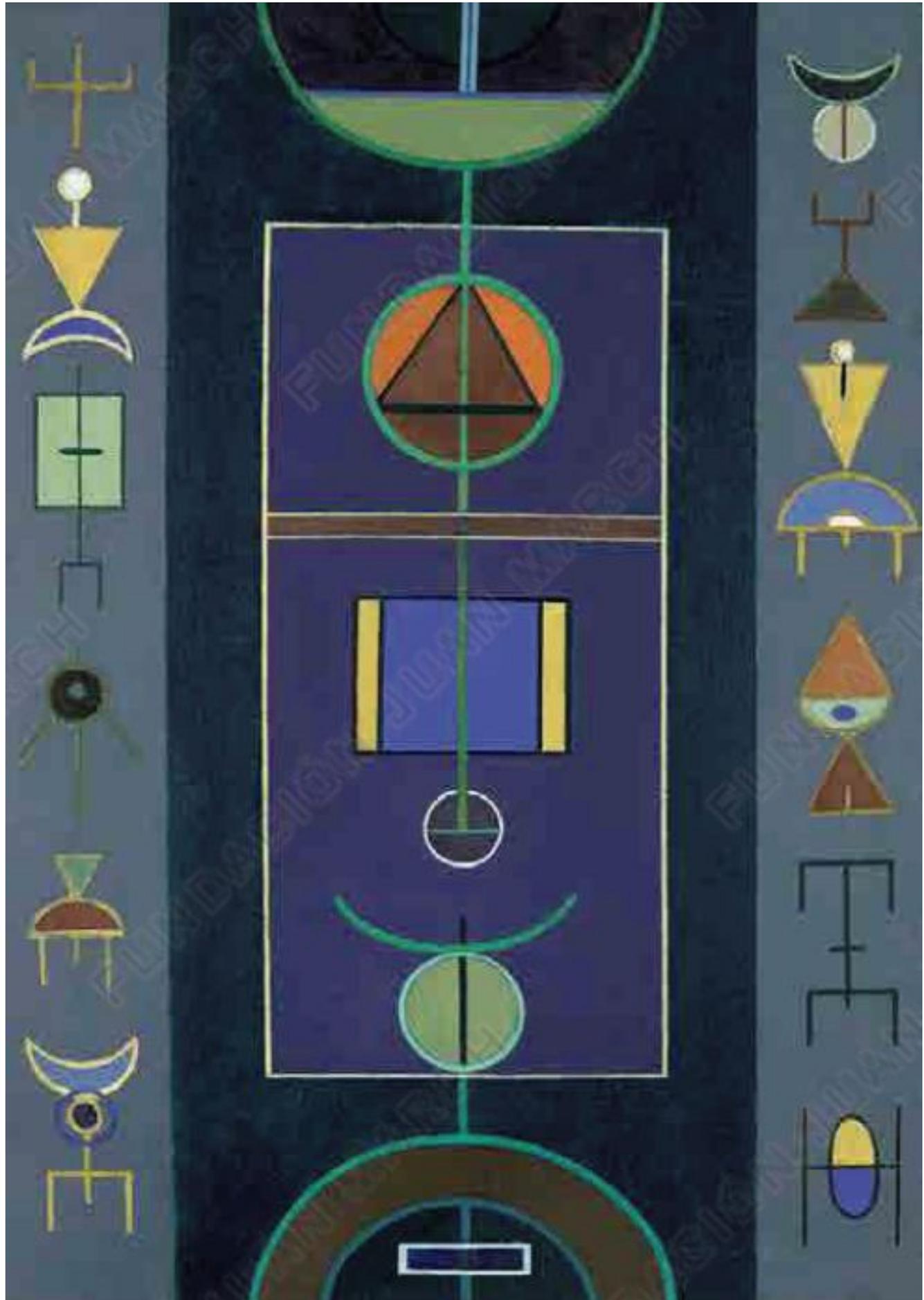
CAT. 137
Lothar Charoux
Composition, 1968
Gouache on paper
35 x 37 cm (13 ¾ x 14 ⅝ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



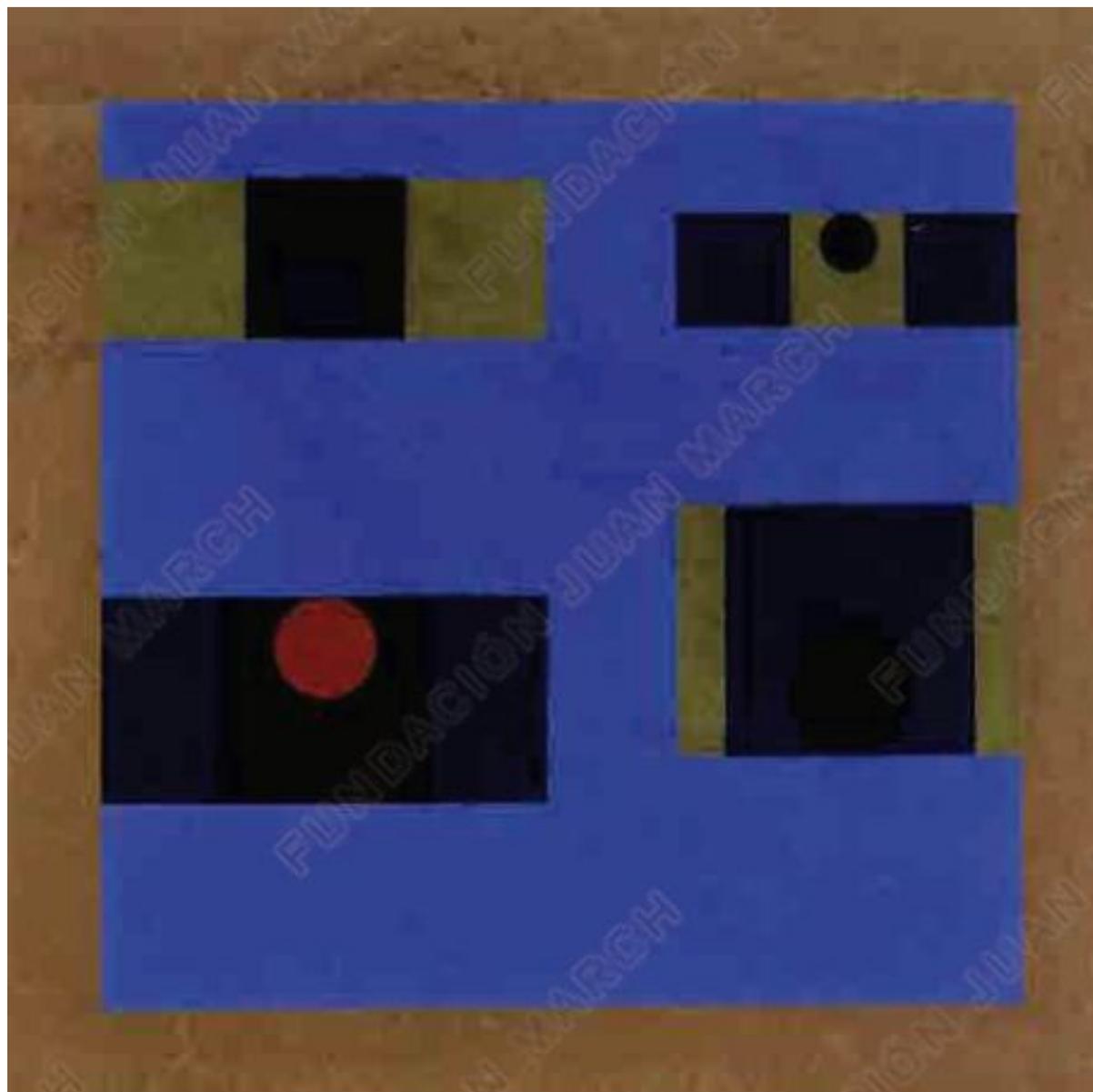
CAT. 139
Mira Schendel
Untitled, 1960
Oil on canvas
23 x 28 cm (9 1/8 x 11 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 140
Rubem Valentim
Untitled, 1956–62
Oil on canvas
70.2 x 50.2 cm
(27 5/8 x 19 3/4 in.)
Colección Patricia
Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 142
Hélio Oiticica
Untitled (Grupo Frente), 1955
Gouache on cardboard
40 x 40 cm (15 ¾ x 15 ¾ in.)
Colección. Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 141
Lygia Pape
Untitled, 1956
Acrylic on plywood
35 x 35 x 8 cm (13 ¾ x 13 ¾ x 3 ⅞ in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 165
Lygia Pape
Untitled, 1961
Acrylic on plywood
50 x 50 x 10.5 cm (19 3/4 x 19 3/4 x 4 1/8 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 144

Augusto de Campos, Haroldo de Campos, Décio Pignatari, Ronaldo Azeredo, José Lino Grünewald
Noigandres, São Paulo, 1952–62

Magazine

144.1. No. 3, *poesia concreta*, December 1956

23 x 16 cm (9 1/4 x 6 1/4 in.)

144.2. No. 4, *poesia concreta*, March 1958

Silkscreen print on cover by Hermelindo Fiaminghi

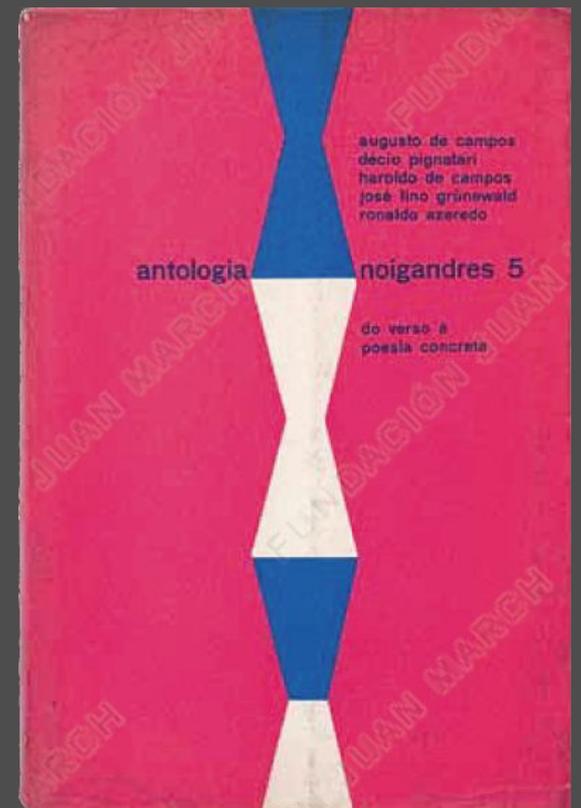
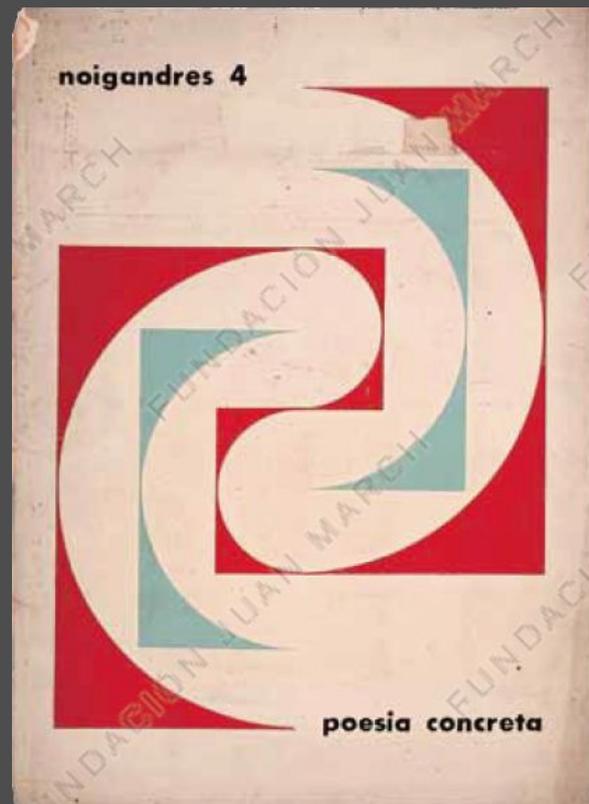
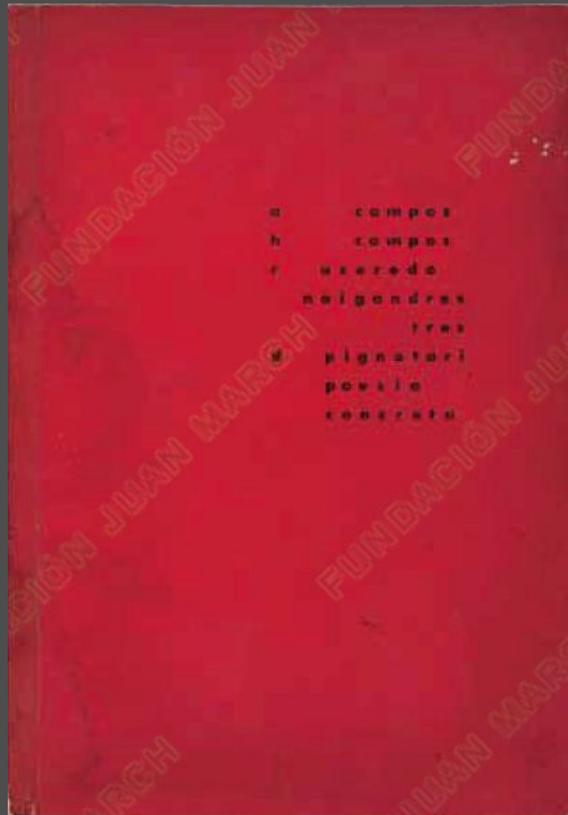
40 x 28.9 cm (15 3/4 x 11 3/8 in.)

144.3. No. 5, *antologia: do verso à poesia concreta*, 1962

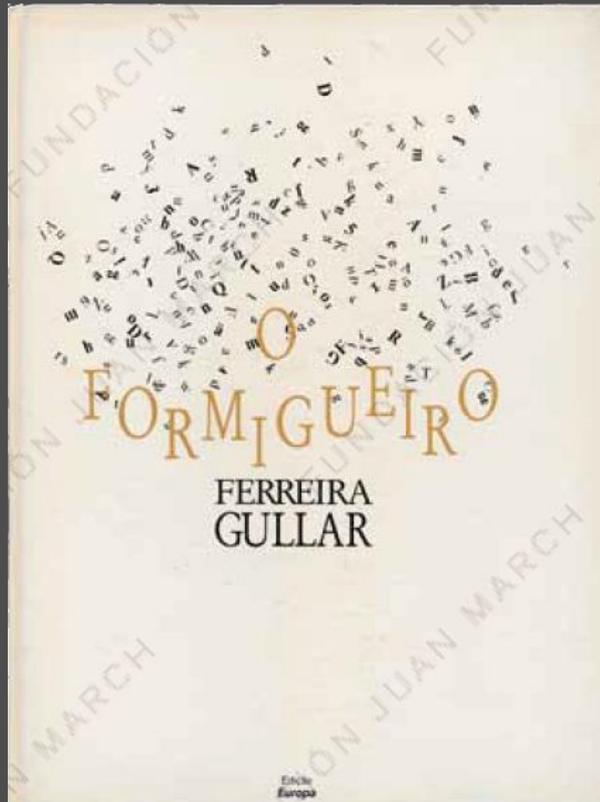
Constructivist work on cover by Alfredo Volpi

23 x 16 cm (9 1/4 x 6 1/4 in.)

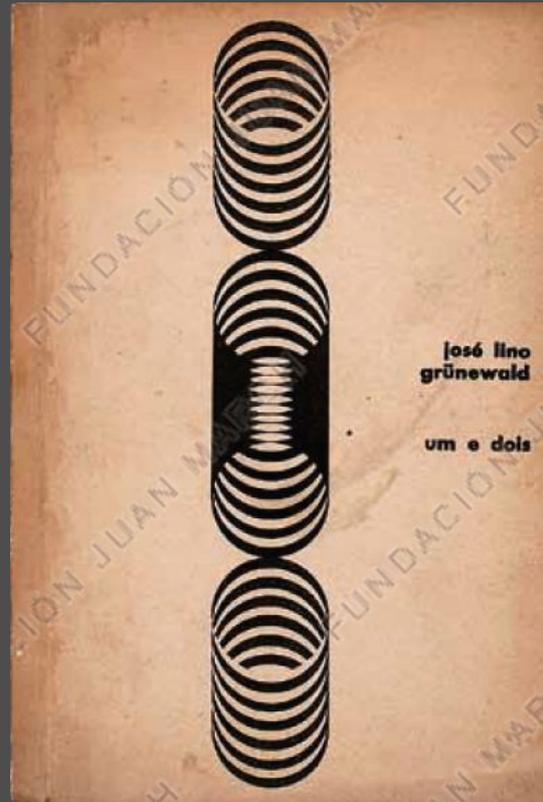
Private collection



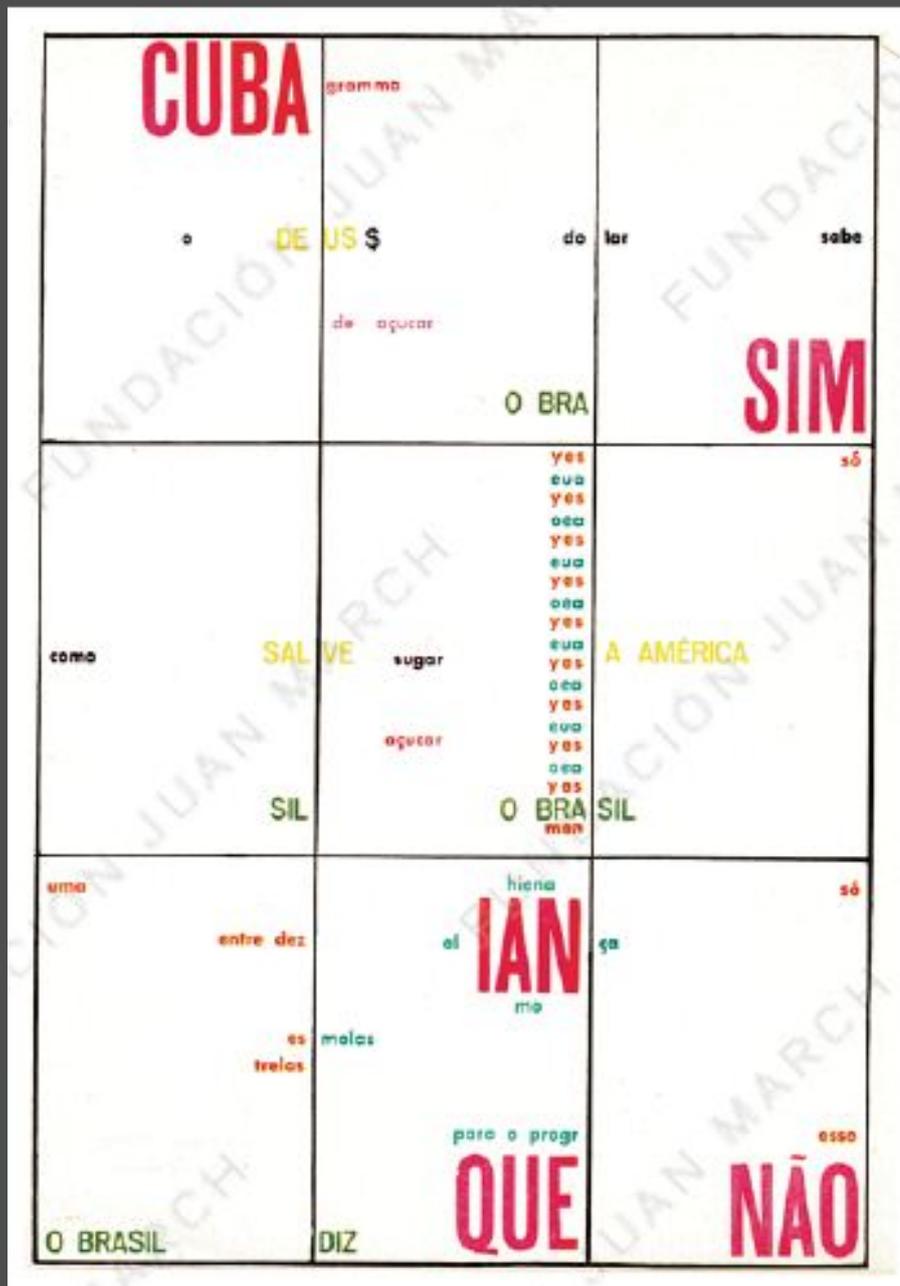
CAT. 145
Ferreira Gullar
O Formigueiro, 1955. Rio de Janeiro:
Edição Europa, 1991
Book
28.7 x 21.5 cm (11 ¼ x 8 ½ in.)
Fundación Juan March, Madrid



CAT. 146
José Lino Grünewald
Um e dois. São Paulo, 1958
Book
24 x 16 cm (9 ¾ x 6 ¼ in.)
Private collection



CAT. 149
 Augusto de Campos
Cubagramma, 1960–62
 Concrete poem
 32 x 24 cm (12 5/8 x 9 3/8 in.)
 Collection Augusto de Campos



CAT. 147

Décio Pignatari

São Paulo Brasil 1960.

São Paulo, 1960

Book

20.3 x 24.5 cm (8 x 9 5/8 in.)

Private collection

CAT. 148

Haroldo de Campos

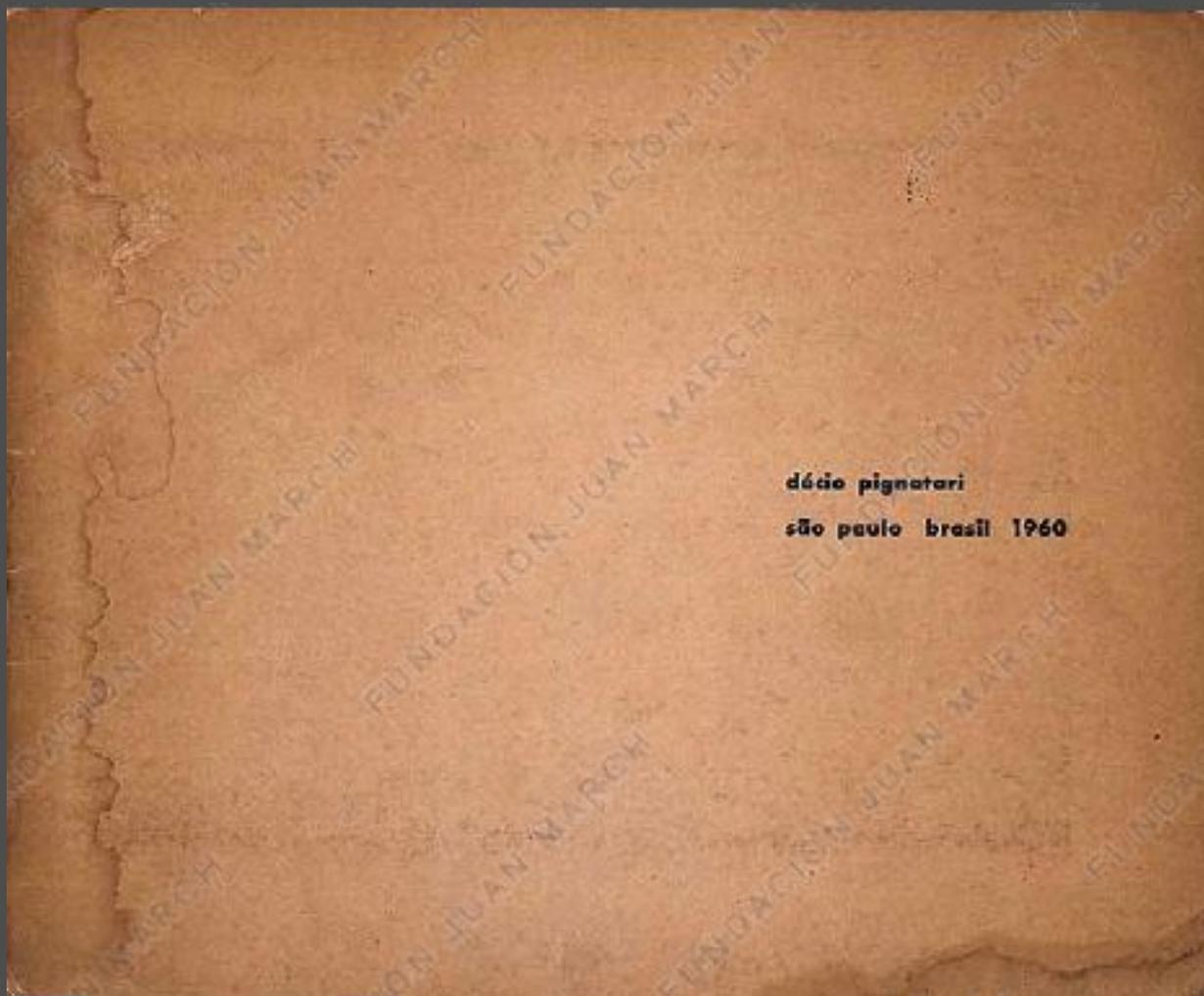
São Paulo 1962. São Paulo

Edição Noigandres, 1962

Book

22 x 11 cm (8 3/4 x 4 1/4 in.)

Private collection



CAT. 151

Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari
and Haroldo de Campos

*Teoria da poesia concreta. Textos
críticos e manifestos 1950–1960*

São Paulo: Edição Invenção,
1965

Book

23 x 16 cm (9 1/8 x 6 1/4 in.)

Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 152

*Invenção. Revista de arte
de vanguarda.* São Paulo

Edição Invenção, 1962–67

Magazine

25.5 x 18 cm (10 x 7 1/8 in.)

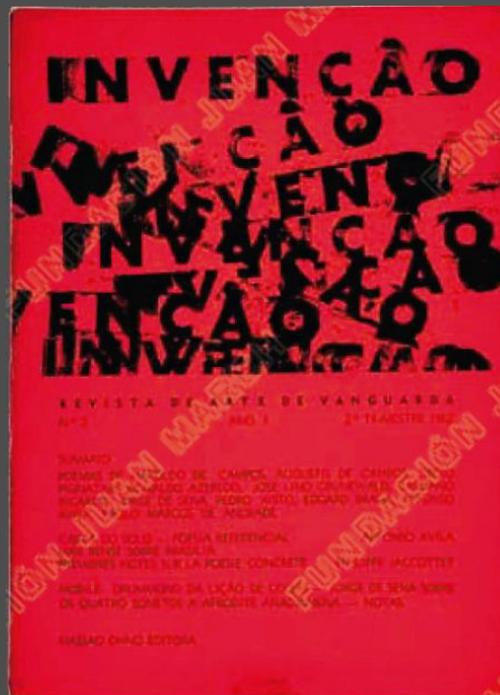
152.1. No. 2, year 1, 2nd

trimester, 1962

152.2. No. 5, year 6, December

1966 - January 1967

Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 153

*Invenção. Revista de
arte de vanguarda*

no. 3, year 2. São Paulo

Edição Invenção, June

1963

Magazine

25.5 x 18 cm (10 x 7 1/8 in.)

Private collection



CAT. 154
Lygia Clark
Livro Obra, 1960
Edition K
Collage and gouache on paper
Variable dimensions
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros.
Courtesy cultural association
O Mundo de Lygia Clark



CAT. 143
Lygia Clark
Creature – model, 1960
Aluminum construction
20 x 30 x 30 cm (7 7/8 x 11 3/4 x 11 3/4 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro
Courtesy cultural association *O Mundo de Lygia Clark*



CAT. 155
Willys de Castro
Active Object, 1959
Oil on canvas on plywood
46.5 x 92.2 cm (18 ¼ x 36 ¼ in.)
MASP - Museu de Arte de São
Paulo Assis Chateaubriand,
São Paulo (1286 P)



CAT. 157
Willys de Castro
Active Object, n. d.
Oil on canvas
18 x 9 cm (7 x 3 ½ in.)
Pinacoteca do Estado de São
Paulo. Gift of Hércules Rubens
Barsotti, 2001 (5252)



CAT. 158
Willys de Castro
Active Object, n. d.
Oil on canvas
18 x 9 cm (7 x 3 ½ in.)
Pinacoteca do Estado de São
Paulo. Gift of Hércules Rubens
Barsotti, 2001 (5253)



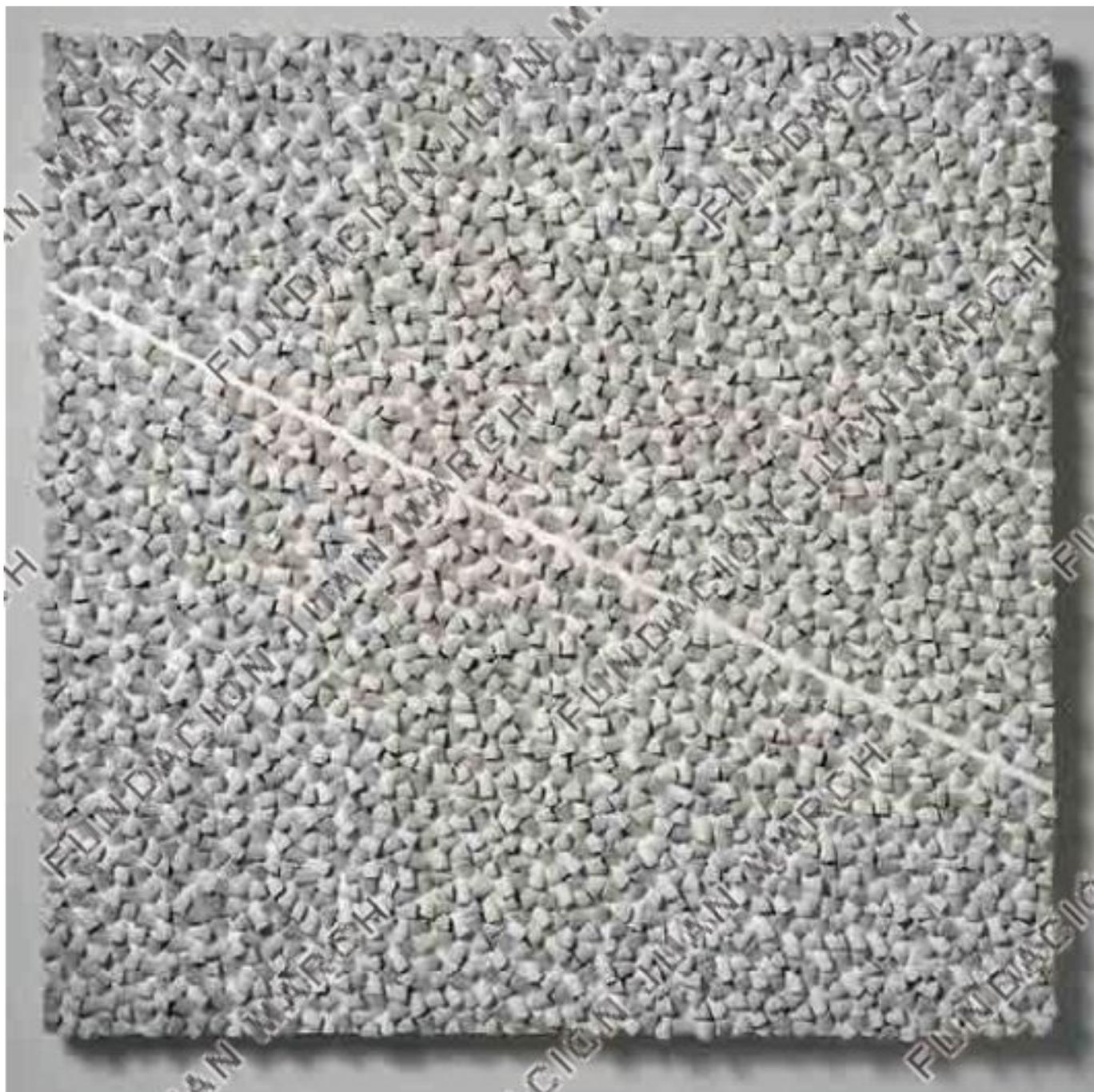
CAT. 156
Willys de Castro
Active Object, 1962
Oil on canvas glued on wood
37.7 x 2 x 4 cm (14 ¾ x ¾ x 1 ½ in.)
[each]; 71 x 41 x 10 cm
(28 x 16 x 4 in.) [with acrylic box]
Pinacoteca do Estado de São
Paulo. Gift of Hércules Rubens
Barsotti, 2001 (5251)



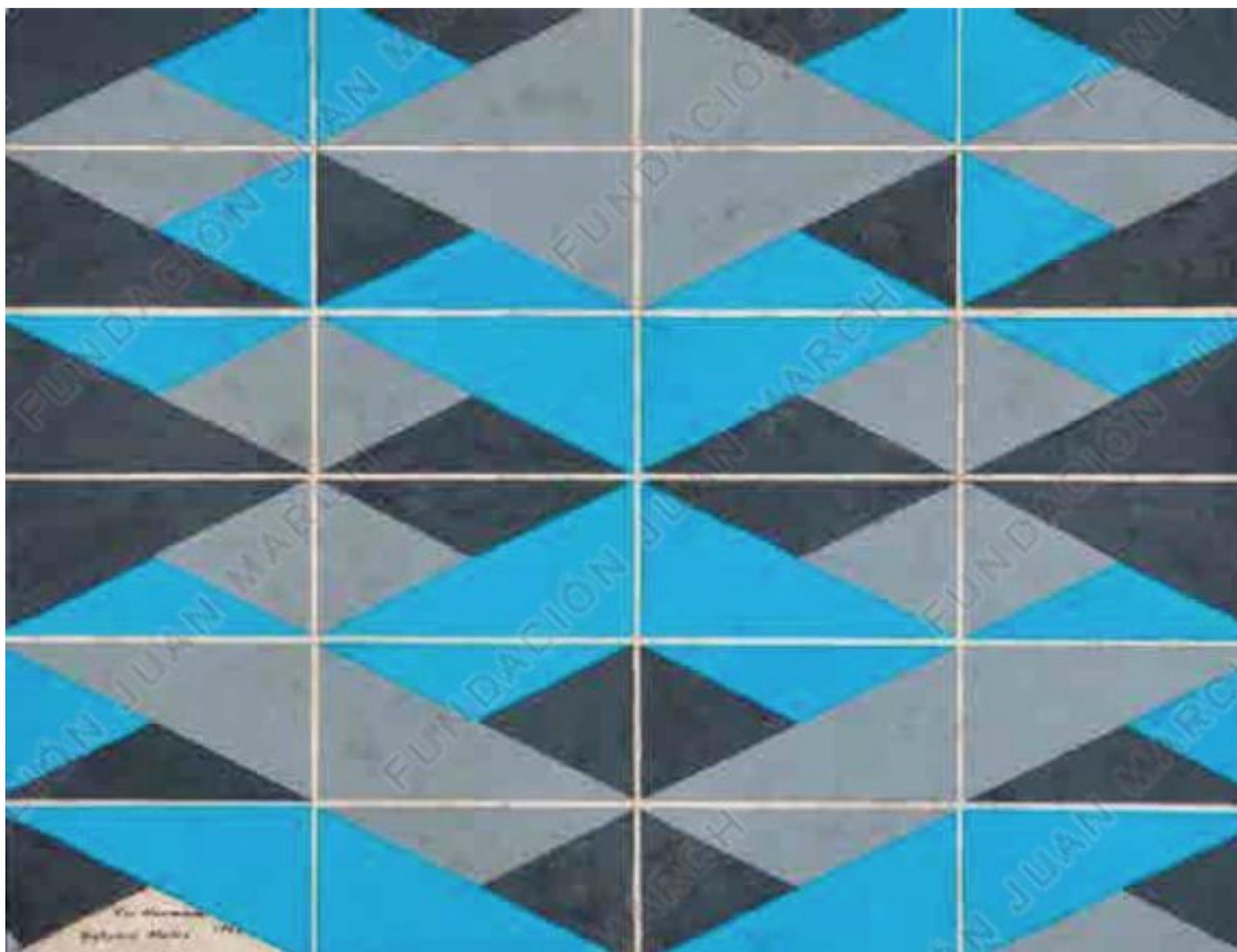
CAT. 159
Sergio Camargo
Relief no. 247, 1969
Acrylic on wood
47 x 47 x 17.5 cm (18 ½ x 18 ½ x 6 ¾ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



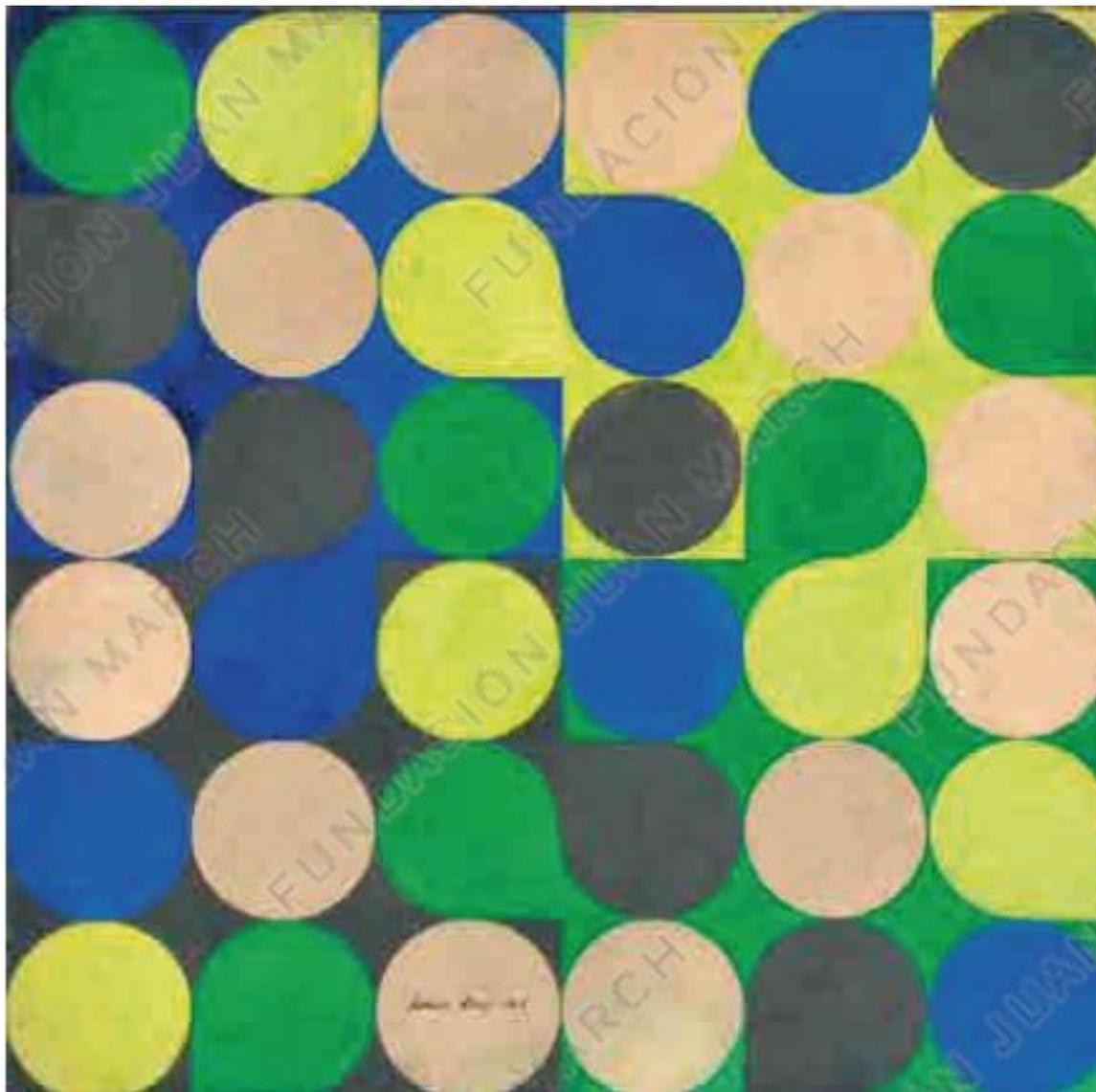
CAT. 160
Sergio Camargo
Relief no. 362, 1969
Acrylic on wood
50.5 x 50.5 x 2.4 cm (20 x 20 x 1 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 161
Antônio Maluf
Villa Normanda Study, 1964
Gouache on cardboard
28 x 21.5 cm (11 x 8 ½ in.)
Private collection



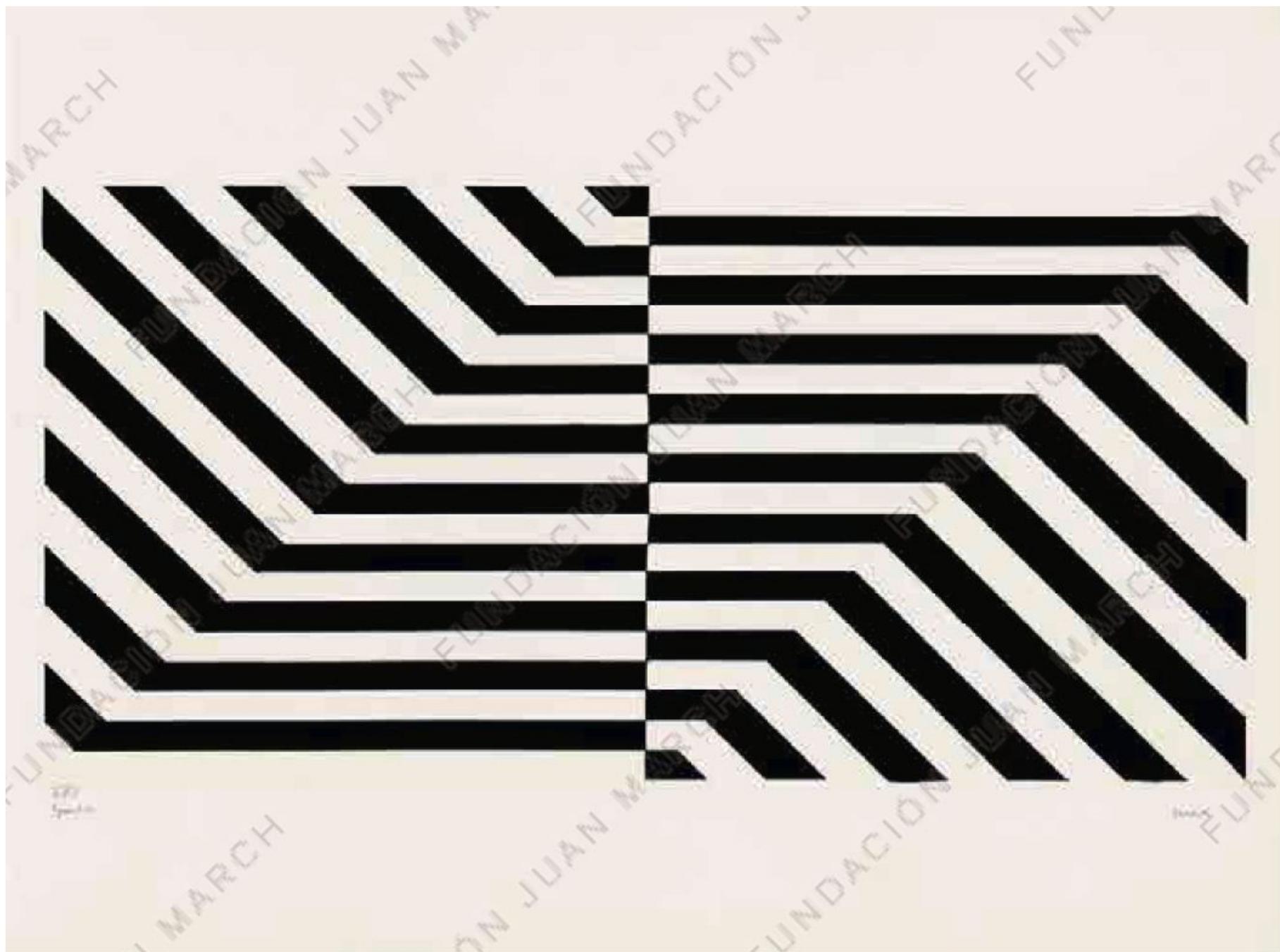
CAT. 162
Antônio Maluf
Untitled, 1964
Gouache on paper glued on wood
30 x 30 cm (11 ¾ x 11 ¾ in.)
Private collection



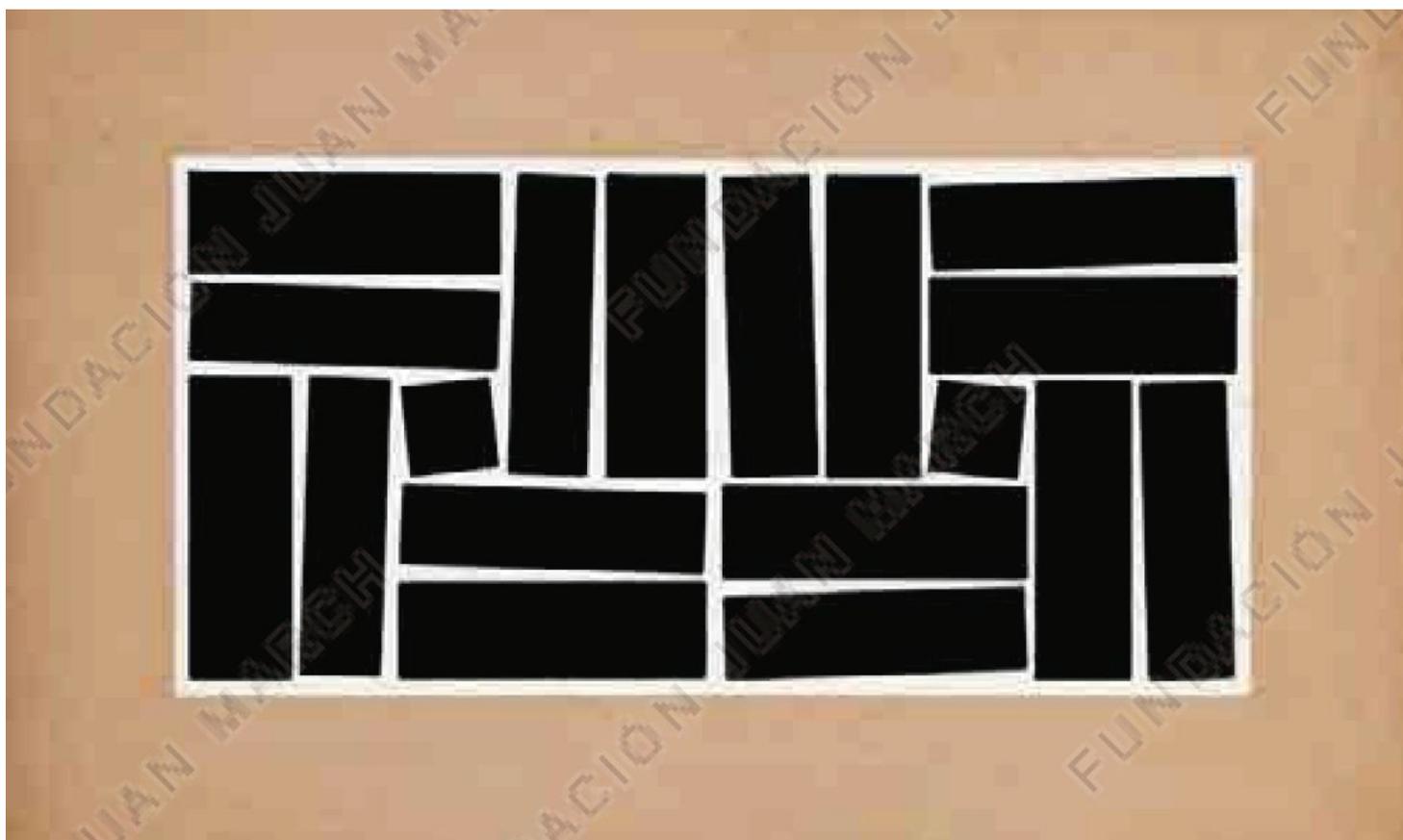
CAT. 163
Luiz Sacilotto
Concreção 58, 1958
Enamel on metal and acrylic on plywood
20 x 60 x 30.5 cm (8 x 23 7/8 x 12 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



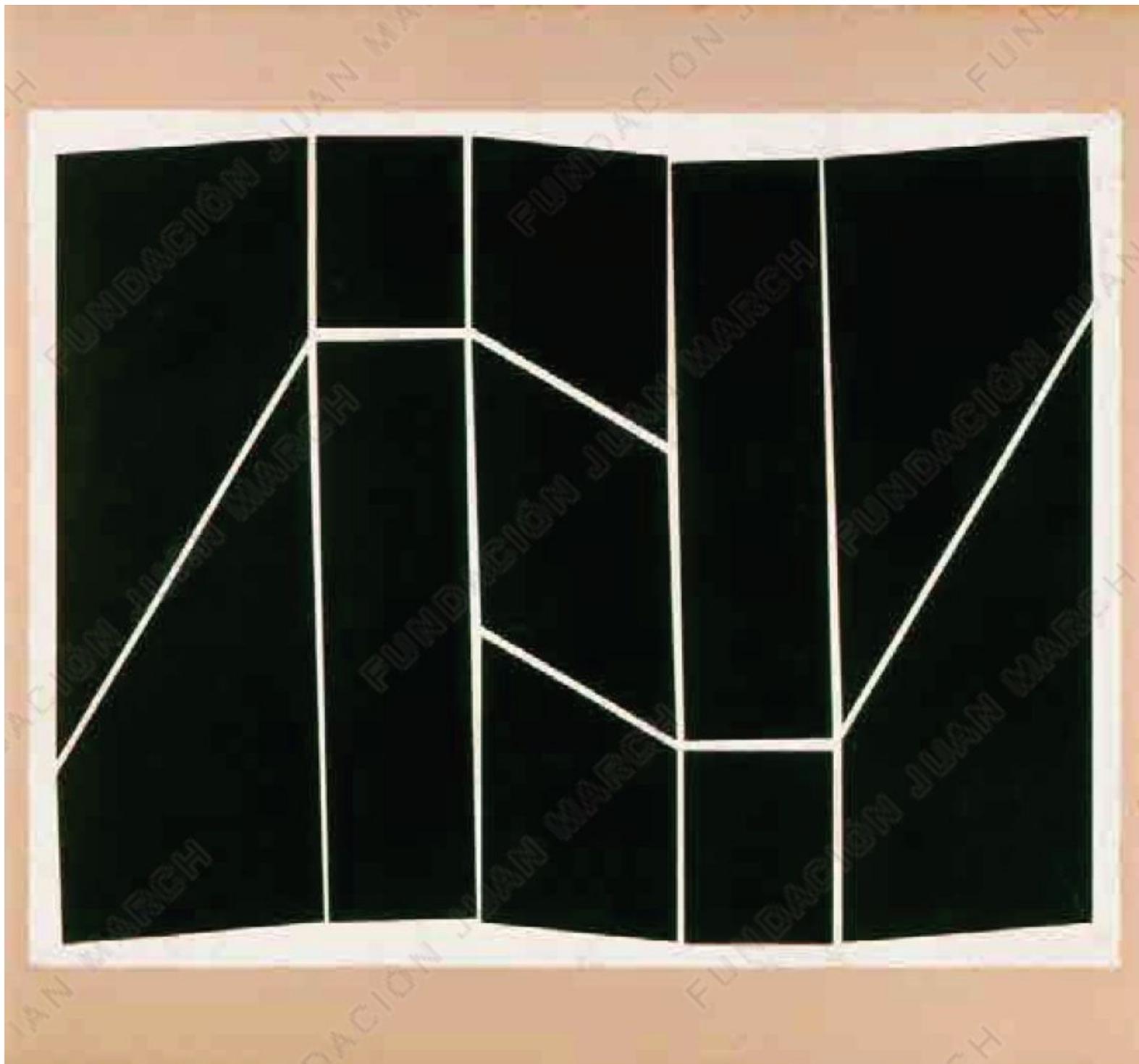
CAT. 164
Luiz Sacilotto
Gouache no. 272, n. d.
Gouache on paper
48 x 64 cm (19 x 25 ¼ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 167
Hélio Oiticica
Metascheme 222, 1957
Gouache on cardboard
26 x 41.8 cm (10 ¼ x 16 ½ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



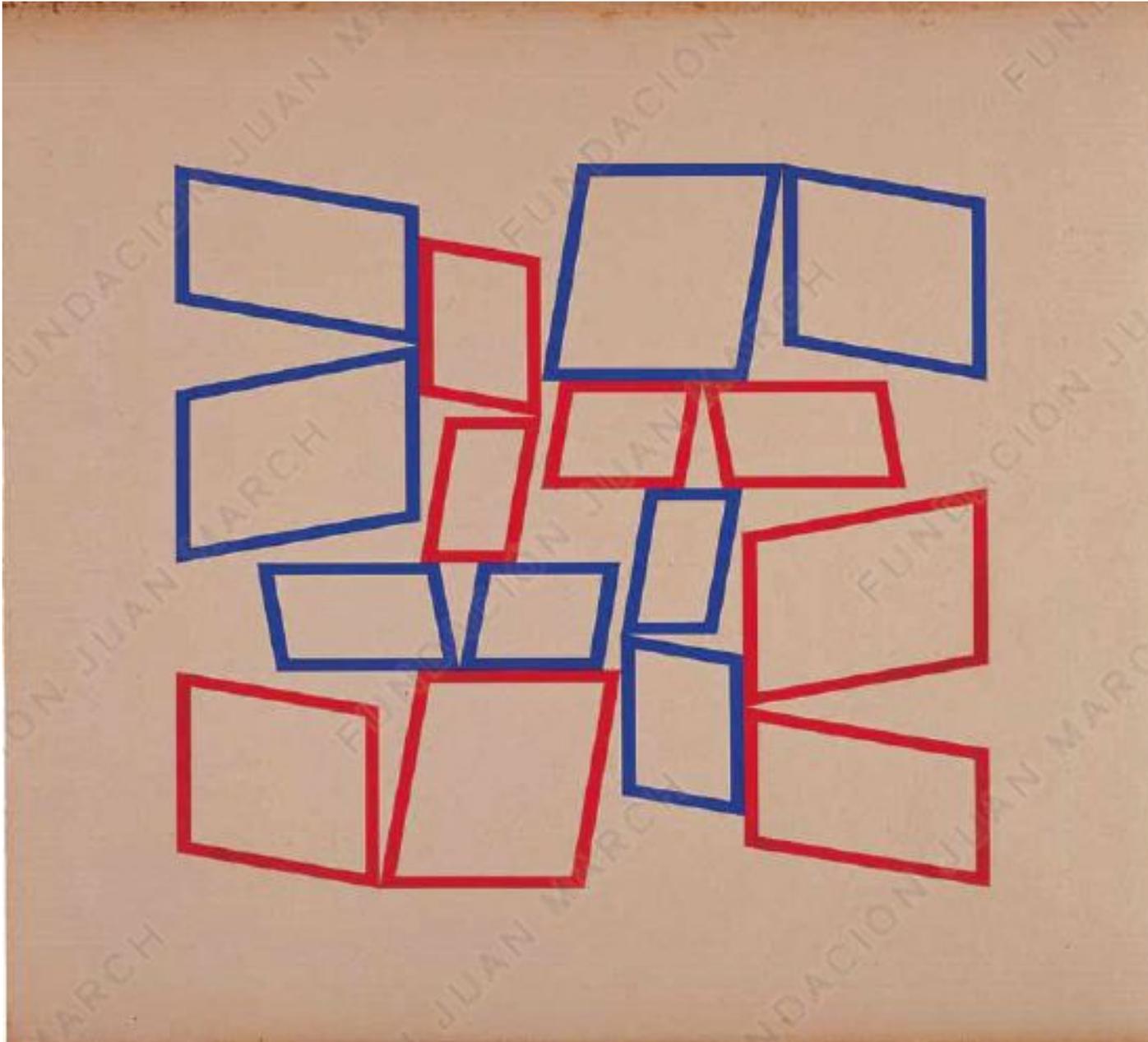
CAT. 168
Hélio Oiticica
Metascheme, 1958
Gouache on cardboard
50.2 x 61.2 cm (19 ¾ x 24 ¼ in.)
Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo
Gift of Milú Villela (1998.044)



CAT. 166
Hélio Oiticica
Metascheme, 1957
Gouache on cardboard
45.5 x 52.5 cm (18 x 20 ¾ in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

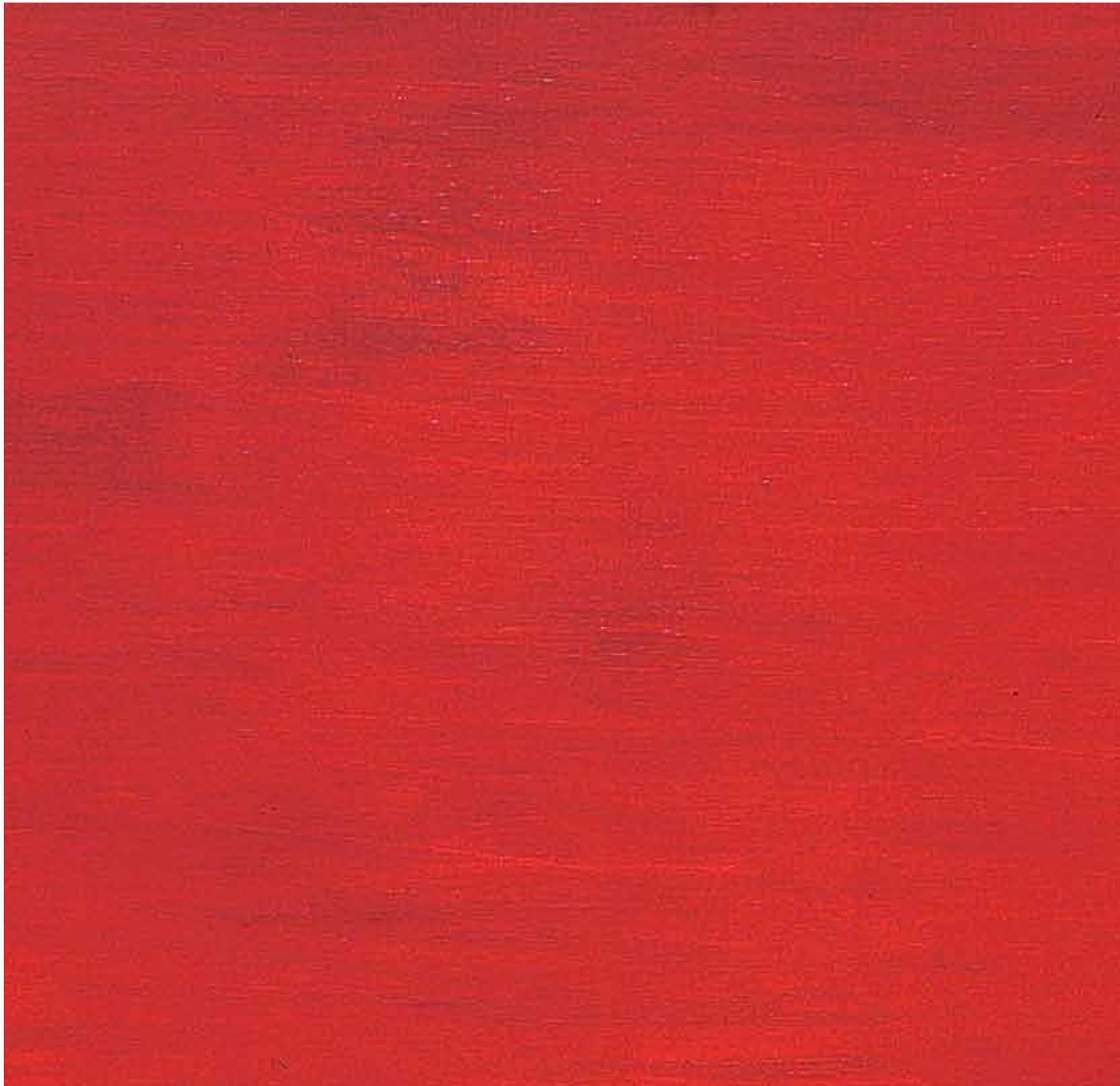


CAT. 169
Hélio Oiticica
Metascheme no. 4066, 1958
Gouache on board
58.1 x 53.3 cm (23 x 21 in.)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Gift of the Oiticica Family, 1997 (1975.1997)



CAT. 170
Almir Mavignier
White/Pink Discontinuous Form, 1962
Oil on canvas
84 x 48 cm (33 x 19 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



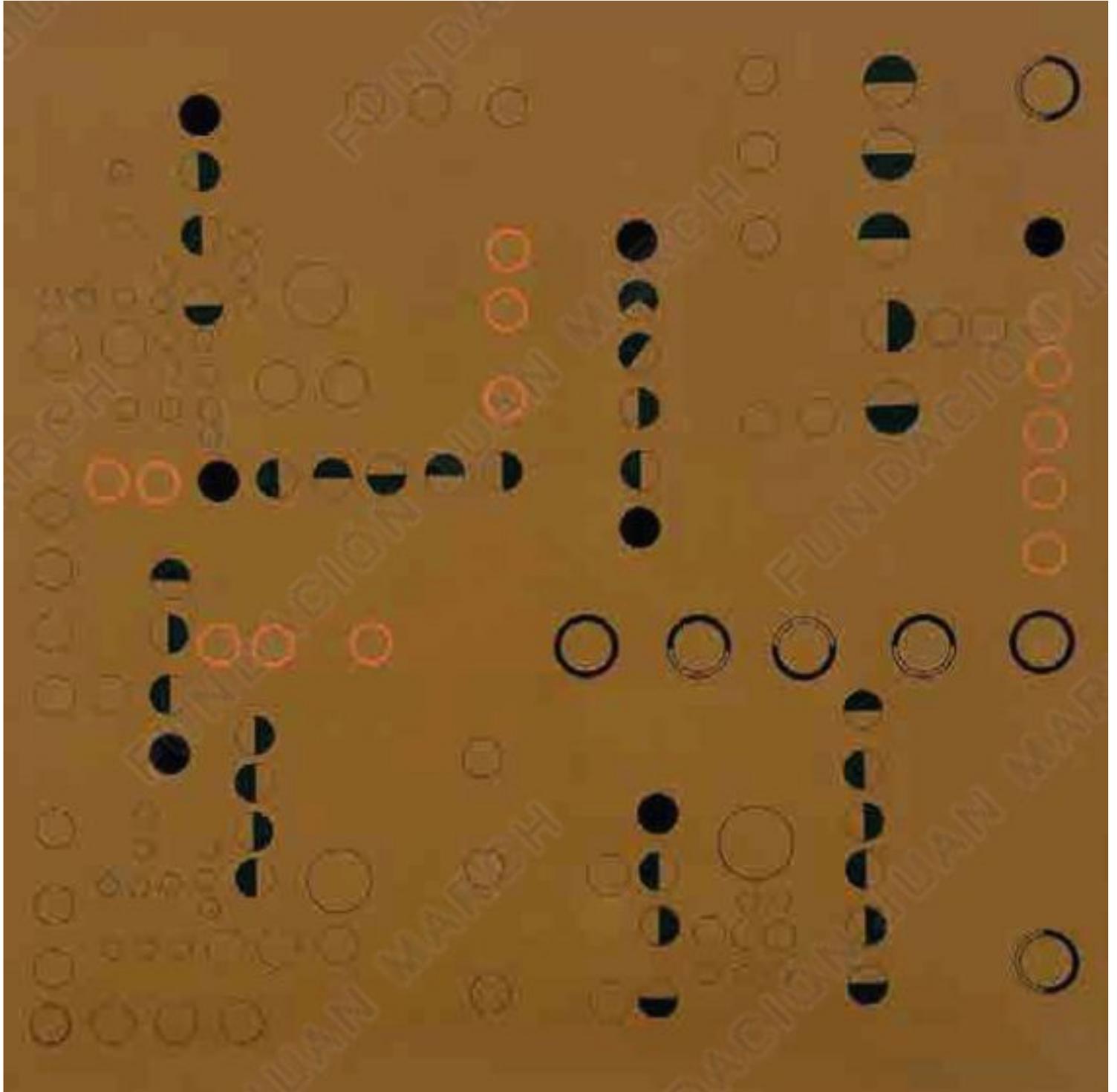


Venezuela

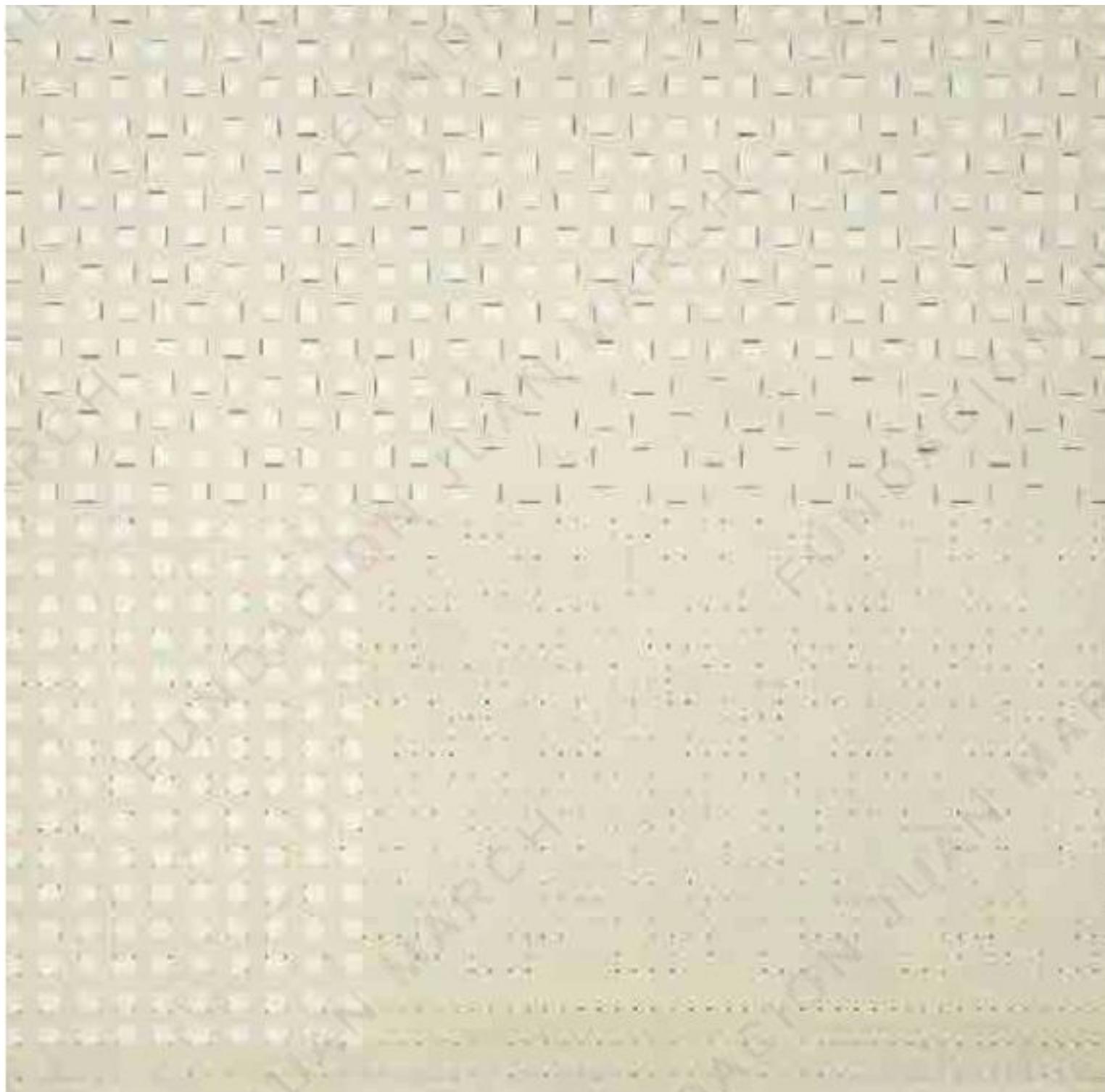
CAT. 171
Omar Carreño
Three-Time Theme no. 22, 1950
Oil on canvas
54.6 x 46 cm (21 ½ x 18 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



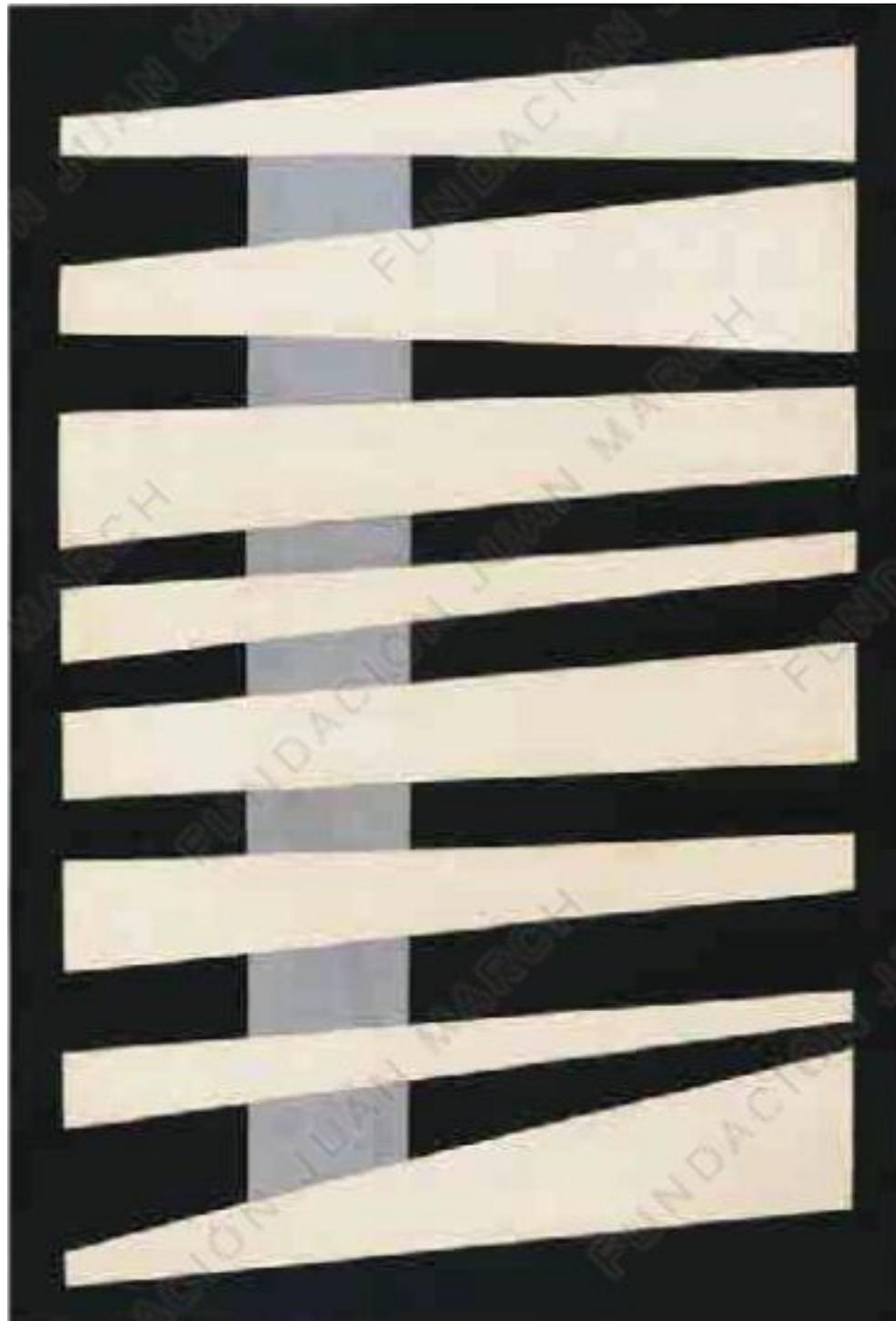
CAT. 172
V́ctor Valera
Untitled, 1951
Tempera on canvas
80 x 80 cm (31 ½ x 31 ½ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 174
Jesús Rafael Soto
Rotation, 1952
Oil on plywood
100.5 x 100 x 7.5 cm (39 5/8 x 39 3/8 x 3 in.)
Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national
d'art moderne/Centre de création industrielle
Purchase, 1980 (AM 1980-529)



CAT. 173
Mateo Manaure
Black is a Color, 1954
Synthetic paint on chipboard
76.5 x 51 x 4.1 cm (30 x 20 x 1 5/8 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 175

Jesús Rafael Soto

Displacement of a Luminous Element, 1954

Vinyl dots on acrylic and tempera on panel and wood

50 x 80 x 3.3 cm (19 ¾ x 31 ½ x 1 ¼ in.)

Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 176
Jesús Rafael Soto
Black and Blue Mustache, 1962
Iron, wood and acrylic paint
73 x 153.4 x 14.7 cm (28 ¾ x 60 ⅞ x 5 ¾ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 177
Jesús Rafael Soto
Small Horizontal-Vertical, 1965
Wood, metal, Plaka and nylon
32.5 x 41.5 x 14.5 cm (12 ¾ x 16 ¼ x 5 ¾ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 178

Jesús Rafael Soto

Large Horizontal Vibration, 1966

Painted wood relief and metal rods

146 x 216 x 14 cm (57 ½ x 85 x 5 ½ in.)

Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 179
Jesús Rafael Soto
Untitled, 1966
Acrylic, wood and acrylic paint
40 x 40 x 24 cm (15 ¾ x 15 ¾ x 9 ⅝ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 180

Jesús Rafael Soto

Sotomagie. Paris: Éditions

Denise René, 1967

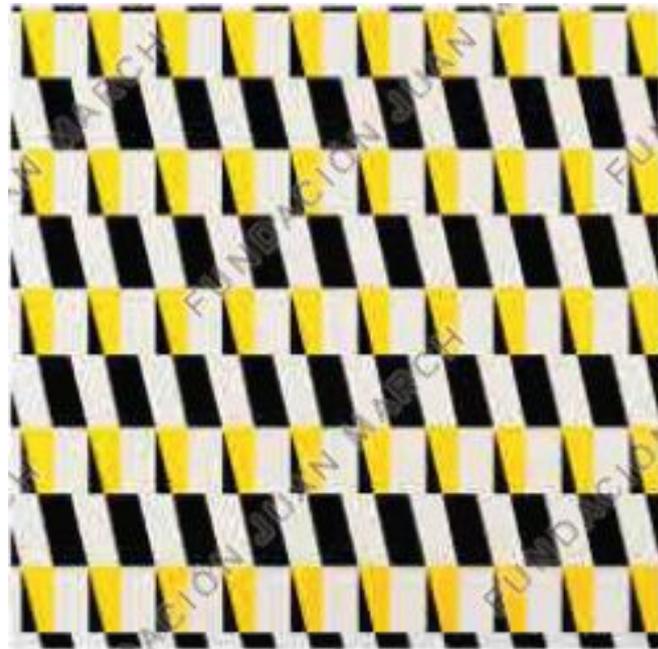
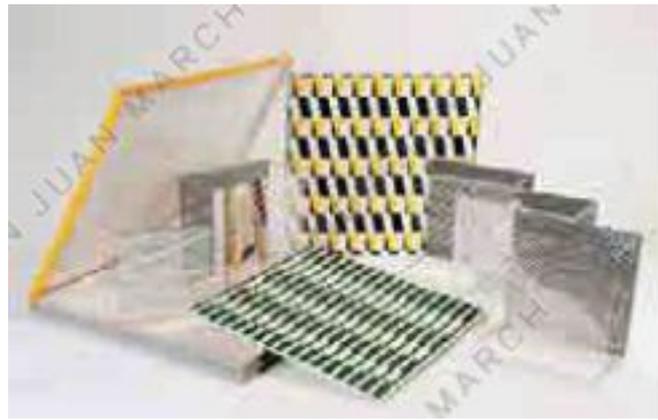
Box containing a group of 11
optical and kinetic works

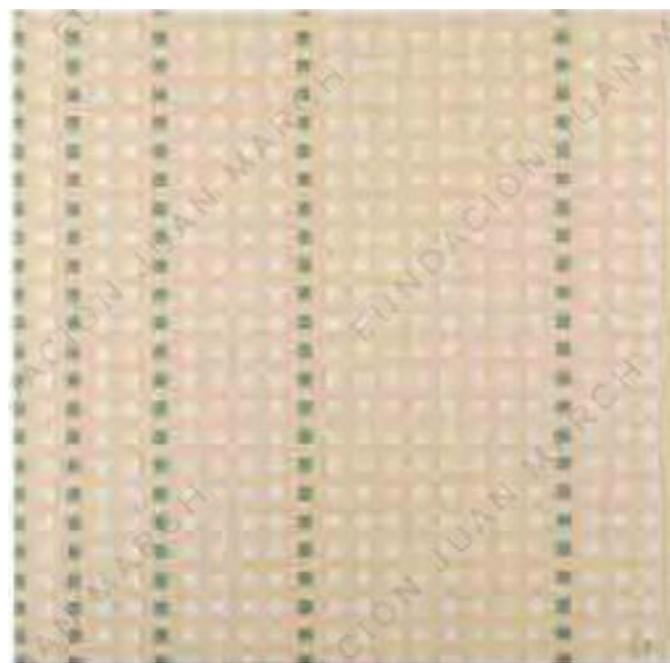
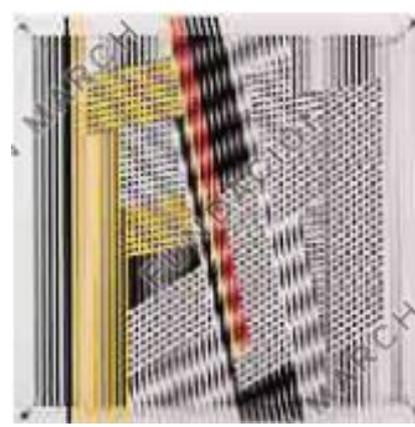
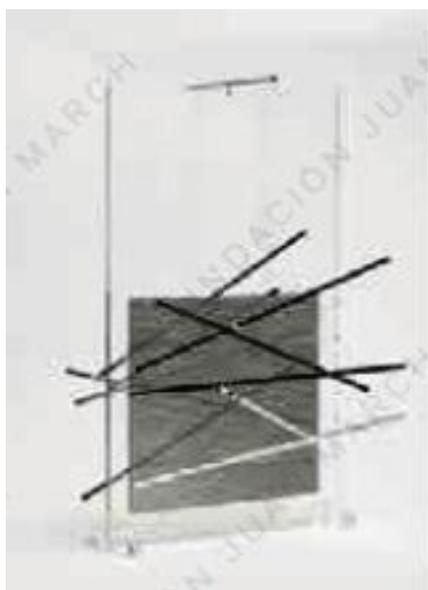
1 kinetic sculpture in methacrylate
50 x 30 x 16 cm (19 ¾ x 11 ¾ x 6 ¼ in.)

4 kinetic silkscreen sculptures on
polystyrene and methacrylate, 34 x
34 x 18 cm (13 ⅜ x 13 ⅜ x 7 in.) each

2 colored silkscreens superimposed
on cellulose acetate, 60 x 60
cm (23 ⅝ x 23 ⅝ in.) each

4 colored silkscreens, 60 x 60
cm (23 ⅝ x 23 ⅝ in.) each
Galerie Denise René, Paris

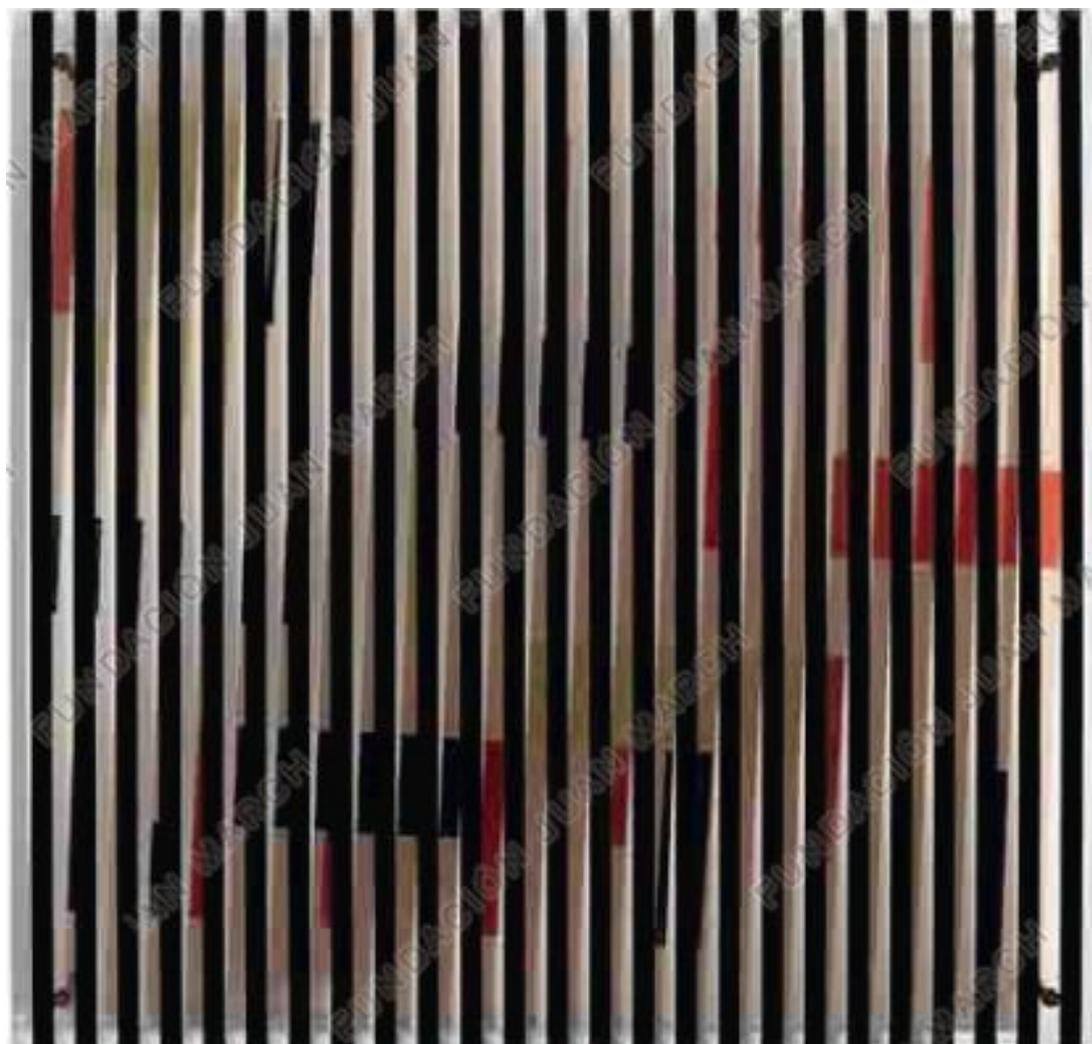




CAT. 181
Alejandro Otero
Colored Lines on White Background III, 1951
Oil on canvas
65 x 54 cm (25 5/8 x 21 1/4 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 182
Alejandro Otero
Colorhythm in Movement 2, 1957
Duco paint on wood and methacrylate
100 x 104 x 4 cm (39 3/8 x 41 x 1 5/8 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



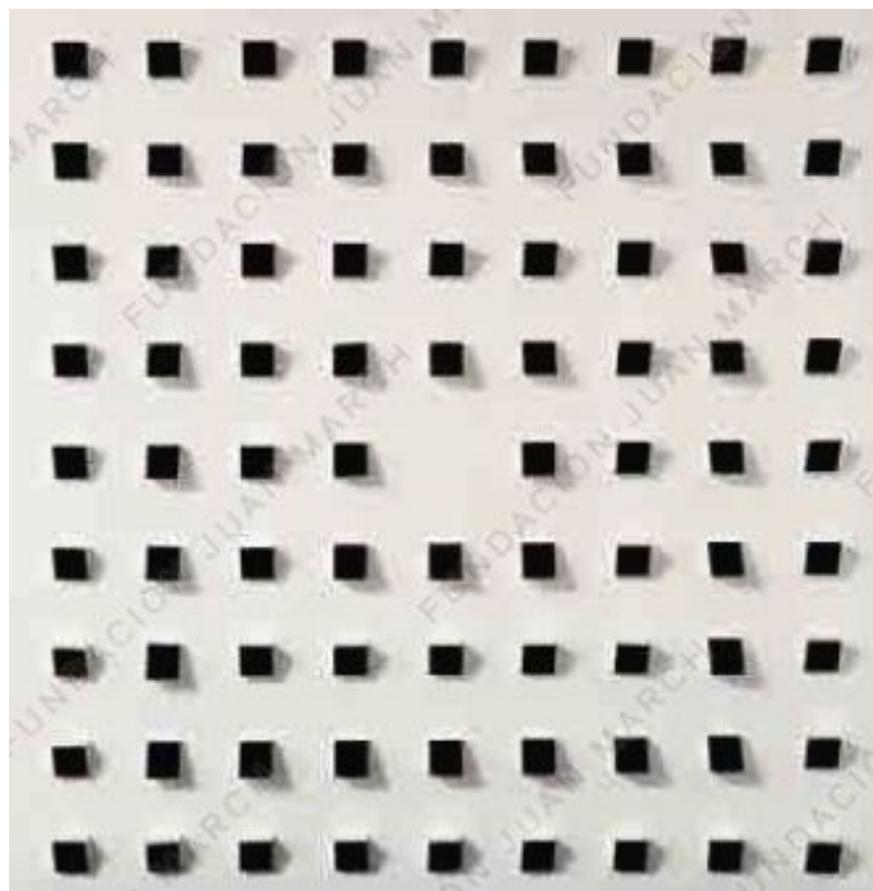
CAT. 183
Alejandro Otero
Colorhythm 45A, 1960
Duco paint on wood
200 x 57.5 cm (78 ¾ x 22 ⅝ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 184
Alejandro Otero
Colorhythm 63, 1960
Lacquer on wood
150 x 38 cm (39 x 15 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 185
Narciso Debourg
In White and Black (On White), 1953
Assemblage in wood and Duco paint
100 x 100 x 7 cm (39 3/8 x 39 3/8 x 2 3/4 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 186
Narciso Debourg
White of White, 1966
Wood, PVC and acrylic paint
101.5 x 101.5 x 13 cm (40 x 40 x 5 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 187
Narciso Debourg
White Multi-Reflections, 1970
Painted wood and aluminum relief
91 x 91 x 9.5 cm (35 ¾ x 35 ¾ x 3 ¾ in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 188
Carlos Cruz-Diez
Vibration of Black, 1957
Oil on wood
54.6 x 59.7 x 4.8 cm (21 ½ x 23 ½ x 2 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 189
Carlos Cruz-Diez
Physichromie 35, 1961
Wood and cardboard
30 x 30 cm (11 ¾ x 11 ¾ in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



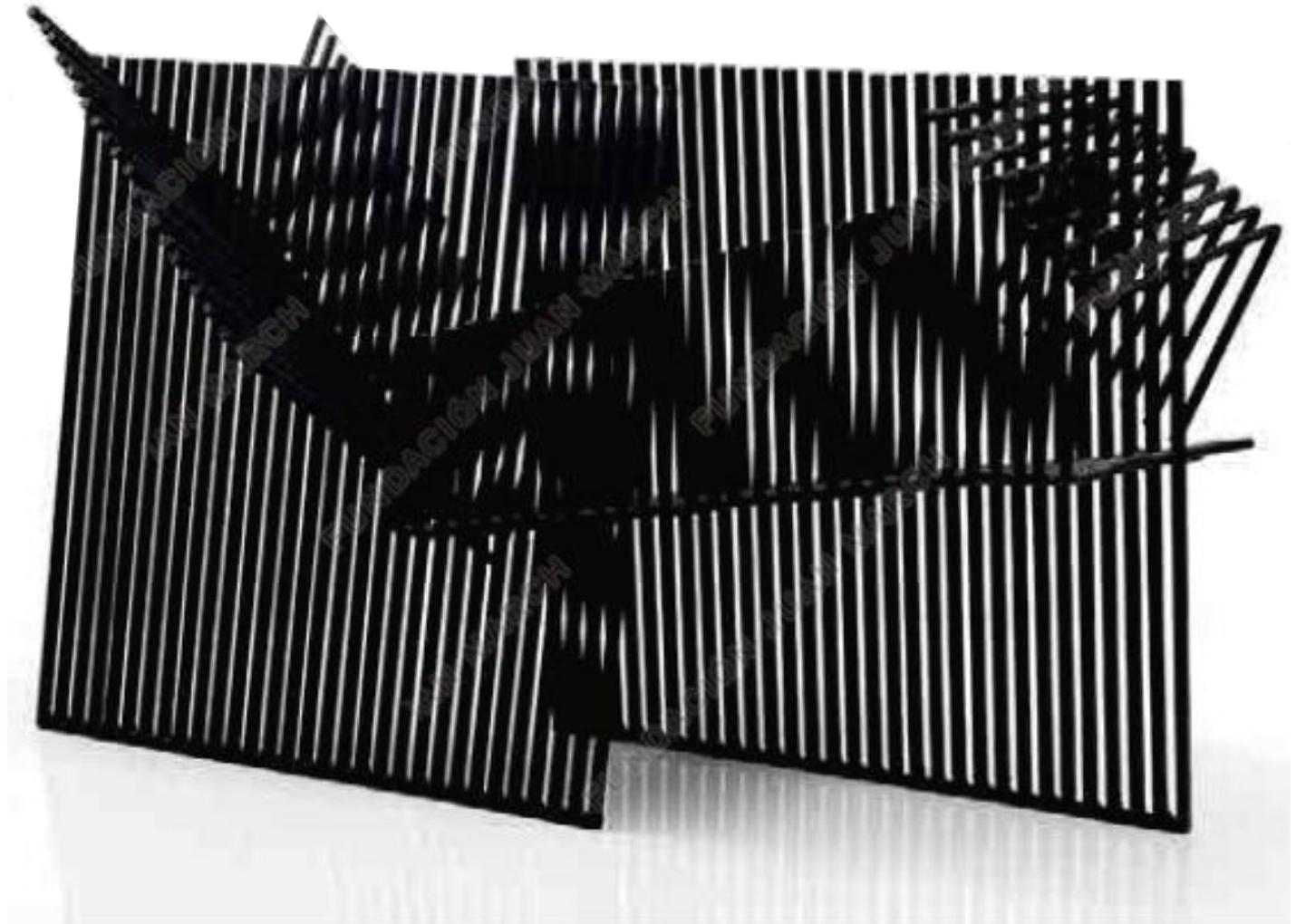
CAT. 190
Carlos Cruz-Diez
Psychromie 94, 1963
Mixed media on wood
40 x 81 cm (15 ¾ x 32 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 191
Gego
Departing from a Rectangle II, 1958
Folded and twisted aluminum strips
32 x 36 x 37 cm (12 5/8 x 14 1/4 x 14 5/8 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 192
Gego
Construction Based on Squares, 1961
Welded and enameled iron rods
40.5 x 66.5 x 48 cm (16 x 26 ¼ x 19 in.)
Fundación Privada Allegro



CAT. 195

Venezuela

Invitation to the presentation of the album
at Galerie Denise René, Paris, June 22, 1956

10.5 x 13.7 cm (4 x 5 3/8 in.)

Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 193
Victor Vasarely
Caribbean Sea (Venezuela Album), 1956
Silkscreen on paper
66 x 51.5 cm (26 x 20 ¼ in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



CAT. 194
Victor Vasarely
Maracaibo (Venezuela Album), 1956
Silkscreen on paper
66 x 51.5 cm (26 x 20 1 in.)
Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros



Leo Matiz
Aula Magna, Ciudad Universitaria
Caracas, 1955–56
Vintage silver-gelatin print
30 x 40 cm (11 ¾ x 15 ¾ in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz

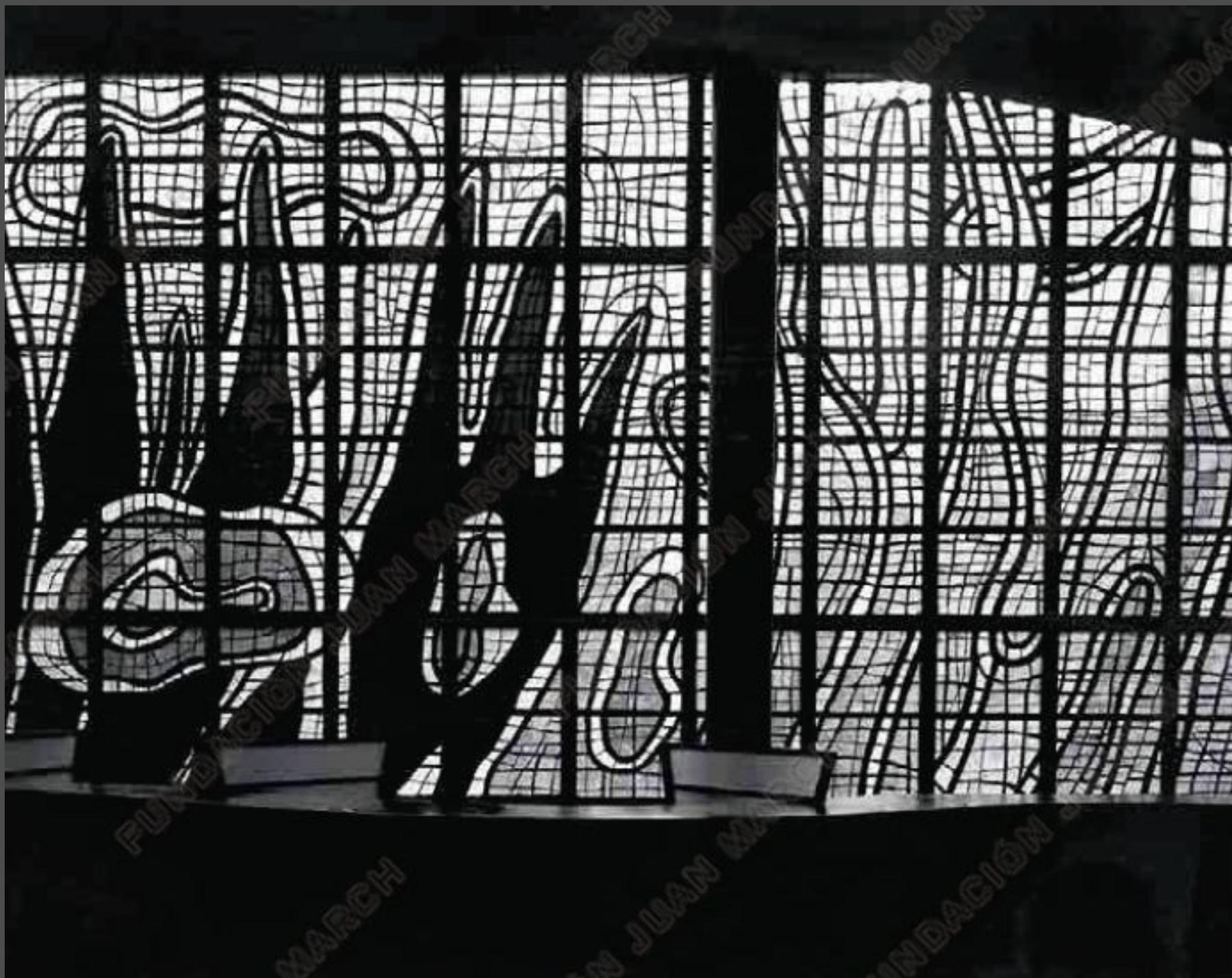


Alexander Calder
Sketches for the Aula Magna
Ciudad Universitaria, Caracas, 1952
Pencil and watercolor on paper
70 x 104 cm (27 ½ x 41 in.)
58 x 72 cm (22 ¾ x 28 ¼ in.)
37 x 59 cm (14 ½ x 23 ¼ in.)
Fundación Villanueva

Pencil, ink and color pencil
56 x 78 cm (22 x 30 ¾ in.)

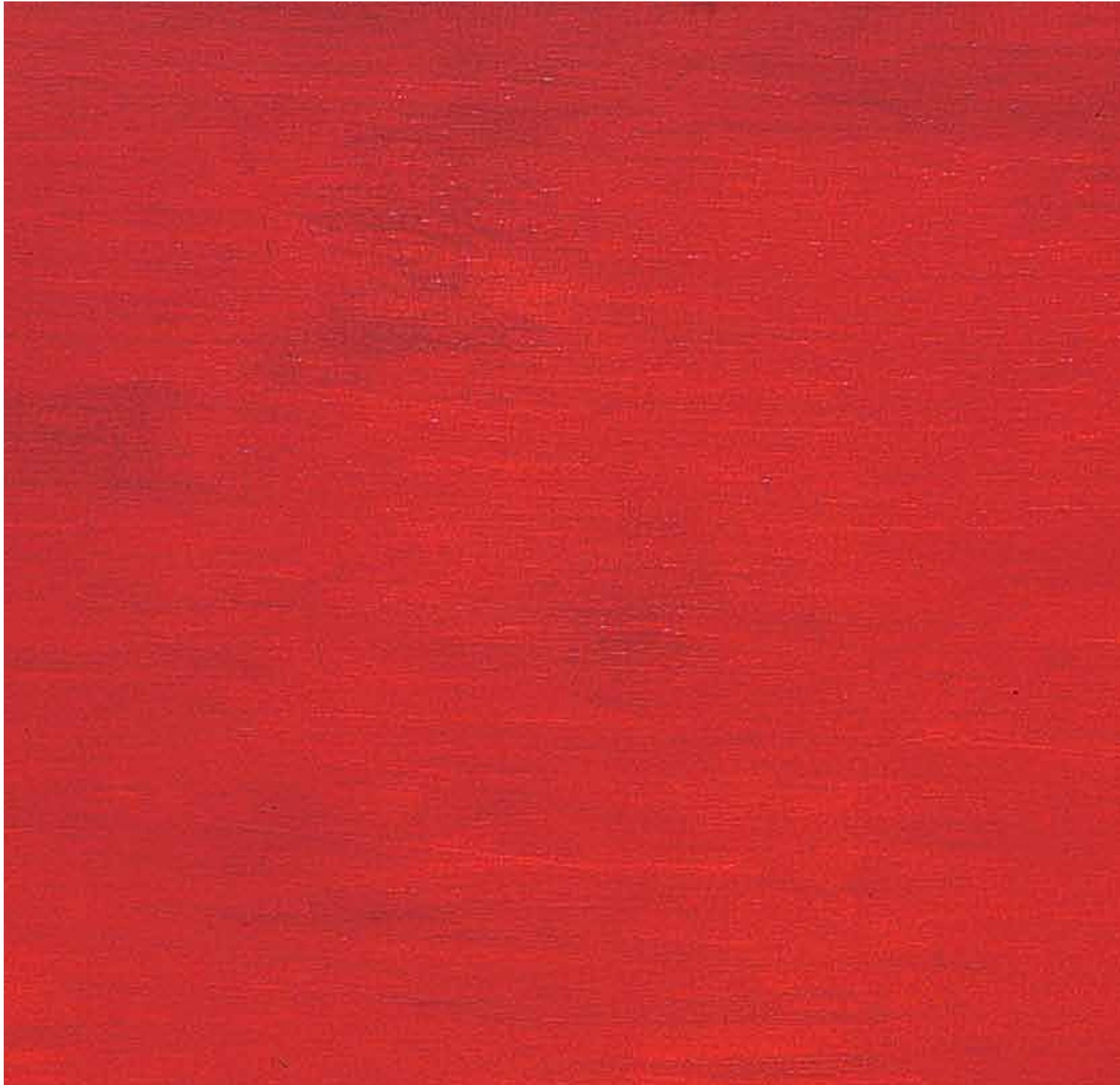


Leo Matiz
Stained glass window by Fernand Léger
for the Central Library, Ciudad Universitaria
Caracas, 1955–56
30 x 40 cm (11 ¾ x 15 ¾ in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz



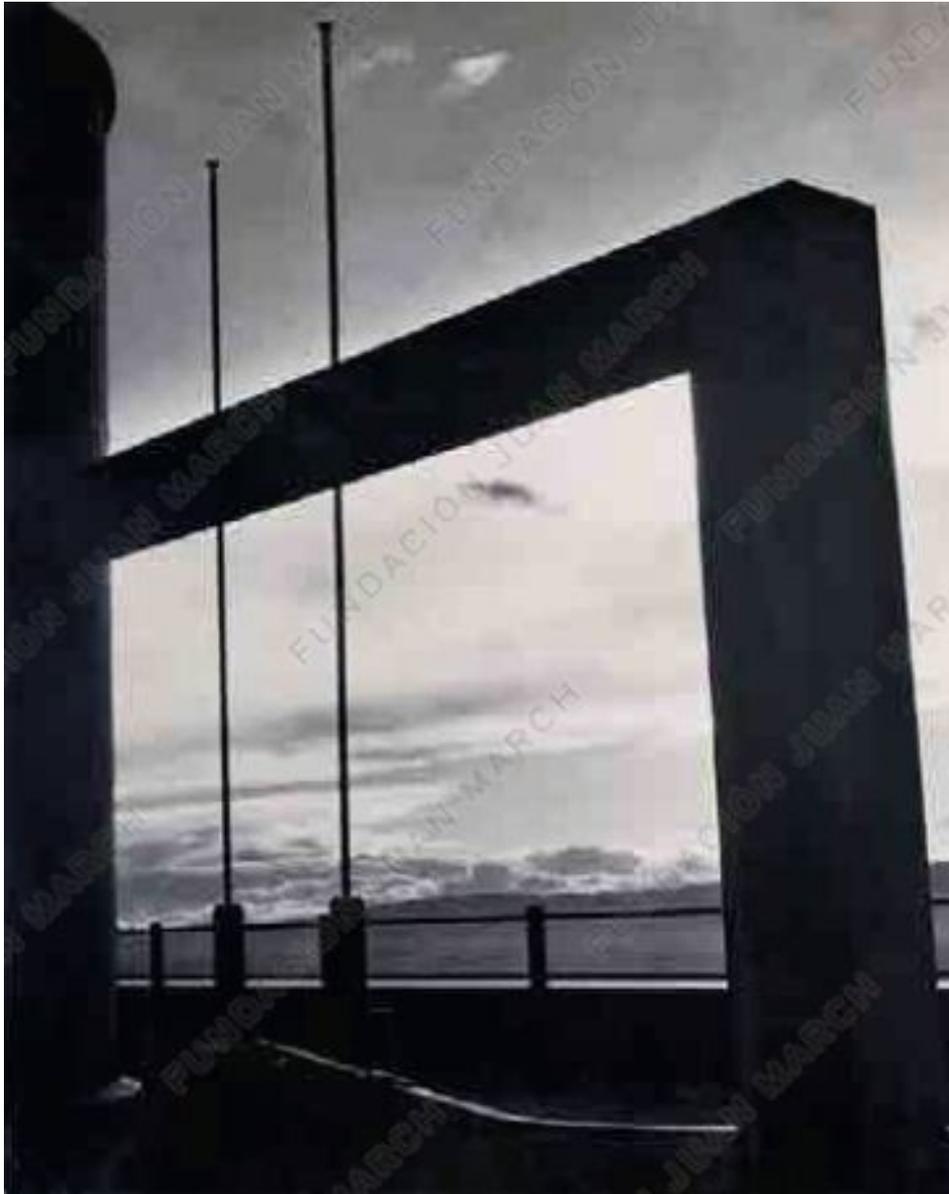
Fernand Léger
Sketch for stained glass window for Central Library
Ciudad Universitaria, Caracas, 1953
Gouache on paper
45 x 91 cm (17 ¾ x 35 ¾ in.)
Fundación Villanueva





Colombia

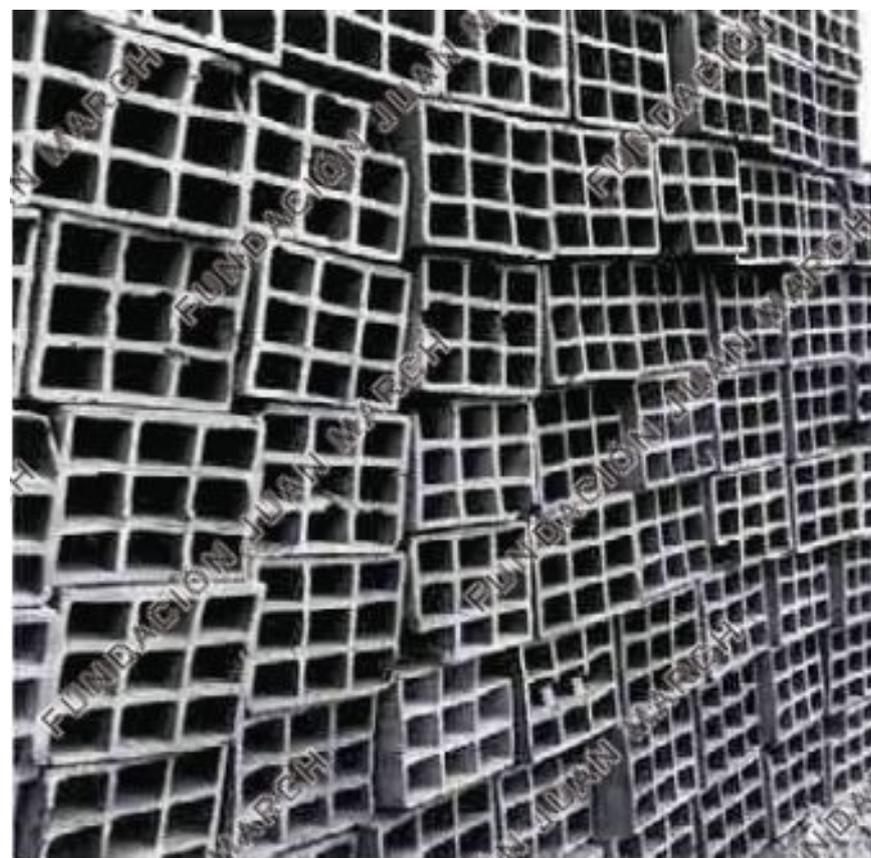
CAT. 196
Leo Matiz
Construction, Bogota, 1937
Silver-gelatin print
31.7 x 24.7 cm (12 ½ x 9 ¾ in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



CAT. 197
Leo Matiz
Abstract, Mexico, 1941
Silver-gelatin print, 2010
25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz



CAT. 198
Leo Matiz
Mexico, 1942
Silver-gelatin print, 2010
25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz



CAT. 199
Leo Matiz
The Stair, New York, 1949
Vintage silver-gelatin print
21.5 x 19.3 cm (8 ½ x 7 ½ in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



CAT. 200
Leo Matiz
Abstracts, 1950
Vintage silver-gelatin print
17.1 x 24.1 cm (6 ¾ x 9 ½ in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



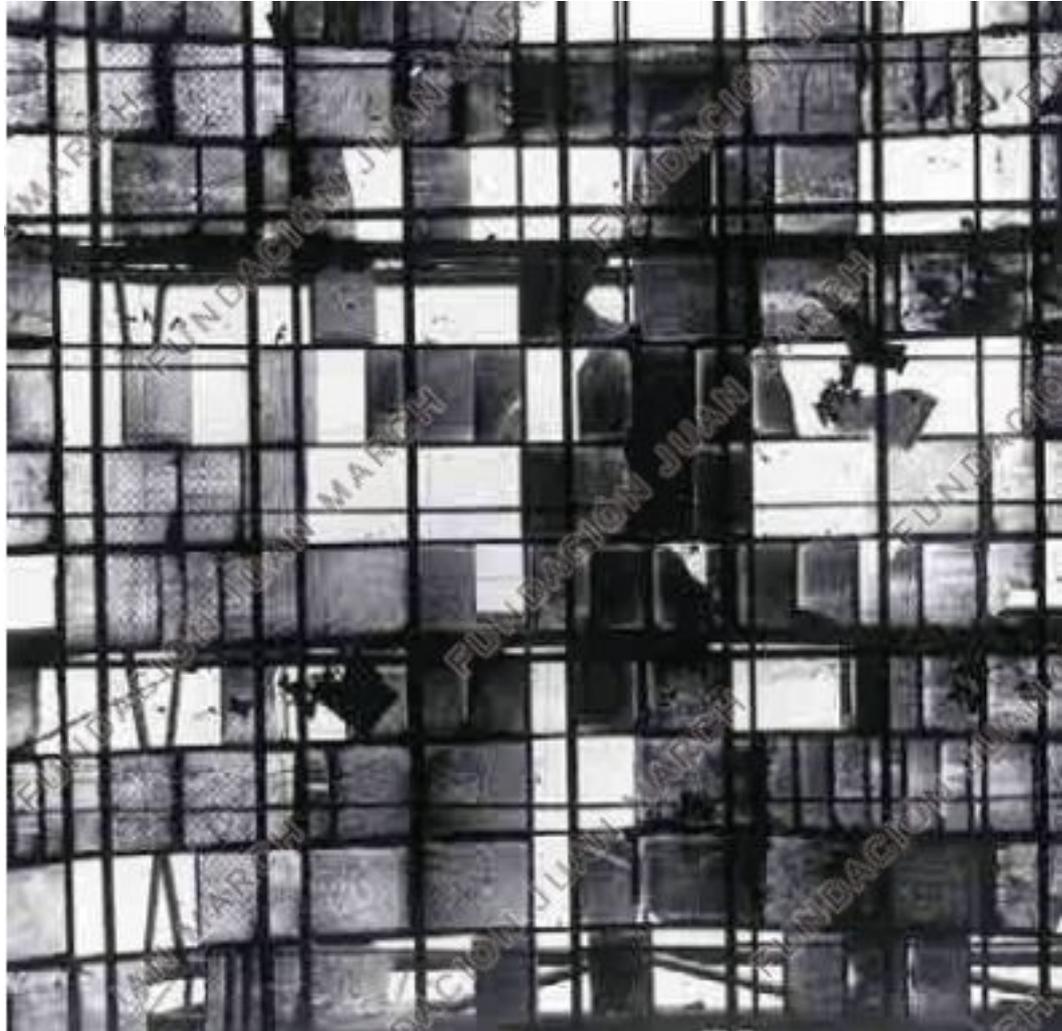
CAT. 201
Leo Matiz
Abstract, USA, 1950
Vintage silver-gelatin print
16.5 x 24.4 cm (6 ½ x 9 ½ in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



CAT. 202
Leo Matiz
Polygon, Venezuela, 1950
Silver-gelatin print
40 x 30 cm (15 ¾ x 11 ¾ in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



CAT. 203
Leo Matiz
Abstract, Caracas, 1950
Silver-gelatin print, 2010
25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz



CAT. 206
Leo Matiz
Light and Shadow, Argentina, 1965
Silver-gelatin print, 2010
25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz



CAT. 204
Leo Matiz
Venezuela, 1951
Vintage silver-gelatin print
25.4 x 19.9 cm (10 x 7 ¾ in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz



CAT. 205
Leo Matiz
Venezuela, 1952
Silver-gelatin print, 2010
25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz



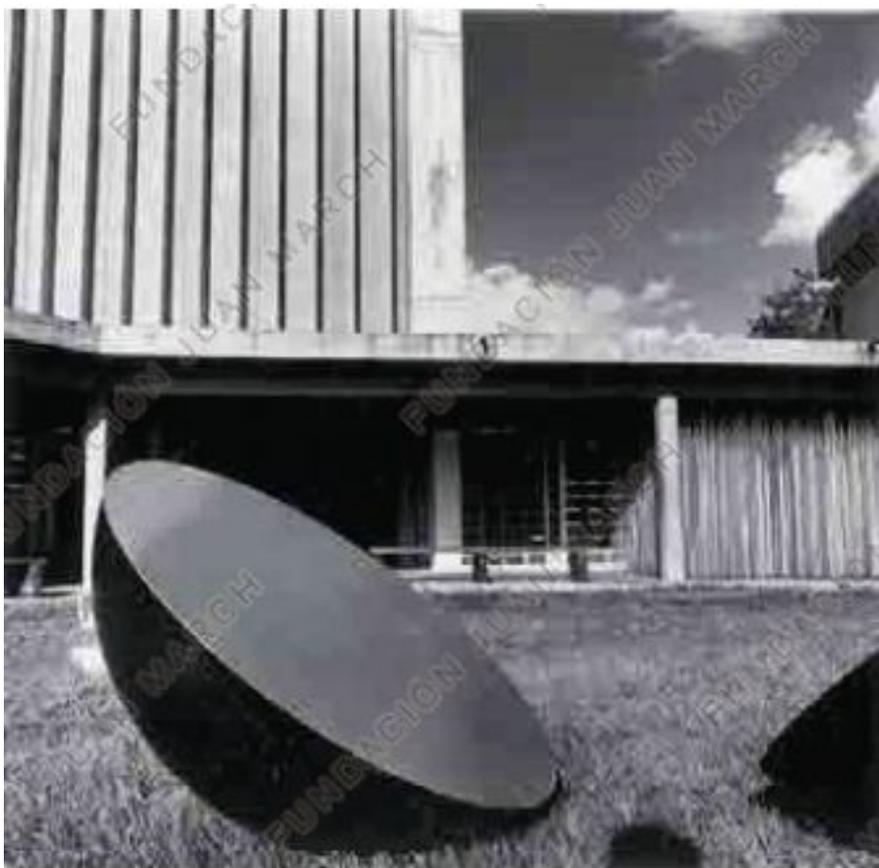
CAT. 207
Leo Matiz
Museo Jesús Soto, Venezuela, 1973
Silver-gelatin print, 2010
25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz



CAT. 208
Leo Matiz
Museo Jesús Soto, Venezuela, 1973
Silver-gelatin print, 2010
25.3 x 20.3 cm
Fundación Leo Matiz

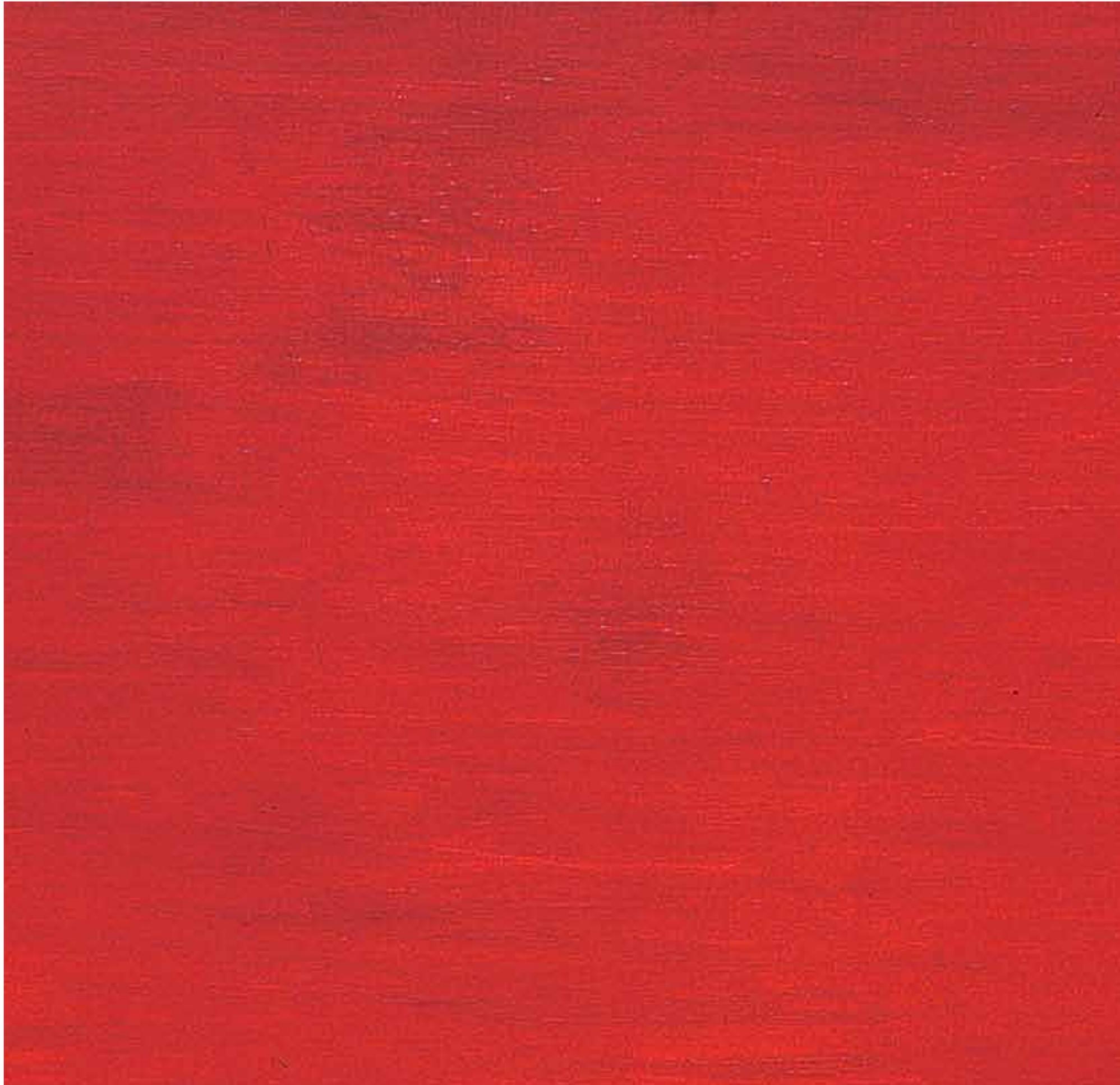


CAT. 209
Leo Matiz
Museo Jesús Soto, Venezuela, 1973
Silver-gelatin print, 2010
25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz



CAT. 210
Leo Matiz
Museo Jesús Soto, Venezuela, 1973
Silver-gelatin print, 2010
25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.)
Fundación Leo Matiz



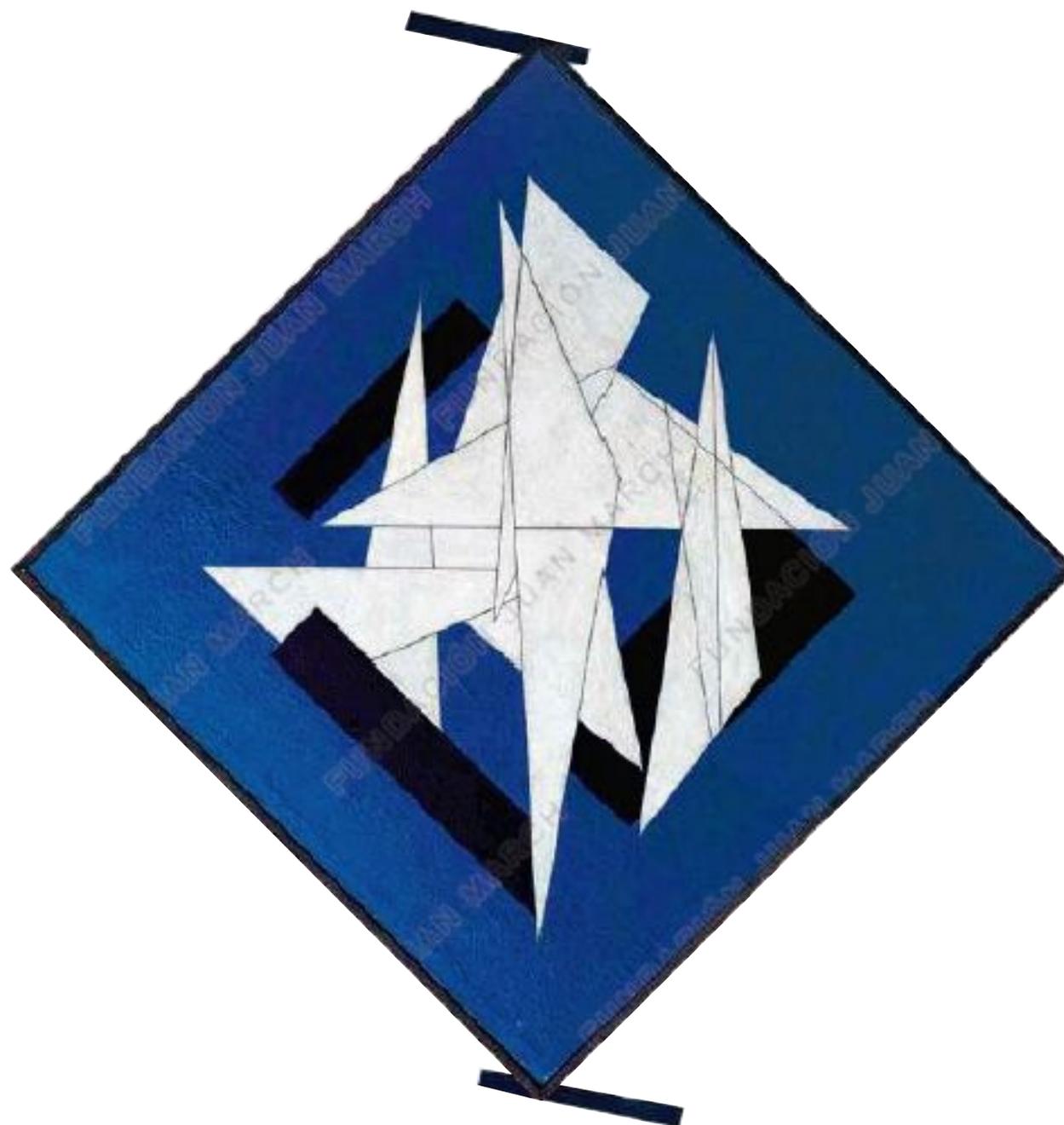


Cuba

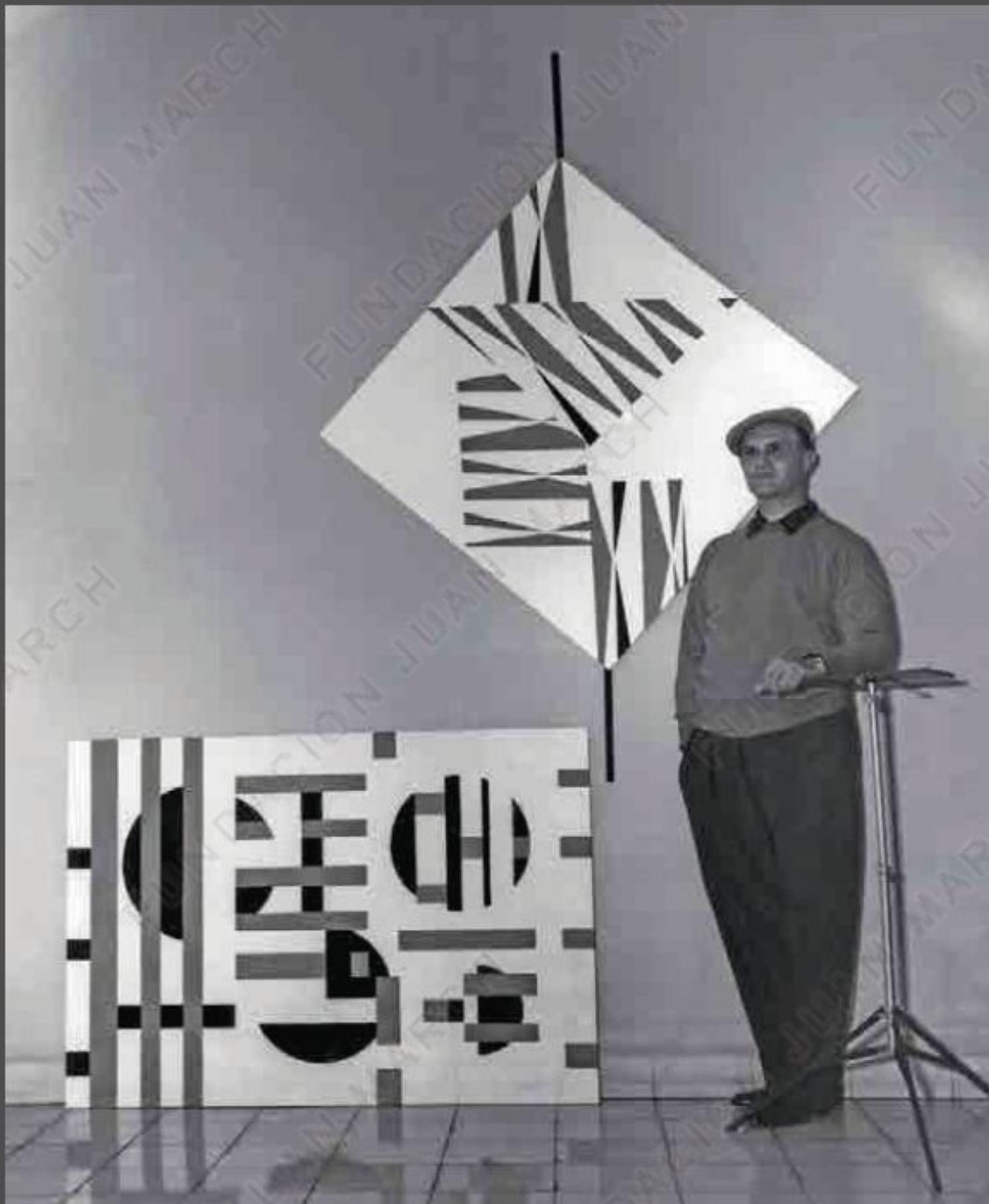
Sandu Darie with his wife Lily in front of his
Spatial Multivision, Havana, n. d.
Archivo del Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana



CAT. 211
Sandu Darie
Spatial Multivision, 1950s
Oil on canvas and wood rods
126 x 126 cm (49 ½ x 49 ½ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (90.3304)



Sandu Darie next to his
Transformable Painting
in his home in Havana, late
1950s
Archivo del Museo
Nacional de Bellas Artes,
Havana



CAT. 215
Sandu Darie
Transformable Painting, 1957
Oil on canvas and wood rods
133.5 x 134 cm (52 ½ x 52 ¾ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (07.425)



CAT. 213
Sandu Darie
Pictorial Construction, ca. 1950
Stretcher and painted wood rods
80 x 42.5 x 6 cm
(31 ½ x 16 ¾ x 2 ⅝ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas
Artes, Havana (89.1353)



CAT. 212
Sandu Darie
Untitled, 1950s
Oil on canvas
53.5 x 55 cm (21 x 21 ¾ in.)
Museo Nacional de
Bellas Artes, Havana (90.3305)



CAT. 214
Sandu Darie
Spatial Multivision, 1955
Oil on canvas
136 x 102 cm (53 ½ x 40 ¼ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas
Artes, Havana (07.432)



CAT. 216
Mario Carreño
Unexpected Encounter, 1952
Oil on canvas
130 x 200 cm (51 ¼ x 78 ¾ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (07.410)



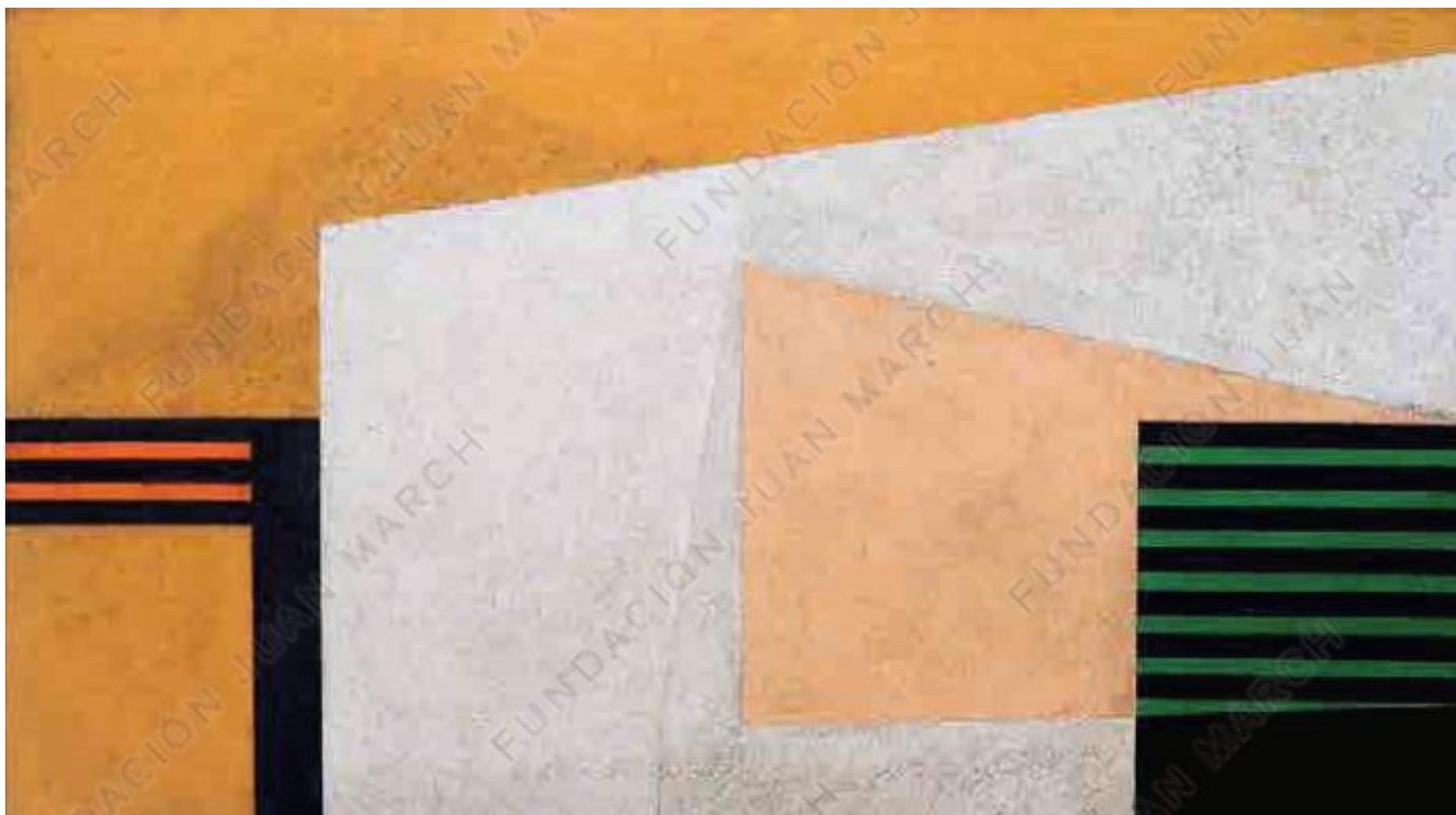
CAT. 217
Mario Carreño
Untitled, 1954
Oil on canvas
91 x 76.5 cm
Museo Nacional de
Bellas Artes, Havana (2393)



CAT. 218
Rafael Soriano
Composition, n. d.
Oil on canvas
56 x 97 cm (22 x 38 ¼ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (03.30)



CAT. 219
Rafael Soriano
Untitled, n. d.
Oil on canvas
56 x 97 cm (22 x 38 ¼ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (03.28)



CAT. 220

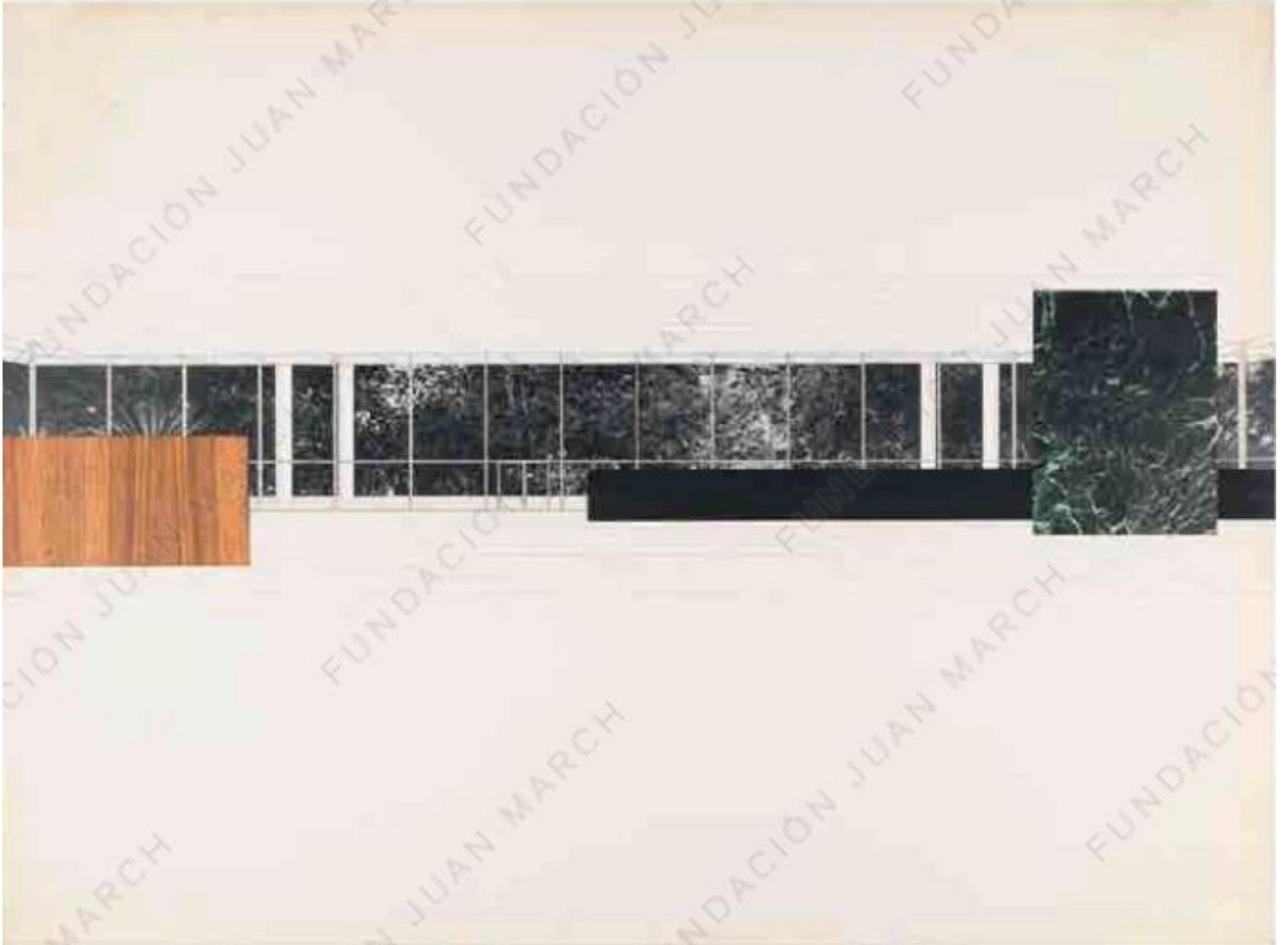
Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Ron Bacardi y Compañía S.A. Administration Building
project, Santiago de Cuba. Interior perspective, ca. 1957

Colored paper, wood veneer, ink and
photo collage on illustration board

76.2 x 101.6 cm (30 x 40 in.)

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mies van der
Rohe Archive. Gift of the architect (MR5701.454)



CAT. 221

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Bacardi Office Building project, Santiago de Cuba.

Preliminary version: interior perspective, 1957

Ink, wood veneer, marbled paper and
cut-out reproduction on illustration board

76.2 x 101.6 cm (30 x 40 in.)

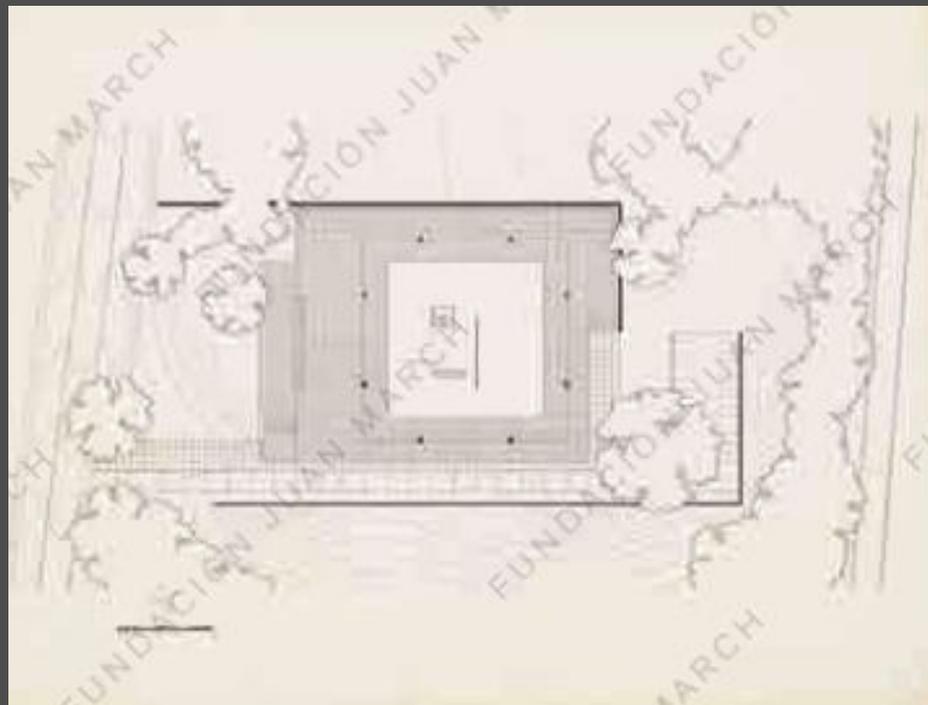
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mies van der
Rohe Archive. Gift of the architect, 1966 (999.1965)



Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
Ron Bacardí y Compañía S.A. Office Building project
Santiago de Cuba, view of the model, 1957–60
Silver-gelatin print
20.6 x 25.4 cm (8 x 10 in.)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Mies van der Rohe Archive
Gift of the architect (MMA 17200)

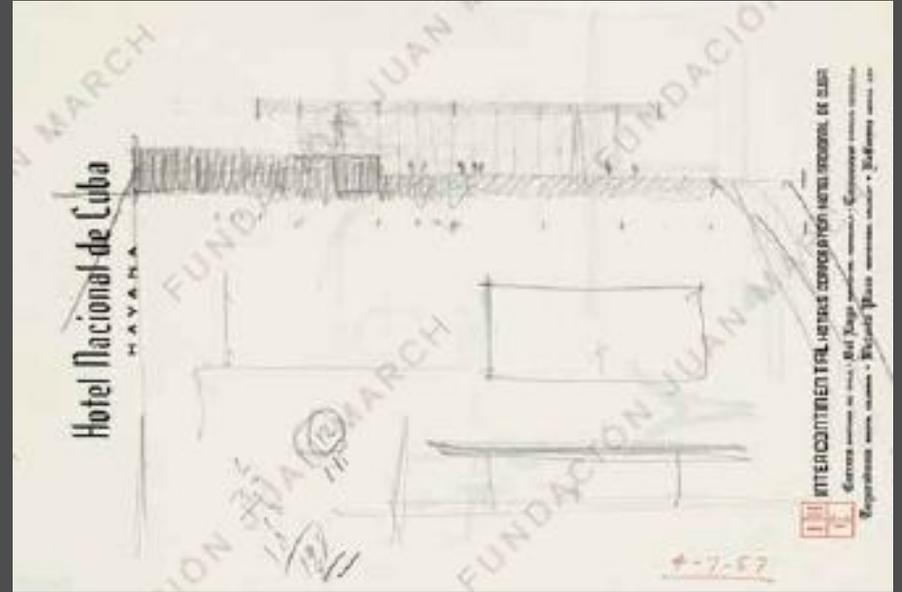
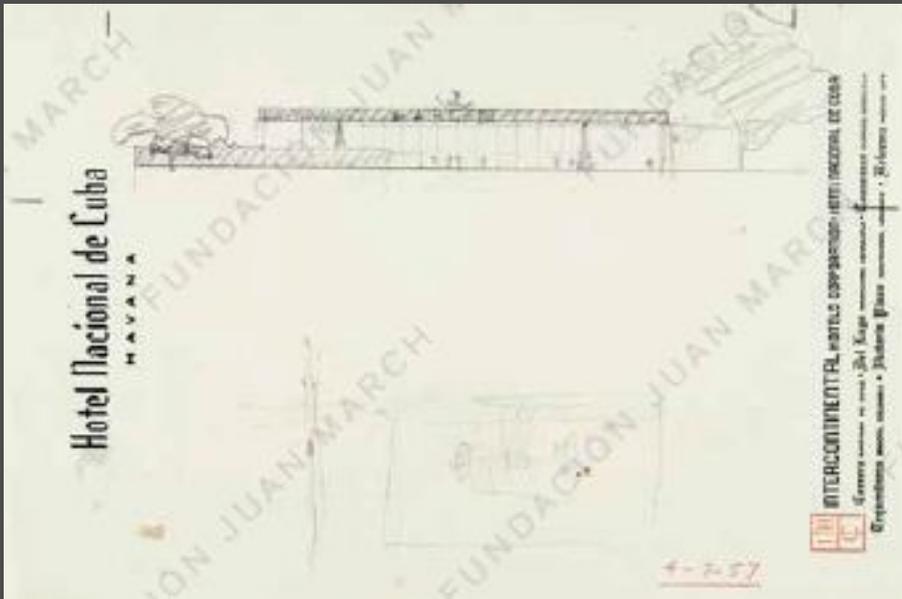


Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
Ron Bacardí y Compañía S.A. Office Building project
Santiago de Cuba, situation plan, 1957–58
Silver-gelatin print
72.6 x 101.6 cm (28 ½ x 40 in.)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Mies van der Rohe Archive
Gift of the architect (MR5701.443)



Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
Ron Bacardí y Compañía S.A. Office Building project
Santiago de Cuba, exterior elevation and plan, 1957
Pencil on paper with the Hotel Nacional de Cuba
Letterhead, Havana
18.4 x 27.3 cm (7 ¼ x 10 ¾ in.)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Mies van der Rohe Archive
Gift of the architect (MR5701.174)

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
Ron Bacardí y Compañía S.A. Office Building project
Santiago de Cuba, exterior elevation, cross section and plan, 1957
Pencil on paper with the Hotel Nacional de Cuba
Letterhead, Havana
18.4 x 27.3 cm (7 ¼ x 10 ¾ in.)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Mies van der Rohe Archive
Gift of the architect (MR5701.175)



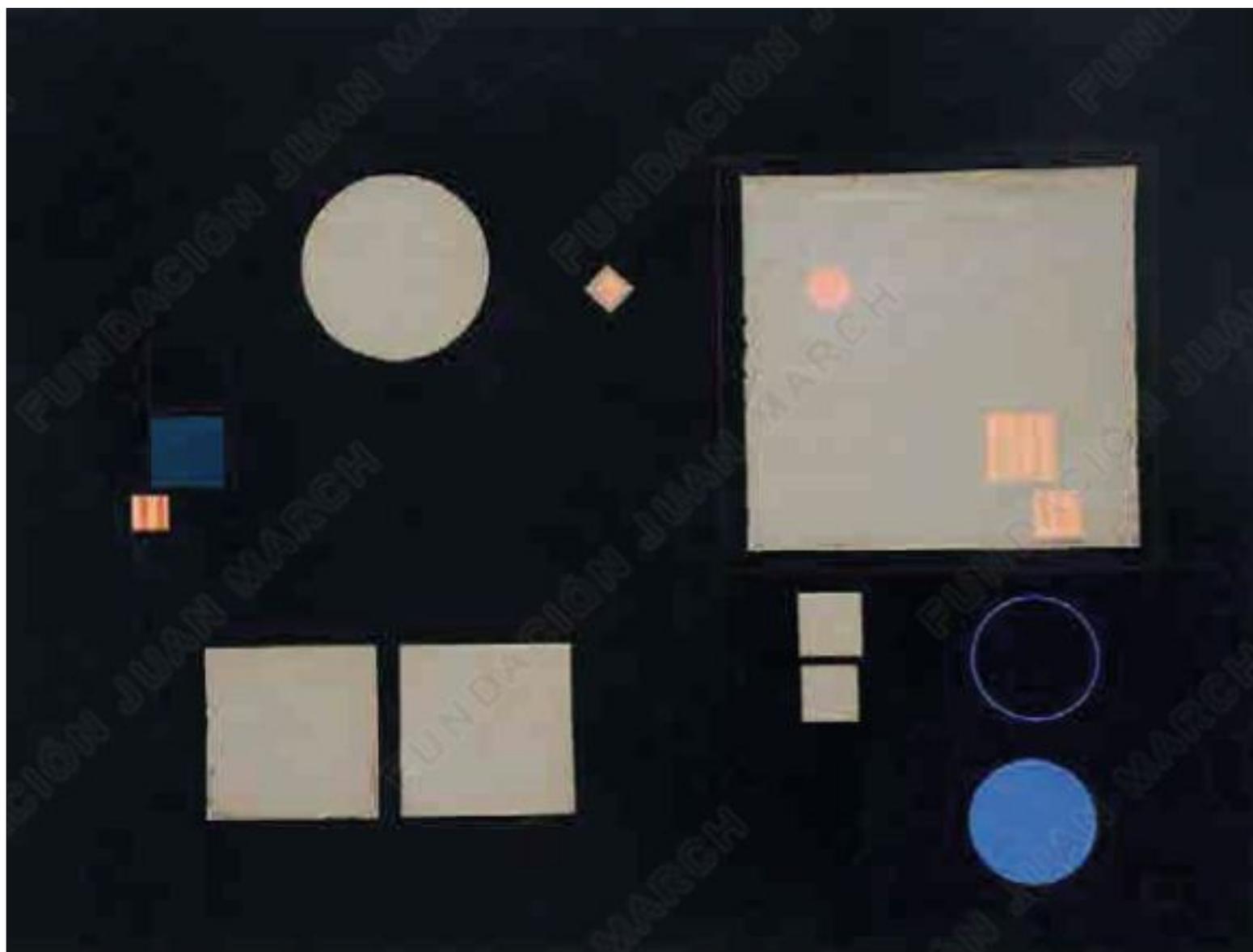
CAT. 222
Loló Soldevilla
Composition, 1950s
Oil on canvas
75 x 75 cm (29 ½ x 29 ½ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (08.1969)



CAT. 223
Loló Soldevilla
Celestial Chart in Yellow no. 1, Paris, 1953
Oil on canvas
73 x 92 cm (28 ¾ x 36 ¼ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (07.415)



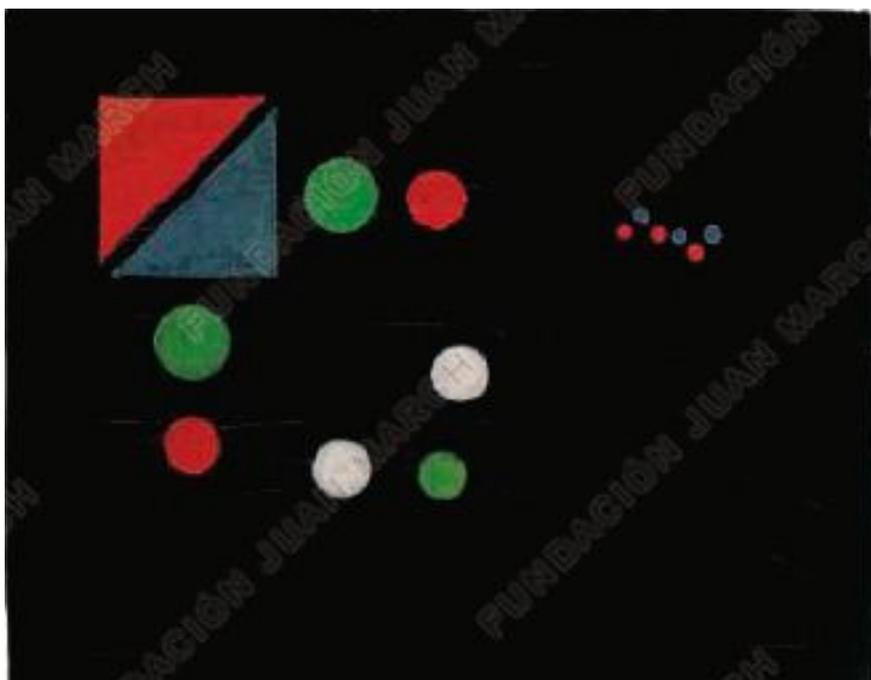
CAT. 224
Loló Soldevilla
Untitled, 1955
Collage on paper
50.6 x 65 cm (20 x 25 ½ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (1057)



CAT. 225
Loló Soldevilla
Untitled, 1956
Oil on cardboard
27.9 x 35.6 cm (11 x 14 in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

CAT. 227
Loló Soldevilla
Untitled, 1956
Oil on cardboard
27.9 x 35.6 cm (11 x 14 in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

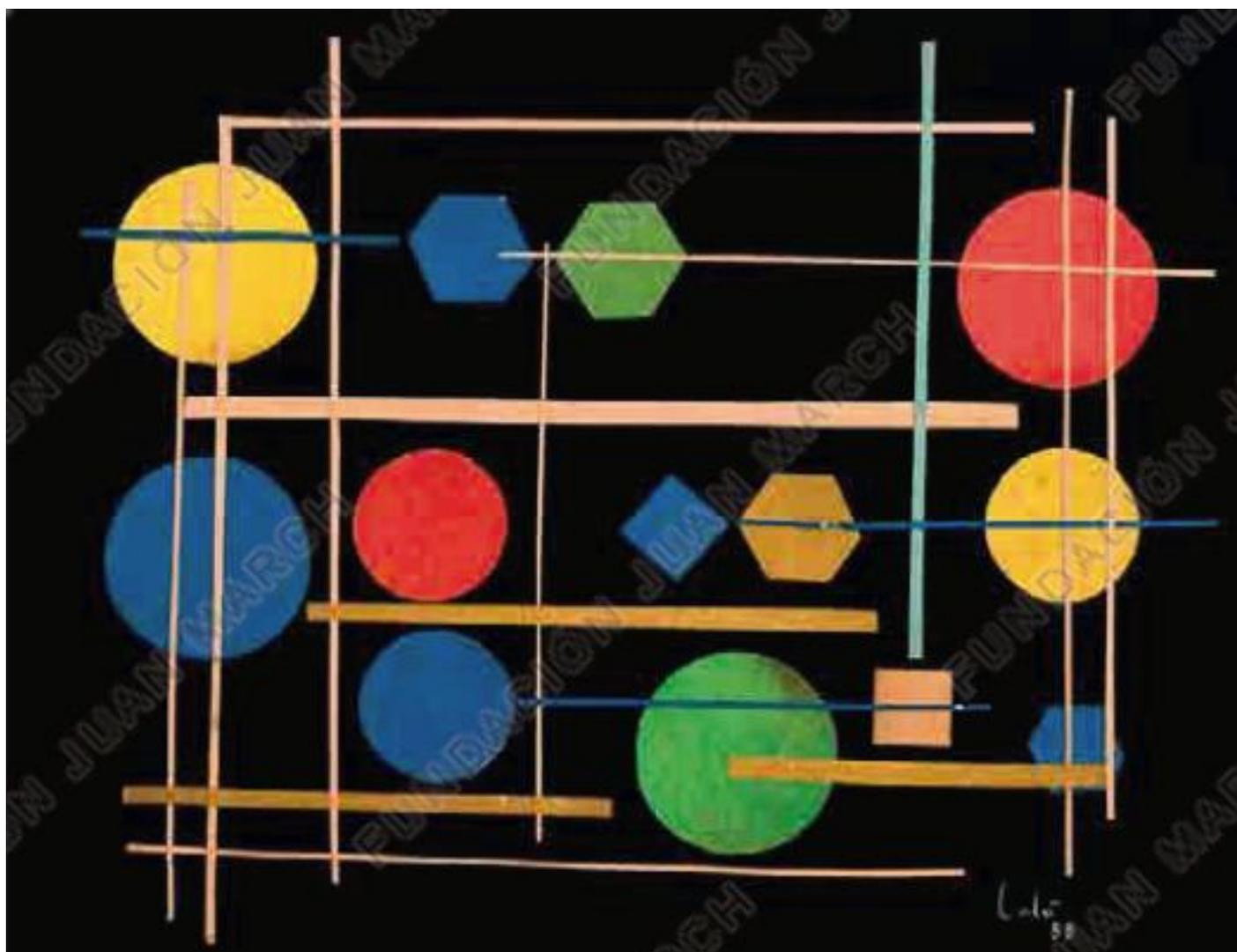
CAT. 226
Loló Soldevilla
Untitled, 1956
Oil on cardboard
27.9 x 35.6 cm (11 x 14 in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



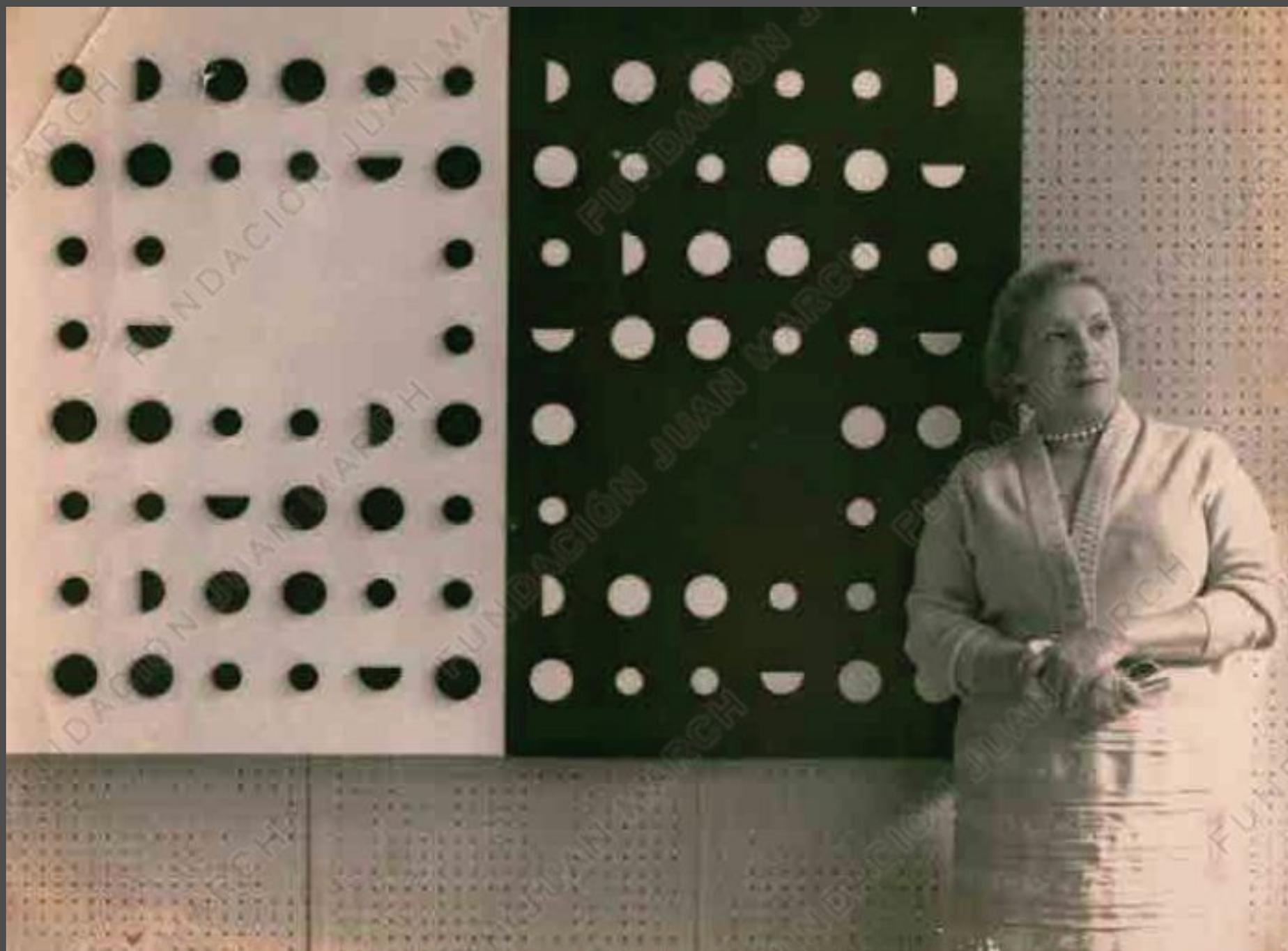
CAT. 228
Loló Soldevilla
Untitled, ca. 1956
Mixed media on card
30 x 24.7 cm (11 ¾ x 9 ¾ in.)
Private collection



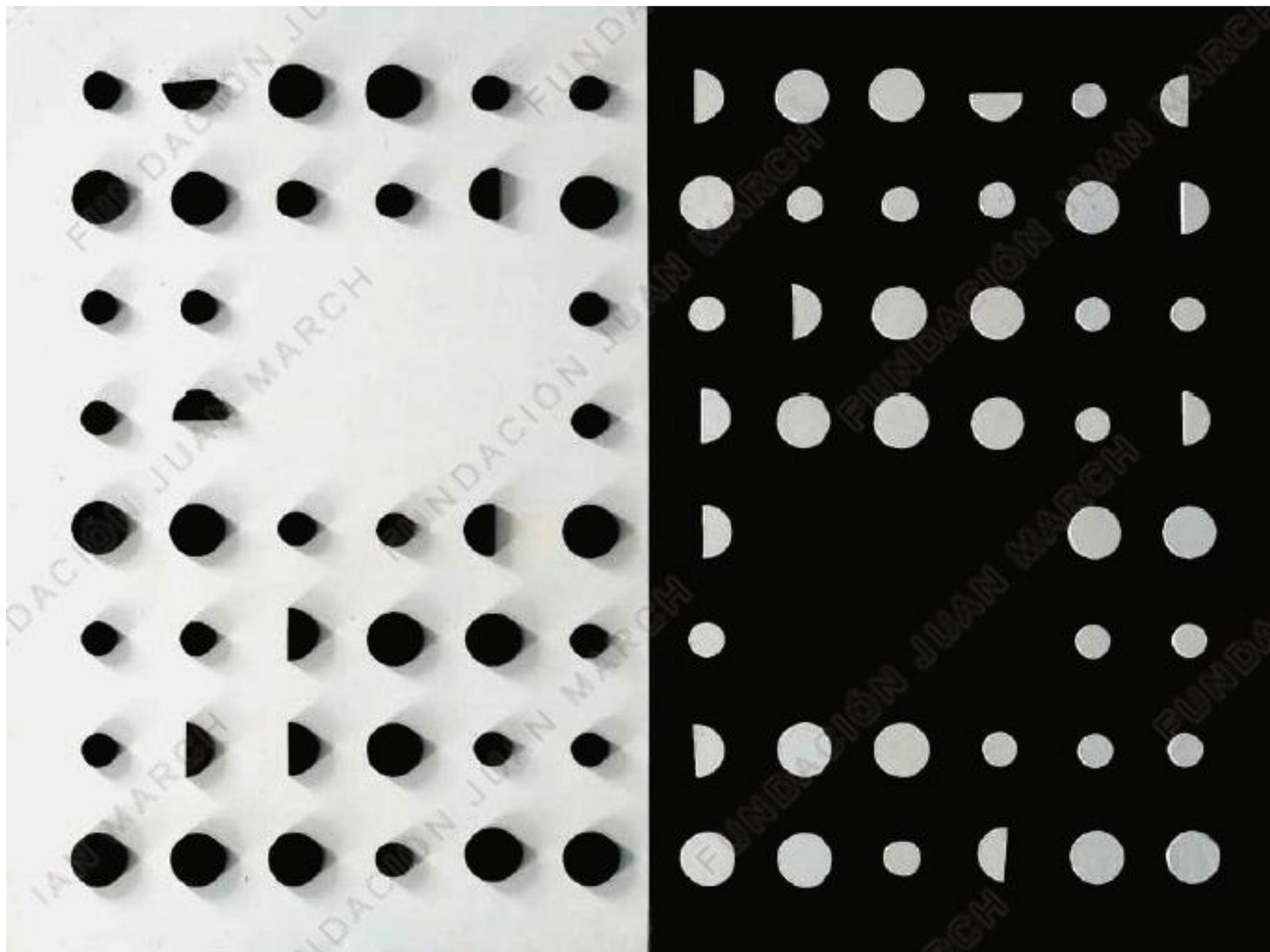
Loló Soldevilla
Untitled, 1955
Collage on card
25.1 x 32.8 cm (10 x 13 in.)
Collection Jorge Virgili, Madrid



Loló Soldevilla next to her
Diagonal Silence
(later titled Homage to Fidel), ca.
1957
Archivo Museo Nacional de
Bellas Artes, Havana



CAT. 229
Loló Soldevilla
Homage to Fidel, 1957
Assemblage in wood and vinyl paint
145 x 152.5 cm (57 x 60 in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (08.2121)



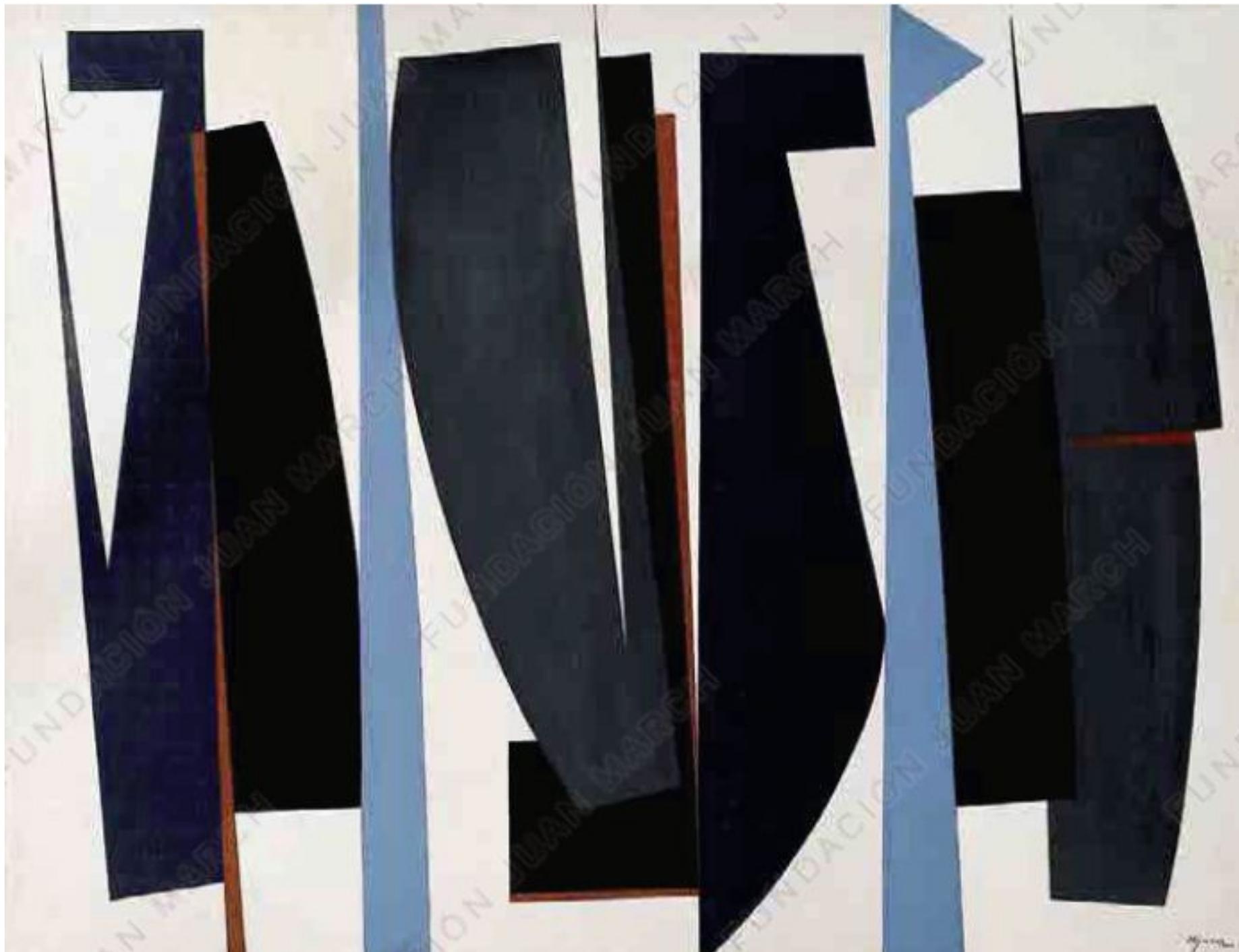
CAT. 230
José Mijares
Stability, 1959
Acrylic on canvas
210 x 61.5 cm
(82 ¾ x 24 ¼ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas
Artes, Havana (08.1050)



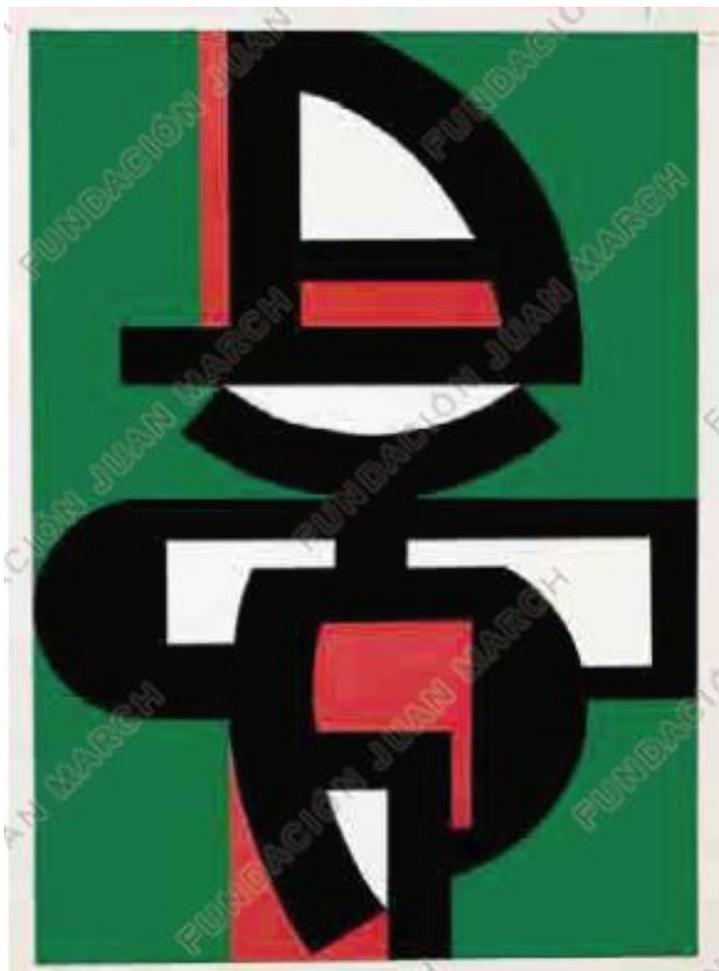
CAT. 231
José Mijares
Composition no. 2, 1960
Oil on canvas
104 x 83 cm (41 x 32 ¾ in.)
Collection Raquel Villa, Havana



CAT. 232
José Mijares
Painting, 1961
Oil on canvas
99.5 x 129.5 cm (39 ¼ x 51 in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (08.1072)



CAT. 233
José Mijares
Forms, 1965
Collage on paper
53 x 75.5 cm (21 x 29 ¾ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (76.2027)



CAT. 234
José Mijares
Composition, 1965
Collage on paper
93.5 x 68.5 cm (36 ¾ x 27 in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (68.457)



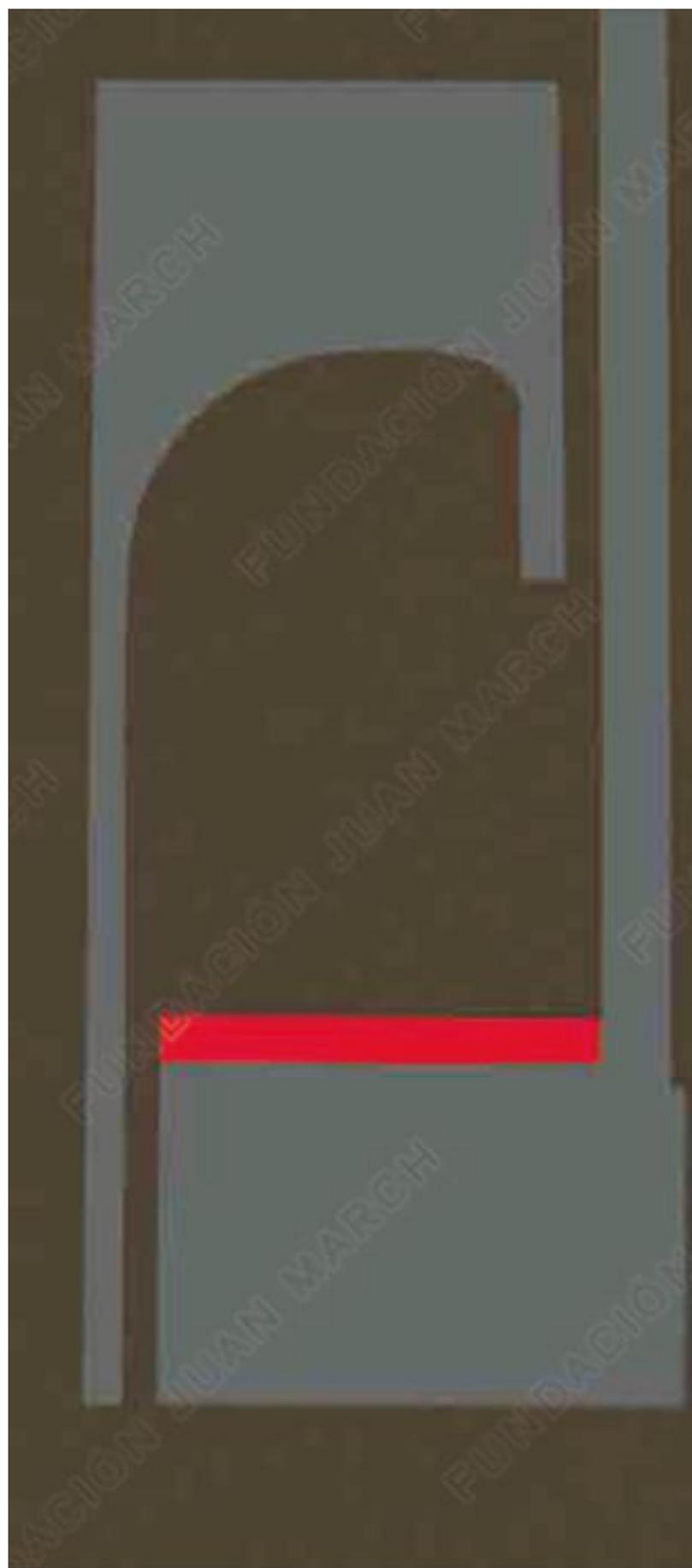
CAT. 235
Luis Martínez Pedro
Composition no. 6, 1954
Oil on canvas
203 x 126.5 cm (80 x 49 ¾ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas
Artes, Havana (08.1173)



CAT. 236
Luis Martínez Pedro
Composition no. 12, 1956
Acrylic on canvas
61 x 76.2 cm (24 x 30 in.)
Collection Rafael DiazCasas



CAT. 237
Luis Martínez Pedro
Homage, 1959
Oil on canvas
196 x 87 cm (77 ¼ x 34 ¼ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (07.413)



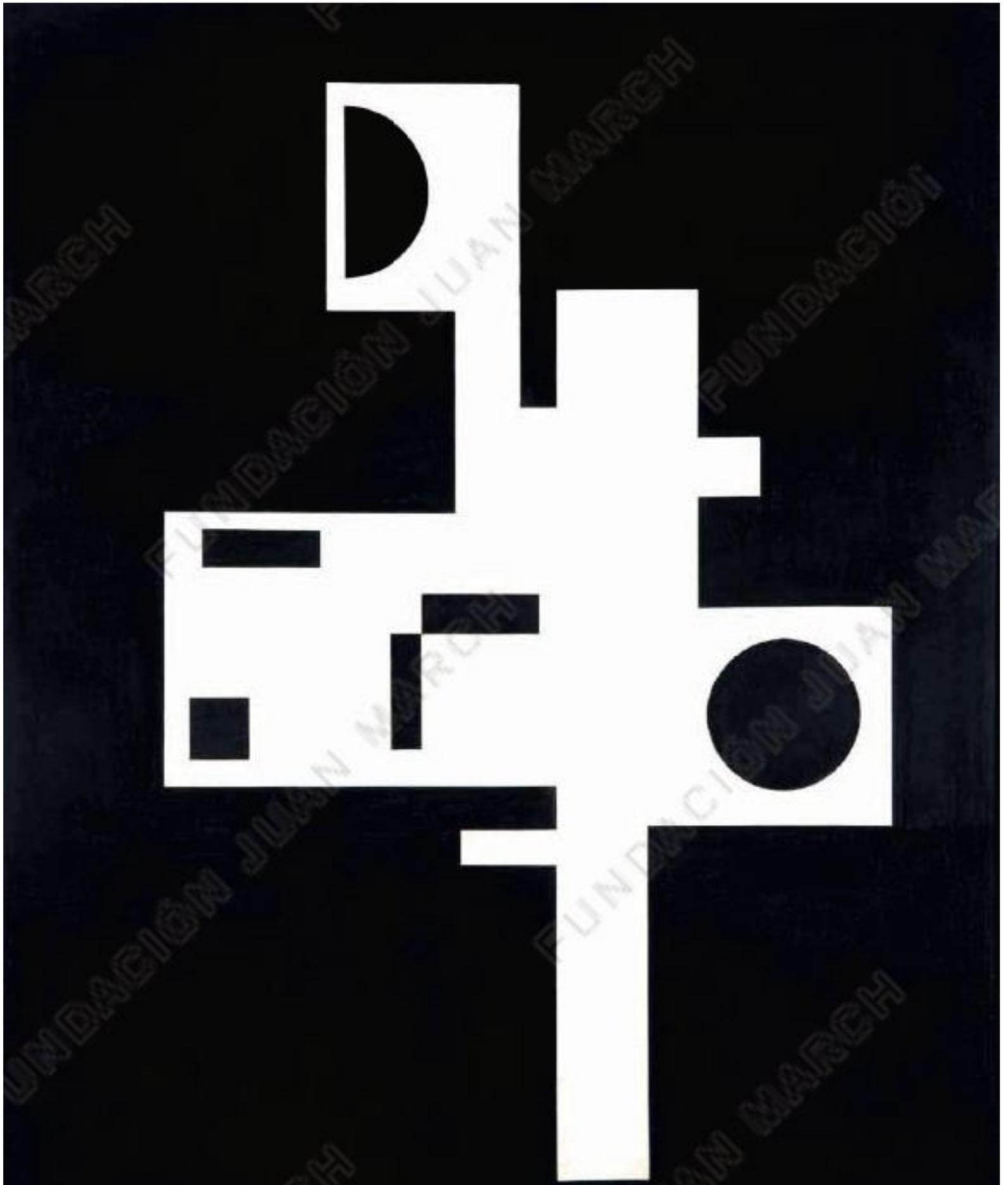
CAT. 238
Luis Martínez Pedro
Territorial Waters
no. 5, 1962
Oil on canvas
186.5 x 148.5 cm
(73 ¾ x 58 ½ in.)
Museo Nacional de Bellas
Artes, Havana (07.414)



CAT. 239
Salvador Corratgé
Untitled, late 1950s
Gouache on paper
60 x 46 cm (23 5/8 x 18 in.)
Collection Raquel Villa, Havana

CAT. 240
Salvador Corratgé
*New Formal Planar Unity Opened
in 3 Distinct Phases onto a
Supporting Point*, 1961
Oil on canvas
124 x 153 cm (48 3/4 x 60 1/4 in.)
Private collection, Havana

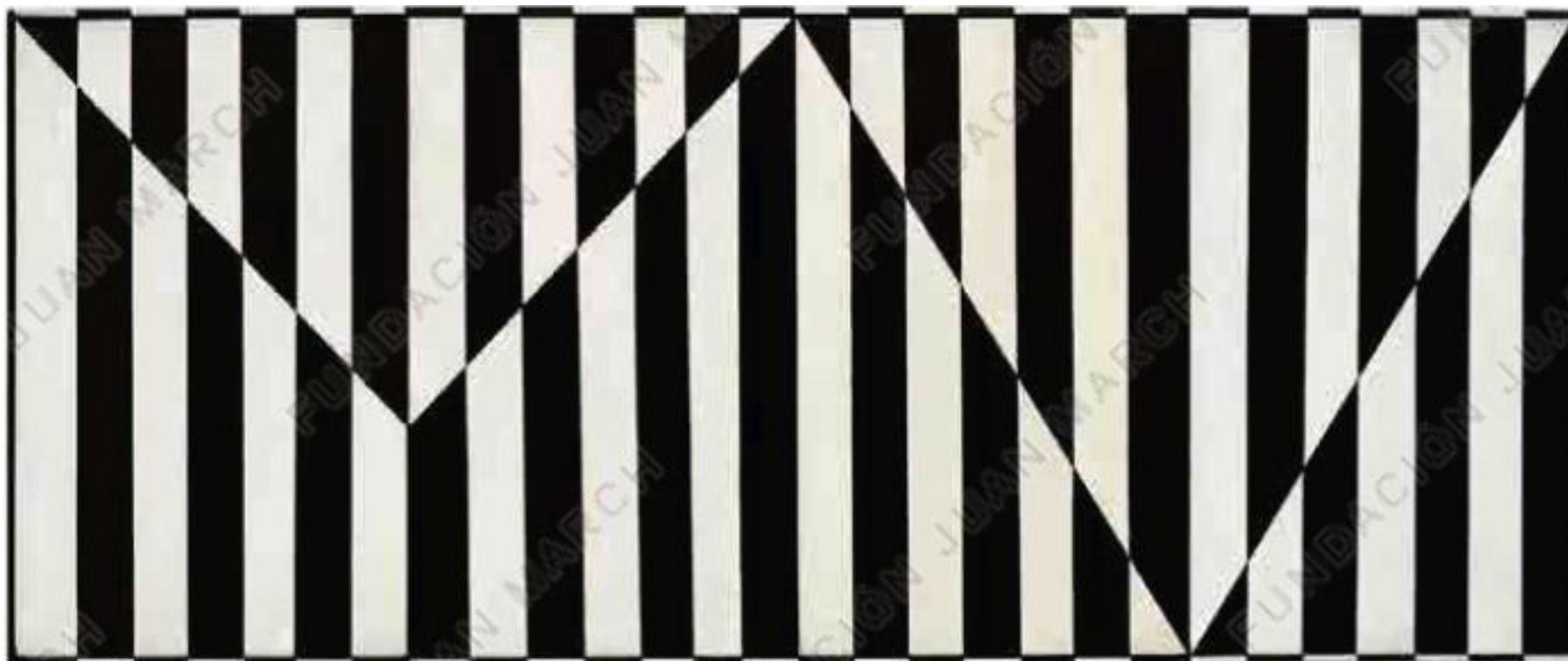






CAT. 241
Carmen Herrera
Untitled (Black and White), 1950
Acrylic on canvas
123.5 x 123.5 x 4.1 cm (48 5/8 x 48 5/8 x 1 5/8 in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

CAT. 242
Carmen Herrera
Untitled, 1952
Synthetic polymer paint on canvas
63.5 x 152.4 cm (25 x 60 in.)
The Museum of Modern Art, New
York. Gift of Agnes Gund and Tony
Bechara, 2005 (972.2005)



CAT. 244
Carmen Herrera
White and Green, 1966–67
Acrylic on canvas
114.3 x 101.6 cm (45 x 40 in.)
Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros



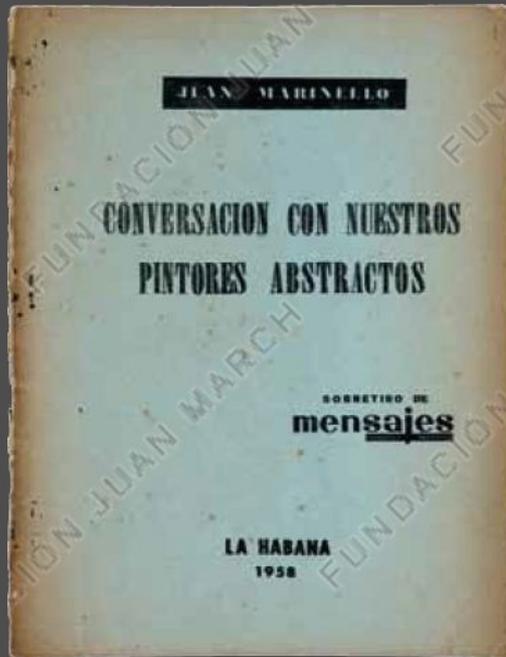
CAT. 243
Carmen Herrera
White and Green, 1959
Acrylic on canvas
114.9 x 152.9 cm (45 ¼ x 60 ¼ in.)
Tate, London. Lent by the
American Fund for the Tate
Gallery, courtesy of Ella Fontanals
Cisneros 2006 (L02658)



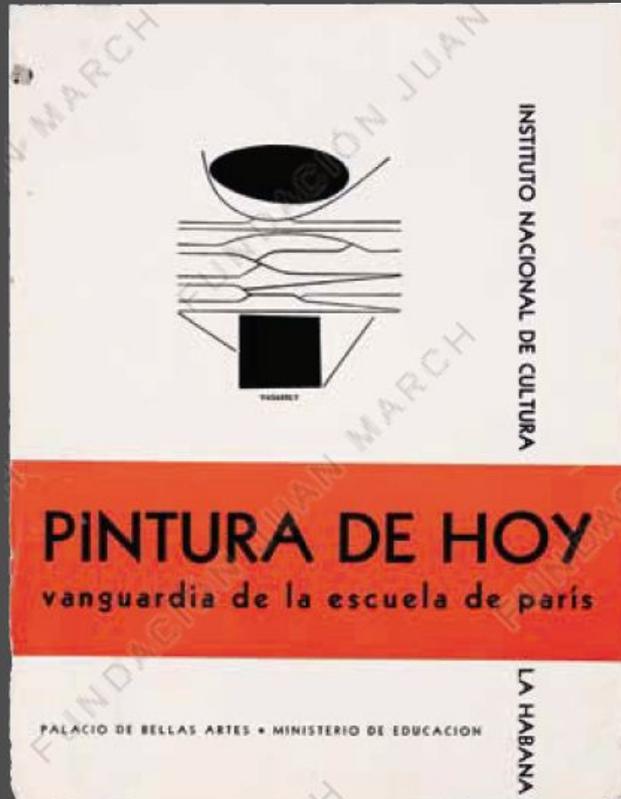
CAT. 245
 Noticias de Arte, 1952-53
 Magazine
 31 x 24 cm (12 ¼ x 9 ¾ in.)
 245.1. Year 1, no. 1, September 1952
 245.2. Year 1, no. 8, April 1953
 245.3. Year 1, no. 9, May 1953
 Fundación Juan March, Madrid



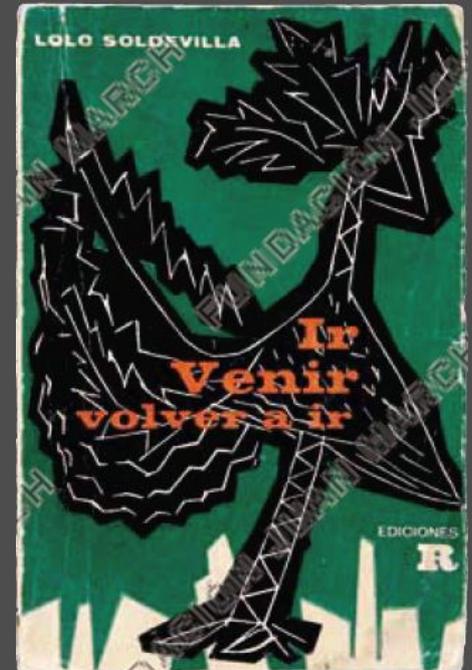
CAT. 247
Juan Marinello
Conversación con nuestros pintores abstractos. Mensajes. Cuadernos marxistas. Offprint, Havana, 1958
Book
21.5 x 16.5 cm (8 ½ x 6 ½ in.)
Fundación Juan March, Madrid

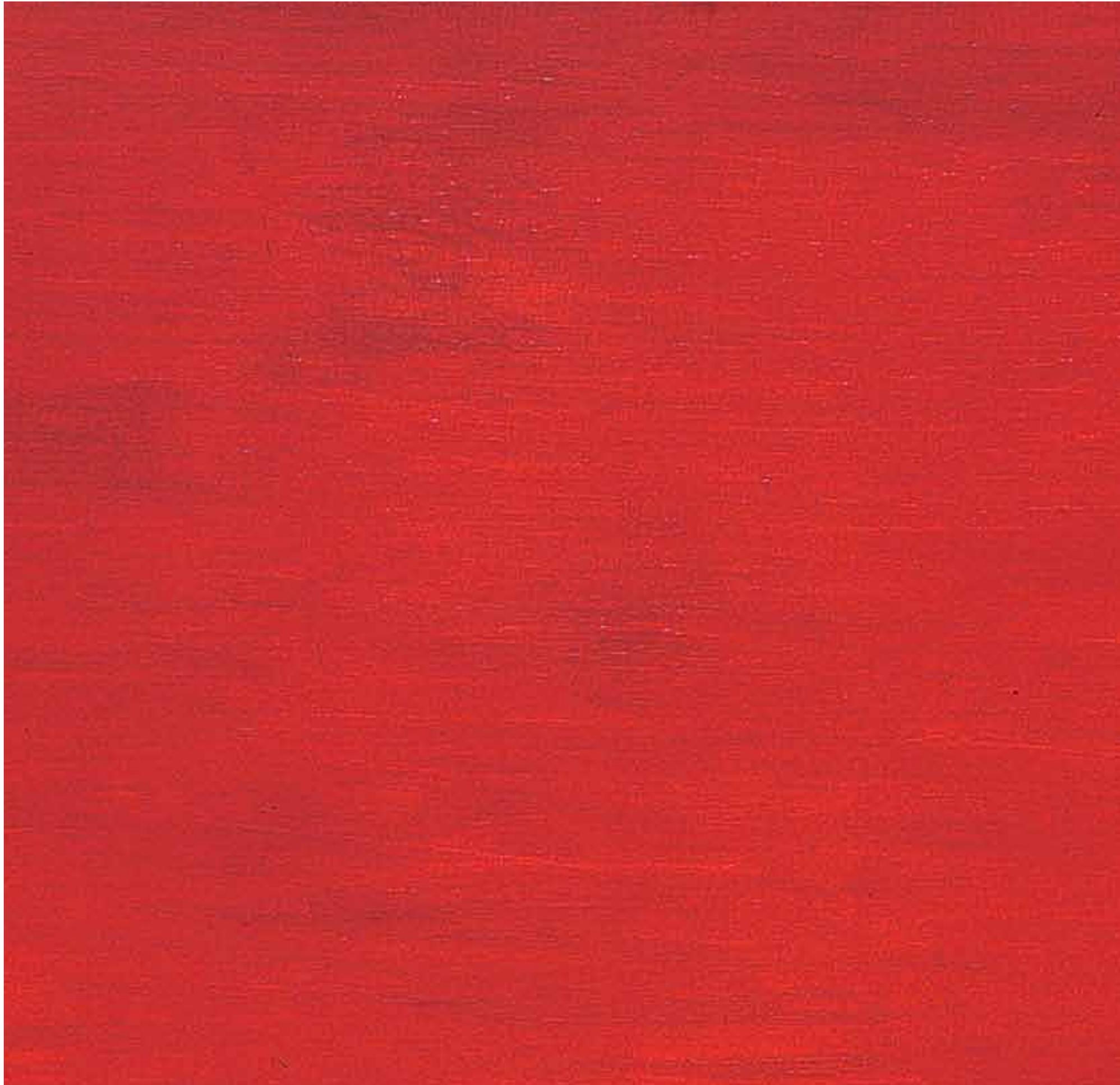


CAT. 246
Pintura de hoy, Vanguardia de la Escuela de París. Havana: Instituto Nacional de Cultura, Palacio de Bellas Artes, 1956
Exhibition program
31 x 24 cm (12 ¼ x 9 ¾ in.)
Private collection



CAT. 248
Loló Soldevilla
Ir, venir, volver a ir. Crónicas (1952-1957)
Havana: Ediciones [R]evolución, 1963
Book
20.5 x 13.5 cm (8 x 5 ¼ in.)
Fundación Juan March, Madrid





Europe

CAT. 249

Cercle et carré, Paris, 1930

Magazine

32 x 24 cm (12 5/8 x 9 5/8 in.)

249.1. No. 1, March 15, 1930

249.2. No. 2, April 15, 1930

249.3. No. 3, June 30, 1930

Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 250

Abstraction création. Art non figuratif, Paris, 1932–33

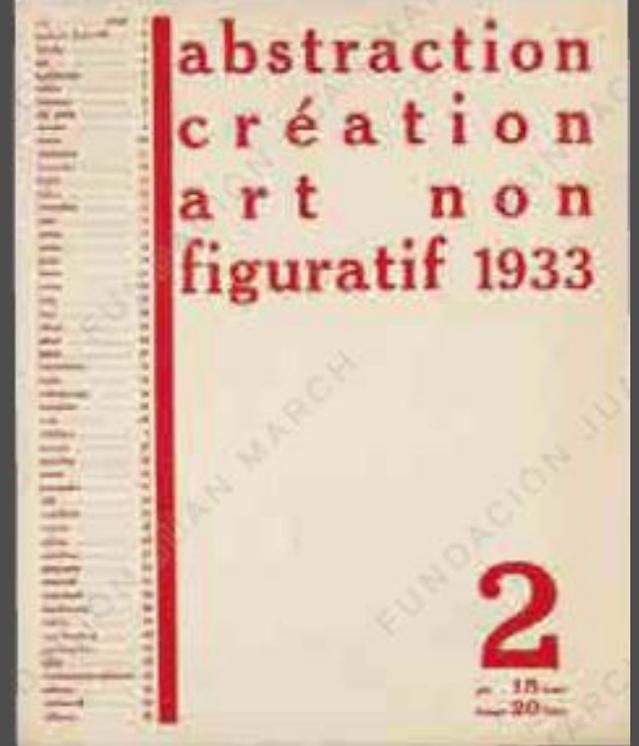
Magazine

28 x 22.5 cm (11 x 9 in.)

250.1. No. 1, 1932

250.2. No. 2, 1933

Collection José María Lafuente



Avda 95 eq. Alcalá.

Señor D. Benjamín Palencia.

Distinguido Señor y amigo.

Hemos pedido a la Junta del Salón de Otoño, una sala para exponer un grupo de amigos y nos la han concedido, así como también una disminución en la cotización que debe pagarse, quedando reducida a 3 pts por obra. Los expositores serán, en principio, los siguientes: Souto, Mateo, Moreno Villa, Clement, Alberto, Palencia, Angelas Ortiz, Díaz Jover, Luisa, Torres-García, Cuello, González, Castellano, Creea me etc. no rechazarán exponer con nosotros... Nos reuniremos aquí, en esta sala, el jueves próximo a las 6 de la tarde. No le luego que venga, ni puede, caso de que no pueda ser, tenga la bondad de mandarme

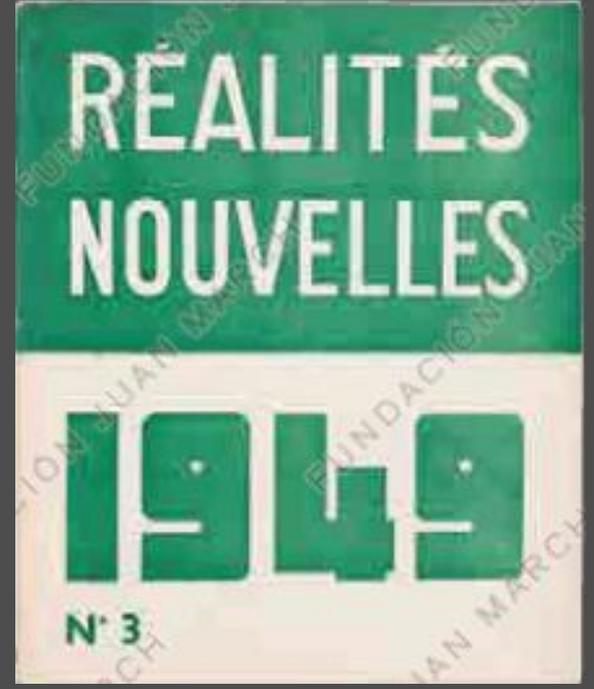
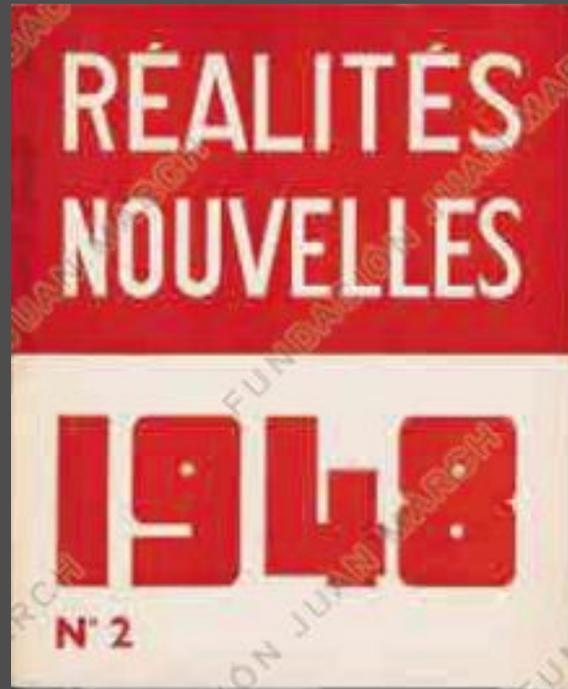
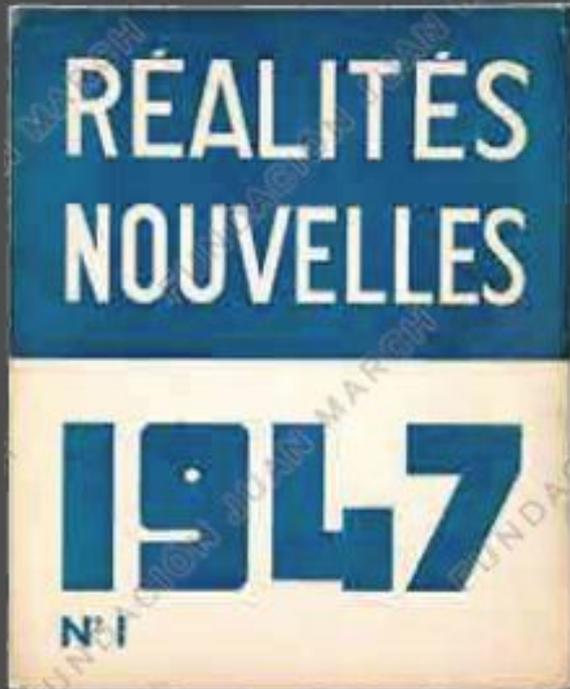
las listas, diciéndome si se adhieren o rehúsa. - Aproposito: en el otro día en la librería Calpe, una monografía fin de D. Nada había visto de usted. Me gusto mucho! - ¿Qué tal se le da le que tengo muchos deseos de conocer su obra directamente, ¿Permitiría que un día le visite?

En fin, quisiera decirle algo sobre todo esto, y quien tiene que por amigos y admiradores de su obra.

J. Torres-García.

Madrid 25 Sept 33

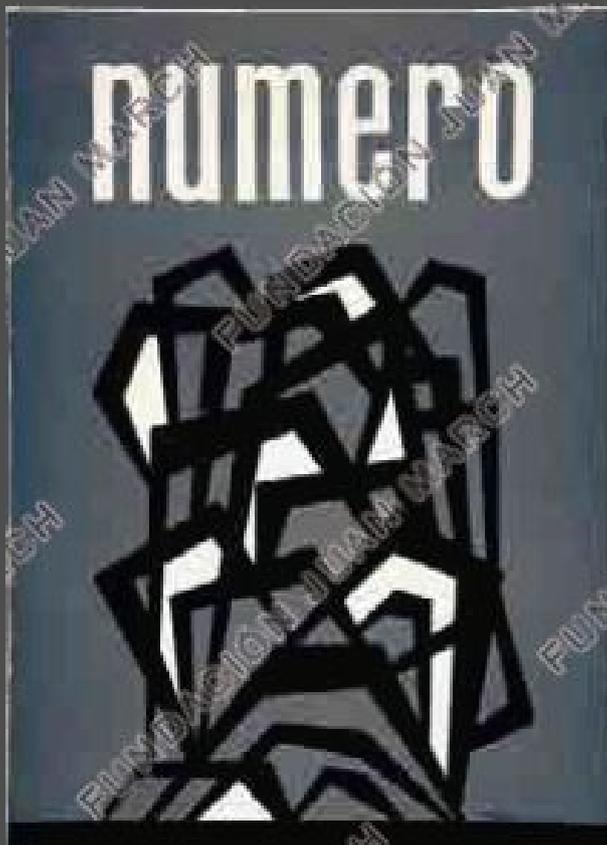
CAT. 252
Réalités Nouvelles, Paris, 1947–49
Magazine
28 x 23 cm (11 x 9 1/8 in.)
252.1. No. 1, 1947
252.2. No. 2, 1948
252.3. No. 3, 1949
Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 253
Arte concreta, Milan, 1951–52
Bulletin
16.5 x 17 cm (6 ½ x 6 ¾ in.)
253.1. No. 1, November 1951
253.2. No. 5, March 1952
Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 254
Numero, Florence, November-
December 1953
Magazine
Two poems by Gyula Kosice and one
by Juan Bay published on page 21
34 x 24 cm (13 ¾ x 9 ⅝ in.)
Collection José María Lafuente



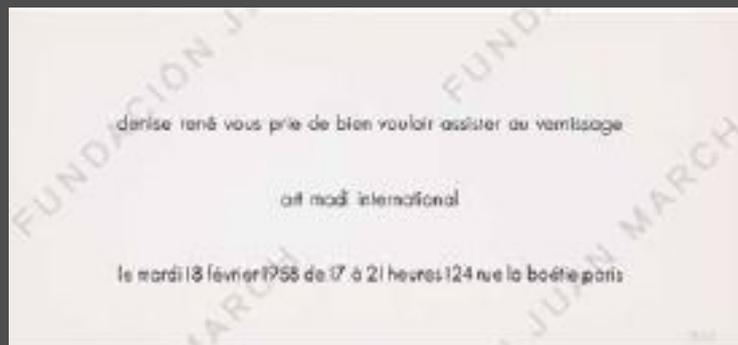
CAT. 255
Eugen Gomringer, *konstellationen*,
constellations, *constelaciones*
Bern: Spiral Press, 1953
Book
25 x 25 cm (9 ¾ x 9 ¾ in.)
Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 258
Art madi international
Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1958
Exhibition opening invitation
February 18, 1958
9.7 x 21.2 cm (3 ¾ x 8 ¼ in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris

CAT. 259
Art madi international
Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1958
Exhibition program
16 x 20.4 cm (6 ½ x 8 in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris

CAT. 261
Opening of exhibition
Art madi international
at Galerie Denise René
Paris, February 18, 1958
Photos
24 x 18 cm (9 ¾ x 7 in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 262
Kosice. Galerie Denise
René, Paris, April 5–30, 1960
Exhibition catalogue
24 x 20 cm (9 3/8 x 8 in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



**LYGIA CLARK
AT
SIGNALS LONDON**
27th May to 3rd July

Journal de l'Exposition Artresado

Large a structure de papier
Belle sculpture a l'interieur de la
salle
Belle sculpture a l'exterieur
A voir l'interieur de la
L'interieur est une oeuvre de papier
Belle sculpture de l'exterieur de la salle

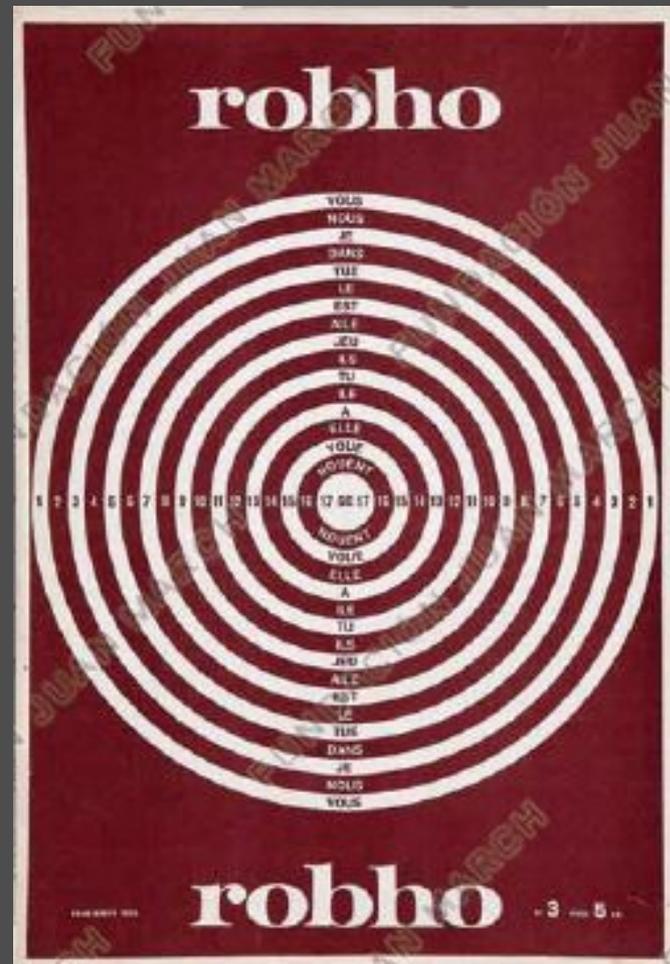
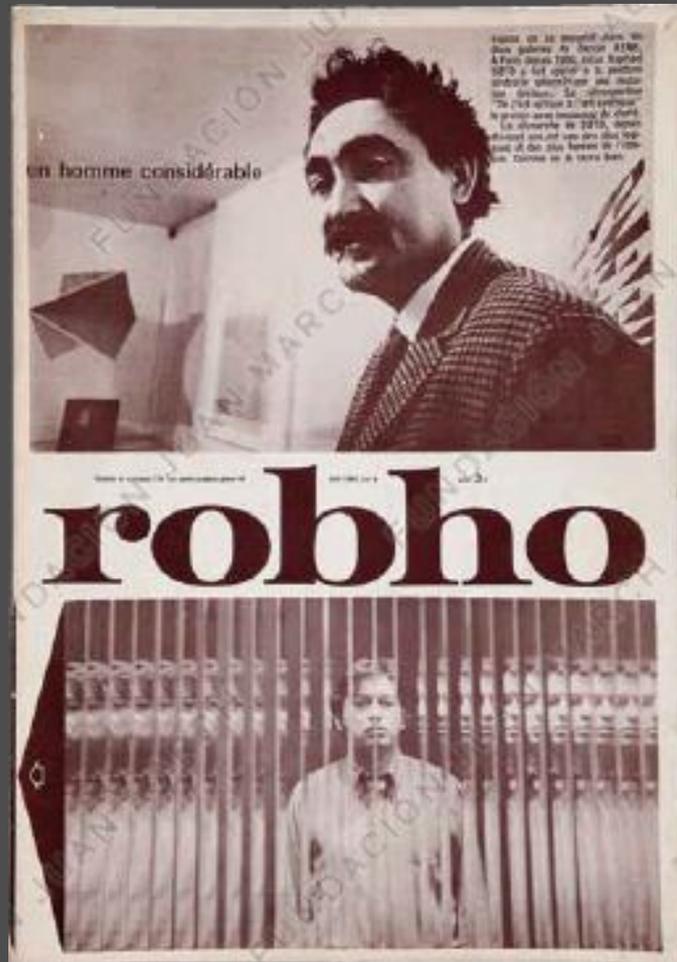
SIGNALS

NEWSBULLETIN OF SIGNALS LONDON • 39 WIGMORE ST, W1 • Weekbook 2054 • 276

DIRECTOR: PAUL KEELER • EDITOR: DAVID MEDALLA • volume 1 number 7

MEMBERS OF SIGNALS LONDON: CAROL CRONIN, MRS H. D. MORGENTHAU, VIOLETT AND VIOLETTA DINK, MR ROBERT AND LESTER MAHER, MR AND MRS CHARLES H. BIRDA, MR JOHN KOTENBERG, MR EDWARD FENICHEL, MR FRANK POPPER AND MR FRANK STREIB WILSON

CAT. 264
Robho, Paris, 1967-68
Magazine
41 x 28,5 cm (16 x 11 ¼ in.)
264.1. No. 1, June 1967
264.2. No. 3, spring 1968
Collection José María Lafuente



CAT. 265

Abstraction géométrique, Lumière et mouvement, Art optique et cinétique

The Redfern Gallery, London, 1968

Exhibition catalogue

30.5 x 24.2 cm (12 x 9 ½ in.)

Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 266

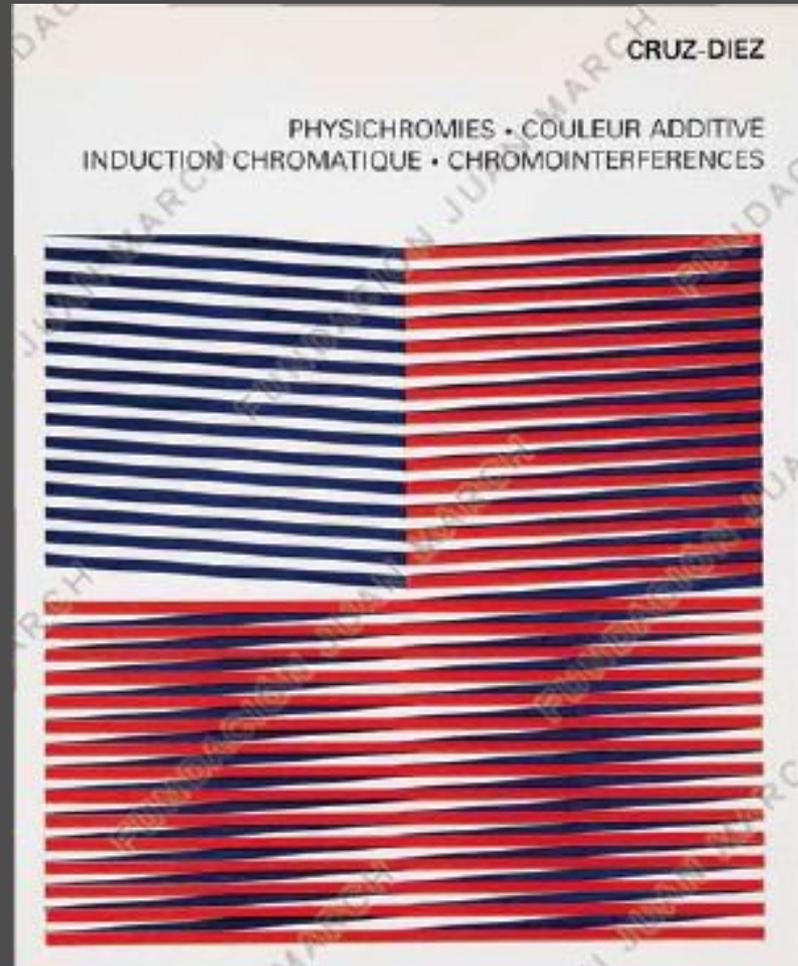
Cruz-Diez. Physichromies. Couleur additive. Induction Chromatique. Chromointerférences

Galerie Denise René, New York, November 1971

Exhibition catalogue

26 x 21 cm (10 ¼ x 8 ¼ in.)

Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 267
Carlos Cruz-Diez and Francisco Sobrino exhibition
Two Optical Artists of the 70s
Galerie Denise René, New York
November 17 - December 4, 1971
Installation photos
20.5 x 25.3 cm (8 x 10 in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 268
Cruz-Diez. Galerie Denise René
 Paris, May 23 - June 11, 1973
 Exhibition catalogue
 26 x 21 cm (10 ¼ x 8 ¼ in.)
 Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 269
Narciso Debourg. Galerie
 Denise René Hans Mayer
 Düsseldorf, 1972
 Exhibition opening invitation
 March 17, 1972
 21 x 10.5 cm (8 ¼ x 4 in.)
 Galerie Denise René, Paris



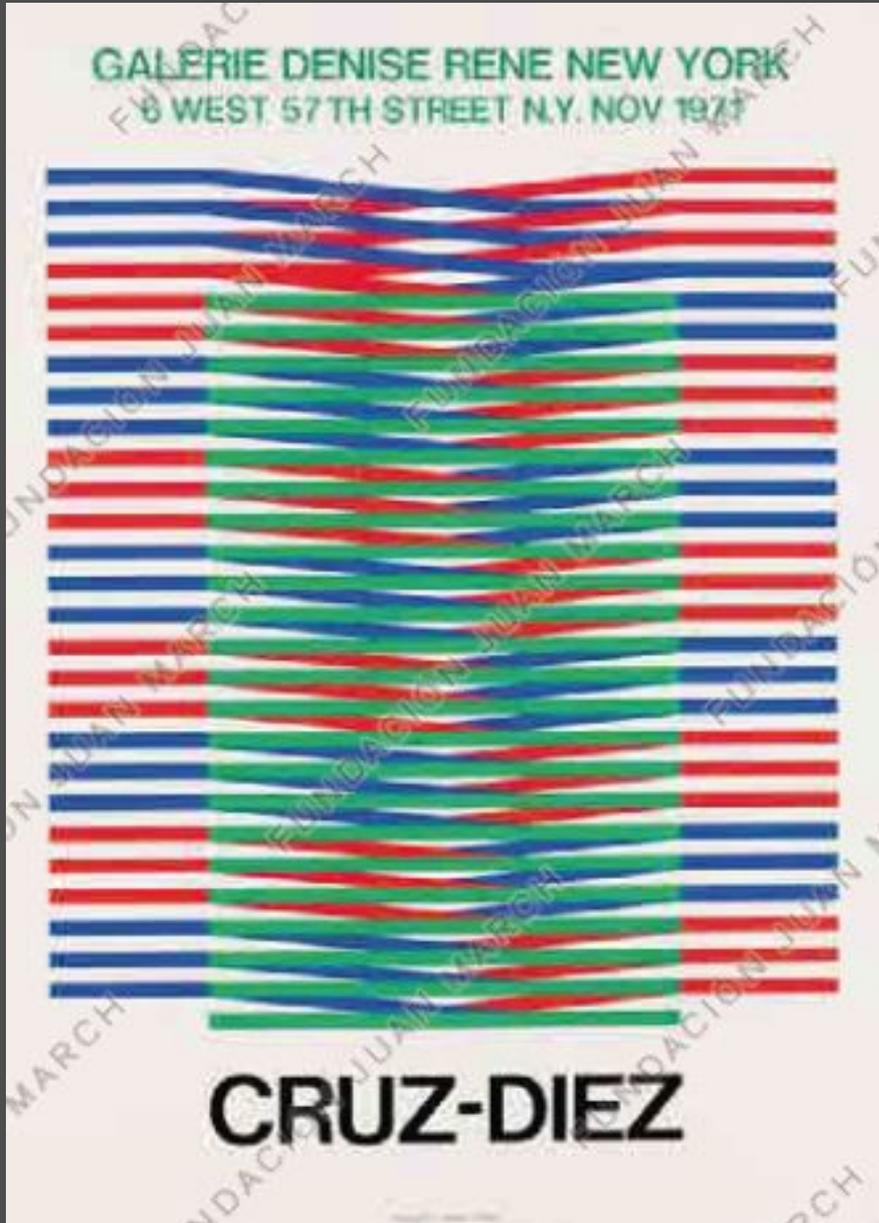
Poster for the exhibition of the Argentine group Madi at the Galerie Denise René Paris, February 18–28, 1958



Poster for the exhibition 12 leading modern artists at the Galerie Denise René, Hans Mayer Düsseldorf, July–September 1968



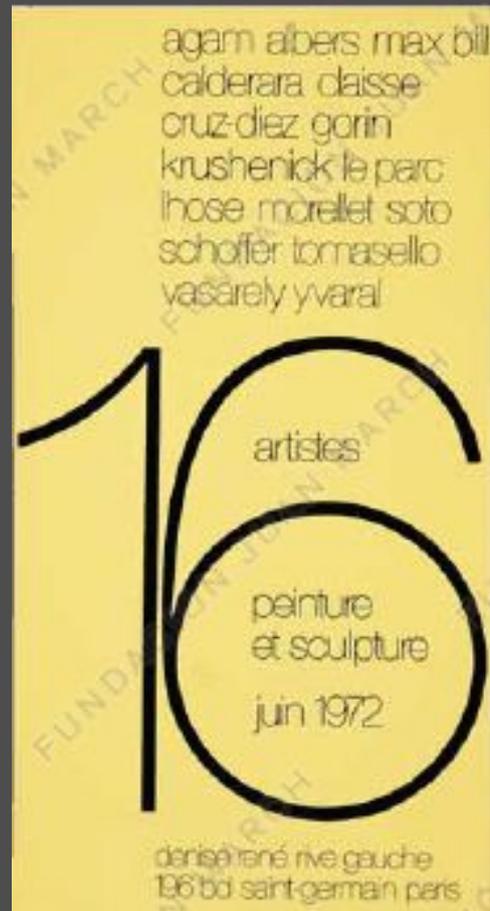
Poster for the Carlos Cruz-Diez exhibition
at the Galerie Denise René, New York
November 1971



Poster for the Jesús Rafael Soto exhibition
at the Galerie Denise René, Paris
July 1970



CAT. 270
16 artistes, peinture et sculpture
Galerie Denise René, Paris, June 1972
Invitation
20 x 10.5 cm (8 x 4 in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



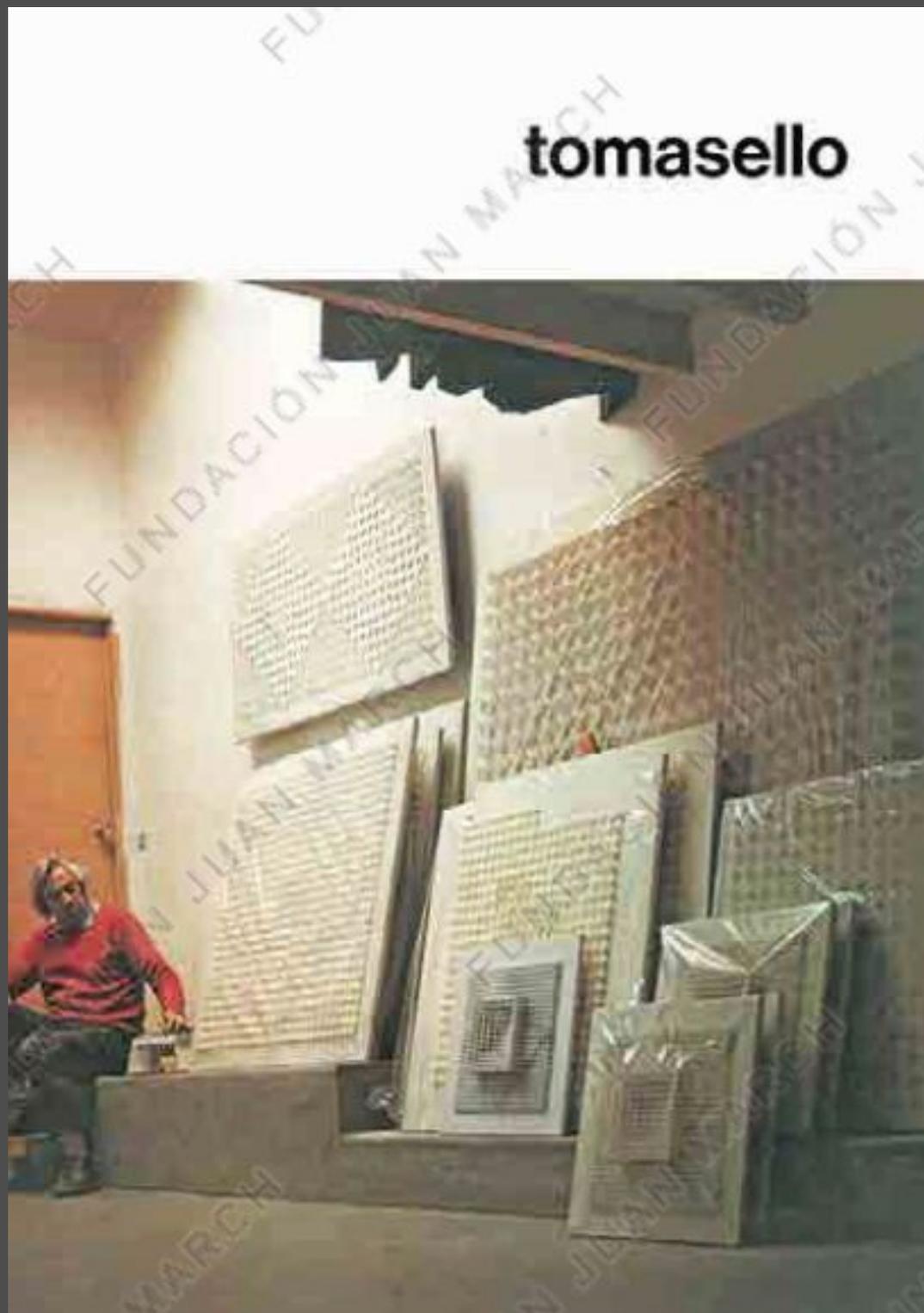
CAT. 271
Tomasello. Originale + Multiples. Galerie Denise René Hans Mayer, Düsseldorf, April 16, 1971
Exhibition opening invitation
21 x 10.5 cm (8 ¼ x 4 in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 272
Tomasello. Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1972
Exhibition opening invitation, May 3, 1972
20 x 10.5 cm (8 x 4 in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 273
Tomasello: oeuvres récentes
Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1972
Exhibition catalogue
26 x 21 cm (10 ¼ x 8 ¼ in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 274
Luis Tomasello exhibition at Galerie
Denise René, Paris, 1972
Installation photos
18.3 x 24 cm (7 ¼ x 9 ⅝ in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



CAT. 275

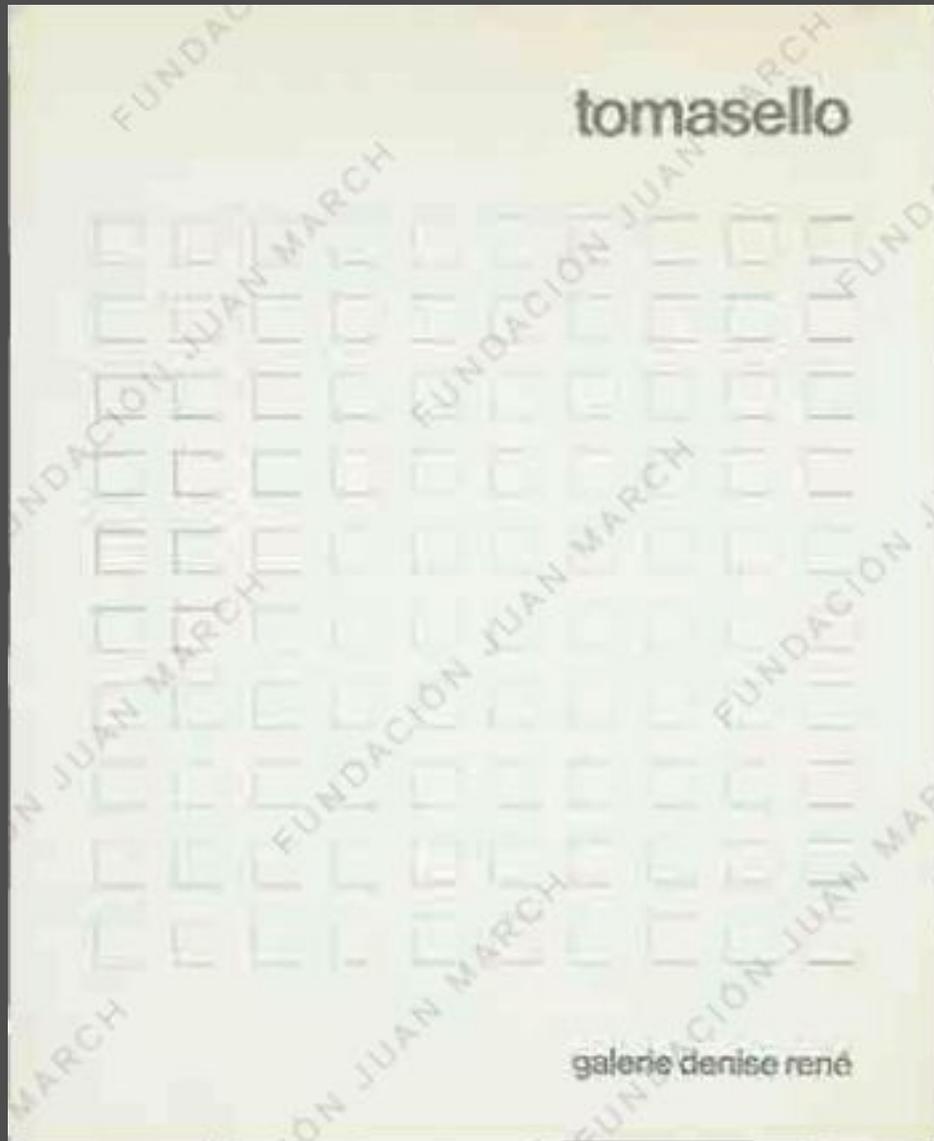
Tomasello: Recent Works.

Galerie Denise René, New York, May 1973

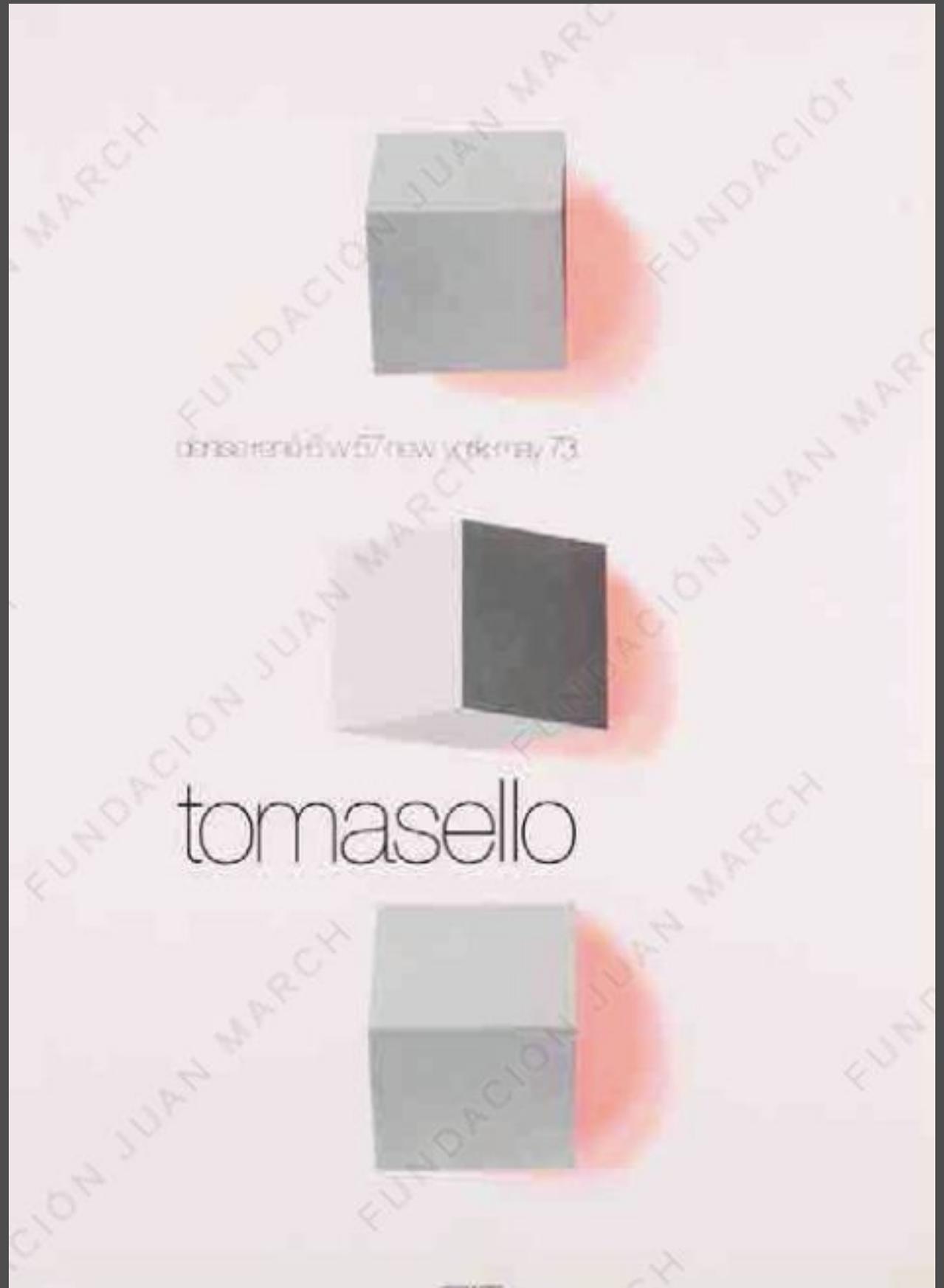
Exhibition catalogue

26 x 21 cm (10 ¼ x 8 ¼ in.)

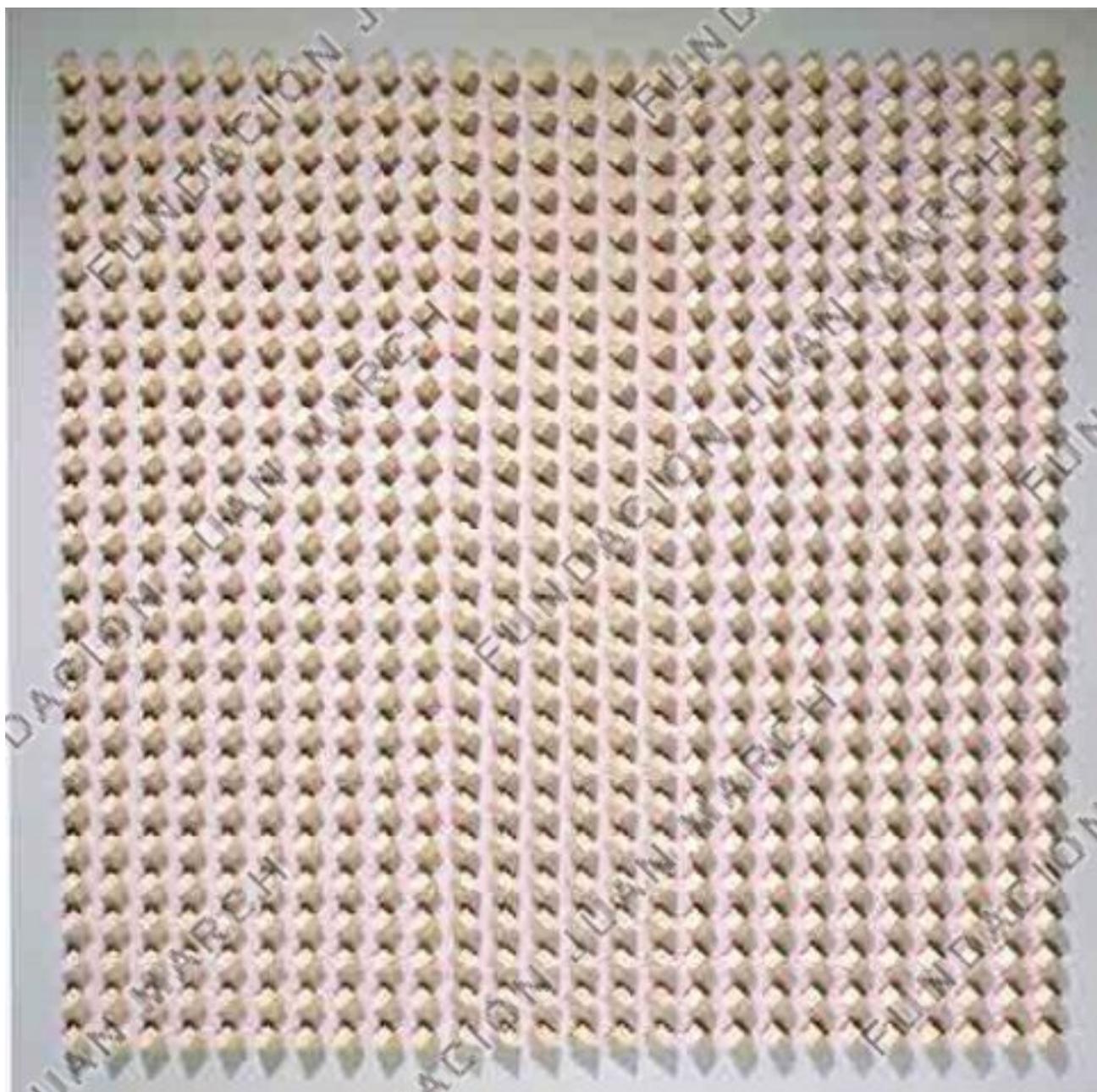
Galerie Denise René, Paris



Poster for the Luis Tomasello exhibition
at Galerie Denise René
New York, May 1973



CAT. 276
Luis Tomasello
Chromoplastic Atmosphere no. 352, 1974
Painted wood relief
100 x 100 x 10 cm (39 3/8 x 39 3/8 x 3 7/8 in.)
Galerie Denise René, Paris



chronology

Notes for a Chronology of Geometric Abstraction in Latin America (1930–1973)

OSBEL SUÁREZ

While the exhibition spans a period marked by the return of two artists to Latin America (1934 and 1973), the present chronological notes go back to 1930, covering events that are crucial for an understanding of what was to come in the next forty years. Relevant events are listed in chronological order below their corresponding year. In order to guide the reader through the numerous references to artists and historical figures, and taking into account several names may only be known to a specialized audience, a brief glossary is included at the end of the section, along with a biographical note that places the cited individuals in chronological context.

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- 1930** + Joaquín Torres-García and Michael Seuphor form the Cercle et Carré group in Paris and publish a periodical of the same name, the first issue of which is released on March 15, 1930.
- + In April, Torres-García organizes an exhibition with Latin American artists Diego Rivera, Germán Cueto, and Juan del Prete, among others, at the Galerie Zak in Paris.
-
- 1931** + In February, Georges Vantongerloo and Auguste Herbin co-founded the Abstraction-Création movement in Paris. The group organizes an annual exhibition up until 1936.
-
- 1932** + The first of five *Abstraction-Création: Art non figuratif* yearbooks is published.
- + Germán Cueto leaves Paris, where he had resided since 1927, and returns to Mexico.
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- 1933** + Joaquín Torres-García sets up the Grupo de Arte Constructivo in Madrid.
- + On April 11, the Bauhaus is closed on Hitler's orders [FIG. 1].
- + In the fall, Josef Albers joins the newly founded Black Mountain College in North Carolina.
-
- 1934** + Cuban designer Clara Porset, a former student at Black Mountain College, invites Josef Albers to deliver a series of lectures at the Lyceum in Havana. His three-week stay in Cuba was the first of many trips to Latin America.
- + On April 14, after living in Europe for over four decades, Joaquín Torres-García and his family embark at Cadiz for Montevideo, where they arrive 16 days later.
- + On June 5, a retrospective exhibition featuring over 200 works executed by Joaquín Torres-García between 1909 and 1934 opens at the Amigos del Arte center in Montevideo [CAT. 11].
- + In August, Joaquín Torres-García publishes his *Manifiesto 1* [CAT. 12] in response to an article by Norberto Berdía in which the artist
-

was accused of “theorizing” and “taking refuge in abstract forms to escape reality.” On the last page of the publication, Torres-García warned further manifestos would be published periodically, for “heartfelt words are needed on all topics and episodes that concern art.” Two more manifestos were released, the second in December 1938 and the third in January 1940 [CAT. 15, 20].

- 1935** + Josef and Anni Albers make the first of fourteen trips to Latin America.
+ Torres-García establishes the Asociación de Arte Constructivo (AAC) in Montevideo.
- 1936** + In May, Joaquín Torres-García launches the quarterly magazine *Círculo y Cuadrado*, which stems from the periodical created in Paris in 1930.
+ The Alberses make their second trip to Mexico. In August, an exhibition of Josef Albers’s gouache paintings and graphic work opens at the head offices of the daily *El Nacional*.
- 1937** + The architects Carlos Raúl Villanueva and Luis Malaussena design the Venezuelan Pavilion for the Paris World Fair, a project that earns them a special mention.
- 1938** + Uruguayan artist Carmelo Arden Quin settles in Buenos Aires.
- 1939** + Gertrude Goldschmidt (Gego) leaves Germany for Venezuela.



FIG. 1. Iwao Yamawaki, *Der Schlag gegen das Bauhaus* (Attack on the Bauhaus), 1932. Photo collage, 26 x 19 cm (10 1/8 x 7 3/8 in.). Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin. Originally published in the magazine *Kokusai-Kenchiku*, vol. 8, 12 (Tokyo, December 1932): 272

+ Following a brief stay in Paris, Martin Blaszko takes up residence in Buenos Aires.

- 1941** + Rumanian-born artist Sandu Darie leaves France for Havana and settles permanently in Cuba.
- 1942** + The *Manifiesto de los Cuatro Jóvenes*, signed by Jorge Brito, Tomás Maldonado, Claudio Girola, and Alfredo Hlito, is published in Buenos Aires
- 1943** + Gyula Kosice, Carmelo Arden Quin, and Rhod Rothfuss visit Torres-García’s studio in Montevideo.
+ The last issue of *Círculo y Cuadrado* is printed.
- 1944** + Buenos Aires publisher Poseidón releases *Universalismo constructivo* (Constructive Universalism), a collection of 150 lectures delivered by Joaquín Torres-García since his return to Uruguay from 1934 to 1943.
+ On February 1, Piet Mondrian dies of pneumonia in New York.
+ On 18 March, Max Bill opens the first international exhibition of concrete art at the Kunsthalle in Basel.
+ In the austral summer, the first and only issue of the magazine *Arturo. Revista de Artes Abstractas* is published; it includes an article by Rhod Rothfuss entitled “El marco: un problema de la plástica actual” (The Frame: A Problem in Contemporary Art) that questions conventional notions of the frame.
+ On December 13, Wassily Kandinsky dies in his studio in Neuilly-sur-Seine, then a town on the outskirts of Paris.
- 1945** + Alejandro Otero receives a fellowship from the French government to study in Paris. The grant is later extended by the Ministry of Education of Venezuela.

+ In November, Tomás Maldonado, Alfredo Hlito, Lidy Prati, Rafael Lozza, Manuel Espinosa, Edgar Bayley, Antonio Caraduje, Raúl Lozza, Alberto Molenberg, Óscar Núñez, and Jorge Souza, among others, form the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención (AACI) in Buenos Aires.

- 1946** + Josef and Anni Albers make their sixth trip to Mexico. Josef Albers begins a new series of paintings entitled *Variantes* (Variants) or *Adobe*, a clear reference to adobe geometric architecture in Mexico.
+ The Salon des Réalités Nouvelles is founded in Paris by Fredo Sidès serving as president, Auguste Herbin as vice-president, and A. F. del Marle as secretary general. The group is intended to replace the Abstraction-Création association. Initial committee members included Jean Arp, Gilbert Besançon, Sonia Delaunay, Jean Dewasne, Albert Gleizes, Jean Gorin, and Antoine Pevsner. Latin American artists were strongly represented at later editions of the salon.
+ The first *Exposición Arte Madí* takes place at the Instituto Francés de Estudios Superiores / Galería Van Riel in Buenos Aires. The exhibition includes works by Gyula Kosice, Martín Blaszko, Carmelo Arden Quin, Rod Rothfuss, Diyi Laañ, Valdo Longo, and Elizabeth (Lisl) Steiner, among others.
+ In the spring, Lucio Fontana launches the first spatialist declaration, *Manifiesto Blanco*.
+ The *Manifiesto Invencionista* is published in the first issue of *Arte Concreto-Invención* magazine, printed in August.
+ On November 24, László Moholy-Nagy dies at the age of 51 from leukemia in Chicago.
- 1947** + The *Manifiesto Invencionista* is published along with an article by Carlos Drummond de Andrade in the newspaper *Correio da Manhã* in Brazil.

- + Raúl Lozza leaves the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención and founds Perceptismo.
- + After having lived ten years in Palestine, Abraham Palatnik returns to Brazil and settles permanently in Rio de Janeiro.
- + The first issue of *Arte Madí Universal* is published.
- + The Madí movement disbands; Gyula Kosice joins sides with Rhod Rothfuss, while Carmelo Arden Quin moves to Paris following the split and concentrates his efforts on internationalizing Madí art.
- + The first issue of the annual magazine *Réalités Nouvelles* is published.

- 1948**
- + During a two-month tour of Europe, Tomás Maldonado comes into contact with Bruno Munari, Max Bill, Gillo Dorfles, and Georges Vantongerloo.
 - + An exhibition of the Argentine Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención opens at the Taller Libre de Arte in Caracas.
 - + Clara Porset, who had settled in Mexico, is invited to teach architecture and interior design at the Universidad de la Habana in Cuba.
 - + Awarded a fellowship by the French government, Juan Melé travels to France and tours Italy, where he comes into contact with members of the MAC, the Concrete art movement of Milan.
 - + The second issue of *Réalités Nouvelles* magazine includes reproductions of works by, among others, Manuel Espinosa, Gyula Kosice, Alberto Molenberg, Juan Melé, Rhod Rothfuss, Tomás Maldonado, Lidy Prati, and Juan del Prete, which led to the first major display of Argentine and Uruguayan art at the Salon des Réalités Nouvelles, held at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Paris.
 - + In September, Alexander Calder's work is exhibited at the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM-RJ) [FIG. 2]. The exhibition catalogue includes texts by Jean-

Paul Sartre and Henrique Mindlin, among others [FIG. 3].

- 1949**
- + Alejandro Otero leaves Paris for Venezuela the same year Mercedes Pardo, Narciso Debourg, and Armando Barrios embark on a trip to France. On his return to Venezuela, Otero causes a stir with his *cafeteras* (coffee pots), exhibited at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas.
 - + Josef Albers begins the seminal series *Homenaje al cuadrado* (Homage to the Square).
 - + Sandu Darie and Gyula Kosice exchange correspondence [FIG. 4], and continue doing so regularly until 1958.
 - + Hungarian-born photographer Thomaz Farkas acquires Brazilian citizenship. The exhibition



FIG. 2. Lúcio Costa and team, Ministry of Education and Public Health, view of the north façade, Rio de Janeiro, 1937–45. Photo: Marcel Gautherot, ca. 1950, 48 x 36 cm (18 ¾ x 14 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles

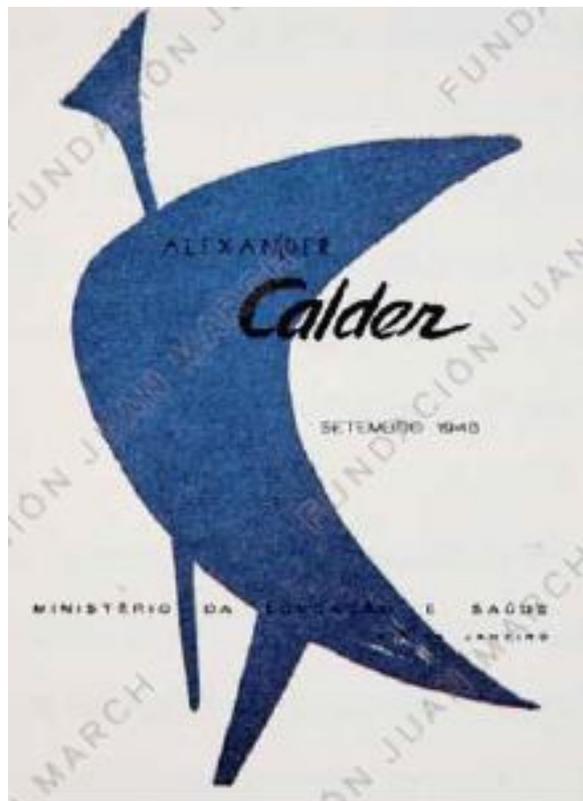


FIG. 3. Cover of the exhibition catalogue *Alexander Calder* at the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (Rio de Janeiro: Ministério da Educação e Saúde, September 1948)

Del arte figurativo al arte abstracto. El arte abstracto en Francia, curated by Léon Degand, opens in Buenos Aires. Presented previously at the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), the exhibition showcases works by Alexander Calder, Victor Vasarely, Francis Picabia, Fernand Léger, Wassily Kandinsky, and other European artists.

- + The Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención disbands.
- + On August 8, Joaquín Torres-García dies at the age of 75 in Montevideo.
- + The *Manifiesto Perceptista* is published in the catalogue of the first exhibition of perceptist art held at the Galería Van Riel in Buenos Aires on October 31.

- 1950**
- + Alejandro Otero returns to Paris and creates *Los Disidentes* magazine together with Mateo Manaure, Pascual Navarro, Carlos González Bogen, Narciso Debourg, Rubén Núñez, Perán Ermíny, Dora Hersen, J. R. Guillent Pérez, and Aimée Battistini. The publication gives rise to the group Los Disidentes, proponents of abstract art.
 - + In April, Carlos Raúl Villanueva attends the Panamerican Congress of Architects organized in Havana.
 - + Jesús Rafael Soto is awarded a grant by the Venezuelan government and on September 16 he travels to Paris, where he settles permanently.
 - + *Perceptismo* magazine is first launched in Buenos Aires in October. The seventh and last issue is published in July 1953.
 - + From October 9–20, an exhibition of Sandu Darie's work entitled *Estructuras pictóricas* is displayed at the Havana Lyceum [FIG. 5, 6].

- 1951**
- + Spanish architect Josep Lluís Sert visits the construction site of the UCV University Campus in Caracas. Through Sert, Villanueva meets Alexander Calder at the former's home in Roxbury (Connecticut).

S. Darie
 B 9525. Vedado
 Habana, Cuba.

La Habana, 26 de Noviembre de 1949.

Revista Arte Nudi Universal
 Sedi Carnot 41 - 2° D
 Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Señores:

Con ocasión de mi exposición en New York y debido a la amabilidad del Dr. Jean Leeron, famoso pintor non-objetivo, he conocido el movimiento Medinamor, admirando la actividad de ustedes a través de la revista Arte Nudi Universal.

Discutí con el Dr. Jean Leeron el interés que podría tener el movimiento de ustedes y la importancia que puede tener para la pintura en general, y le prometí escribirles.

Les estaría muy reconocido si quisieran enviarme la revista de ustedes Arte Nudi Universal desde el primer número a la fecha, diciéndome al mismo tiempo el importe para enviarles un check. Les agradecería que me informen sobre los últimos trabajos del grupo y si aparecieron otras publicaciones en relación con el arte que ustedes desarrollan.

Desearéoles muchos éxitos, reciban ustedes mi admiración sincera.

S. Darie

FIG. 4. First letter from Sandu Darie to Gyula Kosice, Havana, November 26, 1949



FIG. 5. Cover of the catalogue of Sandu Darie's exhibition *Estructuras pictóricas*, Lyceum, Havana, October 9–20, 1950



FIG. 6. Sandu Darie at his exhibition *Estructuras pictóricas*, Lyceum, Havana, 1950

FIG. 7. Geraldo de Barros, *Self-portrait* (São Paulo, Fotoformas series), 1949. Silver emulsion on paper, 24 x 18 cm (9 3/8 x 7 in.). Modern impression, 1999. Fabiana de Barros Collection

- + The magazine *Nueva Visión* is launched in Argentina under the direction of Tomás Maldonado; Alfredo Hlito designs the typographic layout. Nine issues of *Nueva Visión* are published until the magazine's demise in 1957.
- + The first MAC *bollettino* is published in Milan.
- + Having received a grant from the French government, Almir Mavignier leaves for Paris and works at Jean Dewasne's studio.
- + In January, Geraldo de Barros presents the exhibition *Fotoformas* at MASP, a key event in the development of modernist photography in Brazil. [FIG. 7].
- + On March 1, an exhibition of works by the Swiss artist Max Bill opens at the Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP). The show includes painting, graphic work, photography, sculpture, and industrial design [FIG. 8].
- + On October 20, the I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo opens, the first large-scale exhibition of modern art held outside the artistic and cultural centers of Europe and the United States. The sculpture *Dreiteilige Einheit* (Tripartite Unity) by Max Bill wins the first prize in the International Sculpture category and Ivan Serpa receives the Best Young Painter prize for his work *Formas* (Forms). Antônio Maluf wins the poster competition and Abraham Palatnik receives an honorable mention for his cinechromatic art machine.

- 1952**
- + In São Paulo, Augusto de Campos, Haroldo de Campos, and Décio Pignatari found the concrete poetry movement Noigandres and the magazine of the same name.
 - + Carlos Raúl Villanueva oversees construction of the central area of the University Campus of Caracas; Calder designs his *Flying Saucer* acoustic panels for the Aula Magna Hall.
 - + Throughout the month of February, Josef Albers delivers a series of lectures at the Department of Architecture of the Universidad de La Habana.

- + In September, the painters Luis Martínez Pedro, Sandu Darie, and Mario Carreño launch the magazine *Noticias de Arte* in Havana. Carreño is also the coordinator of the arts section. Contributors to the magazine include José Gómez Sicre, Jorge Romero Brest, José Lezama Lima, Gyula Kosice, Alfred H. Barr Jr., and Néstor Almendros, among others.
- + On December 9, the MAM-SP hosts an exhibition that marks the official start of concrete art in Brazil. The display is organized by seven artists, residents in São Paulo and members of the Grupo Ruptura: Austrian Lothar Charoux, Polish artists Anatol Wladyslaw and Leopold Haar, Hungarian Kazmer Féjer, Geraldo de Barros, Luiz

FIG. 8. Installation view of Max Bill's first exhibition in Brazil, Museu de Arte de São Paulo, March 1951. Arquivo da Biblioteca do MASP



Sacilotto, and Waldemar Cordeiro, who also acts as the group's official spokesman.

- 1953**
- + The book *Qué es el arte abstracto?* (What is Abstract Art?) by art critic Jorge Romero Brest is published in Buenos Aires.
 - + Cuban painter Luis Martínez Pedro travels through South America and meets members of the group Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción. As a result of this trip, concrete art becomes the main focus of his work.
 - + With the aim of superimposing geometric elements, Jesús Rafael Soto uses Plexiglas in his work for the first time. By varying the angle's position he gives the finished work a dynamic effect.
 - + Alexandre Wollner wins the III Bienal de São Paulo poster competition.
 - + On February 20, the first *Exposición de Arte Abstracto* is organized by the MAM-RJ at Quitandinha Hotel, bringing together a varied group of artists such as Abraham Palatnik, Lygia Clark, Lygia Pape, and Ivan Serpa.
 - + On April 1, the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG), a teaching and research institute specializing in design, opens in Ulm, German Democratic Republic. Several Latin American artists would join the school.
 - + Josef and Anni Albers tour Chile and Peru. Josef Albers lectures at the School of Architecture of the Universidad Católica in Santiago, Chile, and at the National School of Engineering in Lima. While in Perú, Josef Albers meets Max Bill, director of the HfG in Ulm, and agrees to return to Germany and teach at the school for two months.
 - + In August, Calder visits Caracas and sees for the first time the ceiling he designed for the Aula Magna Hall at the Caracas University Campus. He exhibits his work at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas in September. He also executes the mobile *Ráfaga de nieve* (Gust of Snow), later displayed at the School of Architecture in the Caracas Campus.

+ The II Bienal de São Paulo [FIG. 9] takes place from December 1953 to February 1954 at a new venue designed by Oscar Niemeyer and Roberto Burle Marx situated at Ibirapuera Park [FIG. 10]. The United States presents three exhibitions, one entirely devoted to the work of Alexander Calder. Luis Martínez Pedro presents *Tabla en azul* (Blue Plank), taking first prize for best abstract artwork.

1954 + The Grupo Frente hold their first exhibition at Galería do Ibeu in Rio de Janeiro. The original group is formed by Lygia Clark, Lygia Pape, João José da Silva Costa, Décio Vieira, Aluísio Carvão, Carlos Val, and leader Ivan Serpa; some of whom later go on to form the Grupo Neoconcreto.

+ At Max Bill's invitation, Tomás Maldonado begins teaching at the HfG in Ulm [FIG. 11, 12], giving up painting shortly after. Almir Mavignier also teaches a course on visual communication at the school.

+ Eusebio Sempere and Loló Soldevilla exhibit their work at the Círculo de la Universidad university club in Valencia, Spain.

+ In March, the Aula Magana Hall at the University Campus in Caracas is inaugurated. A number of the works from the "Integration of the Arts" project, exhibited the previous year at the Musée national d'art moderne in Paris, are put on display at the university. The September issue of the magazine *ART d'aujourd'hui* features an illustrated article by Léon Degand on the Caracas University Campus.

1955 + Alejandro Otero begins the series *Coloritmos* (Coloryhtms), on which he continues to work for five years. The series consists of vertical boards to which Otero applies Duco lacquer with a compressor and a stencil, thus highlighting the composition and belittling the idea of "trade."

+ Luis Martínez Pedro and Sandu Darie exhibit their work at the Pavilion of Social Sciences,

FIG. 10. Roberto Burle Marx, *Ibirapuera Park project*, partial perspective, São Paulo, ca. 1953. Ink on Duratex, 122 x 151.2 cm (47 ½ x 59 in.). Fondos de Burle Marx & Cia. Ltda.

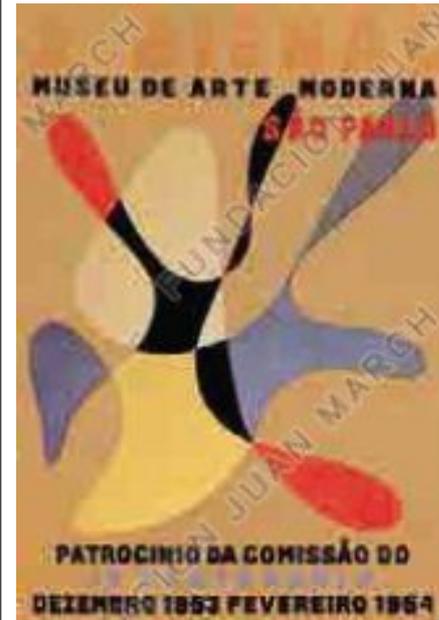


FIG. 9. II Bienal de São Paulo poster designed by Antônio Bandeira, 1954

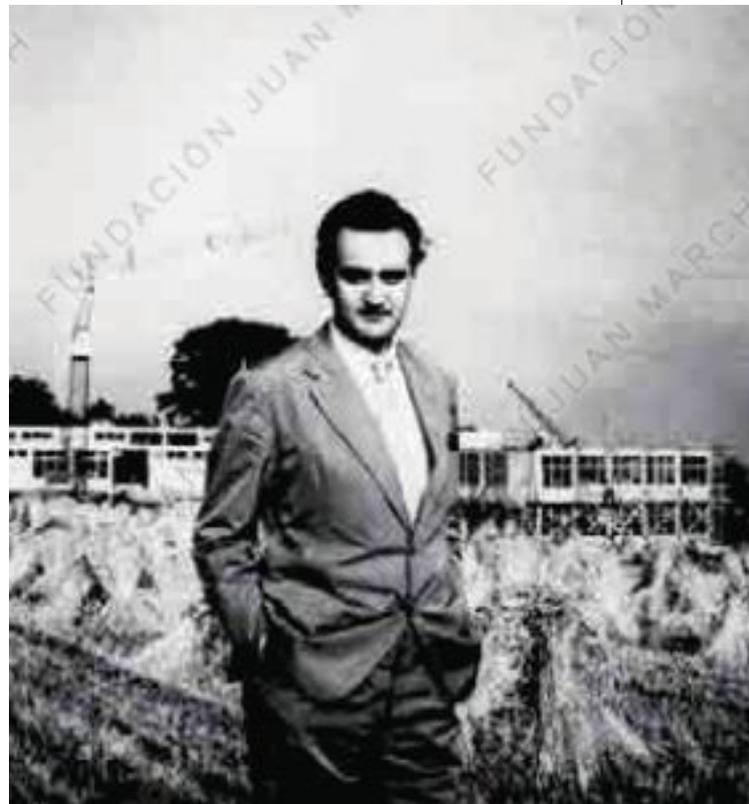


FIG. 11. Tomás Maldonado with Max Bill, Ulm, 1954

FIG. 12. Tomás Maldonado with the HfG (Hochschule für Gestaltung) under construction in the background, Ulm, 1954

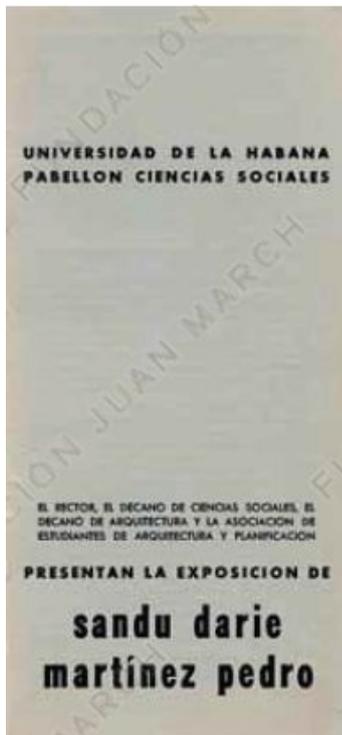


FIG. 13. Cover of the catalogue of Sandu Darie and Luis Martín Pedro's exhibition, later known as the *Primera Exposición Concreta*, at the Pavilion of Social Sciences, Universidad de La Habana, Havana, 1955



FIG. 14. Visiting the Schulthess House during construction, Havana, 1955. From left to right: Richard Neutra, Raúl Álvarez, Alfred de Schulthess, and Pablo Ortiz, construction manager and Schulthess's assistant



FIG. 15. Richard Neutra between Alfred de Schulthess and his wife, Harriet, during a visit to the building site of the Schulthess House, Havana, 1955. Also in the photo, Pablo Ortiz, Schulthess's assistant, and on the far right, the Cuban architect Raúl Álvarez, associate technical director of the project, Havana, 1955



FIG. 16. Schulthess House, Havana. In the center of the extensive grounds, Richard Neutra placed a reflecting pool to further enhance the setting with its reflections

Universidad de La Habana, from April 25 to May 10. As the show was not officially named, it is commonly referred to as the *Primera exposición concreta* (First Exhibition of Concrete Art) [FIG. 13].

- + An exhibition of Alexander Calder's work organized by Carlos Raúl Villanueva and Alejandro Otero is held at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas from September 11–25. The prologue to the exhibition catalogue is written by the Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier.
- + The architect Richard Neutra travels to Havana for the third time to oversee construction of the Schulthess House [FIG. 14, 15]. Living with his family in Havana, the Swiss vice-president of Banco Garrigó, Alfred de Schulthess, puts Richard Neutra in charge of the building program [FIG. 16] and commissions Roberto Burle Marx to design the gardens [FIG. 17, 18]. The house becomes the residence of the ambassador to Switzerland in 1961.
- + Alexandre Wollner designs the poster for the III Bienal de São Paulo.
- + Carlos Cruz-Diez moves to Masnou (Barcelona) for one year.

1956 + In the spring, Max Bill resigns as director of the HfG in Ulm.

- + Loló Soldevilla returns to Cuba after a long sojourn in Paris and organizes an exhibition on geometric abstraction at the Palacio de Bellas Artes, Havana, from March 22 to April 8. The show entitled *Pintura de hoy. Vanguardia de la Escuela de París* has a profound impact on the Cuban art scene and features the work of Vasarely, Arp, Robert and Sonia Delaunay, Herbin, Soto, and Omar Carreño, among others. The exhibition catalogue is written by Mario Carreño, the fine arts advisor to the Instituto Nacional de Cultura.
- + In August, Sandu Darie showcases *Estructuras transformables* at the Pavilion of Social Sciences, Universidad de La Habana, Cuba.
- + In December, Waldemar Cordeiro organizes the *Exposição Nacional de Arte Concreta* at the MAM-SP [FIG. 19], a show that travels to the MAM-RJ the following year.

- 1957**
- + Gyula Kosice settles in Paris, where he lives for the next seven years.
 - + The Culture and Fine Arts Section of the Ministry of Education publishes *Polémica sobre arte abstracto* (The Controversy over Abstract Art) in Caracas. The book originated from the controversy surrounding a discussion between Alejandro Otero and the art critic Miguel Otero Silva in the pages of *El Nacional* and *El Universal* regarding the

awards handed out at the 18th Annual Official Salon of Venezuelan Art.

- + Michel Seuphor's *Dictionnaire de la peinture abstraite* (Dictionary of Abstract Painting) is published in Paris.
- + Mies van der Rohe designs the plan for Bacardi's new headquarters in Santiago de Cuba, a project that will not be realized.
- + Luis Tomasello settles in Paris.
- + Carlos Cruz-Diez returns to Venezuela and opens a graphic art and industrial design studio in Caracas.
- + From September to December, a selection of works by Josef Albers is exhibited at the IV Bienal de São Paulo. Carlos Raúl Villanueva and Alexander Calder receive an Honorary Mention for the Aula Magna Hall at the University Campus of Caracas, while Lygia Clark is awarded the Acquisition Prize.
- + Together with Pedro de Oraá, Loló Soldevilla founds the Galería de Arte Color-Luz in Havana, a meeting point for Cuban geometric painters. The opening exhibition takes place on October 31 and features the work of a number of painters and sculptors including Eduardo Abela, Amelia Peláez, Wilfredo Arcay, Agustín Fernández, Cundo Bermúdez, Hugo Consuegra, Wilfredo Lam, Mariano Rodríguez, Mirta Cerra, José Mijares, and Pedro Álvarez. The poet José Lezama Lima delivers the inaugural presentation.
- + During the present and coming year, Mathias Goeritz and Luis Barragán design the Ciudad Satélite Towers situated in the northwestern part of Mexico City [FIG. 20].

- 1958**
- + Alejandro Otero is awarded the National Prize for Painting for his work *Coloritmo no. 35* (Colorhythm no. 35), the first official recognition of abstract art in Venezuela.
 - + *Conversación con nuestros pintores abstractos* (Conversation with our Abstract Painters) by Juan Marinello is published in Havana. An attack on Cuban abstract artists,

FIG. 17. One of Roberto Burle Marx's proposals for the gardens of the Schulthess House, Havana, 1956

FIG. 18. Landscaping plan by Roberto Burle Marx for the grounds of the Schulthess House, Havana, 1956



FIG. 19. Waldemar Cordeiro, Lothar Charoux, Geraldo de Barros, Luiz Sacilotto, Anatol Wladyslaw, et al., Poster for the Primeira *Exposição Nacional de Arte Concreta*, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM/SP), December 4–18, 1956. Offset lithograph, 48 x 32.5 cm (18 ¾ x 12 ⅝ in.). The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Adolpho Leirner Collection of Brazilian Constructive Art, museum purchase with funds provided by the Caroline Wiess Law Accessions Endowment Fund, 2007.17. Photo: Tom Jenkins

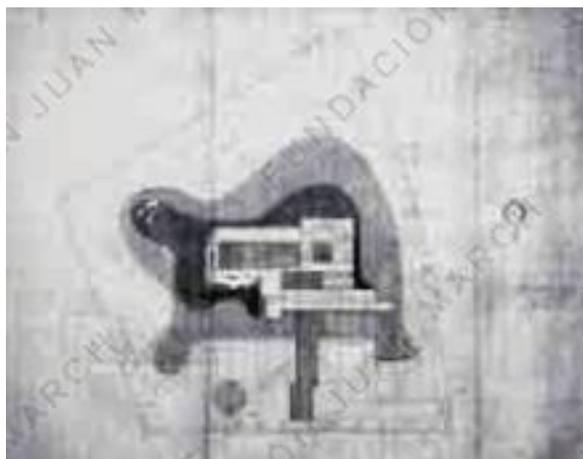


FIG. 20. Mathias Goeritz, Model for the Ciudad Satélite Towers, Mexico City, 1957–78. Assembled polychrome wood. Five elements, the tallest of which is 90 cm (35 in.). Courtesy Galería La Caja



the book describes abstraction as an art of "superficial elements."

- + The group Diez Pintores Concretos is founded at the Color-Luz gallery in Havana. Members of the movement include Loló Soldevilla, Sandu Darie, Pedro Álvarez, Salvador Corratgé, Luis Martínez Pedro, José Mijares, Alberto Menocal, Pedro de Oraá, Rafael Soriano, and Wilfredo Arcay.
- + The architect Richard Neutra visits Brasília while the city is under construction and admires the work of Oscar Niemeyer and Lúcio Costa [FIG. 21].

- 1959**
- + T Alexander Calder travels from Paris to Rio de Janeiro and lives at the Hotel Gloria for one month. During his stay in Brazil he visits Brasília.
 - + Carlos Cruz-Diez completes his first *psychromie*.
 - + Following the Cuban revolution's rise to power, Clara Porset is assigned to set up the first Cuban School of Design. She also designs furniture for the National School of Art, the School of Modern Dance, and the School of Fine Arts in Havana.
 - + An exhibition of paintings and drawings by Victor Vasarely opens at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas.
 - + The Extraordinary International Congress of Art Critics is held in Brasília, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo from February 17–25 with the aim of discussing the construction of Brasília as part of the "Integration of the Arts" project. Mário Pedrosa, Tomás Maldonado, Gillo Dorfles, Giulio Carlo Argan, and Meyer Schapiro attend the conference.
 - + On March 22, the newspaper *O Journal do Brasil* publishes the *Manifiesto Neoconcreto* in Rio de Janeiro. Signed by Ferreira Gullar, Amílcar de Castro, Franz Weissmann, Lygia Clark, Reynaldo Jardim, Lygia Pape, and Theon Spanudis, the declaration marks the beginning of the neo-concrete movement.

FIG. 21. Oscar Niemeyer and Lúcio Costa at work, late 1950s. Fundação Oscar Niemeyer, Rio de Janeiro. Photo courtesy of FON. Fundação Oscar Niemeyer



- 1960**
- + Carlos Raúl Villanueva writes *La integración de las artes* (The Integration of the Arts).
 - + Jesús Soto receives the National Award for Painting in Venezuela.
 - + After giving up painting, Lygia Clark exhibits *Bichos* (Creatures), a series of small metal sculptures held together by hinges, which enable them to be rearranged, at Galería Bonino in Rio de Janeiro.
 - + Having received a grant from the French government, the Chilean artist Matilde Pérez travels to Paris.
 - + The capital of Brazil is moved from Rio de Janeiro to Brasília, which is officially inaugurated on April 21.
 - + Over twenty Latin American artists take part in the exhibition *konkrete kunst: 50 Jahre entwicklung*, held at the Helmhaus in Zurich from June 8 to August 14. The show, organized by Max Bill, features works by Gyula Kosice, Jesús Soto, Luis Tomasello, Hélio Oiticica, Lygia Pape, Alfredo Hlito, Enio Iommi, Lygia Clark, and Judith Lauand, among others [FIG. 22].

- + On occasion of the second anniversary of the Galería de Arte Color-Luz, an exhibition by the group Diez Pintores Concretos is held at the Ramón Guiteras Library in Matanzas, Cuba, from November 6–30.

- 1961**
- + Gego's first solo exhibition, *Dibujos recientes de Gego*, opens at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas.
 - + Sergio Camargo settles in Paris.
 - + The Havana-based Galería de Arte Color-Luz closes permanently. The gallery promoted geometric art in Cuba and served as a



FIG. 22. Cover and back cover of the exhibition catalogue *konkrete kunst* (concrete art) with the roster of concrete artists featured in the exhibition, June 8–August 14, 1960. Helmhaus Zürich, Switzerland

meeting point for members of the Diez Pintores Concretos group.

1963 + Clara Porset resigns as director of the School of Design in Havana and returns to Mexico.

1964 + Tomás Maldonado is appointed rector of the HfG in Ulm, a position he holds until 1966.
+ *Homenaje al cuadrado*, an exhibition of Josef Albers's work, opens in Caracas on March 8 and later travels to Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Lima, Rio de Janeiro, Bogotá, Santiago (Chile), and Mexico. Gego writes a letter to Josef Albers expressing her admiration.
+ In August, the newsletter *Signals* is launched by the Centre for Advanced Creative Study in London. Under the direction of Paul Keeler, the publication focuses on Latin American concrete and kinetic art.

1965 + Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari, and Haroldo de Campos write *Teoría da poesia concreta. Textos críticos e manifestos 1950–1960* (Theory of Concrete Poetry: Critical Texts and Manifestos 1950–1960) for Edições Invenção.

1966 + The photographer Gaspar Gasparian dies in São Paulo.
+ Mathias Goeritz organizes an exhibition on international concrete poetry, with the Noigandres group taking center stage. The show is on view from March to May at the university gallery of the Universidad Autónoma de México (UNAM).

1967 + Jose Yalenti dies at the age of 72 in São Paulo.
+ Together with Mathias Goeritz, the Mexican architects Luis Barragán and Ricardo Legorreta visit the Alberses at their home in New Haven.
+ Carlos Raúl Villanueva designs the Venezuela Pavilion at the Montreal World Fair.



FIG. 23. Loló Soldevilla's obituary in the newspaper *Granma*, Havana, July 6, 1971

1968 + The HfG in Ulm closes after fifteen years.

1969 + A retrospective exhibition of Jesús Soto opens at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris.
+ Carlos Cruz Diez's first solo exhibition takes place at Galerie Denise René.
+ Matilde Pérez forms the Grupo Cinético in Chile.
+ The architect Mies van der Rohe dies in Chicago on August 17
+ Rhod Rothfuss dies in Montevideo on December 31.

1970 + Two major projects by Oscar Niemeyer are concluded in Brasília: the Itamaraty Palace and the Metropolitan Cathedral.
+ Work begins on the Museo Jesús Soto, the last building designed by the architect Carlos Raúl Villanueva.

1971 + The painter Loló Soldevilla dies in Havana on July 5 [FIG. 23].
+ Carlos Cruz-Diez receives the Fine Arts National Award; the prize includes a retrospective exhibition and the publication of a monograph.

1972 + The Argentine art critic and historian Marta Traba settles in Caracas and begins writing for *El Nacional*.

1973 + Marta Traba writes an editorial for *Siglo XXI* entitled *Dos décadas vulnerables en las artes plásticas latinoamericanas, 1950–1970* (Two Vulnerable Decades in Latin American Fine Arts, 1950–1970).
+ Gego's *Dibujos recientes* solo exhibition opens at the Galería Conkright in Caracas.
+ Carlos Raúl Villanueva retires as professor of Architecture and Urbanism at the Universidad Central de Venezuela (UCV).
+ Ivan Serpa, founder of Grupo Frente, dies on April 6.
+ Waldemar Cordeiro, founder of Grupo Ruptura, dies in São Paulo on June 30.
+ The first stage of the Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto is inaugurated in Ciudad Bolívar on August 25. The museum, the last building designed by the architect Carlos Raúl Villanueva, opens with an exhibition showcasing works by Jean Arp, César Paternosto, Eusebio Sempere, Julio Le Parc, Sonia Delaunay, Gianni Colombo, and Günther Uecker [FIG. 24].



FIG. 24. Leo Matiz, *Self-portrait*, Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela, 1973

Appendix

The information that follows serves to place the artists and historical figures mentioned in the Chronology in context. Artists featured in the exhibition appear in bold print.

ABELA, EDUARDO (1889–1965), Cuban painter and draughtsman / Galería de Arte Color-Luz

ALBERS, JOSEF (1888–1976), German painter, designer, photographer, poet, and art professor

ALMENDROS, NÉSTOR (1930–1992), Spanish director of photography, resident in Cuba / *Noticias de Arte*

ÁLVAREZ, PEDRO [CARMELO] (1922–), Cuban painter / Galería de Arte Color-Luz / Diez Pintores Concretos

ARCAY, WILFREDO (1925–), Cuban painter, printer, and screen printer / Galería de Arte Color-Luz / Diez Pintores Concretos

ARDEN QUIN, CARMELO (1913–2010)

ARGAN, GIULIO CARLO (1909–1992), Italian essayist and art critic

ARP, JEAN (HANS) (1886–1966), French painter and sculptor

BARR, ALFRED H. JR. (1902–1981), art historian, founder and first director of the MoMA / *Noticias de Arte*

BARRAGÁN, LUIS (1902–1988), Mexican architect / Ciudad Satélite Towers

BARRIOS, ARMANDO (1920–1999), Venezuelan painter

BATTISTINI, AIMÉE, Venezuelan painter / Los Disidentes

BAYLEY, EDGAR (1919–1990), Argentine poet / Asociación Arte Concreto-Inventiva

BERDÍA, NORBERTO (1900–1983), Uruguayan painter

BERMÚDEZ, CUNDO (1914–2008), Cuban painter / Galería de Arte Color-Luz

BESANÇON, GILBERT, French painter / Salon des Réalités Nouvelles

BILL, MAX (1908–1994), Swiss artist, designer, and professor

BLASZKO, MARTIN / Blasko / Blaszkowski (1920–)

BRITO, JORGE, Argentine painter / *Manifiesto de los Cuatro Jóvenes*

BURLE MARX, ROBERTO (1909–1994), Brazilian landscape architect / Ibirapuera Park / Schulthess House

CALDER, ALEXANDER (1898–1976), American sculptor / University Campus of Caracas

CAMARGO, SERGIO (1930–1990)

CARADUJE, ANTONIO (1924–), Argentine artist / Asociación Arte Concreto-Inventiva

CARPENTIER, ALEJO (1904–1980), Cuban writer

CARREÑO MORALES, MARIO, “Karreño” (1913–1999)

CARREÑO, OMAR (1927–)

CARVÃO, ALUÍSIO (1920–2001), Brazilian artist / Grupo Frente

CERRA, MIRTA (1904–1986), Cuban painter / Galería de Arte Color-Luz

CHAROUX, LOTHAR (1912–1987)

CLARK, LYGIA (1923–1988)

COLOMBO, GIANNI (1937–), Italian painter and sculptor

CONSUEGRA, HUGO (1929–), Cuban painter / Galería de Arte Color-Luz

CORDEIRO, WALDEMAR (1925–1973)

CORRATGÉ, SALVADOR (1928–)

COSTA, LÚCIO (1902–1998), Brazilian architect / Brasília

CRUZ-DIEZ, CARLOS (1923–)

CUETO, GERMÁN (1893–1975)

DA SILVA COSTA, JOÃO JOSÉ (1931–) Brazilian artist / Grupo Frente

DARIE, SANDU (1908–1991)

DE BARROS, GERALDO (1923–1998)

DE CAMPOS, AUGUSTO (1931–), Brazilian poet / Noigandres

DE CAMPOS, HAROLDO (1929–2003), Brazilian poet / Noigandres

DE CASTRO, AMILCAR (1920–2002)

DE CASTRO, WILLYS (1926–1988)

DEBOURG, NARCISO (1925–)

DEGAND, LÉON (1907–1958), Belgian art critic

DEL MARLE, AIMÉ FELIX (1889–1952), French painter / Salon des Réalités Nouvelles

DEL PRETE, JUAN (1897–1987)

DELAUNAY-TERK, SONIA (1885–1979), French painter and designer, born in Ukraine / Salon des Réalités Nouvelles

DEWASNE, JEAN (1921–), French painter and sculptor / Salon des Réalités Nouvelles

DORFLES, GILLO (1919–) Italian painter, critic, and philosopher

DRUMMOND DE ANDRADE, CARLOS (1902–1987), Brazilian poet / *Manifiesto Invencionista*

ERMINY, PERÁN, Venezuelan art critic and historian / Los Disidentes

ESPINOSA, MANUEL (1912–2006)

FARKAS, THOMAZ (1924–)

FÉJER, KAZMER (1923–1989), Hungarian sculptor, resident in Brazil / Grupo Ruptura

FERNÁNDEZ, AGUSTÍN (1928–2006), Cuban painter / Galería de Arte Color-Luz

FERREIRA GULLAR [José de Ribamar Ferreira] (1930–), Brazilian poet / *Manifiesto Neoconcreto*

FONTANA, LUCIO (1899–1968), Italian-Argentine sculptor and painter / *Manifiesto blanco* / Spatialism

GASPARIAN, GASPARIAN (1899–1966)

GEGO [Gertrud Louise Goldschmidt] (1912–1994)

GEORGE, WALDEMAR (1893–1970), Polish-French critic

GIROLA, CLAUDIO (1923–1994), Argentine sculptor, brother of Enio Iommi / Asociación Arte Concreto-Inventiva / Grupo MAC / *Manifiesto de los Cuatro Jóvenes*

GLEIZES, ALBERT (1881–1953), French cubist painter

GOERITZ, MATHIAS (1915–1990), Mexican sculptor, born in Germany / Ciudad Satélite Towers

GÓMEZ SICRE, JOSÉ (1916–1991), Cuban art critic / *Noticias de Arte*

GONZÁLEZ BOGEN, CARLOS (1920–1992) Venezuelan painter / Los Disidentes

GORIN, JEAN (1899–1981), French painter and sculptor / Salon des Réalités Nouvelles

GUILLENT (GUILLÉN) PÉREZ, J. R. (1923–1989), Venezuelan artist / Los Disidentes

HAAR, LEOPOLDO (1910–1954) Polish-Brazilian designer and artist / Grupo Ruptura

HERBIN, AUGUSTE (1882–1969), French painter

HERSEN, DORA, Venezuelan painter / Los Disidentes

HLITO, ALFREDO (1923–1993)

IOMMI, ENIO (1926–)

JARDIM, REYNALDO (1926–), Brazilian poet / *Manifiesto Neoconcreto*

KANDINSKY, WASSILY (1866–1944), Russian painter

KEELER, PAUL, owner of *Signals* magazine, based in London

- KOSICE, GYULA** (1924–)
- LAÑ, DIYI (1927–2007), Argentine painter / Madí movement
- LAM, WIFREDO (1902–1982), Cuban painter / Galería de Arte Color-Luz
- LAUAND, JUDITH** (1922–)
- LE PARC, JULIO (1928–), Argentine sculptor and painter
- LÉGER, FERNAND (1881–1955), French artist
- LEGORRETA, RICARDO (1931–), Mexican architect
- LEZAMA LIMA, JOSÉ (1910–1976), Cuban writer / *Noticias de Arte*
- LONGO, VALDO, Argentine painter
- LOZZA, RAÚL** (1911–2008)
- MALAUSSENA, LUIS (1900–1962), Venezuelan architect
- MALDONADO, TOMÁS** (1922–)
- MALUF, ANTÔNIO** (1926–2005)
- MANAURE, MATEO** (1926–)
- MARINELLO, JUAN** (1898–1977), Cuban art critic
- MARTÍNEZ PEDRO, LUIS** (1910–1989)
- MAVIGNIER, ALMIR** (1925–)
- MELÉ, JUAN** (1923–)
- MENOCAL, ALBERTO, Cuban painter / Diez Pintores Concretos
- MIJARES, JOSÉ** (1921–2004)
- MINDLIN, HENRIQUE (1911–1971), Russian-Brazilian architect
- MOHOLY-NAGY, LÁSZLÓ (1895–1946), Hungarian artist, photographer, and designer
- MOLENBERG, ALBERTO (1921–), Argentine draughtsman and designer / Asociación Arte Concreto-Inventiva
- MONDRIAN, PIET (1872–1944), Dutch painter
- MUNARI, BRUNO (1907–1998), Italian artist and designer
- NAVARRO, PASCUAL (1923–1986), Venezuelan painter / Los Disidentes
- NEUTRA, RICHARD (1892–1970), Austrian architect, resident in the United States / Schulthess House
- NIEMEYER, OSCAR (1907–), Brazilian architect / Ibirapuera Park, Itamaraty Palace, Metropolitan Cathedral
- NÚÑEZ, (BENICIO) ÓSCAR (1924–), Argentine painter and illustrator / Asociación Arte Concreto-Inventiva
- NÚÑEZ, RUBÉN (1930–), Venezuelan artist / Los Disidentes
- OTICICA, HÉLIO** (1937–1980)
- ORAÁ, PEDRO DE, Cuban painter and art critic / Galería de Arte Color-Luz / Diez Pintores Concretos
- OTERO SILVA, MIGUEL (1908–1985), Venezuelan writer
- OTERO, ALEJANDRO** (1921–1990)
- PALATNIK, ABRAHAM (1928–), Brazilian artist
- PAPE, LYGIA** (1927–2004)
- PARDO, MERCEDES (1921–2005), Venezuelan painter / Los Disidentes
- PATERNOSTO, CÉSAR** (1931–)
- PEDROSA, MÁRIO (1900–1981), Brazilian critic and essayist
- PELÁEZ, AMELIA (1896–1968), Cuban painter / Galería de Arte Color-Luz
- PÉREZ, MATILDE (1920–), Chilean painter
- PEVSNER, ANTOINE (ANTON) (1886–1962), French sculptor, born in Russia / Salon des Réalités Nouvelles
- PICABIA, FRANCIS (1879–1953), French painter and poet, partly of Spanish-Cuban origin
- PIGNATARI, DÉCIO (1927–), Brazilian poet and essayist / Noigandres
- PORSET, CLARA (1895–1981), Cuban designer, promoter of the first School of Design in Cuba
- PRATI, LIDY** (1921–2008)
- RIVERA, DIEGO (1886–1957), Mexican artist
- RODRÍGUEZ, MARIANO (1912–1990), Cuban painter / Galería de Arte Color-Luz
- ROMERO BREST, JORGE (1905–1989), Argentine art critic / *Noticias de Arte*
- ROTHFUSS, RHOD** (1920–1969)
- SACIOTTO, LUIZ** (1924–2003)
- SARTRE, JEAN-PAUL (1905–1980), French philosopher and writer
- SCHAPIRO, MEYER (1904–1996), American art historian
- SEMPERE, EUSEBIO (1923–1985), Spanish sculptor and painter
- SERPA, IVAN** (1923–1973)
- SERT, JOSEP LLUÍS (1902–1983), Spanish architect
- SEUPHOR, MICHEL [Fernand Berckelaers] (1901–1999), Belgian painter and draughtsman
- SIDÈS, FREDO, French art dealer / Salon des Réalités Nouvelles
- SOLDEVILLA, LOLÓ** (1901–1971)
- SORIANO, RAFAEL** (1920–)
- SOTO, JESÚS RAFAEL** (1923–2005)
- SOUZA, JORGE (1919–), Argentine sculptor / Asociación Arte Concreto-Inventiva
- SPANUDIS, THEON (1915–1986), Brazilian psychoanalyst and writer, born in Turkey / *Manifiesto Neoconcreto*
- STEINER, ELIZABETH (LISL) (1927–), Argentine photographer of Austrian origin
- TOMASELLO, LUIS** (1915–)
- TORRES-GARCÍA, JOAQUÍN** (1874–1949)
- TRABA, MARTA (1930–1983), Argentine art critic and historian
- UECKER, GÜNTHER (1930–), German painter and sculptor
- VAL, CARLOS (1937–), Brazilian artist / Grupo Frente
- MIES VAN DER ROHE, LUDWIG** (1886–1969), German architect and last Bauhaus director
- VANTONGERLOO, GEORGES (1886–1965), Belgian artist and sculptor
- VASARELY, VICTOR** (1908–1997), Hungarian artist
- VIEIRA, DÉCIO (1922–1988), Brazilian artist / Grupo Frente
- VILLANUEVA, CARLOS RAÚL (1900–1975), Venezuelan architect / University Campus of Caracas / Museo Jesús Soto
- WEISSMANN, FRANZ** (1911–2005)
- WLADYSŁAW, ANATOL (1913–2004), Polish-Brazilian painter, draughtsman, and printmaker / Grupo Ruptura
- WOLLNER, ALEXANDRE** (1928–)
- YALENTI, JOSÉ** (1895–1967)

artists'
biographies

MICHAEL NUNGESSER

The biographies by Michael Nungesser, written exclusively for the present catalogue, present artist information in the following order: biography, work, solo and group exhibitions, work in museums and collections, written work by the artist (where applicable), bibliography, and links (where applicable). As seen in the following index, the biographic entries of the sixty-four artists selected for the show are arranged in chronological order by country, in keeping with the arrangement of the works on view at the exhibition. The word "[catalogue]" appears in the list of solo exhibitions when there is knowledge of its existence. As most of the catalogues in this section were published by the museum or gallery that hosted the exhibition, including them in the bibliography would have led to a section of vast proportions and was therefore deemed unnecessary. In addition, due to the large number of artists involved, the subsections *Written work by the artist* and *Bibliography* in each biographic entry cross-refer the reader to a numbered reference in the bibliography (Books: BIB. B, 1–486; Texts in periodical publications: BIB. C, 1–47), therefore avoiding duplication of titles.

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Uruguay

Arden Quin, Carmelo

French painter, sculptor, and poet of Uruguayan origin, Carmelo Arden Quin (Carmelo Heriberto Alves Oyarzum) was born on March 16, 1913, in Rivera, Uruguay, and died on September 27, 2010, in Savigny-sur-Orge, near Paris.

Biography

Arden Quin studied painting at Sant'Ana do Livramento, Brazil, with Catalan writer and painter Emilio Sans. In 1935, he attended lectures given by Joaquín Torres-García, whose style he admired. In late 1937 he settled in Buenos Aires, where he befriended various avant-garde artists and studied Philosophy and Literature at the University. At this time he came into contact with artists Gyula Kosice and Enio Iommi, among others. In 1941, Arden Quin became involved in the bimonthly journal *El Universitario*, in which he expressed his political and aesthetic ideas. Together with Edgar Bailey, Gyula Kosice, Tomás Maldonado, and Lidy Prati, he formed the group that stemmed from the creation of *Arturo. Revista de Artes Abstractas*. Published in 1944, the first and only issue of this magazine marked the beginning of the non-figurative movement in Argentina. Co-founder of Agrupación Arte Concreto-Invención in 1945, he was instrumental in founding the Madí movement the following year, showcasing his work at the Madí group shows and publishing various manifestos. In 1948, while he was in Paris, he met Michel Seuphor, Marcelle Cahn, Auguste Herbin, Jean Arp, Georges Braque, and Francis Picabia. In 1950 he created the Centre Madí in Paris. A few years later, in 1954, he traveled to Argentina where, together with Aldo Pellegrini, Arden Quin founded the group Arte Nuevo, formed by non-figurative artists. Back in Paris, in 1951 he founded the Centre de Recherches et d'Études Madistes, which was housed in his studio until 1958. In 1962 he launched the literary magazine *Ailleurs* (eight issues until 1966) and formed part of the concrete poetry movement throughout the 1960s. Among other awards, he received First Prize at the 1986 Bienal de La Habana.

Work

Arden Quin's early work was primarily cubist. In 1935 he completed his first non-figurative geometric work and, transcending the boundaries of traditional painting, executed his first non-orthogonal paintings the following year. In the mid-1940s he explored polygonal shapes and designed modulated and mobile structures, coplanar pieces, object-paintings and concave-convex objects. He continued working in Paris, where he experimented with collage and decoupage (molding), his preferred technique until 1971. That same year, he returned to painting and his signature compositions of voluminous shapes

intersected by black lines, which he called *Formes galbées* (Shaped Forms).

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1973 Galerie Charley Chevalier, Paris
- 1977 Galerie Quincampoix, Paris
- 1983 Homenaje a sus sesenta años, Espace latino-américain, Paris [catalogue]
- 1985 *Retrospective 1936–1985*, Galerie des Ponchettes, Nice [catalogue]
- 1986 Galleria Nizzi, Brescia
- 1987 Galerie Downtown, Paris [catalogue]
- 1988 *1938–1988. Retrospective*, Galerie Franka Berndt, Paris [catalogue]
- 1994 *Œuvres 1934–1994*, Galerie Esplanade, Metz
- 1996 *MADÍ in Carmelo Arden Quin, Salvador Presta, Volf Roitman*, Galleria Arte Struktura, Milan [catalogue]
- 1997 Fundación Arte y Tecnología, Madrid [catalogue]
- 1998 *Pinturas y objetos 1945–1995*, Galería Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires
- 2006 Durban Segnini Gallery, Miami, Florida [catalogue]
- 2006 *A Celebration of Geometric Art. MADÍ Homage to Carmelo Arden Quin*, Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art, Tarpon Springs, Florida
- 2008 *Exposition rétrospective*, Galerie Drouart, Paris [catalogue]
- 2008 Galería de Arte Laura Haber, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2010 *Geometría en mutación*, Galería de las Misiones, José Ignacio, Uruguay [catalogue]
- 2010 Centro Cultural de España, Montevideo

Selected group exhibitions

- 1952 *Espace, Lumière*, Galerie Suzanne Michel, Paris
- 1955 *Salón de Arte Nuevo no-figurativo*, Galería van Riel, Buenos Aires
- 1980 *Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Invención, Arte Madí, Perceptismo*, Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
- 1984 I Bienal de La Habana, Havana
- 1984 *Face à la machine*, Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris
- 1985 *Artistas latino-americanos de Paris*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1990 *Argentina. Arte Concreto-Invención 1945, Grupo Madí 1946*, Rachel Adler Gallery, New York
- 1991 *Arte Concreto Invención, Arte Madí*, Haus für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Stiftung für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Zurich
- 1992 *Abstraction géométrique*, Galerie Alexandre de La Salle, Saint Paul-de-Vence
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994–95 *Art from Argentina 1920–1994*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford [traveling exhibition]

- 1997–98 *Arte Madí*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz
- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2001 *MADÍ. Outside the Box. Eleven International MADÍ Artists. Featuring Carmelo Arden Quin and Volf Roitman from the Masterson and Lenherr Collections*, Polk Museum of Art, Lakeland, Florida
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York
- 2001 *Geometric Abstraction. Latin American Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 2002 *Madí. L'art sud-américain*, Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble
- 2002 *50 años de pintura geométrica latinoamericana*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, Buenos Aires
- 2003 *Geometrías. Abstracción geométrica latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano, Buenos Aires
- 2003 *Desde la geometría. 2 + 10*, Salas Nacionales de Exposición, Palais de Glace, Buenos Aires
- 2003 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo
- 2004 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Mouvement MADÍ International. Buenos Aires 1946 - Paris 2008*, Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris
- 2010 *Géométrie hors limites: art contemporain latino-américain dans la collection Jean et Colette Cherqui*, Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris
- 2010 *Madí Internacional*, Centro Cultural Borges, Buenos Aires
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland
Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela
Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
Musée d'art moderne de Saint-Étienne, Saint-Étienne, France
Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble, France
Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, Argentina
Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Museu Madí, Sobral, Ceará, Brazil

The Museum of Geometric and MADÍ Art, Dallas, Texas, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 128, 179, 181, 347, 360

Costigliolo, José Pedro

Uruguayan painter, draughtsman, graphic artist, and designer, José Pedro Costigliolo was born on November 6, 1902, in Montevideo, and died on June 3, 1985, in the same city.

Biography

Costigliolo took drawing lessons with José Luis Zorilla in 1918. From 1921 to 1925 he studied at the Círculo de Bellas Artes in Montevideo under Vicente Puig and Guillermo Laborde. From 1927 on he combined his painting activity with advertising and graphic design work in Montevideo and Buenos Aires, executing many billboards. Together with his wife María Freire, he took an active part in the creation of the Grupo de Arte No-Figurativo in 1952. After receiving a scholarship, he embarked on his first trip to Europe from 1957 to 1959, where he specialized in stained glass techniques. Among the distinctions he received are the Grand Prize for Painting awarded by the Salón Nacional in 1970 and the 1981 Grand Prize for Painting at the First Bienal de Primavera in Salto, Uruguay. The Espacio José Pedro Costigliolo was founded in Montevideo in 2006.

Work

Together with María Freire, Costigliolo was one of the pioneers of non-figuration in Uruguay. Influenced by Russian constructivism and Dutch neo-plasticism, his works shifted to neo-purism and machinist aesthetics in 1946, as evidenced in his figurative painting and still lifes. In 1950, his work acquired abstract-geometric features and orthogonal elements. Following a brief experience with Art Informel in 1960 (works which he later destroyed), Costigliolo began adding letters to his compositions. These were followed by his signature works, which initiated a period of artistic maturity. Throughout the 1960s, he perfected these series entitled *Triángulos* (Triangles), *Rectángulos* (Rectangles) and *Cuadrados* (Squares), structures consisting of geometric forms arranged either separately or as part of a composition and featuring a limited range of color: in addition to red and black, he applied tones of blue, lilac, purple, and brown. Costigliolo also executed large-scale works such as ceramic murals and stained glass windows.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1949 Galería Antú, Buenos Aires
1954 *Pintura y escultura. Costigliolo. Freire. Llorens*, Galería Salamanca, Montevideo

- 1956–57 *María Freire. José Costigliolo. Pinturas*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo; Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
1958 *Freire, Costigliolo. Gouaches, 1953–1958*, Ateneo Barcelonés, Barcelona [catalogue]
1959 *María Freire. José Pedro Costigliolo*, Galerie les Contemporains, Brussels [catalogue]
1966 *María Freire. José Pedro Costigliolo*, Pan American Union, Washington, D.C. [catalogue]
1967 Galería Lirloy, Buenos Aires
1970 Galería Moretti, Montevideo [catalogue]
1976 Galería Portal, São Paulo
1983 *Homenaje a Costigliolo*, Alianza Francesa, Montevideo
1983 Palacio Municipal, Centro de Exposiciones, Montevideo [catalogue]
1987 Galería Bruzzone, Montevideo [catalogue]
1988 Centro Municipal de Exposiciones - Subte, Montevideo [catalogue]
2006 Galería de las Misiones, José Ignacio, Uruguay

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
1966 XXXIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
1977 XIV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
1994 *Constructivism in Latin America*, University of Essex, University Gallery, Colchester, Great Britain
1997 I Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
1999 *Cuerpos. Redes. Voces. Tránsitos. Horizontes cambiantes*, Casa de América, Madrid
2001 III Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York
2005 V Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
2006 *Un siglo de arte uruguayo*, Galería de las Misiones, José Ignacio
2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
2010 *Géométrie hors limites: art contemporain latino-américain dans la collection Jean et Colette Cherqui*, Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris
2010 *Constructive Spirit. Abstract Art in South and North America, 1920s–50s*, Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey; Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

Museums and collections

Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, D.C., United States
Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de El País, Montevideo, Uruguay
Museo de Bellas Artes y Artes Decorativas, Salto, Uruguay
Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes Juan Manuel Blanes, Montevideo, Uruguay
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales, Montevideo, Uruguay
Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States
University of Essex Collection of Latin American Art, Colchester, Great Britain
University of Texas, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 49, 130, 192, 193, 366, 397, 453

Freire, María

Uruguayan painter, sculptress, draughts-woman, and art critic, María Freire was born on November 7, 1917, in Montevideo, where she currently lives.

Biography

From 1938 to 1943 Freire studied sculpture and painting with José Cúneo, Severino Pose, and Guillermo Laborde at the Círculo de Bellas Artes in Montevideo. She was also a pupil of Antonio Pose at the Universidad del Trabajo. After earning a Gallinal scholarship, she pursued studies in Amsterdam and Paris from 1957 to 1960. Sent on an official mission in 1966, Freire embarked on her second study tour. Together with her husband José Pedro Costigliolo, she co-founded the Grupo de Arte No-Figurativo in 1952. She later worked as a secondary school art teacher and taught Art History and Culture, training students for architecture exams. An art critic for the daily *Acción* from 1962 to 1973, she became friendly with Rod Rothfuss and Gyula Kosice, members of the Madí movement. Among her distinctions are an Honorary Prize at the 1957 Bienal de São Paulo, the Grand Prize awarded by the Salón Nacional in 1968, the 1978 Grand Prize for Painting at the VII Salón de Primavera de Salto, and the 1996 Figari Prize.

Work

Along with her partner José Pedro Costigliolo, Freire was a pioneer of non-figurative art in Uruguay. Inspired by *planismo*, cubism, and African art during the 1940s, her early work was somewhat abstract. In the

early 1950s she devoted herself to painting and sculpture. Her output from this period is fundamentally geometric and marks the beginning of early Madí art. Freire used a limited range of colors, as she preferred to underscore the delicacy and musicality of geometric form. In subsequent decades, she constructed a variable formal repertoire composed of a small number of components. The series *Sudamérica* (South America, 1958–60) was characterized by its precise contours, resulting in a symbol constructed as a polygonal shape. By perforating the object's surface in the series *Capricornio* and *Córdoba* (1965–75), Freire created a nodal point through which the work could expand infinitely. In the later series *Variantes* and *Vibrantes* (1975–85), she focused on the possibilities of altering the surface's volume by subdividing the surface. As a result, she obtained reliefs and vibrating effects consistent with modular chromatic sequences, much in the line of op art.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1954 *Pintura y escultura. Costigliolo. Freire. Llorens*, Galería Salamanca, Montevideo
- 1956–57 *María Freire. José Costigliolo. Pinturas*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo; Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1958 *Freire, Costigliolo. Gouaches, 1953–1958*, Ateneo Barcelonés, Barcelona [catalogue]
- 1959 *María Freire. José Pedro Costigliolo*, Galerie les Contemporains, Brussels [catalogue]
- 1966 *María Freire. José Pedro Costigliolo*, Pan American Union, Washington, D.C. [catalogue]
- 1967 Galería Lirólay, Buenos Aires
- 1976 Galería Portal, São Paulo
- 1990 Galería Bruzzone, Montevideo
- 1998 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de El País, Montevideo
- 2007 52 Premio Nacional de Artes Visuales, Casa de la Cultura, Maldonado; Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales, Montevideo [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1966 XXXIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1994 *Constructivism in Latin America*, University of Essex, University Gallery, Colchester, Great Britain
- 1997–98 *Arte Madí*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz
- 1999 *Cuerpos. Redes. Voces. Tránsitos. Horizontes cambiantes*, Casa de América, Madrid
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York
- 2003 IV Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre [solo exhibition]
- 2005 V Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre

- 2006 *Un siglo de arte uruguayo*, Galería de las Misiones, José Ignacio
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Bright Geometry. Abstract Geometric Paintings and Sculpture by Artists from Argentina and Uruguay*, Cecilia de Torres Gallery, New York
- 2010 *Then & Now. Abstraction in Latin American Art from 1950 to Present*, 60 Wall Gallery, Deutsche Bank, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn
- 2010 *Constructive Spirit. Abstract Art in South and North America, 1920s–50s*, Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey; Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

Museums and collections

Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland
 Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de El País, Montevideo, Uruguay
 Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
 Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales, Montevideo, Uruguay
 University of Essex Collection of Latin American Art, Colchester, Great Britain
 University of Texas, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 366, 397, 453; BIB. C) 18, 46

Rothfuss, Rhod

Uruguayan painter and sculptor, Carlos María (Rhod) Rothfuss was born in 1920 in Montevideo and died on December 31, 1969, in the same city.

Biography

Rothfuss studied with Guillermo Laborde and José Cúneo at the Círculo de Bellas Artes in Montevideo in 1938 and at the Academia de Bellas Artes in the early 1940s. In 1939 he met Carmelo Arden Quin, and shortly thereafter he became friendly with Gyula Kosice and Tomás Maldonado once he had settled in Buenos Aires. In 1944 Rothfuss was on the editorial board of the magazine *Arturo*, in which he published his first article, "El marco. Un problema de la plástica actual." Together with Arden Quin, Gyula Kosice, and Diyi Laañ, among others, he founded the Madí art movement and showcased his work at the following group shows: *Primera Exposición MADÍ*, held at Galería Van Riel in 1946; the third and fourth editions of the *Exposición Madí* at the Escuela Libre de Arte Altamira and the Bohemien Club in Buenos

Aires; and the *Primera exposición Madí internacional*, organized by the Ateneo de Montevideo. Rothfuss represented Argentina at the 1948 edition of the Salon des Réalités Nouvelles in Paris and participated in the 1952 and 1953 non-figurative art exhibitions, along with José Pedro Costigliolo and María Fre

Work

Between 1945 and 1950, Rothfuss created abstract sculptures with mobile components and incorporated irregular, mobile, geometric figures in his paintings. As pointed out by the artist, "a painting should begin and end in itself. It should not be offered continuity." Rothfuss studied the effects adjacent polygons had on perception, a subject he examined in the article "Un aspecto de la superposición," published in the second issue of *Madí* magazine in 1948.

Selected group exhibitions

- 1980 *Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Invencción, Arte Madí, Perceptismo*, Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994–95 *Art from Argentina 1920–1994*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford [traveling exhibition]
- 1997–98 *Arte Madí*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz
- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York
- 2002 *Madí. L'art sud-américain*, Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble
- 2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York

Museums and collections

Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble, France
 Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Constantini, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
 The Museum of Geometric and MADÍ Art, Dallas, Texas, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. C) 42, 43

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 408

Torres-García, Joaquín

Uruguayan painter, sculptor, and draughtsman, Joaquín Torres-García was born on July 28, 1874, in Montevideo, and died on August 8, 1949, in the same city.

Biography

Son of a Catalan father and Uruguayan mother, Torres-García and his family moved to Catalonia in 1891. There, he attended the Academia Baixas and the Escuela Oficial de Bellas Artes La Llotja while working as an occasional magazine illustrator. He also met Pablo Picasso and, together with Joan and Julio González, experienced the bohemian scene in Barcelona. From 1903 to 1907 Torres-García worked with Antoni Gaudí on the stained glass windows for the Sagrada Família Basilica and assisted in renovating the Palma de Mallorca Cathedral. In 1910 he created the interior decoration for the Uruguayan Pavilion at the Brussels World Fair and in 1913 he executed a series of murals for the Diputación Provincial de Barcelona. In addition to teaching and writing, Torres-García made wooden toys, which he exhibited for the first time in 1918. From 1920 to 1922 he lived in New York, where he continued making toys under commission. Following sojourns in Italy and Southern France, in 1926 he moved to Paris, where he met Michel Seuphor, Theo van Doesburg, and Piet Mondrian, who introduced him to neo-plasticism. In 1930 he co-founded the group Cercle et Carré and the eponymous magazine, which endorsed the first international exhibition of constructivist and abstract art. Following a brief stay in Madrid, during which he attempted to form a constructivist art group, in 1934 Torres-García returned to Uruguay. In Montevideo, he worked as an artist and was also an influential teacher. In 1935 he founded the Asociación de Arte Constructivo, and in 1936 he became editor of the magazine *Círculo y Cuadrado*. From 1944 onwards he directed the studio *Taller Torres-García*, organized several exhibitions, and gave lectures on art and the Escuela del Sur's great achievement, the creation of constructive universalism.

Work

During his youth, Torres-García formed part of Catalan Noucentisme, a primarily classic movement based on a Mediterranean tradition inspired by the monumental and pastoral style. In the late 1920s he turned to constructivism. Impressed by prehistoric and pre-Columbian art, over the next twenty years Torres-García developed what came to be known as constructive universalism, a style that aimed at uniting the visual arts by fusing Indoamerican art and European constructivism.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1921 *Torres-García & Stuart Davis*, Whitney Studio Club, New York
- 1933 Museo de Arte Moderno, Madrid
- 1947 *Mística de la pintura*, Asociación de Arte Constructivo, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 1951 *Pinturas*, Instituto de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1951 Exposición de la Comisión Municipal de Cultura, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 1955 Musée national d'art moderne, Paris [catalogue]
- 1960 Rose Fried Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 1961 Pan American Union, Washington, D.C. [catalogue]
- 1961 Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam [catalogue]
- 1962 Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Baden-Baden [catalogue]
- 1964 Rose Fried Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 1964 *Obras de museos y colecciones particulares de Montevideo y Buenos Aires*, Centro de Artes Visuales (Instituto Torcuato di Tella), Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1965 Musée national d'art moderne, Paris [catalogue]
- 1965 Galería Moretti, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 1970 *Universalismo constructivo*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1970 National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Rhode Island School of Design, Museum of Art, Providence, Rhode Island [catalogue]
- 1971 University of Texas at Austin, Archer M. Huntington Art Gallery, Austin, Texas [catalogue]
- 1973 *Exposición antológica*, Museo Español de Arte Contemporáneo, Madrid [catalogue]
- 1974 Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 1974 *Exposición homenaje a Torres-García. Juguetes, objetos de arte, maderas*, Museo de Arte Precolombino, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 1974 Galería Biosca, Madrid [catalogue]
- 1974 *Exposición homenaje centenario de su nacimiento*, Dau i Set Galeria d'Art, Barcelona [catalogue]
- 1974 *Épocas figurativas*, Galería Arturo Ramón, Barcelona [catalogue]
- 1974 *Chronology and Catalogue of the Family Collection*, University of Texas at Austin Art Museum, Archer M. Huntington Art Gallery, Austin, Texas [catalogue]
- 1975 *Construction et symboles*, Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris, Paris [catalogue]
- 1977 *Exhibition of Paintings, Reliefs & Drawings*, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 1979 Museo de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1980 *Su visión constructiva*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1981 *Paintings, Constructions and Drawings*, Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, New York [catalogue]
- 1981 *Exposición del gran pintor uruguayo*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City; Museo de Monterrey, Monterrey [catalogue]
- 1982 *Pinturas, Barcelona - Nueva York - Liorna - París - 1916-1928*, Vermeer Galería de Arte, Buenos Aires [catalogue]

- 1984 *Paintings and Constructions*, Gimpel Fils Gallery, London [catalogue]
- 1985 *Grid, Pattern, Sign. Paris-Montevideo, 1924-1944*, Hayward Gallery, London [catalogue]
- 1986 *Estructura-dibuix-símbol. Paris-Montevideo, 1924-1944*, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona [catalogue]
- 1988 *Cataluña eterna*, Galería Sur, Punta del Este [catalogue]
- 1988 *Cataluña eterna. Bocetos y dibujos para los frescos de la Diputación de Barcelona*, Fundación Torres García, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 1988 *Época catalana (1908-1928)*, Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 1989 *Óleos y dibujos*, Galería Thomas Levy, Madrid [catalogue]
- 1989 *Obras sobre papel. Una retrospectiva*, Galería Siete Siete, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1990 *Hommage à Torres-García. Œuvres de 1928 à 1948*, Galerie Marwan Hoss, Paris [catalogue]
- 1990 Caja General de Ahorros de Granada, Centro Cultural, Granada [catalogue]
- 1994 Corporación Cultural de las Condes, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1995 *Barradas, Torres-García*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1995 *Pinturas de mon repòs*, Museu d'Art Modern, Barcelona; Fundació Cultural Caixa de Terrassa, Terrassa [catalogue]
- 1996 *Obra constructivista*, Museo de Pontevedra, Pontevedra [catalogue]
- 1996 *A vanguardia no Uruguai. Barradas e Torres-García*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brazil, São Paulo; Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1997 *Artista y teórico*, Centro de Exposiciones y Congresos, Zaragoza [catalogue]
- 1997 *Aladdin toys. Les joguines de Torres-García*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Centre Julio González, Valencia [catalogue]
- 1999 *Óleos, dibujos, esculturas y juguetes*, Museo Ramón Gaya, Murcia [catalogue]
- 2000 Ayuntamiento, La Coruña [catalogue]
- 2000 *Dibujos de las colecciones de Alejandra, Claudio y Aurelio Torres-García*, Fundación Bilbao Bizkaia Kutxa, Bilbao [catalogue]
- 2001 *Dibujos del universalismo constructivo. Exposición itinerante del Museo Torres García*, Museo Pablo Serrano, Zaragoza [catalogue]
- 2001 *Universalismo constructivo*, Fundación Picasso, Museo Casa Natal, Málaga [catalogue]
- 2002 *Un monde construit*, Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg; *Un mundo construido*, Museo Colecciones ICO, Madrid [catalogue]
- 2003 *Joaquín Torres-García y Rafael Barradas. Las vanguardias en España 1917-1929*, Embassy of Spain, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 2003 Museo Picasso, Barcelona [catalogue]
- 2004 *Universalismo constructivo. Óleos, maderas y dibujos*, Museo Torres García, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 2007 *Aladdin. Universalismo constructivo*, Museo Oscar Niemeyer, Curitiba [catalogue]
- 2007 *A vanguardia cotià. Torres-García e Barradas, 1917-1929*, Museo de Pontevedra, Pontevedra [catalogue]
- 2007 *Darrere la máscara constructiva*, Fundació Caixa Girona, Centre Cultural de Caixa Girona-Fontana D'or, Girona [catalogue]

- 2008 *Tras la máscara constructiva*, Fundación CajaMurcia, Murcia [catalogue]
- 2008 *Una vida en papel*, Museu Valencià de la Il·lustració i la Modernitat, Valencia [catalogue]
- 2009 *Universalismo constructivo*, Fundación Antonio Saura, Cuenca [catalogue]
- 2009 *Constructing Abstraction with Wood*, Menil Collection, Houston, Texas [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1950 *Torres-García and his workshop*, Pan American Union, Washington, D.C.
- 1959 V Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 *Taller Torres-García*, New School for Social Research, New School Art Center, New York
- 1969 *Joaquín Torres-García. El constructivismo universal y su derrotero Uruguayo*, Intendencia Municipal de Montevideo, Montevideo
- 1987 *Seis maestros de la pintura uruguaya. Juan Manuel Blanes, Carlos Federico Saez, Pedro Figari, Joaquín Torres-García, Rafael Barradas, José Cúneo*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires
- 1988-90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920-1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 1989-90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820-1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1991-93 *La Escuela del Sur. El Taller Torres-García y su legado*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid [traveling exhibition]
- 1992 *Crosscurrents of Modernism. Four Latin American Pioneers. Diego Rivera, Joaquín Torres-García, Wifredo Lam, Matta*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.
- 1992-93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994 XXII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1995 *D'una terra, d'un paisatge*, Ajuntament de Girona, Girona
- 1996 *Constructive Universalism and the School of the South*, Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, D.C.
- 1997 *Joaquín Torres-García y la Escuela del Sur. La colección de Adolfo Maslach. Visión de una poética constructiva. El universalismo constructivo y la Escuela del Sur*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
- 1999 *Escuela del sur. Taller Torres García y su legado*, Fundación Caja Madrid, Madrid
- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918-1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933-1953*, The Americas Society, New York
- 2001 *Geometric Abstraction. Latin American Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 2001-2 *Abstracción. El paradigma amerindio*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Valencia; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels

- 2002 *Artistas modernos rioplatenses en Europa 1911-1924. La experiencia de la vanguardia*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano, Buenos Aires
- 2002 *Da Puvís de Chavannes a Matisse e Picasso. Verso l'arte moderna*, Palazzo Grassi, Milan
- 2003 *Geometrías. Abstracción geométrica latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano, Buenos Aires
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2006 *Cruce de miradas. Visiones de América Latina. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City
- 2006 *Un siglo de arte uruguayo*, Galería de las Misiones, José Ignacio
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2006 *Vasos comunicantes 1900-1950. Vanguardias latinoamericanas y Europa*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Esteban Vicente, Segovia
- 2007 *New Perspectives in Latin American Art*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2007 *Cubismo y tendencias afines*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Alicante; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008-9 *Explorando el sur. El universalismo constructivo y otras tendencias en América Latina*, Fundación Carlos de Amberes, Madrid; Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz
- 2010 *Géométrie hors limites: art contemporain latino-américain dans la collection Jean et Colette Cherqui*, Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris
- 2010 *Constructive Spirit. Abstract Art in South and North America, 1920s-50s*, Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey; Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

- Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, United States
- Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, D.C., United States
- Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Banco de la República de Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia
- Colección FEMSA (Fomento Económico Mexicano S.A.), Monterrey, Mexico
- Colección Fundación Telefónica, Madrid, Spain
- Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland
- Fundación Caixa Galicia, Vigo, Spain
- Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, Italy
- Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., United States
- Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Valencia, Spain
- Lille Métropole Musée d'art moderne, d'art contemporain et d'art brut, Lille, France

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, United States
 Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico
 Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Constantini, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo de Arte Moderno, Trujillo, Peru
 Museo de Bellas Artes, Bilbao, Spain
 Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
 Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales, Montevideo, Uruguay
 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo Patio Herreriano, Valladolid, Spain
 Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain
 Museo Torres García, Montevideo, Uruguay
 Museu de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
 Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain
 Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
 Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States
 San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, United States
 Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, California, United States
 The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States
 University of Iowa Museum of Art, Iowa City, Iowa, United States
 University of Texas, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, United States

Written work by the artist

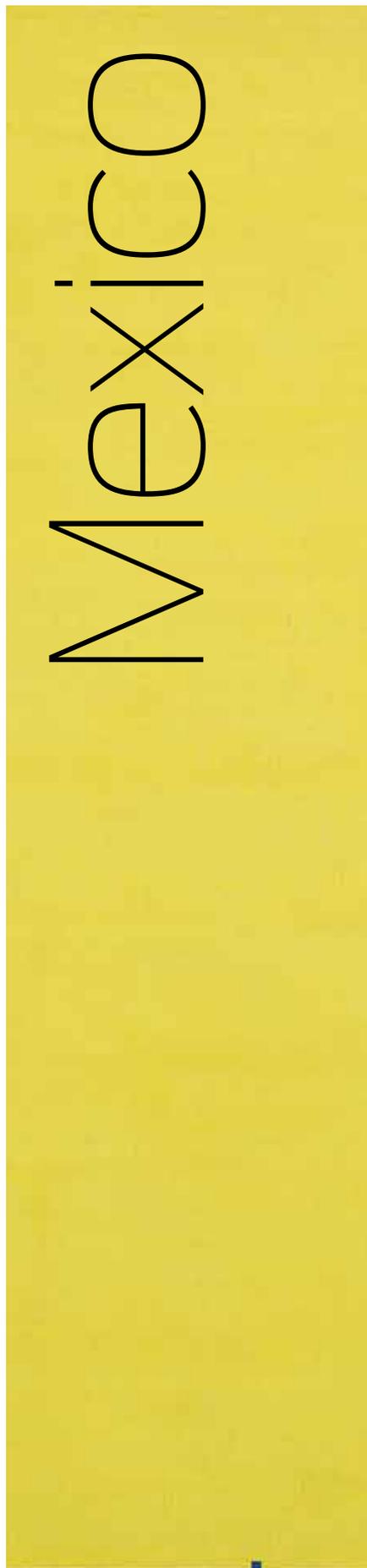
See BIB. B) 455–464

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 20, 39, 41, 69, 86, 90, 101, 102, 118, 120, 134, 142, 154, 155, 157, 163, 164–166, 171, 178, 180–182, 204–205, 212, 235, 302, 312, 322, 323, 354, 359, 363, 385, 387, 402, 405, 417, 438–439, 454

Links

www.torresgarcia.org.uy



Cueto, Germán

Mexican sculptor, painter, draughtsman, and puppet designer, Germán Gutiérrez Cueto was born on February 8, 1893, in Mexico City and died on February 14, 1975, also in Mexico City.

Biography

Cueto's cousin, the cubist painter María Gutiérrez Blanchard, introduced him to modern art while he was visiting Spain in 1916–17. He then studied briefly at the Academia de San Carlos, Mexico City, in 1918, but was largely a self-taught artist. Cueto and the artist Dolores (Lola) Velázquez (1897–1978) married in 1919 and separated in 1936. Together they founded the avant-garde group Los Estridentistas. From 1927 to 1932 the couple lived in Paris, where they became friendly with Joaquín Torres-García, Jacques Lipchitz, Constantin Brancusi, and several members of the group Cercle et Carré. They later set up a puppet company in Mexico and toured the country, putting on plays and presenting their characters. Cueto joined the Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios in 1934, and served as director of the Instituto de Danza del Palacio de Bellas Artes in 1948. He was named founding member of the Academia de Artes de la Ciudad de México in 1968.

Work

Despite being a pioneer of modern sculpture in Mexico and Latin America, Cueto did not achieve recognition during his lifetime and was almost forced to live in exile. His work sits between abstract sculpture and the art of mask-making. Materials used include metal sheets, aluminum, paper, wire, glass, plastic, brass, and stone. He also worked as a stage designer and teacher. During the 1940s he created masks for ballets using concrete, power cable, and metal wire. From 1941 to 1945 he executed large abstract drawings in black or color pencil. Notable large scale sculptures include *El corredor* (The Runner) for the Route of Friendship, made on occasion of the XIX Olympic Games held in Mexico City in 1968.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1944 Galería de Arte Mexicano, Mexico City [catalogue]
- 1954 Svensk-Franska Konstgalleriet, Stockholm [catalogue]
- 1965 *Obras*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City [catalogue]
- 1981 Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City
- 2000 Centro Cultural Santo Domingo, Oaxaca
- 2005 Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid [catalogue]
- 2006 *La memoria como vanguardia*, Museo Federico Silva, San Luis Potosí; Museo de Arte, Zapopan, Jalisco [catalogue]
- 2006 Museo de Arte Alvaro y Carmen T. de Carrillo Gil, Mexico City [catalogue]

- 2010 *Hierros y sombras*, Galería Freijo Fine Art, Madrid [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1930 *Cercle et Carré Exhibition*, Galerie 23, Paris
- 1991 *Modernidad y modernización en el arte mexicano 1920–1960*, Museo Nacional de Arte, Mexico City
- 1998 *Forjar el espacio. La escultura forjada en el siglo XX*, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Museums and collections

Biblioteca México, Mexico City, Mexico
 Biblioteca México de la Ciudadela, Mexico City, Mexico
 Blaisten Collection, Centro Cultural Universitario Tlatelolco, Mexico City, Mexico
 Musée d'art moderne, Lille, France
 Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, Mexico
 Museo Nacional de Arte, Mexico City, Mexico
 Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
 Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 58, 238, 320

Bay, Juan

Argentine painter, draughtsman, and art critic, Juan Bay was born in 1892 in Trenque Lauquen, Buenos Aires, and died in 1978 in Italy.

Biography

Bay moved to Milan in 1908, where he studied drawing and painting until 1914. Before 1920, his work was featured at group exhibitions, including an independent futurist show held at the Umanitaria, Milan, in 1911. Between 1925 and 1929 he worked as a teacher in Argentina. Back in Italy, Bay became an active member of the Milanese movement Gruppo del Milione and wrote art reviews for European and Argentine papers. He was also invited to display his work alongside the futurists at the 1942 Biennale de Venezia and at the 1943 Quadriennale di Roma. After returning to Argentina in 1949, he joined the Madí art movement in 1952. Bay's work was showcased at the following Madí group exhibitions: in 1955 at Galería Krayd, Buenos Aires, and Galleria Numero, Florence; in 1956 at Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires; and in 1957 at Galería Van Riel, also in Buenos Aires.

Work

During the central years of the twentieth century, Bay's oeuvre was influenced by futurism and subsequently by constructivist and concrete painting. Throughout this period, he produced a number of abstract wood reliefs to which he applied bright colors. In these, the interplay between curves, angles, and empty space allow the back wall to come into view. These works are not constrained by a picture frame or its customary rectangular shape; instead they generate a sense of movement that may be seen as evidence of Bay's association with futurism.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1949 Galería Van Riel, Buenos Aires
- 1951 *Juan Bay. Emilio Pettoruti*, Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1978 Galerie Alexandre de la Salle, Saint-Paul-de-Vence

Selected group exhibitions

- 1942 XXII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1952 *La pintura y la escultura argentinas de este siglo*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires
- 1955 *10 artisti. Disegni tempere progetti. Arte madí*, Galleria Numero, Florence
- 1958 *Art Madí International. Groupe Argentin*, Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 1980 *Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Invencción, Arte Madí, Perceptismo*, Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London;

- Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1990 *Argentina. Arte concreto-invencción 1945, Grupo Madí 1946*, Rachel Adler Gallery, New York
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2002 *Madí. L'art sud-américain*, Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble
- 2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2010 *Géométrie hors limites: art contemporain latino-américain dans la collection Jean et Colette Cherqui*, Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris

Museums and collections

Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milan, Italy
Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble, France
Musei del Castello Sforzesco, Milan, Italy
Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Villa Croce, Genoa, Italy

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 28

Blaszko, Martín

Argentine painter, sculptor, and draughtsman of German origin, Martín Blaszko (also Blasko or Blaskowski) was born on December 12, 1920, in Berlin and currently lives in Buenos Aires.

Biography

Following the Nazis' rise to power in 1933, Blaszko was forced to leave Germany and settle in Poland, where he studied drawing with Henryk Barczyński. In 1938, he drew from the teachings of Jankel Adler while living in Danzig. During a short visit to Paris, Blaszko came into contact with Marc Chagall. He emigrated to Argentina in 1939, where he learned composition from Carmelo Arden Quin in 1945 and co-founded the Madí art movement in 1946. In 1952, he received an award from the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, for a project entitled *Monumento al prisionero político desconocido* (Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner). Other distinctions include the Bronze Medal at the 1958 Brussels World Fair; First Prize at the Salón de Mar del Plata in 1959; Gold Medal awarded by the Argentine Parliament in 1973; and First Prize at the "Homenaje al día internacional de la Paz" contest organized by the City of Buenos Aires in 1986.

Work

Blaszko began making large-scale sculptures out of wood, bronze, and cement in 1947.

Essentially, his oeuvre relies on the balance he achieves between opposing forces and the rhythmic interplay of conflicting formal values and coplanar elements. In line with Madí principles, he replaced geometric abstract forms for a combination of independent planes, thus overcoming the tendency to interpret any shape as a figure against a background. Among Blaszko's sculptures for public spaces is *Júbilo* (Jubilation, 1991), on view at Parque Centenario in Buenos Aires.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1954 Galería Müller, Buenos Aires
- 1961 *15 años de escultura*, Galería Lirolay, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1974 *Escultura, Óleos, Collages y Dibujos*, Galería de Arte Vermeer, Buenos Aires
- 1976 *El Mensaje*, Galería de Arte, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1977 Del Retiro Galería de Arte, Buenos Aires
- 1981 Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C.
- 1990 *Sculptures, Collages*, Galerie Edwige Herdé, Paris
- 2000 Museo Luis Perloti, Buenos Aires
- 2001 *Nace una escultura*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
- 2002 *Zeichnungen und Collagen*, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt
- 2002 *Esculturas en el jardín*, Asociación Cultural Pestalozzi, Buenos Aires
- 2004 RO Galería de Arte, Buenos Aires
- 2007 The Museum of Geometric and MADí Art, Dallas, Texas; Insight Arte, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2007 Galería Emily Murphy, Madrid
- 2007 *Collages*, Asperger Gallery, Berlin [catalogue]
- 2008 *60 años de arte*, Laura Haber Galería de Arte, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2009 *Arte y paisaje*, Centro de Exposiciones, San Isidro, Buenos Aires [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1956 XXVIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1958 Expo 58 Brussels World Fair, Brussels
- 1990 *Argentina. Arte concreto-invencción 1945, Grupo Madí 1946*, Rachel Adler Gallery, New York
- 1991 *Arte Concreto Invencción, Arte Madí*, Haus für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Stiftung für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Zurich
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1995 *Arte al Sur*, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires
- 1997–98 *Arte Madí*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York
- 2003 *Desde la geometría. 2 + 10*, Salas Nacionales de Exposición, Palais de Glace, Buenos Aires

- 2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Mouvement MAD1 International. Buenos Aires 1946 - Paris 2008*, Maison d'Amérique latine, Paris
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina

The Museum of Geometric and MAD1 Art, Dallas, Texas, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. C) 5, 6, 7, 8

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 56, 194, 360; BIB. C) 11

Links

www.martinblaszko.com.ar

Del Prete, Juan

Argentine painter, draughtsman, sculptor, stage designer, layout artist, and photographer of Italian origin, Juan del Prete was born on October 5, 1897, in Vasto, Chieti, Italy, and died on February 4, 1987, in Buenos Aires.

Biography

Del Prete and his family emigrated to Argentina when he was a child. Although he studied briefly at the Academia Perugino and the Mutualidad de Estudiantes de Bellas Artes studio in Buenos Aires, he was largely a self-taught artist. In 1922, he befriended Raquel Forner and, along with other artists, founded the Grupo Vermellón. After acquiring Argentine citizenship in 1929, a scholarship from the Asociación Amigos del Arte de Buenos Aires took Del Prete to Paris in 1930, where he became friends with Joaquín Torres-García. In 1932, he joined Abstraction-Création/Art non Figuratif—a group formed by Hans (Jean) Arp, Piet Mondrian, and Georges Vantongerloo, among others—and contributed to its magazine. Del Prete returned to

Buenos Aires in 1933, where he showcased his paintings and sculptures at the 1933 and 1934 Amigos del Arte exhibitions, among the first non-figurative shows held in Argentina. The artist Eugenia Crenovich (Yente) became his pupil and partner in 1937. From 1953, he traveled regularly to Italy and spent sojourns in Genoa between 1963 and 1967. Among his awards are the 1958 Premio Palanza and International Grand Prize at the 1958 Brussels World Fair; the Grand Prize of Honor at the Salón Nacional, Buenos Aires, 1963; the 1982 Platinum Konex Award of Abstract Art, Buenos Aires; and the 1983 Premio Consagración Nacional, Buenos Aires.

Work

In his figurative and expressive work of the 1920s, Del Prete applied rich impasto with a spatula. His paintings, paper collages, and cast and wire sculptures of the 1930s show the influence of geometric abstraction. An unorthodox and inquisitive artist, he moved between abstract and figurative art, painting dynamic and dark contours. Giotto, Cézanne, and Matisse are among his influences, as well as cubist and futurist artists. From 1946 to 1955, loud colors and flat, geometric shapes dominated his compositions. Impressed by Art Informel, Del Prete soon added stains, drips, and blots to his works. He did, however, return to the expressive quality that is a feature of his work in a variety of media, including painting, sculpture, collage, and assemblage. In 1934, Del Prete executed stage designs for three productions in Buenos Aires: the plays *Estrella de mar* and *Magia negra*, commissioned by Amigos del Arte, and the opera *Leyenda de Urutaú* for the Teatro Colón.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1926 Asociación Amigos del Arte, Buenos Aires
- 1932 Galerie Vavin, Paris
- 1949 Galería Van Riel, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1951 Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1951 Secretaría de Cultura de la Municipalidad, Buenos Aires
- 1961 *Retrospectiva*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1964 Galleria Schneider, Rome [catalogue]
- 1964 Galleria il Cavallino, Venice [catalogue]
- 1965 Galleria Interarte, Milan [catalogue]
- 1965 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Santiago, Chile [catalogue]
- 1969 Galería Van Riel, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1973 Galleria Artevisive, Rome [catalogue]
- 1974 *Retrospectiva 1927–1974*, Lorenzutti Artes y Antigüedades, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1982 *Retrospectiva 1924–1984*, Museo de Artes Visuales, Quilmes, Buenos Aires
- 1989 *Homenaje a Juan del Prete*, Fundación San Telmo, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1998 *El legado de un maestro*, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2007 *Esculturas, relieve y collage*, Espacio de Arte AMIA, Buenos Aires

Selected group exhibitions

- 1952 XXVII Biennale di Venezia, Venice

- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1958 Expo 58 Brussels World Fair, Brussels
- 1959 V Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 XXXI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1987 *Arte Argentina dalla indipendenza ad oggi 1810–1987*, Istituto Italo-Latino Americano, Rome
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York
- 2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2005 *Berni y sus contemporáneos*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires
- 2010 *Realidad y Utopía - Argentinien künstlerischer Weg in die Gegenwart*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Museo Civico, Vasto, Italy

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Rosario, Rosario, Argentina

Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes Juan B. Castagnino, Rosario, Argentina

Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes, La Plata, Argentina

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 51, 162, 181, 203, 309, 435, 485

Espinosa, Manuel

Argentine painter, draughtsman, and sculptor, Manuel O. Espinosa was born on October 26, 1912, in Buenos Aires and died on January 24, 2006, in the same city.

Biography

Espinosa studied at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes Prilidiano Pueyrredón and at the Escuela Superior de Bellas Artes Ernesto de la Cárcova in Buenos Aires. He co-founded the Asociación Arte Concreto-Inventiva in 1945 and signed its *Manifiesto Invencionista* the following year. Espinosa joined the Communist Party of Argentina in the 1940s. During a trip to Europe in 1951, he met Georges Vantongerloo in Paris and Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart in Amsterdam. Both artists guided Espinosa in his research. Among other prizes, Espinosa received the Premio Consagración Nacional in 1983.

Work

Espinosa was initially influenced by surrealism but soon shifted to concrete painting. In his serial compositions, geometric figures, such as the square and circle, are arranged

in the foreground and repeated in sequences in the mid- and background. As a result, the spectator feels he is in a deep compressed space. Faithful to the principles of non-figurative art, Espinosa's clear and restrained style of geometric painting relies on controlled sequences of elements. Transparent, juxtaposed, and superimposed elements give way to optic illusions. This interplay between reason and passion stems from Espinosa's interest in music and literature.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1947 *Manuel Espinosa. Tomás Maldonado*. Arte Concreto-Inventiva, Sociedad Argentina de Artistas Plásticos, Buenos Aires
- 1959 Galería Van Riel, Buenos Aires
- 1961 Honorable Concejo Deliberante, Buenos Aires
- 1968 Galería Arte Nuevo, Buenos Aires
- 1970 Galería Alvear, Buenos Aires
- 1971 Galería del Mar, Mar del Plata
- 1972 Galería Carmen Waugh, Buenos Aires
- 1974 Instituto Argentino Venezolano, Caracas
- 1974 Galería Contemporánea, Montevideo
- 1975 Centro de Artes y Letras, Punta del Este
- 1977 Galería Vermeer, Buenos Aires
- 1978 De Armas Gallery, Miami, Florida
- 1979 Del Retiro, Galería de Arte, Buenos Aires
- 1980 National Arts Center, Ottawa
- 1980 Providence of British Columbia, Vancouver
- 1981 Del Retiro, Galería de Arte, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2001 Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes Juan B. Castagnino, Rosario [retrospective exhibition]
- 2003 *Antología sobre papel*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2010 Paintings and Drawings, Sicardi Gallery, Houston, Texas

Selected group exhibitions

- 1963 *Del arte concreto a la nueva tendencia*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
- 1973 *Projection et dynamisme. Six peintres argentins*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1980 *Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Inventiva, Arte Madi, Perceptismo*, Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
- 1987 *Arte Argentina dalla indipendenza ad oggi 1810–1987*, Istituto Italo-Latino Americano, Rome
- 1994–95 *Art from Argentina 1920–1994*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford [traveling exhibition]
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York
- 2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Bank of Boston, Boston, Massachusetts, United States

Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, Quito, Ecuador
Chase Manhattan Bank, New York, United States
Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Sofía Imber, Caracas, Venezuela

Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo de Bellas Artes de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, La Plata, Argentina

Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende, Santiago, Chile

Museo Municipal de Arte Juan C. Castagnino, Mar del Plata, Argentina

Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes Juan B. Castagnino, Rosario, Argentina

Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Neuquén, Argentina

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

National Museum, Damascus, Syria

Rhode Island School of Design, Museum of Art, Providence, United States

The Ella Fontanals- Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States

University of Texas, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 361

Hlito, Alfredo

The son of Syrian immigrants, Argentine painter Alfredo Hlito Olivari was born on May 4, 1923, in Buenos Aires and died on March 28, 1993, in the same city.

Biography

Hlito studied at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes from 1938 to 1942. Together with Jorge Brito, Claudio Girola, and Tomás Maldonado, he wrote the *Manifiesto de los Cuatro Jóvenes* against academicism in 1941. He also co-founded the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción in 1945 and signed the *Manifiesto Invencionista* the following year. He was a member of the Communist Party of Argentina. In association with Tomás Maldonado, he launched the magazine *Nueva Visión*. *Revista de Cultura Visual* in 1951. In 1964 he moved to Mexico, where he lived until 1973. In 1984, he was elected a full member of the Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes, and in 1985 he received the Visual Arts Di Tella Prize.

Work

His early work was inspired by Joaquín Torres-García. In the series *Construcciones* (Constructions, 1945), contrasting patterns of formal elements play out over a modulated monochrome grid. Hlito later explored the

tension arising between solid color and linear color formations. He abandoned Planismo in 1954 and began painting interior spaces while experimenting with sinuous lines and contrasting light effects. By the late 1950s, his work deviated from geometric abstraction. Rather than exploring the relationship between figures and backgrounds, he chose to apply color over a distinct luminous and dynamic backdrop. In the series *Espectros* (Specters), Hlito applied color with small systematic strokes. In *Simulacros* (Drills), dating from the 1960s, shades of ochre and grey dominate the surface as sets of parallel lines generate interior spaces leading to vague focal points. In the mid-1970s, phantasmagoric and increasingly anthropomorphic structures made their way into the artist's compositions. The simple and ascetic pieces entitled *Efigies* (Effigies) were inspired by art history icons, conveying a religious and mystical quality.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1950 *arte concreto. pinturas/esculturas/dibujos. alfredo hlito. enio iommi. tomás maldonado*, Instituto de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
- 1952 *Pinturas*, Galería Van Riel, Buenos Aires
- 1960 Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires
- 1969 *Pintura 1946–1969*, Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City [catalogue]
- 1974 Galería Carmen Waugh, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1979 *Efigies y simulacros*, Galería Jacques Martínez, Buenos Aires
- 1983 *Efigies y simulacros 1976–1979*, Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes Juan B. Castagnino, Rosario
- 1987 *Obra pictórica, 1945–1985*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1992 *Œuvres de 1945 à 1970*, Galerie Nabert, Geneva [catalogue]
- 1993 Galería de Arte Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2002 *Obras sobre papel*, Galería Jorge Mara-La Ruche, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2002 *Metáforas de lo visible*, Fundación Telefónica, Madrid [catalogue]
- 2003 *Hlito (1923–1993)*, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2007 *Las reglas del juego*, Museo de la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, Caseros, Buenos Aires [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1956 XVIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1975 XIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1980 *Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Invencción, Arte Madí, Perceptismo*, Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
- 1987 *Arte Argentina dalla indipendenza ad oggi 1810–1987*, Istituto Italo-Latino Americano, Rome
- 1989 XX Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo

1990 *Argentina. Arte concreto-invencción 1945, Grupo Madí 1946*, Rachel Adler Gallery, New York

1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York

1994–95 *Art from Argentina 1920–1994*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford [traveling exhibition]

1997 I Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre

2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York

2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires

2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]

2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York

2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

2010 *Realidad y Utopía - Argentinien's künstlerischer Weg in die Gegenwart*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Colección FEMSA (Fomento Económico Mexicano S.A.), Monterrey, Mexico

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Rosario, Rosario, Argentina

Museo de la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, Caseros, Buenos Aires

Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes Juan B. Castagnino, Rosario, Argentina

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain

Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 8, 201

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 74, 324, 361

Iommi, Enio

The son of Italian immigrants, Argentine sculptor and painter Enio Girola Iommi was born on March 20, 1920, in Rosario, Santa Fe, and currently lives in Buenos Aires.

Biography

Iommi joined his father's funerary and decorative sculpture business in 1936. The following year, he studied drawing privately with the artist Enrique Forni. In the late 1930s the family settled in Buenos Aires. Together with his brother the sculptor Claudio Girola and other artists, he co-founded the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción in 1945 and signed the *Manifiesto Invencionista* the following year. In 1952, Iommi joined the Grupo de Artistas Modernos de la Argentina, an art movement endorsed by Aldo Pellegrini. In 1968 he was invited by the Italian government and later traveled to Switzerland, France, England, and the United States. Elected a full member of the Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes in 1975, he resigned in 1999. Iommi began teaching at the Instituto de Arte Cromos, Buenos Aires, in 1990. Among his many distinctions is the Silver Medal awarded at the 1958 Brussels World Fair.

Work

Iommi began working with metal early on in his career and was the first Argentine artist to execute an abstract sculpture in 1945. (There were, however, isolated examples by Antonio Sibellino in 1926 and Juan del Prete in 1933). Using the principles of geometry and linear and directional structures, he transformed empty space into an important element in permanent connection with volume. The 1960s marked Iommi's departure from pure concrete art and his new-found interest in open structures. The ensembles of objects, sculptural assemblages, and impoverished materials dominant in his production during the 1970s responded to his search for "spatial drama." He incorporated household utensils to his work, cutting and combining pieces according to a poetic and sculptural narrative. Parodies of his rationalist period are suggested in these pieces, as well as grotesque undertones of social criticism. Iommi also executed sculptures for public spaces.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1950 *arte concreto. pinturas/esculturas/dibujos. alfredo hlito. enio iommi. tomás maldonado*, Instituto de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
- 1951 *arte concreto. exposición de pinturas, esculturas, dibujos. enio iommi. tomás maldonado. lidy prati*, Instituto de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
- 1958 Galería Pizarro, Buenos Aires
- 1962 Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro
- 1963 *Exposición de esculturas de Claudio Girola y Ennio [sic] Iommi*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1966 Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1969 Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1971 *Retrospectiva*, Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes Emilio Caraffa, Córdoba, Argentina
- 1974 *Enio Iommi. Miguel Ocampo*, Galería Aele, Madrid [catalogue]
- 1975 *Iommi. Argentine Sculptor - Sculpteur Argentin*, Ottawa City Hall, Ottawa [catalogue]

- 1979 La Galería. Arte Contemporáneo. Jacques Martínez, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1980 *Esculturas de Enio Iommi. 1945–1980*, Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1981 Arte Nuevo, Galería de Arte, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1985 Contemporary Sculpture Center, Osaka and Tokyo [catalogue]
- 1985 *40 años de escultura 1945–1985*, Galería de Arte Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires
- 1989 Galería Julia Lublin, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1991 *Desde la escultura concreta hasta mi libertad*, Fundación Banco Mercantil Argentino, Buenos Aires
- 1995 *Enio Iommi - Clorindo Testa. 83–85*, Galería Patricia Ready, Vitacura, Chile [catalogue]
- 1996 Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1997 *El espacio como forma*, Galería de Arte Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1999 *Mis utopías vs. la realidad*, Galería de Arte Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires
- 2001 Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2003 *Del espacio en tensión al objeto en situación. Selección antológica, 1945–2002*, Galerías del Centro Cultural del Parque de España, Rosario [catalogue]
- 2007 *Enio Iommi. Clorindo Testa*, Galería del Infinito Arte, Buenos Aires

Selected group exhibitions

- 1958 Expo 58 Brussels World Fair, Brussels
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1964 XXXII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1969 X Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Arte Argentina dalla indipendenza ad oggi 1810–1987*, Istituto Italo-Latino Americano, Rome
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1990 *Argentina. Arte concreto-invencción 1945, Grupo Madí 1946*, Rachel Adler Gallery, New York
- 1991 *Arte Concreto Invencción, Arte Madí*, Haus für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Stiftung für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Zurich
- 1991–93 *La Escuela del Sur. El Taller Torres-García y su legado*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid [traveling exhibition]
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994–95 *Art from Argentina 1920–1994*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford [traveling exhibition]
- 1997 I Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2002 *Madí. L'art sud-américain*, Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble
- 2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires

- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland
Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble, France
Museo de Arte Americano, Maldonado, Uruguay
Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Rosario, Rosario, Argentina
Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Museo de Arte Moderno, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Museo de Bellas Artes, Asunción, Paraguay
Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Museu de Arte, Brasília, Brazil
The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas, Texas, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 150, 257, 361; BIB. C) 11, 35

Kosice, Gyula

Argentine sculptor, painter, poet, and theorist of Slovak origin, Gyula Kosice (Fernando Fallik) was born on April 26, 1924, in Košice, Czechoslovakia (now Slovakia), and currently lives in Buenos Aires.

Biography

Kosice's family emigrated to Argentina in 1928. He studied drawing and modeling at Academias Libres. Co-founder of the magazine *Arturo. Revista de Artes Abstractas* launched in 1944, of the group Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción in 1945, and of the Madí art movement in 1946, he served as director of the magazine *Revista Arte Madí* (eight issues published between 1947 and 1954) and exhibited his work at the group shows. Kosice moved to Paris in 1957 and wrote the manifesto *La arquitectura del agua en la escultura* (Water Architecture in Sculpture) in 1959. He was named Officier des Arts et des Lettres by the French government in 1989 and granted the Fine Arts Life Achievement Award by the Fondo Nacional de las Artes, Buenos Aires, in 1994. Recipient of the Distinguished Citizen of the City of Buenos Aires Award in 1997, in 2007 he was awarded the Premio Cultura Nación by

the Argentine Secretariat of Culture. Kosice's studio-gallery in Buenos Aires is open to the public.

Work

Inspired by constructivism, Kosice created *Röyi* (1944), his first articulated, abstract mobile made of wood. He was a pioneer in incorporating neon to artworks, as seen in *Estructuras lumínicas con gas neón* (Radiant Structures with Neon Gas, 1946). He also executed paintings in trimmed picture frames and aluminum, bronze, and iron sculptures. With *Escultura hidráulica* (Hydraulic Sculpture, 1957), he introduced water as a key element, which came to be, along with Plexiglas, light, and movement, a trademark feature of his oeuvre. Kosice devised the utopian project *Ciudad hidroespacial* (Hydrospatial City), an idea previously suggested in *Arturo* magazine. In 1964, he designed the Argentina Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. In 1988, he was commissioned a sculpture for the Olympic Games in Seoul, resulting in the monument *Victoria*. In addition to decorative pieces, Kosice has produced large-scale reliefs and sculptures, murals, hydrosatial installations, and hydromurals, located mainly in Argentina and Uruguay. Examples include the *Faro de la cultura* (Lighthouse of Culture) in La Plata, 1982, and the *Monumento a la democracia* (Monument to Democracy) in Buenos Aires, 2000.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1947 Galerías Pacífico, Buenos Aires
- 1953 Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires
- 1960 *Sculptures hydrauliques. Reliefs. Sculptures*, Galerie Denise René, Paris [catalogue]
- 1963 L'Œil galerie d'art, Paris [catalogue]
- 1967 *Sculpture. Water-light-movement*, Galería Bonino, New York [catalogue]
- 1968 *100 obras de Kosice, un precursor*, Centro de Artes Visuales del Instituto Torcuato di Tella, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1971 *La ciudad hidroespacial*, Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1972 *Kosice, Argentina*, Biblioteca Luis-Ángel Arango, Banco de la República de Colombia, Bogotá [catalogue]
- 1974 The Israel Museum, Jerusalem
- 1974 *La cité hydrospatiale*, Espace Pierre Cardin, Paris
- 1982 Hakone Open Air Museum, Tokyo
- 1985 *Obras monumentales*, Centro Cultural Ciudad de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires
- 1991 *Obras, 1944–1990*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1994 *Homenaje a Kosice*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
- 1999 *Anticipaciones*, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2009 *Obras recientes*, Galería Zurbarán, Buenos Aires [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1956 XXVIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo

- 1964 XXXII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1968 documenta 4, Kassel
- 1972 III Bienal de Arte Coltejer, Medellín
- 1986 II Bienal de La Habana, Havana
- 1987 *Arte Argentina dalla indipendenza ad oggi 1810–1987*, Istituto Italo-Latino Americano, Rome
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum y Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1991 *Arte Concreto Invencción, Arte Madí*, Haus für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Stiftung für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Zurich
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994–95 *Art from Argentina 1920–1994*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford [traveling exhibition]
- 1997–98 *Arte Madí*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz
- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York
- 2001 *Geometric Abstraction. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 2002 *Madí. L'art sud-américain*, Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble
- 2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2005 *Agua. Sin ti no soy - Water. Without you I'm not*, III Bienal de Valencia, Valencia
- 2007 *New perspectives in Latin American Art*, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2007 *Lo[s] cinético[s]*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2010 *Realidad y Utopía - Argentinians künstlerischer Weg in die Gegenwart*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, United States
Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, Paris, France
Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland
Fondo Nacional de las Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
Hakone Open Air Museum, Tokyo, Japan
Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden
Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble, France

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Medellín, Colombia
 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de El País, Montevideo, Uruguay
 Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo Nacional de Arte Moderno, Asunción, Paraguay
 Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales, Montevideo, Uruguay
 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
 Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea
 Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel
 Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
 Olympic Park, Seoul, South Korea
 Secretaría de Recursos Hídricos, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Sociedad Venezolana de Ingeniería Hidráulica, Caracas, Venezuela
 The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut, United States
 The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel
 The New School for Social Research, New York, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 217–232; BIB. C) 21, 22

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 32, 157, 190, 403, 436; BIB. C) 11

Links

www.kosice.com.ar
 www.gyulakosice.blogspot.com

Lisa, Esteban

Argentine painter, draughtsman, educator, and theorist of Spanish origin, Esteban Lisa was born on August 8, 1895, in Hinojosa de San Vicente, Toledo, and died on June 19, 1983, in Buenos Aires.

Biography

At the age of twelve, Lisa moved to Argentina to live with his paternal aunt and uncle. He earned a living as a dishwasher, messenger, and librarian at the Buenos Aires Central Post Office. Following his studies at the Escuela de Arte Beato Angélico, where he met Fray Guillermo Butler, he worked as an art teacher at a school for adults and joined the Agrupación del Docente Argentino (teacher association). With the support of his pupils, he founded his own school in Buenos Aires, the so-called Escuela de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires Las Cuatro Dimensiones, and subsequently opened the Instituto de Investigaciones de la Teoría de la Cosmovisión. Between 1956 and 1979, he toured Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Paraná, Gualaguay, and Azul, giving lectures on the theory of cosmo-

vision and the connection between aesthetic experience, ethics, and modern science. Lisa traveled to Spain in 1981 to reunite with his family. In 1987, the Fundación Esteban Lisa opened in Buenos Aires. The institution houses a museum, library, exhibition gallery, painting and drawing studio, and an art school for children. Lisa did not live to see a solo exhibition of his work. Isolated from the world, he lived in self-imposed seclusion. Only in the late 1990s did Lisa's role as a forerunner of Latin American art become noted.

Work

Lisa's oeuvre, modest in size and extraordinarily subtle, stemmed from his reflections on aesthetic experience and education. His work gradually shifted to abstract art between 1925 and 1934, when he began applying rich impasto to depict landscapes and figures stripped of detail that would eventually transform into amorphous shapes. Lisa's paintings thus moved towards geometric abstraction and began featuring different types of symbols in the 1940s. His palette grew brighter throughout the 1950s, resulting in freer, more expressive compositions. In the prolific series *Juego con línea y colores* (Playing with Lines and Color), spirals, swirls, curves, and arabesques make their way into his work. The brilliant colors and spontaneous brushwork moving in multiple directions allude to a cosmic world

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1987 Fundación Esteban Lisa, Buenos Aires
- 1988 Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1997 Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes Juan B. Castagnino, Rosario
- 1998 *Retrospectiva - A Retrospective*, Museo Torres García, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 1998 Galería Guillermo de Osma, Madrid [catalogue]
- 1999 Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes Emilio A. Caraffa, Córdoba, Argentina [catalogue]
- 1999 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2000 *The Art of Esteban Lisa*, Hirsch & Adler Galleries, New York [catalogue]
- 2001 *Playing with Lines + Colour*, Blains Fine Art, London [catalogue]
- 2002 *Paintings*, Parkerson Gallery, Houston, Texas [catalogue]
- 2005 *Jugando con líneas y colores*, Artur Ramon Art Contemporani, Barcelona [catalogue]
- 2006 Fondo Nacional de las Artes, Casa de la Cultura, Buenos Aires
- 2007 *Óleos y pasteles*, Galería Palatina, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2007 *Image, Form, Force, Movement*, Galería Ramis Barquet, New York [catalogue]
- 2008 *Diálogos con Esteban Lisa. Colección Jorge Virgili*, Fundación Antonio Pérez, Cuenca [catalogue]
- 2009 *Au pays des cèdres, Traditions et abstraction - In the land of Cedars. Tradition and Abstraction*, Fondation Audi, Beirut [catalogue]
- 2009 *Abstracción, mundo y significado*, Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, Caseros, Buenos Aires [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York

Museums and collections

Fondo Nacional de las Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Fundación Esteban Lisa, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 243–256

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 181, 362; BIB. C) 17, 24

Links

www.estebanlisa.com

Lozza, Raúl

The son of Italian immigrants, Argentine painter, draughtsman, designer, journalist, and theorist Raúl Elbio Lozza was born on October 27, 1911, in Alberti, Buenos Aires, and died on January 27, 2008, in Buenos Aires.

Biography

Lozza learned to paint from his father. From 1932 to 1936 he wrote articles on political and social topics for newspapers and magazines before becoming an advertising designer. Co-founder of the group Contrapunto, created in 1943, Lozza was also art editor of the eponymous magazine. In 1945 he co-founded the Asociación Arte Concreto-Inventación in Buenos Aires—becoming co-editor of its magazine and taking part in its group shows—signing the *Manifiesto Invencionista* the following year. With his own view of concrete art in mind, Lozza left the Asociación in 1947 and founded Perceptismo, publishing the movement's manifesto in 1949. Together with his brother Rembrandt and German theorist Abraham Haber, he founded the magazine *Perceptismo*, which ran from 1950 to 1953. Among his distinctions are the 1992 Gran Premio Consagración; the 1998 Premio Leonardo awarded by the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes; and the 2007 Premio Cultura Nación conferred by the Argentine Secretariat of Culture. The Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Raúl Lozza opened in his native city of Alberti, Buenos Aires, in 2003.

Work

Following his early figurative work, mainly drawings containing social subject matter,

Lozza began painting flat objects with irregular contours in 1939. These asymmetrical compositions did not have a focal point and were instead organized around independent color fields. By the late 1940s, Lozza had developed his own conceptual and practical framework as he sought to create an open and accessible structure capable of generating a specific shape. For Lozza, a bare surface was not a background but rather a "colored field." He envisaged a new theory in which color, understood in terms of relative discontinuity and potentiality, replaced concepts such as "harmony" and "complementary." As a result, form was the only valid vessel for connecting ideas. Lozza disapproved of geometry, which he thought inefficient, and only used number operations as a complementary method. His theory of "the 'qualimetry' of flat form" provided a mathematical formula which demonstrated that the sum of all parts is greater than the whole.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1949 Galería Van Riel, Buenos Aires
- 1963 Museo de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro
- 1969 Instituto de Arte, Buenos Aires
- 1973 Galería Van Riel, Buenos Aires
- 1985 *Cuarenta años en el arte concreto (sesenta con la pintura)*, Fundación San Telmo, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1993 Fundación Banco Patricios, Buenos Aires
- 1996 *Hermann Glöckner / Raúl Lozza*, Batuz Foundation Sachsen, Altzella/Nossen, Dresden [catalogue]
- 1997 *Retrospectiva 1939–1997*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2001 *Un museo por sesenta días. Selección de obra para un futuro museo de su pintura concreta*, Centro Cultural Borges, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2002 *Una revisión a la relación arte-ciencia en la obra de Raúl Lozza*, Centro Cultural Borges, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2006 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Neuquén

Selected group exhibitions

- 1965 *Eugenio Abal, José Rodrigo Beloso, Raul Lozza. Paintings*, Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1980 *Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Inventación, Arte Madí, Perceptismo*, Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1990 *Argentina. Arte concreto-inventación 1945, Grupo Madí 1946*, Rachel Adler Gallery, New York
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994–95 *Art from Argentina 1920–1994*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford [traveling exhibition]
- 1997 I Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York

- 2002 *50 años de pintura geométrica latinoamericana*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, Buenos Aires
- 2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Then & Now. Abstraction in Latin American Art from 1950 to Present*, 60 Wall Gallery, Deutsche Bank, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn
- 2010 *Realidad y Utopía - Argentinienens künstlerischer Weg in die Gegenwart*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Batzu Foundation Sachsen, Aitzella, Germany
 County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, United States
 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Raúl Lozza, Alberti, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales, Montevideo, Uruguay
 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes, Santa Fe, Argentina
 National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 262–264

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 191, 261

Links

www.raullozza.coop
 www.museoizza.com.ar

Maldonado, Tomás

Argentine painter, graphic and industrial designer, teacher, and theorist, Tomás Maldonado was born on April 25, 1922, in Buenos Aires and currently lives in Milan.

Biography

From 1939 to 1941, Maldonado studied at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes Manuel Belgrano in Buenos Aires. In 1941, together

with Jorge Brito, Claudio Girola, and Alfredo Hlito, he wrote the *Manifiesto de los Cuatro Jóvenes* against academicism and visited Joaquín Torres-García's studio in Montevideo. Maldonado married artist Lidý Prati in 1944, the same year he designed the front and back cover of the magazine *Arturo. Revista de Artes Abstractas*. Co-founder of the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción in 1945, he signed the *Manifiesto Invencionista* in 1946. He was a member of the Communist Party from 1945 to 1948. During a trip to Europe in 1948, he met Max Bill in Zurich and Georges Vantongerloo in Paris. Founder of the magazine *Nueva Visión. Revista de Cultura Visual*, he served as its director from 1951 to 1957. He was also coordinator of the Grupo de Artistas Modernos de la Argentina in 1952. From 1965 to 1967, he worked as a professor at the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm, Germany, a renewed version of the Bauhaus school, initially under the direction of Max Bill. Subjects taught by Maldonado included Introduction to Vision, Semiotics, Visual Methodology, Visual Communication, and Industrial Design. He served as vice-chancellor of the HfG from 1964 to 1966 before moving to Milan and Princeton, where he was visiting professor. After settling permanently in Milan in 1969, he worked as a professor in Bologna from 1972 to 1979 and in Milan from 1984 to 1992, where he was appointed director of the Department of Industrial Design at the Politecnico di Milano. Maldonado has received many awards, including the Distinguished Citizen Gold Medal, Milan, 1974; the Lorenzo il Magnifico Gold Medal, Florence, 1981; and the Gold Medal and Benemerito della Scienza e della Cultura First Class Diploma, Rome, 1998 and Milan, 1999.

Work

Maldonado completed his first concrete artworks in 1944. Influenced by Vantongerloo, he took up graphic design in the late 1940s but soon turned to industrial design, which had a great impact on his later work. Interested in creative processes, his approach to design was scientific and systematic. He believed manufactured goods had formal qualities like those "found in the structural and functional relationships that turn systems into coherent wholes." After devoting most of his career to writing, teaching, and research, Maldonado took up painting again in 2000.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1947 *Manuel Espinosa. Tomás Maldonado*. Arte Concreto-Invencción, Sociedad Argentina de Artistas Plásticos, Buenos Aires
- 1948 *Nuevas realidades*, Galería Van Riel, Buenos Aires
- 1950 *arte concreto. pinturas/esculturas/dibujos. alfredo hlito. enio iommi. tomás maldonado*, Instituto de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
- 1951 *arte concreto. exposición de pinturas, esculturas, dibujos. enio iommi. tomás maldonado. lidý prati*, Instituto de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
- 2007 *Un itinerario*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires [catalogue]

- 2009 Triennale Design Museum, Milan [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1953 Il Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1988 *L'École d'Ulm. Design, architecture, communication visuelle*, Centre de Création Industrielle, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris
- 1990 *Argentina. Arte concreto-invencción 1945, Grupo Madí 1946*, Rachel Adler Gallery, New York
- 1991 *Arte Concreto Invencción, Arte Madí*, Haus für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Stiftung für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Zurich
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994 *Arte concreto invencción, Arte madí*, Galerie von Bartha, Basel
- 1994–95 *Art from Argentina 1920–1994*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford [traveling exhibition]
- 1997–98 *Arte Madí*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Rio de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York
- 2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2010 *Géometrie hors limites. Art contemporain latino-américain dans la collection Jean et Colette Cherqui*, Maison de l'Amérique Latine, Paris
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn
- 2010 *Realidad y Utopía - Argentinienens künstlerischer Weg in die Gegenwart*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin
- 2010 *Constructive Spirit. Abstract Art in South and North America, 1920s–50s*, Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey; Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

Museums and collections

Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela
 Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
 Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Ulmer Museum, Ulm, Germany

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 55, 268–290, 291, 292, 293, 294; BIB. C) 28–29

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 1, 97, 138, 181, 183, 233, 361, 403, 431, 451

Melé, Juan

Argentine painter, sculptor, and art critic, Juan Nicolás Melé was born on October 15, 1923, in Buenos Aires. He lives between Buenos Aires and Paris.

Biography

Melé studied at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes Manuel Belgrano and the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes Prilidiano Pueyrredón in Buenos Aires until 1945. The following year he joined the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción. In 1948 he earned a scholarship to study at the École de Louvre in Paris and Georges Vantongerloo and Sonia Delaunay's studio. While touring Europe, he met Max Bill in Zurich and other concrete artists in Milan. Melé returned to Buenos Aires in the early 1950s and co-founded the Grupo Arte Nuevo in 1955. From 1957 on, he taught Art and History of Art at his *alma mater*, the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes Prilidiano Pueyrredón, while also writing art reviews for various publications before he moved to New York in 1974. He returned to Buenos Aires in 1986. Melé has received the Premio Tabucchi of the Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1997, and the First Prize in Painting at the Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes, 2003. He was elected full member of the Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes in 2002.

Work

Melé's output in the 1940s drew from concrete painting, as evidenced in his trimmed picture frames and coplanar compositions. He developed these aspects throughout his career, applying them to painting, sculpture, and embossing. In the 1990s, Melé began his prolific series of *Relievs* (Reliefs), painting-objects featuring indented and elevated surfaces as well as trimmed edges with vibrating color combinations.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1976 Clovelly Lane Gallery, New York
 1978 Cayman Gallery, New York [catalogue]
 1979 Clovelly Lane Gallery, New York
 1982 Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
 1983 Arch Gallery, New York
 1985 Arch Gallery, New York
 1987 Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
 1995 *Una investigación constructiva*, Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
 1999 *Juan Melé o el arte constructivo en los '90*, Centro Cultural Borges, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
 2003 Galerie Slotine, Paris

- 2004 *Juan Melé, hoy. 60 años después*, Salas Nacionales de Exposición, Palais de Glace, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2006 Galería Van Eyck, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2009 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, Buenos Aires

Selected group exhibitions

- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1990 *Argentina. Arte concreto-inventión 1945, Grupo Madí 1946*, Rachel Adler Gallery, New York
- 1991 *Arte Concreto Inventión, Arte Madí*, Haus für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Stiftung für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Zurich
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994–95 *Art from Argentina 1920–1994*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford [traveling exhibition]
- 1997 I Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
- 2001 *Abstract Art from Río de la Plata. Buenos Aires and Montevideo, 1933–1953*, The Americas Society, New York
- 2002 *Madí. L'art sud-américain*, Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble
- 2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2009 *Expansionismo. Contemporary Latin American Artists Explore Space*, The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas, Texas
- 2010 *Géométrie hors limites. Art contemporain latino-américain dans la collection Jean et Colette Cherqui*, Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris
- 2010 *Constructive spirit. Abstract art in South and North America, 1920s–50s*, Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey; Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Collection de la Cité International des Arts, Paris, France

Housatonic Museum of Art, Bridgeport, Connecticut, United States

Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble, France

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Rosario, Rosario, Argentina

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela

Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes Juan B. Castagnino, Rosario, Argentina

Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, Great Britain

The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States

The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas, Texas, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 307

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 360, 361, 426

Paternosto, César

Argentine painter, sculptor, and writer, César Pedro Paternosto was born on November 29, 1931 in La Plata, Buenos Aires. He lives in Segovia.

Biography

Paternosto read Law at the Universidad Nacional de la Plata in La Plata, Buenos Aires, from 1951 to 1958, before enrolling at the School of Fine Arts and the Institute of Philosophy of the same University, where he studied from 1957 to 1961. He won First Prize at the at the Salón de la Joven Pintura in 1965, two years before he moved to New York, where he lived until 2004. Paternosto earned a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Painting Fellowship in 1972, a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Fellowship in 1980, and a grant from the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation in 1991. In his desire to conduct a systematic study of pre-Columbian sculpture, he toured Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru in 1977. Two years later, he worked at the archeological sites of Cuzco and Nazca, and joined similar projects in Mexico throughout 1986. In the vein of Torres-García, the outcome of his work resulted in university lectures, books, and catalogues in which he compares modern abstract art to Pre-Columbian art. Paternosto curated the group exhibition *Abstracción. El paradigma amerindio* held in Valencia and Brussels between 2001 and 2

Work

Paternosto's early work drew from abstract expressionist painting but, impressed by the work of Joaquín Torres-García and Madí art, he soon turned to geometric art. His style then evolved towards a form of concrete art defined as sensitive geometry. These works were characterized by extreme delicacy of color and a subtle irregularity of form. In the

late 1960s, Paternosto experimented with the expressive qualities of the canvas's edge and transformed the painting into an object, therefore modifying the viewer's traditional standpoint. Since he began exploring pre-Columbian geometric decorative elements in 1977, Paternosto has strived to combine modern geometric art with sacred forms of ancient American art. These vivid, fragile, brilliant works are intersected by thin strips and lines that seem to transcend the painting's boundaries.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1962 Galería Rubbers Internacional, Buenos Aires
- 1973 Galerie Denise René, New York [catalogue]
- 1974 Galerie Denise René Rive Gauche, Paris [catalogue]
- 1981 *Paintings, 1969–1980*, Center for Inter-American Relations, New York [catalogue]
- 1984 *New Paintings*, Mary-Anne Fine Art, New York [catalogue]
- 1987 *Obras 1961/1987*, Fundación San Telmo, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1995 *Paintings, Sculpture & Works on Paper*, Cecilia de Torres Gallery, New York
- 1998 *North and South Connected. An Abstraction of the Americas*, Cecilia de Torres Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 2002 *César Paternosto, Cecilia Vicuña. DIS SOLVING: Threads of Water and Light*, The Drawing Center's Drawing Room, New York [catalogue]
- 2004 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Esteban Vicente, Segovia [catalogue]
- 2004 *Marginalidades, desplazamientos, hilos de agua, contrapuntos. 19 poemas de L'Allegria (1914–1919) de Giuseppe Ungaretti*, Galería Jorge Mara - La Ruche, Buenos Aires; Dan Galería, São Paulo
- 2006 *Marginalidad, desplazamientos y ritmos*, Galería Guillermo de Osma, Madrid [catalogue]
- 2007 Artur Ramon Art Contemporani, Barcelona [catalogue]
- 2008 *Obras recientes*, Galería Jorge Mara - La Ruche, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 2010 *Pintura. La visión integral*, Galería Guillermo de Osma, Madrid [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1967 *Visión elemental. Las formas no ilusionistas*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1988–90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2001–2 *Abstracción. El paradigma amerindio*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Valencia; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels
- 2002 *50 años de pintura geométrica latinoamericana*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, Buenos Aires
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]

- 2008 *Forma, línea, gesto, escritura. Aspectos del dibujo en América del Sur*, Museu Valencià de la Il·lustració i de la Modernitat, Valencia
- 2008 *High Times, Hard Times. New York Painting 1967–1975*, Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe
- 2010 *Bright Geometry. Abstract Geometric Paintings and Sculptures by Artists from Argentina and Uruguay*, Cecilia de Torres Gallery, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn
- 2010 *Realidad y Utopía - Argentinien künstlerischer Weg in die Gegenwart*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, United States

Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville, Spain

Centro Wifredo Lam, Havana, Cuba

Colección FEMSA (Fomento Económico Mexicano S.A.), Monterrey, Mexico

Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Guggenheim Museum, New York, United States

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., United States

Kunstmuseum Bern, Bern, Switzerland

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Esteban Vicente, Segovia, Spain

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Sofía Imber, Caracas, Venezuela

Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain

Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes, La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain

Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., United States

Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach, Germany

The Menil Collection, Houston, Texas, United States

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

University of Texas, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 355–357; BIB. C) 37

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 79, 149, 181

Prati, Lidy

Argentine painter, designer, and art critic, Lidy (Lidia) Elena Prati was born on January 9, 1921, in Resistencia, Chaco, and died on August 19, 2008, in Buenos Aires.

Biography

Though Prati did not receive formal training, she studied with artist Tomás Maldonado, whom she wedded in 1944. That same year, she designed the layout for the first and only issue of *Arturo. Revista de las Artes Abstractas*. Co-founder of the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción created in 1945, she signed the *Manifiesto Invencionista* the following year and took part in several group exhibitions. In 1951, she worked as a contributor to *Nueva Visión. Revista de Cultura Visual*, a magazine founded by Tomás Maldonado. Prati traveled to Europe in 1952 and encountered international figures of concrete art such as Georges Vantongerloo. That same year she joined the Grupo de Artistas Modernos de la Argentina, endorsed by Aldo Pellegrini, and showcased her work at group shows in Rio de Janeiro and Amsterdam. Prati worked as an art critic throughout the 1970s.

Work

Prati was one of the few women to practice concrete art in the 1940s. She explored a vast repertoire of geometric forms, color strips, and juxtaposed shapes. In the mid-1950s, she abandoned painting and devoted herself to graphic, textile, and jewelry design.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1942 Salón Peuser, Buenos Aires
1951 *arte concreto. exposición de pinturas, esculturas, dibujos. enio iommi. tomás maldonado. lidy prati*, Instituto de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
1954 *Asociación Amigos de Ver y Estimar*, Buenos Aires
2009 *Yente (Eugenia Crenovich). Prati*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1952 *Grupo de artistas modernos de la Argentina. Pinturas, esculturas, dibujos*, Viau Galería de Arte, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
1963 *Veinte años de arte concreto*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
1980 *Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Invencción, Arte Madí, Perceptismo*, Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
1994–95 *Art from Argentina 1920–1994*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford [traveling exhibition]
2003–4 *Arte abstracto argentino*, Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires
2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]

- 2007 *Cubismo y tendencias afines*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Alicante; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn
2010 *Realidad y Utopía - Argentinien*, künstlerischer Weg in die Gegenwart, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires, Argentina
The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 361

Tomasello, Luis

Argentine painter of Italian origin, Luis R. Tomasello was born on November 29, 1915, in La Plata, Buenos Aires, and currently lives in Paris.

Biography

Tomasello worked with his father as a bricklayer, carpenter, and painter. He went to the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes Prilidiano Pueyrredón in Buenos Aires from 1932 to 1938 and continued his studies at the Escuela Superior de Bellas Artes Ernesto de la Cárcova from 1940 to 1944. Before traveling to Europe for the first time in 1951, he met painters Emilio Pettoruti and Carmelo Arden Quin. He stayed in Paris for six months in 1951 before settling permanently in the city in 1957.

Work

Though Tomasello's early paintings and drawings may seem figurative, they were in fact based on geometric structures and influenced by Cézanne's theories. Tomasello explored geometric abstraction and carried out kinetic experiments on flat surfaces, developments he further pursued after he moved to Paris in 1957. His kinetic reliefs, consisting of sequences of black and white polyhedral elements arranged over blank surfaces, generated virtual movement and visual illusions. From the 1960s on, he experimented with light and shadow effects, the outcome of which was a prolific series entitled *Atmosphère chromoplastique*. These kinetic reliefs and plastic objects featured square shapes and wood rods cut at various levels and thickness. In the early 1980s, he pierced lines and small geometric shapes through black monochrome reliefs.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1962 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires
1962 Galerie Denise René, Paris [catalogue]
1966 Galerie Denise René, Paris [catalogue]
1972 *Œuvres récentes*, Galerie Denise René, Paris [catalogue]
1973 *Recent works*, Galerie Denise René, New York [catalogue]
1976 Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris; Galerie d'Art Les Ateliers du Grand-Hornu, Hornu, Belgium; Galerie Nouvelles Images, The Hague, Holland [catalogue]
1978 Galerie Latzer, Kreuzlingen
1981 Musée Réattu, Arles [catalogue]
1985 Museo Español de Arte Contemporáneo, Madrid [catalogue]
1987 La Galería, Quito [catalogue]
1988 *Œuvres anciennes et récentes*, Galerie Carlhian, Paris [catalogue]
1991 Centre Culturel Noroit, Arras, Pas-de-Calais [catalogue]
1994 *Luis Tomasello oggi. Atmosfere cromoplastiche*, Galleria Arte Struktura, Milan [catalogue]
1995 *Una mano enamorada*, Galleria Civica, Palazzo Todeschini, Desenzano del Garda [catalogue]
2003 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
2004 *Muestra antológica*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, Buenos Aires
2009 Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
2009 *Recent Work*, Sicardi Gallery, Houston, Texas
2009 Casa de la Américas, Galería Latinoamericana, Havana
2010 Mayor Gallery, London [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1965 *The Responsive Eye*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
1975 *12 Latin American Artists Today - 12 artistas latinoamericanos de hoy*, University of Texas, University Art Museum, Austin, Texas
1992 *Confluencias. Primera exposición de artistas iberoamericanos en Europa*, Centro de Exposiciones y Congresos, Zaragoza
2002 *50 años de pintura geométrica latinoamericana*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, Buenos Aires
2003 *Desde la geometría. 2 + 10*, Salas Nacionales de Exposición, Palais de Glace, Buenos Aires
2005 *Circuit #1. 2005/2006*, Musée d'art contemporain du Val-de-Marne, Vitry-sur-Seine
2006 *Geometrías animadas*, Arte y Naturaleza Centro de Arte, Madrid
2007 *Lo[s] cinético[s]*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
2007 *Op art*, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt
2008–9 *Explorando el Sur. El universalismo constructivo y otras tendencias en América Latina*, Fundación Carlos de Amberes, Madrid; Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz

- 2009 *De la Abstracción... al Arte Cinético*, Casa de las Américas, Havana

Museums and collections

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, United States
Arithmeum, Bonn, Germany
Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba
Colección FEMSA (Fomento Económico Mexicano S.A.), Monterrey, Mexico
Fonds régional d'art contemporain d'Ile-de-France Le Plateau, Paris, France
Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
Galerij Suvremene Umjestnosti, Zagreb, Croatia
Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, Holland
Musée d'art et d'industrie, Saint-Étienne, France
Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France
Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
Musée Réattu, Arles, France
Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Rosario, Rosario, Argentina
Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Museo de Arte Moderno, Medellín, Colombia
Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela
Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende, Santiago, Chile
Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes Juan B. Castagnino, Rosario, Argentina
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts, Vienna, Austria
Museum für Konkrete Kunst, Ingolstadt, Germany
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
Muzeum Sztuki, Łódź, Poland
Städtisches Museum Schloss Morsbroich, Leverkusen, Germany

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 452

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 7, 9, 486

Brazil

Barsotti, Hércules

Brazilian painter, draughtsman, graphic and stage designer, Hércules Rubens Barsotti was born on July 20, 1914, in São Paulo, where he currently lives.

Biography

Starting in 1926, Barsotti studied drawing and composition with Henrique Vio in São Paulo and undertook studies in chemistry at the Instituto Mackenzie in 1937. In 1954, together with Willys de Castro, he founded the advertising design consultancy Estúdio de Projetos Gráficos. Introduced by art critic Ferreira Gullar, Barsotti joined Grupo Neoconcreto in Rio de Janeiro and exhibited his work at their group shows. He co-founded the Associação de Artes Visuais Novas Tendências de São Paulo in 1963. Among other awards, he received First Prize at the Bienal de São Paulo in 1959.

Work

Barsotti's early work from the 1940s consisted of geometric abstract designs. While working as a textile and theater costume designer in the 1950s, he came into contact with artists drawn to concrete art. Towards 1960, he worked with monochrome black and white planes, emphasizing the subtle geometric spatial relations that exist between them. Barsotti's departure from these contrasting compositions of black and white planes in 1963 gave way to his experiments with color and unconventional media to create a sense of movement and volume.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1974 *Obras recentes*, Galeria Arte Global, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1981 *Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud Babenco*, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1988 *Aventuras da ordem: Hércules Barsotti e Willys de Castro*, Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1998 *Desenhos, 1953–1960*, Galeria Sylvio Nery, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2004 Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo

Selected group exhibitions

- 1959 V Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 XIX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2000 *Heterotopias. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte

- Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2006 *Cruce de miradas. Visiones de América Latina. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2010 *Das Verlangen nach Form – O Desejo da Forma. Neoconcretismo und zeitgenössische Kunst aus Brasilien*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

- Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela
- Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
- Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte de Brasília, Brasília, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
- The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States
- The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 48, 75

Camargo, Sergio

Brazilian painter and sculptor, Sérgio Camargo was born on April 8, 1930, in Rio de Janeiro and died in December 1990 in the same city.

Biography

Camargo enrolled at the Academia Altamira in Buenos Aires in 1946, where he studied with Emilio Pettoruti and Lucio Fontana. Two years later, he undertook studies in philosophy with Gaston Bachelard at the Sorbonne in Paris. He also attended the Académie de la Grande Chaumière, where he met Constantin Brancusi, Hans (Jean) Arp, and Georges Vantongerloo. Camargo returned to Brazil in

1953 and traveled to China the following year. In 1961, upon returning to Paris, he studied at the École Pratique des Hautes Études under Pierre Francastel. He settled in Rio de Janeiro in 1974. Notable awards include the International Prize for Sculpture at the 1963 Paris Biennial, the Best Brazilian Sculptor Award at the 1965 Bienal de São Paulo, and the São Paulo Association of Critics Award to the Best Sculpture Exhibition of 1977.

Work

In 1954, Camargo executed his first figurative sculptures in bronze. He experimented with irregular structures made of sand, plaster, and fabric in the early 1960s and began the impressive series *Relevos* (Reliefs) in 1963. This series consisted of small wood cylinders arranged across a surface in various sequences and positions. In 1965, Camargo completed a wall relief for the headquarters of the Ministério das Relações Exteriores in Brasília, housed in the building known as Palácio do Itamaraty designed by Oscar Niemeyer. During this period, he produced free-standing sculptures and began using Carrara marble, his preferred medium together with black granite from the 1970s onwards. Among his large-scale works for public spaces is the column *Homagem a Brancusi* (Homage to Brancusi) in Bordeaux, completed in 1972.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1953 Galeria Gea, Rio de Janeiro
- 1964 *First One-man Show in Europe*, Signals London, London [catalogue]
- 1966 Signals London, London [catalogue]
- 1967 Galleria la Polena, Genoa [catalogue]
- 1967 Galleria del Naviglio, Milan [catalogue]
- 1968 Gimpel & Hanover Galerie, Zurich; Gimpel Fils Gallery, London [catalogue]
- 1968 *Reliefs*, Galerie Buchholz, Munich [brochure]
- 1969 *White Reliefs*, Gimpel & Weitzenhoffer Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 1970 Gimpel Fils Gallery, London [catalogue]
- 1971 *Reliefs aus Holz*, Galerie Buchholz, Munich [brochure]
- 1972 Estudio Actual, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1974 Gimpel Fils Gallery, London [catalogue]
- 1974 Museu de Arte Moderna, Mexico City
- 1975 *Relevos e esculturas (1963–1975)*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1977 Gabinete de Artes Gráficas, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1980 Espaço Arte Brasileira Contemporânea, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1981 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1981 *Volumi bianchi*, Centro Iniziative Culturali Pordenone, Pordenone [catalogue]
- 1982 *Marble Sculptures*, Gimpel Fils Gallery, London [catalogue]
- 1982 *Sculptures récentes*, Galerie Bellechasse, Paris [catalogue]
- 1983 *Morfoses*, Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud Babenco, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1985 Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1987 *Esculturas*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]

- 1994–95 *Esculturas*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon; Henie-Onstad Kunstsenter, Høvikodden, Oslo; Charlottenborg Museum, Copenhagen; Stedelijk Museum Schiedam, Schiedam [catalogue]
- 1997 *Construção*, Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1999 Palácio do Itamaraty, Brasília [catalogue]
- 2000 *Mira Schendel. Sergio Camargo. Willys de Castro*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2008 *Amilcar de Castro e Sergio Camargo. Obras em madeira*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2010 *Claro enigma*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo

Selected group exhibitions

- 1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1963 VII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1965 VIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1966 XXXIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1968 documenta 4, Kassel
- 1975 *12 Latin American Artists Today - 12 artistas latinoamericanos de hoy*, University of Texas, University Art Museum, Austin, Texas
- 1982 XL Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2000 *Heterotopias. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2001 *Experiment - Experiência. Art in Brazil, 1958–2000*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford
- 2001–2 *Brazil: Body & Soul*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2006 *Amilcar de Castro, Mira Schendel, Sergio Camargo, Willys de Castro*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo
- 2007 *New Perspectives in Latin American Art*, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2007 *Campo ampliado*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo

- 2008 *Time & Place. Rio de Janeiro 1956–1964*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 2009 *De la Abstracción... al Arte Cinético*, Casa de las Américas, Havana
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

- Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba
- Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
- Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., United States
- Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
- Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Villa Croce, Genoa, Italy
- Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
- Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Tate Gallery, London, Great Britain
- The Courtauld Institute of Art, London, Great Britain
- The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 71, 73, 76, 77

Charoux, Lothar

Brazilian painter, draughtsman, and print-maker of Austrian origin, Lothar Charoux was born on February 5, 1912, in Vienna and died in February 1987 in São Paulo.

Biography

Charoux emigrated to Brazil in 1928 and studied painting at the Liceu de Artes e Ofícios in São Paulo. In 1952 he co-founded Grupo Ruptura, bringing together the leading artists of the Brazilian concrete movement, and in 1963 he launched the Associação de Artes Visuais Novas Tendências in São Paulo.

Work

Influenced by *Gestalt* psychology, Charoux's extensive series of paintings and drawings focused on the psychological factors that determine the spectator's perception of form.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1947 Galeria Itapetininga, São Paulo
- 1958 *Lygia Clark, Franz Weissmann, Lothar Charoux*, Galeria de Artes das Folhas, São Paulo

- 1974 *Retrospectiva*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo; Museu de Arte, Rio de Janeiro
- 1986 *Lothar Charoux e Sacilotto*, Centro Cultural do Bairro Assunção, São Bernardo do Campo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2005 *A poética da linha*, Dan Galeria, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2010 *Entre vida e obra*, Caixa Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo

Selected group exhibitions

- 1966 *Seis pesquisadores da arte visual. Alberto Aliberti, Heinz Kühn, Hermelindo Fiaminghi, Kazmer Fejer, Lothar Charoux, Sylvia Mara Gueller*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1973 XII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 2000–2 *Brasil 1920–1950. De la antropofagia a Brasília*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Centre Julio González, Valencia; Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo
- 2002 *Grupo Ruptura. Arte concreta paulista. Revisitando a exposição inaugural*, Centro Universitário Maria Antonia da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

- Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 36

Links

www.lotharcharoux.com.br

Clark, Lygia

Brazilian sculptress, painter, and performance artist, Lygia (or Lígia) Clark was born on October 23, 1923, in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, and died on April 25, 1988, in Rio de Janeiro.

Biography

Clark began studying landscape architecture with Roberto Burle Marx in 1947, continuing her studies from 1950 to 1952 with Fernand Léger, Isaac Dobrinsky, and Arpad Szènes in Paris. In 1952, she received the New Artist Federico Schmidt Prize awarded by the Foreign Office of Brazil. Co-founder of Grupo Frente in Rio de Janeiro in 1953, she also helped establish Grupo Neoconcreto in 1959 and signed the *Manifiesto Neoconcreto*. From 1970 to 1975, Clark taught at the Sorbonne in Paris. On her return to Brazil, she worked as a psychologist and published articles on the use of modulated sculptures and viewer interaction. Among her distinctions are the 1958 and 1960 Guggenheim International Awards and the 1962 Premio Internacional del Instituto Di Tella, Buenos Aires. Founded in Rio de Janeiro in 2001, Associação Cultural O Mundo de Lygia Clark aims to promote the life and work of the artist.

Work

In the series *Superfícies moduladas* (Modulated Surfaces) and *Contrarelievos* (Counter-reliefs), dating from the mid to late 1950s, Clark explored the significance of the plane as a structural component. From here, her interest gradually shifted to sculpture. In 1960 she proclaimed the "death of the plane," claiming it did not stimulate interaction between the work and its surrounding environment. She then produced her first reliefs, which resemble folded sheets of paper, and a series of modulated sculptures entitled *Bichos* (Creatures). These metal structures are held together by hinges the spectator was free to alter and rearrange. In the 1960s she began executing a series of works entitled *Goings*.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1952 Institute Endoplastique, Paris
- 1958 *Lygia Clark, Franz Weissmann, Lothar Charoux*, Galeria de Artes das Folhas, São Paulo
- 1960 *29 esculturas*, Galeria Bonino, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1963 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1965 *First London Exhibition of Abstract Reliefs and Articulated Sculpture*, Signals London, London [brochure]
- 1968 Galerie M. E. Thele, Essen [brochure]
- 1986 *Hélio Oiticica, Lygia Clark*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro; Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1994 *Hélio Oiticica, Lygia Clark*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Salvador da Bahia [catalogue]
- 1997–98 Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona; MAC, Galeries contemporaines des Musées de Marseille, Marseille; Fundação de Serralves, Porto; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels [catalogue]
- 1998 Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1999 Galeria Brito Cimino, São Paulo [catalogue]

- 1999 *L. Clark, H. Oiticica, L. Pape*, Conjunto Cultural da Caixa Econômica Federal, Brasília [catalogue]
- 2004 *Exposição pensamento mudo*, Dan Galeria, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2005 *Lygia Clark, de l'oeuvre à l'événement. Nous sommes le moule, à vous de donner le souffle*, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes [catalogue]
- 2008 *Katarzyna Kobro, Lygia Clark*, Muzeum Sztuki, Łódź [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1959 V Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 XXX Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1962 XXXI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1963 VII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1967 VIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo São Paulo
- 1967 *Nova objectividade brasileira*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 1968 XXXIV Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1988–90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 1994 XXII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo (Sala Especial), São Paulo
- 1996 *L'informe, mode d'emploi*, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris
- 1996 *Inside the Visible. An Elliptical Traverse of Twentieth Century Art in, of, and from the Feminine*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Massachusetts
- 1997 documenta X, Kassel
- 1998 XXIV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1999 *La casa, il corpo, il cuore. Konstruktion der Identitäten*, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna
- 1999 *The Experimental Exercise of Freedom. Lygia Clark, Gego, Mathias Goeritz, Hélio Oiticica and Mira Schendel*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

- 2000 *Heterotopias. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968; F(r)icciones*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2000 *Vivências*, Generali Foundation, Vienna
- 2001 7. Istanbul Biennial
- 2001 *Geometric Abstraction. Latin American Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 2001–2 *Brazil: Body & Soul*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao
- 2002 *Além dos pré-conceitos. Experimentos dos anos 60*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 2003 *Cuasi-corporus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2003 *Geometrías. Abstracción geométrica latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires
- 2003 *Pulse. Art, Healing, and Transformation*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Massachusetts
- 2004 *Beyond Geometry. Experiments in Form, 1940s–70s*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles
- 2004 *Brazil. Body Nostalgia*, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2005–7 *Tropicália: A Revolution in Brazilian Culture (1967–1972)*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Barbican Art Gallery, London; Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbon; The Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, New York
- 2006 *Cruce de miradas. Visiones de América Latina. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2006 *Manobras radicais*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, São Paulo
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2007 *New Perspectives in Latin American Art*, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2007 *Feedback. Arte que responde a instrucciones, a inputs, o a su entorno*, LABoral, Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial, Gijón
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Time & Place. Rio de Janeiro 1956–1964*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 2008 *Diálogo concreto design e construtivismo no Brasil*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro
- 2008 *Face to Face. The Daros Collections*, Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich

- 2008 *The Art of Participation. 1950 to Now*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco
- 2008-9 *Neo Tropicália. When Lives become Form. Contemporary Brazilian Art, 1960s to the Present*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima
- 2009 *Fare mundi / Making Worlds*, LIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 2010 *Tropicália. Die 60s in Brasilien*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna
- 2010 *Das Verlangen nach Form – O Desejo da Forma. Neoconcretismo und zeitgenössische Kunst aus Brasilien*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin
- 2010 *Modern Women. Women Artists at the Museum of Modern Art*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

- 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan
- Associação Cultural “O Mundo de Lygia Clark”, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Daros-Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland
- Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
- Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble, France
- Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
- Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Museo de Arte Moderno, La Paz, Bolivia
- Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende, Santiago, Chile
- Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
- The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States
- The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 152

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 11, 43, 52, 53, 59, 70, 71, 75, 111, 129, 136, 140, 148, 157, 195, 300, 310, 325, 332, 337, 338, 383, 391, 392, 398, 422, 437, 448, 474; BIB. C) 2, 40

Cordeiro, Waldemar

Brazilian painter, sculptor, landscape architect, art critic, and journalist of Italian origin,

Waldemar Cordeiro was born on April 12, 1925, in Rome and died on June 30, 1973, in São Paulo.

Biography

Cordeiro studied at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome. In 1949, he emigrated to Brazil and earned a living as a painter, art critic, and journalist at *Folha da Manhã* in São Paulo, where he met artists Geraldo de Barros, Lothar Charoux, and Luiz Sacilotto. In 1952 he co-founded Grupo Ruptura, a group that supported concrete art, and in 1953 he met Tomás Maldonado in Buenos Aires. Cordeiro staged the first *Exposição Nacional de Arte Concreta* in 1956. As Grupo Ruptura's main theoretician, he supported the group's rationalist position, openly opposed to the principles put forward by the Rio group led by art critic Ferreira Gullar. Cordeiro was the first Brazilian artist to experiment with electronic technology in the late 1960s and to organize an international group exhibition showcasing this new form of art. This show, entitled *Arteônica*, was held at the Museu de Arte Brasileira de la Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado in São Paulo in 1971. Cordeiro is the only Brazilian to have entered the Computer Art Society in London. Among his awards are the 1959 Prêmio Leirner de Arte Contemporânea, and the 1965 and 1967 Prêmio Itamaraty awarded at the Bienal de São Paulo.

Work

Cordeiro began his career painting in a figurative and expressive style. Transforming rigid geometric forms into free sequences throughout the late 1940s, he became a pioneer of concrete art in Brazil. From 1957 to 1959, in the series *Idéias visíveis*, he developed a type of abstract painting based on structural principles and logical concepts. In 1964, Cordeiro began blending features of pop and concrete art, creating a style of his own known as “pop creto.” He then returned to neo-figurative art and, towards the end of his career, experimented with digital and computer graphic design. Convinced of the important role art plays in society, he took part in over one hundred and fifty urban planning projects between 1950 and 1973.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1959 Galeria de Artes das Folhas, São Paulo
- 1964 *Waldemar Cordeiro. Augusto de Campos*, Galeria Atrium, São Paulo
- 1965 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [brochure]
- 1968 *Oeuvres 1965–1968*, Galerie Debret, Paris
- 1969 Galleria d'Arte della Casa do Brazil, Rome
- 1983 Centro Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1986 *Uma aventura da razão*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2001 Galeria Brito Cimino, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2002 *Waldemar Cordeiro e a fotografia*, Centro Universitário Maria Antonia da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1949 *Do figurativismo ao abstraccionismo*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1959 V Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1963 VII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1965 VIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1967 IX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1967 *Nova objectividade brasileira*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 1973 XII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1975 XIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 1997 I Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
- 1999 *Técnica cotidiano/arte*, Instituto Itaú Cultural, São Paulo
- 2000 *Heterotopias. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2002 *Grupo Ruptura. Arte concreta paulista. Revisitando a exposição inaugural*, Centro Universitário Maria Antonia da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2003 *Aproximações do espírito pop, 1963–1968. Waldemar Cordeiro, Antonio Dias, Wesley Duke Lee, Nelson Leirner*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2005 *Visualidades/técnicas. Danilo di Prete, Luiz Sacilotto, Marcello Nitsche, Gilberto Salvador, Waldemar Cordeiro*, Instituto Cervantes, São Paulo
- 2005–7 *Tropicália. A Revolution in Brazilian Culture (1967–1972)*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Barbican Art Gallery, London; Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbon; The

Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, New York

- 2006 *Espaço aberto, espaço fechado. Sites for Sculpture in Modern Brazil*, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Diálogo concreto – Design e construtivismo no Brasil*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte de Brasília, Brasília, Brazil

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 113–114; BIB. C) 14

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 36, 75, 148, 317, 446; BIB. C) 16

De Barros, Geraldo

Brazilian photographer, painter, printmaker, and designer, Geraldo de Barros was born on February 27, 1923, in Chavantes, São Paulo, and died on April 17, 1998, in São Paulo.

Biography

De Barros enrolled at the Associação Paulista de Belas Artes in 1946 and undertook studies in painting. Two years later, he founded the movement Grupo XV, formed by young artists drawn to post-impressionism. In 1949, he joined Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante in São Paulo, an association influenced by pictorialism. That same year, he began teaching at the Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand photo lab. A scholarship from the French government in 1951 gave him the chance to study painting and lithography at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts. He was co-founder of Grupo Ruptura, a group of artists from São Paulo

that paved the way for concrete art in Brazil. In 1954, De Barros established the cooperative Unilabor for the design and production of modern furniture. Drawn to pop art during the 1960s, he worked with Nelson Leirner organizing art-related events and promoting new tendencies.

Work

De Barros's interest in photographic techniques led him to abstract art. By isolating motifs and superimposing different images, the subject matter lost importance giving way to abstract geometric patterns with a somewhat urban feel. He continued exploring the possibilities of modern photography and, together with other photographers, founded the school commonly referred to as Escola Paulista. The Unilabor furniture was featured in various abstract compositions. The series *Sobras* (Leftovers) marked De Barros's return to photography after a period of long absence.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1950 *Fotoformas*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo
- 1965 Museu de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1976 *12 anos de pintura, 1964 a 1976*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1987 Tschudi Galerie, Glarus, Switzerland [brochure]
- 1993 *Peintre et photographe*, Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne
- 1994 *Fotógrafo*, Museu da Imagem e do Som, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1996 *Precursor*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1999 *MMA Collection*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1999–2000 *Fotoformas*, Museum Ludwig, Cologne; SESC Pompéia, São Paulo; Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne [catalogue]
- 2001 The Americas Society, New York [catalogue]
- 2005 *Javier Pérez. Geraldo de Barros*, Galerie Guy Bärtschi, Geneva
- 2006 *Fotoformas. Fotografias - Photographies*, Museu da Imagem e do Som, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2008 *Free, Freed and Freeing*, Sicardi Gallery, Houston, Texas [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1955 *Incisioni e disegni Brasiliani*, Villa Ciani, Lugano
- 1956 XXVIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1967 IX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1967 *Nova objectividade brasileira*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo

- 1979 XV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1986 XLII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1991 XXI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1992 *Brasilien. Entdeckung und Selbstentdeckung*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 1999 *Brasilianische Fotografie 1946–1998. Labirinto e Identidades*, Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg
- 2000 *Heterotopias. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2000–2 *Brasil 1920–1950. De la antropofagia a Brasília*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Centre Julio González, Valencia; Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo
- 2002 *Grupo Ruptura. Arte concreta paulista. Revisitando a exposição inaugural*, Centro Universitário Maria Antonia da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2006 *Cruce de miradas. Visiones de América Latina. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Diálogo concreto – Design e construtivismo no Brasil*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro
- 2009 *Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante. 70 Anos*, Centro Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2009 *Experimentaciones. La experiencia concreta y neoconcreta en la fotografía brasileña*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Parque Forestal y Espacio ArteAbierto de Fundación Itaú, Santiago [traveling exhibition]
- 2010 *Moderna para sempre. Fotografia modernista brasileira na Coleção Itaú*, Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul Ado Malagoli, Porto Alegre
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn
- 2010 *Constructive Spirit. Abstract Art in South and North America, 1920s–50s*, Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey; Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

Museums and collections

Caixa Geral de Depósitos, Lisbon, Portugal

Centro Português de Fotografia, Porto, Portugal

Coleção Pirelli/MASP de Fotografia, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble, France
 Musée de l'Élysée, Lausanne, Switzerland
 Museu da Imagem e do Som, São Paulo, Brazil
 Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
 Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Campinas José Pancetti, Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil
 Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
 Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany
 Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
 Museu Oscar Niemeyer, Curitiba, Brazil
 Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
 The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 36, 115, 139, 147, 303

De Castro, Amilcar

Brazilian sculptor, draughtsman, graphic artist and designer, Amilcar Augusto Ferreira de Castro Filho was born on July 8, 1920, in Paraisópolis, Minas Gerais, and died on November 22, 2002, in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais.

Biography

From 1941 to 1945, De Castro read Law at the Universidad Federal de Minas Gerais in Belo Horizonte. From 1944 to 1950 he also studied design and painting with Alberto da Veiga Guignard and figurative sculpture with Franz Weissmann at the Escola de Arquitetura e Belas Artes, Belo Horizonte. De Castro moved to Rio de Janeiro in the early 1950s and earned a living as a graphic designer at *Jornal do Brasil* newspaper. Thanks to a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, De Castro was able to live in the United States from 1968 to 1971. He settled in Belo Horizonte in the 1970s and worked as a teacher at the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, a position he held until he retired in 1999. Among other awards, he won First Prize at the Salão Nacional de Arte Moderna in Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, in 1962.

Work

His sculptures from the 1950s drew from constructivism. With the aim of reducing the volume of his sculptures, he cut and bent iron sheets. By manipulating iron, he sought to demonstrate the material was in fact flexible. Although he continued to develop this line of work well into the 1970s, graphic design eventually became his main area of interest. He used a coding system when referring to his sculpture: "Cut and bent sculpture from a square iron sheet" (also, "from a

round sheet, a horizontal rectangular sheet, a vertical rectangular sheet," and finally "in an irregular format"). He also designed works for public spaces at Confins International Airport, Minas Gerais, and Hellersdorf neighborhood in Berlin.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1969 Kornblee Gallery, New York
- 1979 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 1986 Museu da Inconfidência, Ouro Preto
- 1989 Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro
- 1990 Thomas Cohn Arte Contemporânea, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1994 *Precisão. Amilcar de Castro, Eduardo Sued, Waltercio Caldas*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1996 *Influências poéticas. Dez desenhistas contemporâneos. Amilcar de Castro e Mira Schendel*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro; Grande Galeria do Palácio das Artes, Belo Horizonte [catalogue]
- 1996 Museu Victor Meireles, Florianópolis
- 1999 *Desenhos e esculturas*, Centro de Arte Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2000 *80 anos*, Thomas Cohn Arte contemporânea, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2002 *Desenhos e esculturas. Tangenciando Amilcar*, Santander Cultural, Porto Alegre [catalogue]
- 2002 Armazém 5, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2005 Espace Brésil Carreau du Temple, Paris [catalogue]
- 2005 Galeria Millan, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2005–6 *Uma retrospectiva*, Fundação Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre; Museu Oscar Niemeyer, Curitiba [catalogue]
- 2008 *Amilcar de Castro e Sergio Camargo. Obras em madeira*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2009 *Desenho e design. Amilcar de Castro e Willys de Castro*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1959 V Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1963 VII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1979 XV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo (Special Room), São Paulo
- 1985 *Uma questão de ordem*, Galeria de Arte Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro
- 1987 XIX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo (Special Room), São Paulo
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1988–90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 1989 XX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 1995 *Entre o desenho e a escultura*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 1998 *Teoria dos valores*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2003 *Quasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museu de Arte Contemporâneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museu de Arte Contemporâneo, Monterrey
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2006 *Amilcar de Castro, Mira Schendel, Sergio Camargo, Willys de Castro*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2007 *Campo ampliado*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Arte para crianças*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2008 *Diálogo concreto – Design e construtivismo na Brasil*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro
- 2008 *Time & Place. Rio de Janeiro 1956–1964*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 2010 *Das Verlangen nach Form – O Desejo da Forma. Neoconcretismo und zeitgenössische Kunst aus Brasilien*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Caixa Econômica Federal, Belo Horizonte, Brazil
 Câmara de Vereadores, Belo Horizonte, Brazil
 Casa de Cultura Amilcar de Castro, Paraisópolis, Brazil
 Centro de Arte Contemporânea Inhotim, Brumadinho, Brazil
 Fundação José e Paulina Nemirovsky, Santa Efigênia, São Paulo, Brazil
 Hakone Open-Air Museum, Hakone, Japan
 Museu de Arte da Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, Brazil
 Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
 Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
 Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
 Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
 University of Essex Collection of Latin American Art, Colchester, Great Britain

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 4, 75, 78, 95, 104, 133, 136, 186, 189, 349, 425, 441

Links

www.amilcardecastro.com

De Castro, Willys

Brazilian painter, draughtsman, printmaker, graphic and stage designer, Willys de Castro was born in 1926 in Uberlândia, Minas Gerais, and died in São Paulo in 1988.

Biography

De Castro began studying industrial design in 1941 and later pursued studies in chemistry until 1948. Together with Hércules Barsotti, he founded the advertising design consultancy Estúdio de Projetos Gráficos in 1954 and joined Grupo Neoconcreto in Rio de Janeiro in 1959.

Work

In the early 1950s, De Castro's paintings and textile designs were inspired by abstract art. Between 1959 and 1962, he worked on the series *Objetos ativos* (Active Objects). In order to grasp a general view of these apparently three-dimensional pieces, the spectator is required to contemplate their various fragments from successive viewpoints and subsequently associate the colored sides of the work. This series was followed by *Pluriobjetos* in the 1970s, a composition of vertical stainless steel sheets that transpose segments of color from one plane to another.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1983 Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud Babenco, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1988 *Aventuras da ordem: Hércules Barsotti e Willys de Castro*, Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1994 *Obras de 1954–1961*, Galeria Sylvio Nery, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2000 *Mira Schendel, Sergio Camargo, Willys de Castro*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2006 *The Rhythm of Color. Alejandro Otero and Willys de Castro. Two Modern Masters in the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Aspen Institute, Aspen, Colorado [catalogue]
- 2009 *Desenho e design. Amilcar de Castro e Willys de Castro*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1973 XII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do

- Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 XIX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zürich
- 2000 *Heterotopias. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2003 *Cuasi-corporus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2006 *Cruce de miradas. Visiones de América Latina. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City
- 2006 *Amilcar de Castro, Mira Schendel, Sergio Camargo, Willys de Castro*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo
- 2007 *Campo ampliado*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo
- 2007 *New Perspectives in Latin American Art*, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Diálogo concreto – Design e construtivismo no Brasil*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Das Verlangen nach Form – O Desejo da Forma. Neoconcretismo und zeitgenössische Kunst aus Brasilien*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
 Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil
 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
 Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
 Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 75, 112, 394

Farkas, Thomaz

Brazilian photographer and filmmaker of Hungarian origin, Thomaz Jorge Farkas was born on October 17, 1924, in Budapest. He lives in São Paulo.

Biography

Farkas' family emigrated to Brazil in 1930. A member of Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante since 1942, his work was featured at Brazil's first major photography exhibition, *Salão Paulista de Arte Fotográfica*, held at Galeria Prestes Maia. He studied mechanical and electrical engineering at the Polytechnic School of São Paulo until 1947 and acquired Brazilian citizenship in 1949. Together with Geraldo de Barros, he set up a photo lab at the Museu de Arte Assis Chateaubriand in São Paulo. Farkas taught photographic journalism and film studies throughout the 1960s at the Escola de Comunicação e Arte de la Universidad in São Paulo, where he earned a PhD in 1977. He was appointed president of the Conselho da Cinemateca Brasileira in 1995. The Cineclubes Thomaz Farkas was founded in 2002. Among his distinctions are the Medalha da Ordem do Mérito Cultural conferred by the Brazilian government in 2000 and the Prêmio Seguro de Fotografia de São Paulo in 2005.

Work

During the 1940s, Farkas' subject matter of choice was architecture, which allowed him abstract photographic compositions. He also produced documentaries and, as of 1958, documented the construction of Brasília, Brazil's new capital, in a series of photographs. From 1968 to 1972, Farkas made a number of documentaries on cultural and social events taking place in Brazil during the dictatorship.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1949 *Estudos fotográficos*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 1997 *A caravana Farkas. Documentários, 1964–1980*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1997 *Fotógrafo*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1999 *39 anos de fotografia, 20 anos de galeria*, Galeria ADG, Sala Thomaz Farkas, São Paulo
- 2000 *Retorno ao Fotoclube*, Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante, São Paulo
- 2002 *Fotografias de Thomaz Farkas. Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo e Brasília*, Instituto Moreira Salles, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2002 *Fotografias e lembranças*, Centro Universitário Maria Antonia da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2005 *Brasil e brasileiros no olhar de Thomaz Farkas*, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2010 *O tempo dissolvido*, Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Salvador da Bahia

- 2010 *Moderna para sempre. Fotografia modernista brasileira na Coleção Itaú*, Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul Ado Malagoli, Porto Alegre

Selected group exhibitions

- 1999 *Brasiliánische Fotografie 1946–1998. Labirinto e Identidades*, Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg
- 2001–2 *Realidades construídas. Do pictorialismo à fotografia moderna*, Itaú Cultural, Campinas, São Paulo; Itaú Cultural, Belo Horizonte
- 2003 *Cuasi-corporus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2004 *São Paulo 450 anos. A imagem e a memória da cidade no acervo do Instituto Moreira Salles*, Centro Cultural Fiesp, São Paulo
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2009 *Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante. 70 Anos*, Centro Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2009 *Experimentaciones. La experiencia concreta y neoconcreta en la fotografía brasileña*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Parque Forestal y Espacio ArteAbierto de Fundación Itaú, Santiago [traveling exhibition]
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Coleção Pirelli/MASP de Fotografia, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil
 Instituto Moreira Salles, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
 Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 143, 144

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 115, 236, 378, 449, 450

Fiaminghi, Hermelindo

The son of Italian immigrants, Brazilian painter, teacher, and advertising and graphic designer Hermelindo Fiaminghi was born on October 22, 1920, in São Paulo and died on June 29, 2004, in the same city.

Biography

Fiaminghi studied graphic art at Companhia Melhoramentos, São Paulo, in 1935 and completed his studies at the Liceu de Artes e Ofícios, which he attended from 1936 to 1941. In 1938 he enrolled in a course on descriptive geometry taught by Waldemar da Costa and subsequently studied painting and

art history with the teacher. Fiaminghi set up the business Graphstudio in 1946 but sold the studio two years later. A decade later, he opened Primeira Agência Promocional in 1956 and co-founded the company Planejamento, Divulgação e Propaganda in 1960. He became acquainted with Grupo Ruptura in 1955 and maintained close ties with concrete poets Décio Pignatari and the Campos brothers. Between 1959 and 1966, he practiced tempera painting at Alfredo Volpi's studio. Fiaminghi joined the Ateliê Coletivo do Brás with Waldemar Cordeiro, among others, in 1958–59, and in 1970 he founded the Ateliê Livre de Artes Plásticas in São José dos Campos, where he served as director and teacher. He was co-founder of the Associação de Artes Visuais Novas Tendências, established in 1963, and the association's art gallery in São Paulo. Among his awards is the 1969 Prêmio Cidade de Santo André.

Work

From 1939 onwards, Fiaminghi gradually shifted from figurative to geometric art. In addition to painting, he worked as an advertising and graphic designer. In 1953, he began incorporating circles and triangles in motion to his abstract-concrete compositions while making poem-posters of poet friends. The series *Virtual* (1958) focused on the tension that arises from the interaction between color and form, highlighting the spatial relations exposed by lithography. Beginning in 1960, Fiaminghi explored a concept he defined as *retícula corluz* ("colight reticulate") and experimented with offset printing. As his work progressed, he named all his paintings *Corluz*, followed by their corresponding number. Due to their transparent and gestural qualities, these paintings appeared to the viewer as a mass of fluctuating color. Fiaminghi also designed layouts and illustrated several books.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1961 Galeria Aremar, Campinas, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1964 Galeria Novas Tendências, São Paulo
- 1975 Galeria do Sol, São José dos Campos
- 1977 A Ponte Galeria de Arte, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1980 *Décadas 50/60/70*, Museu de Arte, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1986 Galeria São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1990 *Corluz 1990*, Galeria Montessanti-Roesler, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1992 *Corluz 91160*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo
- 1995 *Corluz*, Galeria São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1998 *Cor luz*, Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2009 *Cor luz*, Dan Galeria, São Paulo [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo

- 1959 V Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1963 VII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1965 VIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1966 *Seis pesquisadores da arte visual. Alberto Aliberti, Heinz Kühn, Hermelindo Fiaminghi, Kazmer Fejer, Lothar Charoux, Sylvia Mara Gueller*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1973 XII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo (Special room), São Paulo
- 1975 XIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Museu de Arte Brasileiro, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Prefeitura, Santo André, São Paulo, Brazil

Prefeitura, São Caetano do Sul, São Paulo, Brazil

Prefeitura, São José dos Campos, São Paulo, Brazil

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 65, 83, 84, 85

Gasparian, Gaspar

The son of Armenian immigrants, Brazilian photographer Gaspar Gasparian was born in 1899 in São Paulo and died in 1966 in the same city.

Biography

During his youth, Gasparian worked at his family's textile and clothing business, and in 1938 he established his own textile company, Lanifício Brazilia. He joined Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante in 1942 but left the association in 1950 to create Grupo dos Seis along with other artists including Fernando Palmério, Ricardo Belinazzi, Otávio Pini, and José de Amorim Júnior. Among his distinctions are the Prêmio Anchieta of the Salão Paulista de Arte Fotográfica, 1944, and the Silver Medal of Rio de Janeiro's Exposição Internacional de Arte Fotográfica, 1952.

Work

Gasparian took up photography in 1940. He portrayed his subject matter of choice—São Paulo, its buildings and street life—with great romanticism. However, other photographs by the artist dating from the late 1940s and the early 1950s depict repetitive sequences of buildings, sidewalks, and everyday objects, resulting in elaborate compositions that hint at geometric rhythms.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1990 *Um fotógrafo paulista*, Museu da Imagem e do Som, São Paulo
- 2010 *Um fotógrafo*, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo

Selected group exhibitions

- 2001–2 *Realidades construídas: do pictorialismo à fotografia moderna*, Itaú Cultural, Campinas, São Paulo; Itaú Cultural, Belo Horizonte
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2009 *Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante. 70 Anos*, Centro Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Coleção Pirelli/MASP de Fotografia, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 105, 115

Links

gaspargasparian.com

Gautherot, Marcel

Brazilian photographer of French origin, Marcel André Félix Gautherot was born on June 14, 1910, in Paris and died on October 8, 1996, in Rio de Janeiro.

Biography

Gautherot studied architecture and later pursued studies in photography. Moved by Jorge Amado's novel *Jubiabá*, he traveled to Brazil in 1940. After a brief stay in the Amazon region he settled in Rio de Janeiro. His photographs were published in several Brazilian and European journals and were also the subject of a number of books. In 1999, Instituto Moreira Salles in Rio de Janeiro acquired his body of work, comprising nearly 25,000 images.

Work

Gautherot managed photographic documents in the newly created Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional. Everyday life and the religious and pagan celebrations of the São Francisco River region were his subject matter of choice during the 1940s. Together with photographer Pierre Verger, he documented modern and colonial architecture and, in the late 1950s, photographed Brasília's new architecture with particular attention to geometric structures. Although black and white photographs make up most of his oeuvre, he took color photos from the 1970s onwards.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1996 *Retratos da Bahia. Fotografias*, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2001 *O Brasil de Marcel Gautherot*, Instituto Moreira Salles, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2007 *O olho fotográfico. Marcel Gautherot e seu tempo*, Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado, Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2010 Instituto Moreira Salles, São Paulo

Selected group exhibitions

- 1992 *Das Brasilien der Brasilianer. Zeitgenössische Brasilianische Photographie 1945–1990*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 2000 *Brasil + 500. Mostra do Redescobrimento*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 2000–2 *Brasil 1920–1950. De la antropofagia a Brasília*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Centre Julio González, Valencia; Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo
- 2004 *São Paulo 450 anos: a imagem e a memória da cidade no acervo do Instituto*

- Moreira Salles*, Centro Cultural Fiesp, São Paulo
- 2009 *Hot Spots: Rio de Janeiro / Milan – Turin / Los Angeles, 1956–1969*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 2010 *Das Verlangen nach Form – O Desejo da Forma. Neoconcretismo und zeitgenössische Kunst aus Brasilien*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Coleção Pirelli/MASP de Fotografia, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

Fundação Oscar Niemeyer, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Instituto Moreira Salles, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Bibliography

(Books including photographs by M.G.)

See BIB. B) 12, 38, 68, 81, 110, 169, 216, 297, 319, 321, 328, 329, 428, 469, 484

Lauand, Judith

Brazilian painter and printmaker, Judith Lauand was born on May 26, 1922, in Pontal, São Paulo. She currently lives in São Paulo.

Biography

Lauand studied painting with Domênico Lazzarini and printmaking with Lívio Abramo. She attended the Escola de Belas Artes in Araraquara, São Paulo, until 1950. Five years later Lauand was the only woman to join Grupo Ruptura, a Brazilian concrete art movement from São Paulo.

Work

Lauand's work from the 1950s drew from an expressive form of abstract art but became increasingly rigid and analytical from 1954 onwards. Throughout the 1960s, unconventional objects such as paper clips made their way into her compositions, resulting in unusual surfaces and optical illusions.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1954 Galeria Ambiente, São Paulo
- 1965 Galeria Novas Tendências, São Paulo
- 1977 Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Geometria 84*, Paulo Figueiredo Galeria de Arte, São Paulo
- 1992 *Efemérides*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1996 *Obras de 1954–1960*, Galeria Sylvio Nery, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2007 *50 anos de pintura*, Galeria Berenice Arvani, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2008 *65 anos arte*, Galeria Berenice Arvani, São Paulo; Secretaria de Cultura, Araraquara, São Paulo

Selected group exhibitions

- 1956 *Exposição Nacional de Arte Concreta*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1965 VIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1967 IX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1969 X Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 1997 I Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museu de Arte Contemporâneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museu de Arte Contemporâneo, Monterrey
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Then & Now. Abstraction in Latin American Art from 1950 to Present*, 60 Wall Gallery, Deutsche Bank, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Lorca, Germán

Brazilian photographer Germán Lorca was born on May 28, 1922, in São Paulo, where he currently lives.

Biography

Though Lorca studied accounting at the Liceo Acadêmico in 1940, as a photographer he was largely self-taught. In 1949 he joined the Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante in São Paulo and earned a living taking photographs of city views and a wide range of subjects for the world of advertising. He opened his own studio in 1952. His work was featured at the 1953 Bienal de São Paulo organized by Geraldo de Barros and again at the 1967 edition of the Bienal, which for the first time included a permanent display of photographs. In 1954 Lorca was the official photographer of the 400th Anniversary of the foundation of São Paulo. Among other prizes, Lorca received the Prêmio Colunistas awarded by *Meio & Mensagem* magazine in 1985 and 1989.

Work

Lorca's main subject matter is the city. The sharp contrasts in his black and white photographs bring them close to abstract art compositions.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1952 Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 1993 *French Quarter, New Orleans. Germán Lorca, Manuk Poladian*, Li Photogallery, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2006 *Fotografia como memória*, Pinacoteca do Estado, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2008 *Fotografia como memória*, Museu Oscar Niemeyer, Curitiba
- 2010 *Olhar-imaginário*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro

Selected group exhibitions

- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1967 IX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2009 *Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante. 70 Anos*, Centro Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2009 *Experimentaciones. La experiencia concreta y neoconcreta en la fotografía brasileña*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Parque Forestal y Espacio ArteAbierto de Fundación Itaú, Santiago [traveling exhibition]
- 2010 *Moderna para sempre. Fotografia modernista brasileira na Coleção Itaú*, Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul Ado Malagoli, Porto Alegre
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Coleção Pirelli/MASP de Fotografia, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 2, 115

Maluf, Antônio

Brazilian painter, draughtsman, and designer, Antônio Maluf was born on December 17, 1926, in São Paulo and died in August 2005 in the same city.

Biography

Maluf enrolled at the School of Engineering of the Universidade do Paraná in Curitiba in 1947 and took a course in civil engineering at Universidade Mackenzie, São Paulo, the following year. Also in 1948, he began to work at some of the companies owned by his father, Alexander Maluf, especially at Estamparia e Beneficiadora de tecido Victoria (a textile manufacturing company), designing fabric prints. From 1948 to 1949 Maluf studied painting privately with Waldemar da Costa, continuing his studies at Escola Livre de Artes Plásticas in 1950, when he also studied painting with Samson Flexor at the Museu de Arte de São Paulo and lithography and printmaking with Darel Valença Lins and Aldemir Martins. In 1951 he pursued studies in industrial design under Roberto Sambonet, Jacob Ruchti, and Salvador Candia at the newly founded Instituto de Arte Contemporânea located within the museum. Co-founder of the Associação Brasileira de Desenho Industrial, he initially served as its promoting director. In 1968, Maluf was appointed technical director of Galeria Seta—later called Escritório de Arte Seta—organizing major art shows at both the gallery and the Museu de Arte de São Paulo throughout the 1970s.

Work

Maluf abandoned his early figurative style in the 1950s in favor of constructivist-geometric compositions, as seen in the series *Equação dos desenvolvimentos* (Equation of Development) which incorporated motifs inspired by advertising that had already appeared in his poster for the first Bienal de São Paulo in 1951. He explored the applications of visual rhythm in the series *Progressões crescentes o decrecentes* (Increasing and Decreasing Progressions) and continued to develop this technique throughout the 1960s working on a number of murals. Together with architects Fábio Pentead and Lauro da Costa Lima, Maluf executed several glazed ceramic wall murals in the city and state of São Paulo. He also worked in the textile design and advertising industry, creating logotypes and ads.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1968 Galeria Cosme Velho, São Paulo
- 2002 Centro Universitário Maria Antonia da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1965 I Bienal de Arte Aplicada, Punta del Este

- 1967 IX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1968 I Bienal de Desenho Industrial, Rio de Janeiro
- 1969 X Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1991 *Construtivismo: arte cartaz 40/50/60*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 2000–2 *Brasil 1920–1950. De la antropofagia a Brasilia*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Centre Julio González, Valencia; Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museu de Arte Contemporâneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museu de Arte Contemporâneo, Monterrey
- 2007 *Lo[s] cinético[s]*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2008 *Diálogo concreto – Design e construtivismo no Brasil*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro

Museums and collections

Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 36, 301, 316, 445

Mavignier, Almir

Brazilian painter, graphic artist, and designer, Almir da Silva Mavignier was born on May 1, 1925, in Rio de Janeiro. He lives in Hamburg.

Biography

Mavignier supervised a painting workshop at a mental hospital from 1946 to 1951. Shortly after having begun this activity, he studied painting in Rio de Janeiro with Arpad Szenes, Axel von Leskoschek, and Henrique Boese from 1948 to 1949. After touring Europe in 1951, he settled in Paris and enrolled at the Academie de la Grande Chaumière. Between 1953 and 1958 he studied at Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm, Germany. Among

his teachers were Max Bill, Josef Albers, Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart, Otl Aicher, and Tomás Maldonado. He was part of Zero Group from 1958 to 1964 and organized the international exhibition *Nove tendencije* (New Tendencies) in Zagreb in 1960. Mavignier opened his own graphic studio in Ulm in 1959 and worked as a teacher at Staatliche Hochschule für bildende Künste in Hamburg from 1965 to 1990. Among other distinctions he received the Stankowski-Stiftung award (Anton Stankowski Foundation for the integration of the arts and design) in Stuttgart in 1985.

Work

Mavignier abandoned his early figurative style in the late 1940s and moved towards abstraction, devoting himself entirely to concrete art from 1952 onwards. His experiments dealt with the interplay between color, form, and light within a square surface. He executed the paintings *Punktbilder* (Dot Paintings) in 1954 and *Rasterbilder* (Reticulate Paintings) in 1955. These were followed by op-art influenced paintings in 1956, monochrome works in 1957, a series of silk screen prints entitled *Permutações* (Permutations) from 1959 to 1961, and the black and white paintings *Côncavo-convexo* (Concave-Convex) in 1962. These abstract compositions paved the way for his work of the 1960s, focusing on advertisements and posters. *Additive Plakate* (Additive Posters) from 1963 is a composition of systematically arranged forms that admits an endless association of elements. Other works include mono-polychrome paintings (1974), monochrome structures reflecting light and shadows (1975), and a series entitled *Divisão-rotação* (Division-Rotation, 1981), consisting of rotating devices that free color from form. The posters he designed in 1985 featured imprinted words on all margins which allowed the picture to be hung from any side.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1951 *A exposição da pintura*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1957 Galerie Gänsheide, Stuttgart [catalogue]
- 1963 Ulmer Museum, Ulm [brochure]
- 1963 *25 manifesti*, Galleria d'arte della Casa do Brasil, Rome [catalogue]
- 1963 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1964 *Herbert W. Kapitzky, Almir Mavignier*, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. [catalogue]
- 1964 Galerie Ad Libitum, Antwerp [catalogue]
- 1966 *Punctum: 7 Serigraphien, Bilder*, Galerie der Spiegel, Cologne [catalogue]
- 1967 *Three Graphic Designers: Norman Ives, Almir da Silva Mavignier, Massimo Vignelli*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York [catalogue]
- 1968 Kestner-Gesellschaft, Hannover [catalogue]
- 1973 Galerie Denis René - Hans Mayer, Düsseldorf [catalogue]
- 1973 *Prinzip seriell*, Kunstmuseum, Düsseldorf [brochure]
- 1974 *Serielle Farbprogressionen*, Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich [catalogue]

- 1975 *Licht, Schatten, Farbe*, Neue Sammlung, Staatliches Museum für angewandte Kunst, Munich [brochure]
- 1978 *Druckgrafik und Plakate*, Deutche BP-Aktiengesellschaft, Hamburg [catalogue]
- 1981 *Plakate*, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg; Deutsches Plakat Museum, Essen [catalogue]
- 1985 Quadrat Bottrop, Josef Albers Museum, Bottrop [catalogue]
- 1985 *Kunst + Design. Almir Mavignier, Preisträger der Stankowski-Stiftung 1985*. Bauhaus-Archiv, Museum für Gestaltung, Berlin; Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen am Rhein; Ulmer Museum; Kunstverein Ulm, Ulm [catalogue]
- 1990 *Bilder, Plakate*, Staatliche Antikensammlungen, Glyptothek, Munich; Herning Kunstmuseum, Herning, Denmark; Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg [catalogue]
- 1995 *Plakate*, Mies van der Rohe Haus, Berlin [catalogue]
- 2000 *Mavignier 75*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2003 *Plakate, mavignier-katalog hfg/ulm 1953–58*, Museum für Konkrete Kunst, Ingolstadt [catalogue]
- 2004 *Additive Plakate - Additive posters*, Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt [catalogue]
- 2005 Galerija Rigo, Novigrad, Croatia [catalogue]
- 2008 *Momentos de luz*, Dan Galeria, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2010 *Max Bill. Mavignier. Wollner. 60 anos de arte construtiva no Brasil*, Dan Galeria, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2010 *Docugrafias*, Museu Afro Brasil, São Paulo [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1962 *Exposition Nul*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
- 1964 XXXII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1964 documenta 3, Kassel
- 1965 *The Responsive Eye*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1968 documenta 4, Kassel
- 1968 XXXIV Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1969 X Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1992 *Bildervelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2003 *Cuasi-corporus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2005 Prague Biennale 2
- 2006–7 *Die neuen Tendenzen. Eine europäische Künstlerbewegung 1961–1973*, Museum für Konkrete Kunst, Ingolstadt; Leopold-Hoesch-Museum, Düren
- 2007 *Op art*, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt
- 2008 *Diálogo concreto – Design e construtivismo no Brasil*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro

- 2010 *Das Verlangen nach Form – O Desejo da Forma. Neoconcretismo und zeitgenössische Kunst aus Brasilien*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Daimler Contemporary, Berlin, Germany
 Deutsches Plakat Museum, Essen, Germany
 Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
 Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany
 kunsthalle weishaupt, Ulm, Germany
 Kunstmuseum, Düsseldorf, Germany
 Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark
 Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessalonica, Greece
 Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
 Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach, Germany
 Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany
 Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Cologne, Germany
 Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany
 Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, Germany
 Museum gegenstandsfreier Kunst, Otterndorf, Germany
 Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel
 Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
 Ulmer Museum, Ulm, Germany
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 318, 420

Links

www.mavignier.com

Ohara, Haruo

Brazilian photographer and farmer of Japanese origin, Haruo Ohara was born in 1909 in Kochi and died in 1998 in Londrina, Paraná.

Biography

Ohara's family emigrated to Brazil in 1927 and worked as tenant farmers on coffee plantations in the São Paulo region. Ohara moved to the northern Paraná in 1933, where he acquired land in the vicinity of the burgeoning city of Londrina. Though he was able to grow coffee, fruit, and flowers, he was forced to sell the land in 1951 and settle in Londrina. A self-taught photographer, his first photographs date from 1938. Ohara co-founded Foto Cine Clube de Londrina in 1951, an association of photographers that later cooperated with Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante de São Paulo. Ohara's collection of photographs was donated to the Instituto Moreira Salles by his family in 2008. The life and work of the artist was described by film director Rodrigo Rota in the acclaimed short film *Haruo Ohara. Pausa para a neblina* (Londrina 2010).

Work

Ohara documented the history of Londrina as well as his family's experiences in rural Brazil, images illustrative of the life of many Japanese immigrants. His precise compositions and panoramic views show the influence of geometric and serial structures. In the late 1970s he shifted from black and white to color photography.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 2008 *Fotografias*, Instituto Moreira Salles, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2010 *Fotografias*, Museu Histórico, Londrina
- 2010 *Forma e abstração*, Museu de Arte, Londrina

Selected group exhibitions

- 1998 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de Fotografia, Curitiba
- 2000 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de Fotografia, Curitiba [solo exhibition]

Museums and collections

Instituto Moreira Salles, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
 Coleção Pirelli/MASP de Fotografia, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 30, 198, 260

Links

ims.uol.com.br

Oiticica, Hélio

Brazilian sculptor, painter, performance artist, and theorist, Hélio Oiticica was born on July 26, 1937, in Rio de Janeiro and died on March 22, 1980, in the same city.

Biography

Oiticica began his studies in painting with Ivan Serpa at the Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, in 1954. In 1955 he joined Grupo Frente and shortly thereafter he began to exhibit his work at concrete and neo-concrete art shows. A John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship enabled him to move to New York in 1970, where he lived for several years. The Projeto Hélio Oiticica was founded under the direction of his brother César Oiticica in 1981. Great part of Oiticica's oeuvre was lost in 2009 due to a fire at his brother's studio in Rio de Janeiro.

Work

In the *Metaesquemias* (Metaschemes) series from the 1950s, Oiticica created an unstable structure by dividing the surface into segments. Like Lygia Clark, he questioned the predominance of the flat surface in concrete

art. The result of these inquiries was *Relevos espaciais* (Spatial Reliefs), which led to *Penetráveis* (Penetrables), installations made of suspended monochrome fabrics. The series *Parangolés* (slang for a situation of sudden confusion or excitement among people) from the 1960s consisted of plastic objects that could be used as garments and required viewer participation, an aspect explored by the artist. As Oiticica believed dance was a source of aesthetic inspiration, he took samba lessons, earning him the nickname “*passista*.” Other significant works include *Nuclei*, a color maze of screens, and *Bolides*, fireballs made of insignificant materials. He also made films and published theoretical texts.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1966 Galeria G4, Rio de Janeiro
- 1969 Whitechapel Gallery, London [catalogue]
- 1989 *Grupo Frente e Metaesquemmas*, Galeria São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1989 *Mundo-abrigo*, 110 Arte Contemporânea, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1992–97 Witte de With, Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam; Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris; Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona; Centro de Arte Moderna da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Centro de Arte Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1994 *Hélio Oiticica, Lygia Clark*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Salvador da Bahia [catalogue]
- 1996 *Grupo frente 1955–1956. Metaesquemmas 1957–1958*, Joel Edelstein Arte Contemporânea, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1999 *L. Clark, H. Oiticica, L. Pape*, Conjunto Cultural da Caixa Econômica Federal, Brasília [catalogue]
- 2000 Espaço de Instalações Permanentes, Museu do Açude, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2001–2 *Hélio Oiticica. Quasi-Cinemas*, Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio; Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne; Whitechapel Gallery, London; New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York [catalogue]
- 2002 *Liam Gillick: The Wood Way. Hélio Oiticica: Quasi-cinema*, Whitechapel Gallery, London [catalogue]
- 2002 *Hélio Oiticica. Obra e estratégia*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2003 *Hélio Oiticica. Cor, imagem, poética*, Centro de Arte Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2005 *Cosmococa. Programa in progress. Hélio Oiticica, Neville D’Almeida*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires; Centro de Arte Contemporânea Inhotim, Brumadinho [catalogue]
- 2006 *Penetrável*, Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo [brochure]
- 2006–7 *Hélio Oiticica. The Body of Color*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas; Tate Modern, London [catalogue]
- 2010 *Beyond Participation. Hélio Oiticica and Neville D’Almeida in New York*, The Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Art Gallery, Hunter College, New York [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1967 *Nova objectividade brasileira*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bial de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d’art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1988–90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1992 *Bildervelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d’art moderne, Centre national d’art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 1994 XXII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo (Special Room), São Paulo
- 1998 XXIV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1998 *Hélio Oiticica e a cena americana*, Centro de Arte Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro
- 1999 *The Experimental Exercise of Freedom. Lygia Clark, Gego, Mathias Goeritz, Hélio Oiticica and Mira Schendel*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2001 *Geometric Abstraction. Latin American Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 2001–2 *Brazil: Body & Soul*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao
- 2002 *Além dos pré-conceitos. Experimentos dos anos 60*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 2002 *PoT*, 2nd Liverpool Biennial, Commercial Unit 6, Liverpool
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpous. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2003 *Geometrias. Abstracción geométrica latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires
- 2004 *Beyond Geometry: Experiments in Form, 1940s–70s*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas

- 2005 *Colour after Klein: Re-thinking Colour in Modern and Contemporary Art*, Barbican Art Gallery, London
- 2005 *Open Systems. Rethinking Art c. 1970*, Tate Modern, London
- 2005 *O lúdico na arte*, Instituto Cultural Itaú, São Paulo
- 2005–7 *Tropicália. A Revolution in Brazilian Culture (1967–1972)*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Barbican Art Gallery, London; Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbon; The Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, New York
- 2006 *Cruce de miradas. Visiones de América Latina. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City
- 2006 Bienal del Aire, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Sofía Imber, Caracas
- 2006 XXVII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2007 *New Perspectives in Latin American Art*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Face to Face. The Daros Collections*, Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich
- 2008 *Time & Place. Rio de Janeiro 1956–1964*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 2008 Biennale of Sidney
- 2008–9 *Neo Tropicália. When Lives Become Form: Contemporary Brazilian Art, 1960s to the present*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima
- 2010 *Tropicália. Die 60s in Brasilien*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna
- 2010 IXXX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2010 *Das Verlangen nach Form – O Desejo da Forma. Neoconcretismo und zeitgenössische Kunst aus Brasilien*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

- Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, New York, United States
- Centro de Arte Contemporânea Inhotim, Brumadinho, Brazil
- Daros-Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland
- Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
- Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu do Açude, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
- Tate Gallery, London, Great Britain
- The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States
- The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 151, 152, 330, 406, 410

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 29, 46–47, 52, 66, 67, 71, 72, 80, 100, 125, 145, 146, 148, 157, 211, 300, 315, 331, 334, 336, 337, 384, 422, 427, 448; BIB. C) 2, 10, 15, 31

Pape, Lygia

Brazilian sculptress, graphic artist, and filmmaker, Lygia Pape was born on April 7, 1927, in Nova Friburgo, Rio de Janeiro, and died on May 3, 2004, in the same city.

Biography

Pape studied with Fayga Ostrower at the Museu de Arte Moderna in Rio de Janeiro, where she met Hélio Oiticica and Aluísio Carvão. Together they joined Grupo Frente, founded in 1954, and showcased their work at many group shows until 1956. In 1959, along with other artists including Lygia Clark, Pape signed Ferreira Gullar’s *Manifesto Neoconcreto* and took part in the group’s exhibitions. She also taught at the Universidad Federal de Rio de Janeiro.

Work

As a graphic artist, Pape studied the behavior and reproducibility of geometric images in a number of prints and woodcuts. In the series *Tecelares* (Textiles), for example, geometric shapes merge with the wood’s natural lines. Pape also designed jewelry. In collaboration with the choreographer Gilberto Mota and the poet Reynaldo Jardim, she worked on a neo-concrete ballet in 1958–59. The production featured concrete music by Pierre Henri and displayed abstract forms set into motion by imperceptible human bodies. Pape’s book *Livro da criação*, published in 1959, describes the creation of the universe in terms of form and color, encouraging the reader to participate. In the 1960s, she became involved in the film industry, producing short films and joining the “Cinema Novo.” Large-scale installations from the 1970s include *Teia* (Fabric), *Ovos do vento* (Wind Eggs), and *Luar do sertão* (Sertão Moonlight), all of which require the spectator to interact with the work.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1976 *Eat me. A gula ou a luxúria*, Galeria Arte Global, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1985 *Esculturas*, ArteEspaço, Rio de Janeiro

- 1990 *Amazoninos*, Thomas Cohn Arte Contemporânea, Rio de Janeiro
- 1992 Galeria Camargo Vilaça, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1995 Galeria Camargo Vilaça, Lisbon [catalogue]
- 1996 Centro Cultural São Paulo-Espaço Caio Graco, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1998 Museu de Arte Carrillo Gil, Mexico City
- 1999 *L. Clark, H. Oiticica, L. Pape*, Conjunto Cultural da Caixa Econômica Federal, Brasília [catalogue]
- 2000 *Gávea de tocaia*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto [catalogue]
- 2001 The Americas Society, New York [catalogue]
- 2001 Centro de Arte Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2003 *José Resende. Lygia Pape. Nuno Ramos*, Museu do Açude, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2003 *Noite e dia*, Galeria André Millan, São Paulo
- 2005 *A contra corrente, Mira Schendel, Gego y Lygia Pape. Obras de la Colección Cisneros*, TEOR/ética, San José, Costa Rica
- 2008 *But I fly*, Galeria Graça Brandão, Lisbon

Selected group exhibitions

- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1967 *Nova objectividade brasileira*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Corpo & alma. Fotografia contemporânea no Brasil*, Funarte (Fundação Nacional de Arte), Instituto Nacional da Fotografia, Rio de Janeiro
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 1998 XXIV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1999 *Técnica cotidiano/arte*, Instituto Itaú Cultural, São Paulo
- 2000 *Heterotopias. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2001 *Experiment - Experiência. Art in Brazil, 1958–2000*, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford
- 2001 *Virgin Territory. Women, Gender, and History in Contemporary Brazilian Art*, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C. [catalogue]
- 2001–2 *Brazil: Body & Soul*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao
- 2002 *Vivências. Dialogues Between the Works of Brazilian Artists from 1960s–2002*, The New Art Gallery, Walsall, Great Britain; Sainsbury Centre for Visual Art, University of East Anglia, Norwich, Great Britain
- 2002 *PoT*, 2nd Liverpool Biennial, Commercial Unit 6, Liverpool
- 2003 *Immaginando Prometeo*, Palazzo della Ragione, Milan
- 2003 L Biennale di Venezia, Venice

- 2003 *Cuasi-corporus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2003 *Geometrías. Abstracción geométrica latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires
- 2005 *O lúdico na arte*, Instituto Cultural Itaú, São Paulo
- 2005–7 *Tropicália. A Revolution in Brazilian Culture (1967–1972)*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Barbican Art Gallery, London; Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbon; The Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, New York
- 2006 *Cruce de miradas. Visiones de América Latina. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2006 *Manobras radicais*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, São Paulo
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Diálogo concreto, design e construtivismo no Brasil*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro
- 2008 *Time & Place. Rio de Janeiro 1956–1964*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 2009 *Fare mundi / Making Worlds*, LIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 2010 *Tropicália. Die 60s in Brasilien*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna
- 2010 *Constructive Spirit. Abstract Art in South and North America, 1920s–50s*, Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey; Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas
- 2010 *Das Verlangen nach Form – O Desejo da Forma. Neoconcretismo und zeitgenössische Kunst aus Brasilien*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

- Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela
- Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto, Portugal
- Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
- The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 71, 75, 94, 108, 136, 305, 382; BIB. C) 36

Links

www.lygiapape.org.br

Sacilotto, Luiz

The son of Italian immigrants, Brazilian painter, sculptor, draughtsman, and printmaker Luiz (or Luís) Sacilotto was born on April 22, 1924, in Santo André, São Paulo, and died on February 9, 2003, in São Bernardo do Campo, São Paulo.

Biography

From 1938 to 1941 Sacilotto studied painting at the Escola Profissional Masculina in São Paulo, continuing his studies at the Escola Técnica Getúlio Vargas until 1943. In 1944 he began working as a technical designer at various architecture studios including those of Jacob Ruchti, João Batista Vilanova Artigas, and Lauro da Costa Lima. Together with fellow students Marcelo Grassmann and Octávio Araújo, he founded Grupo Expressionista in 1945. He later opted for concrete art, joining the Sao Paulo-based Grupo Ruptura, which included artists Waldemar Cordeiro and Lothar Charoux, in 1952. In 1963 Sacilotto co-founded the Associação de Artes Visuais Novas Tendências and its gallery in São Paulo. Among other distinctions, he received the Primer Prêmio Governador do Estado, granted in 1961, and the Prêmio Rodrigo de Mello Franco de Andrade from the Associação Brasileira de Críticos de Arte in 2000, honoring his entire body of work. In 1992 the Casa de Olhar that bears Sacilotto's name and aims to promote his work opened in his hometown of Santo André.

Work

During the 1940s, Sacilotto painted portraits in an expressionist style; however, his still lifes progressed towards geometric abstraction in 1947. From then on, concrete art dominated his paintings, which are entitled *Concreção* followed by their corresponding number. Influenced by the work of Mondrian in the 1950s, Sacilotto created orthogonal structures arranged by color, to which he added small patterns of horizontal and vertical lines over a light background. In subsequent years, rectangular and triangular grids appeared in both his paintings and his sculptures. Featuring vibrating visual effects, these pieces can be considered forerunners of op-art, the dominant style of his output during the 1970s and 1980s.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1980 *Expressões e concreções*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1982 *Obras dos últimos 5 anos*, Galeria Cosme Velho, São Paulo
- 1985 Galeria do Sol, São José dos Campos, São Paulo
- 1986 *Intermutações*, Choice Galeria de Arte, São Paulo
- 1986 *Lothar Charoux e Sacilotto*, Centro Cultural do Bairro Assunção, São Bernardo do Campo, São Paulo [catalogue]

- 1988 Galeria Millan, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1995 *Obras selecionadas*, Galeria Sylvio Nery, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1998 *Estudos e desenhos*, Escritório de Arte Luiz Sacilotto, Santo André, São Paulo
- 2000 *Obra gravada completa*, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2001 *Desenhos 1974–1982*, Galeria Sylvio Nery, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2004 *Obra Gravada Completa*, Fundação Pró-Memória, São Caetano do Sul, São Paulo
- 2007 *Operário da forma*, Sabina-Escola Parque do Conhecimento, Santo André, São Paulo
- 2007 *Retratos e Paisagens*, Casa do Olhar Luiz Sacilotto, Santo André, São Paulo

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1952 XXVI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1965 VIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthau Zürich, Zurich
- 1997 I Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2000–2 *Brasil 1920–1950. De la antropofagia a Brasília*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Centre Julio González, Valencia; Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo
- 2001–2 *Brazil: Body & Soul*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao
- 2002 *Grupo Ruptura. Arte concreta paulista. Revisitando a exposição inaugural*, Centro Universitário Maria Antonia da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2003 *Cuasi-corporus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2005 *Visualidades/técnicas: Danilo Di Prete, Luiz Sacilotto, Marcello Nitsche, Gilberto Salvador, Waldemar Cordeiro*, Instituto Cervantes, São Paulo
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro

- 2007 documenta 12, Kassel
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2009 *Dimensionen konstruktiver Kunst in Brasilien. Die Sammlung Adolpho Leirner*, Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles

Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

Pinacoteca da Prefeitura, São Bernardo do Campo, São Paulo, Brazil

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Pinacoteca do Município, São Paulo, Brazil

Prefeitura, Santo André, São Paulo, Brazil

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 36, 48, 99, 109, 407

Links

www.sacilotto.com.br

Schendel, Mira

Brazilian painter and poetess of Swiss origin, Mira Schendel (Myrrah Dagmar Dub) was born on June 7, 1919, in Zurich and died on July 24, 1988, in São Paulo.

Biography

As a child, Schendel lived in Milan, where she attended an art school and read Philosophy at the Università Cattolica. In 1941 she fled to Sarajevo (now Bosnia and Herzegovina) to escape Nazi persecution. After moving to Rome in 1946, she worked at the International Organization for Refugees. Three years later, Schendel's family moved to Brazil, first taking up residence in Porto Allegre in 1949 and finally settling in São Paulo in 1952. Encouraged by Sergio Camargo, Schendel took up painting but never allied herself with the prevalent art movements and associations of her time.

Work

Schendel began her career creating abstract-constructivist compositions and exploring the geometric relations between line, plane,

space, and color, fruit of which were monotypes, letters, words, and graphic symbols. Between 1964 and 1974 her production featured lines and letters arranged over translucent backgrounds, as seen in the series *Monotipias* (Monotypes), *Droguinhas* (Trifles), and *Trezinhos* (Little Trains), in which she emphasized the paper and pigments' textural qualities. Other series, such as *To-quinhos* from the 1970s, manifest Schendel's interest in transforming letters and linguistic elements into objects, an approach that has much in common with concrete poetry and the principle that typography should be a significant part of the poetic-visual work rather than just a formal element. Impressed by Carl Gustave Jung's psychoanalytical theories and Chinese oracles, Schendel executed the series *I Ching* in the 1980s.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1964 Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 1965 Signals London, London
- 1966 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [brochure]
- 1971 *Amélia Amorim Toledo. Donato Ferrari. Mira Schendel*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1974 *Visuelle Konstruktionen und transparente Texte*, Institut für Moderne Kunst, Nuremberg [brochure]
- 1982 Paulo Figueiredo Galeria de Arte, São Paulo; G. B. Gravura Brasileira, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1984 *Desenhos, 5 séries inéditas*, Paulo Figueiredo Galeria de Arte, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1985 *Pinturas recentes*, Paulo Figueiredo Galeria de Arte, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1990 Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1996 *Influência poética. Dez desenhistas contemporâneos. Amílcar de Castro e Mira Schendel*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro; Grande Galeria do Palácio das Artes, Belo Horizonte [catalogue]
- 1996 *No vazio do mundo*, Galeria de Arte do SESI (Serviço Social da Indústria), São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1997 *A forma volátil*, Centro de Arte Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2000 *Mira Schendel. Sergio Camargo. Willys de Castro*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2001 Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris [catalogue]
- 2004 *Concrete Realities: Carmen Herrera. Fanny Sanín. Mira Schendel*, Latin Collector Gallery, New York [brochure]
- 2004 *Continuum amorfo*, Museu de Arte Contemporâneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museu de Arte Contemporâneo, Monterrey [catalogue]
- 2005 *A contra corrente, Mira Schendel, Gego y Lygia Pape. Obras de la Colección Cisneros*, TEOR/ÉTica, San José, Costa Rica
- 2009 *Monotype*, Galeria Millan, São Paulo; Stephen Friedman Gallery, London [catalogue]
- 2009-10 *León Ferrari and Mira Schendel. Tangled Alphabets - El alfabeto enfurecido*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museo

Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1963 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1964 II Bienal Americana de Arte, Córdoba
- 1967 VIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1968 XXXIV Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1981 XVI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Palavra imágica*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 1999 *The Experimental Exercise of Freedom. Lygia Clark, Gego, Mathias Goeritz, Hélio Oiticica and Mira Schendel*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
- 2000 *Heterotopias. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2003 *Geometrias. Abstracción geométrica latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires
- 2004 *Brazil: Body Nostalgia*, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2006 *Cruce de miradas. Visiones de América Latina. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2006 *Amílcar de Castro, Mira Schendel, Sergio Camargo, Willys de Castro*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo
- 2006 *Manobras radicais*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, São Paulo
- 2007 *New Perspectives in Latin American Art*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2007 documenta 12, Kassel
- 2007 *Campo ampliado*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo
- 2007 *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin,

- Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Face to Face. The Daros Collections*, Daros-Latinamerica Collection, Zurich
- 2008 *Frágil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Esteban Vicente, Segovia
- 2008–9 *Neo Tropicalia. When Lives Become Form: Contemporary Brazilian Art, 1960s to the Present*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima
- 2009 *Dimensionen konstruktiver Kunst in Brasilien. Die Sammlung Adolpho Leirner*, Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich
- 2010 1. Biennale für Internationale Lichtkunst, Unna, Germany
- 2010 *Modern Women. Women Artists at the Museum of Modern Art*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2010 *Then & Now. Abstraction in Latin American Art from 1950 to Present*, 60 Wall Gallery, Deutsche Bank, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Colección FEMSA (Fomento Económico Mexicano S.A.), Monterrey, Mexico

Daros-Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland

Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles

Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul Ado Malagoli, Porto Alegre, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 71, 121, 295, 299, 311, 332, 412, 433, 476, 477

Serpa, Ivan

Brazilian painter, printmaker, and designer, Ivan Ferreira Serpa was born in 1923 in Rio de Janeiro and died on April 6, 1973, in the same city.

Biography

After studying printmaking with Axel Leskoschek in Rio de Janeiro from 1946 to 1948, Serpa worked as a lecturer at the Museu de Arte Moderna in Rio de Janeiro between 1949 and 1952. He co-founded Grupo Frente in 1954, a group formed by artists Aluísio Carvão, Lygia Clark, and Hélio Oiticica, among others. The book *Crescimento e criação*, published in 1954, was the product of his research and experience teaching children. While living in Paris in 1957, his work

was displayed at concrete and neo-concrete art shows. Working as a paper conservator at the National Library in the 1960s, he also engaged in joint projects with Lygia Pape. Awards include the Prêmio Jovem Pintor awarded at the 1951 Bienal de São Paulo.

Work

Serpa's first abstract works date from 1951. He developed serial compositions in his paintings and tried to fuse them with architecture. His work experience at the National Library also determined his artistic output, especially the paper collages in which he experimented with conservation and restoration techniques and methods. The expressive series *Fase negra* (Black Phase) from 1962 alludes to the country's heated political situation. In the mid-1960s he returned to a freer form of geometric art, closer to kinetic and op art.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1954 *Collage and Painting*, Pan American Union, Washington, D.C. [catalogue]
- 1965 *Exposição de desenhos e guaches de Ivan Serpa (1963–5)*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1968 *Pinturas*, Galeria Bonino, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1967 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [brochures]
- 1971 *Desenhos 1946–1971*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1974 *Retrospectiva*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1993 *Retrospectiva, 1947–1973*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1962 XXXI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1979 XV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1985 XVIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1989 XX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthau Zürich, Zurich
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2000–2 *Brasil 1920–1950. De la antropofagia a Brasília*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Centre Julio González, Valencia; Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museu de Arte Contemporâneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museu de Arte Contemporâneo, Monterrey

- 2005–7 *Tropicália. A Revolution in Brazilian Culture (1967–1972)*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Barbican Art Gallery, London; Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbon; The Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, New York
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Time & Place. Rio de Janeiro 1956–1964*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 2010 *Das Verlangen nach Form – O Desejo da Forma. Neoconcretismo und zeitgenössische Kunst aus Brasilien*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

- Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 131, 132, 475

Valentim, Rubem

Brazilian painter, sculptor, and printmaker, Rubem Valentim was born on November 9, 1922, in Salvador da Bahia and died on December 30, 1991, in São Paulo.

Biography

Valentim was a self-taught artist. He completed his studies in dentistry in 1946 but only practiced as a dentist for a brief period of time. Instead he took up painting in 1948 and pursued studies in media communication, earning a degree in Journalism from the School of Philosophy, Universidad de Bahia, in 1953. Following his move to Rio de Janeiro in 1957, Valentim received a Salão Paulista de Arte Moderna scholarship that took him to Europe in 1962. He toured the old continent for three and a half years, visiting Great Britain, France, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Spain, Portugal, and Italy. After living in Rome, he returned to Brazil in 1966 following an invitation from Universidad de Brasília's Instituto Central de Artes. Among his awards are the Prêmio Universidade da Bahia, 1955, and the Critics' Award to Best Exhibition of

the Year, Rio de Janeiro, 1962. In 1998, the Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia opened the Rubem Valentim Special Exhibition Space at the Parque de Esculturas.

Work

As a child, Valentim drew landscapes and figures. He formed part of a movement aiming to renew art in Bahia in the 1940s. Under the influence of popular and African art in the 1950s, he created a geometric language that included ritualistic and totemic signs and symbols of Afro-Brazilian culture. Valentim's signature repertoire of symbols appears in his vivid and bright paintings, wood cuts, and painted wood objects and sculptures.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1954 Palácio Rio Branco, Salvador da Bahia, Brazil
- 1961 Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1962 Galeria Revelo, Rio de Janeiro
- 1967 *Pinturas*, Galeria Bonino, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1970 Fundação Cultural do Distrito Federal, Brasília [catalogue]
- 1970 *31 objetos emblemáticos e relevos emblemas*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1971 *Objetos, emblemas e relevos emblemáticos*, Galeria Documenta, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1975 *Panorama da sua obra plástica. Esculturas, objetos emblemáticos, relevos, emblemas, pinturas, serigrafias, tapeçarias*, GDF-SEC Fundação Cultural do Distrito Federal, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1978 *Mito e magia na arte de Rubem Valentim. Emblemática, 10 pinturas, 10 relevos, 10 esculturas*, Galeria Bonino, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1986 *Rubem Valentim e Athos Bulcão*, Performance Galeria de Arte, Brasília
- 1992 Museo Nacional de la Estampa, Mexico City [catalogue]
- 1992 Galeria do Memorial, Auditorio do Memorial da America Latina, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1994 *Construção e símbolo*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2001 *Artista da luz*, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2002 *Pinturas, esculturas, relevos*, Paulo Darzé Galeria de Arte, Salvador da Bahia, Brazil [catalogue]
- 2007 Galeria Berenice Arvani, São Paulo [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1959 V Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1962 XXXI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1963 VII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1967 IX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1969 X Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo

- 1973 XII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1977 XIV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1977 *Arte agora II. Visão da terra*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1978 *Geometria sensível*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1986 II Bienal de La Habana, Havana
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthau Zürich, Zurich
- 1996 XXXIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo (Special Room), São Paulo
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2001 *Para nunca esquecer. Negras memórias/Memórias de negros*, Museu Histórico Nacional, Rio de Janeiro [traveling exhibition]
- 2001–2 *Brasil: Body & Soul*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museu Guggenheim, Bilbao
- 2007 *I Encuentro entre dos Mares Bienal São Paulo - Valencia*

Museums and collections

- Museu Afro Brasil, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte de Brasília, Brasília, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Salvador da Bahia, Brazil
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
- Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 10, 157, 388; BIB. C) 3

Volpi, Alfredo

Brazilian painter and muralist of Italian origin, Alfredo Volpi was born on April 14, 1896, in Lucca, Italy, and died on May 28, 1988, in São Paulo.

Biography

In 1898 Volpi's family emigrated to Brazil and settled in São Paulo. A self-taught artist, he began his career working as a house painter and decorator. Volpi then joined the Grupo Santa Helena figurative art group in 1935 and took an active part in creating the artists union, Sindicato de Artistas Plásticos de São Paulo, the following year. During the 1960s

he formed a close friendship with sculptor Bruno Giorgi and artist Décio Vieira. Distinctions include the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, the Prêmio de Melhor Pintor Nacional awarded at the 1953 Bienal de São Paulo, the Ordem do Ipiranga from the São Paulo State Government, and the Gabriela Mistral Fine Arts Prize awarded by the Organization of American States, Washington, D.C. in 1986.

Work

Volpi's early work drew from post-impressionism, as evidenced in his landscapes, seascapes, and representations of villas and façades executed in subdued earth-colored tones. His interest in religious and popular subject matters brought him closer to geometric abstraction in the 1940s. In the 1950s, concrete art came to dominate the series entitled *Triângulos em tangência* (Triangles at a Tangent), which led to his signature work *Bandeirinhas* (Flags). In the series *Mastros* (Masts), ocean motifs take up the entire surface of the painting, either as individual figures or fused together. During the 1970s, Volpi created dynamic visual effects by painting knots of flags intersected by masts and arches. Other recurring motifs include façades, building components, sails, and boats, elements he arranged in simple two-dimensional compositions. From the beginning of his career, Volpi also executed murals and church stained glass windows.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1944 Galeria Itá, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1956 Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 1957 *Volpi. 1924–1957*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1963 *16 dipinti*, La Galleria d'arte della Casa do Brasil, Rome [catalogue]
- 1972 *Pintura, 1914–72*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1973 *Têmperas*, Cosme Velho Galeria de Arte, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1975 *Retrospectiva*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1980 Galeria Oswaldo Goeldi, Brasília [catalogue]
- 1980 *As pequenas grandes obras. Tres décadas de pintura*, Galeria A Ponte, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1981 *A construção da catedral*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1985 *Exposição comemorativa, 1960–1985*, Galeria Bonino, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1986 *90 anos*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1993 *Projetos e estudos. Em retrospectiva décadas 40–70*, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1996 *Guignard, Volpi. Centenário de nascimento*, Coleção Mário de Andrade, Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros, Universidades de São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1997 *Un percurso visual. Múltiplas faces*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo [catalogue]

- 2002 *A transmutação pela cor*, Dan Galeria, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2003 Galeria de Arte Ipanema, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2006 *A música da cor*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2006 *Volpi e as heranças contemporâneas*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2008 *Absorção e intimismo em Volpi*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1950 XXV Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1952 XXVI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1954 XXVII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1962 XXXI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1964 XXXII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1979 XV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1992 *Bildewelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 1997 *Poetas do espaço e da cor, Alfredo Volpi, Arcângelo lanelli, Aldir Mendes de Souza, Franz Weissmann*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo
- 1998 XXIV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon
- 2000–2 *Brasil 1920–1950. De la antropofagia a Brasília*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Centre Julio González, Valencia; Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo
- 2001–2 *Brazil: Body & Soul*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]

- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2007 *Campo ampliado*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

- Coleção Banco Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil
- Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado, Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo, Brazil
- Fundação José e Paulina Nemirovsky, Santa Efigênia, São Paulo, Brazil
- Galleria Internazionale d'Arte Moderna di Ca'Pesaro, Venice, Italy
- Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
- Museo Nacional de Arte, La Paz, Bolivia
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte de Brasília, Brasília, Brazil
- Museu de Arte de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Brazil
- Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul Ado Malagoli, Porto Alegre, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Salvador da Bahia, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museu do Banco Central, Brasília, Brazil
- Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
- Museus Castro Maya, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Pinacoteca Municipal, São Paulo, Brazil
- The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 48, 123, 214, 215, 265, 296, 388, 409, 413, 415, 434, 442, 443, 444, 473

Weissmann, Franz

Brazilian sculptor, painter, and draughtsman of Austrian origin, Franz Josef Weissmann was born on September 15, 1911, in Knittelfeld, Austria, and died on July 18, 2005, in Rio de Janeiro.

Biography

Weissmann and his family moved to Brazil in 1921. They first lived in the State of São Paulo, from where they moved to the city of São Paulo in 1927 and finally settled in Rio de Janeiro in 1929. Weissmann attended the Polytechnic School and worked at his

father's bus manufacturing business. From 1939 to 1941 he attended painting and sculpture classes at the Escola Nacional de Belas Artes, subsequently studying privately with Polish sculptor August Zamoyski between 1942 and 1944. From 1944 to 1956 Weissmann taught at the Escola do Parque de Belo Horizonte, a school commonly called Escola Guignard. In 1955 he joined the concrete art Grupo Frente and displayed his work at their group shows. During a brief sojourn in Rio de Janeiro in 1959, he signed the *Manifesto Neoconcreto*. Staring in 1960 Weissmann traveled to Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, and India, then made his way to Europe. After a short stay at the studios of Franz Krajcberg in Paris and Jorge Oteiza in Irún, Weissmann lived at the Casa do Brasil residence in Madrid for nearly a year, returning to Rio de Janeiro in early 1965. Awards include the Primer Prêmio de Escultura at the 1954 Salão Paulista de Arte Moderna, the Melhor Escultor Nacional at the 1957 Bienal de São Paulo, and the Critics' Award to Best Sculptor of the Year, São Paulo, in 1975. Weissmann was the first artist to receive the Prêmio Nacional de Arte, an award established by the Brazilian Ministry of Culture through the Fundação Nacional de Arte (Funarte) in 1993.

Work

Weissmann's early representational work featured human figures which he progressively simplified, marking his transition to a form of geometric abstraction in the style of Constantin Brancusi and Henry Moore. Influenced by Max Bill, in the early 1950s he executed his first abstract works in iron and stainless steel, the beginning of a long list of series including *Cubo vazado* (Emptied Cube, from 1951) and *Cubo aberto* (Open Cube, from 1952). These were followed by a series sculptures that resembled drawings in space, entitled *Escultura linear* (Lineal Sculpture, from 1954). Weissmann was eager to experiment with cubes and blocks, as seen in *Coluna concretista* (Concrete Column, from 1952) and *Coluna neoconcreta* (Neo-Concrete Column, from 1958). Inspired by his travels to the Middle East in the 1960s, he executed the strikingly expressive and spontaneous series *Amassados*, consisting of sculptures made of zinc, burlap, plaster, and aluminum. He returned to constructivism following this interlude and produced modulated artifacts such as *Módulos mutáveis* (Mutable Modules, 1967), *Arapuca*, and *Torre vermelha* (Red Tower, 1967), in which he used color to create vibrating visual effects. Weissmann also designed works for public spaces in São Paulo (*Grande flor tropical*, 1989, Memorial da América Latina), Rio de Janeiro, and Belo Horizonte, among other cities.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1946 Escola Nacional de Belas Artes, Diretório dos Estudantes, Belo Horizonte
- 1958 *Lygia Clark. Franz Weissmann. Lothar Charoux*, Galeria de Artes das Folhas, São Paulo
- 1962 Galeria San Jorge, Madrid [catalogue]

- 1963 *Scultore*, Galleria d'Arte della Casa do Brasil, Rome [catalogue]
- 1964 *Chapas y dibujos*, Sala Neblí, Madrid
- 1975 *Esculturas, relevos, múltiplos*, Galeria Arte Global, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 1980 Galeria Aktuel, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1981 Instituto de Arquitetos do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1984 Galeria Paulo Klabin, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1985 *Esculturas recentes*, Thomas Cohn Arte Contemporânea, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 1994 Sala Especial, Salão Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Brasília [catalogue]
- 1995 Museu de Arte, Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo
- 1998–99 *Uma retrospectiva*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo [catalogue]
- 2000 Galeria Anna Maria Niemeyer, Rio de Janeiro
- 2001 Fundação Casa França-Brasil, Rio de Janeiro [catalogue]
- 2003 *No fio do espaço*, Galeria Anna Maria Niemeyer, Rio de Janeiro.
- 2003 *A poética da forma. Oscar Niemeyer, Tomie Ohtake, Franz Weissmann*, Museu Oscar Niemeyer, Curitiba, Paraná [catalogue]
- 2008 Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1964 XXXII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1965 VIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo (Special Room), São Paulo
- 1967 IX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1967 *Nova objectividade brasileira*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 1971 XI Biennale Middelheim, Antwerp
- 1972 XXXVI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1984 *Tradição e ruptura. Síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 XIX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1987 *Modernidade. Art brésilien du 20e siècle*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 1997 *Poetas do espaço e da cor, Alfredo Volpi, Arcângelo Ianelli, Aldir Mendes de Souza, Franz Weissmann*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo
- 2000 *Século 20. Arte do Brasil*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon

- 2001–2 *Brazil: Body & Soul*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao
- 2002 *Atelier Finep 2002: Antonio Dias, Franz Weissmann, José Resende, Luiz Aquila, Lygia Pape, Waltercio Caldas, Paço Imperial*, Rio de Janeiro
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2007 *Desenho construtivista brasileiro*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Time & Place. Rio de Janeiro 1956–1964*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 2010 *Das Verlangen nach Form – O Desejo da Forma. Neoconcretismo und zeitgenössische Kunst aus Brasilien*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

Museums and collections

Coleção Banco Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil

Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado, Museu de Arte Brasileira, São Paulo, Brazil

Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Museo de Belas Artes da Coruña, La Coruña, Spain

Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte da Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Museu de Arte de Brasília, Brasília, Brazil

Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

University of Essex Collection of Latin American Art, Colchester, Great Britain

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 75, 122, 349, 414; BIB. C) 32, 34

Wollner, Alexandre

The son of Yugoslav immigrants, Brazilian painter, photographer, graphic and industrial designer Alexandre Wollner was born on September 16, 1923, in São Paulo, where he currently lives.

Biography

Wollner began his studies in 1948 at the Associação Paulista de Belas Artes, later reading industrial design at the newly founded Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, Museu

de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, from 1951 to 1952, with Lina Bo Bardi, Jacob Ruchti, Poty Lazzaroto, Roberto Sambonet, and Leopoldo Haar, among others. In 1951 he collaborated with Pietro Maria Bardi in the staging of a Max Bill retrospective. Wollner joined Grupo Ruptura in 1953. Soon thereafter he received a grant to study from 1954 to 1958 at the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm, Germany, a school founded by Max Bill in the Bauhaus tradition. Among his professors was Otl Aicher. Together with Geraldo de Barros, he opened Forminform, the first design consultancy in São Paulo. He left the business the following year to set up two consultancies of his own, Dicv Design (Wollerdesigno), founded in 1962, and Alexandre Wollner Programação Visual. Established in 1963, the Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial in Rio de Janeiro followed the example of the university in Ulm. Wollner, who sat on the school's development committee, also served as a teacher for several years. In 1964 he entered into partnership with the printing firm Planegraphics. He then co-founded the Associação Brasileira de Desenho Industrial and served as its president from 1970 to 1974. Among his awards are the Primer Prêmio de Pintura Jovem Revelação Flávio de Carvalho at the 1953 Bienal de São Paulo, poster awards at the 1955 and 1957 Bienal de São Paulo, and the Orden de Mérito Cultural, Rio de Janeiro, 2009.

Work

Wollner began his career designing clothes at his mother's sewing workshop in the 1940s. He then took up graphic design after encountering the innovative visual work of Paul Rand and Alexey Brodovitch. Under the influence of concrete painting in the early 1950s, he adapted the style to his graphic drawings and advertisements. As a student in Ulm, Wollner executed several posters, a form of art he returned to years later creating film posters in collaboration with Geraldo de Barros. A pioneer of abstract and industrial design in Brazil, Wollner has created corporate logotypes for companies across Brazil. Among his clients are Ibesa, Coqueiro, Argos Industrial, Coretron, Metal Leve, Equipesca, Ultragaz, Grupo Hansen, Mause, Brasilit, Itaú, São Paulo Petróleo, and several publishing houses.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1980 *Wollner Designer Gráfico*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
- 1999 *Criatividade e consequência*, Centro de Comunicação e Artes do SENAC (Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Comercial), São Paulo
- 2003 *wollnerphotos.hfg-ulm.de-sp.br*, Centro Universitário Maria Antônia da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2010 *Cartazes*, SESC (Serviço Social do Comércio), Pinheiros, São Paulo
- 2010 *Max Bill. Mavignier. Wollner. 60 anos de arte construtiva no Brasil*, Dan Galeria, São Paulo [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 *konkrete kunst. 50 jahre entwicklung*, Helmhaus, Zurich [traveling exhibition]
- 1967 IX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1968 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de Design, Rio de Janeiro
- 1970 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de Design, Rio de Janeiro
- 1971 Bienal Americana de Artes Gráficas, Cali
- 1977 *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte. 1950–1962*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1992 *Bilderwelt Brasilien*, Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich
- 1994 *Bienal Brasil Século XX*, São Paulo [traveling exhibition]
- 2003 *Cuasi-corpus. Arte concreto y neoconcreto de Brasil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey
- 2008 *Diálogo concreto – Design e construtivismo no Brasil*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro

Museums and collections

Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 478–482, 483

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 153, 170, 173, 210, 240, 440

Yalenti, José

The son of Italian immigrants, Brazilian photographer José Vicente Eugênio Yalenti was born on April 26, 1895, in São Paulo and died on May 4, 1967, in the same city.

Biography

Yalenti was a founding member of the Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante, established in 1939, and remained in the association until his death. In 1942, he helped stage the exhibition Salão Paulista de Arte Fotográfica at Galeria Prestes Maia, São Paulo, where he received an honorable mention.

Work

Valenti photographed architectural elements which he transformed into geometric structures through the use of light.

Selected group exhibitions

- 1984 *Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante nos anos 40, os anos 40 e a fotografia no Brasil*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2001–2 *Realidades construídas: do pictorialismo à fotografia moderna*, Itaú Cultural, Campinas, São Paulo; Itaú Cultural, Belo Horizonte
- 2004 *Da modernidade à revolução da fotografia digital. 1939 à 2004*, Foto Cine Clube Bandeirante, São Paulo
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Fragmentos. Modernismo na fotografia brasileira*, Galeria Bergamin, São Paulo
- 2009 *Cine Foto Clube Bandeirante. 70 Anos*, Centro Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2009 *Experimentaciones. La experiencia concreta y neoconcreta en la fotografía brasileña*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Parque Forestal y Espacio ArteAbierto de Fundación Itaú, Santiago [traveling exhibition]
- 2010 *Moderna para sempre. Fotografia modernista brasileira na Coleção Itaú*, Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul Ado Malagoli, Porto Alegre
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Coleção Pirelli/MASP de Fotografia, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

Miami Art Museum, Miami, Florida, United States

Tate Gallery, London, Great Britain

The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 115

Links

joseyalenti.blogspot.com



Carreño, Omar

Venezuelan painter, sculptor, goldsmith, and architect, Omar Rafael Carreño Rodríguez was born on February 7, 1927, in Porlamar, Nueva Esparta. He lives in Caracas.

Biography

Carreño studied at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas de Caracas from 1948 to 1950, later entering the Taller Libre de Arte. Between 1950 and 1955 he lived in Europe, mainly in France, where he came into contact with members of the group Los Disidentes. Upon returning to Caracas in 1956, he worked as art director at *Integral* magazine until 1959, while also contributing to other publications. In 1957 he joined the group Sardió. From 1960 to 1963 he lived in Paris, where he undertook studies in engraving at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, the Collège de France, and the École du Louvre. In 1965 he settled in Rome and attended the UNESCO International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property. In 1966 Carreño founded the Grupo Expansionista in Caracas and published its first public declaration, the *Primer Manifiesto Expansionista*. He then taught at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas Cristóbal Rojas from 1967 to 1979. Carreño earned a degree in Architecture from the Universidad Central de Venezuela in 1991. Prizes received include the 1972 Venezuelan National Prize of Fine Arts, the 1973 Arturo Michelena Award conferred by the Ateneo de Valencia, Venezuela, and the 1978 Orden de Andrés Bello (third class).

Work

Carreño's early work was influenced by geometric abstraction. Following this period, in the 1950s he developed expansionism. Notable works in this style include reliefs, some of which incorporated metal components, object-paintings such as *Ojos de Buey* (Port-holes), adjustable polyptychs, and a series of lacquered objects and sculptures entitled *Hierros estables* (Stable Irons). He became involved in the synthesis of the arts project at the Caracas University Campus, where he executed mural paintings at the School of Dentistry. Between 1960 and 1965, his artistic style moved towards Art Informel, though he later returned to geometric abstraction. He experimented with transformable objects made of cubes and explored the possibilities of incorporating artificial light to artworks. Between 1985 and 1992 his production entered a figurative-abstract phase dominated by sailboat motifs which subsequently gave way to abstract reliefs.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1950 Taller Libre de Arte, Caracas
- 1952 Galerie Arnaud, Paris

- 1954 *Œuvres récentes*, Galerie Suzanne Michel, Paris [catalogue]
- 1955 *Antológica abstracta, 1950–1955*, Sociedad Venezolana de Arquitectos, Caracas
- 1965 Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
- 1966 *Opere transformabili*, Galleria Numero, Florence; Galleria Fiamma Vigo, Rome [catalogue]
- 1967 *Obras transformables 1966–1967*, Fundación Eugenio Mendoza, Exhibition Rooms, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1971 *Imágenes transformables, 1969–1971*, Estudio Actual, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1972 Instituto Nacional de Cultura y Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1974 Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
- 1979 Centro de Arte Euroamericano, Caracas
- 1983–84 *Exposición antológica 1950–1983*, Museo Español de Arte Contemporáneo, Madrid; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1989 *Todas las presencias*, Galería Durban, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1994 *Vuelta sobre los pasos. Relieves, 1992–1994*, Galería Durban, Caracas
- 1998 *Relieves*, Museo de Arte, Tovar, Venezuela
- 2005 *Trasnocho Arte Contacto*, Fundación Trasnocho Cultural, Caracas
- 2010 *La pintura en el espacio*, Centro de Arte La Estancia, Caracas

Selected group exhibitions

- 1952 Salon des Réalités Nouvelles, Paris
- 1972 XXXVI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 2001 *Arte Madí - Freie Geometrie*, Galería Emilia Suciú - Konstruktiv-Konkrete Kunst, Ettlingen
- 2003 *9 Venezuelan Modern Masters. Geometry and Movement*, The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas
- 2006 *Espacios re-dibujados. 50 años de abstracción en Venezuela*, Fundación Corp Group Centro Cultural, Caracas
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Expansionismo*, Galería Durban-Segnini, Caracas
- 2009 *Expansionismo. Contemporary Latin American Artists Explore Space*, The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Embracing Modernity. Venezuelan Geometric Abstraction*, Florida International University, The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, Miami

Museums and collections

Ateneo de Valencia, Valencia, Venezuela

Banco Central de Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela

Centro de Artes Omar Carreño, La Asunción, Venezuela

Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Fundación Neumann, Caracas, Venezuela

Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela

Galería Municipal de Arte Moderno, Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela

Ministerio de Educación, Caracas, Venezuela
 Museo Anzoátegui, Barcelona, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Francisco Narváez, Porlamar, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Moderno, Mérida, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela
 Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
 The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas, Texas, United States
 Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 58, 358 BIB. C) 38, 39

Cruz-Diez, Carlos

Venezuelan sculptor, painter, draughtsman, illustrator, and designer, Carlos Cruz-Diez was born on August 17, 1923, in Caracas. He currently lives in Paris.

Biography

Cruz-Diez studied at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas de Caracas. He designed advertisements for Creole Petroleum Corporation and served as art director at McCann Erickson advertising agency from 1946 to 1951. He then earned his living as an illustrator for the daily *El Nacional* and taught History of Applied Arts at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas from 1953 to 1955. Following a trip to Barcelona in 1955, he moved temporarily to Paris, where he met Jesús Rafael Soto as well as other artists interested in renewing abstract art through the use of new media. In 1957, he opened his own studio of graphic and industrial design under the name Estudio de Arte Visual and taught Typography and Graphic Design at the Universidad Central de Venezuela's School of Journalism. Settling in Paris in 1960, he continued his academic activity. Prizes awarded to Cruz-Diez include the 1996 Grand Prize at the III Bienal Americana de Arte in Córdoba and the 1967 International Prize for Painting at the IX Bienal de São Paulo.

Work

Throughout the 1950s Cruz-Diez illustrated several books published by the Venezuelan Ministry of Education. In 1955 he began exploring the possibilities of creating virtual color in relation to the spectator's movement, a subject he treated in his *Fisicromías* (Physichromies). In line with his idea of transforming color, Cruz-Diez created the environments *Transcromías* (Transchromies) and *Cromosaturaciones* (Chromosaturations). He also executed several works that combined kinetic art, urban space, and architecture. Some, like *Transchromies* for the Phelps Tower Gates (1967) in Caracas, were permanent structures, whereas others were

temporary pieces. Examples of the latter are *Chromosaturación pour un lieu public* (Paris 1967) and *Chromatic Environments* for Guri Dam Powerhouse (1980s).

Selected solo exhibitions

(For a complete listing of exhibitions, see the Fundación Juan March catalogue, 2009, included in the bibliography)

- 1947 Instituto Venezolano-Americano, Caracas
- 1955 Galería Buchholz, Madrid
- 1960 *Cruz-Diez. Fisicromías*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1965 *A Decade of Physichromies by Carlos Cruz-Diez*, Signals London, London [brochure]
- 1965 *Physichromies de Cruz-Diez. Œuvres de 1954 à 1965*, Galerie Jacques Kerchache, Paris [catalogue]
- 1965 Galleria la Polena, Genoa [catalogue]
- 1969 *Cruz-Diez et les trois étapes de la couleur moderne*, Galerie Denise René, Paris [catalogue]
- 1971 *Physichromies, couleur additive, induction chromatique, chromointerférences*, Galerie Denise René, New York [catalogue]
- 1972 Galería Buchholz, Munich [catalogue]
- 1974 Galleria della Trinità, Rome [catalogue]
- 1975 *Intégrations à l'architecture. Réalisations et projets*, Galerie Denise René, Paris [catalogue]
- 1975 *Obras sobre el muro, gráficas e integración arquitectónica*, Museo de Arte Moderno La Tertulia, Cali; Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogotá [catalogue]
- 1975 *Obras sobre el muro, gráficas de integración arquitectónica*, Galería Aele, Madrid [catalogue]
- 1975 *El artista y la ciudad*, Sala de Exposiciones de la Gobernación del Distrito Federal, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1976 *Artista venezolano. Fisicromías, cromocinetismo*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City [catalogue]
- 1976 Musée de Beaux-Arts, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland [catalogue]
- 1977 *Physichromien*, Galerie Latzer, Kreuzlingen, Switzerland [catalogue]
- 1980 Galería Municipal de Arte Moderno, Puerto la Cruz, Venezuela [brochure]
- 1981 Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1981 *Didattica e dialettica del colore*, Galleria Sagittaria, Pordenone, Italy [catalogue]
- 1981 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1982 *Didáctica y dialéctica del color*, Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, Mexico City [brochure]
- 1985 *Didaktik und Dialektik der Farbe*, Interstoff Art Gallery, Frankfurt [catalogue]
- 1986 Galerie Denise René, Paris [brochure]
- 1987 *Cruz-Diez y el color*, Alianza Francesa de Venezuela, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1989 *Aventuras de la óptica. Soto y Cruz-Diez*, Palacio de los Condes de Gabia, Granada [catalogue]
- 1990 Abbaye des Cordeliers, Châteauroux, France [brochure]
- 1991 *Inducciones cromáticas*, Espacio Simonetti, Centro de Arte Contemporáneo, Valencia, Venezuela [brochure]
- 1991 *Carlos Cruz-Diez en la arquitectura*, Centro Cultural Consolidado, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1991 *Color-acontecimiento*, Galería Nacional de Arte Contemporáneo, San José, Costa Rica [catalogue]

- 1993 *L'avvenimento-colore*, Vismara Arte, Milan [catalogue]
- 1994 *Otero, Soto, Cruz-Diez. Tres maestros del abstraccionismo en Venezuela y su proyección internacional*, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1998 *Homenaje al maestro Carlos Cruz-Diez*, Petróleos de Venezuela, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1998 Städtisches Museum, Gelsenkirchen, Germany [catalogue]
- 2001 *De lo participativo a lo interactivo*, Fundación Corp Group Centro Cultural, Caracas [catalogue]
- 2003 *De lo participativo a lo interactivo, otra noción del color*, Sala Municipal de Exposiciones L'Almudi, Valencia [catalogue]
- 2003 *Chromosaturación*, firstsite @ the Minorities Art Gallery, Colchester; *Chromointerference*, University Gallery, University of Essex, Colchester [brochure]
- 2005 *The Chromatic Happenings of a Kinetic Harbinger*, Sicardi Gallery, Houston, Texas [catalogue]
- 2005 *La couleur dans l'espace*, Galerie Denise René, Paris [catalogue]
- 2006 *50 x 50*, Trasnocho Arte Contacto, Fundación Trasnocho Cultural, Caracas [catalogue]
- 2007 Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris [catalogue]
- 2007 *Optical Blends and Chromatic Instabilities. The Physichromies of Carlos Cruz-Diez*, Sicardi Gallery, Houston, Texas [catalogue]
- 2008 *(In) formed by Colour*, Americas Society, New York [catalogue]
- 2009 *El color sucede*, Museu d'Art Espanyol Contemporani, Fundación Juan March, Palma de Mallorca; Museo de Arte Abstracto Español, Fundación Juan March, Cuenca [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1965 *The Responsive Eye*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1967 IX Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1970 XXXV Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1974 *Nueve artistas venezolanos*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
- 1975 *12 Latin American Artists Today - 12 artistas latino americanos de hoy*, University Art Museum, University of Texas, Austin, Texas
- 1978 *La mano, la seda, el color. Estampas sobre seda de nueve artistas venezolanos*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
- 1984 *Face à la machine*, Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris
- 1988–90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1992 Expo 92, Exposición Universal de Sevilla, Venezuela Pavilion
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York

- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2001 *Geometric Abstraction. Latin American Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 2002 XXV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 2003 *9 Venezuelan Modern Masters. Geometry and Movement*, The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas, Texas
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Lo[s] cinético[s]*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2007 *Op Art*, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2009 *De la abstracción... al arte cinético*, Casa de las Américas, Havana
- 2009 *Expansionismo. Contemporary Latin American Artists Explore Space*, The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas, Texas
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Géométrie hors limites: art contemporain latino-américain dans la collection Jean et Colette Chérqui*, Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn
- 2010 *Embracing Modernity. Venezuelan Geometric Abstraction*, Florida International University, The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

- Arithmeum, Bonn, Germany
- Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, D.C., United States
- Bangladesh National Museum, Dacca, Bangladesh
- Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Neue Pinakothek, Munich, Germany
- Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Banco de la República de Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia
- Boca Raton Museum of Art, Boca Raton, Florida, United States
- Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba
- Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland
- Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
- Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela
- Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., United States
- Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland
- Kunstmuseum Bern, Bern, Switzerland
- Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- Musée de Cambrai, Cambrai, France
- Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
- Musée Réattu, Arles, France
- Museo de Arte Costarricense, San José, Costa Rica

Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Moderno La Tertulia, Cali, Colombia
 Museo de Arte Moderno, Medellín, Colombia
 Museo de la Estampa y del Diseño Carlos Cruz-Diez, Caracas, Venezuela
 Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende, Santiago, Chile
 Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
 Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts, Vienna, Austria
 Museum für Konkrete Kunst, Ingolstadt, Germany
 Museum gegenstandsfreier Kunst, Otterndorf, Germany
 Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany
 Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna, Austria
 Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, United States
 Muzeum Sztuki, Łódź, Poland
 Quadrat Bottrop, Josef Albers Museum, Bottrop, Germany
 Tate Gallery, London, Great Britain
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States
 University of Essex Collection of Latin American Art, Colchester, Great Britain
 Victoria & Albert Museum, London, Great Britain
 Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen am Rhein, Germany

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 119

For additional texts by the artist, see the above-mentioned catalogue published by the Fundación Juan March in 2009.

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 25, 44, 45, 62-64, 92, 135, 157, 346, 381, 389, 396, 418; BIB. C) 33

See the bibliography in the above-mentioned catalogue published by the Fundación Juan March in 2009.

Links

www.cruz-diez.com

Debourg, Narciso

Venezuelan sculptor Narciso Arturo Debourg was born on March 14, 1925, in Caracas. He lives in Paris.

Biography

Debourg studied at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas de Caracas from 1940 to 1945. In 1949 he moved to Paris and became involved with the group Los Disidentes.

Work

As a kinetic sculptor, his work features optical structures consisting of cylinders or solid geometric structures arranged on a flat sur-

face. By cutting tubular objects diagonally, Debourg also creates different light effects.

Selected solo exhibitions

1969 Estudio Actual, Caracas [brochure]

Selected group exhibitions

2009 *Abstrakcja i kinetyka*, Atlas Sztuki, Łódź, Poland
 2010 *Embracing Modernity. Venezuelan Geometric Abstraction*, Florida International University, The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
 Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Francisco Narváez, Porlamar, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela

Gego

Venezuelan sculptress, draughtswoman, printmaker, and architect of Jewish and German descent Gertrud Louise Goldschmidt, better known as Gego, was born on August 1, 1912, in Hamburg and died on September 17, 1994, in Caracas.

Biography

Gego studied Architecture under Paul Bonatz at the Technische Hochschule in Stuttgart from 1932 to 1938. Fleeing from Nazi Germany, she emigrated to Venezuela in 1939, where she first worked as an architect and furniture designer. In 1952 she acquired Venezuelan citizenship. In Venezuela she met Lithuanian immigrant Gert Leufert, who would become both her professional and emotional partner. A graphic designer and artist, Leufert encouraged her to take up fine arts. Gego held teaching positions for many years; after her first appointment at the School of Architecture and Town Planning of the Universidad Central de Venezuela in 1958, she taught at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas Cristóbal Rojas in 1958–59 and at the Instituto de Diseño de la Fundación Neumann / Instituto Nacional de Cooperación Educativa from 1964–73. Gego was awarded First Prize for Drawing at the IV National Exhibition of Drawing and Engraving. Upon receiving a three-month scholarship, she joined the Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles in 1966. In 1979 she received the Venezuelan National Plastic Arts Prize, and the following year she co-founded the Taller de Artes Gráficas Asociadas (TAGA). The Fundación Gego was established by her family in Caracas in 1994.

Work

Gego began exploring a range of media including drawing, watercolor, monotyping, and xylography in 1953. She excelled at developing an expressive style, as evidenced in her landscape subjects. From the mid-1950s, she concentrated on abstract drawing and, encouraged by Alejandro Otero and Jesús Soto, created three-dimensional works, first using paper and subsequently iron. In these pieces she was able to convey parallel lines and planes projecting onto curved surfaces. In 1964 she began to employ stainless steel wire—a light and flexible medium—leaving her previous structures of parallel lines behind in the late 1960s. She then began to create designs by interlacing lines in triangular shapes which gave way to flat and modular grid structures. Various versions of Gego's three-dimensional work *Retícula*, an architectural installation made of webs and nets, stemmed from these earlier structures. The first *Retícula* was displayed at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas in 1969. In the early 1970s she designed similar grid structures, this time incorporating round or square shapes and iron or aluminum rods. These works sometimes allude to natural phenomena as in *Chorros*; *Nubes*; *Troncos*; *Esferas* (Streams; Clouds; Trunks; Spheres). *Dibujos sin papel* (Drawings without Paper) marked the beginning of a third period in the mid-1970s. This series allowed Gego great freedom of expression, as she drew in the air using wire and other metal materials. In her later work entitled *Tejeduras* (Weavings, 1988–89) she used strips of paper and tin sheets. Gego also adapted her designs to various architectural structures in Caracas, examples of which include the headquarters of the Banco Industrial de Venezuela (1962) and, in collaboration with Leufert, the tower and mural for the Centro Comercial Cediaz (1967), as well as the murals for the Instituto Nacional de Cooperación Educativa headquarters (1968–69).

Selected solo exhibitions

1955 Galerie Gurlitt, Munich
 1961 *Dibujos recientes*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
 1964 *Líneas y entrelíneas. Grabados y dibujos*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
 1967 *Esculturas 1957–1967*, Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Banco de la República de Colombia, Bogotá [catalogue]
 1967 *Esculturas*, Galería Conkright, Caracas
 1969 *Retícula*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
 1975 *Dibujos para proyectos*, Instituto de Diseño, Fundación Neumann, Caracas
 1977 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas [catalogue]
 1982 *Acuarelas*, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas [catalogue]
 1984 *Dibujos sin papel*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
 1985 *Dibujos*, Museo de Barquisimeto, Barquisimeto, Venezuela [catalogue]
 1988 *Obras recientes*, Galería Sotavento, Caracas [catalogue]

1994 *Una mirada a su obra*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
 1996 *Dibujos, grabados, tejeduras*, Centro Cultural Consolidado, Caracas [catalogue]
 2000 *Gego 1955–1990*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
 2002 *Work on Paper 1962–1991*, Latincollector Art Center, New York [catalogue]
 2002 *Questioning the Line. Gego, a Selection 1955–1990*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas [catalogue]
 2003 Sicardi Gallery, Houston, Texas [catalogue]
 2003–4 *Thinking the Line. Ruth Vollmer and Gego*, Ursula Blickle Stiftung, Kraichtal, Germany; Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe, Germany; Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Austria; Miami Art Central, Miami, Florida [catalogue]
 2004 *Anudamientos*, Sala Mendoza, Caracas [catalogue]
 2005 *Gego: Between Transparency and the Invisible*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas [catalogue]
 2005 *La resistencia de las sombras. Alejandro Otero y Gego*, Fundación Cisneros, Caracas [catalogue]
 2005 *A contra corriente, Mira Schendel, Gego y Lygia Pape. Obras de la Colección Cisneros*, TEOR/éTica, San José, Costa Rica
 2006 *Gego: entre la transparencia y lo invisible*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires; Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Banco de la República de Colombia, Bogotá [catalogue]
 2006 *Desafiando estructuras*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Oporto; Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Barcelona [catalogue]
 2007 *Gego: Between Transparency and the Invisible*, The Drawing Center, New York [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

1958 Expo 58 Brussels World Fair, Venezuela Pavilion, Brussels
 1963 I Bienal Americana de Grabado, Santiago
 1970 I Bienal de San Juan del Grabado Latinoamericano y del Caribe, San Juan
 1975 VII Biennale Internationale de la Tapisserie, Lausanne
 1978 *La mano, la seda, el color. Estampas sobre seda de nueve artistas venezolanos*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
 1988–90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
 1996 XXII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
 1996 *Inside the Visible. An Elliptical Traverse of 20th Century Art in, of, and from the Feminine*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Massachusetts [catalogue]
 1999 *The Experimental Exercise of Freedom. Lygia Clark, Gego, Mathias Goeritz, Hélio Oiticica and Mira Schendel*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2003 L Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 2003 *Geometrías. Abstracción geométrica latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2005 *Tropical Abstraction*, Stedelijk Museum Bureau, Amsterdam
- 2005 *Time Lines*, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf
- 2006 *Cruce de miradas. Visiones de América Latina. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City
- 2006 *Espacios re-dibujados. 50 años de abstracción en Venezuela*, Fundación Corp Group Centro Cultural, Caracas
- 2006 Bienal del Aire, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Frágil*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Esteban Vicente, Segovia
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Mind and Matter. Alternative Abstractions, 1940s to Now*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2010 *Modern Women. Women Artists at the Museum of Modern Art*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn
- 2010 *Embracing Modernity. Venezuelan Geometric Abstraction*, Florida International University, The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, United States
 Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, D.C., United States
 Banco Mercantil, Caracas, Venezuela
 California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California, United States
 Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States
 Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland
 Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela
 Fundación Gego, Caracas, Venezuela
 Fundación Polar, Caracas, Venezuela
 Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
 Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela
 Instituto Venezolano de Investigaciones Científicas, Caracas, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas, Venezuela

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Francisco Narváez, Porlamar, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Moderno, Mérida, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela
 Museo de Barquisimeto, Barquisimeto, Venezuela
 Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
 Museu d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona, Spain
 Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, California, United States
 Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, United States
 Pratt Institute, New York, United States
 The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, United States
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States
 The New York Public Library, New York, United States
 University of California, Hammer Museum, Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, Los Angeles, United States
 University of Texas, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 202

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 21, 22, 98, 175, 332, 370, 372, 373, 379, 390, 465, 477; BIB. C) 9, 27, 45

Manaure, Mateo

Venezuelan painter, muralist, sculptor, print-maker, graphic designer, and illustrator, Mateo Manaure was born on October 18, 1926, in Uracoa, Monagas, where he currently lives.

Biography

From 1941 to 1946 Manaure attended the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas de Caracas with Antonio Edmundo Monsanto and studied graphic art under Pedro Ángel González. Upon receiving the National Plastic Arts Prize for young artists in 1947, he traveled to Paris. The following year, Manaure became involved in the founding of the Taller Libre de Arte in Caracas. Back in Paris in 1950, he joined the group Los Disidentes. On his return to Caracas in 1952, Manaure opened the Galería Cuatro Muros with the sculptor Carlos González Bogen, and together they organized the First International Exhibition of Abstract Art held in Venezuela. Founding member of the group Sardino, Manaure focused on journalism and news design and began illustrating magazines and books. He also taught at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas Cristóbal Rojas in Caracas, and in 1984 he was appointed president of the Asociación Venezolana de Artistas Plásticos. Notable awards include the 1950 John Boulton Prize and the 1953 Federico Brandt Prize, both conferred by the Salón Oficial, and the 1994 Armando Reverón Prize awarded by the Asociación Venezolana de Artistas Plásticos. The Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Mateo

Manaure was founded in Maturín, Monagas State, in late 2008.

Work

Manaure's early figurative work featured nudes, landscapes, and still lifes executed in a gestural and surrealist style. In Paris, his production gradually shifted from geometric abstraction to lyrical abstract art. He played an active part in the synthesis of the arts project in the University Campus of Caracas, completing several abstract geometric murals, polychrome works, and stained glass windows. In the early 1960s he returned to figurative art, to which he added magical and surreal elements. Examples include a series of photographic collages entitled *Sobremontajes* (Overmontages, 1965) and *Los suelos de mi tierra* (The Soil of my Land, 1967). His return to geometric abstraction was marked by *Cuvisiones* (1970), in which the cube forms the central theme of the work, and *Columnas policromadas* (Polychrome Columns, 1977), a serial and systematic arrangement of sculptures. Manaure's output remains poised between geometric art and schematic figuration with symbolic and mythical features.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1947 *Mateo Manaure. Pascual Navarro*, Museo de Bellas Arte, Caracas
- 1952 Galería Cuatro Muros, Caracas
- 1954 Galería Cuatro Muros, Caracas
- 1956 Museo de Bellas Arte, Caracas
- 1965 *Pinturas sobremontaje*, Fundación Eugenio Mendoza, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1967 *Suelos de mi tierra*, Fundación Eugenio Mendoza, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1977 *Columnas policromadas*. Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1986 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
- 1992 *Gift to my Race*, Cultural Space, Venezuelan Embassy, Washington, D.C. [catalogue]
- 1994 Galería Durban, Caracas
- 1999 *Einblicke ins neue Jahrtausend*, Galerie Maria Isabel Haldner, Zurich [catalogue]
- 2008 *El hombre y el artista*, Centro de Arte La Estancia, Caracas

Selected group exhibitions

- 1956 XXVIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1974 *Nueve artistas venezolanos*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
- 1983 I Bienal de La Habana, Havana
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 *Alfredo Boulton and His Contemporaries*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2009 *De la abstracción... al arte cinético*, Casa de las Américas, Havana
- 2010 *Embracing Modernity. Venezuelan Geometric Abstraction*, Florida International University, The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba
 Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela
 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Mateo Manaure, Maturín, Venezuela
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States
 Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 87, 184, 185, 470

Otero, Alejandro

Venezuelan painter and sculptor, Alejandro Otero Rodríguez was born on March 7, 1921, in El Manteco, Bolívar, and died on August 13, 1990, in Caracas.

Biography

Otero studied Agriculture in Maracay, Aragu, in 1938. Then from 1939 to 1945 he pursued studies in painting, sculpture, stained glass art, and education at the Escuela de Arte Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas de Caracas. After finishing his studies a state scholarship took him to Paris, where he joined the group Los Disidentes, co-founded the eponymous magazine, and worked as a contributor from 1949 to 1952. Otero taught Art at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas Cristóbal Rojas and became involved in projects aimed at renewing the school. He was one of the many artists to partake in the synthesis of the arts project envisaged by the architect Carlos Villanueva for the Caracas University Campus. He also served as coordinator of the Museo de Bellas Artes and Vice-President of the Instituto Nacional de Cultura y Bellas Artes from 1964 to 1996. In 1971 he received a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship to study at the Center for Advanced Visual Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in Boston.

Work

Otero began his career in the late 1940s painting geometric compositions of still lifes, such as *Cafeteras* (Coffee Pots). He executed aluminum panels and mosaics for the Caracas University Campus project, works that led to the series *Coloritmos* (Colorhythms). While living in Paris in the 1960s, he completed a series of assemblages and collages that incorporated everyday objects in the style of neo-Dada. Otero also designed several abstract urban sculptures, including *Estructuras espaciales* (Spatial Structures) in Maracay (1968), Bogotá (1975), Washington D.C. (1975), Mexico City (1975), Milan (1977), and Guri Dam, Venezuela (1987).

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1948 *Still-life, Themes and Variations*, Pan American Union, Washington, D.C. [brochure]
- 1949 Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
- 1957 *Coloritmos*, Galería de Arte Contemporáneo, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1960 *Coloritmos*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [brochure]
- 1962 *Obras*, Galería Mendoza; Galería El Muro; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1964 *Ensamblajes y encolados 1961/1964*, Fundación Eugenio Mendoza, Caracas [brochure]
- 1966 *A Quarter of a Century of the Beautiful Art of Alejandro Otero, 1940–1965. A Retrospective Exhibition*, Signals London, London [catalogue]
- 1975 *A Retrospective Exhibition*, Michener Galleries, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas, Austin, Texas [catalogue]
- 1976 *Exposición retrospectiva*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City [catalogue]
- 1985 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1988 *Coloritmos*, Museo de Artes Visuales Alejandro Otero, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1990–91 *Las estructuras de la realidad*, Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Bolívar; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1994 *Lineas de luz. Esculturas virtuales*, Museo de Artes Visuales Alejandro Otero, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1994 *Otero, Soto, Cruz-Diez. Tres maestros del abstraccionismo en Venezuela y su proyección internacional*, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas [catalogue]
- 2005 *La resistencia de las sombras. Alejandro Otero y Gego*, Fundación Cisneros, Caracas [catalogue]
- 2006 *The Rhythm of Color. Alejandro Otero and Willys de Castro. Two Modern Masters in the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Aspen Institute, Aspen, Colorado [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1952 *Espace, Lumière*, Galerie Suzanne Michel, Paris
- 1966 XXXIII Biennale di Venezia (solo exhibition), Venice
- 1978 *La mano, la seda, el color. Estampas sobre seda de nueve artistas venezolanos*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
- 1982 XXXII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1987 I Bienal Nacional de Arte de Guayana, Homenaje a Alejandro Otero, Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela
- 1988–90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1991 XXI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national

- d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2001 *Geometric Abstraction. Latin American Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 2001 *Arte en Venezuela. De la firma del Acta de independencia de Juan Lovera, 1838, al premio a Los coloritmos de Alejandro Otero, 1958*, Fundación Banco Industrial de Venezuela, Caracas
- 2003 *Geometrías. Abstracción geométrica latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2006 Bienal del Aire, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
- 2006 *Espacios re-dibujados. 50 años de abstracción en Venezuela*, Fundación Corp Group Centro Cultural, Caracas
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Cubismo y tendencias afines*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Alicante; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
- 2007 VI Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
- 2007 *Lo[s] cinético[s]*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2009 *De la abstracción... al arte cinético*, Casa de las Américas, Havana
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Then & Now. Abstraction in Latin American Art from 1950 to Present*, 60 Wall Gallery, Deutsche Bank, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn
- 2010 *Embracing Modernity. Venezuelan Geometric Abstraction*, Florida International University, The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

- Colección Banco Mercantil, Caracas, Venezuela
- Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas, United States
- Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
- Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela
- Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas, Venezuela
- Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela
- Museo de Artes Visuales Alejandro Otero, Caracas, Venezuela
- Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, Washington, D.C., United States

The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 339–343

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 33, 35, 60, 63, 82, 157, 168, 197, 208, 313, 344, 350, 351, 411, 424

Soto, Jesús Rafael

Venezuelan painter and sculptor, Jesús Rafael Soto was born on June 5, 1923, in Ciudad Bolívar, Bolívar, and died on January 14, 2005, in Paris.

Biography

Soto spent most of his youth living in the country, near the Orinoco River, where he came into contact with indigenous customs. At the age of fifteen, he painted advertising billboards for the movie theater in Ciudad Bolívar. Granted a scholarship in 1942, he enrolled at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas de Caracas and studied under Antonio Edmundo Monsanto. Later, in 1947, he was appointed director of the Escuela de Bellas Artes in Maracaibo. Upon receiving a state scholarship in 1950, he traveled to France. Soto was awarded several prizes throughout his career including the 1963 Gran Premio Wolf at the Bienal de São Paulo, the 1964 David Bright Prize at the Biennale di Venezia, Second Prize at the 1964 Bienal Americana de Arte in Córdoba, and the 1995 Grand Prix National de Sculpture in Paris. In 1973, he opened the Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto in Ciudad Bolívar, Bolívar, designed by the architect Carlos Raúl Villanueva.

Work

Influenced by the work of Marcel Duchamp, Yaacov Agam, and Jean Tinguely, throughout the 1950s Soto used optical effects rather than mechanic devices with the aim of setting his paintings into motion. In 1958, he created the series *Vibraciones* (Vibrations), comprised of suspended elements arranged before a geometric structure that seem to shift as the spectator moves. The series entitled *Escrituras* (Writings, 1963) is based on these same principles. In the late 1960s he began work on *Penetrables*, an installation made of plastic and metallic rods through which the spectator can move. Soto received several commissions, including two kinetic murals for the Venezuelan Pavilion at the 1958 Brussels World Fair, *Volumen suspendido* (Suspended Volume) for Expo 67, the Universal and International Exhibition in Montreal, as well as large-scale reliefs for

the UNESCO building in Paris (1970) and the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas (1971).

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1949 Taller Libre de Arte, Caracas
- 1951 Galería Suzanne Michel, Paris
- 1957 Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
- 1963 *Kinetische Bilder - Tableaux cinétiques*, Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld, Germany [catalogue]
- 1964 Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
- 1965 *Vibrations*, Koontz Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 1965 *The Achievements of Jesús-Rafael Soto, 1950–1965. 15 years of Vibrations. A Retrospective Exhibition*, Signals London, London [brochure]
- 1966 Galerie Schmela, Düsseldorf [brochure]
- 1967 Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
- 1968 Kunsthalle Bern, Bern [catalogue]
- 1968 Kestner-Gesellschaft, Hannover [catalogue]
- 1968 *Werke 1950–1968*, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf [catalogue]
- 1969 Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Paleis voor Schone Kunsten, Brussels [catalogue]
- 1969 *Animation, recherche, confrontation*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris [catalogue]
- 1969 Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 1969 Svensk-Franska Konstgalleriet, Stockholm [catalogue]
- 1970 Galerija suvremene umjetnosti, Zagreb [catalogue]
- 1970 *Vibrationsbilder, kinetische Strukturen, Environments*, Mannheimer Kunstverein, Mannheim; Ulmer Museum, Ulm; Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern, Kaiserslautern [catalogue]
- 1971 Martha Jackson Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 1972 Galerie Beyeler, Basel [catalogue]
- 1972 Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogotá [catalogue]
- 1974 *Soto: A Retrospective Exhibition*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York [catalogue]
- 1979 *Soto: Œuvres actuelles*, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris [catalogue]
- 1979 *Múltiples*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas [brochure]
- 1981 Galería Témpora, Bogotá [catalogue]
- 1982 Palacio de Velázquez del Parque del Retiro, Madrid [catalogue]
- 1983 *Cuarenta años de creación 1943–1983*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1985 *Space Art*, Center for the Fine Arts, Miami, Florida [catalogue]
- 1989 *Aventuras de la óptica. Soto y Cruz-Diez*, Palacio de los Condes de Gabia, Granada [catalogue]
- 1989 *Lo visible y lo posible*, Museo de Arte, Coro, Venezuela [catalogue]
- 1990 Quadrat Bottrop, Josef Albers Museum, Bottrop, Germany [catalogue]
- 1991 *Opere recenti*, Galleria arte 92, Milan [catalogue]
- 1992–93 *La física, lo inmaterial*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas; Museo de Arte Moderno

- Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela [catalogue]
- 1992–93 *Retrospective*, Abbaye Saint-André, Centre d'art contemporain, Meymac, France; Le Carré, Musée Bonnat, Bayonne; Musée d'art moderne, Dunkerque; Fundação de Serralves, Oporto [catalogue]
- 1993 *Re-pensar lo visible*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Mario Abreu, Maracay, Venezuela [catalogue]
- 1994 *Otero, Soto, Cruz-Diez. Tres maestros del abstraccionismo en Venezuela y su proyección internacional*, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1997 Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris [catalogue]
- 1997 *Retrospektive*, Stiftung für Konkrete Kunst, Reutlingen, Germany [catalogue]
- 1998 *Universe of Change*, Riva Yares Gallery, Scottsdale, Arizona [catalogue]
- 1998 Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid [catalogue]
- 1999 Banque Bruxelles Lambert, Brussels [catalogue]
- 1999 *Soto: La poética de la energía*, Fundación Telefónica, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1999 *Soto: Die Poesie der Energie*, Galerie am Lindenplatz, Vaduz, Liechtenstein [catalogue]
- 2000 *Soto clásico y moderno. Homenaje a los cincuenta años de actividad creadora del maestro Jesús Soto*, Fundación Corp Group Centro Cultural, Caracas [catalogue]
- 2001 *Jesús Soto y la filosofía*, Durban Segnini Gallery, Coral Gables, Florida [catalogue]
- 2001–3 Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris; Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogotá; *Soto a gran escala*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Sofía Imber, Caracas; Centro Cultural Metropolitano, Quito [catalogue]
- 2002 *Dos hombres de un mismo río. Jesús Soto, Alirio Palacios*, Galería de Arte Ascaso, Caracas [catalogue]
- 2002 *Jesús Soto en Maracaibo*, Centro de Arte Lia Bermúdez, Maracaibo [catalogue]
- 2003 *Le mouvement dans l'art*, Galerie Denise René, Paris [catalogue]
- 2005 *The Universality of the Immaterial*, Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, California [catalogue]
- 2005 *Homenaje al maestro del arte cinético*, Galería Artespacio, Santiago de Chile [catalogue]
- 2005 *A construção da imaterialidade*, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, São Paulo; Museu Oscar Niemeyer, Curitiba [catalogue]
- 2005–7 *Visión en movimiento*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City.; Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires; Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Bergamo [catalogue]
- 2006 *Pensar en obra. Homenaje a Jesús Soto*, Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela [catalogue]
- 2006 *Jesús Soto en la Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros. Una selección*, Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración, Caracas [catalogue]
- 2009 Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin

Selected group exhibitions

- 1952 *Espace, Lumière*, Galerie Suzanne Michel, Paris
- 1955 *Le mouvement*, Galerie Denise René, Paris

- 1958 Expo 58 Brussels World Fair, Brussels
- 1963 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1964 II Bienal Americana de Arte, Córdoba
- 1964 documenta III, Kassel
- 1964 XXXII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1966 XXXIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1967 Expo 67, Universal and International Exhibition, Montreal
- 1974 *Nueve artistas venezolanos*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
- 1984 *Face à la machine*, Maison de l'Amérique latine, Paris
- 1988–90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1992 *Confluencias. Primera exposición de artistas iberoamericanos en Europa*, Centro de Exposiciones y Congresos, Zaragoza
- 1992 *L'art en mouvement*, Fondation Maeght, Saint-Paul-de-Vence
- 1992–93 *Artistas latinoamericanos del siglo XX*, Estación Plaza de Armas, Seville; Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, Cologne; The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1996 XXIII Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo
- 1998–99 *Forjar el espacio. La escultura forjada en el siglo XX*, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria; Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Centre Julio González, Valencia; Musée des Beaux-Arts et de la Dentelle, Calais
- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918–1968; Fricciones*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2001 *Geometric Abstraction. Latin American Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 2001 *Denise René, l'intrépide. Une galerie dans l'aventure de l'art abstrait, 1944–1978*, Galerie d'art graphique, Galerie du musée, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris
- 2001 *El arte abstracto y la Galería Denise René*, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
- 2003 *9 Venezuelan Modern Masters. Geometry and Movement*, The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas, Texas
- 2003 *Geometrías. Abstracción geométrica latinoamericana en la Colección Cisneros*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires
- 2004 *Inverted Utopias. Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2005 *L'oeil moteur. Art optique et cinétique, 1950–1975*, Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg
- 2006 *Cruce de miradas. Visiones de América Latina. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City
- 2006 Bienal del Aire, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas

- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Op Art*, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt
- 2007 *Lo[s] cinético[s]*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2007 VI Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre
- 2007 *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2009 *De la abstracción... al arte cinético*, Casa de las Américas, Havana
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*, The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn
- 2010 *Embracing Modernity. Venezuelan Geometric Abstraction*, Florida International University, The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

- Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, United States
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sidney, Australia
- Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba
- Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain
- Colección FEMSA (Fomento Económico Mexicano S.A.), Monterrey, Mexico
- Daros Latinamerika Collection, Zurich, Switzerland
- Fundación Cisneros, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela
- Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
- Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela
- Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, Italy
- Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome, Italy
- Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan
- Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., United States
- Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, Holland
- kunsthalle weishaupt, Ulm, Germany
- Kunstmuseum Bern, Bern, Switzerland
- Kunstsammlung Dresdner Bank, Frankfurt, Germany
- Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark
- Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, Sweden
- Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden
- Musée d'art contemporain, Lyon, France
- Musée d'art contemporain, Montreal, Canada
- Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France
- Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes, France
- Musée national d'art moderne, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
- Musées Royaux des Beaux Arts de Belgique, Brussels, Belgium
- Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas, Venezuela
- Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico
- Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela
- Museo de Arte Moderno La Tertulia, Cali, Colombia
- Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende, Santiago, Chile

- Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
- Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany
- Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel, Switzerland
- Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany
- Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen, Germany
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, Croatia
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia
- National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, South Korea
- Openluchtmuseum voor Beeldhouwkunst Middelheim, Antwerp, Belgium
- Quadrat Bottrop, Josef Albers Museum, Bottrop, Germany
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, United States
- Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany
- Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany
- Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Holland
- Tate Gallery, London, Great Britain
- Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel
- The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel
- The Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland
- The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas, Texas, United States
- The Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA
- Ulmer Museum, Ulm, Germany
- University of Texas, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 34, 61, 96, 107, 157, 167, 200, 206, 207, 209, 213, 239, 298, 326, 419, 432, 467; BIB. C) 20

Links

www.venezuelatuya.com/guayana/soto.htm

Valera, Víctor

Venezuelan painter, sculptor, and stage designer, Víctor Valera Martínez was born on February 17, 1927, in Maracaibo, Zulia. He lives in Caracas.

Biography

In 1941, Valera enrolled at the Escuela de Bellas Artes de Maracaibo, continuing his painting studies at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas de Caracas from 1948 to 1950. He later joined the Taller Libre de Arte. After earning a two-year scholarship in 1950, he traveled to Paris and visited the studios of Victor Vasarely, Jean Dewasne, and Fernand Léger. Co-founder of the group Presencia 70, from 1971 he worked as a teacher at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas Cristóbal Rojas. Valera designed the Museo al Aire Libre Andrés Pérez Mujica in Valencia, Carabobo, in 1982. Notable distinctions include the 1958 National Prize for Sculpture awarded by the Salón Oficial Anual de Arte Venezolano

and the First Prize at the I Bienal Nacional de Escultura Francisco Narváez, Porlamar, Nueva Esparta, 1982. Valera was conferred the Orden Ciudad de Maracaibo in 1991 and the Orden Relámpago del Catatumbo, Zulia State, in 2001.

Work

Valera began his career making stylized figurative works. While living in Paris, he experimented with optical effects on stable surfaces. Following his return to Venezuela and encouraged by Danish sculptor Robert Jacobsen, he began using welded iron. Valera explored the properties of volume by taking apart and assembling metal sheets. He was among the first artists involved in the Caracas University Campus project, executing abstract ceramic murals for various schools as well as other buildings between 1954 and 1958. In the 1960s he completed semi-figurative iron sculptures and worked with tubular rods while exploring the possibilities of light, neo-plasticism, and kinetic art. During the 1980s, he completed *Papeles perforados* (Perforated Paper) and *Esquemas perforados* (Perforated Sketches), a series of metal towers. His output of painted iron sculptures, in part large-scale projects, has acquired a somewhat baroque style poised between figuration and abstraction, featuring both totemic and mechanic qualities.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1953 *Loló / Valera*, Galerie Arnaud, Paris
- 1961 *Pinturas y esculturas*, Colegio de Ingenieros, Caracas; Colegio de Ingenieros, Maracaibo
- 1965 Ateneo, Caracas
- 1966 *Victor Valera - esculturas, Enrique Sardá - pinturas, dibujos, Vásquez Brito - pinturas*, Fundación Eugenio Mendoza, Sala de Exposiciones, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1969 Estudio Actual, Caracas [brochure]
- 1973 *Retrospectiva*, Centro de Bellas Artes, Maracaibo [catalogue]
- 1974 Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango, Banco de la República de Colombia, Bogotá [catalogue]
- 1984 *Esculturas 1954-1984*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1985 Centro de Bellas Artes, Maracaibo
- 1987 *Columnas excéntricas para demarcar un espacio americano*, Galería Durban, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1988 *Victor Valera, Steel Sculpture*, Opus Art Studios, Miami, Florida
- 1992 *Formas para tocar*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas
- 1993 *Textos del Chilam Balam*, Galería Durban, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1994 *Papeles perforados y fotomontajes*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Francisco Narváez, Porlamar, Venezuela; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Mario Abreu, Maracay, Venezuela
- 1999 *El muro como soporte*, Museo de Artes Visuales Alejandro Otero, Caracas [catalogue]
- 2001 *Papeles Perforados*, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas [catalogue]

- 2003 *Concreciones. Pinturas, 1998-2003*, Trasncho Arte Contacto, Fundación Trasncho Cultural, Caracas [catalogue]
- 2008 *Homenaje a Antonio Angulo*, Grupo de Teatro Mampara, Sala de Exposiciones Ildebrando Rossi, Maracaibo

Selected group exhibitions

- 1958 Expo 58 Brussels World Fair, Venezuela Pavilion
- 1966 XXXIII Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 2000 *Heterotopías. Medio siglo sin lugar. 1918-1968*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2007 *Lo(s) cinético(s)*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2009 *De la abstracción... al arte cinético*, Casa de las Américas, Havana
- 2010 *Embracing Modernity. Venezuelan Geometric Abstraction*, Florida International University, The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, D.C., United States

Ateneo de Valencia, Valencia, Venezuela

Banco Central de Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia

Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba

Fundación Privada Allegro, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles

Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela

Instituto Nacional de Vivienda, Maracaibo, Venezuela

Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Caracas, Venezuela

Museo Andrés Pérez Mujica, Valencia, Venezuela

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas, Venezuela

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Francisco Narváez, Porlamar, Venezuela

Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogotá, Colombia

Museo de Arte Moderno, Mérida, Venezuela

Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela

Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela

Teatro de Bellas Artes, Maracaibo, Venezuela

Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela

Universidad de Zulia, Maracaibo, Venezuela

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 468

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 88, 187



Matiz, Leo

Colombian photographer, painter, draughtsman, and caricaturist, Leonet Matiz Espinosa was born on April 1, 1917, in Aracataca, Magdalena, and died on October 24, 1998, in Santafé de Bogotá.

Biography

Matiz began working as a caricaturist for *Civilización* magazine in 1933. Two years later he launched the magazine *Lauros* and enrolled at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes in Bogotá. In 1937 he took photography lessons at Luis B. Ramos's studio. Matiz also worked as an illustrator and graphic reporter for magazines such as *Santafé*, *Folletón*, and *Estampa*, as well as various newspapers, including *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*. He moved to Mexico in 1941, where he was a regular contributor to *Así* magazine. Encouraged by set photographers Gabriel Figueroa and Manuel Álvarez Bravo, he joined Estudios Churubusco as a specialist in still photography. In 1947 Matiz relocated to New York. While working for *Norte* and *Life* magazine, he was made correspondent for South America and covered the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East as a UN envoy. He set up Galerías de Arte Foto-Estudio Leo Matiz in Bogotá in 1951. Matiz then settled in Caracas, where he worked in the film industry and as a contributor to several publications such as *Momento*. In 1978 he lost his left eye in a robbery and was forced to give up photography for some years. Matiz opened the Galería de Arte y Fotografía Leo Matiz in Bogotá in 1984. The following count among his numerous awards: in 1949, Matiz was included among the ten best photographers in the world; in 1995, he was named Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Government; in 1997, he was granted the Filo d'Argento by the Italian Government; and in 1998, he was officially recognized as one of the leading photographers in the country by the Government of Colombia. The Fundación Leo Matiz, with branches in Bogotá, Milan (until 2003), and Miami, Florida, was established by Eva Alejandra Matiz, the photographer's daughter, who presides it and who also created the Galería Leo Matiz in Bogotá, a venue specializing in photography, in 2006. The Centro Cultural y Museo Leo Matiz opened in the artist's native city of Aracataca, Magdalena, in 2007.

Work

Following in the footsteps of Ricardo Rendón, Matiz began his career working as a caricaturist, draughtsman, and illustrator. Encouraged by Colombian photographers Luis B. Ramos and Juan N. Gómez, as well as Mexican photographer Gabriel Figueroa, he took up photography professionally. Important sources of subject matter included everyday country and city life, daily work, architecture,

and industry. While living in Venezuela, Matiz documented key political, social, and cultural events. He also excelled at portraiture and photographed several artists and politicians, including Frida Kahlo, Mexican muralists José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera, and David Alfaro Siqueiros, María Félix, Agustín Lara, Camilo Torres, Pablo Neruda, Salvador Allende, Fidel Castro, Luis Buñuel, and León de Greiff. The influence of geometric abstraction is evident in several of these portraits, in which Matiz underlined the use of backlight. He also created different effects as the light streamed over everyday objects, some of which were found in nature, while others were man-made.

Selected solo exhibitions

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1952 | Círculo Colombiano de Reporteros Gráficos, Bogotá |
| 1980 | Galería Colseguros, Bogotá |
| 1984 | <i>Luz, líneas y sombras</i> , Galería de Arte y Fotografía Leo Matiz, Bogotá |
| 1988 | Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogotá [catalogue] |
| 1989 | <i>El perseguidor de la belleza</i> , Ateneo, Caracas |
| 1989 | <i>50 años de fotografía</i> , Museo de Arte Moderno La Tertulia, Cali [catalogue] |
| 1992 | <i>Ritratti. Il mondo dei bambini</i> , Galleria II Diaframma, Milan [catalogue] |
| 1992 | <i>Paesaggi. Mondo del lavoro</i> , Nuovo Spazio Guicciardini, Milan [catalogue] |
| 1995 | <i>Photographie colombien</i> , Nouveau Forum des Halles, Paris [catalogue] |
| 1999 | Galleria Carla Sozzani, Milan |
| 1999–2000 | <i>Locchio divino</i> , Ex Museo Civico di Piazza del Santo, Padua; Museo Ken Damy, Brescia [catalogue] |
| 2000 | <i>El ojo divino</i> , Museo Casa de la Moneda, Madrid [catalogue] |
| 2001 | <i>Retrospective. Rare Photographs from the Estate of Leo Matiz</i> , Westwood Gallery, New York [catalogue] |
| 2001 | <i>A chaque peintre un photographe</i> , Galerie Tatiana-Tournemine, Paris [catalogue] |
| 2004 | <i>Frida Kahlo vista por Leo Matiz</i> , Museo Nacional de Arte, La Paz |
| 2004 | <i>Frida Kahlo. Leo Matiz</i> , Imago Fotokunst, Berlin |
| 2006 | <i>Pasiones en blanco y negro</i> , Museo de Arte Hispanoamericano Isaac Fernández Blanco, Buenos Aires [catalogue] |
| 2006 | <i>Leo Matiz e l'eloquenza del silenzio</i> , Italian Institute of Culture, Melbourne [catalogue] |
| 2007 | <i>Frida Kahlo en la lente de Leo Matiz</i> , Museo de Arte y Cultura Colsubsidio, Bogotá [catalogue] |
| 2007 | <i>El sentido de lo moderno</i> , Galería Fundación Previsora, Caracas [catalogue] |
| 2008 | <i>Leo Matiz</i> , Galleria Ca' di Fra', Milan [catalogue] |
| 2009 | <i>Macondo visto por Leo Matiz</i> , Museo de las Casas Reales, Santo Domingo |
| 2010 | <i>Frida Kahlo & Los Olvidados</i> , Campagne Première, Berlin |
| 2010 | <i>Geometría, un homenaje a Leo Matiz</i> , Galería La Cometa, Bogotá |

Selected group exhibitions

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2006 | <i>The Sites of Latin American Abstraction</i> , Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition] |
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2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Centro Cultural y Museo Leo Matiz, Aracataca, Magdalena, Colombia
 Fondazione Italiana per la Fotografia, Turin, Italy
 Fundación Cisneros, Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection, Caracas, Venezuela
 Fundación para la Cultura Urbana, Caracas, Venezuela
 Fundación-Galería Leo Matiz, Bogotá, Colombia
 Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris, France
 Museo Casa Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo, Mexico City, Mexico
 Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogotá, Colombia
 Museo de Arte Moderno, Cartagena, Colombia
 Museo della Fotografia e della Cinematografia, Calcio, Bergamo, Italy
 Museo Ken Damy di Fotografia Contemporanea, Brescia, Italy
 Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico City, Mexico
 Museo Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia
 Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, California, United States
 The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States
 The New York Public Library, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 89, 91, 156, 188, 241, 259, 304, 306, 308

Links

www.leomatiz.org



Carreño, Mario

Cuban painter, muralist, sculptor, draughtsman, printmaker, illustrator, and art teacher, Mario Carreño Morales ("Karreño") was born on June 24, 1913, in Havana and died on December 20, 1999, in Santiago, Chile.

Biography

Carreño studied at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes San Alejandro in Havana with Antonio Rodríguez Morey between 1925 and 1926. He then worked as an illustrator for the magazine *Orbe* and *Diario de la Marina* (signing his drawings with the initial "K"). In 1934 he studied graphic art at the Escuela Superior de Bellas Artes de la Real Academia de San Fernando in Madrid, and from 1937 to 1939 he attended the École des Artes Appliqués and the Académie Julian in Paris. During a trip to Mexico in 1936 he met several Mexican muralists and the Dominican painter Jaime Colson. Carreño visited Florence, Naples, and New York during the Second World War, and then lived between Cuba and the United States. In 1946, he was appointed professor of Painting at the New School for Social Research in New York. Together with Sandu Darie and Luis Martínez Pedro, he founded the celebrated magazine *Noticias de Arte* in Havana in 1952. He joined the Advisory Board of the Instituto Nacional de Cultura in 1955 and settled in Chile in 1958, acquiring Chilean citizenship in 1969. Member of the geometric-abstract painting group Rectángulo, he co-founded and taught at the School of Art of the Universidad Católica de Chile, in Santiago, created in 1959. Carreño received the National Award for Painting in Havana in 1936 and the Guggenheim International Award in 1956. In 1982, he received the Gold Medal and the National Art Award conferred by the Universidad Católica de Chile.

Work

Carreño began his career depicting social and traditional themes. His early painting was influenced by Picasso's neo-classical period and the work of Jamie Colson and Diego Rivera. Notable figurative paintings representing tropical and West Indian subject matter include *Descubrimiento de las Américas* (Discovery of the Americas, 1940), *Danza afro cubana* (African Dance, 1943), and *Cortadores de caña* (Cane Cutters, 1943). From the 1940s on his work portrayed stylized figures that gradually evolved into geometric abstraction, his dominant style in the 1950s. In Chile, he moved towards a somewhat tragic type of surrealist painting, illustrating fragmented characters such as dolls against a desert backdrop. In the series *El mundo petrificado* (The Petrified World, 1964) and *Serie post-atómica* (Post-Atomic Series, 1965) he expressed his concern over war and the destruction of mankind. He later returned to

his tropical repertoire of symbols in a series of stylized metaphorical compositions.

Solo exhibitions

- 1939 *Exposition Carreño. Peintre cubain*, Galerie Bernheim Jeune, Paris [catalogue]
- 1941 Perls Galleries, New York [brochure]
- 1943 Galería del Prado, Havana [catalogue]
- 1943 Lyceum Lawn Tennis Club, Havana [catalogue]
- 1943 Museum of Art, San Francisco
- 1944 Perls Galleries, New York [brochure]
- 1945 Perls Galleries, New York [brochure]
- 1947 Perls Galleries, New York [brochure]
- 1947 Pan American Union, Washington, D.C. [catalogue]
- 1948 Sala del Pacífico, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1949 Galería Samos, Buenos Aires [catalogue]
- 1949 *Gouaches, tintas, dibujos*, Sala del Pacífico, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1950 New School for Social Research, New York [catalogue]
- 1951 Perls Galleries, New York [brochure]
- 1951 Lyceum Lawn Tennis Club, Havana [catalogue]
- 1957 *El mundo nuevo de los cuadros de Carreño*, Palacio de Bellas Artes, Havana [catalogue]
- 1959 Universidad de Chile, Instituto de Extensión de Artes Plásticas, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1961 Sala Reifschneider, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1962 Galerie Hautefeuille, Paris [catalogue]
- 1965 *Mario Carreño dibuja un mundo petrificado*, Galería Carmen Waugh, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1970 Galería Central de Arte, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1976 Galería Imagen Skriba, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1978 *Pinturas*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas [catalogue]
- 1980 Galería Época, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1984 Galería Época, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1988 *Retrospectiva 1945–1988*, Galería Arte Actual, Santiago; Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales, Montevideo [catalogue]
- 1991 *Cronología del recuerdo. Exposición retrospectiva 1945–1991*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1992 *Dibujos. Una colección en su cumpleaños número setenta y nueve*, La Galería, Concepción [catalogue]
- 1993 *Los años cubanos*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 1993 *80 dibujos. Una colección en su aniversario número ochenta*, Corporación Cultural de las Condes, Santiago [catalogue]
- 1995 *A Retrospective*, Sotheby's, Coral Gables, Florida [catalogue]
- 1998 *Los años geométricos de Mario Carreño, 1950–1962. 44 dibujos*, Cooperación Española, Santiago [catalogue]
- 2000 Gary Nader Fine Art, Coral Gables, Florida [catalogue]
- 2004 *Exposicion retrospectiva, 1939–1993*, Museo de Artes Visuales, Santiago [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1944 *Modern Cuban Painters*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York

- 1951 I Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1952 XXVI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1966 *Art of Latin America since Independence*, The Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut; University of Texas Art Museum, Austin, Texas
- 1987–89 *Outside Cuba. Contemporary Cuban Visual Artists*, Rutgers University, Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick, New Jersey [traveling exhibition]
- 1988–90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 1992–93 *Voces de ultramar. Arte en América Latina y Canarias, 1910–1960*, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria; Casa de América, Madrid
- 1993 *Four Cuban Modernists. Mario Carreño. Amelia Peláez. Fidelio Ponce. René Portocarrero*, Javier Lumbreras Fine Art, Coral Gables, Florida
- 1994 V Bienal de La Habana, Havana
- 2002 *La razón de la poesía. Diez pintores concretos cubanos*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 2004 *Escuela de La Habana. Tradición y modernidad*, Museo de Bellas Artes Gravina, Alicante
- 2006 *Cuba vanguardias 1920–1940*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Valencia; Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin
- 2007 *Cubismo y tendencias afines*, Museo de Bellas Artes Gravina, Alicante; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas
- 2010 *El país geométrico. 89 años de arte constructivo en Chile*, Corporación Cultural de Las Condes, Santiago

Museums and collections

- Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, D.C., United States
- Carroll Reece Museum, Nashville, Tennessee, United States
- Metropolitan Museum and Art Center, Coral Gables, Florida, United States
- Musee d'art moderne, Cérét, France
- Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Santiago, Chile
- Museo de Arte Latinoamericano, Punta del Este, Uruguay
- Museo de Arte, La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
- Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago, Chile
- Museum of Arts and Science, Daytona Beach, Florida, United States
- Norton Gallery and School of Art, West Palm Beach, Florida, United States
- San Francisco Fine Arts Museum, San Francisco, California, United States
- Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., United States
- The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, United States
- The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States
- Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. C) 12, 13

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 124, 174, 364, 380, 399; BIB. C) 26, 30, 47

Corratgé, Salvador

Cuban painter, draughtsman, ceramist, photographer, graphic designer, silversmith, and printmaker, Salvador Zacarías Corratgé Ferrara was born on November 5, 1928, in Havana, where he currently lives.

Biography

From 1949 to 1950 Corratgé attended the Escuela Elemental de Artes Plásticas Aplicadas, an adjunct of the Academia de San Alejandro in Havana. He then studied Architecture at the Universidad de La Habana between 1950 and 1951. Member of the group Diez Pintores Concretos from 1958 to 1961, along with seven other group artists he presented his work in two serigraphic dossiers entitled *7 pintores concretos* (1960) and *A* (1961). A founding member of the Unión de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba (UNEAC) created in 1961, Corratgé was appointed cultural attaché of the Cuban Embassy in Prague from 1963 to 1967, and in Pyongyang from 1977 to 1981. In 1985, he was awarded the First Prize at the III Feria Nacional de Cerámica held at Isla de la Juventud. Together with Pedro de Oráa, in 1993 he edited at the Taller Artístico Experimental de Serigrafía René Portocarrero a dossier in memoriam of Soldevilla, Martínez Pedro, and Darie—founding members of the group Diez Pintores Concretos. In 1995, when he traveled to Spain to teach Serigraphy at the Universidad de Oviedo, Corratgé received the National Culture Distinction awarded by the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba.

Work

Corratgé's body of work forms part of Cuban concrete art. However, his style was not confined to rational and mathematic principles or a dogmatic conception of form and color. Rather, he incorporated moving, harmonic, and sensitive elements, providing his production with a personal yet wide-ranging subject matter. Colors vary from pristine shades of white and black to louder hues, while forms shift from line to dot, and circle to square. Corratgé created an infinite number of geometric combinations, engaging structures that were fundamental to his work. Inspired by the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, Frédéric Chopin, and Hans Werner Henze, he began exploring the relation between painting and music during the 1970s. His studies led to the series of paintings *Notaciones plásticas* (Plastic Notations) and *Ensayos*

lineales (Linear Studies). Although his abstract artwork from the 1990s showed signs of dynamic expressionism, it tended towards concrete art, as evidenced in *Persiguiendo al cuadrado* (Chasing the Square, 2005). Corratgé also designed large-scale works such as the *Mausoleo a los Mártires de Pino 3* (1975) and a cement mural relief in Camagüey.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1965 Casa de la Cultura Cubana, Prague
- 1970 *Dibujos. Fragmentos de una sinfonía*, Galería UNEAC, Sala Rubén Martínez Villena, Havana
- 1990 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 1993 *Homenaje a su 65 aniversario*, Galería La Acacia, Havana
- 1995 *Pintura*, Edificio Histórico de la Universidad de Oviedo, Oviedo
- 1996 *Dibujo y Color*, Museo Universitario Contemporáneo de Arte (MUCA), Mexico City, and Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Ateneo de Yucatán, Mérida
- 1997 *Abstracción*, Galería Domingo Ramos Blanco, Havana
- 2002 *Un color para este miedo*, Galería La Acacia, Havana
- 2005 *Persiguiendo al cuadrado*, Club Irlandés de Raqueta and Galerías Louis C. Morton, Mexico City
- 2007 *La mar de formas*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 2008 *Las telarañas de mis sueños*, Galería La Acacia, Havana
- 2008 *Pintor y serigrafo*, Taller de Serigrafía René Portocarrero, Havana

Selected group exhibitions

- 1958 I Bienal Interamericana de Pintura y Grabado, Mexico City
- 1959 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Galería de Arte Color-Luz, Havana
- 1960 II Bienal Interamericana de Pintura y Grabado, Mexico City
- 1960 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Biblioteca Pública Ramón Guiterras, Matanzas
- 1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1967 I Bienal Internacional de Pintura (F. Estrada Saladich Prize), Barcelona
- 1967 *Contemporary Cuban Paintings*, Galerie Libre, Montreal
- 1986 *Exhibition of the 24th Joan Miró International Drawing Prize*, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei
- 1991 II Bienal de Cerámica de Pequeño Formato Amelia Peláez, Havana
- 1993 1e. Internationale Grafick Biennale, Maastricht
- 1994 *Cuban Art. The Last Sixty Years*, Panamerican Art Gallery, Dallas, Texas
- 1996 *Estampas Cubanas de Tres Siglos*, Museo Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá
- 1997 *Pinturas del silencio*, parallel exhibition, Galería La Acacia, VI Bienal de La Habana, Havana
- 2002 *La razón de la poesía. Diez pintores concretos cubanos*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 2007 *Espacios abstractos*, Galería La Acacia, Havana
- 2009 *Abstractomicina*, Cremata Gallery, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

Biblioteca Nacional José Martí, Havana, Cuba
Colección Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Havana, Cuba
Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico
Museo Ignacio Agramonte, Camagüey, Cuba
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej (Museum of Modern Art), Krakow, Poland
Imperial Palace, Tokyo, Japan
Unión de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba, Havana, Cuba

Links

www.salvadorcorratge.com

Darie, Sandu

Cuban painter, sculptor, draughtsman, ceramist, and stage designer of Romanian origin, Sandu Darie Laver was born on April 6, 1908, in Roman, Neamt, and died on September 2, 1991, in Havana.

Biography

From 1926 to 1932 Darie studied Law in Paris, where he came into contact with surrealist artists and writers. He began to work as an art critic for Romanian magazines and journals and as a caricaturist for French and Romanian newspapers. In 1940 he joined the French army. A year later, he settled in Havana and in 1945 he acquired Cuban citizenship. From 1949 on he maintained correspondence with Gyula Kosice. As a result, he was invited to showcase his work at the *Madí* group exhibitions and to write for the magazine *Arte Madí* in Buenos Aires. In 1952, together with Mario Carreño and Luis Martínez Pedro, he founded the celebrated magazine *Noticias de Arte* in Havana. Member of the group *Diez Pintores Concretos* from 1958 to 1961, Darie gave a lecture on the principles of concrete art at the opening of the group's second exhibition, held in Matanzas. Along with seven other members of the group, he also presented his work in two serigraphic dossiers entitled *7 pintores concretos* (1960) and *A* (1961). In 1981, Darie received the National Culture Distinction awarded by the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba.

Work

Darie took up painting professionally in the mid-1940s, executing lyrical abstract works that conveyed tropical light and nature. *Composiciones* (Compositions, 1949) represented geometric lines immersed in broad stains of bright color, while *Estructuras pictóricas* (Pictorial Structures, 1950) experimented with the frame and its boundaries in space and time. He began to explore kinetic art in *Estructuras transformables* (Transformable Structures, 1955–56). His inquiries resulted

in *Cosmorama* (1963). In 1969, Darie was invited to take part in an international joint project, the kinetic-light installation at Place du Châtelet in Paris. He also designed the kinetic-light towers at the Parque Lenin Floating Amphitheater. From 1975 to 1985, Darie was involved in a series of social projects, to which he brought his experience as a concrete artist. He combined kinetic-light environments with both static and mobile architectural installations, as well as urban structures (Cuatro Caminos, Palacio Central de Pioneros, Hospital Clínico Hermanos Ameijeiras, Central Electronuclear in Cienfuegos, and the Centro de Ingeniería Genética y Biotecnología in Cubanacán).

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1949 Lyceum Lawn Tennis Club, Havana
- 1949 Carlebach Gallery, New York
- 1950 *Estructuras pictóricas*, Lyceum, Havana
- 1955 *Luis Martínez Pedro / Sandu Darie. Primera exposición concreta*, Pabellón de Ciencias Sociales, Universidad de La Habana, Havana
- 1955 Galleria Numero, Florence
- 1966 *Pintura cinética de Sandu Darie. Cosmorama. Electro pintura en movimiento*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 1971 *Selección de 12 de sus obras desde 1944*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 1974 *Rumbos*, Casa de las Américas, Havana
- 1988 *Exposición antológica, 1945–1988*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana [catalogue]
- 2008 *Un universo de luz y movimiento*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 *Some Areas of Research from 1913 to 1951*, Rose Fried Gallery, New York
- 1952 XXVI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1955 III Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1955 *10 artisti. Disegni, tempera, progetti. Arte madí*, Galleria Numero, Florence
- 1956 *Madí Internacional*, Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires; Roland de Aenlle Gallery, New York
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1958 *Art madí internacional. Group argentin*, Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 1959 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Galería de Arte Color-Luz, Havana
- 1960 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Biblioteca Pública Ramón Guiteras, Matanzas
- 1961 *15 años de arte Madí*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires
- 1966 *Kunst-Licht-Kunst*, Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven
- 1972 *Encuentro de Plástica Latinoamericana*, Casa de las Américas, Galería Latinoamericana, Havana
- 1989–90 *Art in Latin America. The Modern Era, 1820–1980*, The Hayward Gallery, London; Nationalmuseum / Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid
- 1997–98 *Arte Madí*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz

- 2002 *La razón de la poesía. Diez pintores concretos cubanos*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 2007 *Lo[s] cinético[s]*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
- 2009 *De la abstracción . . . al arte cinético*, Casa de las Américas, Havana
- 2009 *Abstractomicina*, Cremata Gallery, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 124

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 177; BIB. C) 1

Herrera, Carmen

American painter and sculptor of Cuban origin, Carmen Herrera was born in Havana, Cuba, on May 31, 1915. She lives in New York.

Biography

From a very early age, Herrera studied drawing privately with J. F. Edelman, a teacher at the Academia de San Alejandro in Havana. She then read *Painting and History of Art* at Marymount High School in Paris, and in 1935 she enrolled at the School of Architecture in Havana. Following her marriage to an American, in 1939 she moved to New York, where she studied painting at the Art Students League with John Corvino. During this period, Herrera met Wifredo Lam and Leon Polk Smith and became friendly with Barnett Newman. Between 1948 and 1953 she lived in Paris, where she encountered, among others, painter Yves Klein and exhibited her work at the *Salon des Réalités Nouvelles*. Though she later returned to Cuba, Herrera finally settled in New York in 1963. She earned the Cintas Foundation Fellowship in 1966 and 1968 and the Lifetime Achievement Award in the Visual Arts in 2010. Her body of work has only recently been discovered, coinciding with exhibitions at internationally-renowned art galleries and institutions.

Work

As an illustrator for the series *Habana* (1950–52), Herrera's work showed signs of surrealist abstraction but shifted to geometric abstraction during her formative years in Paris. In these paintings, she used bright colors and contrasted optical rhythms, thus anticipating distinctive features of kinetic and op art. After settling in New York, she followed in the footsteps of Ellsworth Kelly but chose to

create smaller pieces. With time, she forged a consistent yet simple and insightful body of work. By combining a small number of rectangular forms in black and white or in two solid colors, she came close to achieving a minimalist style of painting.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1951 Lyceum Lawn Tennis Club, Havana
- 1955 Eglinton Gallery, Toronto
- 1956 Galeria Sudamericana, New York
- 1963 Trabia Gallery, New York
- 1965 Cisneros Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 1985 *A Retrospective, 1951–1984*, The Alternative Museum, New York [catalogue]
- 1987 Rastovski Gallery, New York
- 1992 *Duo Geo: Carmen Herrera / Ernesto Briel*, Jadite Galleries, New York
- 1998 *The Black-and-White Paintings, 1951–1989*, El Museo del Barrio, New York [catalogue]
- 2004 *Concrete Realities. The Art of Carmen Herrera, Fanny Sanín, and Mira Schendel*, Latin Collector Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 2005 *Five Decades of Painting*, Latin Collector Gallery, New York [catalogue]
- 2005 *The Forms of Silence: Carmen Herrera Abstract Works 1948–1976*, Miami Art Central, Miami, Florida
- 2009–10 *Carmen Herrera. 1948–2007*, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham; Museum Pfalzalerie Kaiserslautern [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 *Art cubain contemporain*, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris
- 1968 *Five Latin American Artists at Work in New York*, Center for Inter-American Relations, New York
- 1987–89 *Outside Cuba. Contemporary Cuban Visual Artists*, Rutgers University, Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick, New Jersey [traveling exhibition]
- 1988–90 *The Latin American Spirit. Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 2004 *Concrete Realities*, Latin Collector Art Center, New York
- 2006 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida [traveling exhibition]
- 2009 *Abstractomicina*, Cremata Gallery, Miami, Florida
- 2009 *Geometric Abstract Works. The Latin American Vision from the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York
- 2010 *Then & Now. Abstraction in Latin American Art from 1950 to Present*, 60 Wall Gallery, Deutsche Bank, New York
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Cintas Foundation Collection, Institute of International Education, New York, United States
El Museo del Barrio, New York, United States
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., United States
Housatonic Museum of Art, Bridgeport, Connecticut, United States

Jersey City Museum, Jersey City, New Jersey, United States
Museo Municipal Emilio Bacardí Moreau, Santiago, Cuba
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
Tate Modern, London, Great Britain
The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States
The Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation, New York University Medical Center, New York, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 199; BIB. C) 23, 25

Martínez Pedro, Luis

Cuban painter, draughtsman, illustrator, ceramist, and designer Luis Darío Martínez Pedro was born on December 19, 1910, in Havana and died on April 11, 1989, in the same city.

Biography

Martínez Pedro studied Architecture at the Universidad de La Habana in 1929 and at Tulane University in New Orleans in 1930. He then took up Design at the Arts and Crafts Club, New Orleans, in 1932. Following the fall of Machado's regime in 1933, he returned to Havana and joined the advertising firm *Mestre y Compañía* in 1935. From 1944 to 1956 he worked as an illustrator for the magazine *Orígenes* and in 1948 he presided the *Agrupación de Pintores y Escultores de Cuba*, which he co-founded. Throughout the 1950s, Martínez Pedro traveled in Latin America and came into contact with prominent artists and members of the *Arte Concreto-Invencción* movement and the Argentine *Madí* group. Together with Mario Carreño and Sandu Darie, he founded the celebrated magazine *Noticias de Arte* in 1952. In 1956 he followed a special Artist Materials and Technology course at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston. Member of the group *Diez Pintores Concretos* from 1958 to 1961, together with seven other artists of the group he presented his work in two serigraphic dossiers entitled *7 pintores concretos* (1960) and *A* (1961). Martínez Pedro became a member of the National Committee of the *Unión de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba* in 1961. He taught design and arts and crafts for several years. Among his distinctions are the UNESCO prize awarded at the 1953 Bienal de São Paulo, the 1976 Distinction Award at the XV Anniversary of the National Council for Culture, and the Félix Varela Order conferred by the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba in 1981.

Work

During the 1930s, Martínez Pedro focused on social subject matters but gradually evolved towards surrealism and expressionism. Themes included taumachy, indigenous

legends, and Afro-Cuban rites. He then turned to a concrete form of geometric abstraction in 1951. From 1959, he painted sea-related subjects, examples of which include *Aguas territoriales* (Territorial Waters) and *Signos del mar* (Sea Signs). In addition to working as a graphic and industrial product designer, he also designed costumes for theater and dance productions and was involved in making educational films. Among his illustrations for books and magazines are *Cuatro canciones para el Ché* (1969) by Nicolás Guillén and *El mundo silencioso* (1973) by Jacques-Yves Cousteau. In the mid-1970s, Martínez Pedro began the series *Flora cubana*—paintings depicting Cuban nature and indigenous flora—while designing building murals in Havana.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1943 Lyceum Lawn Tennis Club, Havana
- 1945 *Recent Paintings*, Perls Galleries, New York [catalogue]
- 1947 *Recent Paintings*, Perls Galleries, New York
- 1947 Philadelphia Art Alliance, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 1949 *Recent Paintings*, Perls Galleries, New York
- 1951 Pan American Union, Washington, D.C. [catalogue]
- 1953 *Exposición de óleos*, exhibition on show at the residence of Architect Miguel Gastón, Havana [catalogue]; Galería La Rampa, Havana
- 1955 *Luis Martínez Pedro y Sandu Darie. Primera exposición concreta*, Pabellón de Ciencias Sociales, Universidad de La Habana, Havana
- 1955 Galería La Rampa, Havana
- 1955 Galleria Il Cavallino, Venice
- 1956 Galleria del Naviglio, Milan [catalogue]
- 1963 *Aguas Territoriales, óleos y dibujos*, Galería Habana, Havana
- 1969 *Exposición homenaje a Amelia Peláez*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana [catalogue]
- 1981 *Oleos de la Serie Flora Cubana de Luis Martínez Pedro. Homenaje a Celia Sánchez*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana [catalogue]
- 1987 *Retrospectiva*, Museo Nacional Palacio de Bellas Artes, Havana [catalogue]
- 2008 *Visión y oficio*, Galería La Acacia, Havana

Selected group exhibitions

- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1959 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Galería de Arte Color-Luz, Havana
- 1960 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Biblioteca Pública Ramón Guiteras, Matanzas
- 1997 *Pinturas del silencio*, parallel exhibition, Galería La Acacia, VI Bienal de La Habana, Havana
- 2002 *La razón de la poesía. Diez pintores concretos cubanos*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 2004 *Escuela de La Habana: Tradición y modernidad*, Museo de Bellas Artes Gravina, Alicante

Museums and collections

Collection d'œuvres d'art de l'UNESCO, Paris, France

Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba

Mijares, José

Cuban painter, draughtsman, and printmaker, José María Mijares Fernández was born on June 23, 1921, in Havana and died on March 30, 2004, in Coral Gables, Florida.

Biography

Mijares studied under Leopoldo Romañach and Armando Menocal at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes San Alejandro in Havana, where he would later teach from 1959–60. After winning the First Prize at the Salón Nacional de Pintura in 1950, he traveled with a grant to New York. Member of the group *Diez Pintores Concretos* from 1958 to 1961, together with seven other artists of the group he presented his work in two serigraphic dossiers entitled *7 pintores concretos* (1960) and *A* (1961). In 1968 he went into exile in Miami, Florida, where he became involved with the group *Gala* from 1968 to 1973. Mijares was appointed art director of *Alacrán Azul* magazine in 1970 and earned a Cintas Foundation Fellowship that same year. In 1998 Mijares was interviewed for the Smithsonian Archives of American Art. In 2001, he received an honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts from Florida International University, and in 2002 he opened an art gallery in Coral Gables, Florida.

Work

Following an early figurative period, in 1953 Mijares began experimenting with concrete forms based on solid colors and non-representational shapes. These balanced compositions represent gradual progressions of color. He later returned to figurative painting, a style he practiced to the end of his career. Mijares's somewhat wistful subject matter of fishermen, sad harlequins, and melancholic women, as well as his particular use of color, became distinctive features of his work. Meticulous yet personal, his paintings also incorporate spectacular and surreal elements.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1944 Conservatorio Nacional Hubert de Blanck, Havana
- 1947 Lyceum Lawn Tennis Club, Havana
- 1952 Lyceum Lawn Tennis Club, Havana
- 1965 Lyceum Lawn Tennis Club, Havana
- 1987 *Exposición retrospectiva*, Asociación de Médicos (P.A.C.H.A.), Miami, Florida
- 1992 *The World of José Mijares / El mundo de José Mijares*, Marpad Art Gallery, Coral Gables, Florida [catalogue]
- 1994 *Celebrando a Mijares. 50 años de creación*, Museo Cubano de Arte y Cultura, Miami, Florida [catalogue]
- 1996 *Mijares en grande*, Alfredo Martínez Gallery, Coral Gables, Florida

Selected group exhibitions

- 1944 *Modern Cuban Painters*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1951 *Art Cubain Contemporain*, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris
- 1952 XXVI Biennale di Venezia, Venice
- 1953 II Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1957 IV Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1959 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Galería de Arte Color-Luz, Havana
- 1959 V Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1960 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Biblioteca Pública Ramón Guiteras, Matanzas
- 1961 VI Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo
- 1981 *The Figure in Latin American Art*, The Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach, Florida
- 1987 *Latin American Treasures from Miami's Private Collections*, Center for the Fine Arts, Miami, Florida
- 1987–89 *Outside Cuba. Contemporary Cuban Visual Artists*, Rutgers University, Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick, New Jersey [traveling exhibition]
- 1990 *Leading Hispanic Artists of South Florida*, Northwood Institute, West Palm Beach, Florida
- 1994 *Cuban Artists: Expressions in Graphics*, Jadite Galleries, New York
- 2002 *La razón de la poesía. Diez pintores concretos cubanos*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 2009 *Abstractomicina*, Cremata Gallery, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

Art Museum of the Americas, OAS, Washington, D.C., United States
Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba
Cintas Foundation Collection, Institute of International Education, New York, United States
Miami-Dade Public Library System, Miami, Florida, United States
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
Museum of the Americas, Doral, Florida, United States
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States
University of Miami, Lowe Art Museum, Coral Gables, Florida, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 31, 103, 137, 174, 177, 333, 345

Soldevilla, Loló

Cuban painter, sculptress, draughtswoman, printmaker, and art critic, Dolores (Loló) Soldevilla Nieto was born on June 24, 1901, in Pinar del Río and died on July 5, 1971, in Havana.

Biography

After training as a singer and violinist in Havana, Soldevilla pursued studies in Sculpture at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in Paris. There she visited the studios of Ossip Zadkine, Jean Dewasne, and Edgard Pillet, and also had the guidance of Robert Jacobsen, Jean Arp, and Victor Vasarely, among other artists. While in Paris, she befriended members of the Venezuelan group Los Disidentes and worked with Valencian kinetic artist Eusebio Sempere. She returned to Havana in 1956 and staged the exhibition *Pintura de hoy. Vanguardia de la escuela de París* at the Palacio de Bellas Artes. Together with Pedro de Oráa, Soldevilla then founded the Galería de Arte Color-Luz in 1957—a meeting point for geometric abstract artists—whose inaugural exhibition was presented by the poet José Lezama Lima. The Diez Pintores Concretos group was conceived at the same gallery the following year. Members of the newly-formed group included Pedro Carmelo Álvarez López (replaced by José Ángel Rosabal Fajardo in 1960), Wilfredo Arcay Ochandarena, Salvador Corratgé, Sandu Darie, Luis Darío Martínez Pedro, Alberto Menocal, José Mijares, Pedro de Oraá Carratalá, Rafael Soriano López, and Soldevilla herself. Along with seven other group members, she presented her work in two serigraphic dossiers entitled *7 pintores concretos* (1960) and *A* (1961). Galería de Arte Color-Luz closed permanently in 1961, putting an end to the group's activities. Soldevilla taught at the School of Architecture in 1960–61. In 1962 she designed toys for the National Institute of Tourism, and from 1965 to 1971 she worked as an editor for the daily *Granma*. In 1965, she founded the art group Espacio.

Work

Circles, squares, and light were predominant features of Soldevilla's concrete artwork. Together, these components form poetic spaces, evocations of a celestial and starry universe. Though her two-dimensional paintings resemble those of Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Soldevilla's stand out for their formal serenity, defined contours, rhythmic patterns of black and white, and compositional elements. She also executed luminous reliefs, to which she incorporated artificial light. Following the Cuban Revolution, she carried out more general tasks within the cultural sector.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1950 *Esculturas*, Lyceum Lawn Tennis Club, Havana
- 1951 *20 óleos de Loló*, Universidad de La Habana, School of Law, Havana
- 1953 *Loló / Varela*, Galerie Arnaud, Paris
- 1954 *Loló Soldevilla. Eusebio Sempere*, Circulo de la Universidad, Valencia
- 1955 *Salon des Réalités Nouvelles*, Paris
- 1957 *Óleos, collages, relieves luminosos 1953–56*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 1957 Centro Profesional del Este, Villa Flor, Caracas

- 1966 *Op Art, Pop Art, la luna y yo*, Galería Habana, Havana
- 1971 *Exposición retrospectiva*, Galería del Edificio del Ministerio de Salud Pública, Havana
- 2003 *Color-Luz*, Museo de la Marcha del Pueblo Combatiente, Havana
- 2006 *Loló, un mundo imaginario*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1959 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Galería de Arte Color-Luz, Havana
- 1960 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Biblioteca Pública Ramón Guiterras, Matanzas
- 1968 *Panorama del Arte en Cuba*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 1988 *Creadoras Cubanas*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 1991 *Maestros de la pintura cubana*, Centro Provincial de Artes Plásticas y Diseño, Havana
- 2002 *La razón de la poesía. Diez pintores concretos cubanos*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 2008–9 *Cuba! Art and History from 1868 to Today*, The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal; Groninger Museum, Groningen, Holland
- 2009 *Abstractomicina*, Cremata Gallery, Miami, Florida
- 2010 *Vibración. Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika*. The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

Museums and collections

Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida, United States

Written work by the artist

See BIB. B) 429, 430

Soriano, Rafael

American painter, draughtsman, and graphic designer of Cuban origin, Rafael Soriano López was born on November 23, 1920, in Cidra, Matanzas (Cuba). He lives in Miami, Florida.

Biography

Soriano attended the Escuela de Bellas Artes San Alejandro from 1936 to 1943. He later co-founded the Escuela de Bellas Artes in Matanzas, where he served as director between 1952 and 1955, and as professor until 1962. Soriano was also appointed president of the Galería de Matanzas. In 1962 he left Cuba and currently lives in exile in the United States, where he works as a graphic designer and teaches art and design in Miami and Coral Gables, Florida.

Work

Soriano embraced geometric abstraction in the 1940s. His early work showed concrete features and later alluded to cosmic elements. Inspired by Sebastián Matta, during the 1970s he executed hazy landscapes evocative of erotic emotions and shapes. He created a luminous and oneiric repertoire of soft and biomorphic shapes and volumes set against a dark backdrop, representing the spatial realm of the unconscious. His palette was restricted to dim, harmonious colors. Soriano's entire body of work shares this surreal quality expressed in an esoteric, mystical, chimerical, and astral style.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 1947 Lyceum Lawn Tennis Club, Havana
- 1948 Colegio de Abogados de Matanzas, Matanzas [catalogue]
- 1955 *Agustín Cárdenas. Rafael Soriano*, Palacio de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 1968 Pageant Gallery, Miami, Florida [catalogue]
- 1970 Pan American Bank, Miami, Florida
- 1977 Galería de las Américas, San Juan, Puerto Rico
- 1980 *Oil Paintings, 1977–1980*, De Armas Gallery, Virginia Gardens, Florida [catalogue]
- 1981 Museo de Antioquía, Medellín
- 1984 *A Selection of Works by Rafael Soriano and Gay García in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Festival*, Bacardi Art Gallery, Miami; Cuban Museum of Art and Culture, Miami, Florida [catalogue]
- 1985 *Dessins, crayon et pastel*, Centre Culturel Editart, Geneva
- 1992 *Light as Utterance*, Gary Nader Fine Art, Coral Gables, Florida [catalogue]
- 1995 *Light's Way*, Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, Florida [catalogue]

Selected group exhibitions

- 1951 I Bienal Hispanoamericana de Arte, Madrid
- 1958 I Bienal Interamericana de Pintura y Grabado, Mexico City
- 1959 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Galería de Arte Color-Luz, Havana
- 1960 *Diez Pintores Concretos*, Biblioteca Pública Ramón Guiterras, Matanzas
- 1986 V Bienal Iberoamericana de Arte, Mexico City
- 1987–89 *Outside Cuba. Contemporary Cuban Visual Artists*, Rutgers University, Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick, New Jersey [traveling exhibition]
- 1993 *Cuban Artists of the Twentieth Century*, Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- 2002 *La razón de la poesía. Diez pintores concretos cubanos*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana
- 2009 *Abstractomicina*, Cremata Gallery, Miami, Florida

Museums and collections

Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, D.C., United States
Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture, Miami, Florida, United States
Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado, United States

Galería de Arte Moderno (now Museo de Arte Moderno), Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Museo de Antioquía, Medellín, Colombia
Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, United States
Nationsbank Corporation, Charlotte, North Carolina, United States
Rutgers University, Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick, New Jersey, United States
University of Miami, Lowe Art Museum, Coral Gables, Florida, United States
University of Texas, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, United States

Bibliography

See BIB. B) 58, 358 BIB. C) 38, 39

documents

This section is organized by country and features a series of texts, manifestoes, and letters, some of which are accompanied by illustrations of original editions. The importance of these documents as historical sources is key in understanding geometric abstraction as a plural phenomenon that took place in Latin America between the 1930s and 60s. These documents present a comprehensive body of writings in both English and Spanish, most of which have been fully edited. A close reading of these texts is not only useful but in some cases essential for an overview of the activities carried out over the course of four decades in five different countries by the artists featured in the exhibition, as well as theorists, poets, art critics, and academics. Due to obvious restrictions of space, the texts were selected according to their relevance and also the degree of existing knowledge on the writings, either because they are not easily accessed (some texts have not been re-edited in recent or updated publications) or, as in other cases, simply owing to the fact they had never been published. The original documents have been transcribed when possible and included in this section as texts. In the transcription of these texts, every attempt has been made to respect the syntax and typographic peculiarities of the originals, although typos in the original Spanish texts are not reflected in the English translations. On occasion, the annotation [sic] has been used to indicate that the preceding word or passage is just as it appears in its original source. Where secondary sources were consulted, a note has been included below the document. Printed and hand-written fragments are also specified.

Uruguay

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Vouloir construire/ The Will to Construct

Paris (1930)

Joaquín Torres-García

Originally published in French as Juan [sic] Torres-García, "Vouloir construire," Cercle et Carré 1 (Paris, March 1931). Translated from the Spanish version, Joaquín Torres-García, "Vouloir construire / Querer construir," in Joaquín Torres-García: un mundo construido [exhibition catalogue, Museo Colecciones ICO, Madrid, October 22, 2002–January 6, 2003]. Madrid: Museo Colecciones ICO, 2003

If we have felt the need to come together, it is because around us confusion and disorder reign. We have united in order to identify a foundation, in order to find certainties. And our reason has shown us that that foundation is *construction*. All of us in agreement, we have marched forth under that ensign. What is construction? From the moment man abandons the direct copy of nature and creates an image *in his own manner*, with no desire to recall the visual deformation imposed by perspective, that is, as soon as he starts drawing *the idea* of a thing more so than that thing in measurable space, the art of construction begins. If, in addition, those images are organized so as to be joined together rhythmically, such that they belong more to the totality of the painting than to what they aim to express, one reaches a superior degree of construction. But that is not yet construction as we have conceived it. Before reaching that goal, we must first take into consideration the form. As simply a representation of things, this form has no value in itself and cannot be called plastic. But to the extent that this form contains value *in itself* — that is, through the abstract expression of its qualities — it takes on plastic significance. One may say of a work conceived in this way that it participates in a certain kind of construction. One may go further — to consider the unity of the surface. This surface will be divided; these divisions will determine spaces, these spaces must be *related to each other*: there must be equivalence among them to maintain the unity of the whole. To organize them, to place them in some order, is one thing; but it is a small accomplishment. What must be done is to *create an order*. — We may arrive at a certain order, for example, by making a naturalistic landscape. Virtually all painters

organize their paintings in this way. They stand before nature as when they step out for a stroll. But he who would create an order must *establish a plan* — moving from the individual and particular to the universal. And this is the most important question. Here I must clarify something. Not all men share the same nature. There is no doubt that they have within them the same basic elements, but the proportions of those elements vary. Hence the diversity among individuals that determines their corresponding works, which does not mean that the different composition of each work implies a greater or lesser degree of evolution in comparison to others. Let us attempt to draw parallels between two tendencies that always manifest themselves by degrees: intuition/intelligence; the current moment/time; tone/color; tradition/the spirit of innovation; the spiritual/material reality; that which is fixed/that which is relative; emotion/reason; the personal/the impersonal; the concrete/the abstract; meaning/measure; belief/faith; romanticism/classicism; synthesis/analysis; prescience/physical science; metaphysics/philosophy; the artist/the plastic. Relying on the *pure* ideas of the intellect, the artist can construct; he can also do so relying on his *intuitions*. As for the basis for this construction, whether it be emotion or reason, we should not care: our only objective is to create. The opposite of constructive meaning is representation.

Imitating something that has already been created is not creation. Why imitate a cave? — Is it not better to create a cathedral? Construction must be above all *the creation of an order*. Plurality exists outside of us — unity, within. We may consider pure concepts: time and space. Every one of our representations of the world of phenomena is inscribed in those pure forms of thought. If we base the plastic arts on these principles, we obtain *the purely plastic*. Every form will be forbidden to us. But if we base construction on intuitive elements, we will be artists, and our art will have a certain relationship with metaphysics. If we take the other path, our art will approach philosophy. We have in our mind the object in its totality, but visually we only perceive part of it. And, in addition, that part changes its appearance when we change our position. This means that visually we never possess the entire object. The complete object is only in our head. If we hold the complete object in our mind, in order to give a graphical idea of it, we will choose, almost unconsciously, its essential parts, and we will *construct* a drawing that may not agree with the rules of perspective but that will be much more illustrative. This is the spirit of synthesis.

This has been so common that in every age, with the exception of the Renaissance, people have drawn in this fashion. And all those who have not studied in the Academy naively draw this way. And that is fine and good. Now then, the greater the spirit of synthesis in him who draws, the better will be the constructed image he presents to us. The drawings of all primitive peoples, Negroes, Aztecs, etc. and the drawings of Egyptians, Chaldeans, etc. are an excellent example. In

my opinion, this very same spirit of synthesis has led to the construction of the whole painting, of sculpture, and to the determination of proportions in architecture. And this spirit alone is what permits a work to be seen in its *totality*, as a single *order*, in its *unity*. How many miracles this rule has worked through the ages! Why have we overlooked it? This rule is anonymous and belongs to no one. Everyone may use it *in his own manner*. It must be the path of every honest man. But if this rule has been applied in every epoch, what will its modern use be? We have already explained this, a propos of form: what is ours in particular is the absolute value we place in the form of something, independently of what it might represent. The same holds true for structure or construction: it ceases to be a mere scaffold on which to arrange things in a certain *order*; it takes their place and becomes the work *itself*. A duality that has always existed in painting thus disappears: the background and the images. There where the structure occupies the place of the images added to it, no longer will one find a duality between background and images, and the painting will have recovered its primordial identity: *unity*.

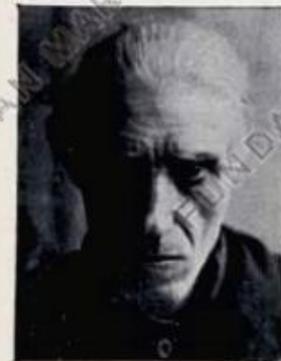
VOULOIR CONSTRUIRE

Si nous avons pensé devoir nous réunir c'est parce qu'ailleurs règne la désorientation et le désordre. C'est pour trouver une base, pour avoir des certitudes. Et notre raison nous a montré que cette base c'est la construction. Tous d'accord nous sommes partis sous ce signe. Qu'est-ce que la construction? — Du moment que l'homme quitte la copie directe de la nature et fait à sa façon une image, sans vouloir se soucier de la déformation visuelle qu'impose la perspective, c'est-à-dire de ce qu'on dessine plutôt l'idée d'une chose et non la chose dans l'espace mesurable, commence une certaine construction. Si en plus on ordonne ces images, cherchant à les accorder rythmiquement de façon qu'elles appartiennent plus à l'ensemble du tableau qu'à ce qu'elles veulent exprimer, on a déjà atteint un degré plus élevé de construction. Mais ce n'est pas encore la construction telle que nous l'envisageons. Avant que d'y arriver nous devons encore considérer la forme. En tant que représentation des choses cette forme n'a pas une valeur pour elle-même et on ne peut pas l'appeler plastique. Mais aussitôt que cette forme contient une valeur en soi — c'est-à-dire par l'expression abstraite de ses contours et de ses qualités — elle prend une importance plastique, et on peut dire d'une oeuvre ainsi conçue qu'elle participe déjà d'une certaine construction. On peut aller plus loin — considérer l'unité de la surface. Cette surface va être divisée, ces divisions vont à déterminer des espaces, ces espaces doivent être en rapport: il doit exister entre eux une équivalence afin que l'unité de l'ensemble reste entier. Mettre de l'ordre serait déjà quelque chose, mais c'est peu de chose. Créer un ordre est ce qu'il faut. — Nous pouvons mettre de l'ordre en faisant par exemple un paysage naturaliste. Plus ou moins tous les peintres arrangent ainsi leurs toiles. Ils sont dans la nature comme quand ils sont en promenade. Mais celui qui crée un ordre, il établit un plan — il passe de l'individuel à l'universel. Et voilà l'importance. Ici, il importe de mettre une chose au point. Tous les hommes n'ont pas une nature égale. Ils ont sans aucun doute les mêmes éléments en eux, mais les proportions de ces éléments varient. De là une diversité qui détermine des oeuvres correspondantes, sans vouloir dire que cette diverse composition de chacun suppose un degré plus ou moins élevé d'évolution. Essayons de faire un parallélisme de deux tendances entre lesquelles il y a toujours encore les graduations: l'intuition-l'intelligence; l'actuel-le temps; le ton-la couleur; la tradition-l'esprit nouveau; le spirituel-le réel matériel; le fixe-le relatif; l'émotion-le raisonnement; le personnel-l'impersonnel; le concret-l'abstrait; le sens-la mesure; la foi-la croyance; le romantique-le classique; la synthèse-l'analyse; la pré-science-la science physique; la métaphysique-la philosophie; l'artiste-le plasticien. Maintenant: si le plasticien, en s'appuyant sur les idées pures de l'entendement, peut construire, l'artiste le peut aussi en s'appuyant sur ses intuitions. Qu'à la base de la construction il y ait émotion ou raisonnement, cela doit nous être égal, notre



seul but c'est de construire. Le pôle opposé du sens constructif est la représentation. Imiter une chose déjà faite n'est pas créer. A quoi bon imiter une caverne — n'est-il pas mieux de construire une cathédrale! La construction doit être surtout la création d'un ordre. En dehors de nous existe le pyralisme — en nous l'unité. Nous pouvons considérer les concepts purs: le temps et l'espace. Toute notre représentation du monde phénoménique est inscrite dans ces formes pures de la pensée. Si nous basons une plastique sur ces principes nous aurons la plastique pure. Toute forme nous sera interdite. Mais si nous basons la construction sur des données intuitives, nous serons des artistes et notre art aura un certain rapport avec la métaphysique. Dans le sens opposé notre art approchera de la philosophie. On a dans la tête la totalité d'un objet, mais visuellement on n'en voit qu'une partie. Cette partie encore change d'aspect si nous changeons de place. Cela veut dire que visuellement nous ne possédons jamais l'objet complet. L'objet complet n'est que dans notre tête. Si on a dans la tête l'objet complet, pour en donner une idée graphique on choisira, presque sans s'en apercevoir, les parties essentielles et on construira un dessin qui, s'il n'est peut-être pas en accord avec les règles de la perspective, sera par contre beaucoup plus illustratif. C'est l'esprit de synthèse. La chose a été si normale que dans toutes les époques, sauf pendant la Renaissance, on a toujours dessiné de cette façon. Et, naïvement, tous ceux qui n'ont pas été initiés à l'Académie, dessinent de cette manière. Et c'est très bien. Or, plus sera grand l'esprit de synthèse de celui qui dessine, plus il nous donnera une image construite. Les dessins de tous les peuples primitifs, nègres, aztèques, etc. et les dessins égyptiens, chaldéens, etc. en sont un bel exemple. Ce même esprit de synthèse, à mon avis, est celui qui est amené à réaliser la construction du tableau tout entier, de la sculpture, et à déterminer les proportions dans l'architecture. Et seul cet esprit rend possible que l'oeuvre soit vue en sa totalité, dans un seul ordre, dans l'unité. Cette règle, à travers les âges, que de merveilles n'a-t-elle réalisées! Pourquoi l'avoir négligée? Cette règle est une chose anonyme, elle n'appartient à personne. Tout le monde peut l'employer à sa façon, elle doit être la vraie voie de tout homme sincère. Mais, si cette règle a été utilisée dans tous les âges, en quoi peut consister son emploi d'une façon moderne? Nous l'avons déjà dit à propos de la forme: ce qui est bien à nous est cette valeur absolue que nous donnons à la forme indépendamment de ce qu'elle peut représenter. Et de la même façon la structure ou construction: qui passe, de simple échafaudage pour ordonner les formes, à prendre la place de celui-ci et à constituer l'oeuvre elle-même. Avec cela disparaît une dualité qui a toujours existé dans le tableau: le fond et les images: où la structure prend la place des images surajoutées il n'y aura plus de dualité entre le fond et les images et le tableau aura recouvert son identité première: l'unité.

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JUAN TORRES-GARCIA



Manifiesto 1

In response to N.B.¹ from the
C.T.I.U. Montevideo (1934)

Joaquín Torres-García

Originally published in Spanish as Joaquín Torres-García, "Manifiesto 1. Contestando a N. B. de la C.T.I.U.," Publicaciones de la Asociación de Arte Constructivo — Montevideo.

A copy of the seventh issue of *Movimiento* (June-July), in which an article pertaining to me and signed by N.B. appears, has belatedly come into my possession. I do not wish to engage in a dispute with the author because, unlike others, I derive no pleasure from conflicts — but it is also not right that he should say things of me that are not true, without my responding. He claims, for example, that after the war in 1914, I went to Paris to live in closer proximity to the influence of the post-cubists, whose explorations obsessed me. On the contrary, I first went to New York, where I painted stage sets together with the other employees of Dood Studios Corporation, and then found a job at Dover Farm Industries, where with other workers I built toys. From there I went on to paint portraits (not of millionaires) and drew billboards and also painted cityscapes — which was like painting for myself — and, tired of that, I traveled to Italy and then Ville-Franche-Sur-Mer — in order to resolve in the quietude there the problem that did obsess me, which was not exactly that of the post-cubists but the present problem of constructivist art with a basis in the universal — these matters that are eternal questions destined to interest all men always — like the movement of the stars, good and evil, being and not being, man and the cosmos — matters as concrete as the laws of proportion and the form to be found in things, apart from the things themselves, for one is always pleased to look and touch — and precisely to free myself from affected, sentimental, bourgeois painting and to do something healthy in which the spirit can take pleasure and rest from the battle, for a moment. And besides that, there, in that quietude, I made toys with my own hands, which I went to sell in big stores, going there on my own two feet — or legs — to sell them. Because I have never been rich, and to eat and to feed others I have always had to work. It was not, therefore, in Paris where I studied and thought and resolved that problem of an art whose aim was to be for all the ages and for every man, no; it was a long way from the "great urban centers of capitalism," it was in Fiesole, a small city in Tuscany, and in Ville-Franche, a little fishing town now taken over by all the nouveaux riches in the world.

N.B. also calls me a theorist, as if I had hardly done anything but write. But I have made numerous murals, perched atop scaffolding; I have illustrated books; I have taught in schools for more than fourteen years; and I have produced such a large number of paintings that I have forgotten what I painted and how many I made. Yet, naturally, one thinks, reasons out, organizes and says and writes what one has thought if one believes it will be useful to others. So, I did not go to Paris until 1926, and although I made some paintings that coincided somewhat with current tastes it was only to fit in and avoid being completely rejected. But soon I returned to the issue that preoccupied me, as is evident in the dates I always include on my paintings. Certainly it is true that one responds to influences, especially artists, who are by nature very sensitive. But a great distance lies between responding to influences and making oneself fashionable. I have never been part of any well-defined movement. I do not know the reason for that man and his group's animosity toward me. Note that, while my painting may not please the people, neither does it please the bourgeoisie, for it is not made with it in mind. Nor for any élite class. I follow only my own thinking. But this, according to Marxism, is a crime. I have noted that whenever art is discussed, it is confused with representation, and for this reason things don't add up; and that he who identifies the boundaries between these two things, putting them in their proper place, is scornfully accused of being an aesthete or a purist. I contemplate the Parthenon and see there a thing of such great beauty that it cannot be surpassed, and what do I care what god it was consecrated to? Likewise, something whose moral intentions are sound can nonetheless be wretched in its expression. If I adopt a Marxist ideology, will I then be a good artist? Velázquez, who painted kings and popes, pleases the people, because he made pretty faces and hands and skillfully copied silk folds and all manner of things: while I, who wish to be a primitivist and to make an austere art, using the humblest media, and who am almost infantilistic, I please no one. But note this well: the issue of *Movimiento* to which I referred includes a drawing that can almost be called modernist; do you believe that that is what "the people are eager for and demand"? No. That neither pleases the simple man nor is it understood by him. Besides: just change the motto underneath the drawing, inverting the order, "Fascism will destroy the Bolshevik guard," and it remains the same. It is just bourgeois art with a Marxist label. Believe me: leave art and artists alone, for they do no harm to anyone and grow and bloom like flowers, which also do no one any harm. Besides, how do you know if we artists are indifferent? Why don't we manifest it? Theo van Doesburg and Mondrian were the fathers of neo-plasticism: the former, a communist; the latter an admirer of Mussolini and the Fascists. So? — Believe me, again — Art is like air or light, in that it can be joined to all manner of things, but in the end it always remains art, with nothing added. And he who is an artist knows this, and he does what he must because he knows. I know that it is a waste of time to try to convince N.B. that what he says in his article is wrong, because I know from experience that whoever embraces

dogmatism must, according to principle, never allow himself to be persuaded otherwise. But since his words have been made public, I must fight back, so that the truth may be made apparent to everyone else. If I had had a portrait of Lenin in my exhibition, all would be resolved, but that was not the case.

But let us return to the story. I know that the art that pleases the owner of the house I live in is the same art that would please the workers who built it, namely, photography. The bourgeois has the same taste in this regard as the proletarian. Must we devise a photographic art so that the people can understand us? Because we know that, in order to more or less appreciate art, one must have cultivated one's mind, more or less, and, indeed, the poor man has not had that opportunity, but the rich man has, if he has wanted it. But, to lower ourselves to the level of the poor man, then, we would have to create a kind of art that is very mediocre, and then all would be lost.

Would it not be more worthwhile, in this case, to educate the people so that they can understand the artist? It is for this reason that one goes around giving lectures everywhere, that one writes and explains what one does, even standing before the works of art in person.

This art of mine could, because of how it has been conceived, become a collective, impersonal art. Elemental art, based on order and measure, founded also on something universal and for this reason, as in Antiquity and the Middle Ages, for the people. And if N.B. thinks he has seen me digressing into a world of dreams, he has not seen this dream which I really have had. And I would also advise him not to depend so heavily on what the critics say and to rely more on what he himself thinks. Do not trust whoever those critics may be, for they judge poorly from a distant vantage point. For in general, modern art is condemned as being pure aestheticism, but that is not what bothers people. What bothers them is its internationalism, or better yet, its universality. Can there be any other reason for Hitler's condemnation of it? And it is likewise condemned in Italy and North America and Spain. It runs contrary to the national and traditional values to which they wish to return. Something else: if all art were judged according to Marxist criteria, absolutely nothing would remain standing from before our era, when new artists have been able to work within the new ideology. And that strikes me as a monstrous error. And I should add: what these artists must now produce, then, would have to surpass everything created before, and it is very doubtful that it could.

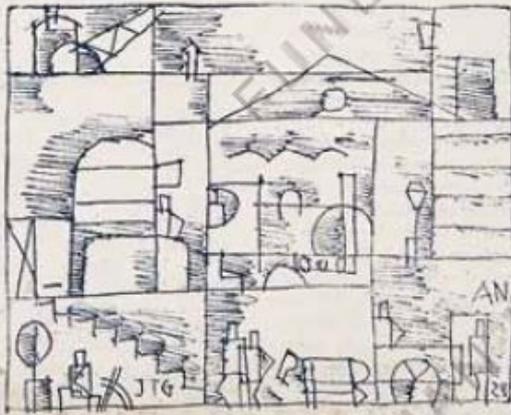
I confess that when I have gone to see some exhibition of proletarian art from Russia, I have prepared myself to see something very new, because it seems to me that for a new social order there should be a correspondingly new aesthetic order. And if I then see the same as always, that is, art that is like bourgeois art, but with a communist label, I am disappointed. I believe that no art can better correspond to the new order in Russia than the new modern classicism that developed out of cubism. Cubism would represent the same revolutionary moment on an aesthetic order. This

manifiesto 1.

CONTESTANDO A N. B. DE LA C.T.I.U.

Tardíamente llega a mis manos el número 7 de "Movimiento" correspondiente a Junio-Julio en el que aparece un artículo firmado por N. B., que me atañe. No es mi ánimo entablar lucha con el que lo escribió, porque no siento ese placer como otros — pero tampoco está bien que de mí se diga lo que no es y yo no proteste. — Diga, por ejemplo, que después de la guerra de 1914 yo voy a París para vivir más de cerca la influencia de las búsquedas post-cubistas, que me atormentaban. Y no fué eso sino que me fui a New-York, pinté decoraciones mezcladas con los obreros en la Dood Studios Corporation, y después también intervino con obreros en la Dover Farm Industries, para hacer con ellos juguetes, y después pinté retratos (no de millonarios) y dibujé para carteles de anuncio, y pinté también del aspecto de la ciudad — que fué como pintar para mí, — y que cansado me fui a Italia y luego a Ville-Franche-Sur-Mer — para en aquella quietud resolver el problema que me atormentaba, que no fué precisamente el de los post-cubistas, sino éste de un arte constructivo con base universal — estas cosas que son de siempre y que a todos los hombres tendrán que interesar siempre — como es el movimiento de los astros, el bien y el mal, el ser y el no ser, el hombre y el cosmos — cosas tan concretas como la ley de proporción y la forma que hay en las cosas, aparte de ellas, que gusta uno siempre de ver y tocar — y precisamente para liberarme de la pintura acaramada, sentimental, burguesa y dar algo sano en que el espíritu pueda complacerse y repararse de la lucha, un momento. Y además de eso allí en aquella quietud hice juguetes con mis manos, que fui a vender a los grandes comercios, yendo yo mismo con mis pies — o

piernas — a venderlos. Porque nunca he sido rico y siempre para comer y dar de comer he tenido que trabajar. No fué pues en París donde estudié y pensé y resolví ese problema de un arte con pretensiones de que fuese para todos los tiempos y para todos los hombres. No; fué bien lejos de "las grandes urbes del capitalismo", fué en Fiésole, una pequeña ciudad de la Toscana, y en Ville-Franche, un pueblito de pescadores.



ahora acaparado por todos los rascacuerpos del mundo.

Me llama también teorizante, casi como si apenas hubiese hecho otra cosa que escribir. Y he hecho obra mural bastante copiosa enmarcada en los andamios; he ilustrado libros; dado lecciones en los colegios por espacio de más de catorce años; y he pintado tal gran cantidad de cuadros que he olvidado lo que pinté y el número de ellos. Pero, naturalmente, uno piensa, razona, ordena y dice y escribe eso que ha pensado si cree que puede ser útil a los demás. No fui pues a París hasta el año 26 y si por poco tiempo hice pintura un poco al gusto del momento, fué solo para ponerme a tono y no ser rechazado completamente. Pero pronto volví a mi tema, como puede verse en la fecha siempre anotada en mis cuadros. Y es claro que uno recibe influencias, y más el artista por ser muy sensible. Pero de eso a ponerse a la moda, hay gran trecho. Nunca figuré en ningún movimiento bien definido. No sé el porqué de la animosidad de ese grupo y es hombre contra mí. Fijense que mi pintura, si no gusta al pueblo, tampoco gusta al burgués, pues no es hecha pensando en él. Y tampoco para ninguna élite. Sigo solo mi pensamiento. Pero éste, según quiere el marxismo, es un crimen. He podido ver, que siempre que se habla de arte, se confunde éste con la representación, y de ahí que no salgan las cuentas. Y, el que deslinda estas cosas y las pone en su lugar, es despectivamente tildado de esteta o purista. Yo contemplé el Partenón y veo algo de tan gran belleza que más allá no puede irse, y ¿qué me importa a que dios fué consagrado? Una cosa con buena intención moral puede ser desgraciada como expresión. ¿Por

entrar en la ideología marxista, ya será buen artista? Velázquez, que pintó reyes y papas, gusta al pueblo, porque hacía caras y manos muy lindas, e imitaba bien las sedas y todas clases de cosas; y yo que quiero ser un primitivo y hago un arte austero, con los medios más pobres, y estoy cerca del infantilismo, no gusto a nadie. Pero fijense bien: este número a que me he referido de "Movimiento", trae un dibujo casi don-

cannot be but one: the problem of the plastic arts in its totality, with which other issues may be implicated, but these issues will never be essential to the basis of art. And I say that he who has not understood art in these terms is digressing into matters that have nothing to do with it. Today, perhaps, this is not acknowledged, but tomorrow it may become a commonplace like any other.

On the other hand, I think that the day in which, for example, Russia finds itself obliged to seriously consider the problem of art — not in the sense of propaganda — it would arrive at the constructivist art that I advocate, an art that is uniquely subject to a severe rule, as it was in the great periods of the past. And Mr. N.B., with less partisan passion, could have recognized that fact, and then he might not have been so indifferent about my latest works, in which I have strived, as best I am able, to resolve this problem. Always in the belief that this might be of real interest to him. He also says that my art is a clear sign-post in this decadent period, just as Romanticism marked the decadent period at the end of feudalism. This is patently absurd. Because an art that is based on generalization and order, that is essentially objective, cannot be that. With a group of neo-plasticist artists in Paris, I founded the journal *Cercle et Carré* precisely because we saw surrealism and its sexual wanderings placing its bets, with the aim, as it seemed then, of becoming a new liberating movement in life.

N.B. also says that, finding myself powerless to narrow down the problem in the face of reality, I seek refuge in abstract forms. How little this man knows of me! He should be made aware, therefore, that this would not be a problem for me and that, though admittedly in another mode of expression, I have already dealt with this very issue in large murals. And I did this before Siqueiros⁵ and Diego Rivera, that is, when the former practiced metaphysical art, like that of Carrà⁶ or De Chirico,⁷ and the latter made art in a cubist or Cézannean vein — and it should be remarked — when they produced much better work than they do now. Because they indeed have not solved this problem in any way. That is to say, propagandistic art, certainly; but not constructivist art, which would correspond to an era that is also constructive.

August, 1934

- 1 The initials of Norberto Berdiá [Ed.]
- 2 Jacques Lipschitz (1891–1973), Cubist sculptor of Lithuanian origin based in France. [Ed.]
- 3 Jean Bichier, pseud. Jean Hélon (1904–1987), French painter and pioneer of abstract art in the United States. [Ed.]
- 4 Otto Freundlich (1878–1943), German painter and sculptor and member of the Cercle et Carré and the Abstraction-Création groups. [Ed.]
- 5 David Alfaro Siqueiros (1896–1974), Mexican muralist. [Ed.]
- 6 Carlo Carrà (1881–1966), Italian futurist painter. [Ed.]
- 7 Giorgio de Chirico (1888–1978), Greco-Italian painter and founder of the so-called "metaphysical school." [Ed.]

is indeed what many, if not all, communist artists within that artistic tendency also believe, like Lipschitz,² Gorin, Bichier (Hélión),³ Doesburg, Cueto, Freundlich,⁴ etc. To conclude, I wish to insist on an idea of capital importance: the total independence of art. Art may ally itself

with something else, and it is even true that the artist manifests his most intimate feelings in his art, but one may claim that art, essentially, remains pure, if it is serious art, independent of whatever else may join or latch on to it. And this is understandable: the aim of the artist

Manifiesto 2

100% Constructive Montevideo (1938)

Joaquín Torres-García

Originally published in Spanish as Joaquín Torres-García, "Manifiesto 2. Constructivo 100%," Publicaciones de la Asociación de Arte Constructivo — Montevideo.

He who only wishes to be so is not constructive; only he who can be, is. We shall speak of many things. Let us sketch out an allegory.

First of all, the men *below* and the men *above*.

The men above *see!* The men below are *blind*.

The bodies of the latter collide with each other and batter each other, yet they find pleasure in this.

The men above are of another temperament. Everything among them is study and repose; everything is calm conversation; everything is benevolence.

The men below attempt to rob each other; the men above try to help each other mutually.

They all live in a pyramid. For this reason, in its wide base there is a larger number of individuals than at its apex. That is, the number of blind madmen is larger than that of sane, wise men.

The relationship between those below and those above is as follows: while the men below are constantly scheming perverse plans to exterminate the men above, the latter, in contrast, are thinking about how they will convince the men below to see and to climb upwards so they are at peace and they improve their lot. But the men below mock them because they think the men above have made themselves dumb, fascinated by something that has no substance.

The tumultuous horde below swirls around a dark precipice in the center, the *abyss of egotism*, out of which pours forth the *fog of ignorance*. This fog is what deprives them of the precious gift of sight.

The cult of force, below; the cult of reason, above.

This arrangement was the work of a god. And after it was done, there remained only a figure: 3 or 4. From that point on, all humans when they are born are marked with these numbers.

At different points in history, the wise men had a premonition of this, but it was only a premonition and for that reason they could not discover this figure. But since all men were marked in this way, they produced works that corresponded to those numbers. And by comparing the works of one man or another, the number could almost be perceived.

Early man, about whom history reports virtually nothing, according to the traces he left behind, bore (as if not

knowing what he was doing) the number 3. For the other number never appeared. And, like the links of a chain, other men went on to bear it. And each time it became more evident; dimly, amid other lines, it began to appear.

The proximity of its revelation led some men to search for it vehemently, while others were lost in unimaginable bestialities. And from that evidence, from that infinite yearning, finally emerged a demigod: a truly divine man. And then, that marvelous being declared an end to the secret of the figure's significance. And from that point forward, the universe was interpreted and understood.

For truly, man could not receive a greater gift than that one, since that declaration was the key to the great mystery in its entirety.

What then appeared before the astonished eyes of those men who already *had knowledge* cannot be retold.

Therefore, now we can ask ourselves: what shines brighter than the sun? And all the generations, coming and going, with their false illusions: what greater clarity can they give us than that which we already have? On the contrary, what we see is the raising of banners that drag multitudes behind them. Are we also to militate beneath those insignias?

Today many different currents dominate the world: none of them will seduce us, because they pertain to the men below. They offer to extend ties to us, but in vain. And how could it be otherwise, if there is only the ardor of sanguinary passion in them?

Different currents govern the world, and here, in the lands of this hemisphere, their influence is felt. For, in truth, this part of the world is not different from the other. And he who thinks that that is not the case deceives himself.

But whether this part of the world is different or not, what does it matter to us? And the same could be said in this century or the next. How can those here below, those who are killing each other, not see that up above, the moon is all purity and serenity? And that after the killing, tomorrow, majestic and radiant, indifferent to this wretched misery, the Sun will appear, as it does every day...?

But if these things characterize a sublime order, deeper yet there is the "number": *the law of laws*. And this is what that divine man revealed when he declared the sacred figure.

Will we cure ourselves, then, of a thousand banners and ensigns, whether they be red or black, brown or white? Let those who are in the thrall of such signs have their wars.

In our attempt to delve into the spirit of these American lands, we seek to find *the work of the essential man*. Scorning the history of yesterday and today, we aim to encounter the *primitive terrain*. And it is for this reason that we have already said that our orientation cannot coexist with any of the ones that today are prominent in the Continent, whether they be centrist, rightist, or leftist.

And, in contemplating them and casting our gaze across the centuries, we refuse to forget that light must always guide our path. WE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE IT FROM THAT ALMOST SUPERNATURAL EVENT IN WHICH THE TRUTH WAS REVEALED FOR ALL ETERNITY.

Given what we have just said, we must conclude the following: that no matter how much a people (in whatever age) manages to manifest the supreme law in itself, it will never be but a pale reflection. Thus, in our attempts to find such a semblance of the law in the virgin peoples of America, we will have perhaps discovered some glimmer from that light. Yet why should we adopt models from one of these peoples (whichever it might be)? Is it not more worthwhile to confine ourselves to the Truth itself?

In essence, what did that man-god reveal? That the Cosmos is inscribed in a numerical figure. That is, that the Universe (which is not an abstraction) is a *living law*. And for this reason capable of being reduced to a number. And he found the essentiality of Harmony. He found the key.

The law of analogy demonstrated the existence of a *fundamental unity*. Therefore it could be deduced that all is one and the same: Universus.

From this point on, the discovery of the cosmic order determined the coordinates of a wondrous Science. We are in it now. For this reason, our separation from the historical is absolute.

And in examining human societies in the passage of time and the manifestations of diverse cultures, we have sought to focus our attention on nothing in any aspect of collective life other than *that which bears a relationship with the universal order*. Hence our effort to draw attention to the first nuclei of human social organization (the earliest forms of association), in preference to later forms of society. And because we had to be consistent with those criteria, we also examined in great depth the mysteries of Prehistory.

It will be understood now why we have no interest in carrying the banner of any of the various ideological tendencies that dominate in this Continent or in the world. It will also be understood where *our constructive foundation* finds its roots (and this has already been pointed out). It is not a mode of thought that was generated *today* or *here* but rather has existed for many centuries.

It can now be seen that our interest in the aboriginal in these American territories — whether from the present or from the past — has no other reason than, in it, to find man on that universal plane, still undistorted by civilization (which we prefer to call *decadence*). It goes without saying that we would like to see such men treated with greater consideration, that they be allowed to *live according to their ways* and that their faith be respected, because for us they must represent men who are still under the *cosmic laws*, the sacred laws of nature. Our sympathies for them have nothing to do with political movements of a different sort (agrarian reform,

J. TORRES GARCIA

MANI

FIES

TO 2

CONSTRUCTIVO

100%

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the doctrines of APRA) that seek to redeem the Indian. And we *would like* to make this categorically clear here.

All of this will be more easily understood if we examine in depth the essence of constructivism, and what it means, therefore, to be constructive.

Let us return to the allegory of the pyramid: the men above and the men below. One might also distinguish them by saying, those who look inward upon their selves (with that inner eye the ancients discovered), and those who only look at the exterior.

We are all, in part and alternately, from above and from below. What is important is to spend more time living on the higher plane than on the lower, to live more with the conscience than with the exterior, to live more with abstract man than with the real man we are.

Because, regrettably, we must coexist with an animal, which is our body, and it makes its demands.

This animal, with which we coexist, takes on different qualities according to the individual man. In some cases, it is a small, inoffensive little creature, one that will never seek to force itself on its owner: a mild lamb, a little dove, or a fish or an insect. But conjoined to other individuals one finds a tiger or a lion, an elephant or a wolf, and also a shark or a serpent. And in these cases, one can only imagine what men dominated by such beasts must be! But all is well, for it is all part of a *cosmic plan*.

Regarding this, there is yet a warning to be made: namely, that the small, inoffensive creature in some men, for a moment and occasionally, can take on a larger form and rival the others in its ferocity. But, in short, what is most important is that it not prevail.

We have already remarked that the wide base of the pyramid houses the greatest number of living beings, in contrast to the apex. This is, unfortunately, the ratio according to which humanity is divided. And since these proportions seem *to have been made this way for eternity*, we need not seek to change them. For this reason, the constructive man will consider the struggle to change this division futile. He remembers that some humans are marked with a 3 and others with a 4, as long as they live. And the same is true of plants and animals. There are, as I once pointed out, friendly plants and aggressive plants; curative plants and poisonous plants; trees that bear nutritious fruit and trees that are sterile. And in like fashion the beasts, as everyone knows.

Of all of this, primitive man was aware. Our ancestor could clearly distinguish the *spirit* that lived in all things, and he gave them the form of a sign. And this sign, for the primitive, was a talisman. His sight penetrated more deeply into nature than modern man's ever could, because he arrived at this intuition: he transcended the material. Everything was spirit for that man (and he was right), fire, wind, thunder, any insect or rock ... everything, according to his universal, pantheistic conception of the universe.

And this is how constructivism sees things, for it lies on that same plane. For this reason, it could hardly be comfortable sensing and observing men in general.

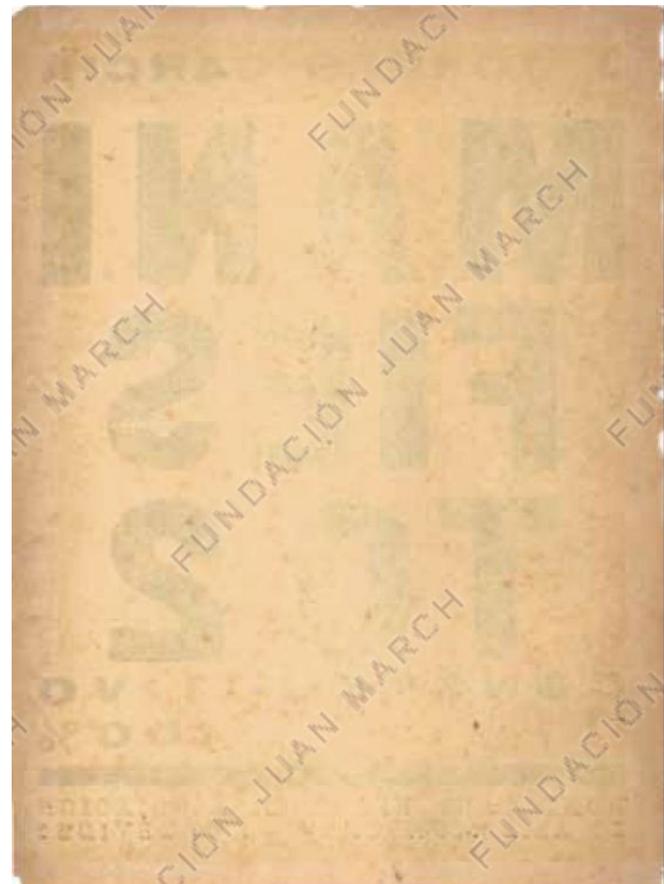
But this attitude should not be seen as deriving from arrogant pride. Far from it. This attitude is as natural as any other. It falls within one order or another, and that is all. And one might claim further: it is eternal and transcends time. And thus there is nothing more to do than to establish what the different orders are.

I would like constructivism's position (and that of anyone who wishes to call himself a constructivist and, for that matter, that of this Association) to be clearly defined. Bear in mind, therefore, that the basis for constructivism lies in the *eternal* and not the *historical*. This cannot be stressed enough. All the struggles and (relatively) all the manifestations on the plane of reality thus do not pertain to us. We only wish to retain, from every real phenomenon, that constant part from which each manifestation derives its shape through time. We must be (relatively) indifferent to everything else. For this reason what interests us in the things that transpire in the world is the profound and constant rhythm of nature.

A constructive man (and there is no doubt I am one!) can never engage in partisan battles under any insignificance whatsoever. But he exists in the world. Thus (because of that human weakness that, as Emerson tells us, leads him to rise to the occasion on behalf of some poor people he doesn't know), he can "figure" in any society; say and talk in such-and-such a place, where he defends (relatively) such-and-such a credo; write for such-and-such a newspaper or magazine (relatively). But, in reality, he is only *with it*, meaning that he is *with that which is universal*, for he wishes to situate himself on that plane. This needs to be understood, so that no one is deceived about him.

This firm conviction, that this is *his only and natural position*, perhaps leads him to be unconcerned about *the details*, and it will thus be no surprise if at times he is quite benevolent in his criticisms. Because, of a thing that is so far from the truth, there is no problem in saying that it is very good... For all these reasons, one might think at times that he is characterized by vacillation, contradiction, or inconsistency, when in reality he is above that sort of trivial nonsense. Seeing Diogenes emerge from the house of a prostitute, the people laughed at him, but he very calmly responded, "the sun also enters that abode, and it does not sully itself." That is how it is. Any place and any piece of paper is good (relatively) to speak of the truth. And he who is focused on the things that happen, on the details, ignoring what is permanent, will never understand that fact.

We may draw a lesson from this, which is that when the artist gives shape to his work according to this universal order (that is, without going beyond the limits of the cosmic plan), he never falls into the falsity of the *relative*, for this falsity begins *as soon as the law is abandoned*. This work will be within "the measure," within the limits of the law. But if he abandons the universal order, there is no longer any measure. And the same can be said of life. To live according to that measure is to transcend the physical. Therefore, since every primitive man transcends this material sphere because of his natural



disposition, whether out of superstition or because of a metaphysical need to believe in an order, we have taken an interest in this; and for this reason we have employed our minds in this matter. So when we say that we are living in prehistory, let our meaning be known.

We are total skeptics regarding the possibility of human evolution, and if it does occur, we do not contemplate it in the plane of reality but in the plane of consciousness. Our skepticism leads us to believe that the world can never live in wisdom, that is to say, in harmony. Thus, there may be periods of greater or lesser tranquility, but never true equilibrium. Therefore, we are little concerned whether one group or another should govern the rest (relatively), whether this or that social tendency should arise (relatively). Since the world cannot be altered, it does not matter. And this explains the failure of all the great educators and founders of social and religious systems.

We can believe in nothing beyond recognizing the value of certain men (of any race or from any age), and this is because they arrived in this life already distinguished in this way, already marked. There is no redemption for the others. Neither are they responsible

MANIFIESTO No. 2

CONSTRUCTIVO 100 %

No es constructivo el que quiere, sino el que puede. Vamos a hablar de muchas cosas. Tracemos una alegoría.

Primeramente de los hombres de *abajo* y de los hombres de *arriba*.

Los hombres de *arriba* ven! los de *abajo* están *ciegos*. Los cuerpos de éstos chocan entre sí y se maltratan, pero en esto hallan placer.

Los hombres de *arriba* son de otro temperamento. Todo entre ellos es estudio y reposo, todo es conversación sosegada, todo es benevolencia.

Los hombres de *abajo* tratan de robarse mutuamente; los de *arriba* de ayudarse mutuamente.

Moran unos y otros en una pirámide. Por esto, en su *ancha* base, hay mayor número de individuos que en la parte superior. Es decir, que el número de *ciegos* y *locos* es mayor que el de los *sabios* y *cuerdos*.

Las relaciones entre los de *abajo* y los de *arriba* son estas: en tanto que los de *abajo* de continuo están urdiendo algo con fines perversos de exterminación de los de *arriba*, éstos, por el contrario, están ideando que harán para que vean y trepen hacia lo alto los otros y estén en paz y se mejoren. Pero los de *abajo* se burlan de ellos porque les creen embozados en algo sin consistencia.

for this. They were born to produce what is negative and should properly fulfill their destiny.

Behold, then, how each man raises himself up, according to the foundation granted to him: towards the law of harmony if he came here for that reason, and if not... well, patience. The world is good just as it is, light and shadow, which cannot exist one without the other. And he who believes he is on the side of right must understand this: that one must render unto Caesar what is Caesar's.

Another thing: poetry is not manufactured; art is not manufactured. Both arise from a *comprehension of the profound harmony and from living according to it*. Thus, one may speak just as much of constructive art as of constructive life, for they are one and the same. And he who does not understand this does not "see" or "hear."

And now, so that nothing remains in the shadows, it seems right to change my tone and say things as plainly as possible. And it would be this: the constructive artist sees poetry and art as something inherent to *his life* (indeed, in that which is universal), and the rules which he adopts in his art are taken from or have the same origin as the rules that give order to his life. The same is true of

his religious sense (universal and secular) and therefore also in what pertains to his life as a member of society. No label can be applied to him: he is neither catholic, nor protestant, nor Buddhist, nor republican, nor fascist, nor anarchist, nor Nazi, nor atheist, nor revolutionary, nor modernist, nor academic, nor cubist, nor surrealist, nor situationist, nor oppositionist, nor socialist, nor proletarian, nor aristocratic; he is not connected with this or that leader, with this or that philosophy, or with this or that association or political party... Nothing of the kind! He is in the universal. And, thus, without complaint, he renders unto Caesar what is Caesar's, for he recognizes, without knowing why, that *this fact* is, was, and will always be the reality of the world.

Everything that tends to assign itself a place in life has its stages of development. Constructivism does not escape this general law. Therefore, once this first, introductory stage (one might say, the sowing of the *idea*) comes to an end, another stage will follow: germination and growth. Hidden beneath the earth are the seeds whose existence no one suspects, but which one day may astonish by revealing that they secretly germinated. I have absolute faith in this possibility. I have faith that it is destined to be. But, as I have said, once this initial phase has passed, once the means of arriving at a profound understanding of its essentiality have been exhausted, then, in my opinion, work should cease. I am not troubled if people say, "constructivism is gone. No one thinks about it. Its promoter no longer insists on the matter with his lectures. That bothersome thing has finally passed!"

I almost wish that people would say this. And, likewise, that people would say that it was something I brought here in the years between 1934 and 1938, and that it did not take root because it did not fit in with the circumstances... or for some other reason.

Therefore, the struggle must end completely, and I must end my efforts to explain. Whoever is interested in the details should consult what has already been published.

From the standpoint of history, it is something that was. And as one may speak of other movements, great or small, that were, one could also speak of this movement as having been; it thus no longer has any existence as such.

This is normal, if one examines the matter dispassionately. For various reasons, such an *idea* could not be assimilated by everyone, quickly. First, because it radically contradicts the current trends in thought. Second (provided it is understood in purely intellectual terms), because it *implies a fundamental change in moral consciousness*, and this is no small matter. Finally, there can be a shortage of ability or preparation. In sum, the time factor is *essential*.

Constructivism, by its very nature, can never disappear, since it exists at the heart of things. Moreover, it falls within the greatest of traditions. For this reason, all that has just been said does not refer to the *doctrine* but to a *possible movement it might have sparked and*

that did not take place. In any case, any failure will be the fault of those who have approached it without being able to sincerely adhere to its principles, for whatever reason.

But, as there will be those who, moved by a certain interest, will want to study it, the texts are there with which they can satisfy their curiosity. This Association serves as an archive of these documents and an office for new publications, as well as [a place from where] to continue studying the phenomenon, above all in the cultures of America. The Association will no longer be the *headquarters of a movement*, but a place for the study and dissemination of constructivist ideas, in any culture but preferably in the Indoamerican. My usual question (whether we are in agreement or not) will thus no longer be necessary. With an understanding, finally, that *this movement is not immediately possible*—with an understanding that this idea should be cast up in the air and not be imposed on anyone, collectively or individually—it will be directed at everyone and at no one. For this reason, let it be something that one may accept or reject as he pleases; let any ties *that might lead to the formation of a group* be severed. He who feels he possesses the doctrine will be constructive, and that is sufficient. Nor do I want to assume any responsibility for it, in the sense of seeking proselytes. I mean to say that I refuse to form a *collective movement in this sense*.

I thus regain my independence.

Beyond this objective, and in this sense, we will continue to meet with whoever desires to do so, to pursue our studies, whether that be of this doctrine itself or of the cultures based on it, as well as to bring our publications to their conclusion, with everyone's collaboration. I ask that I not be considered the promoter of this movement and that no one think that I am linked to this concept. Thus, one can rightfully say that the Uruguayan constructivist movement was only *an attempt* and that today, nothing is left of it; and that its initiator, regaining his liberty, no longer assumes any responsibility for the movement, which is currently defunct. Nor does he plan to resurrect it. Because, with better understanding, and therefore recognizing the impossibility of developing it further in our milieu, and for the aforementioned reasons and for others that might be adduced, the experiment should no longer be pursued. This Institute remains in place, but only for the purpose of study (as I have said) of constructivism and of the cultures erected on this foundation. And toward this goal we will carry out our publications and lectures.

For these reasons, the Constructivist Doctrine, likewise regaining its independence, can from this day forward occupy its place alongside others like it and for the benefit of anyone who would wish to adopt it as a norm for his life and his art. And so that I may be better understood, let us suppose the following: that the doctrine was formulated two hundred years ago, and neither its author nor any of the supporters it might have had are alive today.

Montevideo, December 1938

Manifesto 3

Montevideo (1940)

Joaquín Torres-García

Originally published in Spanish as Joaquín Torres-García, "Manifiesto no. 3," *Publicaciones de la Asociación de Arte Constructivo* — Montevideo, on the occasion of the retrospective exhibition organized at the headquarters of the Association in December 1939

Since naturalistic art is imitative, the exact opposite of constructive abstract art, it seemed illogical to organize at the Asociación de Arte Constructivo an exhibition of my works from another time (my beginnings, even), the majority of which are markedly academic, for the Association was founded to promote and disseminate imitative and constructive art. Despite the apparent lack of logic, however, it has its explanation. I shall try, therefore, to set forth here the reasons for our decision.

We do not harbor the slightest doubt, even today, that for Uruguayan art to prosper, it would have to do so on the side of universal constructivist art, for if that movement, so anxiously awaited and longed for, had taken hold, it would have placed us at the vanguard of every form of artistic expression in the world (thus emulating the art of the most ancient cultures). For this reason, almost believing in a miracle, after I returned to my home country I devoted myself to this objective, with the greatest faith. Testimony of my efforts are the 430 lectures given, the formation of a nucleus of constructivist artists, numerous publications, the organization of seven exhibitions (one in Paris) and, finally, the founding of this Association. Yet, after laboring hard for six years, I finally had to confront the fact that such a goal was unrealizable. Why? That is what I shall strive to explain here.

Every change in the order of things can come about, as we all know, through evolution or revolution, but even in the latter case, without a long period of preparation, successful revolutionary action is not possible. This means that such changes cannot be produced all at once, by suddenly circumventing the indispensable span of time which new ideas need so they can slowly germinate. And in our case, that essential preparation was lacking. Thus, although many came forward, out of curiosity perhaps, or out of a desire to orient themselves or to learn, in the end they retreated, for they could not interpret the new theories (or did not know how); indeed, there was no bridge that could cross that distance, no road or passageway they could follow in a smooth path toward these things that were so new to them. The same thing occurred when we sought to explain the most modern trends in art, such as cubism,

neo-plasticism, futurism, surrealism, dadaism, etc., or even impressionism, which we assumed was already passé. That incomprehension (always the result of insufficient preparation) produced confusion, or even at times aggressive hostility towards it all; and it resulted, in general, in a lack of interest. For this reason I thought it wise to conclude this effort at disseminating modern art and also to abandon attempts at furthering a group of constructivist artists. I realized that it was impossible to bridge the span of a century and that we would have to situate ourselves at the level in which the arts find themselves here. I realized, finally, that what could be proposed here, therefore, would have to be academic, imitative art.

But—one might ask—what of the artists who went to Europe and who returned with something new? Were they not already on a different level? Could they not be seen as sufficiently evolved? And, so, upon the foundation of the work already carried out (in addition to our pedagogical efforts), would it not be possible—indeed, would it not be a duty—to establish a more modern school, purging certain concepts, adjusting others, contributing, in short, more elements with which to consolidate that first effort, which should stand as the true milestone from which we would advance toward the future?

On this matter I must remark (though it pains me to do so) that at the end of the day, when everything is properly examined, what was brought here did not amount to much; it was more apparent than real. I shall attempt to show that this is the case.

We will all agree that it was not a question of bringing here the art of Monet or Cézanne, Bourdelle¹ or Desplaut;² but rather, eschewing any direct influence, it was a matter of studying the achievements in the plastic arts that, for instance, these creators (chosen at random) represented, and then, in possession of a clear concept of what these new aesthetic orientations implied, it was a matter of reworking them from an original, personal standpoint—that is, creating something in accordance with the precedent, but which was completely novel. Moreover, these studies were not to stop at those earlier movements, but were to extend further forward in time to include, without fear, the group of post-Impressionists and the constructivist group begun by cubism, thereby arriving at a definitive criterion regarding what the effort of modern artists could in essence be.

Well, that did not happen. Can anyone here know, therefore, what that modern effort has fundamentally consisted of?

Because of this, then, what has happened? A lapse into falsity. Only the external features of one or another of these movements have manifested themselves. It is because of this, I have said many times, that our young artists were not modern but merely modernist. And the work of education has also suffered because of this false interpretation of modern art.

On the other hand, the majority here, perhaps, has not even accepted this small portion of modernism. To this day, they "discover" Michelangelo or Canova,³ and

they are most definitely, as far as aesthetic development is concerned, back in the early nineteenth century, as I have said on another occasion. Finally, there are others to be found in the abjection of the bad painting of aficionados, but even that (to our shame) is treated here with scorn. Add to this the fact that here everything depends on personal friendships and connections, and its fortunes are favorable or not as a result. And the fact that those who write about art, evidently as poorly prepared as the rest, have set out on such misguided paths in their repetition of concepts learned in school, which to a significant extent has contributed to our sinking further and further into error, even when we assume they have the best intentions.

Well, consistent with that experience and judgment, which I think is accurate, I myself have voluntarily responded to what is our true level in the evolution of the arts, which, as I have said, is limited for the moment to the imitation of reality, based on a subject. For the same reason, I have decided that what is best for us is to return to the "Academy." Teaching, for this reason, will consist solely in the establishment of courses here like those in the academies of Europe, always provided that there is someone available who possesses the knowledge and technique necessary to teach. But if the objective of a return to technique (only imitative technique) is, in short, to provide a foundation, then it would be an error to remain stuck at that level, though there are surely those who think that that would be perfectly fine. But we do not. Technique, in this case, would serve as a liberating tool, allowing the artist to go in any direction. Or better still: this technique, in itself anodyne and impersonal, would serve to lead artists toward other techniques that are themselves already on the evolutionary path toward truly modern styles. This is, no less, precisely the path followed by all the most revolutionary artists of today, from Picasso or Monet to Lipschitz or Vantongerloo.

The current exhibition of my work at the A. C. C. responds, therefore, to a desire to determine the criteria for judging what our aesthetic reality is.

January 1940

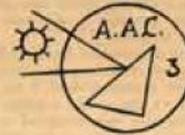
- 1 Émile Antoine Bourdelle (1861–1929), French sculptor, famous for his monumental sculptures. [Ed.]
- 2 Torres-García is probably referring to Charles Despiau (1874–1946), French sculptor who worked in Rodin's workshop and, together with Bourdelle and other artists, was connected with the group created around the brothers Lucien and Gaston Schnegg, humorously dubbed "the Schnegg gang." [Ed.]
- 3 Antonio Canova (1757–1822), Italian sculptor, famous for his sculptures of mythological characters. [Ed.]

J. TORRES - GARCIA

MANIFIESTO Nº 3



PUBLICACIONES DE LA ASOCIACION
DE ARTE CONSTRUCTIVO - MONTEVIDEO



CON MOTIVO DE LA
EXPOSICION RETROS-
PECTIVA EFECTUADA
EN LA ASOCIACION
DE ARTE CONSTRUCTIVO
EN EL MES DE
DICIEMBRE DE 1939.

Imp. "Buda" - Calle del Puro 228



Siendo el arte naturalista imitativo, el polo opuesto del arte abstracto constructivo, ha parecido cosa lógica el realizar en la Asociación de Arte Constructivo, fundada para la difusión y cultivo del arte imitativo y construido, una exposición de obras más de otro tiempo (y aún de más comienzos) la mayor parte de las cuales son marcadamente académicas. Pero, no obstante esta aparente falta de lógica, la cosa tiene su explicación. Trataremos, pues, de explicarnos.

Que la salud para el arte uruguayo, estaba del lado del arte universal constructivo, ya que, de haberse producido el tan deseado y esperado movimiento en tal sentido, nos habríamos puesto a la vanguardia de todo arte así senta hoy en el globo y, emulando por esto el de las más altas culturas antiguas, de este, digo, ni aún hoy nos cabe el menor duda. Por tal motivo, y casi creyendo en un milagro, desde mi vuelta a la patria, me di a trabajar en tal sentido y con la mayor fe, y testimonio de ello son las 430 conferencias dadas, la formación de un núcleo de artistas constructivos, las múltiples publicaciones, la realización de siete exposiciones (una en París) y, finalmente, la fundación de la Asociación. Pero, después de esta ruda labor de casi seis años, tuve al fin que darme cuenta de que tal propósito no era realizable. ¿Porqué? Eso es lo que ahora trataré de explicar.

Todo cambio en el orden de las cosas, puede producirse, como todos saben, por evolución o por revolución, pero, en realidad, aún en el último caso, sin una larga preparación no es posible una eficaz acción revolucionaria. Quiero decir, pues, que, tales cambios, no pueden lograrse por salto, salvando así de golpe, espacios de tiempo indispensable para la lenta germinación de las ideas nuevas. Y en el caso nuestro, faltó esa indispensable preparación. De ahí, pues, que si muchos se acer-

caron casi por curiosidad o quizás con deseo de orientarse o de aprender, al fin tuvieron que alejarse, pues, no pudieron o no supieron interpretar las nuevas teorías, ya que, en efecto, no había puente que permitiese salvar la distancia, paso o pasaje para ir por camino llano a esas para ellas nuevas cosas. Y lo mismo ocurrió al querer explicar y hacer comprender las más modernas tendencias de arte, como cubismo, neoplasticismo, futurismo, surrealismo, dodecimismo, etc., y aún el impresionismo, sobre el cual se creía ya estar de vuelta. Y tal incompreensión (y siempre por la falta de preparación debida) motivó confusión, agresividad a veces contra todo eso, y, en general, falta de interés. Por tal motivo, me pareció bien el cesar en tal trabajo de difusión, y así mismo en la formación de un grupo de artistas constructivos. Me di cuenta de que era imposible salvar el espacio de un siglo, y de que había que situarse en el plano en que se estaba, y que, por esto, lo que aquí podía proponerse, era un arte académico imitativo.

Pero, se dirá, ¿y los artistas que fueran a Europa, y que volvieron con algo nuevo, no estaban ya en otro plano, no podían considerarse ya bastante evolucionados? Y en consecuencia, sobre tal labor, realizada ya, ¿no podía y debía (sumando a ésta la labor docente) fundar una más moderna escuela, depurando conceptos, ajustando otros, dando, en fin más elementos para consolidar tal primer esfuerzo, que debía quedar como un verdadero talón desde el cual se avanzaría hacia lo futuro?

Sobre esto tengo que decir, y aunque me cuesta decirlo, que, a fin de cuentas y bien examinado, lo que se hizo aquí no fué mucho y más aparente que real. Trataré de demostrarlo.

Todos estarán de acuerdo en admitir, que no se trataba de traer aquí el arte de Monet o de Cézanne, de Bourdelle o de Despiau, sino que por el contrario, huyendo de toda influencia directa, estudiar el hecho plástico que representaban tales autores (tomados así al azar como ejemplo) y, entonces, en posesión de un concepto claro de aquello que podían suponer tales nuevas orientaciones estéticas, darlos de manera original, personal; es decir, creando algo de acuerdo pero completamente inédito. Además, que no debía detenerse ahí la búsqueda y estudio, sino que, ultrapasando ese límite, abarcar sin temor el grupo postimpresionista y el grupo constructivo iniciado por el cubismo y así llegar a un criterio definitivo en cuanto a lo que pudiera ser, en esencia, el esfuerzo moderno.

Pues bien: eso no se hizo. ¿Se sabe, por tal razón, en que

ha consistido, fundamentalmente, ese esfuerzo moderno?

Entonces, y debido a eso ¿qué ha sucedido? Pues que se ha caído en lo falso. Se ha dado solo lo externo de alguno de tales movimientos y, por esto, he dicho muchas veces, que nuestros jóvenes artistas, no eran modernos y si solo modernistas. Y la labor docente también ha sufrido por tal falsa interpretación.

Por otro lado, y quizás los más, ni este poco de modernismo han admitido. Aun hoy descubren a Miguel Ángel o a Cónova, y están positivamente, en cuanto a evolución estética y como ya he dicho en otro lugar, a principios del siglo XIX. Y otros finalmente en la abiección de una mala pintura de aficionados, pero a la cual, y para vergüenza nuestra, se da entre nosotros beligerancia. Y añádate a esto, a que aquí todo se alaba por cantidad y, por esto, bien o mal marcha, y de que también los que han escrito de arte, evidentemente mal preparados como los otros, se han adelantado en caminos tales de divagación, repitiendo conceptos aprendidos, que en buena parte han contribuido a sumirnos de más en más en un error y aún suponiendo la mejor voluntad y propósito.

Pues bien: consecuente con tal experiencia y criterio, que creo justo, yo mismo, voluntariamente, he querido ponerme al disposición de nuestro verdadero plano de arte que, como he dicho, es, por el momento el de la imitación de la realidad a base de tema. Y por la misma razón he creído que lo mejor, para nosotros, es volver a la "academia". Que la enseñanza, por esto, ha de consistir solo en establecer aquí cursos como en las academias de Europa y siempre para tal enseñanza. Pero si el volver a la técnica, escuetamente (y técnica solo imitativa) es, con objeto de dar base, sería un error el quedarme ahí. Y habrá quien esto piense y se contente con ello. Pero no así nosotros. Técnica, en tal caso, sería libertad para ir luego en cualquier dirección. O mejor: tal técnica, en sí anódina e impersonal, sería para entrar en otras ya en proceso evolutivo hacia los verdaderos estilos modernos. Que es, ni más ni menos, que el proceso seguido por todos los más revolucionarios de hoy, desde Picasso o Monet, hasta Lipchitz o Vantongerloo.

La actual exposición mía en la A. A. C. obedece, pues, al deseo de fijar el criterio de cual es nuestra realidad estética.

Enero 1940.

J. TORRES - GARCIA.

La Escuela del Sur

(1935)

Joaquín Torres-García

Published in Joaquín Torres-García, *Universalismo Constructivo* (Buenos Aires: Poseidón, 1941).

A great School of Art should be created here in our country. I say this without vacillation: *here in our country*. And I have my reasons for affirming this.

An *Escuela del Sur*,¹ because in reality, *our north² is the South*. There should be no other north, for us, except in opposition to our South.

For this reason, we have inverted the map, so that we may have a proper sense of our position, despite what the rest of the world says. The tip of America, from now on, stretching out, insistently points toward the South, our north. The same is true of our compasses, which point irremissibly always towards the South, towards our pole. Boats that leave here *go down, not up*, as they did before, to travel toward the north. Because the north is now *below*. And the sun now rises, when we face our South, on our left.

This rectification was necessary; we now know where we are.

The city in which we live also shares nothing in common with any other: *Montevideo is unique*. Its character is so profoundly its own that it cannot be confused with any other. This is apparent as soon as one makes out the Cerro;³ then there is the port; and the picture is completed by the Plaza Independencia and the Plaza Matriz. What a shame that its visage is spoiled by a few moles!

The houses in our country remind us well of where we are, above all in those areas where they are low buildings, in contrast with the wide streets. This gives the place an abundance of light that is not to be found elsewhere. This light, furthermore, is white (I would call it *luminous light*, without fear of being redundant), and its angle is its own as well; it could easily be controlled. One should not forget how tall doors and windows are in houses here, which determines a special proportion that characterizes the light.

The composition of the air also suits the city: an air that corrodes the walls and covers them with a kind of greenish slime. This is undoubtedly due to our great River. This river, which seems like a sea to us because of its inordinately great width and which can be spied from the majority of Montevideo's streets, fools us into believing it is a sea: but we must remember that it is nothing more than a river, our great River Plate, also

unique. Many streets lead down to the river, as we all know, sloping so steeply that they cause trepidation. The streets go continuously up- and downhill. And this is another feature that is unique to our city.

Now then: paying close attention we can thus discover the intimate character of everything. For our people are also unlike the inhabitants of any other city. They have as much character as the city itself. And it is not easy for these people to recognize their own character or to recognize that it is different from that of other peoples. It is not that their character is uniform; on the contrary, it is very heterogeneous. For this reason, their special features do not arise from the varieties that make it up but rather from a peculiar expression that gives them their character. For we have here the type that leans more toward Europe, the mestizo of Indian or African heritage, as well as almost pure examples of the latter. And this, too, gives our people its varied features.

If we move from physical features to what we might call *expression* (their gestures, vocabulary, mentality, way of looking at things, etc.) we will find ourselves with something else that is very markedly their own. If we just hear them speak, we can recognize immediately the idiosyncrasy of this people. And — surprisingly — we will not find what we are speaking of in tango, for example, or in any other expression from the slum quarters. Likewise, we will not find it in the *fashionable shops and department stores* or in the city's examples of modern architecture, for our character is lost there, and to such a degree that our own "typical" city, although it is present everywhere, is present the least, or almost not at all, in certain new or modernized neighborhoods. This does not mean that we should not modernize or change, because change must happen. But change should be according to our character, a very subtle nuance that should be *specifically pointed out* so that everyone becomes aware of it. The fact of the matter is that by accentuating certain habits and turns of phrase that are thought to be very distinctive in us, we end up creating an artificial character which, because of its dullness, is detestable. And this is true of many things. For instance, what does *football* have to do with us? And if we examine what this game brings to our country, not just to its character, but in any way, we will see that it offers nothing. But let us leave this delicate question aside.

In certain places in Montevideo, one might even doubt one was here. So great is the number of things around one that have been imported from elsewhere. You may well ask: isn't this the product of modern life? I reply: nothing of the sort. It is the product of other countries' commerce and industry, which has invaded ours. Yet there are neighborhoods *where this tendency has not overcome the local atmosphere*, despite the fact that there, too, things that modern life has imposed on us are bought and sold. This is due to the people who live there, more firmly rooted in their native land, and less frivolous, less eager to spend their money and cultivate foolish whims. This street, with this tall door, its

banderole arranged like a fan, with this tree (not a plane tree), with this little grocery store or some other business and with these sorts of men and women, cannot be from anywhere other than Montevideo. But I repeat: its character may be found everywhere. Thus, the elegant young lady, who has pretensions to Europeanness, French or English, perhaps, is Uruguayan! Whether she likes it or not; and if she doesn't like it, all the worse for her. This character is not to be found in *yerba mate* or in *ponchos* or in popular songs. It is something subtler that saturates everything and has the same clarity, the same white light of the city. And the man from this city is as unique as the city itself, with these ten letters standing in a row, neither going up nor down, all the same, whose expressionlessness makes them confounding: MONTEVIDEO. It had to be so: unique even in its name.

And here we are, on the axis of all these regions' fickle winds, which unhinge minds and bodies, on this singular margin of the great River: almost a peninsula, as if it wished to move forward in the continent to march in the vanguard. Our geographic position gives us a destiny. And we are consistent with it.

I say, then, be careful to stay in line! And I say further: we can accomplish it all (here I refer to the life-force, which we could call telluric, that gives everything its own features) and *not change what is our own for what is foreign* (which is an unpardonable snobbishness), but, on the contrary, make what is foreign a thing of our own. For I believe that the age of colonialism and of importations (I am referring, above all, to culture) has passed. So away with you, you who, literarily, speak a language other than our own natural, native one (and I don't mean Creole), regardless of whether you write, paint, or compose music! So much the worse for that fellow, if he did not learn Europe's lesson in time, because that time has passed. But if the other fellow, who puts the quaintly "typical" in his music, confidently thinks that that is best, he is deceiving himself: it is worse, it is even more unbearable. Besides, the time for that has also passed. And he didn't notice?

The reality of the current moment is something altogether different. It is made by men who do not sleep, by men who are in the present of things. Tied to life and shaped by it. And for this reason they are the *Uruguayans* of today.

And I was coming to this: *to the Uruguayan women of today and the Uruguayan men of today*. That is, the particular shade or hue that characterizes the things of today. I am not referring here to a European characteristic in things but simply to that which time has hobbled. It is because of this that he who pursues the *typical, looking backward into the past*, is so paralyzed or slowed down; the same may be said of him who pursues what is European, nowadays equally backwards-looking. For what we see today is something more real than all that. It is what raises the spirit of our people, who are not in the past or in the future, but in the present: Uruguayan, from the twentieth century, affirming itself on the foundation of its own personality. And constructing.

Yes, *constructing everything*. Though novelty may have been pursued too quickly before, today, in a slower, more certain rhythm, we will construct more positively. Many things will need to be reconsidered and returned to in order to readjust them.

Now then, the Uruguayan of today should say: we must go towards a positive originality of our own, positive because of its frank naturalness. It should no longer be the work of dreamers or apprentices, but of men conscious of the fact that they are working in a frankly realist manner. And then that same man will say: Down with simulation! Down with theater! Down with everything that has no meaning, that has no logic, no reason to exist, for the time of experiments has passed! Because today we are going towards things that are well defined and concrete. In a word: we wish to construct with art (which is to say, with knowledge) and with our own materials. For we are grownups now.

Things are shifting, and faster than we realize. We didn't notice, but the platform has changed; today's rhythm is rapid. And we, fortunately, are following its beat.

Yes, things are shifting. And this moment is almost not even one of renovation, since it is a time of *construction*, as I have said. And consider the fact that the man who still does not realize it, is working to that end. In every nation there are two factors that establish the axis upon which everything else turns: the *political factor* and the *economic-industrial-commercial factor*. Now then, if we compare the state of things here, now, with what they used to be, we will see that there is an enormous difference. And this difference marks a new conception in things and is what determines the nature of a man with a new mentality: *the Uruguayan of today*.

Let us specify what that difference is, admittedly very briefly. It is the following: the *local* problem exceeds that purpose, becoming a *national problem*, always, naturally, without losing sight of the local. This is what gives the problem a new character. This is why I said before that things were shifting. The perspective that this fact defines is new and of a vastness that was undreamed of. In this way, man must leave his narrow base and emerge into the world.

What, then, is the artist to do? He should do the same: without forgetting what is around him, he should keep the world in his mind. Thus, that which is nearby takes on a new character. It will grow in its meaning; the scale will be larger; the space in which he will have to move will be limitless. He will work on a grandiose whole. This will not only determine a new vision for him, but also so many other new subjects which he could not imagine before. In addition, he will realize that he must elevate the tone. Is it not the case that he is working, from now on, alongside other masters from other lands? He must, therefore, be in tune with them.

The Uruguayan of *today changes with regard to what we have just explained*. Therefore the artist must do so as well, whether he be a musician, a painter, a poet, an architect, or a writer. Everything else is left behind:

like something old that has passed, something that has no influence and cannot join this process, something that, in daily life, is made and unmade every day. The artist of today, who prefers to visit the port (and not because of any interest in the picturesque), now greets the great ships that cross the Atlantic, he pays attention to the cranes, and to all the goods piling up there, and he watches the man who works... and, if you will, he no longer even notices the picturesque glinting of the sun on the surface of the water. He sees the enormous steam chimney, the ladders, the ropes, the winches, the air intakes, and the enormous mass of the ship. He sees the hangars, the letters and numbers, and other signs and the locomotive passing by... He sees all this as something ideal, because he is contemplating *forms and not things*; and their architecture. What does all this mean? It means that the Romantic period of the picturesque has passed and that we stand before the *golden age of the form*. One no longer knows what country he is in, for, without realizing it, he is in the universal. And because of this fact, he will be more Uruguayan than ever. Twentieth-century Uruguayan. Now, from this to actually *constructing*, there is a step to be taken; and he will take it. He will construct with *form* and with *tone*. And then at that moment he will *paint*, and he will have to imagine that what he did before was literature.

And then, he will look at his work: it is universal, but it is from here. Let us leave this for the moment and turn to something else.

We were saying at the beginning that a great School of Art should be erected here. Not on account of its organization, not on account of its luxurious facilities, not on account of the resources at its disposition, not on account of a thousand things of that sort, but *because of its robust life, real and productive*, in response to a *necessity that is also real*. *Necessity* has always been the greatest incentive for art, as with everything. And I use the word "art" in its *loftiest* sense: that of constructing well, of making things well with the rules. And then we realize that *that necessity*, in determining an art (in this case, *plastic*), *as has always been the case in every age and in every country*, is set on the goal of a *decorative* expression. But here "decorative" does not mean ornament; it will be an art, most emphatically, with a *social function*. Which is to say, *an art with an authentic basis: real*.

This is not a naturalistic art (which is always a subjective art, based on personality and fleeting emotion) but rather an art that is tenaciously *linked to the city*: commenting on or singing about its life; placing it in relief; showing it and even guiding it in a sense. And if I have called it *decorative*, it is only so that we may understand each other. For in reality, this art is *monumental* art, flat and two-dimensional, *schematic and synthetic*; an art of grand rhythms that is strongly connected to architecture.

Now then: if we were able with all this to arrive at a *truth*, and not a partial, unilateral truth, but a *total truth*, since in *every sense* we would doubtlessly manage to

endow it with our own particular character, then that which is *of today* will have necessarily to be linked to that which is *of the past*.

Such would be, in my opinion, the School of the South, which should be built on this eastern shore of the River Plate.

If we paint any feature of the city, a street, a park, etc., or a stretch of beach or a corner of the port, giving the work all the realism possible, we will have accomplished very little for the already intense life of the city, its multitude of intellectual, moral, artistic and industrial mechanisms, and also little for the life of the contrary aspects that can be found in the city; and, even more than that, we will have accomplished little with regard to the *idea* that we have of the city's importance. Because through that *fragmentary* medium we will never be able to achieve that, much less give/transmit/offer the concept that we have of the city. Hence the need for a schematic, *symbolic* art. An art that, displaced from the imitative and descriptively naturalistic, corresponds wonderfully to today's spirit of synthesis. It can give us all that within new rhythms. Symbolically, the river, the vibration of the power plant or of the streets, the moral of the people, its geographical location, its desires, its marvelous light, the character of its inhabitants, its games and its art; in short, everything.

Now that we are conscious of the magnitude of this art (whether in a small object or on a wall), with this objective, then, this art must enter the rhythm, that is, not only in the fixed and eternal laws of plastic art, but in the system of proportions, so that, through *measure*, it arrives at unity, which is to say, harmony. Then, every artist (plastic or musical), *independently* but united in fact to the others by virtue of the law imposed by the *Rule of Harmony*, will give our art in its entirety a *unity* that it presently lacks but that it should have, as great art always has in every age and in every part of the world. That is, a style. One that demonstrates a *true understanding of the problems of art* and reflects a *higher level*, one where we should already be.

February, 1935

- 1 Literally, School of the South. [Ed.]
- 2 Here, the term north is used in the sense of North Star, goal, or point of reference. [Ed.]
- 3 The mountain next to bay that is a landmark of the city. [Ed.]

Argentina

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The Frame: A Problem in Contemporary Art

(1944)

Rhod Rothfuss

Originally published in Spanish as Rhod Rothfuss, "El marco: un problema de la plástica actual," *Arturo* 1 (Buenos Aires, summer 1944), n. p.

Motivated by the bourgeois revolution in France in 1879, a strongly naturalistic tendency invaded the arts, especially painting, which became relegated for many years to the role of a photographic machine.

It became necessary for a Cézanne to arise, in the panorama of the plastic arts, with such a painterly conceptualization that he could say, "I have discovered the sun cannot be reproduced, but only represented by something else"; or a Gauguin who wrote, "Primitive art proceeds from the spirit and makes use of nature. The so-called refined art proceeds from the senses and serves nature. Nature is the servant of the former and the master of the latter. She demeans man's spirit by allowing him to adore her. In this way we have fallen into the abominable error of the naturalism that began with the Greeks of Pericles ..." ¹This was necessary so that, slowly, painting could return to its ancient laws, long ago forgotten.

This came true in 1907,² with the appearance of cubism, with which the laws of proportion and of color, the composition, and everything related to technique once again regained their full value in the creation of the painting.

Cubism was succinctly defined by Guillaume Apollinaire³ in *Le Temps* of October 14, 1914, referring to the "geometric aspect of these paintings, in which the artists have sought to restore, with great purity, essential reality." And it is this desire to *express* the reality of things that led painting to ever greater abstraction, passing through futurism and culminating in the last periods of cubism, non-objectivism, neo-plasticism, and also, in its abstract mode, constructivism.

At this moment, when it seems that the artist is at the furthest possible distance from nature, Vicente Huidobro⁴ would say, "Man has never been this close to nature, now that he does not attempt to imitate it in its outward appearances, but rather doing as it does, imitating it in its most profound laws of construction, by creating a whole within the mechanism of the production of new forms."

Yet while the problem of pure creation in the plastic arts was being solved, that solution itself (on account of an inviolable dialectical principle) created another problem that is less pronounced in neo-plasticism and constructivism, because of its orthogonal composition, than in cubism and non-objectivism, which is: the frame.

Cubism and non-objectivism, because of their compositions based either on rhythms created by oblique lines or on triangular or polygonal shapes, created for themselves the problem that a rectangular frame prevents the development, in a plastic sense, of the subject. The painting, therefore, was inevitably reduced to being a fragment.

This was quickly intuited, and certain paintings demonstrate the solutions that were attempted. For example, MAN RAY, LÉGER, BRAQUE, and closer to us, the autumnal cubist Pettoruti,⁵ among others, compose some of their works based on circles, ellipses, or polygons, inscribed within the oblong of the frame. But this is also not a solution, for it is precisely the regularity of those shapes, their uninterrupted, symmetrical contours, that dominates the composition, again cutting it off.

Because of this, the majority of those paintings prolonged the concept of the *window* in naturalistic paintings, giving us only part of the subject, not its totality. A painting with a regular frame leads to a sense of continuity of the object beyond the margins of the painting. This situation only disappears when the frame is structured rigorously according to the composition of the painting.

In other words, when the edge of the canvas is made to play an active role in plastic creation. It is a role it should always play. A painting should be something that begins and ends in itself. Without interruption.

1 Paul Gauguin, *Notes Éparses*.

2 Provided by Guillermo Janneau in ART CUBISTE.

3 Guillaume Apollinaire [Wilhelm Apollinaire de Kostrowitzky] (1880–1918), French poet and creator of the term *surrealism*. Precursor, with his *calligrammes*, of automatic writing and pioneer, with his *idéogrammes*, of what is today referred to as "concrete (or visual) poetry." [Ed.]

4 Vicente Huidobro (1893–1948), Chilean poet linked to various avant-garde movements and the creator of the movement known as creationism, which advocates an autonomous poetic creation whose end lies in itself. [Ed.]

5 Emilio Pettoruti (1892–1971), Argentinian painter linked to several different avant-garde movements. [Ed.]

EL MARCO: UN PROBLEMA DE PLÁSTICA ACTUAL



Motivada por la revolución burguesa del 79 en Francia, una fuerte corriente naturalista invade las artes, especialmente la pintura, a la que por largos años relegará a una condición de máquina fotográfica.

Será necesario que surja un Cézanne, en el panorama plástico, con un concepto tan pictórico que le permitió decir: "He descubierto que el sol es una cosa que no se puede reproducir, pero que se puede representar"; o un Gauguin que escribió: "El arte primitivo procede del espíritu y amplía la naturaleza. El arte que se hace llamar refinado, procede de la sensualidad y sirve a la naturaleza. La naturaleza es la servidora del primero y el amo del segundo. Convirtiéndolo en su servidor, haciéndose adorar por el artista, lo envilece. Así es como hemos caído en el abominable error del naturalismo que comenzó con los griegos de Péricles..." (1), para que, lentamente, la pintura vuelva a sus viejas leyes, por tanto tiempo olvidadas.

Esto se concretará en 1907 (2), con la aparición del cubismo, con el cual cobrarán nuevamente todo su valor en la creación del cuadro, las leyes de proporción, de colorido, la composición, y todo lo relativo a técnica.

El cubismo será definido sucintamente por Guillaume Apollinaire en "Le Temps" del 14 de octubre de 1914, refiriéndose al "Aspecto geométrico de esas pinturas, donde los artistas habían querido restituir, con una gran pureza, la realidad esencial". Y será este deseo de expresar la realidad de las cosas, lo que llevará la pintura a una plástica cada vez más abstracta, pasando por el futurismo, hasta culminar en las últimas épocas del cubismo, no-objetivismo, neo-plasticismo y también, en su modo abstracto, el constructivismo.

(1) Paul Gauguin. — Notes Éparses.

(2) Dado por Guillermo Janneau en ART CUBISTE.

En este momento, cuando más lejos parece que está el artista de la naturaleza, Vicente Huidobro dirá: "Nunca el hombre ha estado más cerca de la naturaleza, que ahora que no trata de imitarla en sus apariencias, sino haciendo como ella, imitándola en lo profundo de sus leyes constructivas, en la realización de un todo dentro del mecanismo de la producción de formas nuevas."

Pero, mientras se solucionaba el problema de la creación plástica, pura, la misma solución (por un principio dialéctico inquebrantable) creaba otro, que se siente menos en el neoplasticismo y en el constructivismo, por su composición ortogonal, que en el cubismo o en el no-objetivismo, y fué: el marco.

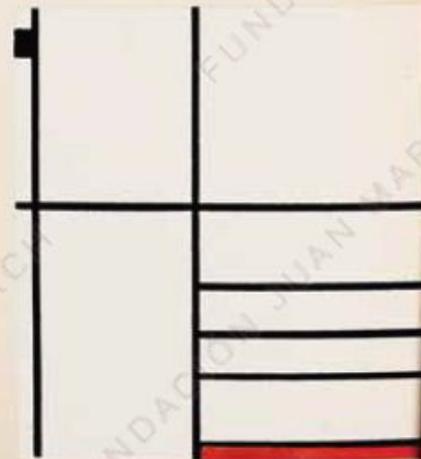
El cubismo y el no-objetivismo, por sus composiciones basadas, ya en ritmos de líneas oblicuas, ya en figuras triangulares o poligonales, se crearon a sí mismos el problema de que un marco rectangular, cortaba el desarrollo plástico del tema. El cuadro, inevitablemente, quedaba reducido a un fragmento.

Pronto se intuye ésto. Y los cuadros muestran las soluciones buscadas. Por ejemplo MAN RAY, LÉGER, BRAQUE y más cerca nuestro, el cubista de otoño Pettoruti, entre otros, componen algunas de sus obras en círculos, elipses o polígonos, que inscriben en el cuadrilongo del marco. Pero esto no es tampoco una solución. Porque, precisamente es lo regular de esas figuras, el contorno ininterrumpido, simétrico, lo que domina la composición, cortándola.

Es por esto que la generalidad de esos cuadros siguieron en aquel concepto de ventana de los cuadros naturalistas, dándonos una parte del tema pero no la totalidad de él. Una pintura con un marco regular hace presentir una continuidad del tema, que sólo desaparece, cuando el marco está rigurosamente estructurado de acuerdo a la composición de la pintura.

Vale decir, cuando se hace jugar al borde de la tela, un papel activo en la creación plástica. Papel que debe tenerlo siempre. Una pintura debe ser algo que empiece y termine en ella misma. Sin solución de continuidad.

R H O D R O T H F U S S



On Concrete Art (1946)

Edgar M. Bayley

Originally published in Spanish as Edgar M. Bayley, "Sobre arte concreto," Orientación (Buenos Aires, February 20, 1946), n. p. Translated from the Spanish version reprinted in Luis Velásquez, comp., Consonancia: La Abstracción Geométrica en Argentina y Venezuela, Años 40 y 50. Caracas: ArtesanoGroup, 2007.

The artists and writers who have joined the concrete art movement started, in formulating their aesthetic, from an awareness of the world and of the means of transforming it.

In every age, artistic style has been related to the organization of the forces of production. Thus, with every economic and social transformation there followed, sooner or later, other transformations of an artistic or spiritual nature.

The era that now begins, a period of reconstruction and of socialism, demands an art in accordance with the material life of the society that is emerging and developing. But this art cannot be based any longer on representational forms, which have been the common denominator for every artistic school and style in the past. This is the case because representation in art is the spiritual image of classist social organizations, those in which the life of the mind, deriving its force from the differentiation of the group or the individual from the rest of the community, imposes on works of art the accessory of representationalism; that is, its confrontation or relationship with objects and processes that are alien to the aesthetic experience.

Present conditions allow us to affirm that the value of a work of art does not reside (nor has it ever resided) in a meaning consisting of anecdote but, on the contrary, in the strength and quality of the inventive act that produces it, in other words, in its power as novelty or its ability to move away from purely emotional values. The novel image has emerged, up to now, as a sign of a reality that is personal, natural, conceptual, etc. (according to the social conditions of the period), but its aesthetic value has not depended on its correspondence with an external reality, but rather on its own nature. That the aesthetic value of a work has to this day been predicated on anecdote is a result, therefore, of the poverty of the means of reproduction, communication, knowledge, etc. Thus, when technical and scientific progress eliminated the existence of the accessory functions of the work of art in society, the modern artist became aware of his specific mission.

This has not implied, however, an evasion of the manifest responsibilities that correspond to the artist in the face of the transformation of the world.

Indeed, modern art—appreciated through the only manifestations that rightly correspond to it, namely, those that are “abstract” and concrete—has been characterized by a constant effort to participate in the world, not by means of a copy, but through the invention of objective realities. Naturally, it is apparent that, from the first manifestations of non-figurative art to this day, a process has been fulfilled. After the first efforts by cubists, still held back by the legacy of abstraction and representationalism, we have now moved on to new stages, no less important themselves, certainly, and without an analysis of which it proves risky to attempt to establish the return to representation. In the latest stages of the evolution of painting, its concrete, inventive tendencies have become all the more clearly pronounced, to the extent that in our times they have come to dominate movements whose impact has been very substantial.

For what was born with the first experiments in non-figurative art was not abstraction or symbolism, concepts that no longer bore fruit, which the newer artists then sought to surpass. Subjective exaltation, the abstract and the symbol had become the typical forms in the Romantic and symbolist schools. If these tendencies persisted in the newer creations, it was as a kind of bad habit or abiding burden, and not in any way as an essential or defining quality. Rather, what was born or, more accurately, what became an awareness in artists and writers, marking new paths different from the hallowed ones from the past, was the inventive function that truly corresponds to the artist. It was not a matter of new modes of expression or of new subjects; what was in crisis was the idea itself of representation in the work of art.

By not understanding this, many critics lamentably confused those works that did indeed respond to the new creative exigencies with those that continued the contrary attitude to realism, that is, escapist subjectivism. They did not distinguish between that which, mysterious and symbolic, desperately exalted evasion and denied the reality of the external world, on the one hand, and, on the other, the new art, eager for objectivity, which aspired to continue, under new conditions, the humanist tradition of that former realism. Furthermore, as if to accentuate the incomprehension, some theorists of the new humanism, spurred by the urgent construction of the world that was being born, established for the development of art the same foundations as individualistic realism. For them, change, adaptation to the new technical and social conditions, should only be a façade. In contrast, for the first concrete realists, social art implied a profound transformation, in no way limited to a superficial change of models. A different society was emerging before their eyes. Old values based on difference were substituted with the values of communion. A human type was approaching his end: one

who, dominated throughout most of his historical development by fear and an aggressive spirit, had required the use of signs in his struggle against the unknown powers that obsessed him.

We see, therefore, that concrete art, unlike surrealism and other decadent movements (to which it is absurd to compare it), exalts the dominion over the immediate reality and the invention—to mankind’s joy and pride—of new realities. It is anti-objective, but not because it scorns objectivity but because it refuses to copy it, to turn works of art into representational fictions, and because it seeks, in contrast, to create new objects.

Thus, concrete art proves to be realist, that is, if its works resist becoming signs for something else. It is objective, inventive, humanistic, and—far from taking pleasure in melancholy individualisms, hermeticisms, or mysterious symbolisms—it affirms the need for a collective art divested of any explicit or hidden representation.

“Art does not imitate itself; it furthers itself,” Léonce Rosenberg has rightly remarked.¹ Just because in earlier times the objective of producing representational art resulted in true invention, there is no reason to think that, when other arts and techniques take over the role of copying and communicating and do so more accurately, the same objective will lead to the same result. Only by virtue of a pigheaded romanticism can one insist any longer on aspiring to reconcile the concrete objectives of propaganda and political education with the diffuse, subjective, and expressionist needs that, in so-called “propaganda art,” conspire against intelligibility and the technical success of the poster, the popular march, poetry expressing collective exaltation, etc. In reality, the applied arts are now developed and have become effective, to the extent that they have cast aside the interferences that, with an “artistic” pretext, sought to distract them from their exclusive content and, also, to the extent that they have managed to take advantage of not only advances in the sciences and industry, but also the technical discoveries of the non-representational art movements.

Concrete art can therefore be defined as a substantial contribution to the liberation of mankind, affirming his command over the world, working against what is mere fiction through the act of invention and through the techniques of propaganda and education, in whose progress he takes part.

1 Léonce Rosenberg (1879–1947), French art collector and founder of the Parisian galleries Haute Époque and l’Effort Modern. [Ed.]

White Manifesto

(1946)

Lucio Fontana and students

Originally published in Spanish as Bernardo Arias, Horacio Cazeneuve, Marcos Fridman, Pablo Arias, Rodolfo Burgos, Enrique Benito, César Bernal, Luis Coll, Alfredo Hansen, and Jorge Rocamonte, "Manifiesto blanco" (1946). Translated from the original Spanish, making reference to the English version translated by Guido Ballo in Kristin Stiles and Peter Selz, eds., *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings* (Berkeley / Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 48–51.

The transformations of the material means of life have determined man's psychic states throughout history.

The system that has directed civilization from its origins is in transformation.

Its place is progressively being taken by a system that is opposed to it in essence and in all its forms. All of the life conditions of society and of every individual will be transformed. Each individual will live a life based on an integrated organization of labor.

The boundless discoveries of science are gravitating toward this new organization of life.

The discovery of new physical forces, the control of matter and space, will gradually impose new conditions that have not been known previously to man at any point in history. The application of these discoveries to all aspects of life will produce a change in the nature of man. Man will take on a different psychic structure.

We are living in the mechanical age.

Painted cardboard and rigid plaster no longer have a place.

From the point at which the known forms of art were discovered, each at a different moment in history, an analytical process took place within each form of art. Each of them developed organizing systems, independent of the others.

All the possibilities were discovered and developed; everything that could be expressed was expressed.

Identical conditions of spirit were expressed in music, in architecture, in poetry. Man divided his energies in different manifestations in response to the need of knowledge.

The practice of idealism developed when existence could not be explained in a concrete manner.

The mechanisms of nature were unknown. The processes of the mind were known. Everything resided in the inherent possibilities of the mind. Knowledge consisted in tangled speculations that very seldom reached any kind of truth.

The plastic arts consisted in ideal representations of known forms, images to which reality was ideally attributed. The spectator imagined an object behind another; he imagined the difference between the muscles and the clothes represented.

Today, experimental knowledge replaces imaginative knowledge. We are aware of a world that exists and is self-explanatory, and cannot be modified by our ideas.

We need an art that is valid on its own terms. In which the idea that we may have of it does not intervene.

The materialism established in every man's consciousness demands an art in possession of values of its own, far removed from representation, which today is a farce. We, the men of this century, forged in materialism, have become insensitive when faced with the representation of known forms and the narration of constantly repeated experiences. Abstraction was conceived, and it was gradually reached through deformation.

WE ARE CONTINUING THE EVOLUTION OF ART

Art is now in a period of latency. There is a force that man is incapable of manifesting. We are expressing it in literary form in this manifesto.

Therefore, we ask all of the world's men of science, who know that art is a vital necessity of our species, to direct a part of their research toward the discovery of that luminous and malleable substance and toward the creation of instruments capable of producing sounds that will allow for the development of four-dimensional art.

We will supply the experimenters with the necessary documentation.



Ideas cannot be rejected. Their seeds are found in society, and are then given expression by thinkers and artists.

All things emerge out of necessity and have value in their time.

The subconscious, that magnificent receptacle where all the images that the intellect perceives are stored, adopts the essence and the form of those images, and houses the notions that inform man's nature. Thus, when the objective world is transformed, what the subconscious assimilates is also transformed, which produces changes in man's form of thinking and conceiving.

The historical legacy inherited from the earlier states of civilization and the adaptation to the new conditions of life comes about by means of that function of the subconscious. The subconscious molds the individual; it integrates him and transforms him. All artistic concepts come from the subconscious.

The plastic arts developed based on the forms of nature. The manifestations of the subconscious fully adapted themselves to them because of the idealist conception of existence.

Materialist consciousness, that is, the need for clearly demonstrable things, requires that the forms of art arise directly from the individual, and that all adaptation to natural forms be suppressed.

An art based on forms created by the subconscious, balanced by reason, constitutes a true expression of the being and a synthesis of the historical moment.

The position of rationalist artists is false. In their effort to impose rationality and to deny the function of the subconscious, they only succeed in making its presence less visible. In each and every one of their works, we note that this faculty has its part.

Reason does not create. In the creation of forms, its function is subordinate to that of the subconscious.

In every one of his activities, man functions with the totality of his faculties. The free development of all of them is a fundamental condition in the creation and interpretation of the new art. Analysis and synthesis, meditation and spontaneity, construction and sensation are values that converge for their integration in a functional unity. And its development through experience is the only path that leads to a complete manifestation of man's being.

Society suppresses the separation of its forces and integrates them into a single, more powerful force. Modern science is based on the progressive unification of its various branches.

Humanity integrates its values *and* its knowledge. It is a movement that is deeply rooted in history, having developed over various centuries.

This new state of consciousness gives rise to an integral art in which the being functions and manifests itself in its totality.

After several centuries of analytical artistic development, the moment of synthesis has arrived. Before, separation was necessary. Today it represents a disintegration of the conceived unity.

We conceive of synthesis as a sum of physical elements: color, sound, movement, time, space, integrating a psycho-physical unity. Color, the element of space; sound, the element of time; and movement, which develops in time and space, are the fundamental forms of the new art that contains the four dimensions of existence. Time and space.

The new art requires the application of all of man's energies in creation and interpretation. The being manifests itself integrally, with the plenitude of its vitality.

The new art takes its elements from nature.

Existence, nature, and matter form a perfect unity. They develop in time and space.

Change is an essential condition of existence.

Movement, the property of evolving and developing, is the basic condition of matter. Matter exists in movement and only in movement. Its development is eternal. In nature, color and sound are found only as part of matter.

The simultaneous movement of the phenomena of matter, color, and sound makes up the new art.

Volumes of color, developing in space, adopting successive forms. Sound is to be produced by means as yet unknown. Musical instruments do not respond to the need for great sonorities nor do they produce sensations of sufficient breadth.

Voluminous changing forms are to be constructed by means of some mobile plastic substance.

Arranged in space, they are to act in synchronic form and to integrate dynamic images.

We thus exalt nature in all of its essence.

Matter in movement manifests its total and eternal existence, developing in time and space, and adopting different states of existence as it mutates.

We conceive of man in his reencounter with nature in terms of his need to connect himself to nature in order to rediscover the use of his original values. We seek a thorough understanding of the primary values of existence; for this reason, we infuse art with the substantial values of nature.

We present the substance, not the accidents. We do not represent man, or the other animals, or the other forms. These are manifestations of nature, mutable in time, which change and disappear according to the succession of phenomena. Its physical and psychical conditions are subject to matter and its evolution. We direct our attention to matter and its evolution, the generative sources of existence.

We take the energy that belongs to matter, its need to exist and develop.

We posit an art that is free of all aesthetic artifice. We practice what is natural to man, what is true in him.

We reject the aesthetic falsehoods invented by speculative art.

We place ourselves near nature, closer than art has ever been in its entire history.

The love of nature does not impel us to copy it. The feeling of beauty that attracts us to the form of a plant or a bird, or the sexual feeling that attracts us to the body of a woman, develops and works in each man according to his sensibility. We reject the particular emotions that certain forms produce in us. Our intention is, in synthesis, to deal with all the experiences of man, which, united with the function of his natural conditions, constitute a manifestation of the being itself.

We take as our starting point the first artistic experiences. The prehistoric men who perceived for the first time a sound produced by striking a hollow body felt enthralled by its rhythmic combinations. Driven by the suggestive force of the beat, they must have danced to the point of intoxication. Everything was sensation in primitive men. Sensation in the face of unknown nature, musical sensations, the sensation of rhythm. Our aim is to develop that original condition of man.

But this new state does not respond to the demands of modern man.

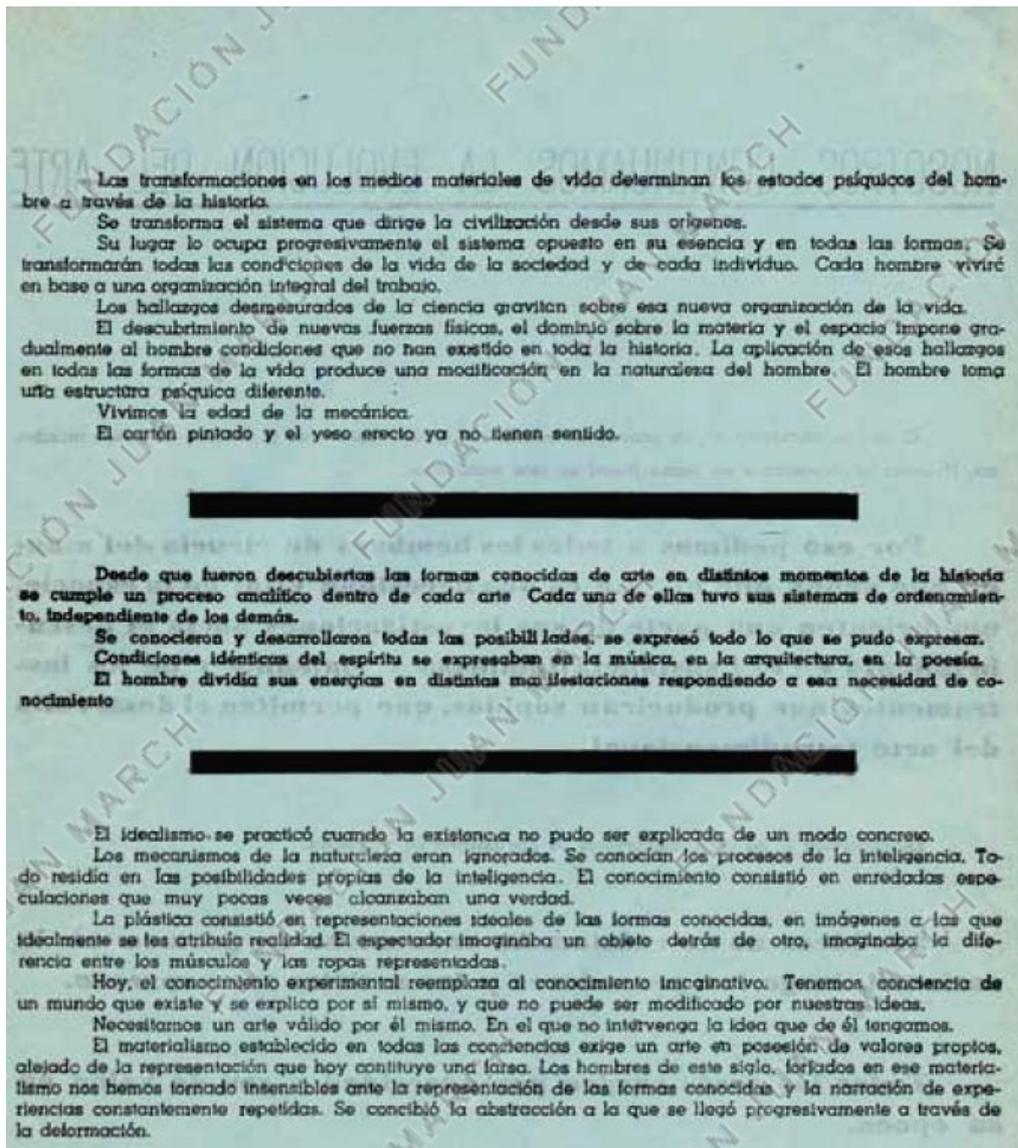
What is needed is a change in both essence and form. What is needed is the supersession of painting, of sculpture, of poetry, of music. It is necessary to have an art that is in greater harmony with the demands of the new spirit.

The fundamental conditions of modern art can be traced back to the 13th century, when the representation of space first began. The great masters who appeared one after the other gave ever new impulse to this tendency. In the centuries that followed, space was represented with ever greater fullness.

The Baroque artists effected a qualitative change in this direction: they represented space with a grandiosity yet unsurpassed, and they enriched the plastic arts with the notion of time. Their figures appear to leave the picture plane and to continue the represented movements outward into space.

This came about as a consequence of the concept of existence that man was in the process of developing. For the first time in history, the physics of that age explained nature in terms of dynamics. As a foundation for the understanding of the universe, it was determined that movement is a condition immanent in matter.

At that point in the process of evolution, the need for movement was so great that the plastic arts could not match it. From there, the process was taken over by music. Painting and sculpture entered into neo-classicism, a true bog in the history of art, and they were overshadowed by what was the true art of the age. Once time was conquered, the need for movement was plainly manifest. Its progressive liberation from the rules gave music an ever-greater dynamism (Bach, Mozart, Beethoven). Art continued to develop in the direction of movement.



Music maintained its hegemony for two centuries, and from the time of impressionism onward it developed along lines parallel to those of the plastic arts. SINCE THEN, THE EVOLUTION OF MAN HAS BEEN A MARCH TOWARD MOVEMENT AS IT DEVELOPS IN TIME AND SPACE. IN PAINTING, THOSE ELEMENTS THAT WERE NOT CONDUCIVE TO THE IMPRESSION OF DYNAMISM WERE GRADUALLY ELIMINATED.

The impressionists sacrificed drawing and composition. Other elements were suppressed in futurism, and still others lost their importance and were subordinated to sensation. Futurism adopted movement as its sole principle and its only finality. The cubists denied that their painting was dynamic; but the essence of cubism is the vision of nature in movement.

When music and the plastic arts unified in their development in impressionism, music came to be based on plastic sensations, while painting seemed to dissolve into an atmosphere of sound. In the majority of

Rodin's works, the volumes seem to turn in this same ambience of sound. His conception is essentially dynamic and many times exaggerates movement. In recent times, has not the "form" of sound been intuited (Schoenberg)?¹ Or the superimposition or correlation of "sonorial planes" (Scriabin)?² The similarity between the forms of Stravinsky [sic]³ and the planimetry of the cubists is obvious. Modern art found itself in a moment of transition in which it was necessary to break with the art of the past in order to make way for new concepts. This state of affairs, seen synthetically, is the passage from stasis to dynamism. Finding itself in the middle of this transition, art could not free itself completely from the legacy of the Renaissance. It employed the same materials and the same disciplines for the expression of a completely transformed sensibility. The ancient elements were employed in a contrary sense. They were opposed forces, clashing with each other. The familiar and the unknown, the future and the past. For this rea-

son, tendencies proliferated, resting on opposing values and pursuing apparently different objectives. We are taking up that experience and projecting it toward a clearly visible future.

Whether or not they were consciously searching, modern artists could not attain that future. They did not have at their disposal the necessary technical means to give movement to bodies. They only did so in an illusory way, representing it by conventional means.

It has been determined, then, that there is a need for new technical materials to reach that objective. This circumstance, together with the developments in mechanics has produced the cinema, and its triumph is one more testimony of the spirit's orientation toward the dynamic.

MAN HAS EXHAUSTED PICTORIAL AND SCULPTURAL FORMS. THESE EXPERIENCES AND THEIR UNBEARABLE REPETITIONS BEAR WITNESS TO THE FACT THAT THESE ARTS HAVE BEEN LANGUISHING IN VALUES THAT ARE ALIEN TO OUR CIVILIZATION, AND THAT CANNOT BE FURTHER DEVELOPED IN THE FUTURE.

The quiet life has disappeared. The notion of speed is a constant in human life.

The artistic era of paints and paralytic forms has reached its end. Man is becoming more and more insensitive to fixed images that bear no signs of vitality. The immobile images of times past no longer satisfy the needs of the new man, formed in the necessity of action, in coexistence with machines that impose upon him a constant dynamism. The aesthetics of organic movement has replaced the exhausted aesthetic of stationary forms.

We invoke this change that has taken place in the nature of man, both morally and psychically, and in every human relationship and activity, **and we abandon the use of the known forms of art in order to advance toward the development of an art based on the unity of time and space.**

Bernardo Arias – Horacio Cazeneuve
Marcos Fridman

Pablo Arias – Rodolfo Burgos – Enrique Benito – César Bernal – Luis Coll – Alfredo Hansen – Jorge Rocamonte

COLOR SOUND MOVEMENT

- 1 Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951), Austrian composer and painter of Jewish origin, emigrant to the United States and creator of dodecaphony, or the twelve-tone technique. [Ed.]
- 2 Alexander Scriabin (1872–1915), Russian composer and pianist. [Ed.]
- 3 Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), Russian composer and conductor, a great innovator in classical ballet. [Ed.]

Madí Manifesto ¹

Buenos Aires (1946)

Gyula Kosice

Originally published in Spanish as Gyula Kosice, "Manifiesto Madí," *Manifiesto de la Escuela* (Buenos Aires 1946), and published anew in *Arte Madí Universal* 0 (Buenos Aires 1947), n. p.

By Madí Art² we mean the organization of the elements inherent to each art in their continuity.

This involves presence, mobile dynamic organization, development of proper subject matter, playfulness, and plurality as absolute values, consequently annulling any interference of the phenomena of expression, representation, and signification.

Madí drawing³ is an arrangement of points and lines on a surface.

Madí painting, color and two-dimensionality. Cut-away and irregular frame, flat surface and curved or concave surface. Articulated planes with a linear, revolving, and shifting movement.

Madí sculpture, three-dimensionality, no color. Total form and solids with contour and articulated, revolving, shifting movements, etc.

Madí architecture, mobile and shifting environment and form.

Madí music, inscription of sounds into the golden section.

Madí poetry, invented sentences, concepts and images not translatable through any medium other than language. Pure idea process.

Madí theater, mobile sets, invented dialogue.

Madí novel and tale, characters and action not confined to a particular place or time, or in a place and time that are completely invented.

Madí dance, body and motion confined to a measured space, without music.

In the countries that have reached the culmination of their industrial development, the old state of things, of bourgeois realism, almost completely disappears. In them, naturalism beats a retreat and defends itself weakly.

It is at this point that abstraction—essentially expressive and romantic—occupies naturalism's place. This tendency includes⁸ all figurative art schools, from cubism to surrealism. These schools have responded to the

ideological needs of their time, and their achievements are invaluable contributions to the solution of the cultural problems posed in our time.⁹ Nevertheless, they must be viewed as historically obsolete.¹⁰ On the other hand, their insistence on things "extrinsic" to their inherent qualities is a movement backwards in the service of naturalism and against the true constructive spirit that is spreading¹¹ in every country and culture under the names of expressionism, surrealism, constructivism, etc.

With the "CONCRETE"—which is, in reality, a younger shoot of that abstractionist spirit—the great period of Non-Figurative Art begins, in which the artist, using the element and its respective continuum, creates his work in all its purity, without hybridizations or objects alien to its nature. But in the CONCRETE there has been a lack of universality and consistency in its organization. Artists have fallen into deep and insurmountable contradictions. The great voids and taboos of art from the past were retained¹² in painting, sculpture, poetry, etc., which were, respectively: superimposition, the rectangular frame, athematism¹³, stasis, and reference¹⁴ between volume and surrounding space; cognitively graspable¹⁵ propositions that can be translated graphically. As a result, concrete art has not been able to seriously oppose, by means of an organic theory and a disciplined practice, the intuitionist movements which, like surrealism, have conquered the entire world. Hence the triumph (despite all the unfavorable conditions) of instinctive impulses over thought; of intuition over consciousness; of the revelation of the subconscious over cold analysis, the rigorous study and examination on the part of the creator of the laws of the object to be constructed; of symbolism, hermetism, and magic over reality; of metaphysics over experience.

With regard to the theory and understanding of art, subjective, idealistic, and reactionary description prevails.

In sum, art before Madí was:

A scholastic, idealistic historicism.

An irrational conception.

An academic technique.

A unilateral, static, false composition.

A work lacking true essentiality.

A consciousness paralyzed by its unsolvable contradictions, impervious to the permanent renewal of technique and style.

Madí takes a stand against all this, confirming man's firm, consuming desire to invent and construct objects within the absolute values of the eternal, together with humanity in its struggle to construct a new, classless society that will liberate energy and rule over space and time in all directions, and matter to its logical conclusion.

Without fundamental descriptions referring to the totality of its organization, it is impossible to construct

an object or make it enter the constant order of creation. Thus the concept of invention can be defined in the field of technique and the concept of creation delineated as a fully defined essence.

For Madism, invention is a surmountable internal "method," and creation an unchangeable totality. Madí, therefore, INVENTS AND CREATES.

From the MANIFESTO OF THE SCHOOL — 1946
Buenos Aires

- 1 The text translated here is based on the transcription of the Spanish text published in 1946 and signed by Gyula Kosice. A year later, in 1947, this same text (with minor variants, indicated in the notes when they affect the translation or are otherwise relevant) was published unsigned in issue no. 0 of the magazine *Arte Madí Universal*. [Ed.]
- 2 In capitals up to this point in the version in *Arte Madí Universal*, which adds "(Nemisorismo)". In the earlier edition there is a blank space here. [Ed.]
- 3 In the *Arte Madí Universal* version, "drawing," "painting," "sculpture," etc. are printed in bold. [Ed.]
- 4 "Madic" (*mádica*) in the *Madí Nemisor* version. [Ed.]
- 5 "Madist" (*madista*) in the *Arte Madí Universal* version. [Ed.]
- 6 "Madist" (*madista*) in the *Arte Madí Universal* version. [Ed.]
- 7 "totally" (*totalmente*) in the *Arte Madí Universal* version. [Ed.]
- 8 "involved" (*involucradas*) in the *Arte Madí Universal* version. [Ed.]
- 9 "the problems posed to the culture of our time" in the *Arte Madí Universal* version. [Ed.]
- 10 "must be considered passé" in the *Arte Madí Universal* version. [Ed.]
- 11 "which has spread throughout every country..." in the *Madí Nemisor* version [Ed.]
- 12 "were preserved as an essence in painting, sculpture, poetry, etc.," in the *Arte Madí Universal* version [Ed.]
- 13 "atematismo plástico" in the original. [Trans.]
- 14 "interference" (*interferencia*) in the *Arte Madí Universal* version. [Ed.]
- 15 "gnoseológicas" in the original. [Trans.]

MANIFIESTO MADI

Se reconocerá por **Arte Madi**

la organización de elementos propios de cada arte en su continuo.

En ello está contenida la presencia, la ordenación dinámica móvil, el desarrollo del tema propio, la ludicidad y pluralidad como valores absolutos, quedando por lo tanto abolida toda ingerencia de los fenómenos de expresión, representación y significación.

El dibujo madi es una disposición de puntos y líneas sobre una superficie.

La pintura madi, color y bidimensionalidad. Marco recortado e irregular, superficie plana y superficie curva cóncava. Planos articulados, con movimiento lineal, rotativo y de traslación.

La escultura madi, tridimensionalidad, no color. Forma total y sólidos con ámbito, con movimiento de articulación, rotación, traslación, etcétera.

La arquitectura madi, ambiente y formas móviles, desplazables.

La música madi, inscripción de sonidos en la sección áurea.

La poesía madi, proposición inventada, conceptos e imágenes no traducibles por otro medio que no sea el lenguaje. Sucesos conceptuales puros.

Teatro madi, escenografía móvil, diálogo inventado.

La novela y cuento madi, personajes y acción sin lugar ni tiempo localizados o en lugar y tiempo totalmente inventados.

La danza madi, cuerpo y movimientos circunscritos a un ambiente medido, sin música.

En los países que alcanzaron la etapa culminante de su desarrollo industrial el viejo estado de cosas del realismo burgués desapareció casi por completo; en ellos el naturalismo se bate en retirada y se defiende muy débilmente.

Es entonces cuando la abstracción, esencialmente expresiva, romántica, ocupa su lugar. En este orden están incluidas las escuelas de arte figurativo, desde el cubismo hasta el surrealismo. Tales escuelas han respondido a necesidades ideológicas de la época y sus realizaciones son aportes inestimables para la solución de los problemas culturales planteados en nuestros días. No obstante ello, su tiempo histórico debe considerarse como perteneciente al pasado. Por otro lado, su insistencia en el tema "exterior" a sus cualidades propias es un retroceso al servicio del naturalismo contra el verdadero espíritu constructivo extendido por todos los países y culturas, como es el caso del expresionismo, surrealismo, constructivismo, etcétera.

Con lo CONCRETO -que, en realidad, es un gajo más joven de ese espíritu abstraccionista- se inicia el gran período del Arte No Figurativo donde el artista, sirviéndose del elemento y su respectivo continuo, crea la obra en toda su pureza, sin hibridaciones y objetos extraños a su esencia. Pero en lo CONCRETO hubo falta de universalidad y consecuencia de organización. Se cayó en hondas e insalvables contradicciones. Se conservaron los grandes vicios y tabúes del arte del pasado en la pintura, escultura, poesía, etc., respectivamente superposición, marco rectangular, atomismo plástico; lo estático, la referencia entre volumen y ámbito; proposiciones e imágenes gnoseológicas y traducibles gráficamente. La consecuencia de ello fue que el arte concreto no pudo oponerse seriamente, por intermedio de una teoría orgánica y pedagógica disciplinaria, a los movimientos intuicionistas que, como el surrealismo, han ganado para sí todo el universo. De ahí el triunfo, a pesar de todas las condiciones en contrario de los impulsos instintivos contra la reflexión; de la intuición contra la conciencia; de la revelación del subconsciente contra el análisis frío, el estudio y la detención rigurosa del creador ante las leyes del objeto a construir; del simbolismo, de lo hermético, de la magia contra la realidad; de la metafísica contra la experiencia.

En cuanto a la teoría y conocimiento del arte, campea en ellos la descripción subjetiva, idealista, reaccionaria.

Resumiendo, el arte antes de madi:

Un historicismo escolástico, idealista.

Una concepción irracional.

Una técnica académica.

Una composición unilateral, estática, falsa.

Una obra carente de verdadera esencialidad.

Una conciencia paralizada por sus contradicciones sin solución; imperecedera a la renovación permanente de la técnica y del estilo.

Contra todo ello se alza madi, confirmando el deseo feroz, abasurbante del hombre de inventar y construir objetos dentro de los valores absolutos de lo eterno, junto a la humanidad en su lucha por la construcción de una nueva sociedad sin clases, que libere la energía y domine el espacio y el tiempo en todos sus sentidos y la materia hasta sus últimas consecuencias.

Sin descripciones fundamentales referentes a la totalidad de la organización no es posible construir el objeto ni hacerlo penetrar en el orden constante de la creación. En así como el concepto invención queda definido en el campo de la técnica y el de creación como una esencia definida totalmente.

Para el madismo, la invención es un "módelo" interno, superable, y la creación una totalidad inamovible. Madi, por lo tanto, INVENTA Y CREA.



KOSICE

Del MANIFIESTO DE LA ESCUELA - 1948

Buenos Aires

GYULA KOSICE

Inventionist Manifesto

Buenos Aires (1946)

Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción

Originally published in Spanish as an untitled text ["Manifiesto invencionista"] in the catalogue to the *Primera Exposición de la Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción* at Salón Peuser, Buenos Aires, March 18–April 3, 1946, n. p. This translation is based on the edition of the text in Luis Velásquez, comp., *Consonancia: La Abstracción Geométrica en Argentina y Venezuela, Años 40 y 50*. Caracas: ArtesanoGroup, 2007.

The age of representational fiction in art has come to an end. Man is less and less sensitive to illusory images. That is to say, he is progressing in his sense of integration in the world. The old phantasmagorias no longer satisfy the aesthetic appetite of the new man, formed in a reality that demands of him his total presence, without reservations.

The prehistory of the human spirit is thus brought to a close.

The scientific aesthetic will replace the age-old speculative and idealist aesthetic. Considerations revolving around the nature of Beauty no longer have any reason to be. The metaphysics of the Beautiful has died of exhaustion. The physics of Beauty now prevails.

There is nothing esoteric in art; those who presume to be "initiates" are liars.

Representational art shows static "realities," frozen in place by abstract means. For all representational art has always been abstract. Only because of an idealist misunderstanding did non-representational aesthetic experiences come to be called "abstract." In truth, whether or not there was any awareness of the fact, through these experiences, we have followed a path leading away from abstraction; the result, an exaltation of the concrete values of painting, prove this conclusion irrefutably. The struggle waged by so-called abstract art is, at its heart, a struggle for concrete invention.

Representational art tends to dampen the cognitive energy of man, distracting him from his own powers.

The raw material of representational art has always been illusion.

The illusion of space.

The illusion of expression.

The illusion of reality.

The illusion of movement.

A formidable mirage from which man has always come away disappointed and impaired.

Concrete art, in contrast, exalts Being, for that is what it puts into practice.

An art that is an act; it generates the will to act.

A presentational art, versus representational art.

For a poem or a painting do not serve to justify a renunciation of action, but, on the contrary, they help to situate man in the world. We concrete artists are not above any struggle. We are in the midst of all of them. At the front line.

We are against art as a support for difference. In favor of an art that serves, from within its own domain, the new communion rising up in the world.

We practice a joyous technique. Only exhausted techniques nourish themselves on sadness, resentment, and secrets.

For inventive jubilation! Against the nefarious existentialist or romantic moth. Against the sub-poets of the

little wound and the little intimate drama. Against all elitist art. For a collective art.

"Kill optics," the surrealists have said, the last of the representationalist Mohicans. EXALT OPTICS, we say.

This is fundamental: to surround man with real things, not phantoms.

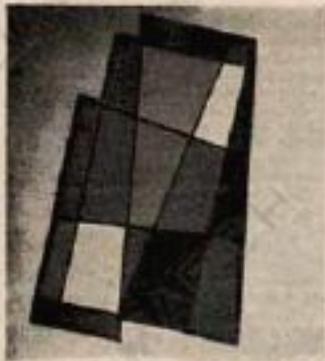
Concrete art accustoms man to a direct relationship with things and not with the fiction of things.

To a precise aesthetics, a precise technique. The aesthetic function versus "good taste." The white function.

NEITHER SEARCHING NOR FINDING: INVENTING.

Edgar Bayley, Antonio Caraduje, Simón Contreras, Manuel O. Espinosa, Claudio Girola, Alfredo Hlito, Enio Iommi, Obdulio Landi¹, Rafael Lozza, Raúl Lozza, R. V. D. Lozza, Tomás Maldonado, Alberto Molenberg, Primaldo Mónaco, Oscar Núñez, Lidy Prati, Jorge Souza, Matilde Werbin

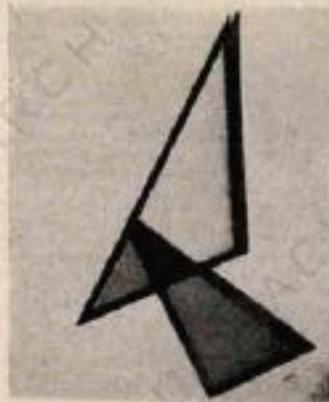
1 Obdulio Landi's name does not appear in some of the versions of the Manifesto. [Ed.]



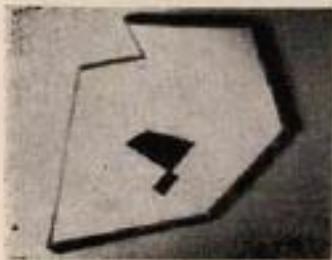
Jorge Souza



Prímido Manaco



Raúl Lozza



Tomas Maldonado



Manuel Espinosa

MANIFIESTO INVENCIONISTA¹⁾

La era artística de la ficción representativa llega a su fin. El hombre se torna de más en más humilde a las exigencias del mundo. En decir, progresa en el sentido de su integración en el mundo. Las antiguas fantasmas se matan en las aperturas estéticas del hombre nuevo, formado en una realidad que ha elegido de sí en presencia total, sus trazos.

No estancará así la proclividad del espíritu humano. La estética científica reconstruirá a la ultramaría estética especulativa e idealista. Las consideraciones en torno a la existencia de lo bello en su propia razón de ser. La metafísica de lo bello ha muerto por agotamiento. Se impone ahora la física de la belleza. No hay nada más que en el arte; los que se pretenden "inventar" son unos laberintos.

El arte representativo muestra "realidades" estéticas, abstractamente frenadas. Y es que todo el arte representativo ha sido abstracto. Sólo por un malentendido idealista se dio en llamar abstractas a las experiencias estéticas no representativas. En verdad, a través de estas experiencias, hubiere o no conciencia de ellas, se ha marchado en un sentido opuesto al de la abstracción; sus resultados, que han sido una exaltación de los valores concretos de la pintura, lo prueban de un modo irremisible. La batalla librada por el arte llamado abstracto en, en el fondo, la batalla por la invención concreta.

El arte representativo tiende a amortiguar la energía cognoscitiva del hombre, a distorsión de su propia potencia.

La materia prima del arte representativo ha sido siempre la ilusión. Ilusión de espacio. Ilusión de expresión. Ilusión de realidad. Ilusión de movimiento. Fossilizable espejismo del cual el hombre ha retornado siempre decaído y debilitado.

El arte concreto, en cambio, exalta el ser, pues la practica. Arte de acción; genera la voluntad del acto.

Que un poema o una pintura no sirvan para justificar una renuncia a la acción, sino que, por el contrario, contribuyan a colocar al hombre en el mundo. Los artistas concretos no estamos por encima de ninguna conciencia. Estamos en todas las conciencias. Y en primera línea.

No más el arte como soporte de la diferencia. Por un arte que obra, desde su propia esfera, a la nueva conciencia que se recoge en el mundo.

Practicamos la técnica aliger. Sólo los ideales agotados se nutren de la técnica, del instrumentalismo y de la conformidad.

Por el hecho inventivo. Contra la nefanda política existencialista o romántica. Contra las subterfugos de la técnica. Hacia y del momento drama latente. Contra todo arte de élites. Por un arte colectivo. "Matar la técnica", han dicho los surrealistas. Los mismos nosotros, en la representación, EXALTAR LA OPTICA, declinamos nosotros. En fundamental; volver al hombre de cosas reales y no de fantasmas.

El arte concreto habilita al hombre a la relación directa con las cosas y no con las ficciones de las cosas.

A una estética pasiva, una estética activa. La función estética reedifica el "buen gusto". La función técnica.

NI BUSCAR NI ENCONTRAR: INTENTAR.

Edgar Pacheco, Antonio Casado, Simón Cuatrecasas, Manuel H. Kurling, Alfredo Bello, Elio Luzzati, Eugenio Luzzi, Raúl Lozza, R. V. D. Lopez Torres Maldonado, Alberto Stenberg, Prímido Manaco, Oscar Núñez, Lily Prati, Jorge Souza, María de Weis.

¹⁾ Manifiesto publicado con motivo de nuestra última exposición, realizada en el Salón Ponce en Marzo de 1940.

Perceptist Manifesto

Buenos Aires (1949)

Raúl Lozza

Originally published in Spanish as Raúl Lozza, "Manifiesto perceptista," in the catalogue of the *Primera Exposición de pintura perceptista*, Galería de Arte Van Riel, Buenos Aires, October 31, 1949, n. p. This translation is based on the edition of the text reprinted in Luis Velásquez, comp., *Consonancia: La Abstracción Geométrica en Argentina y Venezuela*, Años 40 y 50. Caracas: ArtesanoGroup, 2007

in the face of the decadence and negative spirit that now engages the entire world of representation and of interpretation in figurative art, **perceptism** instills in the viewer a dynamic attitude toward the action and exaltation of his own active faculties; it creates new conditions for aesthetic vision and emotion, surmounting, in the act of artistic contemplation, the old temporal process imposed on visual perception, a process which entails the subjugation both of man's creative faculties as well as of the planes and relationships in the reality of art itself.

in my book on color i have already pointed out that, for an art based on space, it is necessary to exalt objectively the sensation of visual perception by means of the structure of the perceptive material, which consists in achieving, through the knowledge that provides us with the totality of our sensations as well as our mental power, **a visual objectivity**.

in figurative painting, the visible mediums that condition the structure do not subsist on the inherent qualities of color and form, but rather the represented object, whose three-dimensionality is known to us from general experience, plays the role of **weight** and **equilibrium**.

consequently, and to the extent to which it abstracted itself from representing the familiar objects of the world around us, art confronted a new problem **bringing together** those material elements of painting by means of an intuition of their values.

perceptism surpasses that intuitive stage, which still exists in abstract and concrete painting, and it suppresses the dualism between color and form: in revolutionizing the old norms, it creates a new realist concept of functional structure; in overcoming the old contradiction of **form** and **content**, it resorts to the dialectical method that recognizes the process of material elements itself.

the idealists have persisted in unifying **form** and **content** in figurative art, without going beyond representational forms, symbols, or the plastic anecdote expressed on a plastic background, but they have not managed to reconcile the irreconcilable. in my notion of art and in my artistic practice, **form** and **content** constitute a single, real fact, indivisible, created by the visible artistic material in its very process of creation and invention.

an art of imitation, and not of transformation, does not deserve any longer to be called art.

perceptism is not complemented with the medium, but rather propels its development; it is not the product of the medium, but rather it is conditioned by its power of renewal.

with the new concept of structure and the degree of perception of the plastic values of relationships, i have not discovered the philosophers' stone of art; rather, this all signifies the practical reality of an objective and materialist philosophy of aesthetics. technique, inseparably identified with the very process of the aesthetic object's creation, has ceased to construct a rigid, abstract, and purist norm, despite a supposed content, such that it engages an entire attitude and an entire process of creative consciousness.

because of that, painting's refuge in a geometric and mathematical idealism is nothing but its integral connection to its historical reality and to the unambiguous, unmistakable nature of its social function, as a revolutionary fact and as a dialectical process of the material elements of creation.

perceptism is not an improvised art, an art of the imagination, but one of knowledge, for the image is also an object, whose plastic objectification would signify a representation. overcoming all lingering flavor of the

prehistoric, the new painting stands firmly against academicism and against the new **neo-realist** academics.

against the platonic purism that accentuates the superficiality and improvisation of a metaphysical painting erroneously based on geometric and mathematical elements.

against the **snobs** that collect like parasites around a paranoid, intimate, salon-art that sustains them.

against anything that smacks of individualist interpretation, whose visual result, a sign of mediocrity and decadence, marks the end of the representational era.

painting, like all art, must obey a structure, yet this structure can no longer be reduced to the superficial conditioning of images or signs, but must construct the very product of a process, that of the visible material itself, recognized in practice as reality.

the one attitude, in art, is a paradox: it is unrelated to transformation or revolution of any sort in the practical field of artistic creation and invention, because it lacks an objective structure. in spiritual activity, the only attitude is a fallacy; it makes clear the impotence of the intellectual who evades a concrete position in a socially revolutionary milieu.

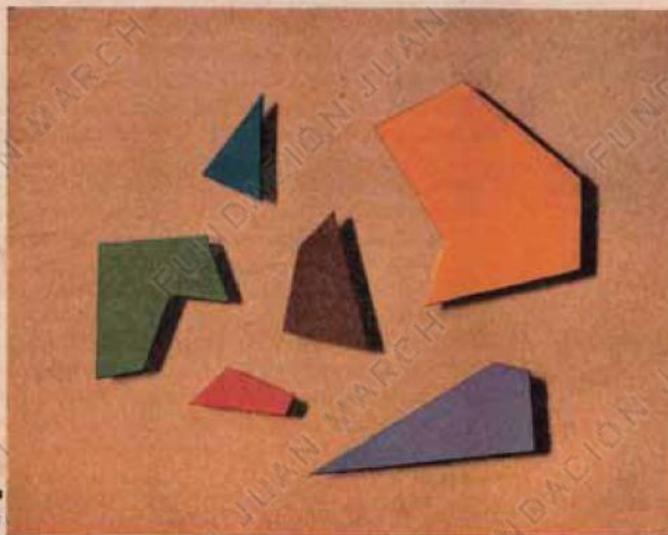
thus, **perceptism** reveals itself to be the highest and most advanced stage in painting. it inaugurates a new era in art and differs from all the other abstract and concrete schools in the fundamental fact that it has for the first time achieved the reality of the **color-plane**, a new structural concept consubstantial with the practical process of the visible means of creation and the surmounting of the contradictions between form and content, the *raison d'être* of representational art and the nightmare of abstract art.

van riel
galería de arte
florida 659
buenos aires

raúl lozza

primera exposición de pintura
p e r c e p t i s t a

31 de octubre
12 de noviembre
mil novecientos cuarenta y nueve



raúl lozza pintura
perceptista - nº 161



ante la decadencia y el espíritu negativo que involucra ya todo el mundo de la representación y de la interpretación en el arte figurativo, el **perceptismo** impone al observador una actitud dinámica hacia la acción y exaltación de su propia facultad activa, crea nuevas condiciones para la visión y la emoción estética, superando en el acto de la contemplación artística el viejo proceso temporal impuesto a la percepción visual, el que entraña el sojuzgamiento tanto de la facultad creadora del hombre como de los planos y de las relaciones en la realidad misma del arte.

ya en mi libro sobre el color señalo que, para un arte de espacio, es preciso exaltar objetivamente la sensación de la percepción visual mediante la estructura de la materia perceptiva. consiste en lograr, a través del conocimiento que nos facilita tanto la totalidad de nuestras sensaciones como nuestro poder mental, una **objetividad visual**.

en la pintura figurativa, los medios visibles que condicionan la estructura no se sustentan en las propias cualidades del color y de la forma, sino que el objeto representado, su tridimensionalidad conocida por nuestra experiencia general, juega como **peso y equilibrio**.

por esa causa, el arte, a medida que se abstraía de representar los objetos conocidos del mundo que nos rodea, afrontaba un nuevo problema **armando** esos elementos materiales de la pintura mediante una intuición de sus valores.

el **perceptismo** supera esa etapa intuitiva existente aún en la pintura abstracta y concreta, y suprime el dualismo entre color y forma. al revolucionar las viejas normas, crea un nuevo concepto realista de estructura funcional; al superar la vieja contradicción de **forma y contenido**, recurre al método dialéctico que reconoce el propio proceso de elementos materiales.

los idealistas se han empeñado en unificar la **forma** y el **contenido** en el arte figurativo, sin superar las formas representativas, el símbolo o la anécdota plástica expresada sobre un fondo plástica. pero no han logrado conciliar lo inconciliable. en mi concepto y práctica del arte, **forma y contenido** constituyen un solo hecho real, indivisible, dado por la materia artística visible en su proceso mismo de creación e invención.

un arte de imitación, y no de transformación, no merece ya llamarse arte.

Regarding the Frame

(1950)

Rhod Rothfuss

Originally published in Spanish as Rhod Rothfuss, "A propósito del marco," *Arte Madí Universal* 4 (Buenos Aires, 1950).

Cubism, by abolishing the naturalistic representation of its subjects, proposed the revision of the concept that drove painters from every period to enclose the painting within a regular frame, the "window" through which, apparently, one sees the world. In 1941, I attempted to solve this problem, which cubism had not resolved (despite the experiments of Marcoussis¹). The two questions raised in this case were, whether there should be an unmediated relationship between the structure of the subject and the contours of the painting or, conversely, whether there should continue to be a mediated relationship between the subject and the contour through the use of "grounds," because

while it is true that the background in naturalistic painting is essential in order to create the illusion of space, it is always an element that creates a break in continuity, that is, it offers only a fragment of the subject, never its totality. From this it became apparent that, in ceasing to be representational (in order to take on the challenge of actually creating entities), painting should be conceived of as a total unity and in no way should be fragmented. The solution was to cut out the frame in such a way that it seemed to fully satisfy that notion, because it creates a discontinuous composition.

I exhibited these first experiments at the Ateneo in Montevideo in 1943 and, from a theoretical standpoint, these investigations were documented in issue 1 (1944) of the magazine "ARTURO." When the group "ARTE CONCRETO INVENCIÓN" formed, these experiments became the body of its doctrine. Later, the group split on account of the exclusion of some of its members, who continued to use the same name, and the central nucleus of the movement adopted the name "MADI."

Since the formation of Madí, this evolutionary process continues to follow its course, and the foundation for two types of painting (and the basis for their analysis) is a function of their construction, and they are characterized by their frame, namely: paintings with a cut-out frame and paintings with a structured frame. In the cut-out frame, there is a process of introversion, that is to say, a multiple-sided figure is divided (fragmented shape), or it has simply been cut out based on a fragmented regular polygon; in this case, the resulting form always recalls the shape from which it was

generated, because by following the fundamental lines of the resulting shape, one may reconstruct the regular polygon in which it was conceived. In the case of the structured frame, the procedure is the inverse, that is, a process of extraversion or turning outward, in which the multiple-sided figures are composed starting from one or several centers (composite shapes).

From this we can gather that in paintings with a cut-out frame, since the frame in almost every case is the only consciously-created form, it acquires fundamental importance, to the detriment of the composition of the painting, which is reduced to a series of compartments, created by the paths of lines between points on the perimeter. It is therefore also lacking any plastic subject; or, if it has one, it is the necessary result of a reliance on filler forms (grounds) in order to cover the spaces that intervene between the subject proper and the frame. In paintings with a **structured frame**, meanwhile, this is the final result of a process of development and composition of a strictly plastic subject, which in no case requires unrelated elements for its normal structuring.

These are the reasons that led to the development of new concepts which confirm, supported by dialectical and scientific arguments, these theories, in opposition to the old methods, giving rise to infinite perspectives for the future of painting.

- 1 Louis Marcoussis [Ludwig Casimir Ladislav Markus] (1878–1941), cubist painter and engraver of Polish origin, who lived in France. [Ed.]



Concrete Art and Meaning

(1953)

Alfredo Hlito

Originally published in Spanish as Alfredo Hlito, "Significado y arte concreto," *Nueva visión* 2-3 (Buenos Aires, January 1953), where it states that it was the "Preface to the catalogue for the *Alfredo Hlito* exhibition at 'Galería U.'"

The viewer has often had to be satisfied with a negative notion of concrete art.

I am not referring to notions based on hostile judgments of the art. I am also not attempting to claim that concrete art currently lacks a sufficiently explicit theoretical foundation. On the contrary.

Concrete art has been demonstrated more than once, and, regardless of one's attitude in the face of the problems it has posed or resolved, it is difficult to find another form of art that, confronted with the need to verify its own postulates, has sought greater contribution from areas that are apparently the furthest from thought and culture. I am referring here to another group of notions: those that are charged with indicating in which plane of experience or sensibility a concrete painting or sculpture is intended to operate.

It has been thought, for example, that it was sufficient to indicate what it is that one should not seek in concrete art. And, indeed, the viewer knows already what he will not find: representation, literary anecdote, symbol. These notions, removed from the context that provides them with a precise, restricted meaning, are purely negative. They serve as warnings and have proven useful insofar as they helped create a certain convention for concrete art.

A warning certainly, but not a program. For it would be as absurd to suppose that the creative effort of the concrete artist is spent on not representing natural forms as it would be to believe that the effort of the figurative artist ends when he has managed to not make concrete art.

Now, my purpose is not to say what should be sought out in a concrete painting or sculpture. The alternative is not so brutal. The difficulties that such an attempt would present are, furthermore, common to every form of art, when it is not archeology or a convention adopted from among other, equally effective conventions. If one considers the fact that in every work of art, sensory and conceptual elements which are intimately linked intervene, one will understand that art can hardly be reduced, in order to facilitate its comprehen-



sion, to only one of its elements. The "untransmittable" is not necessarily the enigmatic or the mysterious but is simply what is irreplaceable in the experience.

It is worth pointing out, however, the peculiar character of that experience when confronted with a form of art whose aesthetic signification must be achieved without the cooperation of the psycho-mental operations traditionally associated with art.

The recognition, through painted, sculpted, or narrated forms, of realities that pertain to the familiar order of experience had allowed for the establishment of an aesthetic judgment about form and meaning, which, partially at least, could be applied to the artistic productions of the past.

Recognition and association were considered, therefore (either as a subsidiary or as an absolute requirement), components of aesthetic perception. Cubism and surrealism, to the extent that they still preserved the formal or symbolic extensions of objects, did not represent a total break with that criterion. But in a concrete painting or sculpture, it is no longer a matter of recognizing, completely or partially, certain objects.

This has led some to believe that concrete art lacks meaning, as well as to think that it implies a distancing

from the normal conditions in which aesthetic experience takes place.

However, what the viewer has before him is perceptibly coherent: it makes "sense"; it has meaning.

It has been proven that, faced with a grouping of lines or points, perception, without any sort of mediation, can discern the presence of an order. This explanation does not abandon the level of the sensory that for some is the goal of concrete art. This simple fact is in itself important: It reveals that perception is not entirely passive.

But the "sense" also includes meanings whose scope is much greater and whose expression concrete art in no way renounces.

It has been said that lines carry no significance beyond that of the objects of which they are a part. Yet it is forgotten that it is with pure lines that man has elaborated an order of perceptions—the geometric—which, undoubtedly, is capable of bringing about new meanings. Therefore, it is useless to try to repeat the practically infinite series of operations that led to the imagination of a geometric figure, since the meaning of this figure is not to be found in its genesis but in its function.

Brazil

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Ruptura¹ Manifesto

São Paulo (1952)

**Lothar Charoux, Waldemar Cordeiro,
Geraldo de Barros, Luiz Sacilotto y otros**

The *ruptura* manifesto was published on the occasion of the *I Exposição do Grupo Ruptura* in the Museu de Arte Moderna in São Paulo, 1952.

charroux – cordeiro – de barros – fejer – haar – sacilotto – wladyslaw

art from the past was great, when it was intelligent.
however, our intelligence cannot be Leonardo's.

history has made a qualitative leap:

there is continuity no longer!

- those who create new forms from old principles.
- those who create new forms from new principles.

we distinguish therefore

why?

the scientific naturalism of the renaissance — the method for representing the external world (three dimensions) on a plane (two dimensions) — has exhausted its historical mission.

it was crisis

it was renovation

today the new can be differentiated
with precision from the old. we
break with the old thus
we affirm:

the old is

- all the varieties and hybridizations of naturalism;
- the mere negation of naturalism, that is, the "erroneous" naturalism of children, of madmen, of "primitives," of expressionists, of surrealists, etc...
- hedonistic non-figurative art, a product of gratuitous pleasure, which seeks the mere provocation of pleasure or displeasure.

the new is

- expressions based on the new artistic principles;
- every expression that tends toward the renovation of the essential values of visual art (space-time, movement, and matter);
- artistic intuition provided with principles that are clear, intelligent, and that offer great possibilities for practical development;
- bestowing art with a defined space in the framework of the contemporary work of the spirit, considering it a medium of deducible knowledge of concepts, situating it above opinion, demanding previous knowledge for its judgment.

modern art is not ignorance. we are against ignorance.

1 Split, break (with), breaking-off, radical change. [Trans.]

ruptura

charroux — cordeiro — de barras — fejer — haar — sacilotto — wladyslaw

a arte antiga foi grande, quando foi inteligente.

contudo, a nossa inteligência não pode ser a de Leonardo.

a história deu um salto qualitativo:

não há mais continuidade!

então nós distinguimos

- os que criam formas novas de princípios velhas.
- os que criam formas novas de princípios novos.

por que?

o naturalismo científico da renascença — o método para representar o mundo exterior (três dimensões) sobre um plano (duas dimensões) — esgotou a sua tarefa histórica.

foi a crise

foi a renovação

hoje o novo pode ser diferenciado precisamente do velho. nós rompermos com o velho por isto afirmamos:

é o velho

- tôdas as variedades e hibridações do naturalismo;
- a mera negação do naturalismo, isto é, o naturalismo "errado" das crianças, dos loucos, dos "primitivos" dos expressionistas, dos surrealistas, etc. . . .;
- o não-figurativismo hedonista, produto do gosto gratuito, que busca a mera excitação do prazer ou do desprazer.

é o novo

- as expressões baseadas nos novos princípios artísticos;
- tôdas as experiências que tendem à renovação dos valores essenciais da arte visual (espaço-tempo, movimento, e matéria);
- a intuição artística dotada de princípios claros e inteligentes e de grandes possibilidades de desenvolvimento prático;
- conferir à arte um lugar definido no quadro do trabalho espiritual contemporâneo, considerando-a um meio de conhecimento deduzível de conceitos, situando-a acima da opinião, exigindo para o seu juízo conhecimento prévio.

arte moderna não é ignorância, nós somos contra a ignorância.

Concrete Poetry (1955)

Augusto de Campos

Originally published in Portuguese as Augusto de Campos, "Poesia concreta," in *Forum*, official mouthpiece of the Centro Acadêmico "22 de Agosto" in the Faculdade Paulista de Direito, year 1, no. 3 (October 1955). In the publication, together with the poems quoted here, the author (faced with the impossibility of including one of the compositions from the series "poetamenos," because of the high cost of printing in color) added the final section of his poem "Ad Augustum per Augusta," preferring not to comment on his own work. Not long afterwards, three poems from that series were presented in the show organized by the musical group Ars Nova, in four voices and with the simultaneous projection of the corresponding slides, at the Teatro de Arena, in São Paulo, on November 21 and December 5, 1955. On that occasion, the poet read a text on his creations with the same title as this *essay*, *Poesia concreta* (see *Código* 11 [Salvador, Bahia, 1986], which published it).

In line with the terminology adopted by the visual arts and, to a certain extent, avant-garde music (concretism, musique concrète), I would say that there is a concrete poetry. Concrete in the sense that, by leaving aside the figurative aims of expression (which is not to say leaving aside meaning), in this poetry the words function like autonomous objects. If, as Sartre presumes, poetry is distinguished from prose in the sense that for the former words are signs while for the latter words are *things*, here that distinction between genres moves to a more acute and literal level, so that *concrete poems* are characterized by an irreversible and functional structuring that is optico-sonic which, so to speak, generates the idea, creating an all-dynamic "verbivocovisual" entity (the term is Joyce's), of ductile, malleable, combinable words at the service of the poem.

As a conscious process, it can be said that it all began with the publication of *Un coup de dés* (1897), the "plant-poem" by Mallarmé,¹ the organization of thought in "prismatic subdivisions of the Idea" and the visual spatialization of the poem on the page. With James Joyce,² the author of the novels *Ulysses* (1914–1921) and *Finnegans Wake* (1922–1939), and his "palimpsest technique" of simultaneous narration through sound associations. With Ezra Pound³ and *The Cantos*, his epic poem begun around 1917, on which the poet has worked for the last forty years, utilizing his ideogrammic method, which allows him to coherently group together, like a mosaic, disparate

fragments of reality. With E. E. Cummings,⁴ who breaks words up in order to create with the pieces a dialectic of eye and breath, in direct contact with the experience that inspired the poem.

In Brazil, the first to respond to these new problems, at least in certain regards, was João Cabral de Melo Neto.⁵ An architect of verse, Cabral constructs his poems like flourishes of cement and glass. In *Psicologia da Composição*, with the "Fábula de Anfião" and "Antiode" (1946–1947), he reaches the expressive maturity of which he had already given premonitions in *O Engenheiro*.

Flor é a palavra
flor, verso inscrito
no verso, como
manhãs no tempo,⁶

he tells us, in "Antiode," creating with it what can only be called a theory of concrete poetry.

"O Jogral e a Prostituta Negra"⁷ (1949) represents another avant-garde, constructivist leap forward, in this case by a member of the youngest generation, Décio Pignatari. In this poem, Pignatari resorts to numerous "concrete" compositional techniques: breaks, tmesis, "coathanger-words" (that is, word-montages that permit the simultaneity of meanings: *al(gema negra)cova* = *alcova, algema, gema negra, negra cova*),⁸ all of them converging around the theme of the poet tortured by the anguish of expression. It is Hamlet's doubt applied to the poet and the poetic word: to what extent does it express or fail to express, "veil" or "reveal"? Here is the poet, clown-priest, composing with cartilage and molluscs, the black-*hasard* prostitute-poetry that here—like that "mudaria o Natal ou mudei eu?"⁹ from Machado de Assis' sonnet—explodes in a single verse, "cansada cornucópia entre festões de rosas murchas."¹⁰

Haroldo de Campos is, so to speak, a Baroque "concrete" poet, which leads him to work preferably with images and metaphors, which he lays out in true blocks of sound. In the fragments of "Círopédia ou a Educação do Príncipe"¹¹ (1952) that we have presented, what should be emphasized in particular is the special use of compound words, with which he seeks to turn the idea into verbal ideograms of sound.

- 1 Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–1898), French poet, the summit of symbolism and precursor of the avant-garde movements. *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* (A throw of the dice will never abolish chance), from 1897, represents a daring experiment with blank space, free verse, and typography. [Ed.]
- 2 James Joyce (1882–1941), Irish writer. Both his magnum opus, *Ulysses*, and *Finnegans Wake* experiment with the possibilities of language as a vehicle for thought, means of communication, and literary material. [Ed.]
- 3 Ezra Pound (1885–1972), American poet. He played an important role, along with Wyndham Lewis, in the founding of vorticism, whose name was a creation of Pound's. [Ed.]

- 4 Edward Estlin Cummings (1894–1962), American painter and writer. In his poems he expresses the signifying possibilities of language, relying on orthographic and syntactic distortion and frequently also on unusual uses of typography. [Ed.]
- 5 João Cabral de Melo Neto (1920–1999), Brazilian poet. *O engenheiro* is from 1945. [Ed.]
- 6 Flower is the word/ flower, verse inscribed/ in the verse, like/ mornings in time. [Trans.]
- 7 The Jongleur and the Black Prostitute. [Trans.]
- 8 Untranslatable play of words in which the poet combines the words *alcove* (bedroom), *algema* (handcuff), *gema negra* (black gem), and *negra cova* (black cavern). [Trans.]
- 9 Can Christmas have changed, or is it just me? [Trans.]
- 10 "Tired cornucopia among garlands of withered roses." [Trans.]
- 11 *Ciropaedia, or the Education of the Prince*. [Trans.]



AUGUSTO DE CAMPOS
DÉCIO PIGNATARI
HAROLDO DE CAMPOS



TEORIA DA POESIA CONCRETA



TEXTOS CRÍTICOS
E MANIFESTOS
1950 - 1960



EDIÇÕES INVENÇÃO

Concrete Art: Object and Objective

(1956)

Décio Pignatari

Originally published in Portuguese as Décio Pignatari, "Arte concreto, objeto e objetivo," in *ad – arquitetura e decoração* 20 (São Paulo, November-December 1956); reprinted in *Correio da Manhã* (Rio de Janeiro, February 6, 1957) and in the Sunday supplement of the *Jornal do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, April 21, 1957).

For the first time, Brazilian concrete artists have the opportunity to join together: as an immediate presence of achievements and as a proposition of principles.

Visual concretism has already carried out its first tests; it circulates; it refines itself in healthy debate; it advances with qualitative rigor based on information and critical awareness.

Concrete poetry, after a more or less long period of investigations — in order to determine the planes of division in its internal mechanism (Mallarmé, *Un coup de dés* - Pound - Joyce - Cummings - some of the dadaist and futurist experiments - some of Apollinaire's propositions) — enters its polemical phase. The exhibition of concrete poetry has an almost didactic character: the phases in its formal development, the passage from verse to ideogram, from linear rhythm to spatio-temporal rhythm; new conditions for new ways of structuring language, this relationship between verbivocovisual elements — as Joyce would say.

One of the principal characteristics of concretism is the problem of movement, the dynamic structure, the qualitative mechanism. And that reference to "mechanism" is not strange: Norbert Wiener¹ already warned us (in *Cybernetics: The Human Use of Human Beings*), in the face of the erroneous and fruitless, individualist yearning to judge negatively everything mechanical. This brings us to the relationship between geometry and geometric painting: geometric painting is to geometry what architecture is to engineering. The logic of the eye is sensitive and sensorial, artistic; the logic of geometry is conceptual, discursive, scientific, in the end. For precisely this reason, in a previous issue of this publication, and in this same place, the architect Eduardo Corona² recalled the need for closer contact between architects and the visual arts, like painting and drawing: "Apprenticeship in those arts should be taken very seriously in our universities, to educate architects

who are more rounded, more knowledgeable, in the end, about Art."

On the other hand, the concrete artists also feel the urgency of a closer contact with architecture: the fact that several of them, if not architects or students of architecture, are interior designers, landscape designers, or draftsmen — activities connected with art and architecture — attests to that urgent need (as if its own value were not sufficient justification), as does its presence in a review on architecture and design. As for poetry, it is not indifferent to this problem, as might seem to be the case at first glance: the isomorphic kinships of the various artistic manifestations will never be a minor question. With the abolishment of verse, concrete poetry confronts many problems of space and time (movement) that are common to the visual arts and to architecture, not to mention the most advanced music, electronic music. Furthermore, for example, an ideogram (whether monochrome or color) can work perfectly on a wall, inside or out.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that concretism does not aim to remove from circulation those tendencies whose very existence proves its necessity in the dialectic of the formation of culture. On the contrary, concretism's critical attitude leads it to absorb the concerns of the other artistic currents, aiming to overcome them through the coherent, objective presentation of the problems. Every visual manifestation is of interest to it: from the unconscious discoveries in the façade of a humble dry cleaners' or a lighted billboard, to the extraordinary pictorial wisdom of a Volpi, the greatest poem of Mallarmé's, or the doorknobs designed by Max Bill in the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm.

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- 1 Norbert Wiener (1894–1964), American mathematician, regarded as the father of cybernetics. [Ed.]
 - 2 Brazilian architect connected with the modern movement. [Ed.]

Pilot Plan for Concrete Poetry

(1958)

Augusto de Campos, Haroldo de Campos, Décio Pignatari

Published in the journal *Noigandres* no. 4 (1958)

concrete poetry: the product of a critical evolution of forms, bringing the historical cycle of verse (rhythmical-formal unity) to a close, concrete poetry begins by becoming aware of graphic space as a structural agent. qualified space: spatio-temporal structure, instead of mere temporal-linear development. hence the importance of the idea of the ideogram, from its general sense of syntactical or visual space, to its specific sense (fenollosa/pound¹) of compositional method based on the direct juxtaposition — analogical and not logical-discursive — of elements. “il faut que notre intelligence s’habitue à comprendre synthético-idéographiquement au lieu de analytico-discursivement”² (apollinaire). eisenstein:³ ideogram and montage.

precursors: mallarmé (*un coup de dés*, 1879): the first qualitative leap, “subdivisions prismatiques de l’idée”;⁴ space (“blancs”) and typography as substantive elements of composition. pound (*the cantos*): ideogrammatic method. joyce (*ulysses* and *finnegans wake*): ideogram-word; organic interpenetration of time and space. cummings: atomization of words, physiognomic typography; expressionistic valorization of space. apollinaire (*calligrammes*): as vision more than as production. in brazil: oswald de andrade (1890–1954): “em comprimidos, minutos de poesia.”⁵ joão cabral de melo neto (b. 1920, *o engenheiro* and *a psicologia da composição* as well as *antidade*): direct language, economy, and functional architecture of verse.

concrete poetry: tension of words - things in space-time. dynamic structure: multiplicity of concomitant movements. in music also — by definition an art of time — space intervenes (webern and his followers. boulez and stockhausen; *musique concrète* and electronic music⁶); in the visual arts — spatial by definition — time intervenes (mondrian and the *boogie-woogie* series, max bill, albers and perceptive ambivalence; concrete art in general).

ideogram: appeal to non-verbal communication. the concrete poem communicates its own structure: content-structure. the concrete poem is an object in and of itself, not an interpreter of external objects and/or more or less subjective sensations. its material, the word (sound, visual form, semantic load). its problem:

a problem of that material’s relations-functions. factors of proximity and similarity, gestalt psychology, rhythm: relational force. the concrete poem, using the phonetic system (digits) and an analogical syntax, creates a specific linguistic area — “verbivocovisual” — that partakes of the advantages of non-verbal communication, without renouncing the potentialities of the word. with the concrete poem the phenomenon of meta-communication occurs: coincidence and simultaneity of verbal and non-verbal communication, with the characteristic that it is a communication of forms, of a content-structure, not the usual communication of messages.

concrete poetry aims for the least common multiple of language, and thus its tendency to nominalize and verbify: “the concrete coin of language” (sapir⁷). thus its affinities with “isolating” languages (chinese): “the less external grammar possessed by the chinese language, the more internal grammar is inherent to it!” (humboldt quoted by cassirer⁸). chinese offers an example of purely relational syntax based exclusively on the order of words (see fenollosa, sapir, cassirer).

isomorphism is what we call the conflict of content-and-form in search of identification. parallel to the isomorphism content-form, the isomorphism space-time develops, which generates movement. isomorphism, in a first stage of the praxis of concrete poetry, tends toward physiognomy, toward an imitative movement of the real (*motion*)⁹; the organic form and the phenomenology of composition predominate. at a more advanced level, isomorphism tends to resolve itself in pure structural movement (*movement*); in this phase, the geometric form and the mathematics of composition predominate (sensible rationalism).

renouncing the dispute over the “absolute,” concrete poetry remains in the magnetic field of the perennially relative. micro-timing of chance. control. cybernetics. the poem as a self-regulating mechanism: “feedback.” the fastest communication (implicit: a problem of functionality and structure) bestows a positive value upon the poem and guides its own making.

concrete poetry: a total responsibility facing language. total realism. against poetry of expression, subjective and hedonistic. to create exact problems and resolve them in terms of perceptible language. a general art of the word, the product-poem. useful object.

1961 post-script

“without a revolutionary form, there is no revolutionary art”
(mayakovsky¹⁰)

1 This alludes to Ezra Pound’s edition of Ernest Fenollosa’s manuscript, *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry*, published for the first time in 1920. Modern edition: Pound *et al.*, eds., *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry: A Critical Edition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008). Ernest Francisco Fenollosa (1853–1908) was an American Orientalist, art historian, and poet of Spanish parentage. [Ed.]

- 2 our intelligence must become accustomed to understanding in a synthetic-ideographic manner instead of an analytic-discursive one. [Trans.]
- 3 Sergei M. Eisenstein (1898–1948), Russian filmmaker and theater director of Jewish origin, who developed the concept of “montage.” He directed, among other films, the famous *Battleship Potemkin*. [Ed.]
- 4 prismatic subdivisions of the idea. [Trans.]
- 5 minutes of poetry compressed in pills. [Trans.]
- 6 Anton von Webern (1883–1945), Austrian composer whose contribution to serialist music was notable; Pierre Boulez (b. 1925), French composer and conductor, one of the major exponents of integral serialism; and Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928–2007), German composer, an innovator in the fields of electroacoustic and serialist music. [Ed.]
- 7 The American anthropologist and linguist Edward Sapir (1884–1939) was one of the pillars of structural linguistics. [Ed.]
- 8 Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835), German baron, intellectual, and author of studies pertaining to the field of philosophy of language and regarding the configuration of languages; Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945), German-Jewish philosopher of culture, whose contributions to the field of philosophy of language were central for structural linguistics. [Ed.]
- 9 The words in italics here (*motion*, *movement*) are in English in the original. [Trans.]
- 10 Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893–1930), Russian poet and playwright, initiator of futurism in Russia. [Ed.]

Neo-Concrete Manifesto

Rio de Janeiro (1959)

Ferreira Gullar

Translated from the Spanish version of the original published in Portuguese as Ferreira Gullar, "Manifesto neoconcreto," in *Jornal do Brasil*, Sunday supplement (Rio de Janeiro, March 22, 1959), 4–5.

We use the term "neo-concrete" to differentiate ourselves from those committed to non-figurative "geometric" art (neo-plasticism, constructivism, suprematism, Ulm School) and in particular the kind of concrete art that is influenced by a dangerously extreme rationalism. Compelled by their experiences, the painters, sculptors, engravers, and writers participating in this First Neo-concrete Exhibition came to the conclusion that it was necessary to revise the theoretical principles on which concrete art has been founded, none of which offers a rationale for the expressive potential they feel their art contains.

Born with cubism, as a reaction against the impressionist disintegration of poetic language, it was natural that so-called geometric art should situate itself in a position diametrically opposed to the technical and allusive resources of ordinary painting. The new achievements of physics and mechanics, in opening up a wide perspective for objective thought, encouraged, among those who continued this revolution, the tendency towards an ever-increasing rationalization of the processes and purposes of painting. A mechanicalist notion of construction invaded the language of painters and sculptors, generating, in turn, equally extreme responses of a reactionary nature, such as magical or irrationalist realism, Dada, or surrealism. Therefore, there is no doubt that the true artists—as is the case with, for example, Mondrian or Pevsner—constructed their works following those theories that consecrated scientific objectivity and mechanical precision, but in that hand-to-hand combat with expression they overcame the limits imposed by theory. Yet the work of those artists has been interpreted to this day from theoretical positions that that same work denied. We propose a reinterpretation of neo-plasticism, constructivism, and other similar movements, basing ourselves on their expressive successes and making the work of art take precedence over theory. If we were to attempt to understand Mondrian's painting starting from his theories, we would be forced to choose one over the other. We either find the prophecy of the complete integration of art in daily life to be possible (and we see in Mondrian's work the first

steps in that direction), or we view that integration as ever more remote, in which case his work seems to have failed. Either the vertical and the horizontal are truly the fundamental rhythms of the universe, and Mondrian's oeuvre is the application of that universal principle, or the principle fails, and his work turns out to be based on an illusion. But the truth is that Mondrian's work is there, alive and fertile, above these theoretical contradictions. It is useless to view Mondrian as the destroyer of the surface, of the plane and the line, if we do not perceive the new space that that destruction constructed.

The same can be said of Vantongerloo or Pevsner. It does not matter what mathematical equations are at the root of a sculpture or a painting by Vantongerloo, because only in the experience of its direct perception does the work provide the "meaning" of its rhythms and colors. Whether Pevsner started from figures of descriptive geometry or not is irrelevant, when one confronts the new space that his sculptures generate and the cosmic-organic expression that, through it, its forms reveal. Determining the ways in which artistic objects and scientific instruments, or the artist's intuition and the physicist's and engineer's objective thought, converged may be interesting from a cultural standpoint, but from an aesthetic standpoint, the work of art provokes interest precisely because of what it possesses that transcends these external circumstances—because of the universe of existential meanings that merge together and are revealed in the work of art.

Malevich, having recognized the superiority of "pure perception in art," placed his theoretical definitions in a position that was safe from the limitations of rationalism and mechanicalism, projecting a transcendent dimension in his paintings that guarantees him a notable relevance today. But Malevich's daring cost him dearly, in simultaneously opposing both figurative art and mechanicalist abstraction, for to this day certain rationalist theoreticians consider him a naïf who did not understand the true sense of the new plastic arts ... In fact, Malevich already expressed, within "geometric" painting, his dissatisfaction, his desire to transcend the rational and the sensorial, which today is undeniably manifest.

Neo-concretism, emerging out of the need to express the complex reality of modern man with the structural language of the new plastic arts, denies the validity of the attitudes espoused by scientificism and positivism in art and reconsiders the problem of expression, incorporating the new "verbal" dimensions created by constructive, non-figurative art. Rationalism divests art of all autonomy and substitutes the untransferable qualities of the work of art with notions of scientific objectivity. Thus, the concepts of form, space, time, and structure—which in the arts are linked to an existential meaning, emotive and affective—are confused with their theoretical application by science. In fact, in the name of preconceived ideas that today's philosophy denounces (M. Merleau-Ponty,¹ E. Cassirer, S. Langer²)—and that are collapsing in every field, starting with modern biology, which has overcome Pavlovian mechanicalism—

the concretist-rationalists still view man as a machine among machines and attempt to limit art to the expression of that theoretical reality.

We do not conceive of art either as a "machine" or as an "object" but as a quasi-corpus, that is, an entity whose reality is not exhausted in the external relationships of its elements; an entity that, though analytically divisible into its parts, only gives itself up fully to a direct, phenomenological approach. We believe that the work of art overcomes the material mechanism upon which it rests, not due to some virtue lying outside this Earth: it overcomes it by transcending those mechanical relationships (which is the object of Gestalt theory) and by creating for itself a tacit signification (Merleau-Ponty) that emerges in it for the first time. If we had to search for a simile for the work of art, we could not find it, therefore, either in a machine or in objects taken objectively, but rather, as S. Langer and V. Wleidlé [*sic*]³ argue, in living organisms. Furthermore, this comparison would not be sufficient to express the specific reality of the aesthetic organism.

Since the work of art is not limited to occupying a place in objective space—but rather transcends it in basing a new signification in it—the objective notions of time, space, form, structure, color, etc. are not sufficient to understand the work of art, to fully explain its "reality." The lack of an adequate terminology for expressing a world that does not succumb to notions led art critics indiscriminately to employ words that are unfaithful to the complexity of the created work. The influence of technology and science was manifest here as well, to the degree that today, with their roles reversed, certain artists, confused by that terminology, attempt to make art starting from these objective notions in order to apply them as a creative method. Inevitably, the artists who work in this fashion only reveal a priori notions, since they are constrained by a method that already prescribes the results of their work before they begin. By avoiding intuitive creation, by reducing himself to an objective body in an objective space, with his paintings the rationalist concrete artist hardly demands, from himself and from the viewer, a stimulating and reflexive reaction. He speaks to the eye as an instrument and not to the eye as a human means of possessing the world and of giving oneself to it; he speaks to the machine-eye and not the body-eye.

Given that the work of art transcends mechanical space, the notions of cause and effect lose all validity in it, and the notions of time, space, form, and color are integrated in such a way—since they lacked any existence, as those notions, prior to the work—that it would be impossible to speak of them as elements that can be broken down. Neo-concrete art, affirming the absolute integration of these elements, vouches for the ability of its "geometric" vocabulary to assume the expression of complex human realities, manifest in many works by Mondrian, Malevich, Pevsner, Gabo, Sofia Taeuber-Arp, etc. If even these artists at times confused the concept of mechanical form with expressive form, it is important to clarify that,



in the language of art, these so-called geometric forms lose the objective character of geometry in order to become vehicles for the imagination. Gestalt theory, in that it is still a psychology based on the concept of causation, also proves insufficient in helping us understand that phenomenon that dissolves the causally definable realities of space and form and presents them as time, as the spatialization of the work. By "spatialization of the work" is meant the fact that it is continually making itself present, it is always regaining the impulse that generated it and of which it was, in turn, the origin. And if this description remits us likewise to the first—full—experience of the real, that is because neo-concrete art seeks nothing more than to revive that experience. Neo-concrete art creates a new expressive space.

This position is equally valid for neo-concrete poetry, which condemns in concrete poetry the same mechanical objectivism of painting. The rationalist concrete poets also established the imitation of the machine as an ideal for their art. For them, too, space and time are but external relationships between object-words. Now, if that is the case, the page is reduced to a graphic space and the word to an element of that space. As in painting, the visual here is reduced to the optical, and the poem does not transcend the graphic dimen-

sion. Neo-concrete poetry rejects such spurious notions and, faithful to the very nature of language, reaffirms the poem as a temporal entity. In time and space, the word unfolds its complex signifying nature. The page in neo-concrete poetry is the spatialization of verbal time: it is pause, silence, time. It is evidently not a matter of returning to the concept of time that characterizes discursive poetry; for while language flows in succession in discursive poetry, in concrete poetry language opens up in duration. Therefore, unlike rationalist concretism, which views the word as object and transforms it into a mere optical signal, neo-concrete poetry restores it to its condition as "verbum," that is, to the human mode of presentation of the real. In neo-concrete poetry, language does not slip away, but rather remains.

In its turn, neo-concrete prose, opening up a new field for expressive experiments, recovers language as flux, overcoming its syntactical contingencies and giving new, fuller meaning to certain solutions that until now were erroneously accepted as poetry. This is how, in painting as in poetry, in prose as in sculpture and printmaking, neo-concrete art reaffirms the independence of artistic creation in the face of objective knowledge (science) and practical knowledge (ethics, politics, industry, etc.).

The participants in this First Neo-concrete Exhibition do not constitute a "group." They are not united by dogmatic principles. The evident affinity of their explorations in various fields has brought them together and led them to meet here. The commitment that obliges them commits each one of them, first and foremost, to their individual experience; they will remain together as long as the deep affinity that brought them together endures.

AMILCAR DE CASTRO – FERREIRA GULLAR –
FRANZ WEISSMANN – LYGIA CLARK – LYGIA PAPE –
REYNALDO JARDIM – THEON SPANUDIS
RIO DE JANEIRO, MARCH 1959

- 1 Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961), French philosopher, author of *Phénoménologie de la perception* (1945). [Ed.]
- 2 Susanne Katherina Langer (1895–1985), American philosopher of mind and of art. [Ed.]
- 3 Vladimir Weidlé (1895–1979), French critic of Russian origin. His essay *Les abeilles d'Aristée. Essai sur le destin actuel des lettres et des arts* (Aristeus' Bees: Essay on the Future of Letters and the Arts, 1936) had great influence in the artistic and literary milieu. [Ed.]

The Death of the Plane

(1960)

Lygia Clark

Text translated from "A Morte do Plano" found in the artist's web site, www.lygiaclark.org.br, under the heading "arquivos."

The plane is a concept created by man with a practical objective in mind: to satisfy his need for balance. The square, an abstract creation, is a product of the plane. By arbitrarily marking limits in space, the plane offers man an entirely false and rational idea of his own reality. Hence, the opposing concepts of high and low, front and back, which contribute to the destruction of man's sense of wholeness. This is also the reason why man projected the part of him that is transcendent and gave it the name of God. In this way, man situated the problem of his existence — inventing the mirror of his own spirituality.

The square took on a magical meaning when the artist considered it the bearer of a total vision of the universe. But the plane is dead. The philosophical conception that man projected onto it is no longer satisfactory, just as the idea of a God extrinsic to man no longer is.

When man realized it was a poetics of himself projected outwards, he understood at the same time the need to reintegrate that poetics as an indivisible part of his own being.

It was likewise this introjection that exploded the rectangle of the canvas. We have swallowed the shards of this shattered rectangle and absorbed it. Before, when the artist situated himself in front of the rectangle, he projected himself onto it, and in that projection he filled the surface with transcendent meaning. To demolish the plane as the support for expression is to become aware of unity as an alive and organic whole. We are a whole and now is the time to join together all the pieces of the kaleidoscope in which the idea of man has been shattered and reduced to fragments.

We have submerged ourselves in the totality of the cosmos; vulnerable on all sides, we form part of that cosmos; high and low, right and left, in short, good and evil: all concepts that are transformed.

Contemporary man frees himself from the laws of spiritual gravity. He learns to float in the cosmic reality, as if in his own internal reality. He feels overcome by vertigo. The crutches that supported him fall away, far from his arms. He feels like a child that must learn to balance himself for his own survival. It is his first experience; it now begins.

Venezuela

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Los Disidentes Manifiesto

Paris (1950)

Los Disidentes

Originally published in Spanish as "Presentación" [Manifiesto NO], *Los Disidentes* 5 (Paris, September 1950): 1–2. This translation is based on the edition of the text reprinted in Luis Velásquez, comp., *Consonancia: La Abstracción Geométrica en Argentina y Venezuela, Años 40 y 50*. Caracas: ArtesanoGroup, 2007.

WE did not come to Paris to study diplomacy, nor to acquire some "culture" for our own personal interests. We came to confront problems, to struggle with them, to learn to call things by their name, and for this very reason we cannot remain indifferent faced with the climate of falsity that is the cultural reality of Venezuela. We believe we are contributing to its improvement by attacking its defects with the greatest rigor, placing blame on those who are truly responsible or on those who support them.

To a large extent, this task we are undertaking does not pertain to us, but given the indifference of those to whom it does correspond, we have not hesitated to make it our own, being as specific as possible.

We are Venezuelans (and we will continue to be so), and we have been the first victims of this lamentable state of affairs. We are rebelling against it today,¹ and we speak loudly because it is necessary.

We are against that which to us seems retrogressive or stationary, against that which has a false function. We are the product and the witnesses of much that is absurd, and we would be in bad shape indeed if we could not say what we think, the way we feel is necessary.

We have wanted to say "NO" now and after "Los Disidentes." "NO" is the tradition we want to establish. The Venezuelan "NO" which is so hard for us to say. "NO" to the false Salons of Official Art.

"NO" to that anachronistic archive of anachronism called the Museum of Fine Arts.

"NO" to the School of Plastic Arts and its promotion of false impressionists.

"NO" to those national and foreign artmongers' exhibitions that number in the hundreds each year at the Museum.

"NO" to false art critics.

"NO" to false folklorist musicians.

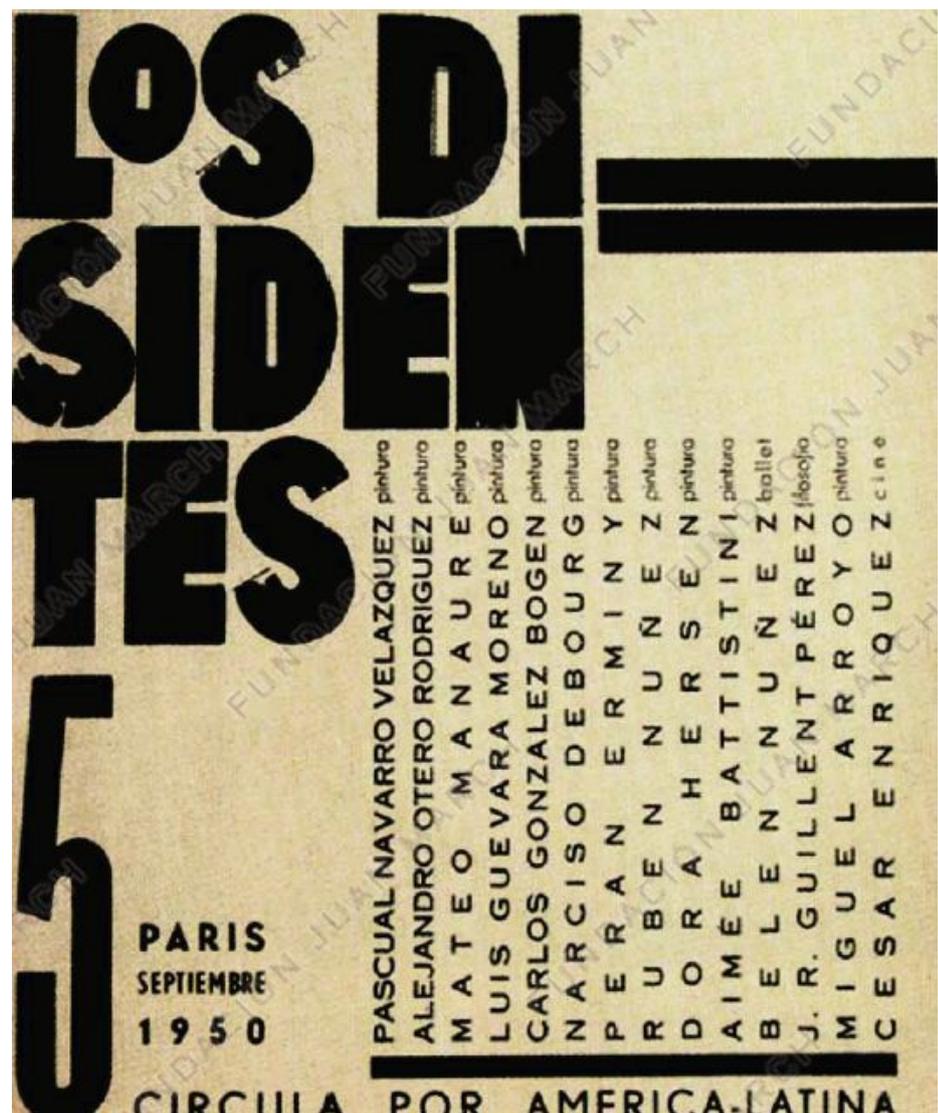
"NO" to false poets and paper-filling scribblers.

"NO" to the newspapers that support so much

absurdity, and to the public that goes, docile, to the slaughterhouse every day.

We say "NO" once and for all: to that Venezuelan "consumatum est" with which we will never be anything but a ruin.

- 1 The Spanish would appear to be a pun on *nos revelamos* ("we reveal ourselves") and *nos rebelamos* ("we rebel"), which sound exactly alike. In the original it is spelled with a *v*, producing the not-so-grammatical construction "we reveal ourselves against them," which has led us to adopt the more straightforward translation as if it had been a *b*. [Trans.]



On Painting Today (1950)

Narciso Debourg

Originally published in Spanish as Narciso Debourg, "En torno a la pintura de hoy," *Los Disidentes 4* (Paris, June 1950): 1–3. This translation is based on the edition of the text in Luis Velásquez, comp., *Consonancia: La Abstracción Geométrica en Argentina y Venezuela, Años 40 y 50*. Caracas: ArtesanoGroup, 2007.

In broaching my subject, I intend to consider an intimate problem; the further I delve into this world of the contemporary plastic arts that surrounds me, it only grows and becomes more complex. Because of limited time within this new conceptual sphere, furthermore, it proves difficult to identify definitively with one or another of the various currents struggling in this new age of regeneration in the plastic arts.

For a young Latin American artist, it is a challenging problem to situate himself in this new world and to identify it with his own reality. The European has the advantage over us of having lived stage center amid the development of the most important cultural movements in Western culture. He has been privileged to have a clear vision of that reality since he has been at once the maker and the product of the great transformations in European culture.

Coming from a world where for historical reasons we acquired an almost exclusively Romantic education, when we confront this European world, we recognize in it an enormous degree of intellectual development that we have not yet undergone.

The task of revision imposed on us by an inadequate education requires a certain period of time in order to acquire the judgment that would allow one scrupulously to choose one thing or reject another in matters that pertain to one's personal development. This is why it is difficult at present to choose, without vacillation, a point of departure in matters pertaining to one's work as an artist.

Upon arriving in Europe, we experience the collision between what is really, truly current and what we erroneously thought was—a new world we paradoxically found in the old. We are compelled to start over.

After a general tour of the already-seen in the art world, in which we observe the milieux, the personalities, etc., that produced its various currents, we arrive at this non-figurative contemporary art, more hotly-disputed than Romanticism, impressionism, cubism or any other revolutionary tendency has ever been—tendencies that in the end prevailed, according to the natural logic of evolution and because they vindicated themselves in their moment. In art, the only stable norm is that of creation.

After a corporativist period (in which peoples and schools joined forces to execute works that translated into the language of art the respective spiritual characteristics of different ages), art began to enter a more individualistic period that increasingly emphasized the ever more personal efforts of each creator.

At the same time that it presents itself as the culmination of that individualistic phase, today's non-figurative art also claims to represent a new period in which the artist, divesting himself of every traditional rule and precept and rejecting nature as a point of departure, goes so far as to commit to his art the fundamentals of his own existence.

Starting with the non-objective, the task of the contemporary artist is to impose an art that reveals him to be, intrinsically, the creator of beauty, as a reaction against the anecdotal and the vain.

A first glance at this non-figurative art we are speaking of reveals two principle currents: a Romantic one,

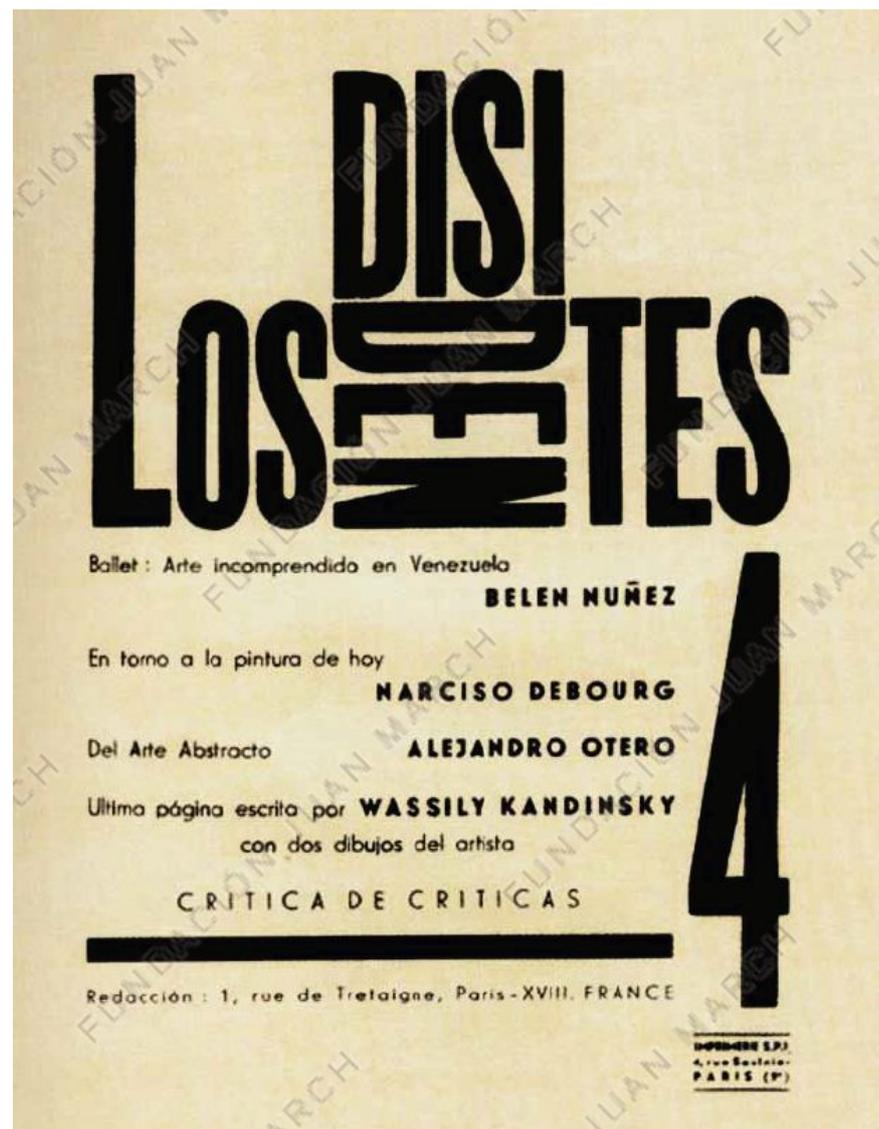
born of pure instinct, eminently colorist, and, in part, linked to the contributions of Matisse, Bonnard, and the Fauvists (Manesier, Lapicque, Le Moal, Singier, Bazaine, on the one hand, and, on the other, Schneider, Hartung, Soulages, Dewasne, Vassarely [*sic*], Cicero Días).

The other tendency is more intellectualizing and its ascendancy is cubist and neo-plastic; it includes Mag-nelli, Herbin, Arden Quin, Lohse, Bolotowsky.

These two currents emerged with the contributions of the creators of abstract art: the "inner world" proclaimed by Kandinsky and the radical purging carried out by Malevitch and Mondrian.

Klee's and Miro's contributions offer other important perspectives that come into play in the possibilities for today's art.

In that universe we struggle, attempting on a daily basis to overcome our disadvantages as South Americans, encouraged by a powerful, double faith: faith in America and faith in Europe.



Letter to Carlos Raúl Villanueva

Paris (1953)

Jesús Rafael Soto

Señor Arq.

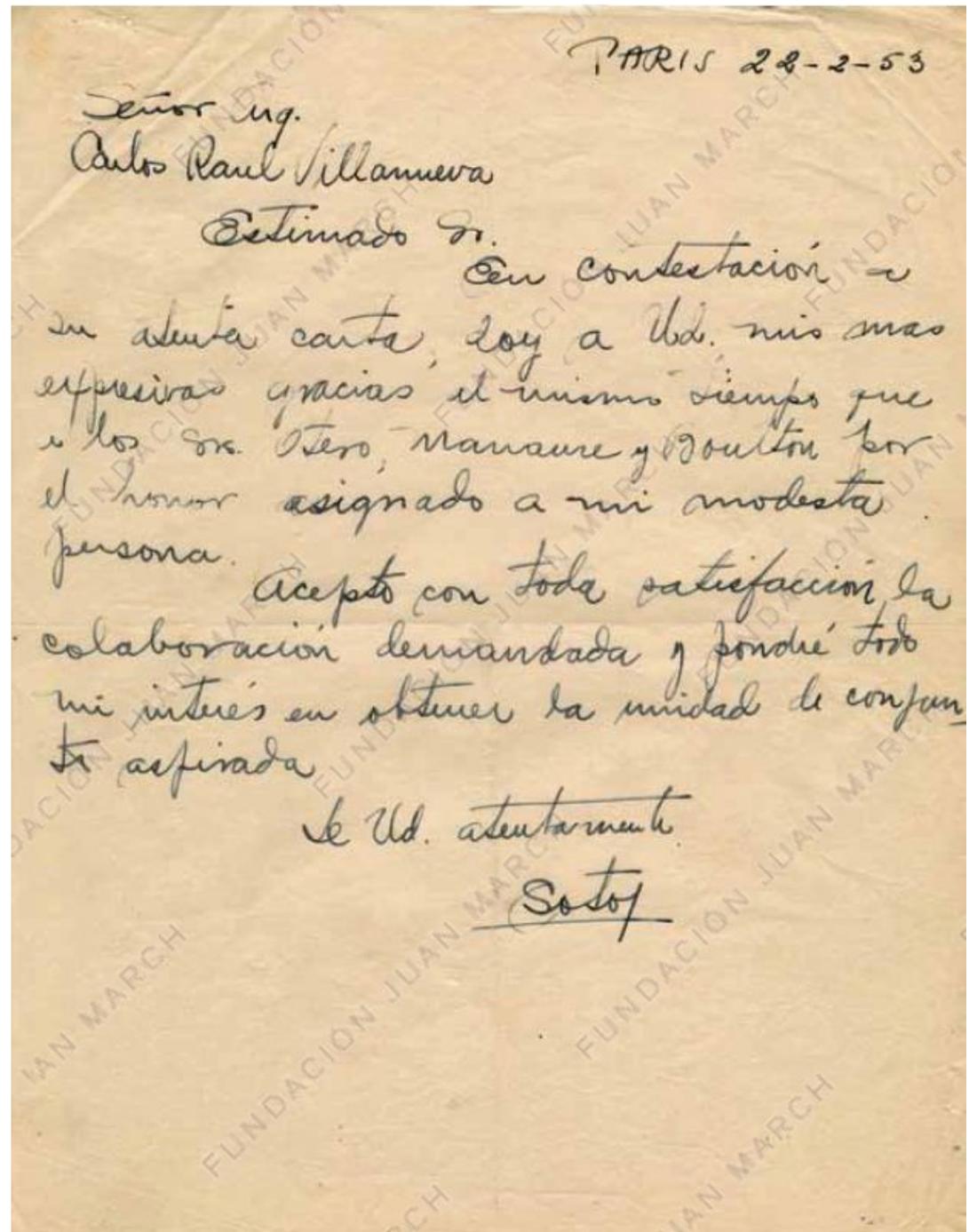
Carlos Raul Villanueva

Dear Sir,

In reply to your kind letter, I would like to thank you most emphatically and also Mr. Otero, Mr. Manaure, and Mr. Boulton for the honor bestowed upon my humble self.

I happily accept the request for collaboration and will direct all my efforts towards achieving the desired unity in the project.

Yours faithfully,
Soto



PARIS 22-2-53

Señor Arq.
Carlos Raul Villanueva

Estimado Sr.

En contestación a su atenta carta, doy a Ud. mis mas expresivas gracias al mismo tiempo que a los srs. Otero, Manaure y Boulton por el honor asignado a mi modesta persona.

Acepto con toda satisfaccion la colaboracion demandada y pondre todo mi interes en obtener la unidad de conjunto aspirada.

Le Ud. atentamente
Soto

1 Letter in which Jesús Rafael Soto thanks Carlos Raúl Villanueva, Alejandro Otero, Mateo Manaure, and Alfredo Boulton for having put his name forward for the Ciudad Universitaria de Caracas project and accepts to participate in the undertaking.

Integration of the Arts

(1957)

Carlos Raúl Villanueva

Original text (all in lower case) of the lecture given at the School of Architecture and Town Planning of the Universidad Central de Venezuela on June 27, 1957. Published in Colección Espacio y Forma 3 (Caracas, October 1960), 2nd ed., 3–11, and reprinted in *Arquitectura XXVII*, no.36 (January 1959)(see illustration) on the occasion of Villanueva's visit to Havana. This translation is based on the edition of the text in Luis Velásquez, comp., *Consonancia: La Abstracción Geométrica en Argentina y Venezuela, Años 40 y 50*. Caracas: ArtesanoGroup, 2007.

the arts are the main manifestation of cultural meaning in every era; in them, we discover the features that mark the historical individuality of each period. the greater the conceptual unity or the greater the mutual, formal participation that they manifest, the more clearly apparent is the social axis around which the binomial man/culture rotates. the presence of that axis favors the agglutination of artistic expression. moreover, the unity of human content is a fertile and necessary condition for the flourishing of total integration around a common objective; architecture, painting, sculpture, and technique unite around a collective purpose; the joining together of objectives facilitates a synthesis of the plastic arts.

within this synthesis, architecture, given its adherence to issues of functionality, currently bears the responsibility of defining general concerns from the outset: outlining from the very beginning the guidelines of the structure in which the events of a plastic nature will take shape.

architecture, with the aid of technique, organizes space. it can exist alone, with its single organism, isolated and autonomous, without the collaboration of the other arts, as in certain romanesque churches or in the austere vertical architecture of mies van der rohe.

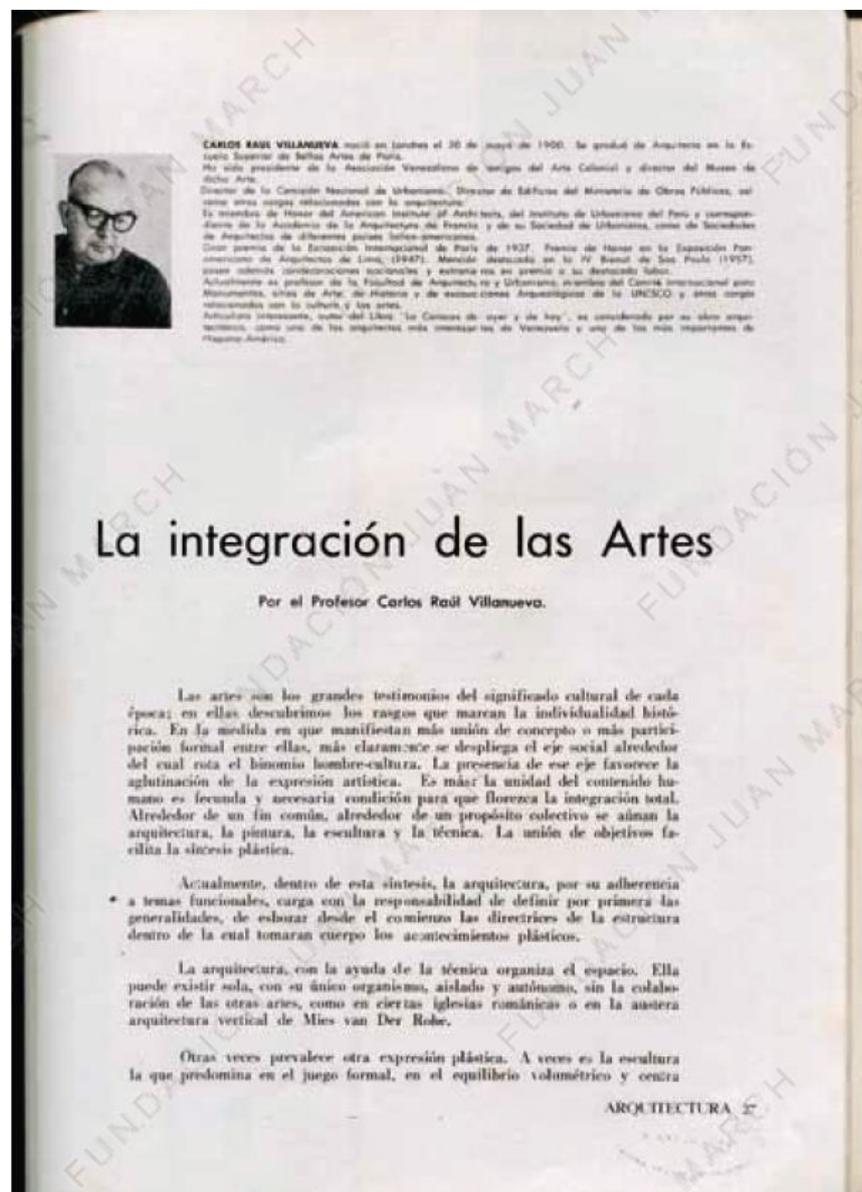
on other occasions another plastic art takes precedent. at times sculpture predominates in the formal interactions, in the volumetric equilibrium, and focuses upon itself the principal interest of the composition. as is the case with the architecture of india or the imposing pre-colombian constructions, the sculptural substitutes for the architectural. that is, because of the metaphysical characteristics of those peoples' focus in life and religion, architecture conceived organically as a closed space, as an internal space, is displaced in favor of a monumental conception of the plastic as an external fact, directed more towards the exaltation or

mystical valorization of a transcendent life external to man than towards the pragmatic recognition of human actions.

on other occasions it is painting that ostensibly marks the space and content of architecture. in those cases the subjects (and the form with which those subjects are treated) surpass in importance, in vigor, in arrogant isolation, the value of the walls that receive them. those pictorial subjects, then, have a value of their own, regardless of the architectural space in which they are situated. moreover, it is they that leave their characteristic stamp on that milieu. the best example of this is michelangelo's sistine chapel, in which the pictorial values are evidently superior to the architectural space and totally indifferent or neutral with respect to it. when the world of the plastic arts is pervaded by a single concept, when a single philosophy runs through it, when a single vision enriches its components, the arts coexist on the same ground (often in contact with each

other), but they do not necessarily join in a total fusion. the effort to integrate them is not necessary. there is no need for total union, either as a purpose or as the consequence of collective work. nevertheless, those works that flourish in a single period, protected by a single sentiment, show, under careful analysis, a constant unity of form.

this is the result of what has been called the "zeitgeist," and it is also the product of contacts and cultural mixes that have been more or less frequent depending on the greater or lesser ease of communication and transmission of culture. in the photos that i will presently show, the persistence of certain forms that emerge in very unrelated cultural fields will be clearly apparent. they demonstrate the permeability of different artistic events and the extremely important influence that the same technique, with its rigorous approach dictated by function, has had on artistic vision.



there are moments of crisis when the arts diverge, and each follows its own individual path. even if they skirt around the same subjects, their languages are different and sometimes extremely individualized. this occurs when it is necessary to reconstruct a language, surmounting a syntax and a grammar spent by use and which no longer correspond to the new human contents. in those moments there is a unity of purpose concentrated on the search for an elementary plastics (sometimes starting from zero), that leads to the elaboration of new boundaries which are original, new, and appropriate. at those moments, the elements that comprise the internal structure of each artistic focus should be separated, analyzed, and even sterilized (if need be), so that, after a long work of analysis, the foundations may be laid for a more concrete construction, for a larger narrative, final and profound, in which the relationship between content and form is more explicit and more cohesively ties the two terms together. the crisis produced at the turn of the twentieth century led to precisely the search for purity of language that can help us clarify the preceding. indeed, as the contradictions between new technique and old decoration became acute, along with those that existed between the new social problematic and old social forms, twentieth-century man, who was born with his eyes set on the immense possibilities and transformations offered by mechanization, elaborates again the basic elements

of his language, clearly separating each form of artistic expression. it is only later, once that language has been elaborated, that the need (and therefore the possibility) to re-integrate those scattered elements is announced.

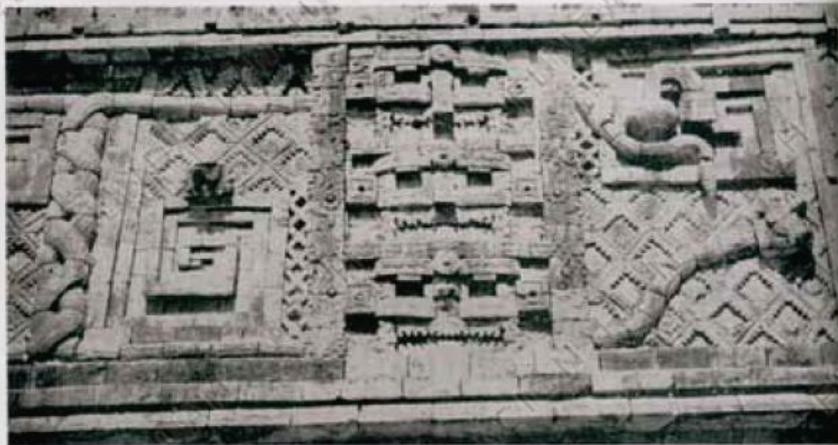
what are the reasons for which artistic integration is currently promoted by architects, painters, and sculptors as one of the most important and immediately urgent objectives? why does the painter approach the architect and ask for the opportunity to work with him, in the field of architecture?

why does the architect feel the need to call the painter so that he can make architectural surfaces vibrate with color? the reason, in my opinion, has to do with the fact that the architect, on the one hand, desires to create a deeper meaning for his architecture; he seeks a greater enrichment of its plastic values, through a more controlled, wise, and careful use of the instruments that have been traditionally those of the painter: colors, lines, shapes.

on the other hand, the painter and the sculptor have just emerged from a personalized, individualistic tradition, to enter into another which heralds human intervention as a symbol of social adherence, of human and collective empathy, as a sign of responsibility. it is a matter of reincorporating what his painting or sculpture ceases to offer as a value of communication (above all if they free themselves according to individual arbitrariness), by means of the approach to art which is

in the most functional, direct, and necessary relationship with society. introducing the pictorial or sculptural work within the architectural frame currently means to evince a clear desire to assume social responsibilities. is it necessary to reiterate that the contemporary artist can no longer create for himself alone, in a personal world whose comprehension is limited to a small number of people or that floats in the barren isolation of the individual act?

now then, it is precisely as a reaction against all this that the artist approaches the architect and offers his collaboration. he demands that his plastic vision be allowed to possess another meaning and have social transcendence. this attempt at collaboration does not take place without the prior resolution of a gamut of problems. it is evident that the collaboration between artists, geared towards integration, cannot work without team spirit, solidarity, and camaraderie. likewise, painters and sculptors must have a more or less clear idea of the architect's way of working, of his possibilities as an artist and of what limits his interventions as a technician. the spatial vision that is characteristic of the architect must be understood and utilized by the painter. in like manner, the architect must take into account the particular medium that the painter or the sculptor works in. whether on surfaces or in volumes, he must respect the creative methods that are characteristic of each. there is a substantial difference between a work of integration and an attempt

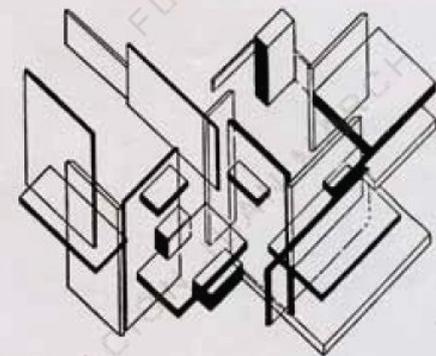


Uxmal—Las Monjas, detalles del hito del edificio occidental.

guaje que bien nos puede servir para aclarar lo anterior. En efecto, al agudizarse las contradicciones entre la nueva técnica y la antigua decoración, entre la nueva problemática social y las antiguas formas, el hombre del siglo XX, que nace con el ojo puesto en las inmensas posibilidades y transformaciones ofrecidas por el maquinismo, vuelve a elaborar los elementos básicos de su lenguaje, separando netamente cada una de las expresiones artísticas. Es solamente tarde, cuando ese lenguaje ya está elaborado, que se anuncia la necesidad, y por ende, la posibilidad de volver a integrar estos elementos dispersos.

¿Cuáles son las razones por las cuales la integración artística, actualmente, se propone por parte de los arquitectos y por parte de los pintores y escultores, como uno de los fines más importantes, como uno de los objetivos a lograr más inmediatos? ¿Por qué el pintor se acerca al arquitecto y pide que se le dé oportunidad de trabajar junto a él, en el campo de la arquitectura?

¿Por qué el arquitecto siente la necesidad de llamar al pintor para que con el color haga vibrar las superficies arquitectónicas? La razón, a nuestro



Theo Van Doesburg 1921.

como valor de comunicación (sobre todo si se libran a la arbitrariedad individual), se trata de reincorporarlo mediante el acercamiento al arte que con la sociedad está en la relación más funcional, más directa, más necesaria. Introducir la obra pictórica o escultórica dentro del marco arquitectónico, significa actualmente evidenciar un claro deseo de asumir responsabilidades sociales.

¿Hace falta repetir que el artista contemporáneo ya no puede crear para sí mismo, en un mundo personal cuya comprensión esté circunscrita a un número limitado de personas o que flote en el aislamiento estéril de la actuación individual?

Pues bien, es justamente como reacción a todo esto que el artista se acerca al arquitecto y ofrece su colaboración. El suyo es un llamado para que a su visión plástica se le deje poseer un significado más y una transcendencia social. Este intento de colaboración no se realiza sin antes resolver una amplia gama de problemas. Es evidente que la colaboración entre los artistas, con el fin de la integración, no puede tener consecuencia sin espíritu de equipo, de solidaridad en el trabajo y de compañerismo. Asimismo es necesario que los pintores o escultores tengan una idea más o menos clara de la forma de trabajo del arquitecto, de sus posibilidades como artista y de sus determinantes como técnico. La visión espacial que es propia del arquitecto debe ser comprendida y utilizada por el pintor. Igualmente el arquitecto deberá tomar en cuenta los

at decoration. decoration, in our time, is viewed as an elaboration of the surface, like a superposition, and, as such, useless or even hostile to the aims of architecture. integration, in contrast, is the product, not only of the understanding of common purposes but also of the necessary subordination between the different forms of expression. it is the creation of a new architectural-sculptural-pictorial organism, in which one does not perceive the slightest indecision, in which one cannot find a single crack between the different modes of expression. that which is necessary in each of those plastic valuations must be irremediably apparent.

color represents an immense force for the architect. for him it is as powerful a medium as floor plans and cross-sections are to determine a space. as léger said, color is a natural necessity, like water and fire. it was a great scandal, more than a century ago, when the archeologist hittford discovered in a greek temple in sicily traces of polychrome painting on its pediments. indeed, the high parts of greek temples were painted with vivid, pure colors. we also know that the egyptians painted their reliefs on walls with the aim of revealing and making more visible those parts of the temple that needed to be more apparent. the romans appear to have been the first to leave materials, marble or stone, without any polychrome decoration, reserving for their stucco walls the joy of their frescoes. in the medieval period as well, cathedrals offer examples of polychrome painting.

our lady of paris had its tympana painted in gold and vivid colors. its sculptures stood out with their black, red, and other bright colors. while in the renaissance interior spaces lose the vibrations of color to take on the geometric rigor of white surfaces, the baroque, in contrast, took advantage of all the resources painting could offer to carry to the limit its attempts at distortion and the creation of optical illusions. indeed, baroque domes, with their vertical perspective, disintegrate measurable space; they project heaven-ward their enormous masses, voluptuously decorated—the dense material that stirs in the walls and at the base of the interior space.

color also has a use as an instrument for ordering, rectifying, determining, or appraising volumes and surfaces, for accentuating outlines, affirming spaces. but used in this sense, it does not go beyond being simply one more tool among others that the architect employs to establish a more immediate communication between his work and the man that will use it.

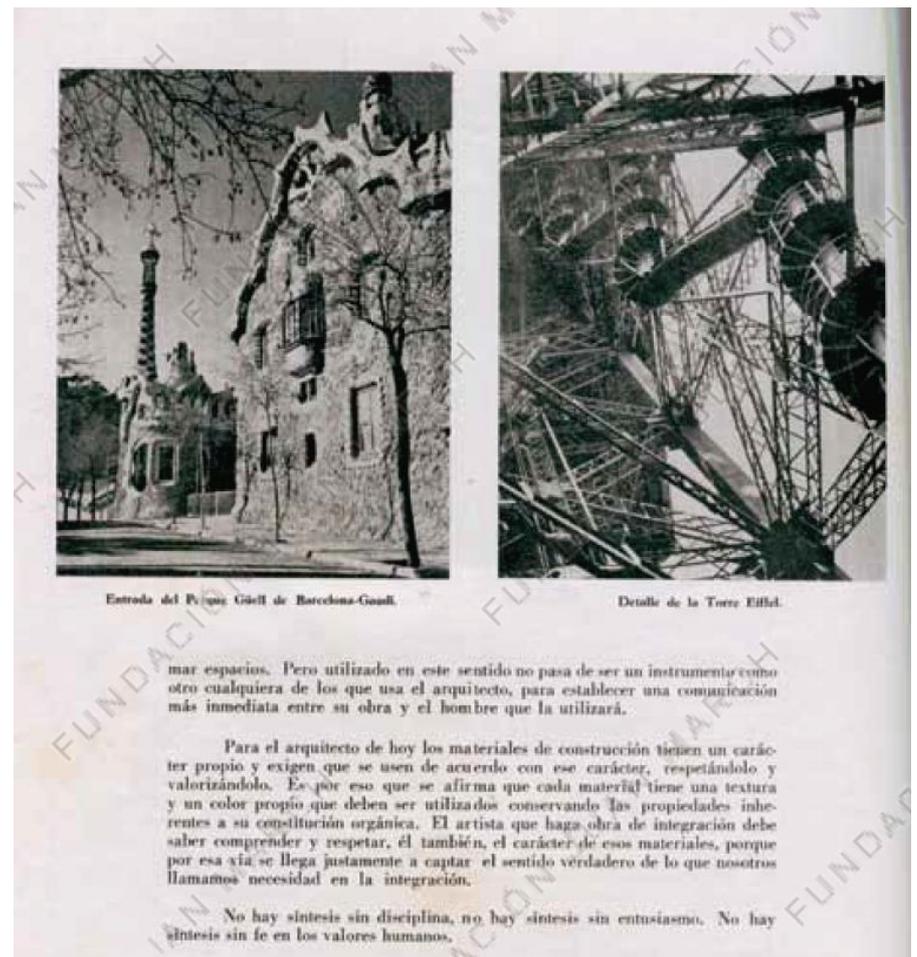
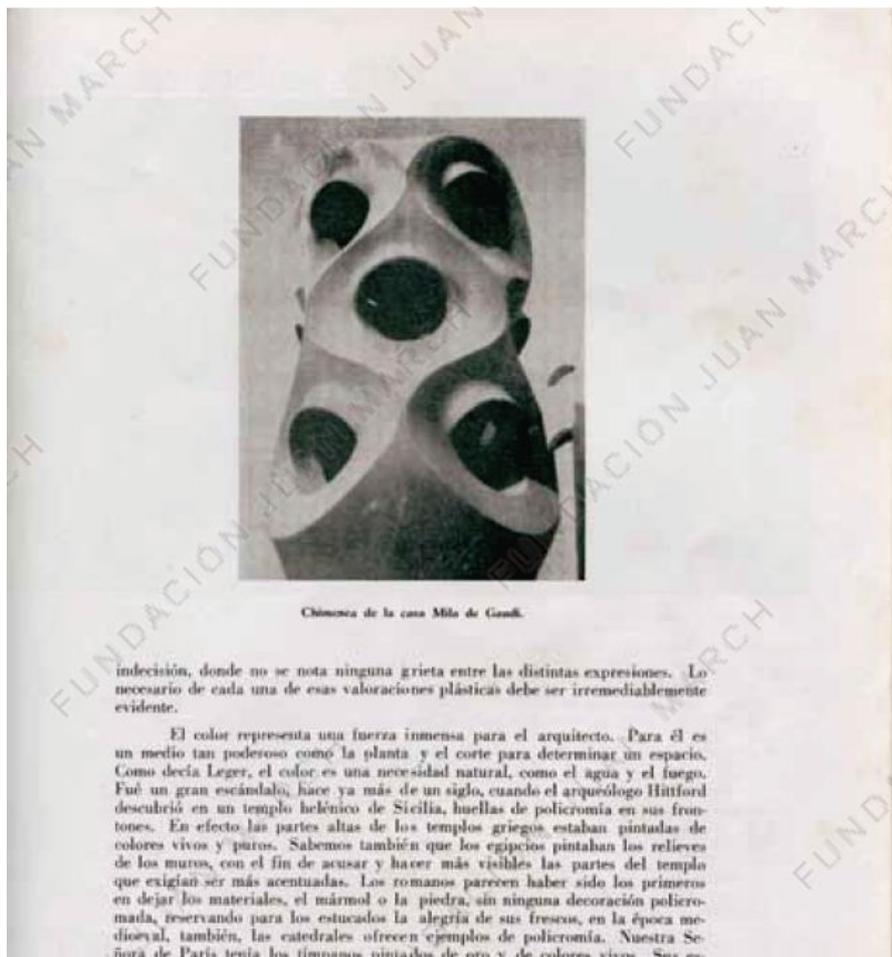
for today's architect, construction materials have their own character and demand that they be used according to that character, respecting it and valuing it. for this reason it is claimed that each material has its own texture and color, which must be used in such a way as to preserve the inherent properties of its organic constitution. and regarding the artist who creates a work of integration, he, too, must know how to understand and respect the character of those materials, because

that path leads precisely to an understanding of the true sense of what i call necessity in integration.

there is no synthesis without discipline. there is no synthesis without enthusiasm. there is no synthesis without faith in human values.

it is useful to recall with michel ragon that, just as lions should not be in zoos, paintings and sculptures should not be shut away in museums.

the natural environment of wild animals is the jungle. the natural environments for works of art are squares, gardens, public buildings, factories, airports: all the places where man perceives man as a partner, as an associate, as a helping hand, as hope, and not as the withered flower of isolation and indifference.



“Colorhythms”¹

(1957)

Alejandro Otero

Originally published in Spanish as “Coloritmos” in the catalogue of the exhibition Coloritmos-Alejandro Otero, Galería de Arte Contemporáneo, Caracas, May-June, 1957.

This series of paintings that I have called **colorhythms** can be defined as a series of experiments—in the sense of an expressive adventure—whose primary interest lies in rhythm and in color, in the power of the color-form linked to the visual dynamism of rhythm contrary to what one who looks at these compositions superficially might think, they are not the result of a calculation or the product of a theory conceived a priori at the time I composed the sketches that precede each of them, rhythms and tensions, forms and colors followed the free course of my own intuition no judgment or control unconnected to **the unity** of the very act of creation itself has intervened in them in each sketch the work of art has sought, almost by itself, **its unity**, its beginning and its end however, a sketch is not always a work of art; the latter often demands greater fullness, a more refined language, and even a technique and a material which are indispensable to it and which in the sketch is only ever attained rarely the differences that exist between the sketches for each of these works and the works themselves are but this: a more adequate proportion or scale, more formal clarity, greater definition in the coloring and organization; all this in immediate relationship with the material used—lacquer on wood and plexiglas—and therefore with the appropriate **technique**—colors applied with a spray gun to develop a sketch is to extract from it its ultimate possible consequences, to carry it to the dimensions of a more complete or mature work this does not signify a break in the creative act but rather the opening of possibilities for a greater enrichment and expansion accompanying the paintings that I am currently showing are the sketches that correspond to some of them I hope that this allows for a better understanding of the way these **colorhythms** have been created as can be seen from the difference in the dates between the sketches and the completed works, the latter in some cases were finished long after the sketch was created the number indicates the order in which the work was conceived.

1 “Coloritmos” in Spanish. The original lacks capitals (except for the first word of the piece) and periods (except for the very end). It was printed as a continuous block of text. [Trans.]

On Some Statements of Dissent by the Painter Alejandro Otero Rodríguez

(1957)

Miguel Otero Silva

The most intense and important polemic on abstract art in Venezuela began in 1957, provoked by Alejandro Otero’s statements criticizing the jury’s decision to bestow the National Prize for Sculpture to Eduardo Gregorio at the XVIII Salón Oficial Anual de Arte Venezolano. The polemic was compiled for the first time in 1957 in the collection “Letras Venezolanas” published by the Ministry of Education. It was reprinted in Sergio Antillano’s book, *Los salones de arte*, in 1976. From *El Nacional* (Caracas, March, 20, 1957) 12.

With an impetuosity that brings to mind the now somewhat forgotten era of “Los Disidentes,” the abstract painter Alejandro Otero Rodríguez has attacked the jury of the XVIII Salón de Arte Nacional, his wrath stirred by the jury’s decision to bestow the prizes for painting and sculpture on Armando Barrios and Eduardo Gregorio¹ rather than on abstract painters.

I should point out that I was not a member of that jury, and more importantly, that I hold radical aesthetic differences with several who were. But the decision to honor the works of Barrios and Gregorio with first prizes has seemed to me so just and proper, that I have not been able to resist the temptation to write these comments in response to the recriminations made by my dear friend Alejandro Otero.

He begins with a fanciful classification of the members of the jury that can only be explained by that rashness in judgment that partisan attitudes typically bring to bear. Alejandro publicly asserts that the jury was made up of one member who favored abstract art, “against six who lean toward the contrary tendency.” In this way, he attempts arbitrarily to group six members of the jury together under the same category, pigeonholed into one “tendency,” based only on the fact that those six members, for various reasons, do not agree with abstract art, or at least do not consider it to be the sole and exclusive form of legitimate artistic expression.

Do Pedro Centeno Vallenilla and Marcos Castillo,² two members of the jury, belong to the same artistic tendency? Do Santiago Poletto and Elisa Elvira Zuloaga,³ also members of the jury, belong to the same tendency? All of us, abstract artists included, know perfectly well that to affirm this is a foolishly puerile claim. A cultivated and talented man of the caliber of Otero Rodríguez, however, gambols on the road to nonsense when he makes a hotchpotch out of Centeno and Castillo, Poletto and Elisa Elvira, simply because the dogmatic approach of the artistic school to which he belongs so demands. The truth is very different. The truth is that painters are not divided between abstract painters and “the rest,” but rather abstractionism is one of many currents that exist in the world of painting. To toss impressionists, fauvists, cubists, expressionists, surrealists, neo-realists, etc., into the same bag simply because they are not abstract artists is as arbitrary as if a surrealist, let’s say, were to believe himself entitled to claim that Alejandro Otero and the portraitist Botzaris⁴ belong to the “same school” because neither of them is a surrealist.

I do not know why the members of the jury, despite the diverse tendencies they represent, came to the agreement to award the national prizes to Armando Barrios and Eduardo Gregorio. Regardless of their reasons, however, I and hundreds of others who attended the opening of the Salón, can single out three fundamental reasons in favor of their verdict and against those who sought to have this year’s awards land in the hands of abstract artists. These are:

First, a reason whose argument is human. The work carried out over the last twenty years by our Museo de Bellas Artes—whose most visible achievement is the enthusiastic crowds that currently attend its exhibitions—is owing to the fervent, selfless, and persistent efforts of a group of artists: Antonio Edmundo Monsanto, Manuel Cabré, Luis Alfredo López Méndez, Carlos Otero, Elisa Elvira Zuloaga, Pedro Ángel González, Carlos Raúl Villanueva, Juan Röhl, Alfredo Boulton, Armando Barrios, etc.⁵ Against that Museum, against those exhibitions, against those organizers and juries, a group of Venezuelan abstract painters has carried out a systematic campaign that began with the intemperate bursting onto the scene of “Los Disidentes”; this campaign sustained itself on the permanent boycott of official exhibitions. On the occasion of this year’s exhibition, however, for reasons not yet publicly explained, the abstract artists revised their position, ended the boycott, and chose to participate. Should we have expected that those involved with the reviled juries, with an insulted museum, and with spurned exhibitions would respond to this unexpected return of the abstract artists by awarding them with national prizes, which in our country traditionally imply not only a judgment of artistic merit, but also the recognition of a history of loyalty to culture? The most basic human sense of fairness suggested the contrary.

Second, a reason that is social. As much as it is an aesthetic attitude, abstract art represents a philosophical position. Its sign is evasion; its modus operandi, to

escape from reality and seek refuge in the subjective and esoteric world of the artist. It is the old theory of art for art’s sake—pure, uncontaminated art—that has appeared throughout human history in different guises and that, in the twentieth century, as a response to both world wars, has sought refuge under the rubric of “abstract art.”

This formulation is comprehensible only to its minority coterie of initiates who deny mankind and the Earth and show no interest in the people and its suffering; who seek to substitute artistic emotion with the cerebral appreciation of the work of art. It is understandable that in a *faisandée*, culturally decadent nation, worn out by skepticism and a lack of faith in man, the national prize would go to an abstract painting. But never in these American nations, which bear their destiny with the clay of humanity and ask of their artists works that will contribute to the consummate fulfillment of that destiny.

Third, a reason whose argument pertains to aesthetic content. When the jury bestowed the national prize for painting on Armando Barrios and for sculpture on Eduardo Gregorio, far from committing a “gross injustice,” as Alejandro Otero suggests, the prizes went to two artists entirely deserving of them, from any point of view. Without going into considerations about their school or tendency, I can say that Armando Barrios, who already passed through an abstract phase and took from it those descriptive attributes that it can provide, is a Venezuelan painter of the first order and has deserved this recognition for years; but it is only today, in the eighteenth installment of the exhibition, that he has obtained it. I mean specifically that if the intrinsic artistic qualities of his work, its chemically pure aesthetic merits, were taken into exclusive consideration, Armando Barrios would still be deserving of the prize. In the section of the exhibition devoted to the abstract artists (a cold, winter pasture of a repeated formula), notwithstanding the impressive technical mastery of Alejandro Otero or the hand-shackled poetry of Angel Hurtado,⁶ there was no work that could have legitimately wrested the prize from Barrios.

Regarding Gregorio, matters are even graver. The magnificent work of this sculptor from the Canary Islands stood in such a superlative manner above all its competitors that not to give him the prize would have been practically an outrage. So much so, that Alejandro Otero had to resort to arguments completely unrelated to artistic mastery when he asserts that an abstract sculptor should have received the award instead of Gregorio. “This is a blow to the drive of the Nation,” he says, because the competing abstract sculptors were Venezuelan and Gregorio is Spanish. “He could have become better acclimatized to our milieu,” he adds, because Gregorio has only lived in Venezuela for six months. These discriminatory assertions, common in others, are inappropriate in a man of Alejandro Otero’s education, as inappropriate as those exotic recipes our greenhorn abstract sculptors follow in their formulaic, mass-produced constructions are a thousand times more foreign to the artistic “drive of the Nation” than the beautiful girl in alabaster, a prodigy of tenderness

and a sign of the new spirit, well understood by Eduardo Gregorio, for which he obtained his prize. So what if the abstract sculptors were born in the town of Charallave and Gregorio has only recently arrived.

Lastly, the most lamentable aspect of this imbroglia is, in my opinion, Alejandro Otero Rodríguez’s already lengthy foray in the field of abstractionism. He is an extraordinarily talented painter whose artistic vocation is prodigious, and Venezuelan painting should rightfully be able to place its firmest hopes upon him. It pains me to see him struggling year after year in the midst of a barren and partisan aesthetic current, drying up his creative genius under the weight of a dogma that in the name of “new art” aspires to turn painting into a secondary and decorative craft, subordinated to architecture. What great works of art he would execute if he were to abandon parallels and ruling pen to brandish his brush again and confront, without prejudices, the Venezuelan land and Venezuelan man!

- 1 Armando Barrios (1920–1999), Venezuelan member of the group Los Disidentes; Eduardo Gregorio López Martín (1903–1974), sculptor and ceramist from the Canary Islands who emigrated to Venezuela in 1956, where he came into contact with kinetic art and geometric abstraction. His earlier works evolved toward indigenism. [Ed.]
- 2 Pedro Centeno Vallenilla (1904–1988), Venezuelan painter and diplomat, creator of the murals for the Federal capitol building and for the Círculo de las Fuerzas Armadas in Caracas. In his work one observes a symbiosis of the racial and the mythic; Marcos Castillo (1897–1966), Venezuelan painter in whose works the influence of Cézanne predominates. [Ed.]
- 3 Santiago Poletto, Venezuelan artist who followed a social-indigenist or historical line; Elisa Elvira Zuloaga (1900–1980), Venezuelan painter and graphic artist. [Ed.]
- 4 Sava Botzaris (1894–1965), painter and sculptor born in Belgrade, in the former Yugoslavia, he lived in England and France and in 1938 emigrated to Venezuela. The creator of portraits of such well-known writers as George Bernard Shaw, James Joyce, and Thomas Hardy.
- 5 Antonio Edmundo Monsanto (1890–1948), Venezuelan painter and art historian, founder of the Círculo de Bellas Artes, he rebelled against the prevailing academism. He greatly influenced the training of many other Venezuelan artists; Manuel Cabré (1890–1984), Venezuelan landscape painter born in Spain; Luis Alfredo López Méndez (1901–1996), Venezuelan landscape painter, professor, and politician; Carlos Otero (1886–1977), Venezuelan painter and first director of the Museo de Bellas Artes in Caracas; Pedro Ángel González (1901–1982), Venezuelan painter and founder of the Taller de Artes Gráficas in Caracas; Juan Röhl, Juan Röhl writer and art critic. [Ed.]
- 6 Angel Hurtado (b. 1927), Venezuelan painter, musician, and filmmaker; linked early in his career to the first period of the Taller Libre de Arte; later, in Paris, he encountered Soto and kinetic art, about which he directed his first film, *Vibrations*. His first fiction film, *La chambre d’à coté* (The Room Next Door), is also well known. [Ed.]

Letter to Miguel Otero Silva

(1957)

Alejandro Otero

Originally published in Spanish as Alejandro Otero, "Carta a Miguel Otero Silva," *El Nacional* (Caracas, March 20, 1957), 2

Dear Miguel,

I think the statements I made a few days ago in *El Universal* and in this very newspaper, regarding the debatable deservedness of the awarding of the National Prize for Sculpture and regarding the bias of the members of the jury who ruled in the contest, require some clarification because, following their publication, I have heard arguments, criticisms, and comments that demand a clearer exposition. It would not be odd, taking into account the general climate, that a controversy should arise around this problem, abstract art included. This has led me to write to you to accept once and for all the challenge of a debate, knowing full well that in a couple of sheets of paper one cannot fully develop a theoretical discussion about art, though, perhaps, it might open up the possibility for a clear-minded debate between opposing views.

I think that controversies are always beneficial, or at least amusing. In principle, they are good for stirring things up—Caracas needs it from time to time—and even if they do not get far, they are useful for defining ourselves, something that rarely happens among us these days. For my part, I do not think the latter will be difficult for me. Here, in my country, where I like to live and where I have sought to do something useful, I have thrown to the winds all my beliefs as a man and as a painter, and I have accepted the risk that this implies. When working on my art, I am also aware of this risk and I have never been afraid of the provincial commotions that it may provoke. I could not possibly get angry over it, as I am secure in my decision to obey my deepest needs as an artist. However, I know that behind this there also hides another risk, perhaps the gravest of all: that of being a bad painter, much to my regret. But, who can ever escape these feelings of uncertainty in the deepest recesses of his being? Only those who are arrogant, those who are full of vanity. I can have been taken for one of them on occasion, but I believe that I have never been arrogant or vain in the face of a negative judgment of my work. I have been, however, in the face of the arrogance and smugness of others, especially when I am convinced that little or nothing sup-

ports their claims, as in the case of the unappreciated Guayasamín.¹

The fact that in the eighteenth Salón all the schools of art practiced today in Venezuela were represented—which confers particular importance on this event—demanded the selection of a jury that would reflect that reality. I would like to stress this again, for the jury chosen was made up of a perplexing majority of supporters of a single tendency, something that openly contradicted the very spirit of the Salón which aspired to bring together these different tendencies, as in fact it did. Thus, it was necessary to form a balanced jury—or unbalanced, if you will, but in a reasonable proportion of four against three and not six against one, as was the case.

You might think that personal resentments move me in this matter. Happily, the exhibition remains open and it is not difficult to ascertain the degree of injustice committed this year. Is the quality of Gregorio's sculptures superior to that of Carreño's and Varela's?² Are the figurative artists better represented in their halls than the abstract artists in theirs? What are the problems posed by each of them in their respective treatment of the plastic?

Let them respond who are capable of judging without prejudices and who know what they are talking about. In this sense, it would be advisable for juries to explain their verdicts and for a discussion about it to ensue.

Cordial greetings from your friend,
San Antonio de los Altos, March 19, 1957

- 1 Oswaldo Guayasamín (1919–1999), Ecuadorian painter. [Ed.]
- 2 Abigail Varela (b. 1948), Venezuelan sculptress. [Ed.]

The “Los Disidentes” Parenthesis

(1988)

Alejandro Otero

Published in *Imagen* 100–37 (Caracas, January 1988): 48.

In 1950, in the age of “The Dissidents,” a group of then very young painters in Paris embarked upon the challenge of bringing Venezuelan plastic arts to the level of the contemporary arts in Europe. It was not a question of renovation or a simple bringing up to date, which would have been possible with little effort; rather, they responsibly assumed the profound commitment of responding to a moment (in Western terms) that presented itself as an unknown quantity rather than a tangible reality.

It was not a question of nimbly grasping the typical characteristics and orientations of the period (which were already confused and in decline), but rather understanding, from its very foundations, a wider cultural space, the point of departure for the epoch that was to become truly ours. This, because of our youth and our origins: we had lived, geographically and in history, as distant imitators of the currents of European thought that determined our creative existence.

Thus, we were presented with a difficult task whose dimensions were unexpected: to resolve the lacunae of a deficient training and, at the same time, to go about understanding that moment which projected itself vertiginously into the future.

Contemporaneousness was not a matter of an instant or an hour, but of a period of time between our youth and its necessary maturation. That and no other, was going to be the interval: we were to be its witnesses and also its actors. That would be the only way to situate ourselves in it, to belong to it.

I should clarify that I am not speaking exclusively of European time. Our responsibility as men hailing from other latitudes was to stretch that time out, making it include us with our own peculiarities: we are the West in its unity and its multiplicity.

We found ourselves on the edge of two worlds, one that was ending, struggling to survive; another that was opening up as a possibility—a possibility, because nobody truly embodied it. We felt we could have a role there, and that we could be the “relay” generation, someday, not exactly in Paris.

Our group dissolved very quickly, abandoning the common responsibility we had assumed. We are still

friendly and close to each other, but nobody took charge of the path that each of us followed on our own. In Venezuela we appeared together in the occasional local project as a group, as a result of the space that at that point opened up for abstract art, which dominated as a tendency, though it had no leader guiding, so to speak, any of its unforeseeable paths.

Abstract art was important as a potential impetus, personified above all in the pioneers from the years before the war: Kandinsky and Mondrian, an antithesis of the “organic” and the “essential”; this impetus thus situated everyone at one of these two extremes, which, it was expected, would engender new paths.

What it produced was a “derivative” art, based on one style or the other. I would go further: what happened for a long time afterwards, with few exceptions, was a speculative game starting from one or the other system of forms (albeit not of conception)—a sufficiently great deviation from those potential paths such that the road to true creativity was largely lost.

Cover Sketch and text for the Calder's exhibition catalogue at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas (1955)

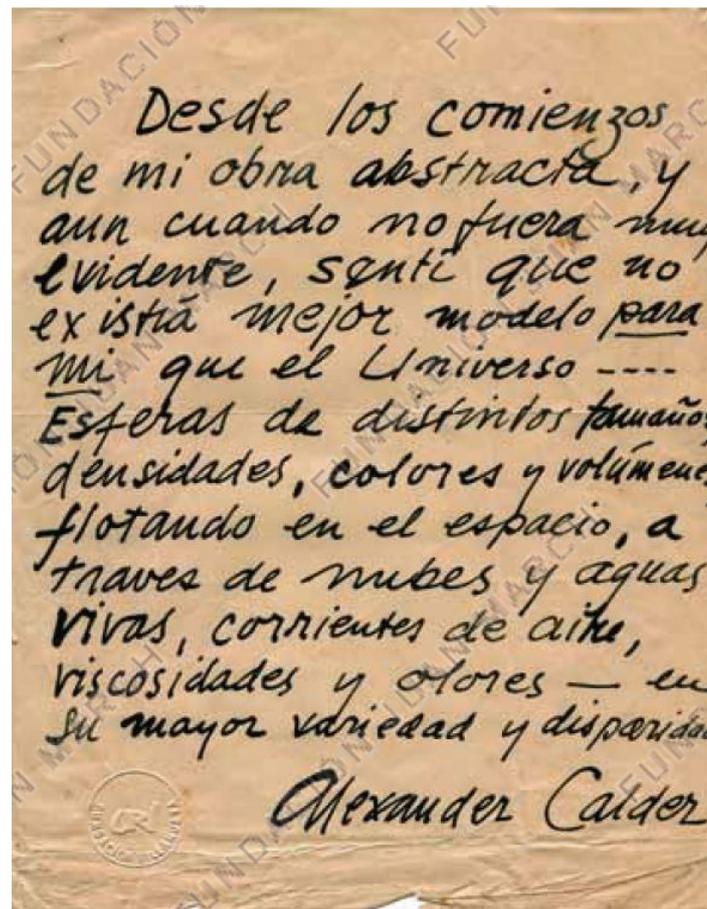
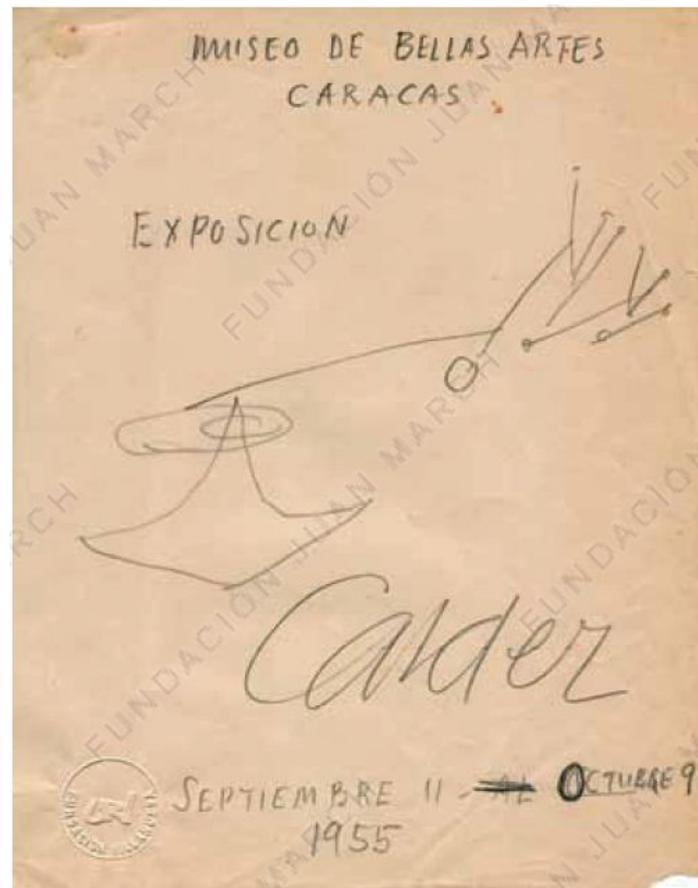
Carlos Raúl Villanueva

Pencil sketch for the cover of Alexander Calder's exhibition catalogue at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas, September 11–25, 1955. Handwritten text by Alexander Calder for the catalogue of his exhibition at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas, September 11–25, 1955.

From the beginning of my abstract work, even when it might not have seemed so, I felt there was no better model for me to choose than the Universe ----

Spheres of different sizes, densities, colors and volumes, floating in space, traversing clouds and sprays of water, currents of air, viscosities and odors — of the greatest variety and disparity.

Alexander Calder



Letter to Carlos Raúl Villanueva

(1958)

Richard Neutra

ARCHITECT AND CONSULTANT
2300 SILVERLAKE BOULEVARD
LOS ANGELES 39, CALIFORNIA
TELEPHONE: NORMANDY 5-8194. NORMANDY
4-2684, MRS. G. SERULNIC, EXECUTIVE
COLLABORATORS: DION NEUTRA, BENNO FISCHER, SERGE KOSCHIN
JOHN BLANTON

CABLE: RITRA

October 20, 1958

Mr. Carlos Raul Villanueva
Los Jabillos, 27 - La Florida
Caracas, Venezuela

Dear Mr. Villanueva,

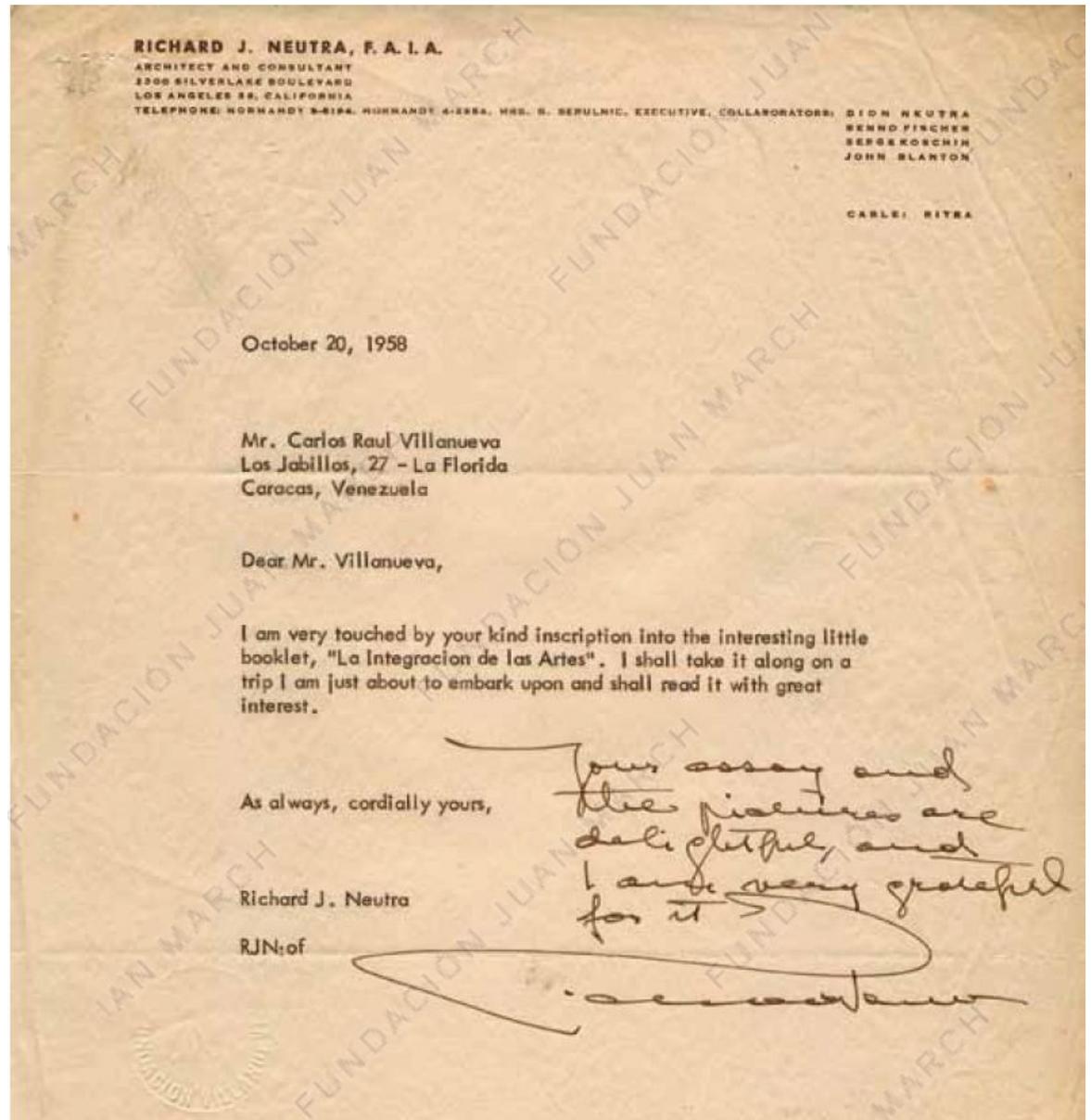
I am very touched by your kind inscription into the interesting little booklet, "La Integración de las Artes". I shall take it along on a trip I am just about to embark upon and shall read it with great interest.

As always, cordially yours,

Richard J. Neutra
RJN: of

Your essay and the pictures are delightful, and I am very grateful for it

[Neutra's signature]



Letter to Carlos Raúl Villanueva

(1959)

Alexander Calder

CALDER
PAINTER HILL ROAD
R.F.D. ROXBURY
CONN. U.S.A.

11 Oct 59

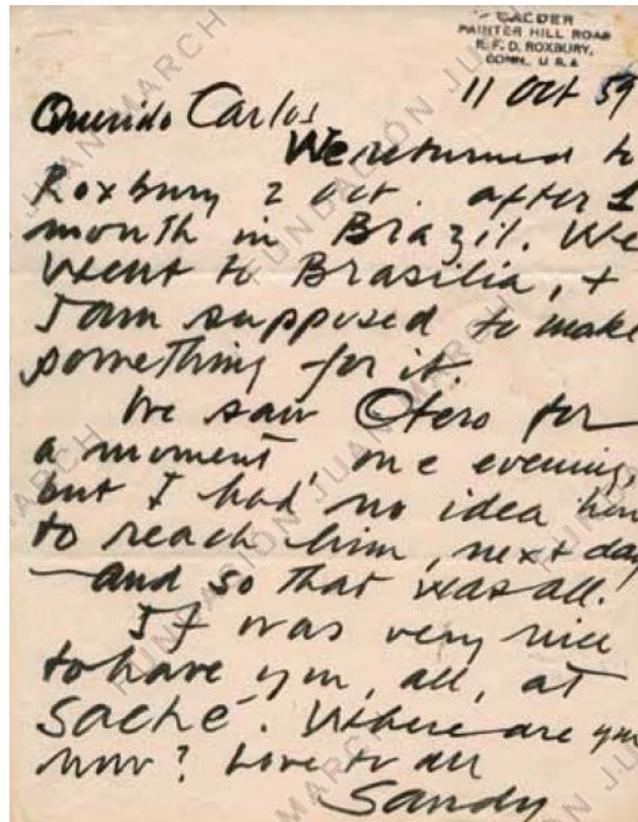
Querido Carlos

We returned to Roxbury 2 Oct. after 1 month in Brazil. We went to Brasilia, + I am supposed to make something for it.

We saw Otero for a moment, one evening, but I had no idea how to reach him, next day—and so that was all.

It was very nice to have you, all, at Saché. Where are you now? Love to all

Sandy



CALDER
PAINTER HILL ROAD
R.F.D. ROXBURY,
CONN. U.S.A.

11 OCT 59

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Letter to Carlos Raúl Villanueva

(1963)

Alejandro Otero

Dr. Carlos Raúl Villanueva
CARACAS.—

Paris, January 14, 1963

Dear Villanueva,

I received your letter from the 5th. I hope that in the interim you have received the duplicates in color from the School of Architecture which I sent you with my previous letter.

Fina is very concerned because at the last minute she forgot who the magazines were for, and this is understandable, she had hundreds of parcels and a very long list of people to see regarding the exhibition in Le Havre, on top of other problems, and too little time. She left them with Miss Ana Teresa Serna, her assistant for all matters pertaining to the Foundation, and I will write to her now so that she contacts you.

Regarding the mock-up, it is in Miss Serna's possession. Although the documents in it are only a rough approximation, the general sense of the exhibition seems no less clear to me: to offer as complete an idea as possible about the Venezuela that nurtured us; its breathtaking landscape, its peoples, its buildings; of the man who expresses himself in a lightly engraved stone or in the blue of a wall—up to our own time, pausing at just the right moment to examine the creative undertaking that the Ciudad Universitaria represents, and then concluding at ten: nine painters and a sculptor, the list of whom you already know, as well as their works.

We need color slides and black and white photographs, as many as necessary to thoroughly develop each subject. Recent experiences, particularly the Le Corbusier exhibition, lead me to do away with the formula of large format photographs, which become tedious, and which everybody resorts to without thinking much about the end results. I prefer the small document which, arranged properly, is more intimate and can be more easily manipulated. Save for exceptional cases, such as the Aula Magna, for example, I think we could arrive at proportions that vary between 0.50 x 0.50 or 0.60 maximum. In the others I would be happy with 0.20 x 0.20 or 0.30 photographs. For the slides, the 6 x 6 format is always preferable. We should also consider the fact that the exhibition will be itinerant and that we will not always have large spaces at our disposal.

The subject "Synthesis of the Arts at the Ciudad Universitaria in Caracas" must necessarily correspond to you, since nobody else would know how to explain it in all its fullness and complexity: murals, façades, polychromes, perspectives, overview photographs, interiors, construction details, etc., drawing particular attention to the work of a great architect, ever too modest: Carlos Raúl Villanueva.

Since the exhibition includes another chapter, "The Modern City and the Synthesis of the Arts," I would be also grateful if you could send me documents regarding other works of yours such as your house in Caracas, the one on the coast, Cerro Piloto, etc.

When I was preparing the mock-up, giving shape to the exhibition, I realized that there is a singular Venezuela, whose character is especially determined by the landscape, and of which I was unaware until now. Of course, this is not the only factor, but it is the one that to me seems to unify all the others, especially in the field of the plastic arts. Our sense of color and space, the way in which we organize, our notion of scale, the internal dynamic of our works; the almost wild freedom that appears in our work and that seems to defy all unity; the fullness with [which] we take in everything, and even the way we progress by leaps (which is so very typical of us); these things seem to me to be rooted in the Nature that surrounds us and in which we have made ourselves at home, filled with love and enthusiasm for it.

I believe the power of color in my latest *colorhythms* is produced in the same violent way in which our rivers run; when their colors concentrate they are not unlike the reds on our walls when they burst under the midday sun, and even their rhythms plunging downward in vertical lines seem to evoke those waterfalls from my native Guyana. And what about that purest blue sky in February—blue for the School of Architecture—that already has a long history in Venezuelan painting, from the indigo baseboards of our village architecture to the paintings by Jesús Soto. If one examines the mock-up carefully and moves certain things together—Bogen's advertisements (in principle neo-plasticist) with Gasparini's photographs of walls; some of Cruz-Diez's "Physichromies" with certain windows by Coro—numerous confirmations of this sort are strikingly apparent.

Without wishing to prove this thesis in any absolute way with this exhibition—a complete panorama of our reality seen through visual images—the idea has seemed to me to be very necessary and useful for when the first exhibition of Venezuelan painting is held in Europe. The reason is obvious: the lack of information about what we are—from the point of view of the cultural orbit within which we are inscribed (which is none other than Western culture)—leads us to be viewed as hailing from exotic lands from which they expect to be surprised by some type of originality or other. Their disappointment is great when they find that our expressive language is the same as the Euro-

peans' and it is not strange that they should take us for snobs, or at best, for imitators. Many of the criticisms of the Latin American exhibition that we set up this summer in the Modern Art Museum in Paris included this demand; it is a good idea not to repeat the same error. Once this mistake has been rectified nobody will be able to deny that we have our own accent. We can at least aspire to this, and this exhibition tends to highlight that notion.

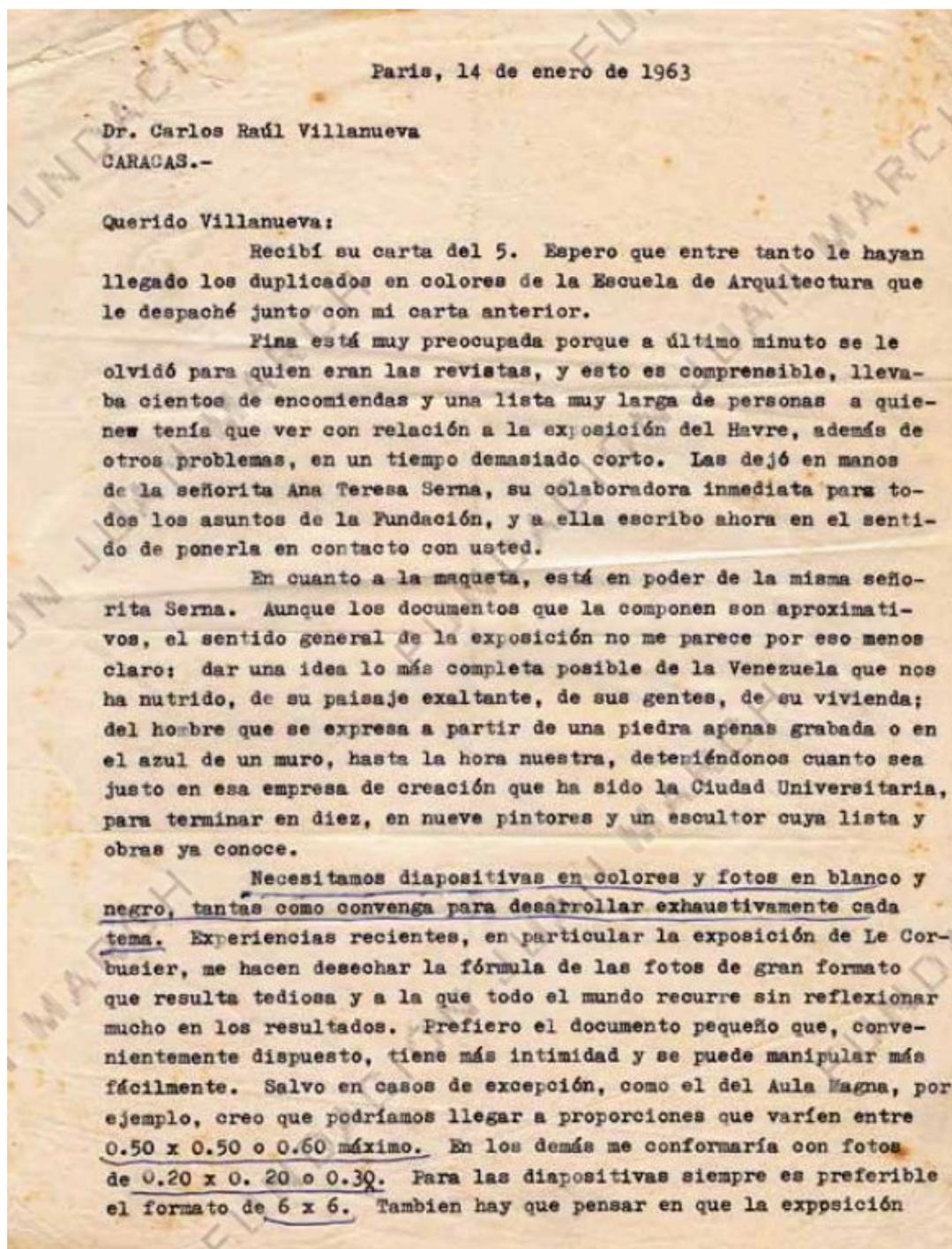
The exhibition, as Fina has already announced, is set to begin on May 16th, and the documents should arrive soon. They should be given to Miss Serna so she can mail them to Paris.

Personally, and on behalf of the Foundation, I thank you for your collaboration. Fondest regards to you and Margot and the children. Your friend, as always,

Alejandro [Alejandro Otero's signature]

Ana Teresa's address is the following:
Edificio GALMUA. Av. CAICARA. Urb LOS CEDROS.

P.S. I am already aware that you received the slides.



Cuba

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A Conversation with Our Abstract Painters (1958)

Juan Marinello¹

Originally published in Spanish as "Conversación con nuestros pintores abstractos," offprint from Mensajes, Cuadernos Marxistas (Havana 1958): 29–39.

SERVITUDE AND REVELATION ²

In this final part of our conversation we can appreciate in all its magnitude the lengthy and heroic race that our plastic arts must run to reach their victorious destiny. The breach between that which is and that which should be is so violent, and the mistaken predilection of so many of our true artists is so deeply ingrained in them that one could rightly imagine that many singular talents are irremediably lost. For it is not a question of a style or a manner but rather of a reorientation of the creative intent. The distance between the nature of abstract art and that of the art we are in need of is such that the change will imply a new order of life. For this reason, whatever optimism we may have falls short, since it is a stretch to think that all the non-figurative artists will return to the true path, convinced of their error. The social and political circumstances to which we have alluded hover over them, and some are held back by a tenuous notoriousness, a reputation earned, in Cuba and abroad, as their abstraction has taken hold. We believe, however, that there is never a surplus of honest advice, and we know that, above and beyond misguided fads and ephemeral glorification, there is an unavoidable process that makes any artistic manifestation a part of the life of a people and a testimony of its deepest problems. It would be a mistake to ask for a specific record; to appeal to fecund loyalty is an obligation. Would that the young Cuban painters in whom such happy qualities are emerging pause to consider a matter that involves the goal of their work and the meaning of their lives.

To stand our visual arts back up on their feet implies making them a valid vehicle to express human concerns. This cannot be achieved without their integration within the country's situation. More than any other art, painting must materialize in works that show the distinctive profile of the creator. And that profile must come from his milieu, no matter how strong and clearly defined his personality may be. It is not a matter of "Cuban color," of course: picturesque, folkloric painting would be the neg-

ative counterpart of abstractionism and even its apparent justification. What is desirable is a class of painting in which the surrounding circumstances condition the work of art in a natural and fluid manner, and in which individual vision is colored from within and remains ever vigilant and watchful.

This unavoidable national character is by definition the best antidote to abstract art. Abstractionism is perforce cosmopolitan and foreign. Since the cosmopolitan does not aim to transform the juices of the earth, it needs no roots. For this reason it is also superficial and sterile. Doesburg said that the universal is simple and therefore rich, situating wealth in the accumulation of aseptic, individualized, and isolating characteristics. This misleading wealth—which has nothing to do with the desirable communication between civilizations and cultures—limits its power to the ostensible understanding of a group of painters of the most diverse origins, united by a negative sign and ruled over by the most reactionary sectors of the moment. Its facile, superficial communication betrays the movement's lack of authenticity. What is profound is always different, and in the resistance and the surprise of its difference lie its enjoyment and efficacy.

The foreignness of abstraction is self-evident. Even given the fact that the theorizers and leaders of the tendency are wrong in the way they address a tragically unsettled Europe, it is clear that they reflect a state of mind that is very far from that which could appear in America. This should inform our painters that, to the primordial nonsense of the anti-figurative one must add the pursuit of reactions that are no less alien, though not just because they are wrong. The decision to focus our gaze on what is ours would quickly cure us of all of this, of cosmopolitan rootlessness and flagrant foreignness.

Painting with these perspectives—reflecting and promoting the national—would encompass an immeasurable repertoire of themes and subjects, and it would have to explore the most intimate part of our spirit to the same degree that it would have to examine the issues that concern us all. This expresses a strict fullness, if it can be qualified as such. The tone of individual reaction must be produced with a decisive voice, the voice that the national group grants it; achieving this with perspicacity and liberty is a noteworthy accomplishment. Following that road one may show the Cuban in all its incarnations. The penetration of its voice and the magnitude of its conflicts have to do with the creator's conscience and strength.

It is possible, probable even, that the abstract artist in his vanity will rise up against our warning, branding it as sectarian, and bring to a close the dialogue alleging that recording the political is not his office. We could respond to the abstract painter that the politics we want is, no more and no less, the politics that has produced great works in every age and that it is, furthermore, a communication—as inevitable as it is fertile—between the most transcendent events of an age and painting in that age. But perhaps it will be best to explain our point of view by dealing with the Cuban reality.

The artist's sense of liberty would carry us to considerations far removed from these arguments; but we should point out that this liberty cannot be understood arbitrarily, illusorily, without attention to the tradition that animates it and the reality that surrounds it. A liberty without these ineluctable sources of energy would lead immediately to abstractionism, and we have already seen its sins. Liberty should reside in the way in which the creator responds to those two determining facts. With that liberty our painter should look in every direction; if he offers an opportune course that is different from his tradition and his reality, he will have imbued his work with the genuine focus that is the stamp of every great accomplishment.

But our island society is not a decorative unity, as many would wish. If our painter fulfills his duty to look around him with a penetrating and interested eye, he will immediately encounter dissimilar reactions that proceed from the place that that which he observes occupies in the whole scenario. He will note the expression of the Cuban allied with foreign monopoly, which reveals the tragic void of one who lacks roots in the historical will of his land. He will note the vacillation of our petty bourgeoisie, with its two faces: the one that looks toward the space of privilege and the one that looks askance at the dissatisfaction of the people. He will note the misery and the struggle of the peasant and proletarian mass, the foundation of the liberating struggle of our time. To faithfully paint this panorama is to present contemporary Cuba and to leave a firm testimony for the future. But he who thinks that this implies an achievement of objective equilibrium suffers the gravest of errors. The dominant and privileged groups are without a doubt a part of our milieu; but they do not express the vital, transformative, revolutionary force that integrates the national will, dynamism, and change. These groups are witnesses to that force and, of course, its tenacious enemies; but their status as a defeated detachment is so evident that a painter cannot fail to apprehend this fact. The popular, proletarian, peasant sectors, in contrast, proudly wear the mark of their impetus and the sign of their triumph. But it is right for us to underline an important fact. The national situation (understood as a process that is underway, marching forward) takes on meaning, substance, reality by virtue of the struggle that animates it, and the classes that propel that struggle color the entire process with their action and presence. This (and not a sectarian interpretation) explains the fact that the most profound upheaval rises from the most revolutionary strata and that the honorable painter must receive it in accordance with the scale of its magnitude. Consider the great Mexican painting, particularly in its spirited beginning, and this will be seen more clearly. Today, the most energetic impulses to fight for what Martí³ called "our second independence" come from the proletariat and from the peasantry; but the liberation from imperialism takes on a national character and demands, therefore, the sensitization of all the elements of the country, with the artists in a prominent position among them. Inevitably, of course, some outmoded maestro will find in the traitorous bourgeoisie a subject

for his art. If his skills are genuine, his work will transmit the ridiculous, caricatured sense of one who has adopted the expression of the person who lords over him. Take a glance at our *exclusive* clubs and you will find the proof. If the painter lends an ear to the popular, in contrast, his work will be born strong in intention and meaning, supported (saved) by the national impulse that sustains it.

It is clear that if we understand artistic expression to be a vital and dynamic part of the life of a people, we will want it to reflect its most general problems. But that does not mean that we should ask our painter that he give himself over, inevitably, to the translation of the change most directly linked to the work of our liberation. That would be to attempt the impossible. But we can ask him to manifest with loyalty and intensity the varied and rich group that incorporates our national way of being, with a faithful record of which we can defend our independence and chip away at the imperialist action. But to follow this path, the first step is to return to figurative art, to shake hands with reality. When there is a return to this path, unsuspected perspectives open up: this is always the case in those stages of history when, faced with an adverse situation, a people is revealed in all its dimensions.

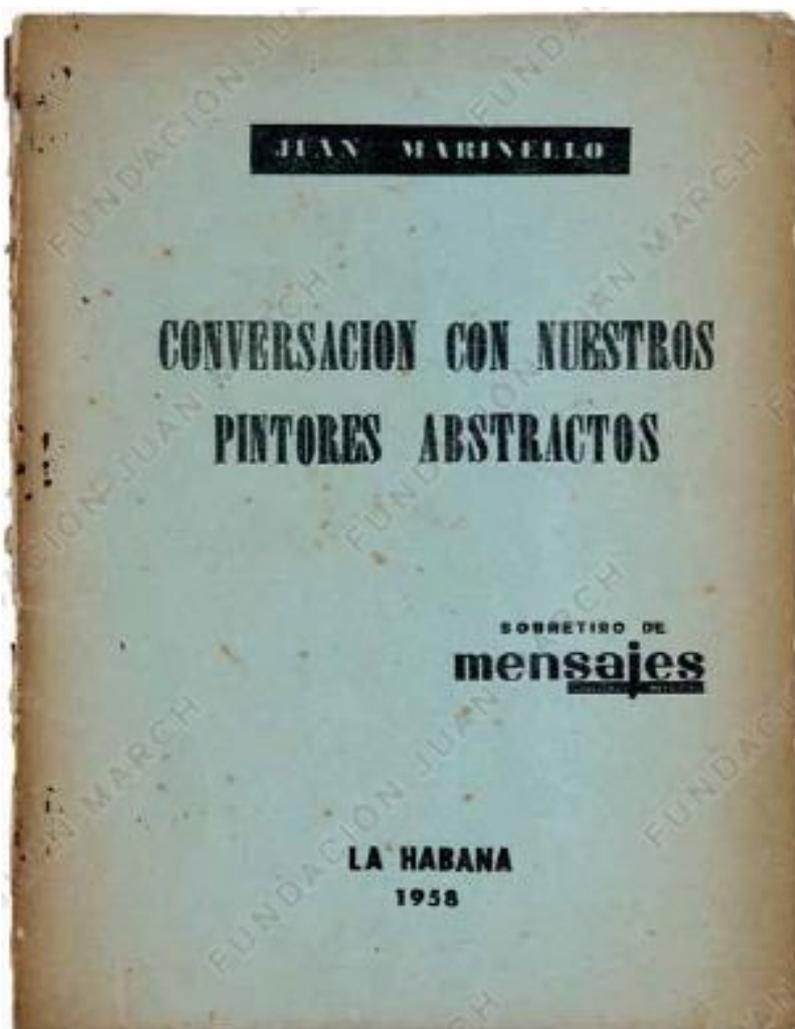
Certain aspects of the Cuban—and we refer both to what is internal and to what is external—had been accurately captured before the abstract epidemic. People like Víctor Manuel, Carlos Enríquez, and Eduardo Abela⁴ achieved in their time intense national translations, even when they always left the impression of showing us the sparks of a fire that was not localized. The revelation of a people in the plastic arts is a task that requires effort, one that confronts, one that is complex, one that marches with life and that cannot be reached with a certain number of fortuitous probings. That revelation does not reside in the contributions of a painter of genius, although his appearance can catalyze the necessary process. This is an affiliated, conscious, energetic orientation of a clear, exact, profound understanding of the role that the plastic arts should play at this stage in Cuba. If the abstract has been, according to the pointed comment of Luis Gardoza y Aragón [*sic*],⁵ a “plastic Esperanto,” the painting that we need should be, above all things, a great national language. A language of our own that will serve to report on the entire spectacle that we confront. Let it be used, at least, to defend its field, to vindicate its authenticity. Its fond exercise will communicate, inevitably, with that which is most profound.

DECISION.

It is not a reiteration of an impressive sentence to say that the time has come for our plastic artists to make a decision. It would be bad for them if they did not recognize this. Persistent topical facts demand this, and reality is not invented and changed like an abstract painting. We already saw that the geometric tautology has been surmounted in the same places where it was born and that our painter cannot give himself over to new dehumanizations. Either he recognizes the need for a sudden leap—which must bring upheavals with it, like all great leaps—or he decides to exhaust himself on the other side of the trench.

It is of great importance that our artists realize that they must confront a great and difficult destiny. We do not possess, like other peoples, a powerful tradition on which to base the new project, but it would be an error not to fully value the partial mastery that has been developing despite the literal wasteland and abstractionist scorn. On the other hand, our island abounds in singular and surprising elements in the field of suggestive appearances; except that up to this point, with fleeting exceptions, our nature has been viewed as slow and lazy or burning with sensual passion: a captive of either (an irredeemably backward) romanticism or a warm sensuality, much more [apparent] in literature than in painting. We must look at our countryside and our city with true and valiant eyes, without disassociating the anxious presence of man from its most sensitive nooks and crannies. As regards human physiognomy, we possess an endless variety of shades and expressions; these have only been captured by painters (and here, too, the exceptions are few) seized by the demon of the sexually and epidermically picturesque, so that the racial projection has not remained in the painting as a way of confronting life but as an external gesture of particular and deliberate situations, as if pain were not a shade of manhood.

Regarding social reality, the Cuban case offers the most intense, painful, and promising aspects; and they all contain a relevant and aggressive objectivity. Imperialist domination, like a great unifying force of the reactionary, has come to add itself to the ancient servitudes and sustained injustices—racial prejudice, subordination of women, deficient and deforming education, monocultures, peasant misery, and growing unemployment. In few places in the world can one witness such a great distance between the country and the city—between the hut and the skyscraper—between the basic life and the most evolved forms of civilization; nowhere do the residues of slavery and the clear consciousness of a free and just future coexist as they do among us. That anguished and rebellious world, that great force which already feels the size of its power, incorporates an invincible whole that shows, in its incorporation and its march forward, a firm and warm beauty. In recording it, our plastic artist finds himself, elevates the meaning of his work, collaborates on a task of historical relevance, and fulfills his grand destiny.



We must wander very far from the Cuban to not recognize that we are approaching a moment of transcendent definition: among very powerful obstacles and fighting against stubborn fogs, the new liberating consciousness clears a path for itself. As in the Wars of Independence, the measure of a conduct and the quality of a work will confront the great common yearning. If our abstract painters persist in their adventure, they will be responsible not only for perverting a great civilizing force but also for having worked against profound unity in decisive moments. If, on the contrary, they understand the signs of the times and base their invention on the wounded but impregnable breast of the people, they will have saved, with their humanity, their creative mission.

THE ESSENCE OF THE CROSSROADS

To the extent that the bourgeoisie has ceased to be a revolutionary force, it has turned against the authenticity, the liberty, and the sagacity of artistic creation. This had to be so, because its wisest captains quickly realized that the clear and true testimony of their failures led necessarily to their defeat. When Chekhov⁶ said that "the more talented an artist, the more extravagant and incomprehensible will his role be, because it is proven that he works for the delight of a dirty beast of prey, and with that supports the order of things," he got to the fundamental issue in the struggle and felt in his own flesh the effects of the aggression.

But the conception that would delineate the relationship between the creator of a work of art and those who rule society as a univocal, unilateral, and uniform conflict would be very simplistic. When the different postulates formulated by artists since the second half of the nineteenth century are studied from all angles, it becomes clear that we are facing a complex process in which the forms of opposition and struggle are various. The usufructuaries of social inequality meet those who denounce the injustice of their rule head on, yet never forget to foment, at times with satanic wisdom, the conceptions that distance a creator from the discovery of reality. When the romantic wails over his fatalistic solitude, when the naturalist takes refuge in his physiologizing isolation, when the symbolist is suspended in ecstasy awaiting the incommunicable crystallization, when the Parnassian isolates himself in affected expectation, the bourgeoisie finds direct and mediated ways of intensifying such distractions.

The struggle of an entire century—the century of the bourgeoisie's decline—should be for today's artist, whether a poet or a painter, an occasion for the richest experience. Neither the romantic nor the naturalist, the symbolist, the Parnassian—and we already know that these approaches were relevant (with the necessary variations) to all the arts—possessed the elements of judgment and the global vision offered by our times. This explains why every artist, to his degree and level, from Lamartine to Rimbaud,⁷ has declared himself misunderstood, the bearer of an otherworldly message, cornered in his offended excellence. They feel the wounds, but they do not know who causes them. (Their aesthetic route impedes them from understanding

reality.) This will be blessed by those who do not wish to change that reality. The wider the pit of sorrows, the better defended he who causes the agony will be.

When the abstract manifestations appeared, the leaders of the bourgeoisie attempted a new procedure. While before they promoted malaise, now they heat up the Dionysiac distraction in which the artist feels not only satisfied but exalted. It is not that they abandon the aggressive register, as soon as someone (whether the Mexican muralists or the Picasso of *Guernica*) raises his dangerous and eloquent originality against "the established order" and hits where it hurts. The attack is then violent and patient suffocation continues to be the norm. But as long as they can neutralize the will of the creator without conflict, they will rush to do so. A greater attack against its reign leads to a growth in its maneuvering power. Now the sharpened malice manages, in the face of the abstractionist adventure, to embark its own designs in another's carriage and then to push it down the wrong path. With this maneuver, those who, because of their exceptional strength, should undermine the reign of the bourgeoisie and accelerate its defeat actually serve to contain the irremediable blows. The abstract artist builds the walls of his own captivity and does so, furthermore, with enthusiasm and majesty. As in the old fable, the bourgeoisie has made a guard-dog out of the wolf.

Of course, even the most impressive dossier can do nothing against the truth, and an art that goes against the grain of its mission has a very limited trajectory. But our artists should not be the ones who prolong its existence. What is gravest in our case is the fact that the acquiescence and perverse pleasure of those who fancy themselves the protagonists of a singular function and, in many cases, chosen for a task of the highest significance join together with self-interest and reactionary pressure—all the more evident in a land harassed by imperialist penetration.

The insistence and fervor of Cuban abstract artists projects itself over the peoples of Latin America. The recent exhibitions in Caracas and Havana speak of a flagrant re-inoculation, presided over by the same signs and cradled by similar situations. One hardly needs to say that a true and fertile art, the child of similar circumstances and nourished by the same liberating impulse, would not have found shelter and praise in today's Venezuela.⁸ The symptom is very damning. It shows how geometric distraction is an excellent way to delay a fundamental transformation in which the future of the visual arts in America is enveloped. It is quite a thing that for this type of *non-committed* communication (but committed, in reality, to the worst part) exchanges are made and propagandas are agreed upon. In contrast, against the other plastic arts, against those that should reveal a rich, varied, and pugnacious reality and in whose wide dominions all the possibilities of the great work of art slumber, the most stubborn obstacles are raised. With this, the current juncture is closing—a juncture in which an innumerable experience of coinciding profiles and similar anxieties takes shape in epic incarnation in the dignified realization of universal attention. In

this effort to block what is fullest and most complete—it is proper but painful to admit—Cuban plastic artists of importance and quality are offering their marked support.

This conversation leads to the conclusion that the problem our plastic artists are facing is one of meditation, clarification, and conscience. Our painter must move—a considerable and urgent effort—from gesticulation to gesture, from the eccentric to the central, from artifice to art, from the fictional and false to the real. To this end, he must put a stop to his errant intoxication. The excellence of his talent commits him and demands this from him. He cannot remain in a self-absorption in which, with his life, he kills, before its time, the life around him that demands exalted incarnation from him. He still has time to take up his duty "with the full power of his voice" and to fully honor his high office. Thomas Mann in *Tonius Kröger*⁹ says, "He whose profoundest enthusiasm is for refinement, eccentricity, and the Satanic is very far indeed from being an artist." These words of the great writer, faithful to his patent humanism, gain firmer significance with each day. The times demand a new stature from the painter, a magnitude reached by the authenticity of his function and the growth of his power. He will not achieve this with his eyes fixed on ephemeral surfaces but by inquiring, with wisdom and passion, into the essence of the crossroads that announces the future. Let him meditate on his current limitations and his possible greatness. And let him assert his claim, as the author of *The Magic Mountain* asks him to do, to the title of artist and the indelible immortality of the creator.

- 1 We publish here only a section of Marinello's text that serves our purpose. [Ed.]
- 2 All the subheadings as well as the italics are underlined in the original. [Ed.]
- 3 José Martí (1853–1895), *modernista* poet and emblematic figure in the Cuban struggles for independence. [Ed.]
- 4 Víctor Manuel García (1896–1969), Cuban painter connected with the post-impressionist movement; Carlos Enríquez (1901–1957), Cuban painter. Following an initial surrealist phase, his painting was oriented towards the representation of folklore and the social reality of Cuba; Eduardo Abela Villarreal (1899–1965), Cuban painter, very well-known for his caricatures and political satire. His oeuvre includes an abstract phase, but he returned to figurative painting. [Ed.]
- 5 Luis Cardoza y Aragón (1901–1992), Guatemalan poet, critic, and essayist. [Ed.]
- 6 Anton Pavlovich Chekhov (1860–1904), Russian short-story writer and playwright. [Ed.]
- 7 Alphonse [Marie Louis Prat] de Lamartine (1790–1869), French romantic poet, considered to be a precursor of Symbolism; [Jean Nicolas] Arthur Rimbaud (1854–1891), French symbolist poet. [Ed.]
- 8 There is a reference here to the situation in Venezuela under the dictatorship of Pérez Jiménez.
- 9 Thomas Mann (1875–1955), German writer based in the United States. Nobel Prize, 1929. *Tonio Kröger* is a story published in 1903. *Der Zauberberg* (The Magic Mountain, 1924) is considered to be his masterwork. [Ed.]

Letters

(1949-1958)

Sandu Darie-Gyula Kosice

In the transcription of these letters, roman type is used to represent a typed original while italics stand for hand-written letters.

I. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice,
November 26, 1949

S. Darie
B #555. Vedado
Havana, Cuba.

Havana, November 26, 1949

Revista Arte Madi Universal
Sadi Carnot 41-2 D
Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Dear Sirs,

On the occasion of my exhibition in New York and thanks to the kindness of Mr. Jean Xceron¹, the famous non-objective painter, I have become acquainted with the Madinemsor movement and admire your activities, which I have learned of through the magazine Arte Madi Universal.

I discussed with Mr. Jean Xceron the interest your movement could have and the importance it can have for painting in general, and I promised him I would write to you.

I would be very grateful if you would send me your magazine, Arte Madi Universal, from the first issue on, and inform me of the cost, to send you a check. I would also appreciate your informing me about the group's latest works and if there are other publications about the art you are developing.

Wishing you many successes, yours admiringly,
S. Darie

1 Jean Xceron (1890-1967), American abstract painter of Greek origin. [Ed.]

Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie,
December 8, 1949

ARTE MADÍ
MOVIMIENTO MADINEMSOR
SADI CARNOT 41- 2.º D
BUENOS AIRES

S. Darie
B/ 555. Vedado
HABANA — CUBA

December 8, 1949

Dear colleague,

We are flattered by your interest in the work we are carrying out and we will send you via regular post some informational materials. Please take note, however, that issues 0 and 1 of our journal are out of print, so they will be difficult to obtain.

Our sincere wish is to be in contact with all non-figurative plastic artists; to this end, we have made a call for a first International Conference of non-representational art, which already has the support of groups from France, Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, etc., and in this part of America, of madists from Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina. Let us know what you think about this and whether in Cuba there is a nucleus of artists who are fighting for the same general aims as your and we are.

In the third issue of "Arte Madi," there is a section devoted to foreign contributions; could you send us some photographs of your work?

We hope to hear back from you soon. Madinemsor sends fraternal greetings.

[Kosice's signature and seal]

II. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice,
January 13, 1950

Havana, January 13, 1950
Arte Madi
Movimiento Madinemsor
Sadi Carnot 41-2ºD. Buenos Aires.

Dear Mr. Rosice [*sic*],

I have received your kind letter dated December 8, 1949, and if I have delayed in replying to you until now, it is because I am still awaiting the informational materials you promised me in your letter and which have not yet arrived.

I congratulate you on your having undertaken to be in contact with all non-figurative plastic artists, and I think the international conference of non-representative art is necessary and will surely be a success.

To your question about whether in Cuba there is a group of plastic artists struggling with the same general objectives, I must say the answer is no.

Thanks to the poet Texidor,¹ I presented a painting of mine in Havana's Central Park, and I am sending you a clipping from the newspaper Mañana where you can read remarks about it.

Today I received news that one of the paintings in my latest exhibition in New York was purchased by the Museum of Modern Art, selected by Mr. A. Barr Jr. For me, more than a personal triumph, this is a contribution to non-objectivism.

Since you asked me to send you a photograph, I am enclosing the photo of a painting appreciated and accepted by Miss Rebay of the Museum of Non-Objective Art in New York.² I hope you consider it of good enough quality for reproduction in your section devoted to foreign contributions.

By the end of the month I hope to have some photographs of my latest works, and I will send them to you right away.

Please always consider me your friend and bear in mind my endeavors, if they can contribute in any way to the aims that inspire you.

I count on your keeping me up-to-date about developments in Madinemsor's activities, for which I thank you in advance.

I hope 1950 has begun most auspiciously for you. My best regards and friendship to all of you (and to you in particular),

S. Darie
Calle B #555. Vedado
Havana. Cuba.

1 He is probably referring to the Cuban art critic Joaquín Texidor. [Ed.]

2 Hilla [Hildegard Anna Augusta Elisabeth] Rebay [von Ehrenwiesen] (1890-1967), American art collector of German origin, she was the first director and curator of the Guggenheim Museum in New York, originally called the Museum of Non-Objective Painting. [Ed.] 4) Letter from Gyula Kosice to Sandu Darie, January 25, 1950

Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie,
January 25, 1950

ARTE MADÍ
MOVIMIENTO MADINEMSOR
SADI CARNOT 41- 2.º D
BUENOS AIRES

Mr. Sandú Darié
B/ 555-Vedado
HAVANA.

Buenos Aires, January 25, 1950

My dear friend Darie,

Please find enclosed with this letter issue 3 of our journal; we hope you have received issue 2, which we sent in advance.

It is truly a pleasure to learn of your success in New York as evidenced by the purchase of your paintings. We have received the photograph you sent us, and we hope to get to know you better through other works of yours.

You mentioned Mr. Texidor in your letter, and we would be interested in knowing what his point of view is regarding madist poetry and art, in addition to getting to know him better by way of some book or publication you could send us.

We appreciate your support for the creation of the first International Conference of non-figurative art, which can give rise to critical approaches and an important exchange of ideas between the different countries that could participate and, also, first and foremost, the unification of scattered members.

Cordial regards from your colleagues in madinemSOR and, from me, a warm handshake,

[Kosice's signature and seal]

III. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice,
January 30, 1950

Havana, January 30, 1950.

Arte Madi
Movimiento MadinemSOR
Sadi Carnot #41 2º D
Buenos Aires.

Dear friend Kosice,

Today I received issue 2 of Madi and various pamphlets about your artistic movement.

I thank you for your kindness and I appreciate your inscription.

I have read and studied them with extreme curiosity, and, because they are not distant from mine in spirit, I have admired the works reproduced in these publications and have thought a great deal about the texts.

On my own, a long time ago I arrived at many of the same conclusions as Madi, and in my studio there are a number of objects that would bear a clear kinship with those of your group.

I will consider them even more now, after having found in the existence of your creative work the confirmation of a true faith.

Can we speak of a rhetoric of Madi, of the group of ardent and enthusiastic artists, struggling to impose a style, which all will have to accept, thus satisfying everyone's aspirations? Frankly, the matter seems fairly complex to me.

Parce que je cite Kahnweiler¹ [*sic*]: un vrais [*sic*]² style est la conséquence inéluctable d'une ensemble de conditions spirituelles et économiques.³

The existence of MadinemSOR⁴ is brilliant; it is the concern of a group of men who arrive at the same conclusions in the plastic arts, amid the divided aesthetic of our times, losing on occasion their impact as individuals because of the family resemblance between them.

I recognize in you a visionary quality full of philosophical implications, unconsciously carrying the weight of an entire tradition in the plastic arts, surrealism included.

A whole series of reactions, questions, and responses came to mind in analyzing your movement, and, observing my friend Kosice's dialectic (with its Central-European philosophy flavoring, and with that name, Gyula, evoking the ancestral strength of a Magyar lord), I told myself it was worth discussing and perhaps finding truths that are more absolute.

Reviewing the calendar of the history of painting, it is clear (and this fact has been vindicated since Kandinsky and all the inspired Russian artists from around 1900 and even in the absolute Mondrian) that it is possible to renounce the plastic object by creating a work of art by itself.

MadinemSOR will make it clear that art can be the product not solely of a spiritual and mystical life inspired

by divine forces transmitted to exceptional individuals.

Madimensor [*sic*] will find clear language to translate the message of works created as the result of intellectual concepts (from empirical intuition to intellectual intuition).

In renouncing the charm of surrealism, one must also renounce the hermetic language pre-fabricated by poets, manifesto-manufacturing prophets, occultists and quacks, who conceal sources of inspiration and historical evolution, producing useless prose necessary only for uncouth, affected painters.

Let the painter find his independent, clear, and constructive inspiration without the need of that poet-dealer-art journal machinery—with its lyrical, detective-fiction criticism, made by frustrated sorts who go about the business of art.

Your collective endeavor will bring about a continuous change in ideas⁵ and each of us must reveal to the other whatever discoveries we make.

I am certain that MadinemSOR is contributing to the evolution of art in our time, and, trusting that I have not offended the sensibilities of your group in any way, I remain at your disposal to discuss and make further contributions to non-figurative art with its vigorous and defined message of reform.

I look forward to your prompt reply and thank you again for the magazine you sent me. Mr. Kosice, I send you my friendship and my regards to your colleagues in the MadinemSOR movement.

S. Darie
Calle B #555. Vedado
Havana, Cuba.

- 1 Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler (1884–1979), German art collector and dealer residing in France. He was one of cubism's main promoters. [Ed.]
- 2 There are some corrections by hand in this sentence. [Ed.]
- 3 Because I quote Kahnweiler: a true style is the unavoidable consequence of a set of spiritual and economic conditions. [Trans.]
- 4 The term was corrected by hand throughout the letter. [Ed.]
- 5 "a change in continuous ideas" in the original, an evident error. [Trans.]

La Habana, 30 de Enero de 1960.

Arte Madi
Movimiento Madinensor
Sadi Carnot #41 2.º D
Buenos Aires.

Querido amigo Kozice:

He recibido hoy el No. 2 de Madi y varios impresos de su movimiento artístico.

Le agradezco su amabilidad y aprecio su dedicación.

Con extrema curiosidad los he leído y estudiado y como no había lejanía espiritual he tenido admiración por las obras reproducidas discutiendo conmigo mismo los textos.

Personalmente hace tiempo he llegado a muchas conclusiones iguales a las ilustradas de Madi, y en mi estudio hay varios objetos de un parentesco seguro con los de ustedes.

Los consideraré más ahora después de haber encontrado la confirmación de toda una fé en la existencia de su grupo creador.

Podemos hablar de una retórica Madi, del grupo de ardientes y entusiastas artistas, luchando para imponer un estilo, el cual tendrá que ser aceptado por todos, satisfaciendo las aspiraciones de todos? Sinceramente veo la cosa un poco complicada.

Porque, le cito a Kahnweiler: *Un vrai style est la conséquence inéluctable d'une ensemble de conditions spirituelles et économiques.*

La existencia de Madinensor es brillante, es la preocupación de un grupo de hombres que llegan a las mismas conclusiones en las artes plásticas, en la música y en la dividida estética plástica de nuestro siglo, perdiendo alguna vez la fuerza individual por un parecido de familia.

He reconocido en ustedes un estado visionario lleno de implicaciones filosóficas, cargado incansablemente del peso de toda una tradición plástica incluso el surrealismo.

Toda una serie de contestaciones, preguntas y respuestas se llegaron analizando el movimiento de ustedes y observando la dialéctica del amigo Kozice (con su buen sabor de filosofía centro-europea y *Opus* nombre nostálgico con fuerza ancestral de caudales magiar) no dije que valía la pena discutir y hallar quizás verdades más absolutas.

Repasando el calendario histórico pictórico, es claro y conquistado desde Kandinsky y todos los inspirados artistas rusos alrededor de 1900 y hasta el absoluto Mondrian, que se puede renunciar el objeto plástico creando una obra de arte por sí misma.

ARTE MADÍ

MOVIMIENTO MADINENSOR

SADI CARNOT 41 - 2.º D
BUENOS AIRES

Sr. Andrés Darís
E/555- Vedado
HABANA

Buenos Aires, 25 de Enero 1960

Amigo Darís:

Vá con esta carta el No. 3 de nuestra revista; esperamos que ya haya recibido el No. 2 que ha sido enviado con antelación.

Verdaderamente nos es muy grato saber de su éxito en Nueva York tradición en la adquisición de sus pinturas. Hemos recibido la foto que nos envió y es nuestro deseo conocerle mejor por intermedio de otros trabajos.

Vá, también al Sr. Teixidor y nos interesa saber de él los puntos de vista relativos a la poesía y trabajos madistas, además de intentar un mayor conocimiento por medio de algún libro o publicación que pudiera Ud. enviarnos.

Le reconocemos su apoyo a la realización del primer Congreso Internacional de arte no-figurativo que puede significar planteamientos y cambios de ideas de trascendencia entre los distintos países que puedan intervenir y más aún y en primer término la unificación de elementos dispersos.

Reciba el cordial saludo de los colegas de madinensor y en mi nombre un sincero apretón de manos

Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie, n. d.

Mr. S. Darie
Calle B 555 Vedado
Havana-Cuba

My dear friend Darie,

Only now can I answer your letter dated January 30, 1950. Truth be told, it contains a series of considerations that I find frankly flattering, and others that I find incomprehensible. I mean incomprehensible insofar as your work, my friend Darie, which in the last analysis is that which determines, by its own virtue, the entire range of assessments one may make of it, does not reflect, so to speak, certain concepts which you have pinpointed. For example, the fact that you are against everything that we are fighting against and you have contributed to our jubilation with a few lines dedicated to madinemsor. So my colleagues and I hope you will send us a copy of those works of yours that might (according to your letter) share some kinship with us.

Our objectives, based on the dialectical history of art and on certain discoveries made by our group, aim to annul anything that introduces itself in the creation of the object that is not real and concrete. That is why it is a contradiction in this transitional period of profound social transformations, and even of false criticism, precisely because one finds oneself with an anachronistic point of view or a "deja [sic] passé" lyricism when one makes non-figurative abstract or concrete art resorting to first intuitions, to the subconscious, to spiritual and personal motivations that are no longer of interest for the permanence of the entity that is totally created, constructed.

A madí painting, its humanism, its equivalence, its function, derive from factors that do not correspond to similes that can be found in nature or that can be "translated" graphically or by means of images that are not the painting itself.

We favor an essentialism that contributes to taking non-figurative art to its logical conclusion.

Please keep us abreast of your activities: your trajectory we are already deeply aware of. Fraternal regards from all of us,

[Kosice's signature and seal]

IV. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice,
August 28, 1950

Sandu Darie, Calle B #555, Vedado, Havana
Havana, 28 August 1950.

Arte Madi
Sadi Carnot 41 2° D
Buenos Aires.

My dear friend Kosice,

I am very grateful for your latest letter.

The photograph that I sent you earlier was one of my works exhibited in New York and represented lyrical manifestations, improvisations, and preoccupations from another time.

Your judgments regarding my previous letters and these works were justified. The lack of agreement between the ideas presented and the illustration is because I am not one of those painters who have an up-to-date photographic record of his works.

For a long time I have wanted to send you some artistic material that would be of interest to your aesthetic preoccupations.

Meanwhile, I have been working in those intervals I call "daily probation," and I will present a new exhibition in October.

The catalogue and the explanatory notes for the exhibition will be sent to you along with a photograph of the general appearance of the exhibition.

You will understand now the reason for the time that has elapsed since you wrote; there are no hurt feelings, and in any case, I always try to rise above these things, believing that sincerity is the foundation for communication.

I am very grateful to you for having remembered me and even more grateful to you all for being interested in my work, which I have carried out without the exchange of stimulating ideas among friends, as I imagine must be common in your admirable group.

In the photograph I have enclosed, you can see three of my works (oils) titled vaguely "Estructuras Pictóricas"¹ and identified from right to left as D 50 X, D 50 Y, and D 50 Z.

You will easily perceive what my plastic aims are.

I would not want to prolong this letter too much, and I am certain you will all notice among my speculations about the plastic arts the idea of initiating the division of the rectangle, of considering the variation of triangles as painting-forms in a continuous space.

My spatial structures are organized under an orthogonal rhythm, and the aggregate elements make up and suggest the prolongation of the plane into the distance where it is no longer possible to imagine the end... toward the infinite.

The vision of these pictorial structures corresponds to the formal will of our times, imposing the direct harmony of pure poetry as a spiritual and constructive manifestation.

I consider simplicity to be vital and, likewise vital, elemental forms expressing the beauty of an essential harmony as a spatial abstraction with greater suggestive force.

I regret not having a finer photograph; I hope these works will show to advantage in the exhibition hall (my studio is very small), provided that there is the right orchestration of space; I hope to obtain a higher-quality photograph so you can better understand the aesthetic meaning of my work.

Do you think the photograph I am sending you would be adequate for publication in issue 4 of Arte Madi, assuming my works will be well received by you?

Regarding the costs for plates and printing, I would be happy to pay for them; I look forward to your reply.

As always, it is a pleasure to stay in touch with you. My admiration to you, dear friend Kosice, and my warmest regards to your colleagues.

1 Pictorial Structures. [Trans.]

Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie, n. d.

Movimiento Madinemsor
arte madi
esperanza 41-2°.
buenos aires

Mr. S. Darie
B /555-Vedado
HAVANA

My dear friend Darie,

On the eve of the publication of issue 4 of "Arte Madi" we feel it would be a shame if you did not send us any material for publication. We are referring, logically, to the material you sustain is related in some way to our work.

Since it has been some time since our last letter to you, we are afraid that we could have offended you with some of the ideas we manifested from a critical standpoint, and that had nothing to do with our personal regard for you.

We look forward to your news; the cost for plates and printing is around \$50.- (Argentinian), for it is only with the help of each contributor that we can make ends meet with the magazine.

Warmest regards from all of us,
Sincerely,

[Kosice's signature and seal]

V. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice,
October 25, 1950

S. Darie
Calle B #555. Vedado
Havana, Cuba.

October 25, 1950.

My dear friend Kosice,

Please forgive my not having answered the flattering letter in which you were kind enough to praise my work; I am truly grateful for it.

The reason for the delay was the preparation of my exhibition and the fact that I wanted to send you the catalogue and the photographs at the same time.

The event was well-received. If you are interested, I can send you the reviews, which will give you an idea of the reaction to the show, later.

The gallery Carlebach¹ is now looking at dates in order to present the same exhibition in New York.

Your movement is well known among many of those who attended my exhibition, especially Cuban writers who have been in Argentina of late.

I would like to know the group's opinion and learn more about the latest activities of the movement. My admiration for you, Mr. Kosice, and my regards to all,

Sandu Darie

1 Gallery in New York associated with Roy Lichtenstein. [Ed.]

Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie, n. d.

Movimiento Madinemsor
arte madí
esperanza 41-2º.
buenos aires

Mr. Sandu Darie
B/ 555. Vedado
Havana. Cuba

My friend Darie,

Finally, after many obstacles, issue 4 of "Arte Madi" has been published.

Let us know your opinion, which is very valuable to us.

We have published two of the latest photographs you sent us and we have selected a brief text from your catalogue. (Due to a printing error, "partial views" got switched with a line of type that says "at the Lyceum in Havana"; the error is partially rectified because we mention the provenance of the photograph in the "Aquí Madi" column).

In the next letter, we will give you our opinion about the addition to a pictorial work implied by the frame; the frame that is not continuous, beginning and ending in itself, the case of the triangle that appears "from behind" or "over" the painting.

We look forward to your frequent collaboration; you have already traced a path towards essentiality in non-figurative art.

A warm handshake,

[Kosice's signature]

VI. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice,
March 26, 1951

S. Darie
Calle B #555. Vedado
Havana, Cuba.

Havana, March 26, 1951.

ARTE MADI
Esperanza #41 2º
Buenos Aires.

My dear friend Kosice,

Yesterday, upon my return from New York where I spent almost three months, I found issue 4 of Arte Madi awaiting me.

Thank you for your letter and for all your kindness in publishing my work.

I look forward to your "next letter" with the opinions of the group.

I would like to manifest my enthusiasm for your magazine and your movement, for its sense of determination, impetus, novelty, vital impulse, and for its contribution to neo-plastic thought.

Your work to me seems unique in spiritual terms. I say this after my trip, where I had occasion to meet admirable people.

I have spoken about your group with my friends Jean Xceron, Rose Fried (from the only truly neo-plastic gallery in New York),¹ Michel Seuphor (who was traveling at the time), and the painter Fritz Glarner.²

You can find below their addresses in case you decide to send them more information about your activities in the plastic arts.

Personally, I prefer the greatest clarity of expression when speaking of the "non-figurative essentialist," and I hold in particularly high regard the texts of Waldo [sic] Wellington³ and Rothfuss.

The turn of phrase of a very charming American woman Rothfuss will probably find amusing: The frame is an architectural offense.

The art critic Clement Greenberg⁴ expressed in a letter he wrote to me the opinion that "The painter-sculptor of the future will have to be a carpenter."

It seems we are distancing ourselves from Baudelaire⁵ ...le Temps a reparu; le Temps regne en souverain maintenant, et avec le hideux veillard est revenu tout son demoniaque cortège de Souvenirs, de Regrets, de Spasmes, de Peurs, d'Angoisses, de Cauchemars, de Coleres et Névroses.... [sic] (La chambre double.)

Please keep me informed about your movement and your work. With warm friendship,

P.S. The modest sum in the money order is to cover the costs for your having kindly sent me your publication.

Rose Fried: 40 East 68 St. New York.
Jean Xceron 54 West 74 St. Studio 608. New York.
Fritz Glarner. 206 East 70 St. New York.
Michel Seuphor 5 Rue Le Condamine. Paris 17. France.

- 1 Rose Fried opened her gallery in 1940. Centered principally on abstract art, she introduced the American public to the work of Mondrian and Kandinsky. [Ed.]
- 2 Fritz Glarner (1899–1972), Swiss-American abstract painter. [Ed.]
- 3 Valdo Wellington, painter associated with the Madí movement. [Ed.]
- 4 Clement Greenberg (1909–1994), important American art critic, closely associated with the abstract expressionists. [Ed.]
- 5 Charles Pierre Baudelaire (1821–1867), “poète maudit” par excellence and the principal figure of symbolism. He was also an art critic. His book *Les fleurs du mal* was the origin of a long and bitter polemic. Darie cites here fragments of *La chambre double*, a prose poem: “Oh! oui! Le Temps a réapparu; le Temps règne en souverain maintenant; et avec le hideux vieillard est revenu tout son démoniaque cortège de Souvenirs, de Regrets, de Spasmes, de Peurs, d’angoisses, de Cauchemars, de Colères et de Névroses.” (Oh! Yes, Time has reappeared; Time now rules supreme, and with the hideous old man has returned all his demoniacal retinue of Memories, Regrets, Spasms, Fears, Anguishes, Nightmares, Rages, and Neuroses.) [Ed.]

Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie, May 1951

Movimiento Madinemsor
arte madí
esperanza 41-2º.
buenos aires

May 1951

Have you ever stopped to investigate the etymology of the word “*cuadro*”?¹

My dear friend Darie,

We are happy to learn that you liked the magazine. For many reasons, it is an inducement for us to know that we can count on the support of colleagues abroad. I sincerely appreciate your notions about me although I think they “exceed me” a bit. In any case, we believe in your painting; you have bravely broken with many taboos that for centuries have imprisoned painting—content and form.

Every true creation—we said—moves from the inside outwards, never the other way around; there where line, plane, and color (in the case of painting) end, it is necessary to structure and compose, to provide it with “its skin” and not to “frame” it. Every attempt to translate experience by any other means than experience itself is impossible. The essential values of presence in that which is invented are valuable in and of themselves; they are, like experience, untranslatable.

We hope you will send us some work of yours and, if possible, some piece of writing about madí for the next issue (5). We now consider you a regular contributor to our magazine.

Rothfuss and Wellington appreciate your attentive reading of the texts which appeared in the last issue.

Thank you for the money order and the addresses.
Cordially,

[Kosice’s signature]

- 1 Painting (i.e., the object, as opposed to the activity or the art). [Trans.]

VII. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice, May 28, 1951

S. Darie
Calle B #555. Vedado
Havana, Cuba.

Havana, May 28, 1951.

My dear friend Kosice,

I am replying to your kind letter from May of 1951.

Please find enclosed an essay on Madi and also a photograph of one of my paintings which is currently being exhibited at the Rose Fried Gallery in New York.

Regarding this exhibition, I am sending you a photocopy of the review that appeared in *The New York Times*.

When will the next issue of *Arte Madi* appear?

I thank you for considering me one of the collaborators for your magazine. My warmest regards to all of you.

Sincerely,
S. Darie

Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie, n. d.

Movimiento Madinemsor
arte madí
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My dear friend Darie,

Please forgive the delay in answering and also the brevity of this letter. We have been extremely busy preparing the magazine.

Your article is the exceptional product of a lucid mind, an overwhelming poetic and—why not?—revolutionary sensibility.

One thing: could we change the title from “Madist Spirituality” to “Madist Thought”? It is simply a question of better defining ourselves and also not to make the mistake of insinuating metaphysical interpretations.

Do you have any other photographs of your works available? We look forward to hearing back from you.

Warmest regards,

[Kosice’s signature]

VIII. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice, August 10, 1951

S. Darie
B #555. Vedado
Havana, Cuba
Havana, August 10, 1951.

Arte Madi
Sadi Carnot 41-2ºD
Buenos Aires.

My dear friend Kosice,

I received your letter today, and I am most grateful to you for your positive appraisal of my article. I agree with you about the change in the title to "Madist Thought."

My latest works are small scale projects; I am trying to cut expenses and to clear space in my studio; I hope to be able to photograph these works as soon as the conditions are more acceptable.

I look forward to meeting you and your friends one day and I will always be sorry to have missed the pleasant and crucial discussions we could have had. I look forward to receiving your magazine, which I imagine will be, as always, superb.

Warm regards,

S. Darie

P.S. Not long ago, I attended a lecture by Mr. Roberto Brest,¹ whom you probably know. He illustrated his lecture by projecting images of works from the precursors of non-objectivism and from Magnelli and even Bazin;² his conclusions, in an avant-garde vein, were surprising for the audience he addressed.

I asked Mr. Brest why he did not mention any of you and why he did not show any madist works (something he was apparently asked repeatedly during his trip). His reply to my question demonstrated not only his lack of knowledge about the Madist movement, but also evidence of a bias that led me to harbor doubts about all his statements regarding the development of contemporary art.

..... I am telling you this not to seem like a vulgar tattle-tale, for I admire the efforts of this illustrious traveler to promote contemporary aesthetic questions; I hope one day you will have the opportunity to explain his case and reasons to me.

1 He is probably referring to the Argentinian critic Jorge Romero Brest (1905–1989). [Ed.]

2 Alberto Magnelli (1888–1971), Italian painter linked to futurism and cubism; André Bazin (1918–1958), French film critic and theorist. [Ed.]

Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie, January 13, 1952

Movimiento Madinemsor
arte madi
esperanza 41-2º.
buenos aires

Mr. Sandu Darie
Havana-Cuba

January 13, 1952

My dear friend Darie,

Finally, I am including with this letter copies of issue 5 of "arte madi." In another shipment, we are sending you some more so you can distribute them. As you can see, your work appears in it; we also have taken the liberty of including you among the representatives of our journal abroad, given your friendship and your position at the vanguard of non-figurative art.

We are in the middle of exhibition season, and the small shows in Brazil and Uruguay delayed the shipment of the copies; we are now preparing for the Venice Biennale.

Any contribution to the journal is one more step in the advancement of our projects; in this regard, it would be of interest if our publication could persuade some friends in Havana to become subscribers.

We follow your trajectory with lively interest, and from now on you can send us reproductions of your works, especially of the latest ones.

Affectionate regards from all of us and a warm handshake,

[Kosice's signature]

IX. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice, March 5, 1952

S. Darie
B #555. Vedado
Havana, Cuba.

Havana, March 5, 1952

My dear friend Kosice,

Thank you for sending issue 5 of Revista MADI, where I found the group's interesting works.

The new format is, without a doubt, an improvement.

I hope that soon several friends of mine will fulfill their promises, by writing to you to subscribe to your journal.

The photographs I am sending include information about where those works were exhibited.

I am enclosing \$5.00, for my own subscription.

I have unexpectedly received issues 2 and 3 of the journal "Perceptismo," which I am sure the group knows and appreciates.

I would like to thank you once again for publishing my text "Madist Thought" and also for your friendship.

Kind regards to all of you and especially to you, Kosice, my friend.

Is Gina Ionescu¹ Romanian?

Would you be so kind as to inform me of some of her biographical details and perhaps her address?

1 Gina Ionescu [María Giorgina Schlachter de Ionescu] (1916–2006), dancer, actress, singer, and painter originally from Romania but living in Argentina; associated with the Madi group and other non-figurative movements. [Ed.]

arte madi

esperanza al
Kuevas Aires

Querido amigo Sancho:

Deberá Ud. disculparme de no haberme ido "in extensa", en el momento de recibir su pintura. Además de la publicación de nuestra antología de poesía, estábamos realizando, precisamente en esos momentos, una exposición colectiva madi, en la galería Eragó.

La obra, de la cual es notorio un aporte estilístico extraordinariamente personal en el campo de la plástica no figurativa, llegó atrasada para poder incluirla en la muestra. Pero es indispensable que el público argentino conozca esas manifestaciones pictóricas que entrenan con madi.

Por lo tanto estamos preparando una exposición internacional, en la cual cada participante deberá figurar con el máximo de sus obras. Contamos con una pintura suya por lo menos, además de la que está ya en nuestro poder siempre que nos la haga llegar antes del comienzo de abril.

Para la preparación del catálogo, envíe con anterioridad el título de la obra y procedimiento.

Ha recibido Ud. el libro de poesía, que le remitimos por vía ordinaria?

En nombre mío y el de todos los amigos y compañeros de madi le reitero nuestra permanente y fraternal amistad en el arte y en la vida, deseándole un año 1956 lleno de ventura. Y realizar más y siempre más.

p. [Signature]

Un abrazo cordial a Martínez Ledes y Sra., Canero, etc. etc.

S. Larie
B #555. Vedado
Habana, Cuba.

La Habana, 28 de Mayo de 1951.

Estimado amigo Esicio:

Contesto a su amable carta de Mayo de 1951.

Adjunto encontrará usted un texto referente a Madi, como también la fotografía de un cuadro mío que está ahora exponiéndose en la Galería Rose Fried, New York.

Con referencia a esta exposición le envío una copia fotográfica de una nota crítica aparecida en New York Times.

¿Cuándo aparecerá el próximo número de Arte Madi?

Agradeciéndole al considerarme entre los colaboradores de su revista, reciban todos ustedes mis más cordiales saludos.

Sinceramente,

S. Larie

ADMINISTRACION
Ministerio de Comunicaciones
REGISTRO DE CERTIFICADOS
ADMINISTRACION DE CORREOS DE
ST. MEDINA, HABANA

FECHA

No. (7511)

ADMINISTRACION

Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie, April 1952

Movimiento Madinemsor
arte madi
esperanza 41-2º.
buenos aires

April 1952

My dear friend Sandu Darie,

We were justifiably delighted to receive the photographs of your latest pictorial structures, no. 9 and 14, which we deemed of higher quality than the previous ones, all of which is further proof of your status as a rigorously authentic creator.

We also thank you for contributing to the cost of plates and printing, although it is preferable to send money expediently disguised as a certified letter because at the official exchange rate, the dollar loses almost 50% of its value in private exchange. As you probably know, the Argentinian peso has been increasingly devalued in the international exchange market, which makes this a more convenient way to receive payment.

We are already anticipating issue 6 of "Arte Madi"; if you wish to send us an article or more material of yours, please do not hesitate to do so. The painter Ionescu has promised to write to you. Her address is included in the catalogue that I am enclosing. She plans to be in Paris this June and will happily attend to any request you may have.

Did you not receive a letter from Rothfuss? Fondest regards,

[Kosice's signature]

X. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice,
June 3, 1955

S. Darie
B #555, Vedado
Havana, Cuba.

Havana, June 3, 1955.

My dear friend Giula [*sic*],

I have not written to you for some time, but I have received news about you indirectly through art magazines and via letters from our friend Gina.

I am enclosing photographs, catalogues, and various reviews about my recent joint exhibition with Martínez Pedro, whom you have met, and you will see that his art has evolved.

During this exhibition, I gave almost daily lectures and I had occasion to refer to the Madi group and to you in particular, emphasizing your contribution to the contemporary plastic art scene.

My transformable structures worked as planned and the visitors were able to feel the pleasure of composition.

It was an interesting experience and the public in general received the message of this exhibition with sympathy.

Last week, I sent two small paintings to the Bienal in Brazil.

They are minor works, which I felt makes it easier to part with them for months, cheaper to ship, and easier to confront the possibility of getting them back damaged.

I would like to read about you, to know of your activities.

Mario Carreño has received a catalogue from a Madi exhibition in Italy. He claims that my name appears in this catalogue. This must be due to your generous initiative, which I am grateful for. Would you happen to have a copy for me?

In February, I traveled in Mexico, which I visited for the first time and I hope to return. Everything in Mexico is fascinating and imaginative.

We should try to meet some day; for the time being, I have the impression that I am getting to know you better and better thanks to Gina, who writes about you in all her letters.

My fondest regards to you and greetings to your wife.

Martínez Pedro sends his regards.

Please show Gina the materials I am sending you.

A couple of days ago I received a very kind letter from the painter Juan Bay [*sic*].¹

¹ He is probably referring to Juan Bay. [Ed.]

XI. Letter from **Sandu Darie** to Gyula Kosice,
July 14, 1955

S. Darie
B #555, Vedado
Havana, Cuba.

Havana, July 14, 1955.

Dear Gyula,

Thank you for your last letter and for having replied so promptly.

You feel as a madist does, as the true creator of the movement, and I conceive of my work as a consequence of a logical dialectic that has developed over the years.

The fact that my works turn out to be madist is probably a sign of our times.

The works that we perceive are concrete and are the product of abstract thought. Concrete art is a general category that for me has nothing to do with certain painters.

Invention does not consist of words, it consists of works. Let others judge me. And I assure you that I would greatly value someday being able to read a critical text of yours about my work.

I am grateful for your invitation to take part in the exhibition that you will organize in Buenos Aires. I have decided not to send "paintings," but if you approve, I will send you via airmail a transformable construction like the one in the enclosed photograph. I believe it will be a better representation of my work, alongside yours. Let me know immediately if there will be no problems with customs officials there, and I will send it to you right away.

I have always kept aside the transformable structure that I will be sending you so that I would be able to offer it to the poet Kosice and his wife.

I look forward to your good news. Fondest regards from your good friend.

P.S. I gave Martínez Pedro your message and he will do as you wish as best as he is able.

XII. Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie,
August 1, 1955

Movimiento Madinemsor
arte madí
esperanza 41
buenos aires

August 1, 1955

Dear Sandu,

We are looking forward to receiving your "transformable construction" as soon as possible; if you can send two (2) even better!

The idea is to introduce your work to the public in buenos aires -

As you point out, the time will come for the critical judgment about the aesthetic convergence of a particular group of artists, who, across many latitudes, define a style. In a universality.

If you have photographs of your latest work handy, do not hesitate to send them (besides photographs for the exhibition)

My untiring good wishes for all my Cuban friends, Martínez Pedro and his wife; Carreño; etc.

Kind regards,

[Kosice's signature]

If you send them via airmail, it is a good idea to declare them as objects with no commercial value—0

XIII. From **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie (n. d. not before August 1, 1955)

Movimiento Madinemsor
arte madí
esperanza 41
buenos aires

My dear friend Sandu,

You must forgive my not having responded to you in a long letter as soon as I received your painting. In addition to the publication of our anthology of poetry, we were organizing, at precisely that time, a madí group exhibition at the Krayd gallery.

Your work (clearly a highly personal contribution to the non-figurative plastic arts) arrived too late to be included in the exhibition. But, it is crucial that the Argentinian public learns about your pictorial manifestations, which are connected to madí.

Therefore, we are preparing an international exhibition, in which each participant should contribute with a minimum of two (2) works. We trust you will send us one more painting of yours at least, in addition to the one already in our possession, provided that you send it so it reaches us before the beginning of April.

For the preparation of the catalogue, please send beforehand the title and technique of the work.

Have you received the book of poetry we sent to you by regular mail?

In my name and in that of all the friends and colleagues of madí, I reiterate to you our permanent and fraternal friendship in art and in life, wishing you a 1956 filled with good fortune. And create more and always more.

[Kosice's signature]

Warm regards to Martínez Pedro and his wife; Carreño; etc. etc.

XVI. Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie, n. d.

Movimiento Madinemsor
arte madí
esperanza 41
buenos aires

Dear Sandu,

I received your painting from the hands of Mr. Piñera.¹ Bravo!

But we need two (2) works for the international exhibition!

Eternal regards from all madí.

Your brotherly friend,

[Kosice's signature]

1 He is probably referring to the Cuban writer Virgilio Piñera (1912–1979), who lived in Buenos Aires from 1946 to 1958. [Ed.]

Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie, n. d.

Movimiento Madinemsor
arte madí
esperanza 41
buenos aires

Dear Darie,

When I think of certain human constants, such as friendship, you¹ come to mind immediately. But when this friendship is joined with a similar, complete devotion to art, this friendship becomes exaltation and companionship at any hour and during any conversation. What a paradox! We have not been able to meet in person, but in our work (only in it!), you find the man and the artist.

I am deeply grateful for your words of affection and regard in Paris.² I will always be ready to repay the favor with all my might. Tell me about your future plans. Ours are limited to an exhibition at the Van Riel gallery in November, with just seven Argentinian madí artists. Also, A. Linenberg,³ a great figure, is now inaugurating a retrospective exhibition. But what is most important is that I am finishing the preparations to take an international madí exhibition to Paris. In this case, everybody is collaborating.

We count on you for at least two paintings. I know that your pressing obligations limit your time, but I have the highest hopes that you will be able to send those wonderful and noteworthy pictorial constructions of yours by November (I leave in December), via diplomatic mail, via airmail, or with some friend or acquaintance traveling to Buenos Aires. Let me know if, later on, you would be interested in publishing a small monograph here in Buenos Aires. As always, I send you my total friendship.

Warm regards to your wife, Martínez Pedro, and Carreño.

Kosice

[Kosice's signature]

- 1 For the first time in this series of letters, Kosice addresses Darie using the familiar second-person pronoun "tú." [Trans.]
- 2 "in Paris" inserted above the line of text. [Ed.]
- 3 Abraham Linenberg, Argentinian sculptor associated with the Madí movement. [Ed.]

XV. Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie,
June 29, 1958

Paris, le 29 June 1958

Cher Monsieur, S. Darie

J'ai conçu l'idée de la publication d'un ouvrage d'une certaine ampleur faisant le bilan des valeurs constructives dans la peinture et la sculpture d'aujourd'hui.

Encouragé dans mon projet par le Galerie DENISE-RENE et par Monsieur Michel SEUPHOR, je vous écris pour vous demander votre accord de principe.

Il s'agirait de confronter les diverses tendances constructives actuelles avec illustrations, notes biographiques et des extraits des écrits de chaque artiste.

Mon but est de montrer la richesse, la variété et aussi la vitalité mondiale de l'art constructif dont certains critiques publient périodiquement l'acte de décès.

La présentation des textes en français et en anglais (peut-être en allemand et en espagnol) permettra une large diffusion de l'ouvrage.

Une soixantaine de peintres et sculpteurs vivants seront pressentis.

L'entreprise étant fort coûteuse et, d'autre part, sans le moindre but lucratif, une souscription de cinq exemplaires environ sera demandée à chaque participant pour couvrir les frais de fabrication.

Je serais heureux de recevoir votre adhésion à ce projet.

Les suggestions dont vous voudrez bien me faire part, outre votre accord, seront évidemment bienvenues et examinées avec attention.

Dans l'espoir d'une prompte réponse, je suis, cher Monsieur, votre collègue amical et dévoué.

[Kosice's signature]

G.KOSICE

P.S.-Toute la correspondance [*sic*] doit être adressée à mon nom personnel à la Galerie DENISE-RENE, 124 rue La Boétie, PARIS, 8°

[On the margin] *Querido Darie: Estoy en la organización de este libro que esperamos que aparezca el próximo año para afirmar nuestro arte contra el "fachismo" o "expresionismo" abstracto.*

Adelante con madí.

Te abraza GKosice.

(Translation)

Dear Mr. S. Darie,

I have had the idea of publishing a work of some size taking stock of the constructive values in contemporary painting and sculpture.

Encouraged by the DENISE-RENE gallery and by Mr.

Michel SEUPHOR to pursue this project, I am writing to ask you whether you would agree with this idea.

It would involve comparing the diverse tendencies in constructivist art today with illustrations, bibliographic notes, and extracts from the writings of each artist.

My goal is to show the richness, the variety, and the vitality of constructivist art around the world, whose obituary is published periodically by certain critics.

The presentation of texts in French and English (perhaps in German and Spanish) will make it possible for the work to be widely disseminated.

Around sixty living painters and sculptors will be proposed.

Since the undertaking will be quite costly, in order to cover production costs (and without, of course, any profit in mind), each participant will be asked to underwrite around five copies.

I would be delighted if you could join this project.

Any suggestion you would like to make, beyond your agreement, will be evidently welcome and given proper attention.

I look forward to hearing from you promptly.

Your friendly colleague,

[Kosice's signature]

G.KOSICE

P.S. All correspondence should be addressed to me personally at Galerie DENISE-RENE, 124 rue La Boétie, PARIS, 8°

[In the margin] *Dear Darie: I am organizing this book, which we hope will be published next year, to reaffirm our art against "fachismo"¹ or abstract "expressionism." Forward with madí!
Warm regards GKosice.*

1 "fachismo" appears to be a Spanish adaptation of the Italian pronunciation of the term fascism. [Ed.]

XVI. Letter from **Gyula Kosice** to Sandu Darie, n. d.

Movimiento Madinemsor

arte madi

esperanza 41-2°

buenos aires

Mr. Sandu Darie, HAVANA-CUBA

Dear Sandu,

[Scratched out:] First, I would like convey to you our deepest condolences for the personal loss in your family you mentioned in your last letter.

"Noticias de Arte," which you enclosed with it, seems to us a fundamentally important publication from every point of view, above all for the education and guidance of young people avid to see their age and their art strengthened, especially in Latin America, where there are very few magazines that operate in essentially this direction.

If it seems proper to you, being one of the editors, I should like to belong to the list of contributors: I would send, as needed, materials for the magazine—essays, paintings, poems, sculptures—and also works from my madi colleagues, who were very happy to receive issue 1.

I should inform you that issue 6 of "Arte Madi" is about to come out (at the end of November). In it, there is a reproduction of one of your "pictorial structures." Also, by that date a book of poems of mine will have appeared, with a selection from 1942 to 52 and with a preface by the great Peruvian poet Alberto Hidalgo.¹

We have organized two exhibitions in Montevideo of late, with considerable public success. It is probable that, if we secure the money for the tickets, we will go with Rothfuss to give a course in Teresópolis—Brazil, which takes place annually under the direction of H. J. Koellreutter.²

I am sending you materials and my personal information to publish in N. de A. hoping that, through the magazine, they will serve to disseminate in Cuba an aesthetic style that is both a support and a point of reference and, we believe, the only viable path among the avant-garde tendencies.

Best wishes from all of us

Warm regards,

[Kosice's signature]

A long and healthy life for N. de A.!

N. de A. feels honored to have such "estimable collaboration"

1 Alberto Hidalgo (1897–1967), Peruvian poet and multi-faceted writer. Together with stories and plays, he is the author of an essay in which he criticizes the artistic milieu of the period. [Ed.]
2 Hans-Joachim Koellreutter (1915–2005), German dodecaphonic composer who settled in Brazil. In the fourth issue of *Arte Madi Universal* his "Open Letter" was published. See María Amalia García's study in this catalogue. [Ed.]

Lines, Rays and a Stingray on L. Martínez Pedro's Lined Paper¹

(1963)

José Lezama Lima

Original text published in Spanish as "Rayas y pez raya en el papel rayado de L. Martínez Pedro," in the catalogue of Luis Martínez Pedro's exhibition of oil paintings and drawings, *Aguas territoriales* (Territorial Waters), presented at Galería de la Habana, Consejo Nacional de Cultura, April 9–28, 1963.

Without seeking to give Monsieur Tribulat Bonhomet² any respite, we can declare that in a work of plastic abstraction we find nature, geometry, excess of composition, **movement as an expressed quantity**, feeling like refusing or suffering, provocations of the point in infinitude, fashion design ambushes throughout history or ludic privileges on the shore of the sea.

Let us observe some banana peels, the extravagant pulp separated from the skin, which surrender, as soon as the corpuscle gilds them, presenting various openings behind their tawny resistance, they crack in series or harangue with discordant fish eyes. **They appear like unrectified Yoruba drums destroyed by fire**, or bookbinding papers moistened by an unforeseeable evaporation. The painter moving the tips of his fingers in the colored material cracks open, rectifies, or advances with determination, as the time of the seasons allied with the **energy of the sun produces a new animist ordering over the peel**.

And it is well-known that the finger traces the path of a parabola, the **ascents** along the quadrant, or the star of a silent ellipse. **It is a tender embryonic geometry**. Now we can see, on a black background, reiterated yellow spheres. It is not the habitual contrast between these colors nor the presumed symbol of the Assyrian crown as it glides across a nocturnal vault. **It is a scene of natural fertilization of the mallow or the marsh-mallow**. Pollens that approach an ovary, that traverse the stigma of the pistil. Seeds, little pouches and germination, in those yellows that invoke a dimension which is at the same time the placentary sheath. **Successive concentrics in Martínez Pedro's painting, which disintegrate into wavelengths, are enough to express the nascent joy of vibration**. On a background, usually



cobalt, which schematizes the dimension, the vibration begins to change into a proportional point, but since the sea here wants to show a terrigenous penetration in the relativism of its bowels, we have to wait until the dimension, which is omnipresent, begins to show the vitality of its relatable distances. **It is a land of ours, on a relatable background the triangle of the swimmer's joined hands, who travels along the Homeric marine scales, from the fiercely wailing sirens to the sentimental manatee. When the universal sea penetrates our land, the mutations of our myths become fixed in time**. Horizontalized on a wall, the fishes imitate roosters. When the solar energy penetrates the water, the figurative boiling begins. The masters of boiling the most important of leaves consider there to be three moments in boiling: fish eyes, pearls, and rooster leaps, or done in the manner of Martínez Pedro, the cobalt shows the precision of the light's journey, a white line the joy of the fish, or simply that which comes towards us, and the encounter in the composition is that majestic waiting of the cobalt or black, with that quantity of color sometimes sustaining a wide, white strip, the beginning of the movement, of the boiling state of flux, and of the precise lesson of the sun.

But the surliness of he who appears startled when he hears talk of ovoid forms and yet shows his satisfaction when looking at a pearl in Stendhal's wide cravat will always remain. There is here a point and a plane of composition, the point that signifies the concentration and the direction of the lines of force and the color extended on the plane of composition. The line that, according to Kandinsky, is that which is invisible or the memory left behind by the wake of points, it is the rotation of the constant point of intersection of the invisible image and the dimension of color. The wake of points

is the embryo of man in that which is invisible, the total body of man concealed in that which cannot be seen. **A hidden man is a tension, like a point that flies is a tension. No dimension can destroy the hidden body of man.**

A foundation of color, a basic plane, places man in the woods, alongside the column in the temple, they are two lines whose tension rises upwards. In this painting by Martínez Pedro, the energy of the point—which can advance, dissolving itself in a white line, equation of fishes—penetrates the sheet of cobalt without wrinkling its surface, but turning the abstract triangularity of the triangle into the joined hands of the swimmer. **Lines, Stripes, Rays, Stingrays, but in the end Martínez Pedro has convinced us all that the stripe of the Bidasoa River is the same as Pheasant Island.**³

- 1 The title deploys a series of puns on the word *raya*, which is impossible to reproduce in English. *Raya* means "stripe," "line," etc., but also (*pez*) *raya* means "(sting/manta) ray." The word is etymologically related to *rayo*, "ray." [Trans.]
- 2 Lezama alludes to the protagonist of the collection of stories titled *Tribulat Bonhomet*, a work by the French symbolist writer Auguste Villiers de l'Isle-Adam (1838–1889). Published in 1887, it opens with the story, *Le tueur de cygnes* (The Swan Killer), which presents Triboulet as a doctor who, "By consulting volumes of Natural History [...] had ended up learning that 'the swan sings well before dying!'" The swan has been traditionally interpreted as a symbol for the artist. [Ed.]
- 3 The Bidasoa River, in the Basque Country, marks the border between France and Spain as it empties into the Bay of Biscay. Pheasant Island is a small island a short distance from the mouth of the river. [Trans.]

DENTRO DE NUESTRO VIGOROSO MOVIMIENTO PLÁSTICO, LUIS MARTÍNEZ PEDRO, CUYA EXPOSICIÓN "AGUAS TERRITORIALES" NOS COMPLACIMOS EN PRESENTAR A LA CONSIDERACIÓN DEL PÚBLICO, OCUPA UN SITIO DESTACADO. MARTÍNEZ PEDRO NACIÓ EN LA HABANA EN 1910. COMENZÓ ESTUDIOS DE ARQUITECTURA, QUE ABANDONÓ POCO DESPUÉS. ESTUDIÓ DISCIPLINADAMENTE EN EL ARTS AND GRAFIS CLUB DE NEW YORK. SE INICIÓ DENTRO DE LAS ARTES PLÁSTICAS COMO DIBUJANTE DE EXCEPCIONAL CALIDAD. SUS DIBUJOS NOS PRESENTAN UNA REALIDAD MÁGICA DE INFINITAS SUGERENCIAS. NO ES HASTA AÑOS DESPUÉS QUE VA A DEDICARSE POR COMPLETO A LA PINTURA.

ENTRE LAS NUMEROSAS EXPOSICIONES EN QUE HA PARTICIPADO FIGURAN LA PRIMERA EXPOSICIÓN DE ARTE MODERNO ORGANIZADA POR EL AYUNTAMIENTO DE LA HABANA EN "100 AÑOS DE ARTE EN CUBA", EN LA UNIVERSIDAD DE LA HABANA, EN EL MUSEO DE ARTE MODERNO DE NEW YORK (1943), EXPOSICIÓN DE ARTE CUBANO EN MOSCÚ (1944) ETC. SU PRIMERA EXPOSICIÓN PERSONAL LA REALIZÓ EN EL LYCEUM (1941).

EN LA PRESENTE EXPOSICIÓN SUS FORMAS CONCENTRADAS Y GEOMÉTRICAS OFRECEN UN UNIVERSO DONDE, COMO NOS SUGIERE EL TÍTULO COMÚN QUE LE HA PUESTO A SUS OBRAS, EL AZUL DE CIELO Y MAR TROPICAL PARECEN VOLVER A CREARSE Y DETENERSE EN LA CERRADA UNIDAD DE CADA UNA DE LAS COMPOSICIONES.

CONSEJO NACIONAL DE CULTURA

RAYAS Y PEZ RAYA EN EL PAPEL RAYADO DE L. MARTÍNEZ PEDRO.

Si pretendier darle tregua a Monsieur Tribulat Bonhomet, podemos afirmar que en una abstracción plástica, encontramos naturaleza, geometría, exceso de composición, movimiento como una cantidad que se expresa, sentimiento como resaca o sufrir, provocaciones del punto en la infinitud, acechanzas del estilismo a través de la historia o regalías lúbricas a la orilla del mar.

Observemos unas cáscaras de plátano, separada de su pulpa excesiva la platinada que se rinde, en cuanto el corpúsculo las toca, ofrecen diversas comportamientos detrás de su resistencia leonada, se agrietan en serie o arenagan con ojos de pez cuando discorriantes. **Parven tamberos yorubas no rectificadas sino destruidas por el fuego, o papeles de encuadración húmedos por una evaporación no previsible.** El pintor moviendo la punta de sus dedos en la materia coloreada, agrieta, rectifica o avanza con decisión, como el tiempo de las estaciones aliado con la energía solar alcanza sobre la cáscara un nuevo animista ordenamiento.

Y sabido es que el dedo acompaña el cálculo de una parábola, las ascensiones por el cuadrante, o el astro de una élipse silenciosa. Es la tierra geometría emblemática. Ahora podemos ver, sobre fondo negro, reiteradas esferas amarillas. No se trata del habitual contraste de esos colores, ni de la presunta simbología de los pasos de la corona asiria por una noche nocturna. Se trata de una escena de fecundación al natural de la alta o malvívica. Pálpese que van a sus ova-

... que atraviesan el estigma del pistilo. Semillas, bolitas y crecimiento, en aquellos amarillos que se acogen a una dimensión que es al propio tiempo lo envolvente placentero. **Sucesivos concéntricos en la pintura de Martínez Pedro, que se resogen para convertirse en longitudes de onda, bastan para expresar la alegría naciente de la vibración.** Sobre un fondo, generalmente de cobalto, que esquematiza la dimensión, la vibración comienza a trocarse en un punto proporcional, pero como aquí el mar quiere mostrar una penetración terribles en el relativismo de sus entrañas, tenemos que esperar que la dimensión, que es una omnipotencia, comience a mostrar la vitalidad de sus distancias relacionables. En un tierra nuestra, sobre un fondo relacionable el triángulo de las manos unidas del nadador, que recorre las marinas ondas homéricas, desde las sirenas gemeladas al marañí sentimental. Al penetrar nuestra tierra el mar universal, se fijan las antelaciones de nuestros mitos. Horizontalizado sobre una pared los peces ruidan gallos. Al penetrar en el agua la energía solar, comienza la ebullición figurativa. Los maestros de la ebullición de la más importante de las hojas, consideras que hay tres momentos en el bullir: ojos de pescado, perlas y saltos de gallo, o llevado a la manera de Martínez Pedro, el cobalto nos da la precisión del recorrido de la luz, una raya blanca la alegría del pez, o sencillamente lo que viene hacia nosotros, y el encuentro en la composición es ese majestuoso esperar del cobalto o del negro, entendiendo a veces esa cantidad de color una estensa franja blanca, comienzo del movimiento, de la ebullición y de la propia inversión solar.

Pero existirá siempre el malhumor del que sobresalta oyendo hablar de formas ovóides, y, sin embargo, muestra su complacencia mirando una perla en la corbata de plastrón de Stendhal. Hay aquí un punto y un plano de composición, el punto que significa la concentración y la dirección de las líneas de fuerza y el color extendido en el plano de composición. La línea que, según Kandinsky, es lo invisible o el recuerdo dejado por la estela de puntos, es la rotación del constante punto de intersección de la imagen invisible y de la dimensión del color. La estela de puntos es el embrión del hombre en lo invisible, el total cuerpo del hombre agazapado en lo que no se ve. **Un hombre escondido es una tensión, como un punto que vuela es una tensión. Ninguna dimensión puede destruir el escondido cuerpo del hombre.**

Una fundamentación de color, un plano básico, coloca al hombre en el bosque, al lado de la columna en el templo, son dos líneas cuya tensión asciende. En esta pintura de Martínez Pedro, la energía del punto, —que puede avanzar destruyéndose en una línea blanca, ecuación de peces—, penetra en la línea de cobalto sin fruncir su superficie, pero convirtiendo la abstracta triangularidad del triángulo en las manos unidas del nadador. **Rayas, Rayas, pero al final Martínez Pedro, nos ha convencido a todos que la raya del Bálaua es lo mismo que la Isla de los Falaones.**

José Lezama Lima

9 AL 28 DE ABRIL / 1963
exposición de oleos y dibujos / l. martínez pedro
GALERIA DE LA HABANA
CONSEJO NACIONAL DE CULTURA



catalogue of
works on display

- 1.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Construction in White and Black*, 1930. Painted wood. 48.9 x 35.6 x 8 cm (19 ¼ x 14 x 3 ⅛ in.). Colección Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza, on deposit at Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (CTB 1999.18)
- 2.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Untitled*, 1930. Oil on canvas stretched over plywood. 73 x 60 cm (28 ¾ x 23 ⅝ in.). Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d'art moderne/Centre de création industrielle. Donation, 1993 (AM 1993-58)
- 3.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Construction in White and Black*, 1938. Oil on paper mounted on wood. 80.7 x 102 cm (31 ¾ x 40 ⅞ in.). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros in honor of David Rockefeller, 2004 (331.2004)
- 4.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Constructivist Construction with Geometric Forms*, 1943. Oil on cardboard. 52 x 69 cm (20 ½ x 27 ⅛ in.). Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d'art moderne/Centre de création industrielle. Donated to State by the artist's family in 1956, allotted in 1956 (AM 3415 P)
- 5.** José Pedro Costigliolo. *Untitled*, 1947. Gouache on paper. 19.3 x 15.5 cm (7 ⅙ x 6 ⅙ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro
- 6.** José Pedro Costigliolo. *Composition*, 1953–54. Lacquer on metal. 70 x 92 cm (27 ⅝ x 36 ⅞ in.). Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (AD03428)
- 7.** José Pedro Costigliolo. *Composition*, 1958. Ink on card. 85 x 61 cm (33 ½ x 24 in.). Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (DE00709)
- 8.** María Freire. *Untitled*, 1954. Oil on canvas. 92 x 122 cm (36 ⅙ x 48 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros
- 9.** María Freire. *V.N.A.*, 1957. Lacquer on wood. 162 x 112 cm (63 ¾ x 44 ⅙ in.). Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (AD03427)
- 10.** María Freire. *Composition*, 1958. Ink on card. 77.8 x 61 cm (30 ⅝ x 24 in.). Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (DO00592)
- 11.** Torres-García: *obras retrospectivas y recientes desde 1898 hasta 1934*. Montevideo: Amigos del Arte, June 1934. Catalogue of Joaquín Torres-García's first exhibition in Uruguay. 16.5 x 12 cm (6 ½ x 4 ¾ in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 12.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Manifiesto 1*. Montevideo: Asociación de Arte Constructivo, August 1934. Printed paper. 32.5 x 20.5 cm (12 ¾ x 8 ⅙ in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 13.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Estructura*. Montevideo: Biblioteca Alfar, 1935. Book. 20 x 15 cm (8 x 6 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 14.** *Círculo y Cuadrado*. Montevideo: Asociación de Arte Constructivo, 1936–43. Magazine. 30 x 20.5 cm (11 ¾ x 8 ⅙ in.). 14.1. No. 1, May 1936. 14.2. No. 2, August 1936. 14.3. No. 3, February 1937. 14.4. No. 4, May 1937. 14.5. No. 5, September 1937. 14.6. No. 6, March 1938. 14.7. No. 7, September 1938. 14.8. Nos. 8–10, December 1943. Collection José María Lafuente
- 15.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Manifiesto 2*. Montevideo: Asociación de Arte Constructivo, 1938. Printed paper. 19 x 14 cm (7 ½ x 5 ½ in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 16.** Joaquín Torres-García. *La tradición del hombre abstracto: doctrina constructivista*. Montevideo: Asociación
- de Arte Constructivo, 1938. Book. 21 x 16 cm (8 ¼ x 6 ¼ in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 17.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Metafísica de la prehistoria indoamericana*. Montevideo: Asociación de Arte Constructivo, 1939. Book. 19.3 x 14.4 cm (7 ⅝ x 5 ¾ in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 18.** Joaquín Torres-García. Handwritten biography on paper with the Asociación de Arte Constructivo (AAC) letterhead, not before 1938. 28.5 x 22.5 cm (11 ⅙ x 8 ⅞ in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 19.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Historia de mi vida*. Montevideo: Asociación de Arte Constructivo, 1939. Book. 18 x 14.5 cm (7 ⅙ x 5 ¾ in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 20.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Manifiesto 3*. Montevideo: Asociación de Arte Constructivo, 1940. Printed paper. 19.3 x 14 cm (7 ⅝ x 5 ½ in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 21.** Joaquín Torres-García. *Lo aparente y lo concreto en el arte*. Montevideo: Asociación de Arte Constructivo, 1947–48. Pamphlets comprising texts of lessons given by Joaquín Torres-García at the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences, Montevideo. 21 x 16.5 cm (8 ¼ x 6 ½ in.). No. 1, July 1947. No. 2, August 1947. No. 3, October 1947. No. 4, December 1947. No. 5, February 1948. Collection José María Lafuente
- 22.** Germán Cueto. *Planes* (Homage to musician Silvestre Revueltas), 1940. Oil on wood. 40 x 50 cm (15 ¾ x 19 ¾ in.). Private collection. Courtesy Freijo Fine Art, Galería de arte y proyectos
- 23.** Germán Cueto. *Geometric Form*, 1944. Pencil on paper. 31 x 23.5 cm (12 ⅙ x 9 ¼ in.). Collection Freijo. Courtesy Freijo Fine Art, Galería de arte y proyectos
- 24.** Germán Cueto. *Abstract Form* (Sculpture Study), 1944. Pencil on paper. 31 x 23.5 cm (12 ⅙ x 9 ¼ in.). Collection Freijo. Courtesy Freijo Fine Art, Galería de arte y proyectos
- 25.** Germán Cueto. *Estela*, 1950. Ceramic (stoneware). 24 x 18 x 4 cm (9 ⅝ x 7 ⅙ x 1 ⅝ in.). Collection Freijo. Courtesy Freijo Fine Art, Galería de arte y proyectos
- 26.** Germán Cueto. Stockholm: Svensk-Franska Konstgallerie, 1954. Exhibition brochure. 21 x 13.8 cm (8 ¼ x 5 ⅜ in.). Courtesy Freijo Fine Art, Galería de arte y proyectos
- 27.** Germán Cueto. Göteborg: Galleri Aveny, 1955. Exhibition brochure. 21.2 x 14 cm (8 ¼ x 5 ½ in.). Courtesy Freijo Fine Art, Galería de arte y proyectos
- 28.** Esteban Lisa. *Composition*, ca. 1935. Oil on cardboard. 30 x 23 cm (11 ¾ x 9 ⅙ in.). Collection Jorge Virgilio, Madrid
- 29.** Esteban Lisa. *Composition*, ca. 1935–40. Oil on cardboard. 30 x 23 cm (11 ¾ x 9 ⅙ in.). Collection Jorge Virgilio, Madrid
- 30.** Esteban Lisa. *Composition*, ca. 1935–40. Oil on cardboard. 30 x 23 cm (11 ¾ x 9 ⅙ in.). Collection Jorge Virgilio, Madrid
- 31.** Juan del Prete. *Composition with Geometric Elements*, 1949. Oil on cardboard. 39.5 x 43 cm (15 ⅝ x 16 ⅞ in.). Private collection
- 32.** Juan Bay. *Composition*, 1950. Oil on plywood. 48 x 38 cm (18 ⅞ x 15 in.). Private collection
- 33.** Rod Rothfuss. *3 Red Circles*, 1948. Enamel on wood. 100.5 x 64.2 x 1.5 cm (39 ⅝ x 25 ¼ x ⅝ in.). Malba - Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires (2001.142)
- 34.** Rod Rothfuss. *Yellow Rectangle*, 1955. Paint on wood. 37 x 30 cm (14 ⅝ x 11 ¾ in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros
- 35.** Carmelo Arden Quin. *Untitled or Composition*, 1945. Oil on cardboard and lacquered wood. 39 x 30 cm (15 ⅝ x 11 ¾ in.). Malba - Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires (2001.03)
- 36.** Gyula Kosice. *Mobile Articulated Sculpture*, 1945. Bronze strips, chrome patina. 65 x 53.5 x 51 cm (25 ⅝ x 21 ⅙ x 20 ⅙ in.). Private collection
- 37.** Gyula Kosice. *Liberated Planes and Color*, 1947. Enamel on plywood. 70 x 55 cm (27 ⅝ x 21 ¾ in.). Private collection
- 38.** Martin Blaszko. *Madí Figure*, 1946. Bronze, green patina. 70 x 31 x 14.4 cm (27 ⅝ x 12 ⅙ x 5 ¾ in.). Private collection
- 39.** Martin Blaszko. *Madí Column*, 1947. Painted wood. 75.5 x 20.5 x 9.3 cm (29 ¾ x 8 ⅙ x 3 ¾ in.). Malba - Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires (2001.39)
- 40.** Juan Melé. *Cropped Frame no. 3*, 1946. Oil on wood. 85 x 55 cm (33 ½ x 21 ¾ in.). Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
- 41.** Juan Melé. *Coplanar no. 18*, 1947. Oil on canvas. 47 x 50 cm (18 ½ x 19 ¾ in.). Collection Raul Naon
- 42.** Manuel Espinosa. *Painting*, 1945. Oil on chipboard. 88 x 47 cm (34 ⅝ x 18 ½ in.). Private collection
- 43.** Manuel Espinosa. *Untitled*, 1945. Oil on chipboard. 55 x 60 cm (21 ¾ x 23 ⅝ in.). Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
- 44.** Manuel Espinosa. *Untitled*, 1950. Gouache on paper. 69.8 x 33.3 cm (27 ½ x 13 ⅙ in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros
- 45.** Enio Iommi. *Opposing Directions*, 1945. Polychromed iron and copper. 87.5 x 84 x 63.5 cm (34 ⅝ x 33 ⅙ x 25 in.). Private collection
- 46.** Enio Iommi. *interrupted Continuity*, 1948. Enamel on metal over black granite base. 62.3 x 45 x 32 cm (24 ½ x 17 ¾ x 12 ⅝ in.). Malba - Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires (2001.98)
- 47.** Enio Iommi. *Linear Rhythm*, 1949. Steel wire and stone. 62.6 x 33.5 x 48.4 cm (24 ⅝ x 13 ⅙ x 19 ⅙ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro
- 48.** Lidya Prati. *Concrete or Untitled*, 1945. Oil on plywood. 62 x 48 cm (24 ⅝ x 18 ⅞ in.). Private collection
- 49.** Lidya Prati. *Untitled*, ca. 1945. Mixed media on canvas. 39 x 39 cm (15 ⅜ x 15 ⅜ in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros
- 50.** Lidya Prati. *infinite Vibration*, 1953. Synthetic enamel on canvas. 40 x 50 cm (15 ¾ x 19 ¾ in.). Collection Raul Naon
- 51.** Tomás Maldonado. *Untitled*, 1948. Oil on canvas. 100 x 70 cm (39 ⅝ x 27 ⅝ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro
- 52.** Tomás Maldonado. *Tensions of Mathematical Origin*, 1950. Oil on canvas. 100 x 70 cm (39 ⅝ x 27 ⅝ in.). Collection Raul Naon
- 53.** Tomás Maldonado. *Untitled*, ca. 1950. Oil on canvas. 110 x 85 cm (43 ¼ x 33 ½ in.). Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
- 54.** Tomás Maldonado. *Theme on Red*, 1953. Oil on canvas. 99.5 x 100 cm (39 ⅙ x 39 ⅝ in.). Private collection
- 55.** Alfredo Hlito. *Linear Construction*, 1952. Oil on canvas. 100 x 72 cm (39 ⅝ x 28 ¼ in.). Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (AD03243)

- 56.** Alfredo Hlito. *Forms and Lines on the Plane or Painting*, 1952. Oil on canvas. 100 x 100 cm (39 3/8 x 39 3/8 in.). Private collection
- 57.** Alfredo Hlito. *Derivation of the Square*, 1954. Oil on canvas. 55 x 45 cm (21 3/4 x 17 3/4 in.). Galeria Guillermo de Osma, Madrid (664)
- 58.** Raúl Lozza. *Painting no. 21*, 1945. Oil on plywood. 55.6 x 45 cm (21 7/8 x 17 3/4 in.). Private collection
- 59.** Raúl Lozza. *Sketch 184*, 1948. Graphite on paper. 84 x 63 cm (33 1/8 x 24 3/4 in.). Collection Raul Naon
- 60.** Raúl Lozza. *Perceptist Period Painting no. 184*, 1948. Polished enamel on wood. 122 x 122 cm (48 x 48 in.). Museu de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires
- 61.** Luis Tomasello. *Untitled*, 1956. Oil on wood. 70 x 60 cm (27 5/8 x 23 5/8 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro
- 62.** César Paternosto. *The Sweetest Skin*, 1970. Acrylic emulsion on canvas. 150.2 x 150.2 x 9.6 cm (59 1/8 x 59 1/8 x 3 3/4 in.). Junta de Andalucía - Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville (CE0442)
- 63.** *Arturo 1*, Buenos Aires, summer 1944. Front and back covers by Tomás Maldonado Magazine. 27.5 x 20 cm (10 3/4 x 7 7/8 in.). Collection Raul Naon
- 64.** *Arturo 1*, Buenos Aires, summer 1944. Front and back covers by Tomás Maldonado Magazine. 27.5 x 20 cm (10 3/4 x 7 7/8 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 65.** *El caballero invisible. Anónimo español del siglo XVII*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones UBU, 1944. Contains 4 illustrations by Rod Rothfuss, hand-colored by the artist (lithographs highlighted with gouache).
- Artist book. Edition: 50/100. 34.5 x 25.5 cm (13 5/8 x 10 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 66.** Elias Piterberg. *Tratado del amor* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Cenit, 1944). Illustrations by Tomás Maldonado. Book. 27 x 18.5 cm (10 5/8 x 7 1/4 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 67.** *invención* (1945). Magazine. 20 x 14.5 cm (7 7/8 x 5 3/4 in.). 67.1. No. 1, Kósice. 67.2. No. 2, Bayley. Collection José María Lafuente
- 68.** *Arte Concreto invención 1*, Buenos Aires, August 1946. Magazine. 31.7 x 22 cm (12 1/2 x 8 3/4 in.). Collection Raul Naon
- 69.** *Boletín de la Asociación de Arte Concreto-Invención 2*, Buenos Aires, December 1946. Printed paper. 31 x 22.5 cm (12 1/8 x 8 7/8 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 70.** *1ª exposición de la Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención*, Buenos Aires, March 18–April 3, 1946. Catalogue. 22 x 12 cm (8 3/4 x 4 3/4 in.). Private collection
- 71.** *Manifiesto Madí*, Buenos Aires, June 1946. Printed paper. 25 x 17 cm (9 3/4 x 6 3/4 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 72.** *Manifiesto blanco*, 1946. Printed paper. 23.5 x 17.7 cm (9 1/4 x 7 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 73.** *Arte Madí Universal*, Buenos Aires, 1947–54. Magazine. 73.1. No. 0, 1947. 31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.). 73.2. No. 3, 1949. 31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.). 73.3. No. 4, 1950. 31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.). 73.4. No. 6, 1952. 23 x 19 cm (9 1/8 x 7 1/2 in.). Collection Raul Naon
- 74.** *Arte Madí Universal*, Buenos Aires, 1947–54. Magazine. 74.1. No. 0, 1947. 31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.). 74.2.
- No. 2, 1948. 31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.). 74.3. No. 3, 1949. 31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.). 74.4. No. 4, 1950. 31 x 25 cm (12 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.). 74.5. No. 5, 1951. 23 x 19 cm (9 1/8 x 7 1/2 in.). 74.6. No. 6, 1952. 23 x 19 cm (9 1/8 x 7 1/2 in.). 74.7. Nos. 7–8, 1954. 23 x 19 cm (9 1/8 x 7 1/2 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 75.** *Contemporánea* year 1 no 1. Buenos Aires, August 1948. Magazine. 36.5 x 28.5 cm (14 3/8 x 11 1/8 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 76.** *Perceptismo 1*, Buenos Aires, October 1950. Magazine. 40 x 29 cm (15 3/4 x 11 3/8 in.). Collection Raul Naon
- 77.** *Perceptismo*, 1950–53. Magazine. 40 x 29 cm (15 3/4 x 11 3/8 in.). 77.1. No. 1, October 1950. 77.2. No. 2, August 1951. 77.3. No. 3, November 1951. 77.4. No. 4, May 1952. 77.5. No. 5, July–August 1952. 77.6. No. 6, January 1953. 77.7. No. 7, July 1953. Collection José María Lafuente
- 78.** Original sketch for magazine *Perceptismo 4*, 1952. Pencil on paper. 41 x 29.5 cm (16 1/8 x 11 5/8 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 79.** *Nueva Visión. Magazine de cultura visual*, Buenos Aires, 1951–57. 30 x 21 cm (11 3/4 x 8 1/4 in.). 79.1. No. 1, December 1951. 79.2. Nos. 2–3, January 1953. 79.3. No. 4, 1953. 79.4. No. 5, 1954. 79.5. No. 6, 1955. 79.6. No. 7, 1955. 79.7. No. 8, 1955. 79.8. No. 9, 1957. Collection José María Lafuente
- 80.** *acht argentijnse abstracten*. Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1953. Exhibition catalogue. 26 x 19 cm (10 1/4 x 7 1/2 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 81.** *acht argentijnse abstracten*. Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1953. Exhibition poster. 52 x 76 cm (20 1/2 x 30 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 82.** a. Buenos Aires: Editorial Nueva Visión, 1956–58. Envelope and publication. 82.1. No. 1, August 1956. 38 x 28 cm (15 x 11 in.). 82.2. No. 2, March 1957. 38 x 28 cm (15 x 11 in.). 82.3. No. 3, March 1958. 32 x 28.5 cm (12 5/8 x 11 1/8 in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 83.** Max Bill. *Quinze variations sur un même thème*. Paris: Éditions des Chroniques du jour, 1938. 83.1. Portfolio of silkscreen prints. 83.2. *Thème*. 83.3. *Variation 1*. 83.4. *Variation 3*. 32 x 30.8 cm (12 5/8 x 12 1/8 in.). Dan Galeria, São Paulo
- 84.** Josef Albers. *Homage to the Square: Study for Nocturne*, 1951. Oil on wood. 53.4 x 53.2 cm (21 x 20 7/8 in.). Tate, London. Presented by The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, 2006 (T12215)
- 85.** Waldemar Cordeiro. *Untitled*, 1949. Oil on canvas. 73.5 x 54.5 cm (28 7/8 x 21 3/8 in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros
- 86.** Waldemar Cordeiro. *Visible Idea*, 1956. Acrylic on plywood. 59.9 x 60 cm (23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros
- 87.** Antônio Maluf. Poster Study for I Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil, 1951. Gouache on cardboard. 98.3 x 65.6 cm (38 3/4 x 25 3/4 in.). Collection Rose Maluf
- 88.** Antônio Maluf. Poster for I Bienal de São Paulo of the Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, 1951. Lithograph. 94 x 63.5 cm (37 x 25 in.). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, 1951 (576.1951)
- 89.** Alexandre Wollner. Poster for III Bienal de São Paulo of the Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, 1955. Digital print, 2010. 96 x 64 cm (37 3/4 x 25 1/4 in.). Private collection
- 90.** Alexandre Wollner. Poster for IV Bienal de São Paulo of the Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, 1957. Digital print, 2010. 96 x 64 cm (37 3/4 x 25 1/4 in.). Private collection
- 91.** Almir Mavignier. Poster for VII Bienal de São Paulo, 1963. Silkscreen print. 93 x 63 cm (36 5/8 x 24 3/4 in.). Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo. Gift of the artist (2000.176)
- 92.** Geraldo de Barros. *Station of Light - SP*, 1949. Vintage silver-gelatin print. 30.7 x 30.2 cm (12 1/8 x 11 7/8 in.). Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo. Sponsored by Petrobras (2001.027)
- 93.** Geraldo de Barros. *The Birds - RJ*, 1950. Vintage silver-gelatin print. 30.1 x 40 cm (11 7/8 x 15 3/4 in.). Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo. Gift of the artist (2006.152)
- 94.** Geraldo de Barros. *Photoform, São Paulo*, 1950. Vintage silver-gelatin print. 40 x 30.1 cm (15 3/4 x 11 7/8 in.). Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo. Sponsored by Petrobras (2001.032)
- 95.** Geraldo de Barros. *Untitled - Seville - Spain*, 1951. Vintage silver-gelatin print, 1970. 30.1 x 40.2 cm (11 7/8 x 15 3/4 in.). Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, on loan from Eduardo Brandão and Jan Fjeld (CM2006.032)
- 96.** Gaspar Gasparian. *Cubist Composition*, ca. 1950. Vintage silver-gelatin print. 30 x 40 cm (11 3/4 x 15 3/4 in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros
- 97.** Thomaz Farkas. *Roof Tiles. Recortes series, São Paulo, SP*, ca. 1945. Silver-gelatin print. 30 x 40 cm (11 3/4 x 15 3/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles
- 98.** Thomaz Farkas. *Recortes series, Rio de Janeiro, RJ*, ca. 1945. Silver-gelatin print. 31 x 30 cm (12 1/4 x 11 3/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles
- 99.** Thomaz Farkas. *Ceiling of Ipiranga Cinema, São Paulo, SP*, ca. 1945. Silver-gelatin print. 28 x 27 cm (11 x 10 1/2 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles
- 100.** Thomaz Farkas. *Recortes series*, ca. 1945. Silver-gelatin print. 29.7 x 30.5 cm (11 3/4 x 12 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles
- 101.** Thomaz Farkas. *Canopy of Pampulha Casino, Belho Horizonte, MG*, ca. 1949. Silver-gelatin print. 31 x 30 cm (12 1/4 x 11 3/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles
- 102.** German Lorca. *Crossed Curves II*, 1955. Silver-gelatin print. 43.8 x 44 cm (17 1/8 x 17 1/4 in.). Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo. Gift of the artist (2006.152)
- 103.** German Lorca. *Homage to Mondrian*, 1960. Vintage silver-gelatin print. 57.8 x 46.5 cm (22 3/4 x 18 1/4 in.). Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo. Acquisition of Núcleo Contemporâneo MAM-SP (2002.083)
- 104.** Haruo Ohara. *Cyclone. Londrina - PR*, 1957. Silver-gelatin print. 30 x 40 cm (11 3/4 x 15 3/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles
- 105.** Haruo Ohara. *Marcha. Terra Boa - PR*, 1958. Silver-gelatin print. 30 x 31 cm (11 3/4 x 12 1/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles
- 106.** Haruo Ohara. *The Drought. Tres Bocas Factory Dam, Londrina, PR*, 1959. Silver-gelatin print. 30 x 40 cm (11 3/4 x 15 3/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles
- 107.** Haruo Ohara. *Composition*, 1964. Silver-gelatin print. 45 x 45 cm (17 3/4 x 17 3/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles
- 108.** Haruo Ohara. *Originality. Londrina, PR*, 1969. Silver-gelatin print. 45 x 45 cm (17 3/4 x 17 3/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles
- 109.** Haruo Ohara. *Abstract, House on Rua São Jerônimo, Londrina*,

PR, 1969. Silver-gelatin print. 40 x 29.5 cm (15 3/4 x 11 5/8 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles

110. José Yalenti. *Arquitectura no. 7*, ca. 1960s. inkjet print on cotton paper, 2006. Reproduction of an original, unique print. 41.5 x 44.9 cm (16 1/4 x 17 3/4 in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

111. José Yalenti. *Fasciceiro*, ca. 1960s. Vintage silver-gelatin print. 37.5 x 47.2 cm (14 3/4 x 18 5/8 in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

112. Marcel Gautherot. *Ministry Buildings, Brasília, DF*, ca. 1958. Silver-gelatin print. 31 x 30 cm (12 1/4 x 11 3/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles

113. Marcel Gautherot. *Detail of Metallic Structure of Ministries, Brasília, DF*, ca. 1958. Silver-gelatin print. 31 x 30 cm (12 1/4 x 11 3/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles

114. Marcel Gautherot. *Detail of Metallic Structure of Ministries, Brasília, DF*, ca. 1958. Silver-gelatin print. 31 x 30 cm (12 1/4 x 11 3/4 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles

115. Marcel Gautherot. *Metropolitan Cathedral of Nossa Senhora Aparecida with Ministeries Esplanade in Background, Brasília, DF*, ca. 1960. Silver-gelatin print. 47 x 47 cm (18 1/2 x 18 1/2 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles

116. Marcel Gautherot. *Palácio do Congresso Nacional, Brasília, DF*, ca. 1960. Silver-gelatin print. 47 x 47 cm (18 1/2 x 18 1/2 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles

117. Marcel Gautherot. *Palácio do Congresso Nacional, Brasília, DF*, ca. 1960. Silver-gelatin print. 47 x 47 cm (18 1/2 x 18 1/2 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles

118. Marcel Gautherot. *Palácio do Congresso*

Nacional, Brasília, DF, ca. 1960. Silver-gelatin print. 47 x 47 cm (18 1/2 x 18 1/2 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles

119. Marcel Gautherot. *Palácio da Alvorada, Brasília, DF*, ca. 1962. Silver-gelatin print. 47 x 47 cm (18 1/2 x 18 1/2 in.). Instituto Moreira Salles

120. Alexander Calder. *Red Angel Fish Mobile*, 1957. Painted metal. 102 x 148 x 58 cm (40 1/4 x 58 1/4 x 22 3/4 in.). Private collection

121. Geraldo de Barros. *Diagonal Function*, 1952. Lacquer on plywood. 62.9 x 62.9 x 1.3 cm (24 3/4 x 24 3/4 x 1/2 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

122. Ivan Serpa. *Untitled*, 1954. Oil on canvas. 116.2 x 89.5 cm (45 3/4 x 35 1/4 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

123. Alfredo Volpi. *White and Red Concrete Composition*, 1955. Tempera on canvas. 54 x 100 cm (21 1/4 x 39 3/4 in.). Collection Rose and Alfredo Setubal.

124. Alfredo Volpi. *Façade with Flags*, 1959. Tempera on canvas. 116 x 72 cm (45 3/4 x 28 1/4 in.). MASP, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo (1237 P)

125. Alfredo Volpi. *Façade IV*, 1960. Tempera on canvas. 72 x 48 cm (28 1/4 x 18 7/8 in.). Fundação José e Paulina Nemirovsky, São Paulo (153)

126. Alfredo Volpi. *Triangles – Black Background*, ca. 1970. Tempera on canvas. 136 x 68 cm (53 1/2 x 26 3/4 in.). Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (AD02513)

127. Franz Weissmann. *Composition with Semicircles*, 1953. Aluminum. 81 x 64.7 x 56.1 cm (31 1/8 x 25 1/2 x 22 1/8 in.).

Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

128. Amilcar de Castro. *Untitled*, n. d. Cut steel. 29 x 30.5 x 20 cm (11 3/8 x 12 x 7 7/8 in.). Fundação José e Paulina Nemirovsky, São Paulo (145)

129. Judith Lauand. *Spatial Construction with Triangles and Straight Lines*, 1954. Synthetic paint on chipboard. 45 x 45 cm (17 3/4 x 17 3/4 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

130. Judith Lauand. *Concrete 18*, 1956. Synthetic paint on chipboard. 30 x 30.2 cm (11 3/4 x 11 7/8 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

131. Hermelindo Fiaminghi. *Circles with Alternating Movement*, 1956. Paint on chipboard. 60 x 35 cm (23 5/8 x 13 3/4 in.). Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo. Acquisition of Banco Bradesco S. A. (1999.026)

132. Hermelindo Fiaminghi. *Alternating 2*, 1957. Lacquer on chipboard. 61 x 61 cm (24 x 24 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

133. Hércules Barsotti. *Black and White II*, ca. 1959–60. ink on paper. 21.5 x 9 cm (8 1/2 x 3 1/2 in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

134. Hércules Barsotti. *Black/White*, 1959–61. Oil and sand on canvas. 50 x 100 cm (19 3/4 x 39 3/8 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

135. Hércules Barsotti. *Project III*, n. d. india ink on paper. 9.5 x 9.5 x 4.2 cm (3 3/4 x 3 3/4 x 1 3/4 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

136. Lothar Charoux. *Re-established Equilibrium*, 1960. Gouache and acrylic on paper. 50 x 50 cm (19 3/4 x 19 3/4 in.). Collection Glauca and Peter Cohn, São Paulo

137. Lothar Charoux. *Composition*, 1968. Gouache on paper. 35 x 37 cm (13 3/4 x 14 5/8 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

138. Lothar Charoux. *Rhythm*, 1970. Oil on canvas. 100 x 35 cm (39 3/8 x 13 3/4 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

139. Mira Schendel. *Untitled*, 1960. Oil on canvas. 23 x 28 cm (9 1/8 x 11 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

140. Rubem Valentim. *Untitled*, 1956–62. Oil on canvas. 70.2 x 50.2 cm (27 5/8 x 19 3/4 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

141. Lygia Pape. *Untitled*, 1956. Acrylic on plywood. 35 x 35 x 8 cm (13 3/4 x 13 3/4 x 3 1/8 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

142. Hélio Oiticica. *Untitled (Grupo Frente)*, 1955. Gouache on cardboard. 40 x 40 cm (15 3/4 x 15 3/4 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

143. Lygia Clark. *Creature – model*, 1960. Aluminum construction. 20 x 30 x 30 cm (7 7/8 x 11 3/4 x 11 3/4 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro. Courtesy asociación cultural *O mundo de Lygia Clark*

144. Augusto de Campos, Haroldo de Campos, Décio Pignatari, Ronaldo Azeredo, José Lino Grünwald. *Noigandres* Magazine. 144.1. No. 3, *poesia concreta*, December 1956. 23 x 16 cm (9 1/8 x 6 1/4 in.). 144.2. No. 4, *poesia concreta*, March 1958. Silkscreen print on cover by Hermelindo Fiaminghi. 40 x 28.9 cm (15 3/4 x 11 3/8 in.). 144.3. No. 5, *antologia: do verso à poesia concreta*, 1962. Constructivist work on cover by Alfredo Volpi. 23 x 16 cm (9 1/8 x 6 1/4 in.). Private collection

145. Ferreira Gullar. *O Formigueiro*, 1955. Rio de Janeiro: Edição Europa, 1991. Book. 28.7 x 21.5 cm (11 1/4 x 8 1/2 in.). Fundación Juan March, Madrid

146. José Lino Grünwald. *Um e dois*. São Paulo,

1958. Book. 24 x 16 cm (9 3/8 x 6 1/4 in.). Private collection

147. Décio Pignatari. *São Paulo Brasil 1960*. São Paulo, 1960. Book. 20.3 x 24.5 cm (8 x 9 5/8 in.). Private collection

148. Haroldo de Campos. *São Paulo 1962*. São Paulo: Edição Noigandres, 1962. Book. 22 x 11 cm (8 3/4 x 4 1/4 in.). Private collection

149. Augusto de Campos. *Cubagramma*, 1960–62. Concrete poem. 32 x 24 cm (12 5/8 x 9 3/8 in.). Collection Augusto de Campos

150. Décio Pignatari. *Stèles pour vivre 3 (estela cubana)*, 1962. Concrete poem. 33 x 70 cm (13 x 27 5/8 in.). Collection Augusto de Campos

151. Augusto de Campos, Décio Pignatari and Haroldo de Campos. *Teoria da poesia concreta. Textos críticos e manifestos 1950–1960*. São Paulo: Edição invenção, 1965. Book. 23 x 16 cm (9 1/8 x 6 1/4 in.). Collection José María Lafuente

152. *invenção. Revista de arte de vanguarda*. São Paulo: Edição invenção, 1962–67. Magazine. 25.5 x 18 cm (10 x 7 1/8 in.). 152.1. No. 2, year 1, 2nd trimester, 1962. 152.2. No. 5, year 6, December 1966 - January 1967. Collection José María Lafuente

153. *invenção. Revista de arte de vanguarda* no. 3, year 2. São Paulo: Edição invenção, June 1963. Magazine. 25.5 x 18 cm (10 x 7 1/8 in.). Private collection

154. Lygia Clark. *Livro Obra*, 1960. Edition K. Collage and gouache on paper. Variable dimensions. Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros. Courtesy cultural association *O Mundo de Lygia Clark*

155. Willys de Castro. *Active Object*, 1959. Oil on canvas on plywood. 46.5 x 92.2 cm (18 1/4 x 36 1/4 in.). MASP

- Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo (1286 P)

156. Willys de Castro. *Active Object*, 1962. Oil on canvas glued on wood. 37.7 x 2 x 4 cm (14 3/4 x 3/4 x 1 5/8 in.) [each]; 71 x 41 x 10 cm (28 x 16 x 4 in.) [with acrylic box]. Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. Gift of Hércules Rubens Barsotti, 2001 (5251)

157. Willys de Castro. *Active Object*, n. d. Oil on canvas. 18 x 9 cm (7 x 3 1/2 in.). Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. Gift of Hércules Rubens Barsotti, 2001 (5252)

158. Willys de Castro. *Active Object*, n. d. Oil on canvas. 18 x 9 cm (7 x 3 1/2 in.). Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. Gift of Hércules Rubens Barsotti, 2001 (5253)

159. Sergio Camargo. *Relief no. 247*, 1969. Acrylic on wood. 47 x 47 x 17.5 cm (18 1/2 x 18 1/2 x 6 7/8 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

160. Sergio Camargo. *Relief no. 362*, 1969. Acrylic on wood. 50.5 x 50.5 x 2.4 cm (20 x 20 x 1 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

161. Antônio Maluf. *Villa Normanda Study*, 1964. Gouache on cardboard. 28 x 21.5 cm (11 x 8 1/2 in.). Private collection

162. Antônio Maluf. *Untitled*, 1964. Gouache on paper glued on wood. 30 x 30 cm (11 3/4 x 11 3/4 in.). Private collection

163. Luiz Sacilotto. *Concreção 58*, 1958. Enamel on metal and acrylic on plywood. 20 x 60 x 30.5 cm (8 x 23 5/8 x 12 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

164. Luiz Sacilotto. *Gouache no. 272*, n. d. Gouache on paper. 48 x 64 cm (19 x 25 1/4 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

165. Lygia Pape. *Untitled*, 1961. Acrylic on plywood. 50 x 50 x 10.5 cm

(19 ¾ x 19 ¾ x 4 ½ in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

166. Hélio Oiticica. *Metascheme*, 1957. Gouache on cardboard. 45.5 x 52.5 cm (18 x 20 ¾ in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

167. Hélio Oiticica. *Metascheme 222*, 1957. Gouache on cardboard. 26 x 41.8 cm (10 ¼ x 16 ½ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

168. Hélio Oiticica. *Metascheme*, 1958. Gouache on cardboard. 50.2 x 61.2 cm (19 ¾ x 24 ½ in.). Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo. Gift of Milú Villela (1998.044)

169. Hélio Oiticica. *Metascheme no. 4066*, 1958. Gouache on board. 58.1 x 53.3 cm (23 x 21 in.). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of the Oiticica Family, 1997 (1975.1997)

170. Almir Mavignier. *White/Pink Discontinuous Form*, 1962. Oil on canvas. 84 x 48 cm (33 x 19 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

171. Omar Carreño. *Three-Time Theme no. 22*, 1950. Oil on canvas. 54.6 x 46 cm (21 ½ x 18 in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

172. Víctor Valera. *Untitled*, 1951. Tempera on canvas. 80 x 80 cm (31 ½ x 31 ½ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

173. Mateo Manaure. *Black is a Color*, 1954. Synthetic paint on chipboard. 76.5 x 51 x 4.1 cm (30 x 20 x 1 ½ in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

174. Jesús Rafael Soto. *Rotation*, 1952. Oil on plywood. 100.5 x 100 x 7.5 cm (39 ½ x 39 ¾ x 3 in.). Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d'art moderne/Centre de création industrielle. Purchase, 1980 (AM 1980-529)

175. Jesús Rafael Soto. *Displacement of a*

Luminous Element, 1954. Vinyl dots on acrylic and tempera on panel and wood. 50 x 80 x 3.3 cm (19 ¾ x 31 ½ x 1 ¼ in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

176. Jesús Rafael Soto. *Black and Blue Mustache*, 1962. Iron, wood and acrylic paint. 73 x 153.4 x 14.7 cm (28 ¾ x 60 ¾ x 5 ¾ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

177. Jesús Rafael Soto. *Small Horizontal-Vertical*, 1965. Wood, metal, Plaka and nylon. 32.5 x 41.5 x 14.5 cm (12 ¾ x 16 ¼ x 5 ¾ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

178. Jesús Rafael Soto. *Large Horizontal Vibration*, 1966. Painted wood relief and metal rods. 146 x 216 x 14 cm (57 ½ x 85 x 5 ½ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris

179. Jesús Rafael Soto. *Untitled*, 1966. Acrylic, wood and acrylic paint. 40 x 40 x 24 cm (15 ¾ x 15 ¾ x 9 ¾ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

180. Jesús Rafael Soto. *Sotomagie*. Paris: Éditions Denise René, 1967. Box containing a group of 11 optical and kinetic works: 1 kinetic sculpture in methacrylate, 50 x 30 x 16 cm (19 ¾ x 11 ¾ x 6 ¼ in.). 4 kinetic silkscreen sculptures on polystyrene and methacrylate, 34 x 34 x 18 cm (13 ¾ x 13 ¾ x 7 in.) each. 2 colored silkscreens superimposed on cellulose acetate, 60 x 60 cm (23 ¾ x 23 ¾ in.) each. 4 colored silkscreens, 60 x 60 cm (23 ¾ x 23 ¾ in.) each. Galerie Denise René, Paris

181. Alejandro Otero. *Colored Lines on White Background III*, 1951. Oil on canvas. 65 x 54 cm (25 ¾ x 21 ¼ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

182. Alejandro Otero. *Colorhythm in Movement 2*, 1957. Duco paint on wood and methacrylate. 100 x 104 x 4 cm (39 ¾ x 41 x 1 ½ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

183. Alejandro Otero. *Colorhythm 45A*, 1960. Duco paint on wood. 200 x 57.5 cm (78 ¾ x 22 ¾ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

184. Alejandro Otero. *Colorhythm 63*, 1960. Lacquer on wood. 150 x 38 cm (39 x 15 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

185. Narciso Debourg. *In White and Black (On White)*, 1953. Assemblage in wood and Duco paint. 100 x 100 x 7 cm (39 ¾ x 39 ¾ x 2 ¾ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

186. Narciso Debourg. *White of White*, 1966. Wood, PVC and acrylic paint. 101.5 x 101.5 x 13 cm (40 x 40 x 5 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

187. Narciso Debourg. *White Multi-Reflections*, 1970. Painted wood and aluminum relief. 91 x 91 x 9.5 cm (35 ¾ x 35 ¾ x 3 ¾ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris

188. Carlos Cruz-Diez. *Vibration of Black*, 1957. Oil on wood. 54.6 x 59.7 x 4.8 cm (21 ½ x 23 ½ x 2 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

189. Carlos Cruz-Diez. *Psychromie 35*, 1961. Wood and cardboard. 30 x 30 cm (11 ¾ x 11 ¾ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

190. Carlos Cruz-Diez. *Psychromie 94*, 1963. Mixed media on wood. 40 x 81 cm (15 ¾ x 32 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

191. Gego. *Departing from a Rectangle II*, 1958. Folded and twisted aluminum strips. 32 x 36 x 37 cm (12 ¾ x 14 ¼ x 14 ¾ in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

192. Gego. *Construction Based on Squares*, 1961. Welded and enameled iron rods. 40.5 x 66.5 x 48 cm (16 x 26 ¼ x 19 in.). Fundación Privada Allegro

193. Victor Vasarely. *Caribbean Sea (Venezuela Album)*, 1956. Silkscreen on paper. 66 x 51.5 cm

(26 x 20 ¼ in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

194. Victor Vasarely. *Maracaibo (Venezuela Album)*, 1956. Silkscreen on paper. 66 x 51.5 cm (26 x 20 ¼ in.). Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

195. *Venezuela*. Invitation to the presentation of the album at Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1956. Exhibition opening invitation, June 22, 1956. 10.5 x 13.7 cm (4 x 5 ½ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris

196. Leo Matiz. *Construction, Bogota*, 1937. Silver-gelatin print. 31.7 x 24.7 cm (12 ½ x 9 ¾ in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

197. Leo Matiz. *Abstract, Mexico*, 1941. Silver-gelatin print, 2010. 25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.). Fundación Leo Matiz

198. Leo Matiz. *Mexico*, 1942. Silver-gelatin print, 2010. 25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.). Fundación Leo Matiz

199. Leo Matiz. *The Stair, New York*, 1949. Vintage silver-gelatin print. 21.5 x 19.3 cm (8 ½ x 7 ½ in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

200. Leo Matiz. *Abstracts, 1950*. Vintage silver-gelatin print. 17.1 x 24.1 cm (6 ¾ x 9 ½ in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

201. Leo Matiz. *Abstract, USA*, 1950. Vintage silver-gelatin print. 16.5 x 24.4 cm (6 ½ x 9 ½ in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

202. Leo Matiz. *Polygon, Venezuela*, 1950. Silver-gelatin print. 40 x 30 cm (15 ¾ x 11 ¾ in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros

203. Leo Matiz. *Abstract, Caracas*, 1950. Silver-gelatin print, 2010. 25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.). Fundación Leo Matiz

204. Leo Matiz. *Venezuela*, 1951. Vintage silver-gelatin print. 25.4 x 19.9 cm (10 x 7 ¾ in.). Fundación Leo Matiz

205. Leo Matiz. *Venezuela*, 1952. Silver-gelatin print, 2010. 25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.). Fundación Leo Matiz

206. Leo Matiz. *Light and Shadow, Argentina*, 1965. Silver-gelatin print, 2010. 25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.). Fundación Leo Matiz

207. Leo Matiz. *Museo Jesús Soto, Venezuela*, 1973. Silver-gelatin print, 2010. 25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.). Fundación Leo Matiz

208. Leo Matiz. *Museo Jesús Soto, Venezuela*, 1973. Silver-gelatin print, 2010. 25.3 x 20.3 cm. Fundación Leo Matiz

209. Leo Matiz. *Museo Jesús Soto, Venezuela*, 1973. Silver-gelatin print, 2010. 25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.). Fundación Leo Matiz

210. Leo Matiz. *Museo Jesús Soto, Venezuela*, 1973. Silver-gelatin print, 2010. 25.3 x 20.3 cm (10 x 8 in.). Fundación Leo Matiz

211. Sandu Darie. *Spatial Multivision*, 1950s. Oil on canvas and wood rods. 126 x 126 cm (49 ½ x 49 ½ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (90.3304)

212. Sandu Darie. *Untitled*, 1950s. Oil on canvas. 53.5 x 55 cm (21 x 21 ¾ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (90.3305)

213. Sandu Darie. *Pictorial Construction*, ca. 1950. Stretcher and painted wood rods. 80 x 42.5 x 6 cm (31 ½ x 16 ¾ x 2 ¾ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (89.1353)

214. Sandu Darie. *Spatial Multivision*, 1955. Oil on canvas. 136 x 102 cm (53 ½ x 40 ¼ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (07.432)

215. Sandu Darie. *Transformable Painting*, 1957. Oil on canvas and wood rods. 133.5 x 134 cm (52 ½ x 52 ¾ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (07.425)

216. Mario Carreño. *Unexpected Encounter*, 1952. Oil on canvas. 130 x 200 cm (51 ¼ x 78 ¾ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (07.410)

217. Mario Carreño. *Untitled*, 1954. Oil on canvas. 91 x 76.5 cm. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (2393)

218. Rafael Soriano. *Composition*, n. d. Oil on canvas. 56 x 97 cm (22 x 38 ¼ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (03.30)

219. Rafael Soriano. *Untitled*, n. d. Oil on canvas. 56 x 97 cm (22 x 38 ¼ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (03.28)

220. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Ron Bacardi y Compañía S.A. Administration Building project, Santiago de Cuba. interior perspective, ca. 1957. Colored paper, wood veneer, ink and photo collage on illustration board. 76.2 x 101.6 cm (30 x 40 in.). The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mies van der Rohe Archive. Gift of the architect (MR5701.454)

221. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Bacardi Office Building project, Santiago de Cuba. Preliminary version: interior perspective, 1957. ink, wood veneer, marbled paper and cut-out reproduction on illustration board. 76.2 x 101.6 cm (30 x 40 in.). The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mies van der Rohe Archive. Gift of the architect, 1966 (999.1965)

222. Loló Soldevilla. *Composition*, 1950s. Oil on canvas. 75 x 75 cm (29 ½ x 29 ½ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (08.1969)

223. Loló Soldevilla. *Celestial Chart in Yellow no. 1*, Paris, 1953. Oil on canvas. 73 x 92 cm (28 ¾ x 36 ¼ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (07.415)

- 224.** Loló Soldevilla. *Untitled*, 1955. Collage on paper. 50.6 x 65 cm (20 x 25 ½ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (1057)
- 225.** Loló Soldevilla. *Untitled*, 1956. Oil on cardboard. 27.9 x 35.6 cm (11 x 14 in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros
- 226.** Loló Soldevilla. *Untitled*, 1956. Oil on cardboard. 27.9 x 35.6 cm (11 x 14 in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros
- 227.** Loló Soldevilla. *Untitled*, 1956. Oil on cardboard. 27.9 x 35.6 cm (11 x 14 in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros
- 228.** Loló Soldevilla. *Untitled*, ca. 1956. Mixed media on card. 30 x 24.7 cm (11 ¾ x 9 ¾ in.). Private collection
- 229.** Loló Soldevilla. *Homage to Fidel*, 1957. Assemblage in wood and vinyl paint. 145 x 152.5 cm (57 x 60 in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (08.2121)
- 230.** José Mijares. *Stability*, 1959. Acrylic on canvas. 210 x 61.5 cm (82 ¾ x 24 ¼ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (08.1050)
- 231.** José Mijares. *Composition no. 2*, 1960. Oil on canvas. 104 x 83 cm (41 x 32 ¾ in.). Collection Raquel Villa, Havana
- 232.** José Mijares. *Painting*, 1961. Oil on canvas. 99.5 x 129.5 cm (39 ¼ x 51 in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (08.1072)
- 233.** José Mijares. *Forms*, 1965. Collage on paper. 53 x 75.5 cm (21 x 29 ¾ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (76.2027)
- 234.** José Mijares. *Composition*, 1965. Collage on paper. 93.5 x 68.5 cm (36 ¾ x 27 in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (68.457)
- 235.** Luis Martínez Pedro. *Composition no. 6*, 1954. Oil on canvas. 203 x 126.5 cm (80 x 49 ¾ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (08.1173)
- 236.** Luis Martínez Pedro. *Composition no. 12*, 1956. Acrylic on canvas. 61 x 76.2 cm (24 x 30 in.). Collection Rafael DiazCasas
- 237.** Luis Martínez Pedro. *Homage*, 1959. Oil on canvas. 196 x 87 cm (77 ¼ x 34 ¼ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (07.413)
- 238.** Luis Martínez Pedro. *Territorial Waters no. 5*, 1962. Oil on canvas. 186.5 x 148.5 cm (73 ¾ x 58 ½ in.). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (07.414)
- 239.** Salvador Corratgé. *Untitled*, late 1950s. Gouache on paper. 60 x 46 cm (23 ¾ x 18 in.). Collection Raquel Villa, Havana
- 240.** Salvador Corratgé. *New Formal Planar Unity Opened in 3 Distinct Phases onto a Supporting Point*, 1961. Oil on canvas. 124 x 153 cm (48 ¾ x 60 ¼ in.). Private collection, Havana
- 241.** Carmen Herrera. *Untitled (Black and White)*, 1950. Acrylic on canvas. 123.5 x 123.5 x 4.1 cm (48 ¾ x 48 ¾ x 1 ½ in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros
- 242.** Carmen Herrera. *Untitled*, 1952. Synthetic polymer paint on canvas. 63.5 x 152.4 cm (25 x 60 in.). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Agnes Gund and Tony Bechara, 2005 (972.2005)
- 243.** Carmen Herrera. *White and Green*, 1959. Acrylic on canvas. 114.9 x 152.9 cm (45 ¼ x 60 ¼ in.). Tate, London. Lent by the American Fund for the Tate Gallery, courtesy of Ella Fontanals Cisneros 2006 (L02658)
- 244.** Carmen Herrera. *White and Green*, 1966–67. Acrylic on canvas. 114.3 x 101.6 cm (45 x 40 in.). Collection Ella Fontanals-Cisneros
- 245.** *Noticias de Arte*, 1952–53. Magazine. 31 x 24 cm (12 ¼ x 9 ¾ in.). 245.1. Year 1, no. 1, September 1952. 245.2. Year 1, no. 8, April 1953. 245.3. Year 1, no. 9, May 1953. Fundación Juan March, Madrid
- 246.** *Pintura de hoy, Vanguardia de la Escuela de Paris*. Havana: instituto Nacional de Cultura, Palacio de Bellas Artes, 1956. Exhibition program. 31 x 24 cm (12 ¼ x 9 ¾ in.). Private collection
- 247.** Juan Marinello. *Conversación con nuestros pintores abstractos. Mensajes. Cuadernos marxistas*. Offprint, Havana, 1958. Book. 21.5 x 16.5 cm (8 ½ x 6 ½ in.). Fundación Juan March, Madrid
- 248.** Loló Soldevilla. *Ir, venir, volver a ir. Crónicas 1952–1957*. Havana: Ediciones [R]evolución, 1963. Book. 20.5 x 13.5 cm (8 x 5 ¼ in.). Fundación Juan March, Madrid
- 249.** *Cercle et Carré*, Paris, 1930. Magazine. 32 x 24 cm (12 ¾ x 9 ¾ in.). 249.1. No. 1, March 15, 1930. 249.2. No. 2, April 15, 1930. 249.3. No. 3, June 30, 1930. Collection José María Lafuente
- 250.** *Abstraction création. Art non figuratif*, Paris, 1932–33. Magazine. 28 x 22.5 cm (11 x 9 in.). 250.1. No. 1, 1932. 250.2. No. 2, 1933. Collection José María Lafuente
- 251.** Joaquín Torres-García. Handwritten letter inviting Benjamín Palencia to participate in the constructivist group, 1933. 22.4 x 16.5 cm (8 ¾ x 6 ½ in.). Courtesy Freijo Fine Art, Galería de arte y proyectos
- 252.** *Réalités Nouvelles*, Paris, 1947–49. Magazine. 28 x 23 cm (11 x 9 ¼ in.). 252.1. No. 1, 1947. 252.2. No. 2, 1948. 252.3. No. 3, 1949. Collection José María Lafuente
- 253.** *Arte concreta*, Milan, 1951–52). Bulletin. 16.5 x 17 cm (6 ½ x 6 ¾ in.). 253.1. No. 1, November 1951. 253.2. No. 5, March 1952. Collection José María Lafuente
- 254.** *Numero*, Florence, November–December 1953. Magazine. Two poems by Gyula Kosice and one by Juan Bay published on page 21. 34 x 24 cm (13 ¾ x 9 ¾ in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 255.** Eugen Gomringer, *konstellationen, constellations, constelaciones*. Bern: Spiral Press, 1953. Book. 25 x 25 cm (9 ¾ x 9 ¾ in.). Collection José María Lafuente
- 256.** *Diagonale*. Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1952. Exhibition opening invitation, November 14, 1952. 13.9 x 10.7 cm (5 ½ x 4 ¼ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 257.** *Art d'Aujourd'hui*, Paris, 1953–54. Magazine. 31 x 24 cm (12 ¼ x 9 ¾ in.). 257.1. Series 4, no. 8, December 1953. includes Edgard Pillet interview with Mário Pedrosa. 257.2. Series 5, no. 6, September 1954. Cover based on a gouache by Cícero Dias. includes homage to Carlos Raúl Villanueva's Ciudad Universitaria, Caracas. Collection José María Lafuente
- 258.** *Art madi international*. Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1958. Exhibition opening invitation, February 18, 1958. 9.7 x 21.2 cm (3 ¾ x 8 ¼ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 259.** *Art madi international*. Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1958. Exhibition program. 16 x 20.4 cm (6 ½ x 8 in.) Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 260.** Carmelo Arden Quin. *Untitled*, 1959. Paper. 31 x 21.7 cm (12 ¼ x 8 ½ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 261.** Opening of exhibition *Art madi international* at Galerie Denise René, Paris, February 18, 1958. Photos. 24 x 18 cm (9 ¾ x 7 in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 262.** *Kosice*. Galerie Denise René, Paris, April 5–30, 1960. Exhibition catalogue. 24 x 20 cm (9 ¾ x 8 in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 263.** *Signals*, London, 1964–65. Magazine. 51 x 34 cm (20 x 13 ¾ in.). 263.1. Vol. 1, no. 1, August 1964. 263.2. Vol. 1, no. 5, December 1964 - January 1965. Issue dedicated to Sergio Camargo. 263.3. Vol. 1, no. 7, April - May 1965. Issue dedicated to Lygia Clark. Collection José María Lafuente
- 264.** *Robho*, Paris, 1967–68. Magazine. 41 x 28.5 cm (16 x 11 ¼ in.). 264.1. No. 1, June 1967. 264.2. No. 3, spring 1968. Collection José María Lafuente
- 265.** *Abstraction géométrique, Lumière et mouvement, Art optique et cinétique*. The Redfern. Gallery, London, 1968. Exhibition catalogue. 30.5 x 24.2 cm (12 x 9 ½ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 266.** *Cruz-Diez. Psychchromies. Couleur additive. induction Chromatique. Chromointerférences*. Galerie Denise René, New York, November 1971. Exhibition catalogue. 26 x 21 cm (10 ¼ x 8 ¼ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 267.** Carlos Cruz-Diez and Francisco Sobrino exhibition, *Two Optical Artists of the 70s*, Galerie Denise René, New York, November 17 - December 4, 1971. 2 Installation photos. 20.5 x 25.3 cm (8 x 10 in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 268.** *Cruz-Diez*. Galerie Denise René, Paris, May 23 - June 11, 1973. Exhibition catalogue. 26 x 21 cm (10 ¼ x 8 ¼ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 269.** *Narciso Debourg*. Galerie Denise René Hans Mayer, Düsseldorf, 1972. Exhibition opening invitation, March 17, 1972. 21 x 10.5 cm (8 ¼ x 4 in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 270.** *16 artistes, peinture et sculpture*. Galerie Denise René, Paris, June 1972. Invitation. 20 x 10.5 cm (8 x 4 in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 271.** *Tomasello. Originales + Multiples*. Galerie Denise René Hans Mayer, Düsseldorf, April 16, 1971. Exhibition opening invitation. 21 x 10.5 cm (8 ¼ x 4 in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 272.** *Tomasello*. Galerie Denise René, Paris, May 3, 1972. Exhibition opening invitation. 20 x 10.5 cm (8 x 4 in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 273.** *Tomasello: oeuvres récentes*. Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1972. Exhibition catalogue. 26 x 21 cm (10 ¼ x 8 ¼ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris
- 274.** Luis Tomasello exhibition at Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1972. Installation photos. 18.3 x 24 cm (7 ¼ x 9 ½ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris.
- 275.** *Tomasello: Recent Works*. Galerie Denise René, New York, May 1973. Exhibition catalogue. 26 x 21 cm (10 ¼ x 8 ¼ in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris.
- 276.** Luis Tomasello. *Chromoplastic Atmosphere no. 352*, 1974. Painted wood relief. 100 x 100 x 10 cm (39 ¾ x 39 ¾ x 3 7/8 in.). Galerie Denise René, Paris

selected
bibliography

MICHAEL NUNGESSER
INÉS D'ORS LOIS

Despite its considerable length, the purpose of the bibliography was not to produce an extensive selection of works but a well-ordered listing of texts specifically concerned with the subject of the exhibition: geometric abstraction in Latin America and the artists included in the show. This section features a comprehensive list of written works compiled by Michael Nungesser in the his sixty-four biographies as well as the bibliographical references and works cited by the authors in their essays (mainly Osbel Suárez's essay and chronology), which in turn are listed in accordance with the biographies section. The bibliography is arranged in three parts: the first is a selected list of catalogues chiefly of group exhibitions, though some solo exhibition catalogues are also included (for example, biographical entries cited in the essays of the present catalogue or those in which the publisher and exhibition gallery do not coincide: see the introductory note in the biographies section). The second part contains works published in book format, and includes monographies, sources, written works by artists, and essays or historical texts of a more general nature. The third part features texts and articles issued in periodical publications. The last two sections are numbered (Books: 1–486; texts in periodical publications: 1–47), enabling the reader of the biographies section to distinguish between general texts and those devoted to an artist in particular, as noted in the biographical entries, without the need of duplicating the information in both sections

A. Catalogues

(This section features a selection of exhibition catalogues presented in chronological order)

Grupo de artistas modernos de la Argentina. Pinturas, esculturas, dibujos. Buenos Aires: Vía Galería de Arte, 1952.

Torre, Guillermo de. *J. Torres-García* [V Bienal Internacional de Arte de São Paulo]. Montevideo: Museo Torres García, 1959.

Eugenio Abal, Jose Rodrigo Beloso, Raúl Lozza. Paintings. Rio de Janeiro: Museu de Arte Moderna, 1965.

Nul: Negentienhonderd vijf en zestig. Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1965.

The Responsive Eye. New York: MoMA, 1965.

Palacios, Inocente. *Alejandro Otero, Jesús Soto, Víctor Valera* [XXXIII Biennale di Venezia]. Caracas: Instituto Nacional de Cultura y Bellas Artes, 1966.

Nova objectividade brasileira. Rio de Janeiro: Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, 1967.

Visión elemental. Las formas no ilusionistas. Buenos Aires: Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1967.

Geometric Abstraction 1926–1942. Dallas: Dallas Museum of Art, 1972.

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12 Latin American Artists Today - 12 artistas latino-americanos de hoy [University Art Museum, University of Texas, Austin]. Mexico City: Excelsior, 1975.

Amaral, Aracy A. *Projeto construtivo brasileiro na arte (1950–1962).* Rio de Janeiro: Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, 1977.

Venezuelan Graphic Art. Etching, Aquatint, Intaglio, Serigraphy, Lithography [traveling exhibition]. Caracas: Museo de Bellas Artes, 1979.

Perazzo, Nelly. *Vanguardias de la década del 40. Arte Concreto-Invención, Arte Madi, Perceptismo.* Buenos Aires: Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, 1980.

Brito, Ronaldo. *Sergio de Camargo. Marble Sculptures* [XL Biennale di Venezia]. Brasília: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education and Culture, 1982.

Rodríguez, Bélgica. *Alejandro Otero.* [XL Biennale di Venezia]. Caracas: Comisión Nacional de Artes Visuales, 1982.

Otero, Alejandro *et al. Presencia de Alejandro Otero en la Bienal de Venecia 1982.* Milan: Fausta Squatriti Editore, 1983.

Face à la machine. Paris: Maison de l'Amérique Latine, 1984.

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TRANSLATIONS

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EXHIBITION CATALOGUES AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS BY THE FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH

1966

☞ CATÁLOGO MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA [Guide to the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español]. Text by Fernando Zóbel. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English). Published by the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español, Cuenca, 1966

1969

☞ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA [Guide to the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español]. Texts by Gustavo Torner, Gerardo Rueda and Fernando Zóbel. Published by the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español, Cuenca, 1969

1973

☞ ARTE'73. Multilingual ed. (Spanish, English, French, Italian and German)

1974

☞ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA [Guide to the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español]. Essays by Gustavo Torner, Gerardo Rueda and Fernando Zóbel. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English). Published by the Museo de Arte Abstracto

Español, Cuenca, 1974 (2nd ed., rev. and exp.)

1975

☞ OSKAR KOKOSCHKA. Óleos y acuarelas. Dibujos, grabados, mosaicos. Obra literaria. Texts by Heinz Spielmann

☞ EXPOSICIÓN ANTOLÓGICA DE LA CALCOGRAFÍA NACIONAL. Texts by Enrique Lafuente Ferrari and Antonio Gallego

☞ I EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1976

☞ JEAN DUBUFFET. Texts by Jean Dubuffet

☞ ALBERTO GIACOMETTI. Colección de la Fundación Maeght. Texts by Jean Genêt, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jacques Dupin and Alberto Giacometti

☞ II EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1977

☞ ARTE USA. Texts by Harold Rosenberg

☞ ARTE DE NUEVA GUINEA Y PAPÚA. Colección A. Folch y E. Serra. Texts by B. A. L. Cranstone and Christian Kaufmann

☞ PICASSO. Texts by Rafael Alberti, Gerardo Diego, Vicente Aleixandre, Eugenio d'Ors, Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, Ricardo Gullón, José Camón Aznar, Guillermo de Torre and Enrique Lafuente Ferrari

☞ MARC CHAGALL. 18 pinturas y 40 grabados. Texts by André Malraux and Louis Aragon (in French). 

☞ ARTE ESPAÑOL CONTEMPORÁNEO. COLECCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH [This catalogue accompanied the exhibition of the same name that traveled to 67 Spanish venues between 1975 and 1996; at many venues, independent catalogues were published.]

☞ III EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1978

☞ ARS MEDICA. Text by Carl Ziggrosser

☞ FRANCIS BACON. Text by Antonio Bonet Correa

☞ BAUHAUS. Texts by Hans M. Wingler, Will Grohmann, Jürgen Joedicke, Nikolaus Pevsner, Hans Eckstein, Oskar Schlemmer, László Moholy-Nagy, Otto Stelzer and Heinz Winfried Sabais. Published by the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart, 1976

☞ KANDINSKY: 1923–1944. Texts by Werner Haftmann, Gaëtan Picon and Wasili Kandinsky

☞ ARTE ESPAÑOL CONTEMPORÁNEO. COLECCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH

☞ IV EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1979

☞ WILLEM DE KOONING. Obras recientes. Texts by Diane Waldman

☞ MAESTROS DEL SIGLO XX. NATURALEZA MUERTA. Texts by Reinhold Hohl

☞ GEORGES BRAQUE. Óleos, gouaches, relieves, dibujos y grabados. Texts by Jean Paulhan, Jacques Prévert, Christian Zervos, Georges Salles, André Chastel, Pierre Reverdy and Georges Braque

☞ V EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

☞ GOYA. CAPRICHOS, DESASTRES, TAUROMAQUIA, DISPARATES. Texts by Alfonso E. Pérez-Sánchez

1980

☞ JULIO GONZÁLEZ. Esculturas y dibujos. Text by Germain Viatte

☞ ROBERT MOTHERWELL. Text by Barbaralee Diamonstein and Robert Motherwell

☞ HENRI MATISSE. Óleos, dibujos, gouaches, découpées, esculturas y libros. Texts by Henri Matisse

☞ VI EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1981

☞ MINIMAL ART. Text by Phyllis Tuchman

☞ PAUL KLEE. Óleos, acuarelas, dibujos y grabados. Texts by Paul Klee

☞ MIRRORS AND WINDOWS. AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY SINCE 1960. Text by John Szarkowski. English ed. (Offprint: Spanish translation of text by John Szarkowski). Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1980

☞ MEDIO SIGLO DE ESCULTURA: 1900–1945. Texts by Jean-Louis Prat

☞ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA [Guide to the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español]. Texts by Gustavo Torner, Gerardo Rueda and Fernando Zóbel

1982

☞ PIET MONDRIAN. Óleos, acuarelas y dibujos. Texts by Herbert Henkels and Piet Mondrian

☞ ROBERT Y SONIA DELAUNAY. Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet, Jacques Damase, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Isaac del Vando Villar, Vicente Huidobro and Guillermo de Torre

☞ PINTURA ABSTRACTA ESPAÑOLA: 1960–1970. Text by Rafael Santos Torroella

☞ KURT SCHWITTERS. Texts by Werner Schmalenbach, Ernst Schwitters and Kurt Schwitters

LEYENDA: ☞ Sold-out publications |  Exhibition at the Museu Fundación Juan March, Palma |  Exhibition at the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español, Cuenca

🏛️ VII EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1983

🏛️ ROY LICHTENSTEIN: 1970–1980. Texts by Jack Cowart. English ed. Published by Hudson Hill Press, New York, 1981

🏛️ FERNAND LÉGER. Text by Antonio Bonet Correa and Fernand Léger

🏛️ PIERRE BONNARD. Texts by Ángel González García

🏛️ ALMADA NEGREIROS. Texts by Margarida Acciaiuoli, Antonio Espina, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, José Augusto França, Jorge de Sena, Lima de Freitas and Almada Negreiros. Published by the Ministério de Cultura de Portugal, Lisbon, 1983

🏛️ ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL EN LA COLECCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH [Guide to the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español]. Texts by Julián Gállego

🏛️ GRABADO ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. COLECCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH. Texts by Julián Gállego [This catalogue accompanied the exhibition of the same name that traveled to 44 Spanish venues between 1983 and 1999.]

1984

🏛️ EL ARTE DEL SIGLO XX EN UN MUSEO HOLANDÉS: EINDHOVEN. Texts by Jaap Bremer, Jan Debbaut, R. H. Fuchs, Piet de Jonge and Margriet Suren

🏛️ JOSEPH CORNELL. Texts by Fernando Huici

🏛️ FERNANDO ZÓBEL. Text by Francisco Calvo Serraller. Madrid, Cuenca

🏛️ JULIA MARGARET CAMERON: 1815–1879. Texts

by Mike Weaver and Julia Margaret Cameron. English ed. (Offprint: Spanish translation of text by Mike Weaver). Published by John Hansard Gallery & The Herbert Press Ltd., Southampton, 1984

🏛️ JULIUS BISSIER. Text by Werner Schmalenbach

1985

🏛️ ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG. Texts by Lawrence Alloway

🏛️ VANGUARDIA RUSA: 1910–1930. Museo y Colección Ludwig. Texts by Evelyn Weiss

🏛️ DER DEUTSCHE HOLZSCHNITT IM 20. Texts by Gunther Thiem. German ed. (Offprint: Spanish translations of texts). Published by the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart, 1984

🏛️ ESTRUCTURAS REPETITIVAS. Texts by Simón Marchán Fiz

1986

🏛️ MAX ERNST. Texts by Werner Spies and Max Ernst

🏛️ ARTE, PAISAJE Y ARQUITECTURA. El arte referido a la arquitectura en la República Federal de Alemania. Texts by Dieter Honisch and Manfred Sack. German ed. (Offprint: Spanish translation of introductory texts). Published by the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart, 1983

🏛️ ARTE ESPAÑOL EN NUEVA YORK: 1950–1970. Colección Amos Cahan. Text by Juan Manuel Bonet

🏛️ OBRAS MAESTRAS DEL MUSEO DE WUPPERTAL. De Marées a Picasso. Texts by Sabine Fehleman and Hans Günter Wachtmann

1987

🏛️ BEN NICHOLSON. Texts by Jeremy Lewison and Ben Nicholson

🏛️ IRVING PENN. Text by John Szarkowski. English ed. Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1984 (repr. 1986)

🏛️ MARK ROTHKO. Texts by Michael Compton and Mark Rothko

1988

🏛️ EL PASO DESPUÉS DE EL PASO EN LA COLECCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH. Text by Juan Manuel Bonet

🏛️ ZERO, A EUROPEAN MOVEMENT. The Lenz Schönberg Collection. Texts by Dieter Honisch and Hannah Weitemeier. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English)

🏛️ COLECCIÓN LEO CASTELLI. Texts by Calvin Tomkins, Judith Goldman, Gabriele Henkel, Leo Castelli, Jim Palette, Barbara Rose and John Cage

1989

🏛️ RENÉ MAGRITTE. Texts by Camille Goemans, Martine Jacquet, Catherine de Croës, François Daulte, Paul Lebeer and René Magritte

🏛️ EDWARD HOPPER. Text by Gail Levin

🏛️ ARTE ESPAÑOL CONTEMPORÁNEO. FONDOS DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH. Texts by Miguel Fernández-Cid

1990

🏛️ ODILON REDON. Colección Ian Woodner. Texts by

Lawrence Gowing, Odilon Redon and Nuria Rivero

🏛️ CUBISMO EN PRAGA. Obras de la Galería Nacional. Texts by Jiří Kotalík, Ivan Neumann and Jiří Šetlik

🏛️ ANDY WARHOL. COCHES. Texts by Werner Spies, Christoph Becker and Andy Warhol

🏛️ COL·LECCIÓ MARCH. ART ESPANYOL CONTEMPORANI. PALMA [Guide to the Museu d'Art Espanyol Contemporani]. Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet. Multilingual ed. (Spanish, Catalan, English and German)

1991

🏛️ PICASSO. RETRATOS DE JACQUELINE. Texts by Hélène Parmelin, María Teresa Ocaña, Nuria Rivero, Werner Spies and Rosa Vives

🏛️ VIEIRA DA SILVA. Texts by Fernando Pernes, Julián Gállego, M^a João Fernandes, René Char (in French), António Ramos Rosa (in Portuguese) and Joham de Castro

🏛️ MONET EN GIVERNY. Colección del Museo Marmottan de París. Texts by Arnaud d'Hauterives, Gustave Geffroy and Claude Monet

🏛️ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA [Guide to the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español]. Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet. (2nd ed., 1st ed. 1988)

1992

🏛️ RICHARD DIEBENKORN. Text by John Elderfield

🏛️ ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY. Text by Angelica Jawlensky

🏛️ DAVID HOCKNEY. Text by Marco Livingstone

1993

🏛️ MALEVICH. Colección del Museo Estatal Ruso, San Petersburgo. Texts by Eugenija N. Petrova, Elena V. Basner and Kasimir Malevich

P 🏛️ ICASSO. EL SOMBRERO DE TRES PICOS. Dibujos para los decorados y el vestuario del ballet de Manuel de Falla. Texts by Vicente García-Márquez, Brigitte Léal and Laurence Berthon

🏛️ MUSEO BRÜCKE BERLÍN. ARTE EXPRESIONISTA ALEMÁN. Texts by Magdalena M. Moeller

1994

🏛️ GOYA GRABADOR. Texts by Alfonso E. Pérez-Sánchez and Julián Gállego

🏛️ ISAMU NOGUCHI. Texts by Shoji Sadao, Bruce Altshuler and Isamu Noguchi

🏛️ TESOROS DEL ARTE JAPONÉS. Período Edo: 1615–1868. Colección del Museo Fuji, Tokio. Texts by Tatsuo Takakura, Shin-ichi Miura, Akira Gokita, Seiji Nagata, Yoshiaki Yabe, Hirokazu Arakawa and Yoshihiko Sasama

🏛️ FERNANDO ZÓBEL. RÍO JÚCAR. Texts by Fernando Zóbel and Rafael Pérez-Madero ©

1995

🏛️ KLIMT, KOKOSCHKA, SCHIELE. UN SUEÑO VIENÉS: 1898–1918. Texts by Gerbert Frodl and Stephan Koja

🏛️ ROUAULT. Texts by Stephan Koja, Jacques Maritain and Marcel Arland

🏛️ MOTHERWELL. Obra gráfica: 1975–1991. Colección Kenneth Tyler. Texts by Robert Motherwell ©

1996

☞ TOM WESSELMANN. Texts by Marco Livingstone, Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker, Tilman Osterwold and Meinrad Maria Grewenig. Published by Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 1996

☞ TOULOUSE-LAUTREC. De Albi y de otras colecciones. Texts by Danièle Devynck and Valeriano Bozal

☞ MILLARES. Pinturas y dibujos sobre papel: 1963–1971. Texts by Manuel Millares. **P** **C**

☞ MUSEU D'ART ESPANYOL CONTEMPORANI. FUNDACION JUAN MARCH. PALMA [Guide to the Museu d'Art Espanyol Contemporani]. Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet and Javier Maderuelo. Bilingual eds. (Spanish/Catalan and English/German)

☞ PICASSO. SUITE VOLLARD. Text by Julián Gállego. Spanish ed., bilingual ed. (Spanish/German) and trilingual ed. (Spanish/German/English) [This catalogue accompanies the exhibition of the same name that, since 1996, has traveled to five Spanish and foreign venues.]

1997

☞ MAX BECKMANN. Texts by Klaus Gallwitz and Max Beckmann

☞ EMIL NOLDE. NATURALEZA Y RELIGIÓN. Texts by Manfred Reuther

☞ FRANK STELLA. Obra gráfica: 1982–1996. Colección Tyler Graphics. Texts by Sidney Guberman, Dorine Mignot and Frank Stella. **P** **C**

☞ EL OBJETO DEL ARTE. Text by Javier Maderuelo. **P** **C**

☞ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH. CUENCA [Guide to the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español].

Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet and Javier Maderuelo. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English)

1998

☞ AMADEO DE SOUZA-CARDOSO. Texts by Javier Maderuelo, Antonio Cardoso and Joana Cunha Leal

☞ PAUL DELVAUX. Text by Gisèle Ollinger-Zinque

☞ RICHARD LINDNER. Text by Werner Spies

1999

☞ MARC CHAGALL. TRADICIONES JUDÍAS. Texts by Sylvie Forestier, Benjamín Harshav, Meret Meyer and Marc Chagall

☞ KURT SCHWITTERS Y EL ESPÍRITU DE LA UTOPIA. Colección Ernst Schwitters. Texts by Javier Maderuelo, Markus Heinzelmann, Lola and Bengt Schwitters

☞ LOVIS CORINTH. Texts by Thomas Deecke, Sabine Fehleemann, Jürgen H. Meyer and Antje BIRTHÄLMER

☞ MIQUEL BARCELÓ. Ceràmiques: 1995–1998. Text by Enrique Juncosa. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/Catalan). **P**

☞ FERNANDO ZÓBEL. Obra gráfica completa. Texts by Rafael Pérez-Madero. Published by Departamento de Cultura, Diputación Provincial de Cuenca, Cuenca, 1999. **P** **C**

2000

☞ VASARELY. Texts by Werner Spies and Michèle-Catherine Vasarely

☞ EXPRESIONISMO ABSTRACTO. OBRA SOBRE PAPEL. Colección de The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nueva York. Text by Lisa M. Messinger

SCHMIDT-ROTTLUFF. Colección Brücke-Museum Berlin. Text by Magdalena M. Moeller

☞ NOLDE. VISIONES. Acuarelas. Colección de la Fundación Nolde-Seebüll. Text by Manfred Reuther. **P** **C**

☞ LUCIO MUÑOZ. ÍNTIMO. Text by Rodrigo Muñoz Avia. **C**

☞ EUSEBIO SEMPERE. PAISAJES. Text by Pablo Ramírez. **P** **C**

2001

☞ DE CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH A PICASSO. Obras maestras sobre papel del Museo Von der Heydt, de Wuppertal. Texts by Sabine Fehleemann

☞ ADOLPH GOTTLIEB. Texts by Sanford Hirsch

☞ MATISSE. ESPÍRITU Y SENTIDO. Obra sobre papel. Texts by Guillermo Solana, Marie-Thérèse Pulvenis de Séligny and Henri Matisse

☞ RÓDCHENKO. GEOMETRÍAS. Texts by Alexandr Lavrentiev and Alexandr Ródchenko. **P** **C**

2002

☞ GEORGIA O'KEEFFE. NATURALEZAS ÍNTIMAS. Texts by Lisa M. Messinger and Georgia O'Keeffe

☞ TURNER Y EL MAR. Acuarelas de la Tate. Texts by José Jiménez, Ian Warrell, Nicola Cole, Nicola Moorby and Sarah Taft

☞ MOMPÓ. Obra sobre papel. Texts by Dolores Durán Úcar. **C**

☞ RIVERA. REFLEJOS. Texts by Jaime Brihuega, Marisa Rivera, Elena Rivera, Rafael Alberti and Luis Rosales. **C**

☞ SAURA. DAMAS. Texts by Francisco Calvo Serraller and Antonio Saura. **P** **C**

☞ GOYA. CAPRICHOS, DESASTRES, TAUROMAQUIA, DISPARATES. Texts by Alfonso E. Pérez-Sánchez

2003

☞ ESPÍRITU DE MODERNIDAD. DE GOYA A GIACOMETTI. Obra sobre papel de la Colección Kornfeld. Text by Werner Spies

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☞ CHILLIDA. ELOGIO DE LA MANO. Text by Javier Maderuelo. **P** **C**

☞ GERARDO RUEDA. CONSTRUCCIONES. Text by Barbara Rose. **C**

☞ ESTEBAN VICENTE. Collages. Texts by José María Parreño and Elaine de Kooning. **C**

☞ LUCIO MUÑOZ. ÍNTIMO. Texts by Rodrigo Muñoz Avia and Lucio Muñoz. **P**

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☞ FIGURAS DE LA FRANCIA MODERNA. De Ingres a Toulouse-Lautrec del Petit Palais de París. Texts by Delfín Rodríguez, Isabelle Collet, Amélie Simier, Maryline Assante di Panzillo and José de los Llanos. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/French)

☞ LIUBOV POPOVA. Text by Anna María Guasch. **P** **C**

☞ ESTEBAN VICENTE. GESTO Y COLOR. Text by Guillermo Solana. **P**

☞ LUIS GORDILLO. DUPLEX. Texts by Miguel Cereceda and Jaime González de Aledo. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English). **P** **C**

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LEYENDA: ☞ Sold-out publications | **P** Exhibition at the Museu Fundación Juan March, Palma | **C** Exhibition at the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español, Cuenca

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Spanish and English eds.

☞ BECKMANN. Von der Heydt-
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☞ EGON SCHIELE: IN
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Texts by Stephan Kojka, Carl E.
Schorske, Alice Strobl, Franz
A. J. Szabo, Manfred Koller,
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Zuckermandl. Spanish, English
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☞ Supplementary publication:
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additional texts by Christian
Huemer, Verena Perhelfter, Rosa
Sala Rose and Dietrun Otten

LA CIUDAD ABSTRACTA:
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de Arte Abstracto Español.
Texts by Santos Juliá, María
Bolaños, Ángeles Villalba, Juan
Manuel Bonet, Gustavo Torner,
Antonio Lorenzo, Rafael Pérez
Madero, Pedro Miguel Ibáñez
and Alfonso de la Torre

GARY HILL: IMAGES OF
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Broeker. Bilingual ed.
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E. Pérez-Sánchez. (11th ed.,
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the same name that, since 1979,
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has been translated into more
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2007

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BEGINNING TO END. Texts
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Ramírez, Ruth Fine, Cassandra
Lozano, James de Pasquale,
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Spanish, French and English eds.

Supplementary publication: Roy
Fox Lichtenstein. PAINTINGS,
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Roy Fox Lichtenstein (1949),
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Cowart and Clare Bell

THE ABSTRACTION OF
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Hofmann, Hein-Th. Schulze
Altcappenberg, Barbara Dayer
Gallati, Robert Rosenblum,
Miguel López-Remiro, Mark
Rothko, Cordula Meier, Dietmar
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Spanish, Catalan, English
and German eds. **P**

2008

MAXImin: Maximum
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John M Armleder, Ilya
Bolotowsky, Daniel Buren,
Hanne Darboven, Adolf
Hölzel, Norbert Kricke,
Heinz Mack and Friederich
Vordemberge-Gildewart.
Spanish and English eds.

TOTAL ENLIGHTENMENT:
Conceptual Art in Moscow
1960–1990. Texts by Boris Groys,
Ekaterina Bobrinskaya, Martina
Weinhart, Dorothea Zwirner,
Manuel Fontán del Junco,
Andrei Monastyrski and Ilya
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Feininger, Thomas Buchsteiner,
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Bonet, Jorge Schwartz, Regina
Teixeira de Barros, Tarsila do
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Bandeira, Haroldo de Campos,
Emiliano di Cavalcanti, Ribeiro
Couto, Carlos Drummond de
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Supplementary publication:
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Andrés Sánchez Robayna

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exp. Spanish and English eds.

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THE ART OF DRAWING. Texts
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English, and German eds.

2010

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Richard Humphreys, Yolanda
Morató, Juan Bonilla, Andrzej

Gasiorek, and Alan Munton.
Spanish and English eds.

Supplementary publication:
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Thomas Middleton. TIMÓN
DE ATENAS/TIMON OF
ATHENS. With illustrations by
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annotated by Ángel-Luis Pujante
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notes by Yolanda Morató.
Semi-facsimile Spanish ed.

PALAZUELO, PARIS, 13 RUE
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Texts by Alfonso de la Torre and
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and Michael Nungesser.
Spanish and English eds.

For more information:
www.march.es

Established in 1955 by the Spanish financier Juan March Ordinas, the **Fundación Juan March** is a family-run institution that dedicates its resources and activities to the fields of science and the humanities.

The Foundation organizes art exhibitions, concerts, lecture series, and seminars. It administers the Spanish Library of Contemporary Music and Theater in its Madrid headquarters and directs the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español in Cuenca, and the Museu d'Art Espanyol Contemporani in Palma de Mallorca.

In 1986, the Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones was created as an institution specializing in the scientific activities that complement the cultural work of the Fundación Juan March. Upon it currently depends the Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences (CEACS). Through this center the Foundation promotes teaching and specialized research in the area of sociology.



Geometric
Abstraction in
Latin America
(1934-1973)

Cold America

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