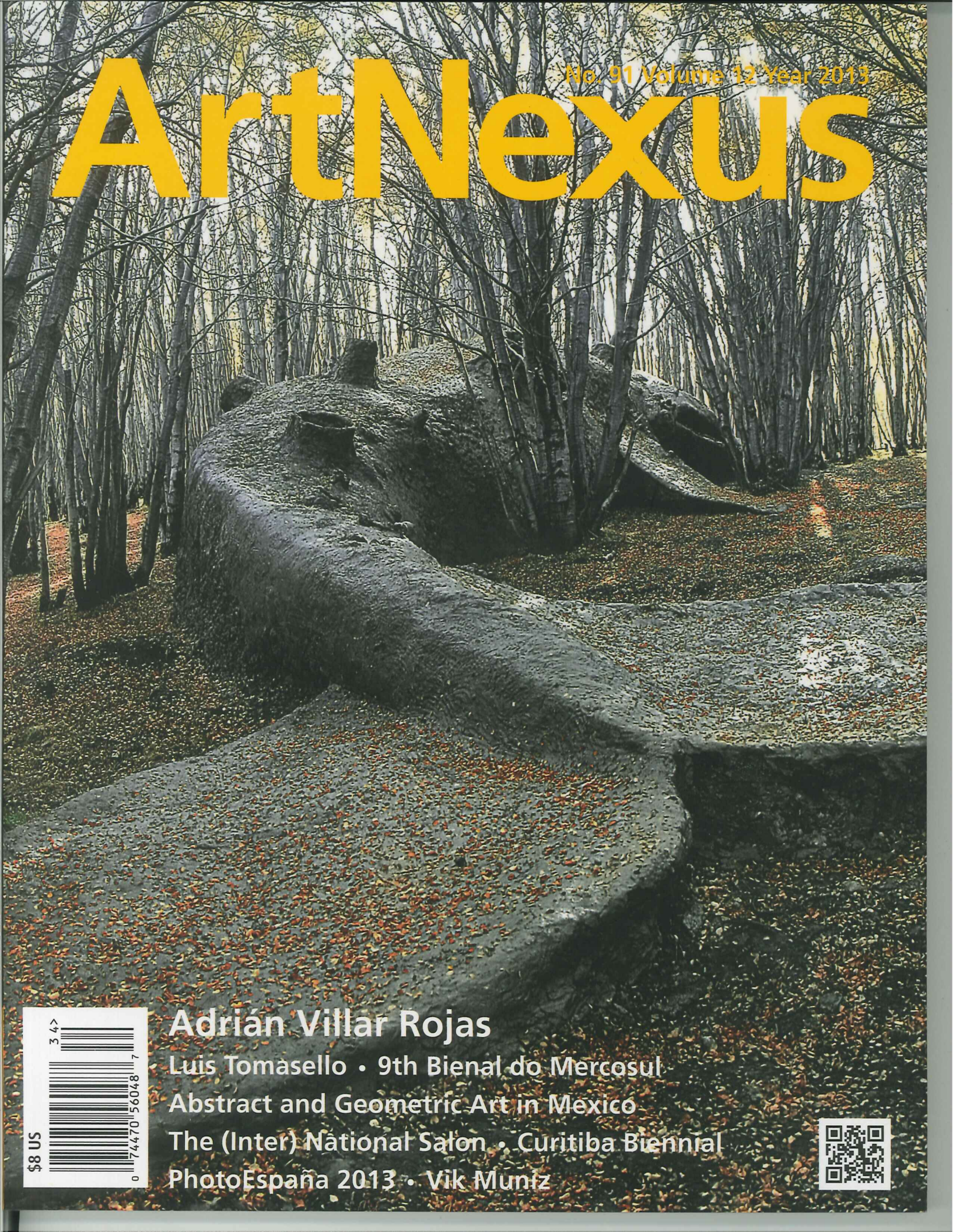


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Adrián Villar Rojas

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nicative aspect of art. This way of thinking extended in Cordeiro's work into the mid-1960s, when he adopted a critical position with regards to concrete art and proposed questions derived from international neo-figurativism. As Cordeiro put it, the new figurative art did not represent reality, but presented it. To that end, Cordeiro created his *popcretos*, organized junk-art objects that composed a "semantic concrete art." These new signifying structures engaged social issues such as the alienation of individuals and the consumerism imposed by the mass-media.

In the 1970s, as he was carrying out the first experiments in electronic art in Brazil, Cordeiro noted that this language, which he deemed "arteônico" (a neologism combining "art" and "oneiric") had methodological precedents in concrete art itself. For him, the impact of new technologies on the art field was reflected in the incorporation of new circulation circuits. The *arteônicos* on exhibit in this show demonstrate, once again, that Cordeiro placed his art at the service of social critique, investigating not only its visual potential but also its political and transformative role.

Alessandra Simões

Geraldo de Barros

SESC Vila Mariana

The public has the opportunity to know at the SESC Vila Mariana the work of an artist regarded as one of the most important representatives of the concrete art movement in Brazil.

The SESC Vila Mariana presents an exhibition centered on works by artist, photographer and designer from São Paulo Geraldo de Barros (1923-1998), one of the exponents of concrete and experimental art in Brazil and who also stood out as the most important referent of Brazilian modernist photography.

The exhibition consists of several works from the decade of the 1980s and 1990s. It includes two series that offer several artistic strategies developed during de Barros's mature period: *Jogos de Dados* (Games of Dice, 1980s) and *Sobras* (Leftovers, 1990s). The former consists of 55 pieces created according to the golden ratio concept, a mathematical formula that exists in nature. It contains several geometric forms created

with Formica. The series was conceived in the laboratory of the furniture company Hobjeto, founded by de Barros, and one of the first to produce designer furniture in series. *Jogos de Dados* pays tribute to symbolist Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-1898), author of a homonymous poem created with free verses and daring typography. The series *Sobras* is the result of a commitment to experimental photography during the 1990s, just before the artist's death. This work was based on manipulations and techniques like cutouts, montages and collages of negatives on glass based on his personal photographic collection in which the family photographs stood out. The 300 images presented in the exhibition are displayed through projections of the entire group from the series and a document that records the creative process of the experiments.

Concurrently with the exhibition, the SESC and the exhibition's curator also scheduled a series of activities connected to de Barros, such as a conference with experts opened to the general public, workshops and the launching of the book entitled *Geraldo de Barros: Isso* (Geraldo de Barros: That), organized by Fabiana de Barros and published by Edições SESC SP; the publication offers a comprehensive view of Geraldo de Barros's creative trajectory.

The exhibition was conceived by the Grupo de Estudos Curatoriais na Obra de Geraldo de Barros, formed by Fabiana de Barros (the artist's daughter), Cris Faria and Michel Favre.

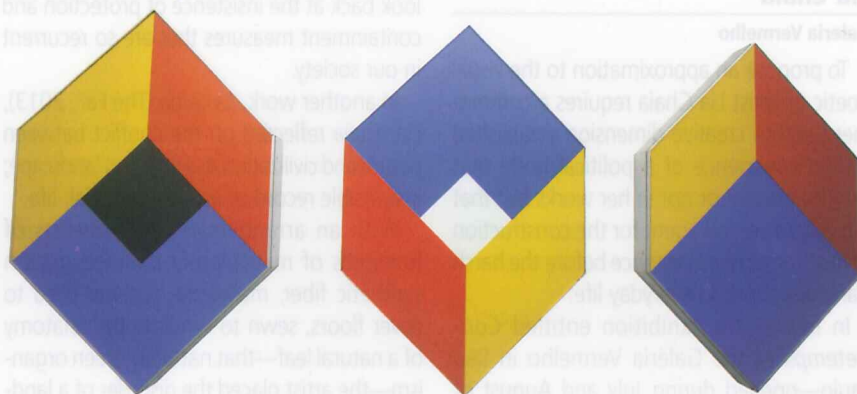
According to Fabiana de Barros, her father painted, drew, photographed and engraved, all at the same time. In the life of de Barros nothing was definitive, everything was combined; drawing would transform into engraving, which in turn would transform in photography and photography into furniture.

In photography, de Barros became interested in the subversion of photographic rules. He experimented, he dared, he reinvented; he would break rules, superimposed images over images in the same negative, manipulated the camera, scratched negatives... He would interfere in any possible way, beginning with the photographic compositions all the way to the darkroom.

A civil servant at the Banco do Brasil, de Barros began to work as an artist in 1941, a day after his brother's death. In search of answers for that loss, de Barros found a solid artistic path. Always eager to learn, he would divide his time between his day job at the bank and his artistic education at the Associação Paulista de Belas Artes. He also spent time at the studio of Clovis Graciano and played a prominent part in the groups Ruptura and Rex. Sensitive to the urban transformations that occurred in São Paulo during the second half of the Twentieth Century, de Barros was influenced by concrete art, a current that essentially addressed social issues, scarcity, inflation and unemployment in an ever growing city. Geraldo de Barros sees the aesthetic option as supportive of the autonomy of people and he is backed by the slogan "Art for Everyone," as it pertained to photography, painting, engraving and furniture design and pop art, influenced by Bauhaus, which pursues the idea of form and content.

In 1946 de Barros became a member of the Foto Cine Clube Bandeirantes group. Because of the characteristics of his work he was regarded as a marginal participant by the other members of the group who were after the aesthetic ideology of photographic canons. His subversive photographic process, which at first was regarded with astonishment by scholars, led him to be

Geraldo de Barros. From the *Scraps* series, 1950. Photo-shapes, super-imposed images.



regarded as the pioneer of Brazilian modernist photography. The series *Sobras* was created after de Barros suffered a cerebral ischemia that affected movement in part of his body. But that setback did not stop his tenacity to produce, reinvent and create based on the unexpected, the error and the challenge. In this manner, Geraldo de Barros challenged his own limitation with the help of an assistant that followed his intentions to the letter. The artist would cut negatives from his family archive, would reinvent the images as he revisited the happiness experienced by his family at any given time. He reorganized his symbolic universe based on the concept of leftovers, vestiges, as if he were writing his own biography his way, with humor, tenacity, perseverance and without any reservations. The series *Sobras* is testimony that for Geraldo de Barros there were no boundaries.

The series *Jogos de Dados* consists of fifty-five pieces of laminated plastic on wood. According to de Barros's instructions it can only be exhibited in its entirety, but the order of the pieces does not matter. The collection was shown for the first time at the 1986 edition of the Venice Biennale and then in 1987 at the Galeria Milan, in São Paulo. The artist donated the series to the Galeria de Arte do Instituto de Artes da UNICAMP of the Universidade Estadual de Campinas. Geraldo de Barros was selected to show his work at the inaugural exhibition of that gallery.

For Danilo Santos de Miranda, Regional Director of the SESC-São Paulo, the opportunity to exhibit this part of the work by the multifaceted artist, reaffirms the commitment by that institution to democratize the access to culture.

Helcio Magalhães

Lia Chaia

Galeria Vermelho

To propose an approximation to the visual poetic of artist Lia Chaia requires a commitment with a creative dimension established by the conscience of a political body that may be present or not in her works but that is always a central agent for the construction of new forms of coexistence before the harsh transformations in everyday life.

In her recent exhibition entitled *Contretemps* at the Galeria Vermelho in São Paulo—opened during July and August of

this year—the artist reminded visitors of the undeniable existence of unforeseeable setbacks, during any given event, which are unavoidable obstacles that accompany the existence of every person.

The solo show critically reflects on the breakdown of social relationships and survival modes. It was presented in the context of the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Galeria Vermelho's involvement in the activation of exhibition spaces dedicated to the dissemination of contemporary art and the promotion of situations conducive to the debate of emerging themes in the cultural life of the city.

I will address the manner in which Chaia structured the explorations shown in the exhibition space.

Beginning with the title of the exhibition, *Contretemps*—chosen by the artist to name a group of explorations activated by some unforeseen mishaps that alter the perception of the environment—the atmosphere guided the gaze to the saturated scene of contemporary society.

We begin by noting the symbolism of the work entitled *Lanza* (2013), a device constructed with thin strips glued to the walls and malleable steps affixed to the halls with adhesive material; simulation of any security and containment measure that which separates the body from life.

Instead of metal, of the ironwork that is typical of any protective fence, the artist used soft material—soft plastic—to create a false barrier, a detour from the usual perception of the object that prevents passing through and limits the condition of an autonomous body.

The steps and spearheads attached to the walls of the gallery served as a warning; straight or crooked, they were arranged across the space to warn viewers that they were expected to reflect on the variants of the daily coercive power of force and then to look back at the insistence of protection and containment measures that are so recurrent in our society.

In another work, *La caída* (The Fall, 2013), Lia Chaia reflected on the conflict between nature and civilization in a polluted landscape; irreversible record of aseptic, artificial, life.

With an arrangement that consists of hundreds of meticulously trimmed grayish synthetic fiber, malleable material used to cover floors, sewn to simulate the anatomy of a natural leaf—that naturally green organism—the artist placed the disorder of a land-

scape modified by the irreversible “progress” of successive losses.

The evident record of the disappointing relationship between “progress” and contemporary life emerges characterized by the monotonous grey tone of the meticulously trimmed and stitched leaves.

Also present in the group of works is the piece *Fiação CP04* (Spinning CP04, 2013), drypoint on photography and cables. It presented a new creation designed for the understanding of several areas of resistance improvised in the large cities, especially in the suburbs, as testimony of a perspective marked by an instability that results from political, economic and social marginalization.

Amid darkened skies, public lamp posts and tangled networks of overhead cables—often the result of clandestine connections attached to the electric system that are common across the entire country—Lia Chaia incorporates the manual record of drypoint in the photographs as a conscious political act.

In fact, Chaia illuminates her entire poetic with the critical conscience of a fighter that resists the instability generated by a dying, decadent, way of life: being limited by the exercise of force, the body is transformed and acquires a thinking dimension.

Her creation promotes areas of resistance, accumulates simulated steps and spears attached to the walls, stitched synthetic leaves and images of neglected overhead cables on city streets and corners, as she invest her energy in the next assimilation of chaos.

Through the entire walk of the exhibition there was the constant double condition that used to persist a decade ago in Chaia's work: the interest in the awareness of the contemporary body and the distrust of a completed project that regards life as a finished work.

For Lia Chaia the strategies created in her work that resonate across the exhibition space are forms of reflecting on the world, particularly when her poetic loudly dialogs with the signals that confront the obsolete energies contained in common litanies.

By proposing viewers a double failed encounter—the consolidated expectation altered by the contact with the personality of each work, and the disorientation in finding the opposite of an everyday experience—Lia Chaia approached urgent themes necessary to coexist with the contemporary, with the dramas of her interlocutors, with adversity.

Claudia Fazzolari