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The Tree of What You Don't Yet Know



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The Tree of What You Don't Yet Know

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It's possible to imitate another body without ever leaving your own, without any need to touch it and without the other person ever realising that you are blending them into you.¹

¹ Sonia Fernández Pan, *Edit* (Bilbao: Caniche editorial, 2022), 15.

A Way of Being Together²

I was there, but I don't trust my memory. I don't trust anyone else's either. And I trust even less the authoritative overviews by those who were not there. . . . I knew more about it then than I do now, despite the advantages of hindsight.

The times were chaotic and so were our lives. We have each invented our own history, and they don't always mesh; but such messy compost is the source of all versions of the past. . . . My own version is inevitably tempered by my feminist and left politics. Almost thirty years later my memories have merged with my own subsequent life and learnings and leanings. . . . I'm not a theoretician. This is an occasionally critical memoir of a small group of young artists' attempts to escape from the frame-and-pedestal syndrome in which art found itself by the mid-1960s.³

I think I only really began to understand Minimal and conceptual art by rereading Lucy Lippard's *Six Years* for a university class some years ago. As I was doing so, I realised she wasn't talking about a theory of art but rather an experience of art that eschewed any authoritarian or universalising tendencies in favour of the specific, the positioned and the situated⁴ and, in a way, the collective or shared. Her text is bursting with the names of friends, roommates and colleagues with whom she learns, navigates and shares ideas. It struck me that her six-year narrative, which starts by marking out a time and place and detailing a series of shared life experiences, was the only way to talk about art. And I also glimpsed how we actually experience art beyond its conceptual bounds, how we describe it, how we

2 This idea was born out of a series of conversations on curatorial practice with Irina Mutt in which we wondered whether an exhibition might offer a way of prolonging female relationships beyond it, "whether we might remain together for a long time". It is fleshed out more extensively in the article "Beware of what you dream of, it may just come true", *A*Desk*, June 2018. [Available online: <https://a-desk.org/en/magazine/vigila-somies-perque-pot-fer-realitat/>]

3 Lucy Lippard, ed., *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (New York: Praeger, 1973).

4 Echoing writers such as Donna Haraway and Rosi Braidotti, who explored the idea of situated knowledge in the field of science.

convey it. Perhaps that's why, in the same class, when we read a chapter from John Dewey's *Art as Experience*,⁵ I was gripped by his descriptions of the "living creature" and above all by his urge to say something about the need to experience art as opposed to understanding it. He was saying something about life.

In *Edit*, Sonia Fernández Pan discusses this idea by relating it to dance culture. She speaks lovingly of a community with a "somatic memory" that appears and disappears in the collective body—on a dancefloor: "To recall this memory, you need to dance,"⁶ she says. And I think something similar happens with some artworks: they need bodies to activate them, because neither an image nor an explanation alone gets to the heart of it. That's why this take on the collection is certainly not a theoretical or historical review. Instead, echoing what Sonia says, it could be thought of as a "history that contradicts the linear understanding of events"⁷ because it aims to open up a time for a shared experience between the artworks and us. If *Edit* suggests that it is through music that we incorporate the moves of dancers around us, infecting ourselves at a distance, devouring them on the sly, then this contagion also occurs in the visual realm, with forms that infect each other, even across great distances in faraway places. We might like to imagine the exhibition as a dancefloor where "stories dance to build up a movement that grows outwards piece by piece."⁸

Everything we do, everything we know—or think we know—is because somebody somewhere has already done or told us something; because we have already read or heard something; because someone has already

danced it, written it or thought it at some time before us or alongside us. The artists in this show are the ones who have made this event happen: through their knowledge, their work and their lives, they have spun this world into existence. And by allowing themselves to be caught in the mesh of the collections and by looking up to speak to me in their unique voices, these women have taught me to look at them afresh and to forge a way of working based on intuition, desire and feelings that come from within and ripple across the skin.

Although each and every one of them has put their body and soul—themselves and their work, interwoven and interconnected—into the show, I should especially like to thank Silvia Gubern for gracing the exhibition with her title and Belén Rodríguez for cloaking it in her artwork. Through their texts, the authors have given us words, which the translators have then shared in other languages. I am indebted to the members of the jury for placing their trust in me and giving me this unique opportunity. On the CaixaForum team, Núria Faraig has been a visionary nerve centre, and Pep Canaleta and Alex Gifreu have reshaped ideas in space and on paper. Jorge Bravo opened my eyes to see through and beyond the artworks, and thanks to ferranElOtro I have been able to read between and beyond text and ideas. Martín Vitaliti has shown me unbounded love, and Leonora Almirall Vitaliti has guided me deep into myself and taught me to be flesh, skin, tenderness and chaos.

5 John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigee Books, 1934).

6 Sonia Fernández Pan, *Edit*, 17.

7 Sonia Fernández Pan, 17.

8 Sonia Fernández Pan, 69.

The Tree of What You Don't Yet Know

The Tree of What You Don't Yet Know casts us between what someone has said or done at some point before us and what we are saying and doing right here, right now. The artists in this show share ties with other women as artists and creators, with an artistic context or a wider spiritual world as the centre of their work, their powerhouse, their reason why. They don't think of themselves as exceptional, original, individual creators but rather as participants—mothers, daughters, friends—in a broader context, as part of a network within an ecosystem from which they draw strength while also feeding back their own input.

By bringing these artists together, we aim to understand art as a shared endeavour where the boundaries between the individual and the collective become blurred in favour of thinking about their relationship with the collection and the exhibition space. The show becomes a collective space that summons not only works of art but also whatever it is that each of them signals or questions: they all allude to something “outside” themselves, either by incorporating something that has come before them or by leaving room for others to enter. The collection is seen as one big family, in the widest sense of kinship, like Donna Haraway's notion of *making kin*;⁹ like when Margaret Mead ponders the strangeness of being a grandmother, a biological tie that extends beyond her;¹⁰ like when Céline Condorelli suggests understanding female friendship¹¹ as a way of working together,

- 9 Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016). In this book, Donna Haraway talks of “making kin, not babies” as she suggests conceiving of kinship beyond strictly blood relationships between mothers and daughters to encompass ties with the planet and other species that accompany us, as well as freely chosen bonds. Chapter 8, “The Camille Stories: Children of Compost”, advocates forming families in which three figures parent a creature linked as a symbiont to an endangered species in order to make the planet a more habitable place by decreasing the population.
- 10 Margaret Mead, “On Being a Grandmother”, in *Blackberry Winter* (New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1972).
- 11 Céline Condorelli, *The Company She Keeps* (London: Book Works, Chisenhale Gallery; Eindhoven, Van Abbemuseum, 2014). I was given this book by Eva Rowson in 2017, when, based on her →

as well as a means of escaping from work, in order to become something that transcends one's own endeavours—a whole whose sum is greater than its parts.

In the chapter of her autobiography entitled “On Being a Grandmother”,¹² Margaret Mead considers how one life can touch another through the ties between people who have never met. She says she has always been acutely aware of her relationship with readers of her books whom she has never met but who have been inspired to become anthropologists. However, when her life is transformed by an act not of her own but of her daughter, she finds it a completely new experience. She hints at the link between production and reproduction, the responsibility we take on by participating in something greater than ourselves, beyond ourselves, something that transcends us, as happens with art and culture. Canadian artist Moyra Davey, editor of an anthology of writings on motherhood including Mead's essay, says: “Much of life with small children revolves around loss of control and disintegration of physical boundaries”. But this idea goes beyond a life with children: she is talking about the need to “de-educate” ourselves to get closer to new ways of relating to the world, both our everyday reality and more magical or unknown varieties. At the start of her essay “The Fisherwoman's Daughter”, Ursula K. Le Guin says she looks on this piece of writing gratefully as a collaboration with

→ residency with BAR Project, she launched *la musea* (<https://lamusea.hotglue.me/>) project in Barcelona and brought together a group of people and a series of activities linking different spaces in the city to rethink the idea of a museum through a transfeminist perspective. Ever since, it has accompanied me and helped me think about the crossed notions of friendship and work, or the support structures that make up the possibility of work.

12 Margaret Mead (Philadelphia, 1901 – New York, 1978) was a pioneering cultural anthropologist in the study of kinship, above all in Oceania (Samoa and Papua Nova Guinea, among others). Her writings had a great influence on feminist movements and revolutionised ethnographic standards, upsetting her more conservative peers, who harshly criticised her research. In 1972 she published her autobiography, in which she wrote about her life as a woman and anthropologist. To a certain extent, she embodied a woman who had successfully combined motherhood and a professional career.

her listeners (the essay was initially given several times as a lecture), her editors and all the writers whose works and words she pieced together in it—ancestors, strangers and friends—to produce a text on her mother, also a writer. The title was inspired by Virginia Woolf's image of a woman writing: “I figure her really in an attitude of contemplation, like a fisherwoman, sitting on the bank of a lake with her fishing rod held over its water. . . . She was not thinking; she was not reasoning; she was not constructing a plot; she was letting her imagination down into the depths of her consciousness while she sat above holding on by a thin but quite necessary thread of reason.”¹³ “Writing the body,” says Woolf; “rewriting the world,” quips Le Guin; “white writing”, writing in milk, adds Hélène Cixous,¹⁴ forging ties with life and death, as well as with the trivial and tangential, in short, with an experience of the world that has been systematically limited.

The Tree of What You Don't Yet Know aims to tell a somewhat different story than usual: the same events experienced in another way. Finding enjoyment in unexpected places, pointing out something that can't be seen, softening things, peering through the invisible . . . These artworks and artists approach the world through desire, through skin, through emptiness, through white beginnings. They don't seek to explain anything or serve as a discursive artefact but narrate, roam and repeatedly probe those places without any answers. They aren't searching for the origin, the first and foremost, but are rooted in the premise that something has always come before us, something we don't yet know. And they do so

13 Ursula K. Le Guin, quoting Virginia Woolf, in “The Fisherwoman's Daughter”, in *Dancing at the Edge of the World* (New York, Grove Press, 1989). Ursula K. Le Guin wrote at length about writing, as in the superb “Telling Is Listening”, in *The Wave in the Mind* (Boston, MA: Shambhala, 2004), although frankly all her work is required reading. In “The Fisherwoman's Daughter”, she considers the bond between mothers and daughters who both write and shares a very personal reflection on creative work.

14 Ursula K. Le Guin, “The Fisherwoman's Daughter”.

as both conscientious host and humble novice. We are invited to spend time with these bodies and images, open and closed, and relish their incompleteness.

The artists in this show all share a certain sense of disquiet or disinterest in anything ostensibly clear, specific or explicable. Their practice is all about curiosity, desire and intuition, urged on by an experimental drive to create and destroy, draw and erase, add and subtract, meld with matter, insinuate, point out, hide. They try out ways of proving that language itself is—contrary to what we are led to believe—incomplete and confused and they seek to make this space the focus of their work. In doing so, they often find it a source of great satisfaction, pleasure and joy: a space where it makes sense to work. As a result, many of them explore materials with their tactile gaze focused more on the body than on the mind, or through shared feelings: their own yet also connected to the world, as much through spirituality as humour, as much through intimacy as laughter, as much through the invisible as any political considerations.

The title, taken from Silvia Gubern's piece in the show, refers to the sense of working in art as a constant search; it cautions us that there is no safe place, only subtler or bolder gestures that destabilise or question everyday premises, unanswered questions, repetitions, cracks, ethereal inklings. It is this tree of things we don't yet know but somehow sense, and the powerful ties between *not knowing* and intuition, that this exhibition seeks to explore and which draws us in.



Silvia Gubern, *Untitled*, 1965–1973

The Water of the Imagination

While the fisherwoman sits by the lake dangling her line into the water of the imagination, she wonders why she chose this particular lake. *This* lake is a collection of several animal, vegetable and mineral species nourished by other sources of water and life. She sits and waits, looking inquisitively at the waves rippling across the surface, her intuition coming and going. This project also aims to look at the collection inquisitively, to find a path to help us see it not as an assemblage of particles but as a dialogue in which these artists look at each other, question each other, challenge each other and learn from each other, even across different generations and continents. It is rooted in the understanding that the collection is shaped by the influences, interferences and references that make it up.

This approach means taking a stand here and now to reread the legacy of contemporary art in museum collections, moving away from paradigms of originality and individual inspiration to view works through crosscutting, contingent, spiritual and longer-term perspectives. *The Tree of What You Don't Yet Know* seeks to bring us together—spectators, artists, specialists or novices, young and old alike—so that each and every one of us, from our own place, can relate to art based on what we know and what sparks our curiosity, while leaving room for learning, intuition, imagination, desire and whatever it may be that we don't yet know. These are open pieces, they need one another and require interaction—they ask us to spend time with them.

This curatorial project aims to do exactly what these artists do: to build an open form that candidly confesses that it belongs to a broader framework of intuitive artistic and curatorial practice. It offers a very specific reading—the collections themselves—within a structure of signifiers where each object and material acquires meaning in contact with the others, as part of a form that exists through contact rather than any attempt to impose order over the objects, or between the objects and history.

The Tree of What You Don't Yet Know explores a double-edged relationship between the whole and its parts: art collections enable pieces to converse, to share a time, space and life within the interpretive framework and sequence of assumptions and circumstances that brought them here; yet each one also necessarily retains its own unique nature. In other words, it is what each piece is and means that enables it to participate in the whole.

The artworks in this exhibition all have their own language, and the dialogue they strike up with one another reveals the “power of things”. The fact that objects cannot be reduced to our meanings and are reluctant to enter into our discourses places them outside our ability to refer to them, giving way to experience, or rather the individual experiences that each of us may have in the gallery.

As a curator, as I undertook research into each and every artist and piece in the show, I found myself almost falling in love with them, although I never quite shook off the feeling that, even though I may well have gained some awareness along the way, I certainly don't yet have a complete understanding. The text and whatever may occur in the “material” environment of the exhibition—text and material being understood as two different coexisting languages—will expose the fragility of our usual understanding of the world. It is through this crack that we glimpse things we don't yet know.

Through Desire and in between Times

If the exhibition is a time and space for us to be together, then being together means working on connections and experience and activating our sensory, emotional side as a space for what we don't yet know. What follows is a journey around the exhibition space written before the show was set up and designed to be read once it has been taken down, which makes it a narrative of something that belongs to the imagination, the force that propels the show through desire and in between times.

Like a great mass of water and colour, Belén Rodríguez's¹⁵ piece spills out in welcome, enveloping us in its hues of blue and sparkling reflections and ushering us in to meet the other pieces with which it shares the exhibition space. This large, bright-blue fabric was inspired by the Can Felipa municipal swimming baths in Barcelona and is the largest of a family of hand-painted curtains specially created by the artist for an exhibition there.¹⁶

Rodríguez uses fabric as her raw material to mould a sculpture through dyeing and bleaching, or perhaps to create a painting that eschews stable surfaces and can be viewed from both sides, thus opening up a spatial dimension by exploiting its tactile and material properties. Handcrafted by doing and undoing, and based on the fluid nature of the picture, it unfurls in a play of tactile folds and textures. The relationship between abstraction and figuration is so porous that it dissolves—almost liquid—into the abstract pattern and stitched pieces of fabric. The exploration of ideas of colour catches our gaze, drawing us in through preverbal, physical cues appealing to presence and the measure of things.

15 Belén Rodríguez (Valladolid, 1981).

16 The curtains formed part of the *Promotora* exhibition, curated by Carlos Fernández Pello as part of the 2017 Can Felipa Arts Visuals call for curating projects. In this show, Carlos was keen to explore the interstices of the space by working on the institution's surface, its skin, and so the participating artists were asked to approach the project as a team of interior designers charged with refurbishing the space and to downplay their own subjective artistic sensibilities. Hence the reference to the swimming baths located several floors down in the same building.



Beyond *Pool*, Rosemarie Castoro's¹⁷ sculpture *Spine on Its Side* meets our body full on, in welcome invitation, and sets it in motion. This free-standing panel at the scale of the artist's body was made at arm's length with the strokes of a brush, here a kind of broom that moulds the surface of the boards by applying plaster which is then covered with graphite shading. The shaped surface retains a trace of this movement, a portion of space made visible, materialised through the sculptor's embrace. This sculpture-painting invites us to walk around it and strike up a direct dialogue with its body.

Rosemarie Castoro forged her artistic practice at the centre of the burgeoning Minimalist art scene in New York in the 1960s and 1970s. However, she challenged its prevailing tenets in favour of alternative forms: she rejected an approach that depersonalised and denied the artist's subjectivity, preferring instead to explore abstraction in relation to the subjective, erotised body and the individual psyche rooted in one's own identity. Castoro wasn't merely a painter or sculptor, or even perhaps a combination of both, but a far more complex figure whose work combined dance, choreography and movement with drawing, painting and sculpture, and later with poetry and even photography as a means of documenting interaction and intervention in space. As she expressed it, "I think of myself as a container, and what I do as an eruption of what I am."¹⁸

A few steps away, yet still in the lee of its embrace, a small geometric piece of painted wood by María Luisa Fernández¹⁹ seems to move with Castoro's

17 Rosemarie Castoro (New York, 1939–2015).

18 Tanya Barson, "Rosemarie Castoro 1964–79: An Obstacle Course for a Dancer?", in *Rosemarie Castoro: Focus at Infinity*, ed. Tanya Barson, Melissa Feldmann, Lucy Lippart and Anna Lovatt (Barcelona: MACBA Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 2018), 22. Originally quoted in *Artforum* (September 1970): 36.

19 In 1979 María Luisa Fernández (Villarejo de Órbigo, León, 1955) and Juan Luis Moraza set up the Comité de Vigilancia Artística (CVA), a conceptual art collective that carried out actions, objects →

panel, or perhaps the two of them are holding a dialogue between their similar surfaces. *Meret I* is a sculpture that spent years tucked away out of sight without being exhibited—almost in parallel to the artist herself, who didn't hold a single show for a number of years, until she reemerged in 2015, saying: "Taking time out is an extremely enriching experience."²⁰

This piece balanced on its stand in fragile equilibrium is part of the *Ideal Artists* series, in which Fernández challenges the notion of the artist as an authoritative genius by analysing leading contemporary artists through an objective method of statistical measurement that should in theory value them all equally. *Ideal Artists* are compositions "governed by the logic of the fixed percentages found in pie charts, thus generating forms in unstable equilibrium. Statistics allows for this idealisation: ideal artists who can be materialised, given a body."²¹ This particular sculpture corresponds to Meret Oppenheim, who, once subjected to this procedure, is turned into an enigmatic and cryptic figure in the form of an inverted triangle.

→ and texts as reflections on the art system in the contemporary context. "Often with results more humorous than effective, the CVA aimed to defend freedom in art and free it from the market." The CVA remained active until 1985. In the 1990s María Luisa Fernández moved to Vigo, where she began lecturing at university while producing objects and paintings that often questioned the place of representations of the figure of the artist. Although Moraza continued with his artistic career, Fernández held no exhibitions between 1997 and 2015, when she returned with *je... luna*, a show at Azkuna Zentroa she described as: "A wink from one lunatic to another. More a reflection than a source of energy, affected by the sun and affecting the earth as body and artwork. The moon is a discreet power compared with the sun. It's not the sun; it's the MOON. The moon affects bodies by its proximity, it affects them physically." Quotes taken from Beatriz Herráez, "An Interview with María Luisa Fernández", in *je... luna. María Luisa Fernández* (Bilbao: Azkuna Zentroa, 2015). [Available online: https://www.marcovigo.com/sites/default/files/Interview_Maria%20Luisa%20Fern%C3%A1ndez_Beatriz%20Herr%C3%A1ez_Eng.pdf]

20 Beatriz Herráez, "An Interview with María Luisa Fernández".

21 Beatriz Herráez.





María Luisa Fernández, *Artistas ideales - Meret I*, 1995



By combining post-Minimalism, conceptual art²² and the Basque sculptural tradition, Fernández's work frequently incorporates double meanings, wordplay and a keen sense of humour, which she deploys to craft sharp critiques of official narratives of art history. She chooses to engage differently, through what she terms an "emotional theory", by questioning the place of representations of the figure of the artist, especially in the case of women. "The body plays as much of a part in art as it does in love. Culture is governed by projects, ideas, clarity, meaning. This "must be so" that we forget at night when the body makes itself felt."²³

To the right, against the wall, Charlotte Posenenske's²⁴ full-scale industrial ventilation ducts become an almost organic form, mainly because of their large openings or holes, seemingly designed to let the space breathe. The artist aimed to create objects that could be infinitely recombined and constantly reconfigured until they were no longer recognisable as "art objects" but instead merged seamlessly with the space they inhabited. She drew inspiration from industrial manufacturing and downplayed the concept of unique authorship to the point where she decided to share hers with the teams responsible for manufacturing and assembling the pieces, who were the ones who ultimately determined the final location and configuration. As she wrote in her 1968 *Manifesto*: "I don't want to make single pieces for individuals, [I want] to have elements combinable within a system."²⁵

22 Many of the artists in this show draw from Minimal and conceptual art from a different perspective to that described by the critics of the time, who focused on work by male artists and ignored women. An alternative way of describing this eclectic production was "Eccentric Abstraction", coined by Lucy Lippard in 1966. Lucy Lippard, "Eccentric Abstraction", *Art International* 10, no. 9 (1966).

23 Beatriz Herráez, "An interview with Maria Luisa Fernández".

24 Charlotte Posenenske (Wiesbaden, Germany, 1930 – Frankfurt am Main, West Germany, 1985).

25 Charlotte Posenenske, "Manifesto", *Art International* 5 (May 1968). [Available online: <https://img.macba.cat/public/document/2020-03/press-release-charlotte-posenenske-work-in-progress.pdf>]

Posenenske stepped away from art—if such a thing can be said of someone who wanted to redefine its very meaning—to work in other disciplines. In any case, her attempt to erase boundaries helped make them clearer to us.

Agnes Martin's²⁶ adjacent piece continues in the same mystical vein. Her work falls somewhere between pictorial abstraction and Minimalist systematisation, although Martin never renounced the emotional and spiritual side to art. The concepts of beauty and happiness are central to a body of work she built up throughout her life. As she liked to say: "Beauty is the mystery of life. It's not in the eye but in the mind." Martin didn't retire from art, but withdrew from the clamour of New York City to settle near the desert in New Mexico. Perhaps this is why her work calls for silence and calm. The hand-drawn graphite lines separating the bands of pale but luminous tones in this painting are seemingly fragile yet prove essential in articulating the surface. Indeed, it is precisely in the relationship between fragility, luminosity and assertiveness that the strength of her work lies.

Keeping to the right, still guided by a mystical aura, we find two small-format drawings by Silvia Gubern:²⁷ two trees that seem to hold a deeper meaning, one of which gives its title to the exhibition. Gubern has been called a "demiurge of the plethoric simplicity of spaces to be filled", someone who "conjures up inexpressible emotions" and whose pieces "don't in any way seek to impose themselves on us, but merely ask us to share a brief moment with them". To Carles Hac Mor, she is a "medium of the ineffable who doesn't try to say anything because she has already said everything by saying nothing" through work that "points beyond art".

26 Agnes Martin (Macklin, Saskatchewan, Canada, 1912 – New Mexico, 2004).

27 Silvia Gubern (Barcelona, 1941).





Gubern was a pioneer in conceptual art in Catalonia in the late 1960s. Later in her career she ventured into other creative areas, such as automatic writing and poetry, embracing a spiritual and mystical approach to artistic practice. She doesn't distinguish between art and life, or dreams and reality, but instead works by listening to time, materials and unfathomable knowledge. Among the many techniques she has employed—painting, drawing, sculpture and painting on glass and fabric, among others—drawing might well be the most essential, serving as an effective tool to reference images that come from beyond, messages she receives and then channels and restores. These two drawings of a tree appear to be trying to tell us something about all the things we don't yet know, vital knowledge, an organic awareness that goes beyond our senses, reaching down into the roots and out into the air. She speaks to everything we are yet to know as essential knowledge of our lives.

Close by we find three drawings by Gego.²⁸ In common with all of her output from this period, these three drawings of meshes or networks are based on a single repeated idea: the line. Varied and ever-changing, Gego's work interlinks notions of space expressed in watercolours, drawings, engravings, paper weavings and sculptures as evidence of her incessant creativity and pressing need to experiment. Throughout her entire body of work, she used the prolific power of the line to generate new forms, something she later began to experiment with using stainless steel wire as a means of exploring volume and space.

On the wall, accompanying Gego's drawings—and striking up a rhythm with it—is Leonor Antunes'²⁹ piece made in tribute to Gego, reminding us of the act of belonging to something greater. Antunes' starting point for her work is always the space itself or figures from art history, or else both.

²⁸ Gego, Gertrude Goldschmidt (Hamburg, Germany, 1912 – Caracas, Venezuela, 1994).

²⁹ Leonor Antunes (Lisbon, 1972).

She often focuses on lesser-known figures, especially women, with whom she weaves an alternative art history to challenge hegemonic narratives. She engages in dialogue with them, forging ties to fashion new forms.

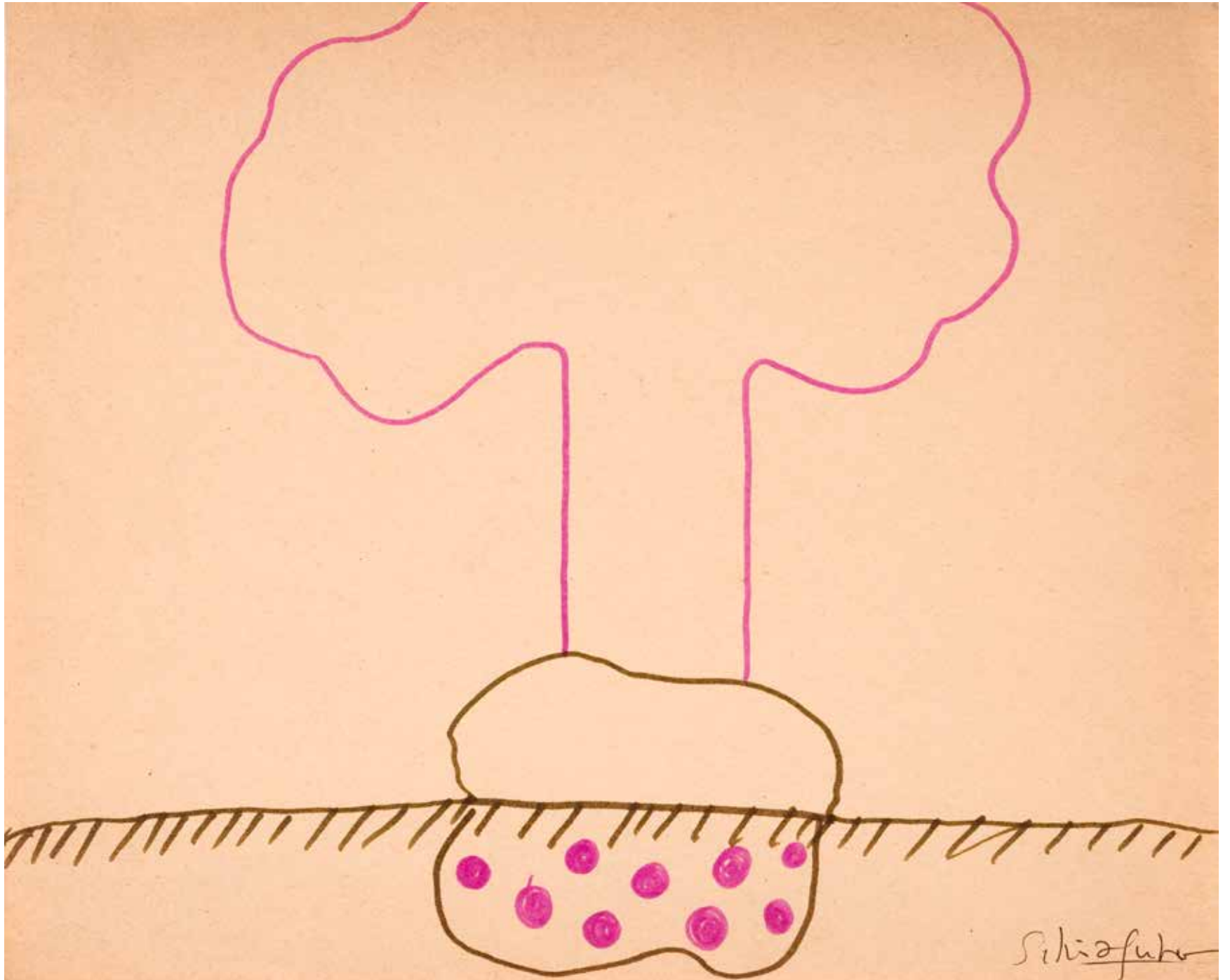
Anni #18 pays tribute to artist Anni Albers, while formally evoking the work of sculptor Gego. Antunes was inspired by Albers' and Gego's work to meticulously recreate their patterned structure by linking thousands of small brass tubes together by hand to form transparent networks hung parallel to the wall. Her intertwining of references and relationships with other artists is proof that an artist's work can never exist without contributions from others. *Anni #18* is a fragment of a larger original work which, after being exhibited in 2015, was split into 16 pieces that are currently divided between different collections. As a fragment, it inherently belongs to something larger, reflecting the constitutive relationship between a whole and its parts. It is clearly part of something else: neither a copy nor an original. Instead, it points to activation, energy and movement, paying tribute while also expanding into the present.

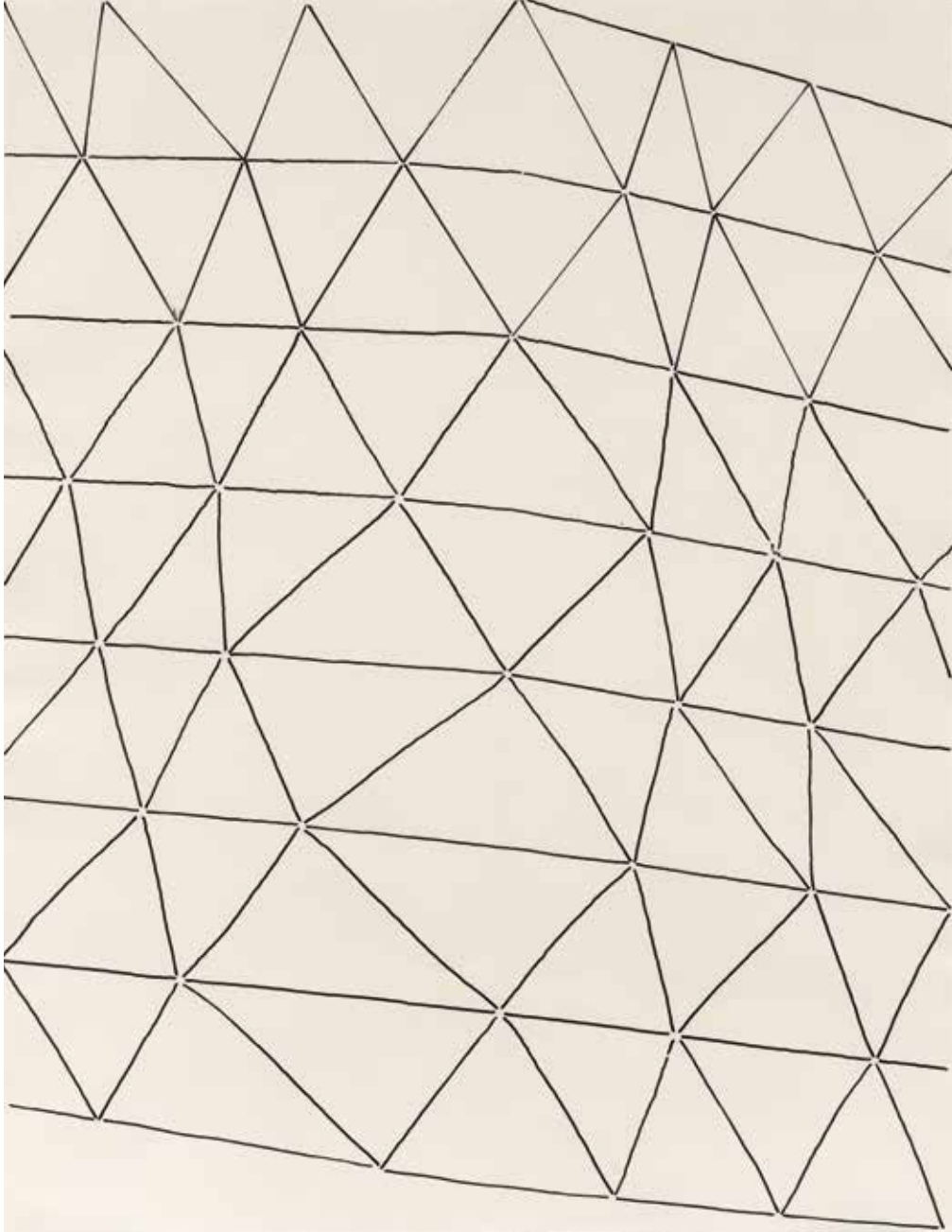
Next, Aurèlia Muñoz's³⁰ textile being connects earth and sky, the spiritual and the worldly realms. *Ens místic* is part of a family of *Beings* or *Entities* (*Mystical Entity*, alongside *Social Entity*, *Historical Entity* and *Beige Eagle*) that Aurèlia Muñoz created in the mid-1970s using a technique derived from macramé. She explored traditional craft techniques and materials from an avant-garde perspective to pursue formal, spatial and sculptural goals within the context of the 1960s revival of textile art movements such as *La Nouvelle Tapisserie* and *Fibre Art*. Beyond that, she used textile fibres as a way of addressing and drawing attention to issues that remain just as pressing today, such as our relationship with nature and ecology, animistic ontology and the resurgence of artisan work.

³⁰ Aurèlia Muñoz (Barcelona, 1926–2011).

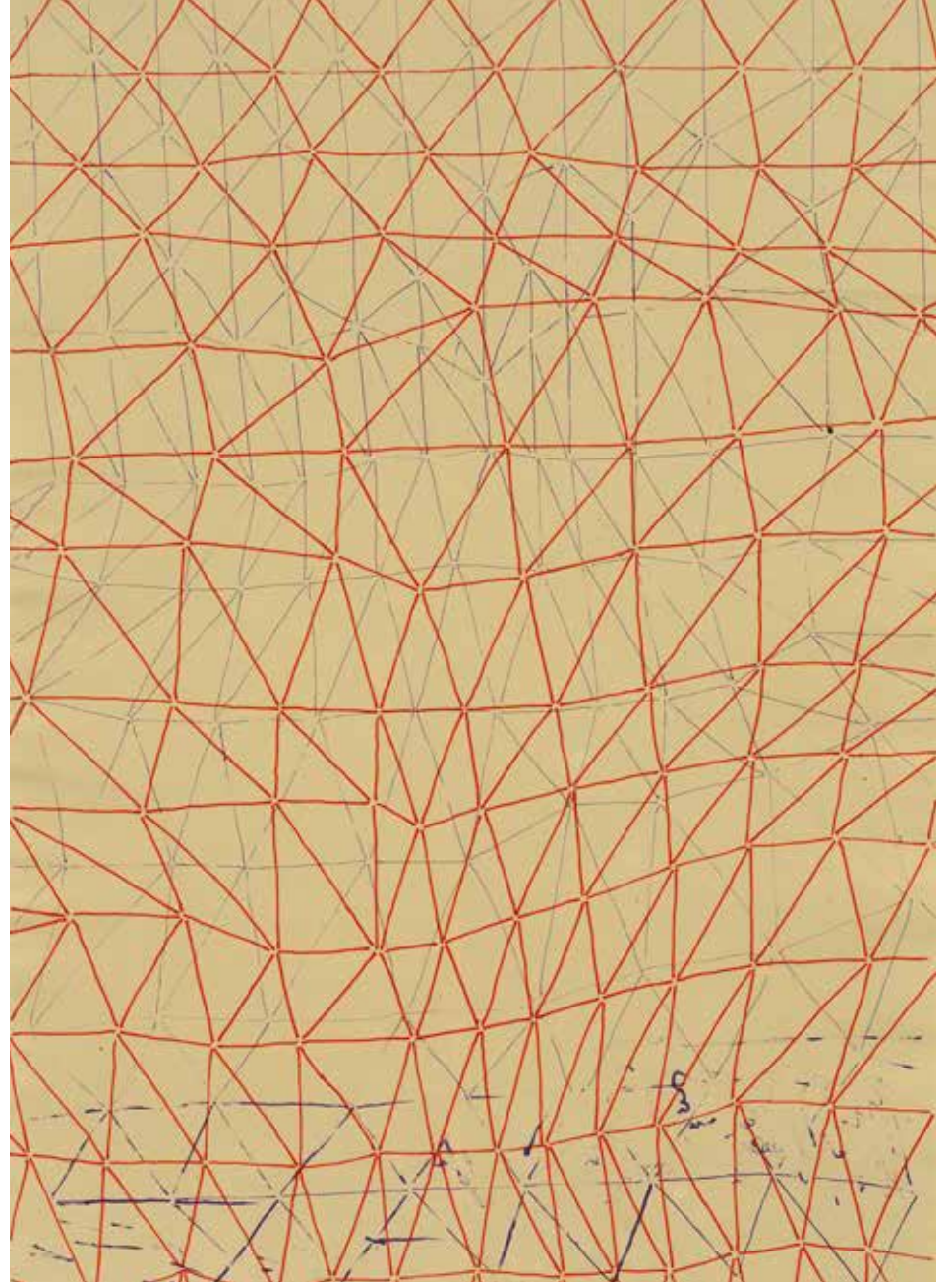


Silvia Gubern, *Untitled*, 1965-1973

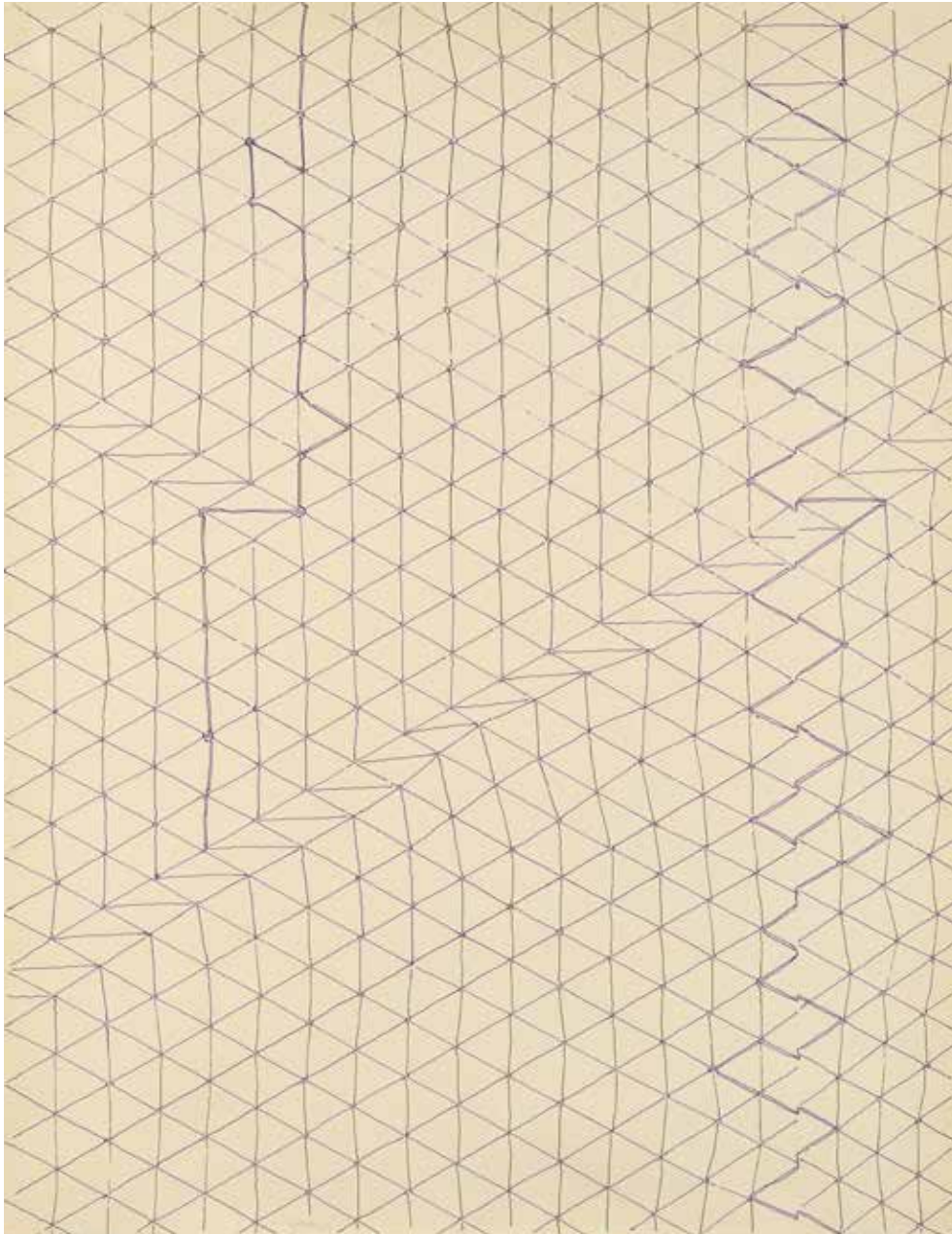




Gego, *Reticulárea*, 1969



Gego, *Untitled*, 1970

Gego, *Untitled*, 1969

Of all her textile pieces, the family of *Beings* takes the relationship with space the furthest. These modules floating in space are also the final pieces she made before moving on to working with paper, growing ever closer to architecture and spatial construction. *Ens mística* connects at both ends: with the earth into which it sinks its tentacular roots and with the air into which it rises, still bearing the weight of the jute. The column-like shape may hint at a connection between the earth and the sky, much like the tree in Gubern's title.

On the wall behind, a drawing by Magda Bolumar³¹ points to the imaginative possibilities of artisan work. Alexandre Cirici once said: "Magda Bolumar's work is not analogous, similar or identical to anything else. Therein lies its primary strength."³² In her quest to forge a unique language within abstract art, she studied and explored materials until she found one she made her own: burlap. Her work is a sensitive engagement with the potential of this material: in contrast to what her Informalist contemporaries were doing, she doesn't tear, damage, monopolise or subdue it. Instead, she works with burlap by listening to it, allowing it to "take on meaning, adopt an attitude, perform an act".

Bolumar's intimate approach involves meticulous microscopic observation of the world's makeup. She merges with her own work, which is the only way to truly listen to a material: becoming material, nature and colour all at once. Nothing comes before anything else; everything is forged through the meeting of mindful hands becoming colours and forms. "The elements she summons in each canvas . . . and everything she reads in the

31 Magda Bolumar (Caldes d'Estrac, Barcelona, 1936).

32 Alexandre Cirici, *Magda Bolumar. Papers. Anys 60 i 70* (Barcelona: Galeria Marc Domènech, 2019), 41. [Catalogue in Catalan and Spanish available online: http://www.galeriamarcdomenech.com/sites/default/files/catalogos/CAT_MAGDA_BOLUMAR_WEB_2_r.pdf]



Leonor Antunes, *Anni #18 Fragment 12*, 2015



Aurèlia Muñoz, *Ens místic*, 1977

fabric . . . serve to present the object like a feeling.”³³ Her work is always rooted in relationships with nature, the organic world running through its core. As in this drawing, which expands out into a kind of magical constellation of fantastical worlds, evoking a mysterious, mystical and unattainable side to nature, somewhere between the world of dreams and observation of nature.

On the following wall is a painting by Damaris Pan,³⁴ whose layered colours of different qualities are driven by a search for something the artist doesn't know a priori. *Finete* was exhibited at the Ana Mas gallery in L'Hospitalet de Llobregat in September 2022. At that show, the painting's characteristic forms and colours resonated with other paintings of hers like distant echoes. Now, this echo is like a memory, the recollection of belonging to a greater whole, realising that you are made up of the ties and connections forged in each experience, in everything you have encountered in life.

Damaris Pan explores materials with no specific goal in mind: she hits upon an image through inquisitive questioning and problem-solving. Although her starting point is often a previous work, like the residue from a process that is over and done with, she aims to create new worlds with a life of their own. She works by layering colours, each step a sort of leap of faith, as if escaping from a trap she set herself the moment she stretched the canvas. The image takes shape in relation to things unseen; we can picture a process that has taken place on this surface, with various types of compositional gestures: thick strokes, ones that cover and conceal, others transparent and ethereal. She blocks off areas and poses questions, all the while covering over and opening up possibilities and surprises.

33 Frederic Montornès in the gallery text for *Artròpodes, centpeus, espiadimonis i llagostes de mar. Una exposició de Magda Bolumar Chertó*, Museu de Granollers, 2023.

34 Damaris Pan (Mallabia, Biscay, 1983).

In this way, the image contains an internal structure that gives it substance, flesh, skin and depth, an integral memory remembered only by itself. This emphasis on the process, the need to engage in a methodless act, endows her paintings with the quality of experiences, of bodies coexisting in the plane of the real world rather than mere representations. “The idea is that it can be there like anything else, like what we understand in everyday life as real and not a reflection.”³⁵

Damaris Pan says: “When I paint, I am accompanied by all the artists who matter to me and who come to mind: not only other artists from the same context, but also artists from the past.”³⁶ In turn, Rachel Harrison³⁷ has described her own wry use of referential imagery as a form of “inappropriation”: not really taking a thing so much as acknowledging its multifaceted nature in a world that will shape it and reshape it. Here, her anti-monumental kouros sheds its geometric forms and ancient smile to give our imagination free rein. Harrison's characteristic shapeless forms follow the idea of working with “forms that can't be described”,³⁸ opaque shapes that both tempt and resist recognition and engage with us to remain unfinished.

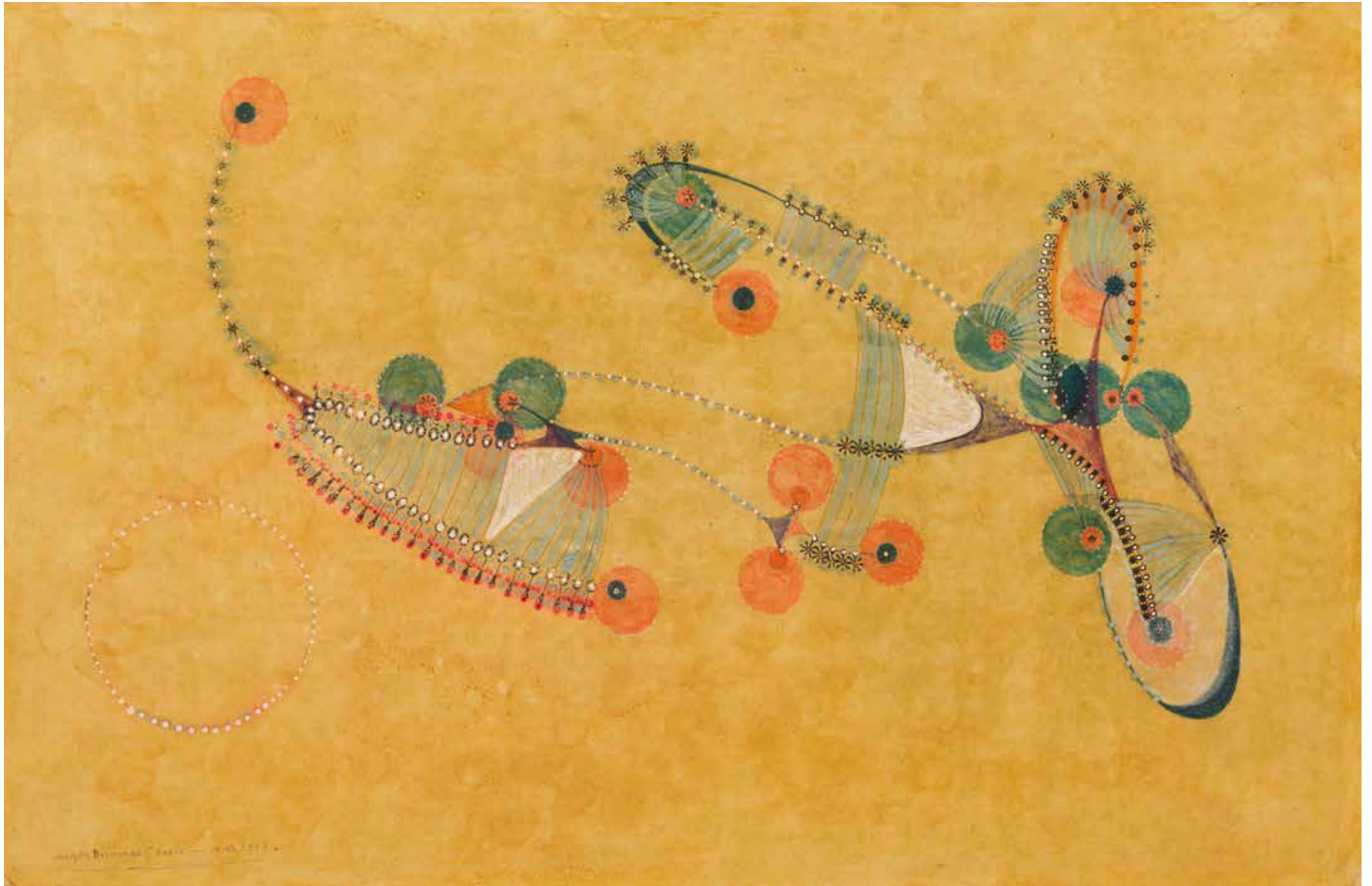
Toying with signs, surfaces and modes of display, her objects can serve as “framing devices”—to repurpose Harrison's own term—that provoke continual cross-referencing and new revelations, with respect not just to the work at hand but also to the particular space and viewer it activates. Here, the kouros and accompanying paraphernalia (stairs, fruit) offer abstract citations of other works or artists, such as Duchamp and Matisse.

35 Quote by Damaris Pan taken from Mikel Onandia and Jone Alaitz Uriarte, eds., *Desmontajes y ornamentos. Entrevistas* (Basque Country: Departamento de Cultura del Gobierno Vasco, 2021), 82.

36 Mikel Onandia and Jone Alaitz Uriarte, *Desmontajes y ornamentos*, 78.

37 Rachel Harrison (New York, 1966).

38 Quote by Rachel Harrison taken from her biography on the website of the Greene Naftali gallery in New York. [Available online: <https://www.greenenaftaligallery.com/artists/rachel-harrison>]





The drawing eagerly sows confusion: the kouros might almost be falling upstairs, over the unnerving architectural space beneath.

As we enter the next space, the only sound we can hear comes from Dora García's³⁹ video, at the heart of the show, a kind of latent breathing that punctuates the atmosphere, engaging us all individually in a three-way relationship with the two characters in the film. *La lección respiratoria* shows a body-awareness exercise in which a girl is trained to work on her breathing. The idea of learning to breathe—an ostensibly involuntary act—could be seen as a way of gaining greater self-knowledge and awareness of one's own body.

Dora García's work explores the relationships that an artist can create with others. In this piece, she offers a reflection on such bonds, critically focusing on the relational aspect of different social roles, such as between artist and reference, artist and audience, teacher and student, mother and daughter. Here, this tense relationship between two people can be seen as being about not only domination but also trust, voluntarily putting oneself in the hands of another. A relationship, an exchange of power, shaped by concepts such as trust, control and dominance, where giver and taker create a bond in which both depend on each other. *La lección respiratoria* contains twelve exercises in which an instructor or trainer (an authoritarian woman) shows a young girl how to breathe. The teacher indicates the start of each exercise by numbering each one while using different hand gestures to guide the student through different rhythms of inhalation and exhalation, some accompanied by different kinds of

39 Artworks by Dora García (Valladolid, 1965) have featured repeatedly in Comisart exhibitions, and this piece in particular was included in *Contratempus*, curated by Sabel Gavaldón in 2014. Far from problematic, this recurring presence is indicative of a fascination with certain artists and practices that reoccur in these shows in dialogue with different interpretive frameworks and other gallery companions.

sounds. As the girl progresses through the exercises, she seems to run out of breath towards the end, as if she were drowning, or perhaps simply triumphantly holding her breath.

Placed at the centre of the exhibition, this piece acts like a lung or heart, beating out a critical caution to pay closer attention to all the things we do without realising it. As well as a way of gaining greater self-knowledge and awareness of one's own body, learning to breathe can also be a first step towards meditation, mindfulness, paying closer attention to the effects of the most basic and essential element that acts on our body: the air we breathe in and out through our nose and mouth, filling our lungs and giving us life or, if we should stop, taking it away. Likewise, we can also learn to look, listen to and feel other everyday things whose action—their mechanisms of power over us and the environment—we can easily forget. It offers no answers but raises plenty of questions, an artwork that remains open and refuses to close off any of its multiple possibilities.

Rosemarie Trockel's⁴⁰ hermetic sculpture rises up to our height on its four slender iron legs to gaze at us through its single eye. Of all the artists in this exhibition, she could well be the one with the most powerful flair for creating images—experiences—that eschew classification, clarity or interpretation. Her work defies pigeonholing and embraces a wide range of forms, yet still takes a clear stance on the world and consistently addresses the issues the artist lists as fuelling her vision: woman, inconsistency and reaction to fashionable trends.⁴¹

She critiques the value of representation and the problem of the identity: she wonders what constitutes the identity of a thing, what characterises it

40 Rosemarie Trockel (Schwerte, Germany, 1952) lives and works in Cologne.

41 Sidra Stich, ed., *Rosemarie Trockel* (Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1991), 12.





as unique in the world. Freed from its normative straitjacket, a familiar form or object can take on a life of its own, form new connections and forge new paths to other situations. As she says: “The minute something works, it ceases to be interesting. As soon as you have spelled something out, you should set it aside.”⁴² Trockel urges us to question commonplace images, signs and messages and consider the alternative possibilities hidden within them—to realise that meaning is not an inherent property but an unstable trait conditioned by history and context. For her, things are never merely as they appear to be: ambiguities, inversions and double permeate her work, objects take on human forms and, in turn, imperceptivity, humans change too.

Hanging in mid-air like a cloud is a delicate sculpture by Gego, both systemised structure and amorphous, organic form. In her *Esferas* ‘spheres’ and *Reticuláreas* ‘areas of little nets’, she works with materials she repurposes from other pieces. With the freedom afforded by drawing, she works intuitively, drawing in space, driven by creativity and enjoyment, sculpting this tiny cloud in the empty air: an airy, weightless structure, flexibly configured, suspended in space.

To avoid the need for any welding, she devised a system for coupling metal rods together; by twisting the wires at the ends, she could join any number of them together at once. Thanks to such technical resourcefulness, her initial geometries could evolve into organic forms, turning her work into intersections, nodes, networks and meshes—a decentralised web of peaks of intensity that shapes a navigable and experiential idea of space. Her work challenges the categories of sculpture and drawing: she creates sculptures that are drawings in the air and makes drawings that revel in their three-

42 “Isabelle Graw on Rosemarie Trockel”, *Artforum International* 41, no. 7 (March 2003).
[Available online: <https://www.artforum.com/columns/rosemarie-trockel-2-165804/>]



dimensionality. This stage in her work led to greater freedom in her art, and she would go on to create paperless drawings and *bichitos* 'wee beasties', named with a nod to Brazilian artist Lygia Clark's work.

Patricia Dauder's⁴³ *Finning* forms an ordered sequence that directly mirrors Rachel Whiteread's piece—two grounded artworks that share something beyond space. Dauder's work is rooted in life and materials, often by researching existing materials through lengthy observation. Her drawings, films, canvases, three-dimensional objects and photographs seek to see and represent things beyond the immediate environment, beyond the physical world of objects, while addressing matters of time, emptiness, space and light.

"I always had the feeling that nothing is stable or compact; that everything is in motion, under the influence of constantly changing natural or artificial cycles and processes, invisible to our senses but nevertheless existent. Because of this feeling of instability, I see the solid, the unified and the compact as something problematic. Perhaps for that reason, many of my works are the result of a sum of parts, like a puzzle of forms, or a sequence, without a clear beginning or end."⁴⁴

Finning is a layered modular sculpture made up of very thin, dark, ceramic discs arranged side by side. All of slightly different shapes and sizes—resembling skins, wings or leaves—they combine to create a snaking irregular profile. As usual, Dauder doesn't set out to explain anything but attempts to find a way to represent a trace, an absence, a footprint or a space now transformed. This work prompts us to think about the relationship between

its component pieces and the whole, as well as the form that emerges in space. Arranged at an angle between the wall and the floor, they suggest an organic form inhabiting the space, like a fungus or algae, a colony of interdependent beings. There is a tension between the organic form of the whole and the set of taut upright components, perhaps inspired by the title, which might make us think of an animal with fins and how a group of them can swim together in one direction.

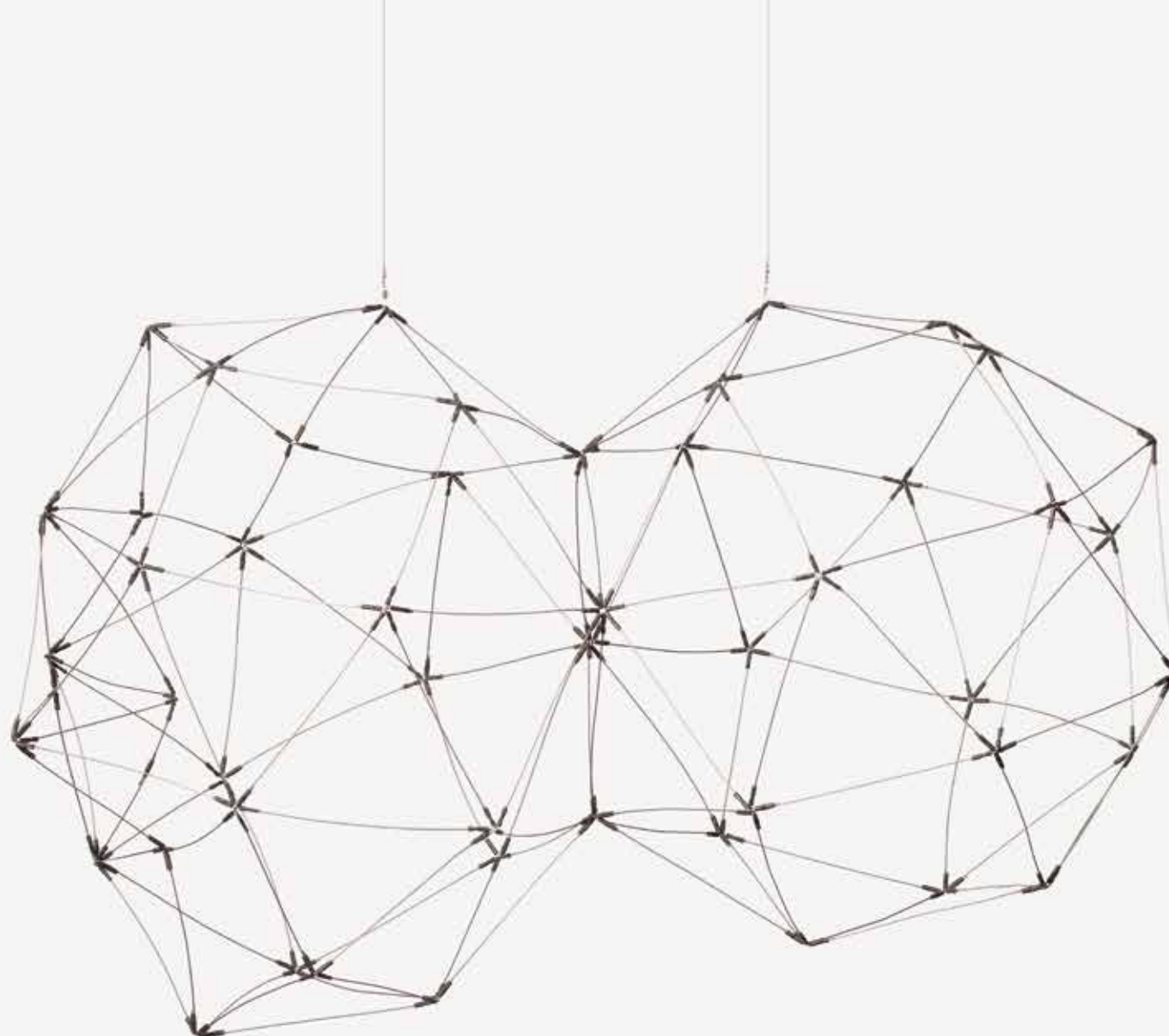
Although the sense of seriality in Rachel Whiteread's⁴⁵ work may bring to mind sculptures by Minimalist artists, she has a very different approach to working with the physical qualities of materials, here resin—though in other pieces it might be plaster or cement—and never renouncing working with colour. She distances herself from industrial objects, often raising questions about the idea of what constitutes a monument.

Untitled (Resin Corridor) is a resin cast of the wooden floor of a corridor in a Victorian house, specifically the cavity beneath the floor, recognisable by the marks left by the nine floorboards above it. The translucent resin used for the cast creates a play of transparencies that reveal the internal structure through the refracted light passing through the material. As is often the case, Whiteread has turned emptiness, an inner negative space, into a physical presence by embodying it in a material. Although in many cases her casts strip objects of their functional purpose, render spaces uninhabitable or signal an absence, in others, as here, the fact that the piece specifically shows a space in the floor, beneath our feet, brings to mind the often invisible or overlooked structures that support us: footsteps, passing traces, a corridor connecting two places, a space that can capture the memory of things that once happened there.

43 Patricia Dauder (Barcelona, 1973).

44 Quote taken from María Minera's interview of Patricia Dauder included in the exhibition catalogue *A Segunda Imagem / The Second Image* (Porto: Fundação Serralves, 2012). [Available online: https://patriciadauder.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/text_pdf_interview1.pdf]

45 Rachel Whiteread (London, 1963).





Her works often convey a ghostly, harrowing feeling, the material presence of something that once was, but is no longer there, time past, lives lived, things forever out of reach. As if we were actually *witnessing* death, recalling the passages in Mercè Rodoreda's novel *Death in Spring*, where bodies are filled with cement as life slips away.⁴⁶

Several niches of scented wax have been placed around the gallery. Our sense of smell should guide us to them. The niches are empty; the scent fills the room. Smells tap into memory, evoking things no longer there. Niches, small openings in the wall, are spaces of welcome, places to put small objects, altars and sites of memory linked to the spiritual and sacred. And the sculpted wax harks back to a form before a form, to the absence of sculpture, sculpture yet to be, like a soul of the sculpture that will disappear materially when the final work is in place.

The artist responsible, Valeska Soares,⁴⁷ studied architecture and she retains a keen interest in the perception, construction and subversion of space, often through site-specific pieces. She uses sensory and conceptual techniques (such as smells or sounds) to create inviting yet unsettling environments and experiences. She likes to think of the museum as a place of the living and emphasises visceral, surprising responses over unitary didacticism. "Desire stops being desire if you do it; if you act on it, it's not desire. It's always in this intermediate state, being between. A lot of what I do exists

on this plane."⁴⁸ From architecture to the body, relationships between space, time, emotions and language run throughout her work, placing her in the interstices between a private environment and the pursuit of public attention. Might desire grow in strength as a shared sentiment builds, as people gather in collective thought?

We bring our visit to a close by returning to the first space, where we find Karla Black's⁴⁹ organic sculptures in chromatic contrast to Belén Rodríguez's piece we saw at the start. Karla Black creates abstract sculptures that explore the physical experience of thought, feelings, communication and relationships. Her work operates in an area of uncertainty, existing in a place she refers to as "almost painting, almost installation, almost performance art". She explores how materiality flows from qualities, keeping her materials as raw as possible, so that the energy they embody remains in the present or future and not in the past. Focused on matters of aesthetics and form, she probes the relationship between composition, shape, colour and material, pushing the limits of the physical world: fragility or tension, the time it takes for materials to solidify, their softness or hardness. Always through a direct relationship with the material aspect.

"I work purely out of desire, or just out of the unconscious . . . whatever is within my own material experience."⁵⁰ She is interested in ideas of play and early childhood learning, as well as the primitive, creative instant when art comes into being, a fragile moment in which the essence of art

46 *La mort i la primavera* is an unfinished novel by Mercè Rodoreda, published posthumously in Catalan in 1986 and released in English in 2009 as *Death in Spring*, trans. Martha Tennent (Rochester, NY: Open Letter Books, 2009). The 2000 Club Editor edition in Catalan includes an appendix with different endings put together by editor Núria Sales i Folch, who explores the multiple versions of each chapter, including the final ones, where the main character, once dead, continues to speak: "Returning. Gathering things around me . . . returning to redo, adding in order to change . . . my life shut up alone and still suffering somewhere without me." This brings to mind artists who are no longer here and the work they left behind. Like a writer's premonition, seen from somewhere beyond.

47 Valeska Soares (Belo Horizonte, Brazil, 1956) lives and works in New York.

48 Tausif Noor and Valeska Soares, "Suprise Suprise [*sic*]: Valeska Soares tells Tausif Noor why her visceral art is 'like a trap'", *Frieze Week: New York 2018*, 2–6 May 2018, 10. [Available online: <https://valeskasoares.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/1.NoorTausif.Suprise-Suprise.Frieze.2018.2.pdf>]

49 Karla Black (Alexandria, Scotland, 1972) lives and works in Glasgow.

50 Quote by the artist taken from the video *KARLA BLACK, Materials*, National Galleries of Scotland, 2016. [Available online: <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/features/karla-black>]





itself is questioned. She uses everyday materials, such as soap, cotton, toothpaste and makeup, together with traditional materials like chalk, pigments and paint, pushing the boundaries of what sculpture can be.

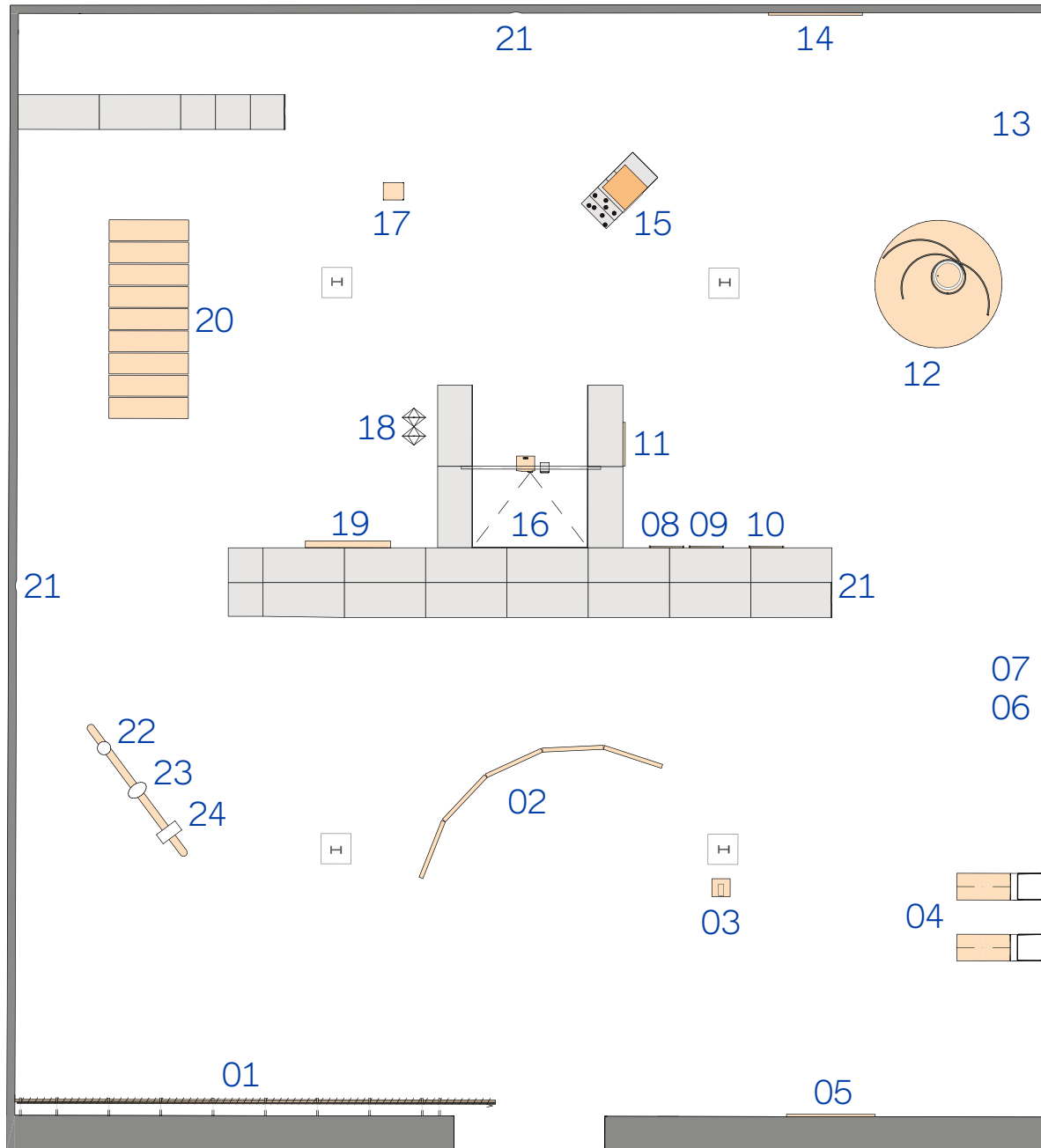
Her works often lie on a horizontal plane, following the ground, like the three sculptures here, establishing a close relationship with the space and architecture (here together with the other pieces in the show). At this height above ground level, the pieces tap into our memory of being a child, a visual shift towards an aesthetic perception of space and art that aims to disrupt the pervasive adult-centred gaze in the art world.

These three sculptures are the trace of a gesture, the result of the malleability of a material moulded in Black's hands. This is what we see, the gesture, as if it were happening right here, right now. And the colour, which conjures up some memory in each of us.

Now we can appreciate Belén Rodríguez's *Pool* in its full splendour, like a great living skin on the wall leading us out of the gallery.







Gallery Layout

- 01 Belén Rodríguez, *Pool*, 2017
- 02 Rosemarie Castoro, *Spine on Its Side*, 1970
- 03 María Luisa Fernández, *Artistas ideales - Meret I*, 1995
- 04 Charlotte Posenenske, *Vierkantrohre Serie D*, 1967 (2010)
- 05 Agnes Martin, *Untitled No. 5*, 1997
- 06 Silvia Gubern, *Untitled*, 1965–1973
- 07 Silvia Gubern, *Untitled*, 1965–1973
- 08 Gego, *Reticulárea*, 1969
- 09 Gego, *Untitled*, 1970
- 10 Gego, *Untitled*, 1969
- 11 Leonor Antunes, *Anni #18 Fragment 12*, 2015
- 12 Aurèlia Muñoz, *Ens místic*, 1977
- 13 Magda Bolumar, *[Untitled]*, 1973
- 14 Damaris Pan, *Jinete*, 2021
- 15 Rachel Harrison, *Kouros Descends Stairs*, 2008
- 16 Dora García, *La lección respiratoria*, 2001
- 17 Rosemarie Trockel, *Untitled*, 1988
- 18 Gego, *Untitled*, c. 1976
- 19 Patricia Dauder, *Finning*, 2019
- 20 Rachel Whiteread, *Untitled (Resin Corridor)*, 1995
- 21 Valeska Soares, *Untitled*, 1995
- 22 Karla Black, *Content Is Used*, 2014
- 23 Karla Black, *Thoroughly Authorised*, 2014
- 24 Karla Black, *Particle Debt*, 2014

List of Artworks

Leonor Antunes
Anni #18 Fragment 12
2015
Brass
250 × 75 cm
MACBA Collection. MACBA
Foundation. Artwork acquired
thanks to Agrolimen

Karla Black
Thoroughly Authorised
2014
Polyurethane foam, cardboard
and paint
102 × 22 × 35 cm
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium
Private long-term loan

Karla Black
Content is Used
2014
Polyurethane foam, cardboard
and paint
120 × 41 × 19.5 cm
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium
Private long-term loan

Magda Bolumar
[Untitled]
1973
Watercolour and gouache on paper
32.5 × 50 cm
MACBA Collection. MACBA
Consortium. Fons Joan Brossa.
Ajuntament de Barcelona
long-term loan

Karla Black
Particle Debt
2014
Polyurethane foam, cardboard
and paint
100 × 23 × 23 cm
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium
Private long-term loan

Rosemarie Castoro
Spine on Its Side
1970
Gesso, modelling paste and graphite
on hardboard
214.3 × 457.2 × 116.84 cm
MACBA Collection. MACBA
Foundation

Patricia Dauder***Finning***

2019

Baked and burned clay

32 × 148 × 25 cm

MACBA Collection.

Generalitat de Catalunya

long-term loan.

Col·lecció Nacional

d'Art Contemporani

María Luisa Fernández***Artistas ideales - Meret I***

[Ideal Artists - Meret I]

1995

Wood and oil paint

116 × 20 × 9 cm

"la Caixa" Foundation

Contemporary Art Collection

Dora García***La lección respiratoria***

[The Breathing Lesson]

2001

Video projection (colour, sound)

16 min 18 s

"la Caixa" Foundation

Contemporary Art Collection

Gego***Reticulárea***

1969

Ink on paper

65,7 × 50,4 cm

MACBA Collection. MACBA

Consortium. Fundación Gego

long-term loan

Gego***Untitled***

1969

Ink on card

65.4 × 50.1 cm

MACBA Collection. MACBA

Consortium. Fundación Gego

long-term loan

Gego***Untitled***

1970

Ink on paper

53 × 38.7 cm

MACBA Collection. MACBA

Consortium. Fundación Gego

long-term loan

Gego***Untitled***

c. 1976

Steel and copper

37 × 70 × 39 cm

MACBA Collection. MACBA

Consortium. Fundación Gego

long-term loan

Silvia Gubern***Untitled***

1965-1973

Ink on paper

20.5 × 25.5 cm

MACBA Collection.

Ajuntament de Barcelona

long-term loan

Silvia Gubern***Untitled***

1965-1973

Ink on paper

20.5 × 25.5 cm

MACBA Collection.

Ajuntament de Barcelona

long-term loan

Rachel Harrison***Kouros Descends Stairs***

2008

Wood, chicken wire, polystyrene,
cement, acrylic, graphite, fake apple
and 9 fake pears

203 × 125 × 61 cm

"la Caixa" Foundation

Contemporary Art Collection

Agnes Martin***Untitled No. 5***

1997

Acrylic and graphite on canvas

152.4 × 152.4 cm

"la Caixa" Foundation

Contemporary Art Collection

Aurèlia Muñoz***Ens místic***

[Mystical Being]

1977

Sisal and jute tapestry

205 × 300 × 130 cm

Generalitat de Catalunya long-term
loan. Col·lecció Nacional d'Art.

Antiga Col·lecció Salvador Riera

Damaris Pan

Jinete

[Rider]

2021

Oil on linen

130 × 162 cm

"la Caixa" Foundation

Contemporary Art Collection

Valeska Soares

Untitled

1995

Beeswax and perfumed oil

5 pieces each measuring 37 × 20 cm

"la Caixa" Foundation

Contemporary Art Collection

Charlotte Posenenske

Vierkantrohre Serie D

[Square Tubes, D Series]

1967 (2010)

Steel, 6 pieces of different sizes

MACBA Collection. MACBA

Foundation

Rosemarie Trockel

Untitled

1988

Wrought iron, fabric, glass and wood

160 × 30 × 35 cm

MACBA Collection. MACBA

Foundation

Belén Rodríguez

Pool

2017

Dyed and bleached cotton fabric

600 × 1100 cm

"la Caixa" Foundation

Contemporary Art Collection

Rachel Whiteread

Untitled (Resin Corridor)

1995

Resin

21.5 × 342 × 137 cm

"la Caixa" Foundation

Contemporary Art Collection"

Biography

Caterina Almirall

Barcelona, 1986

Caterina Almirall is currently director of AcVic Contemporary Art Centre in Vic. She also works as an independent curator and lecturer. She sees artistic practices as a space for producing knowledge and questioning the world and has focused her recent work on exhibition and mediation practice, with a particular interest in the magical and ritual side to the field of art. As a curator, she works outwards to accompany artists and collectives on research, writing and creative projects.


She started out as a curator at the self-managed space El Passadís in Barcelona, which was active between 2013 and 2016. She has since curated projects in Barcelona at La Capella (2021), etHALL gallery (2020), Bombon Projects (2019), Can Felipa (2018) and Sala d'Art Jove (2015). She also curated the annual series Terrassa Comissariat 2017/18 and created projects at the Centre d'Art Maristany in Sant Cugat del Vallès (2017), MAC in Mataró (2018), La Panera in Lleida (2018) and Espacio Trapezio in Madrid (2018), among others. From 2018 to 2022, she was curator, and later cocurator, alongside Margot Cuevas, of the Ephemeral programme at the SWAB Barcelona art fair. She also took part in the *Quasi Veu* project run by the Catalan Ministry of Culture and the Xarxa de Centres d'Art.

She has written for catalogues published by La Casa Encendida and La Casa de Velázquez in Madrid and for artists such as Lluç Baños Aixalà, Sergi Botella, Mariona Moncunill, Núria Gómez Gabriel, Amanda Moreno, Laia Ventayol, Julia Calvo and Aldo Urbano, among others. Since 2016 she has taught undergraduate and master's degree courses at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona and, since 2018, lectured for its Master's Degree in Art Mediation at the Faculty of Education. She sat on the Programmes Committee at the Hangar art space between 2020 and 2022. She has also judged calls for creative and research projects for the Miquel Casablanças Award, Centre d'Art Maristany, BaumannLab Terrassa and La Escocesa.

She holds a PhD in Fine Arts and wrote her thesis on independent curating in Barcelona. She also has a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts and a Master's Degree in Art and Education from the University of Barcelona, as well as completing postgraduate courses on Life Drawing (2010), Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology (2012) and the A*Desk Studies Programme (2014/15). She has received grants and awards from BCN Producció, Goethe Institut, Can Felipa, Unzip in El Prat de Llobregat and Sala d'Art Jove, among others. She has been a resident at TRAMA 34, CAA Andratx in Mallorca, MACBA Study Centre and L'Estruch in Sabadell.

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