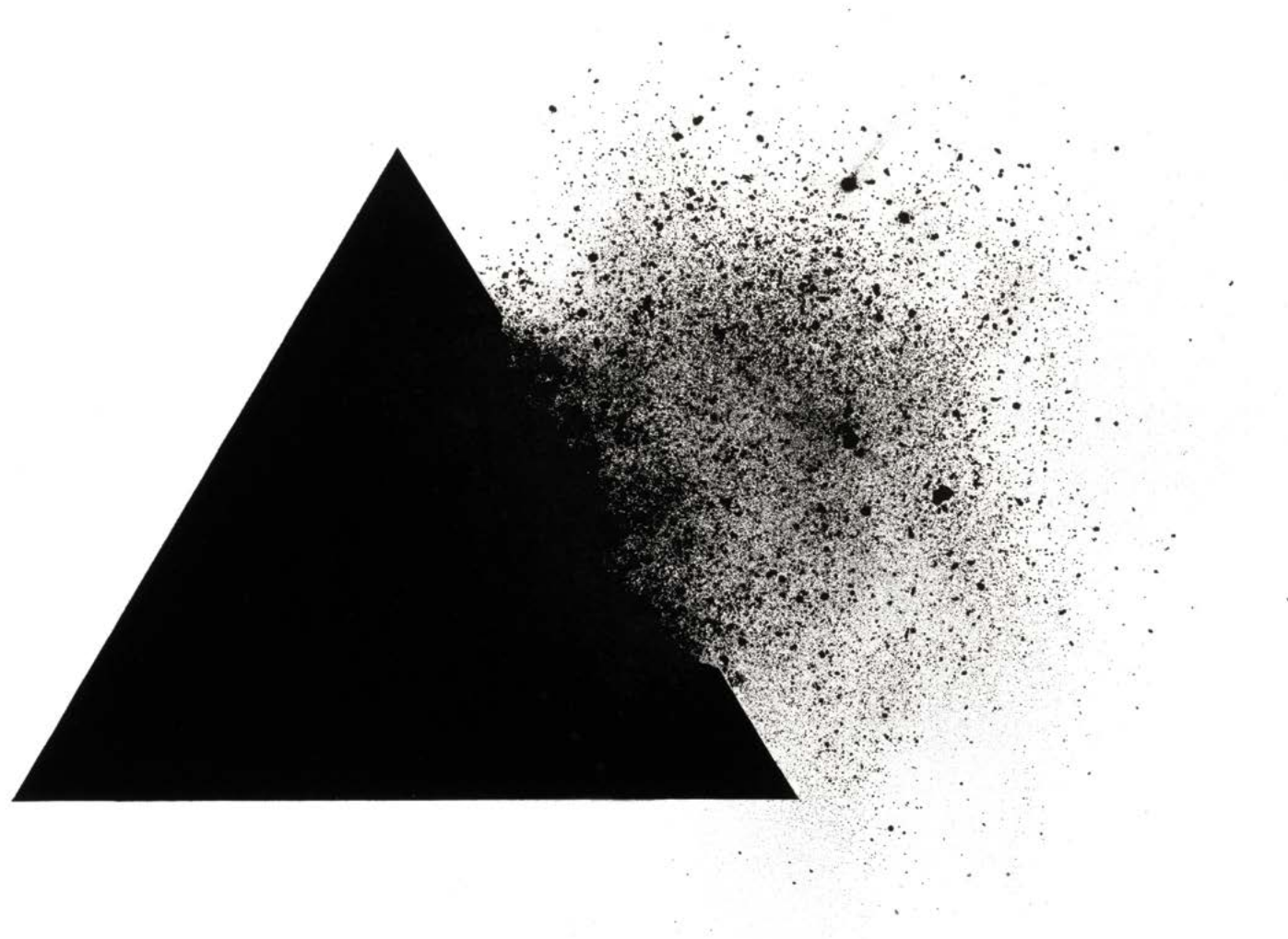


GLADYS NISTOR



WEIGHTLESS MATTER



Triangle 1701, Aleph Series, black adhesive velvet and powder pigment, variable dimensions, 2013/2017

The Argentine Consulate General has the great pleasure to further its collaboration with Puerta Roja by supporting the special exhibition in Hong Kong *Weightless Matter* presenting works by groundbreaking Argentine artist Gladys Nistor.

As part of the 6th Anniversary of the HK ARFEST; Gladys Nistor's exhibition is one of this year highlights, including more than 30 other events to promote our Music, Dance, Film, Wine and Food, taking place every November. More details are available in our website:

www.argentinefestival.org.hk

The Argentine Consulate General wishes the best success to the exhibition and expresses its deep appreciation for the support received by all our partners in this year event.



Consulate General of the
Argentine Republic
Hong Kong and Macao - People's Republic of China
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship

Gustavo H.L. Fazzari



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FOREWORD:

GLADYS NISTOR AND THE ART OF THE NON-OBJECT

Over the last seven years Puerta Roja has constantly explored through the work of its stable of Latin American and Spanish artists the use of untraditional art mediums, seldom presenting in its exhibitions traditional canvas painting. With the exhibition *Weightless Matter*, Puerta Roja further pushes medium boundaries by presenting the work of Gladys Nistor, a dynamic contemporary artist who follows the path of non-objective art to its limits.

Gladys' work and its ambiguity of medium and genre, immediately remind us of the seminal 1959 essay "*Theory of the Non-Object*"¹ by Brazilian poet Ferreira Gullar. In his manifesto, Gullar stated that the path of modernism towards a purer form of art had finally arrived. Starting with the impressionists and culminating with Malevich and Mondrian, the *non-object* challenged traditional categories and norms of painting and sculpture. Freed from the delimiting structures of frame and pedestal and the limitations of language, the *non-object* would thus be liberated from "*any signification outside the event of its own apparition.*" These ideas and those of other artists of the South American Neo-Concrete movement, would be further reviewed in Mónica Amor's "*Theories of the Nonobject*"² as the starting point for a broader investigation of the abstract and constructivist art produced in Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela in the second half of the twentieth century. Amor's focus is on the "*crisis of mediums and representation*" that triggered both formal innovations and new conceptual understandings of the art object and its relation to the viewer.

In its essence, *non-objective* art aims to convey a sense of simplicity and purity, seamlessly reaching towards a moral or spiritual dimension. A form of abstraction that, in most instances, follows Plato's view that geometry is the highest form of beauty and that, by elevating non-traditional materials to an aesthetic level, would eventually bring the rise of minimalist artists such as Sol LeWitt and Donald Judd.

And it is precisely that sense of purity and spiritual dimension, the poetry of minimal beauty, that arises when contemplating Gladys Nistor's creations. When I encountered the artist's work in Paris, I was at first mystified, but quickly curiosity evolved into a deep sense of reflection on the essence of perception, the blurring lines between matter and light, and our own origin. I was engulfed by the simplicity of the artist's view of the world.

Gladys Nistor's bodiless work is playful and paradoxical, floating in space, boldly illuminating an imaginary dimension. As Gullar's *non-objects*, Nistor's works "*do not intend to describe a negative object nor any other thing that may be opposite to material objects. [It] is a special object through which a synthesis of sensorial and mental experiences is intended to take place. It is a transparent body in terms of phenomenological knowledge: while being entirely perceptible it leaves no trace.*"

Nistor precisely balances light and dark in order to release objects from gravitational laws. By constructing intense contrast, the artist distils aesthetics down to their very core. With striking simplicity and intriguing illusion, she leaves the viewer bewildered. Eyes and mind are conflicted to question the mechanisms of both the work and our own perception of it.

Weightless Matter presents the artist's site-specific new series *Objets de Lumière*. Every piece is uniquely and intimately tailored to the gallery space. The works leave convention behind by breaking away from frame, canvas and three-dimensionality to fully occupy the environment and to immerse us in their beauty.

ADRIANA ALVAREZ-NICHOL

Founder, Puerta Roja
Hong Kong, 2017

1. Ferreira Gullar, "Theory of the Non-Object", translation by Michael Asbury of text originally published as 'Teoria do Nao-Objeto' in Suplemento Dominical, Jornal do Brasil, 19–20 December 1959
2. Mónica Amor, "Theories of the Nonobject: Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, 1944–1969", Oakland, Calif: University of California Press, 2016

Untitled 1503
Objets de Lumière Series
Site-specific installation
Variable dimensions
2015



“Looking at Gladys Nistor’s intangible architecture, floating in an undefined dimension is like watching a poem silently unfolding before our eyes. It may also echo a familiar feeling of dematerialization where “virtual” is synonymous with “illusion”, as Nistor’s trompe l’oeil possess this effortless approach and immediate impact related to the spoken word or to music, transient and resonating all in one.

[...] To fully exist in her eyes, her art has to be freed from the laborious fiddling usually associated with sculpture. This is not a struggle for the hands. This is a work for the mind. This is also the very challenge that keeps Gladys Nistor's prolific world alive and kicking, generating a powerful, unpredictable and refreshing approach to contemporary sculpture.”

ISABELLE CHAISE, WRITER



Untitled 1501
Objets de Lumière Series
Site-specific installation
Variable dimensions
2015



Untitled 1504
 Objets de Lumière Series
 Site-specific installation
 Variable dimensions
 2015



Untitled 1604
 Objets de Lumière Series
 Site-specific installation
 Variable dimensions
 2016



“Gladys Nistor creates ‘bodiless sculptures, made from the same matter as a breath, a spoken word, a dream.’

She has invented trompe l’oeil volumes which immerse the viewer in a third dimension. Her geometric shapes seem to float in the air or pop up from the wall, creating an intimate dialogue between intense light and intense black. For some time now, Nistor has been concentrating on extracting any notion of gravity from her artwork, in her aim at dematerializing matter. On the wall, her projected geometrical volumes take shape, expressing an abstract world of signs and figures.

Popping up from the wall, they are abstract objects hanging in space; and the law of gravity doesn't concern them anymore.

These artworks are in situ installations of various dimensions. They thrive in the spaces that welcome them, whether a wall, a room angle, or an empty space in the surrounding architecture.

Gladys Nistor stands against the painstaking fight with matter, usually associated with creation. ‘*I try, as much as I can, to avoid the tedious contact with matter.*’ A paradoxical statement at first, which makes sense from the Genesis metaphor she uses to express her ultimate fantasy: like in the biblical story, you just have to name it and it appears. And the magic operates.”

MARIA IBANEZ LAGO, ARTIST AND CURATOR

Untitled 1602
Objets de Lumière Series
Site-specific installation
Variable dimensions
2016

Untitled 1701
Objets de Lumière Series
Site-specific installation
Variable dimensions
2017



PAINTING ZERO DEGREE

2000 - 2002

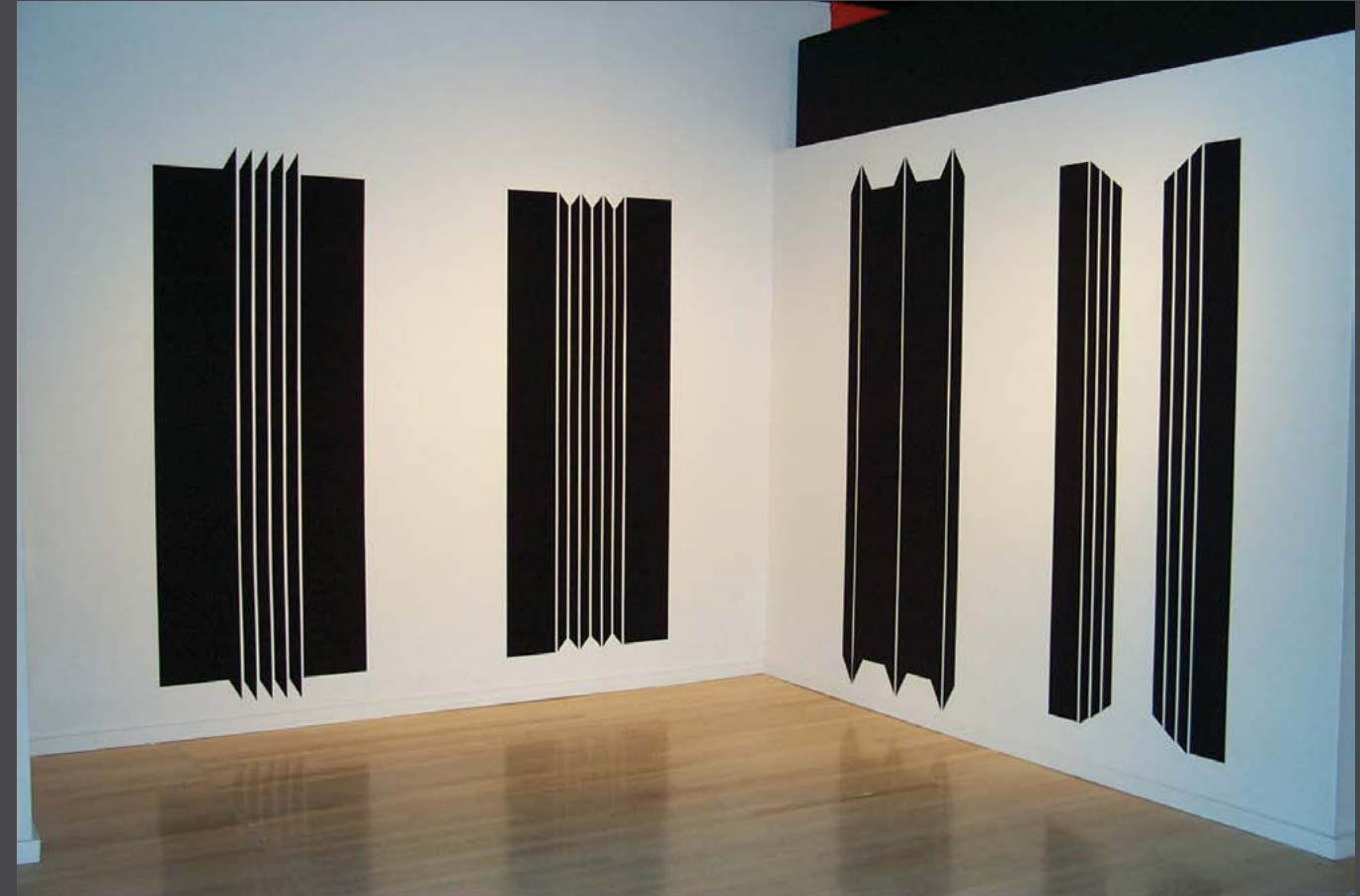
"*Painting Zero Degree* emerged as a response to its curator's anxiety about the presumed validity (or expiration) of pictorial practice, and it is curious to observe that the show represents the very moment of the cancellation of painting as such. We could even guarantee that the vitality of the show, and of the pieces that constitute it, is fundamentally rooted in the certainty that its works constitute some of the necessary steps toward the unending annihilation of painting. The paradox from which *Painting Zero Degree* arises is this: the works that most clearly carry out the presumed "murder" of painting are those that most accurately invoke that medium."

CARLOS BASUALDO, CURATOR

Keith L. and Katherine Sachs Curator of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art
Curator at Large at MAXXI-Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI secolo, Rome

"Gladys Nistor uses the measurements of windows or, as in this case, doorways, from traditional French architecture as the standard dimensions for the outer edge of each piece. The black felt and the white wall interact to provide both figure and ground. By manipulating the shaping of positive and negative space, she introduces an illusion of depth. The tradition of looking at a painting as if looking out a window implies an infinite exteriority, a separation of self and world. Looking *into* a painting as if able to enter, is another familiar metaphor- the penetration of a container that defines the artist's interiority. In Nistor's work, both efforts are invited but simultaneously thwarted. Nistor isolates illusionism and then turns it against itself."

ELLEN TEPFER, PHD. ART HISTORY



Untitled, Gladys Nistor, site-specific installation, 2001
Painting Zero Degree

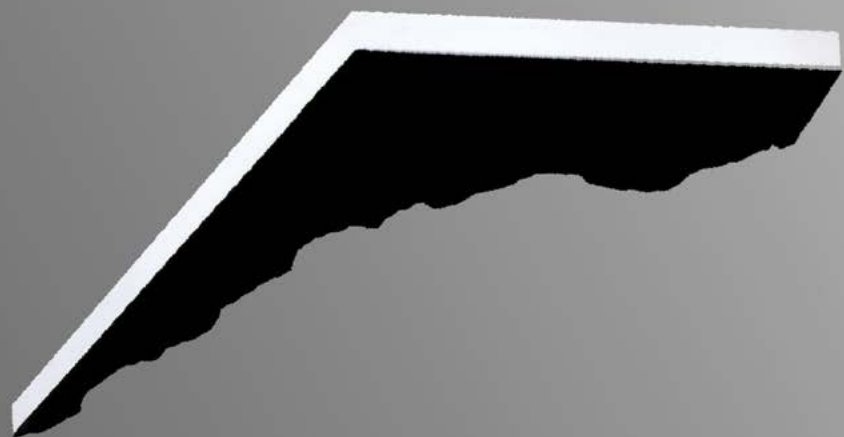
Installation view, Fine Arts Gallery of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, 2001
Courtesy of UMBC and Independent Curators International



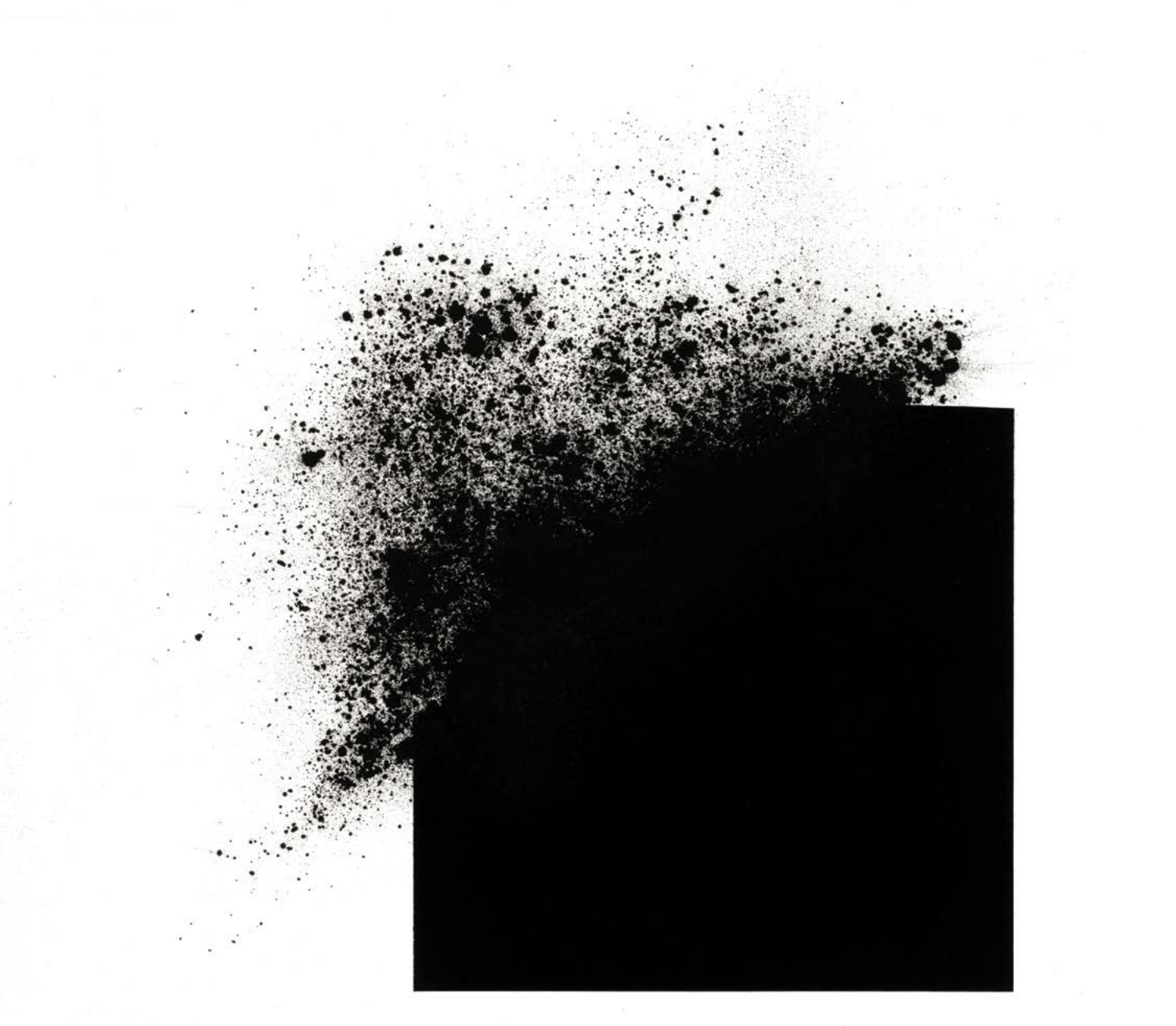
Untitled 1602
Objets de Lumière Series
Site-specific installation
Variable dimensions
2016



Untitled 1702
Objets de Lumière Series
Site-specific installation
Variable dimensions
2017



Untitled 1602, Objets de Lumière Series, site-specific installation, variable dimensions, 2016



Square 1701, Aleph Series, black adhesive velvet and powder pigment, variable dimensions, 2013/2017



Circle 1701, Aleph Series, black adhesive velvet and powder pigment, Variable dimensions, 2013/2017



Untitled 1502, Objets de Lumière Series, site-specific installation, variable dimensions, 2017

"There is a mystery in the works of the artist Gladys Nistor.

The light penetrates and becomes void.

The black and its entourage of geometrical forms accompany it in space.

Their bonds maintain resonances that allow dematerialization, a suspension of matter.

The alchemy of the dream and that of disorder unfold as we contemplate the work of the
sculptor of the void.

Hypnotic works accentuate that dreams do not experience the influence of gravity.

On the contrary, they aspire and inspire the ascent."

JORGE CANETE, DESIGNER AND CURATOR

Untitled 1704

Objets de Lumière Series
Site-specific installation
Variable dimensions
2015



GLADYS NISTOR

b. 1960, Rosario, Argentina



"I try, as much as I can, to avoid the tedious contact with matter."

Gladys Nistor was born in Argentina, studied Philosophy in Israel and in 1990, she received a scholarship from the French Government to study fine art at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In 1994, she received a Master in Fine Arts from the Université de Paris VIII. Experiencing early success in her home country, through the years her work saw a dramatic transformation increasingly focused on a minimal expression and subtraction of matter, giving her a growing presence in France and culminating in her participation in the *Painting Zero Degree* roaming exhibition from 2000 to 2002. Inspired by Roland Barthes' book "Writing Degree Zero", curator Carlos Basualdo presented artists who were reducing their artworks through radical means, focusing on pictorial practices that fitted neither the concept of abstract paintings nor that of the ready-made. Established names such as Robert Ryman and Daniel Buren were featured alongside ten emerging artists including Gladys Nistor. Presented by Independent Curators International (ICI) the exhibition toured museums in the USA for two years to great acclaim and where Nistor's works held the limelight.

Disillusioned with the realities of "life as an artist", Nistor took a step back from her practice to work as a designer in Paris for over a decade. However, the deep and incontestable emotional and spiritual necessity to return to her artistic work brought her back in full force to produce her most innovative series of works. *Objets de Lumière* team not only with vitality but are also executed with the maturity of an artist that has gone through a process of deep introspection and reflection on life.

Puerta Roja is proud to present Gladys Nistor in Asia for the first time in 2017 at a time when the artist's career is reignited with full force.

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

1977-1979

Philosophy, BA, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

1979-1982

Master of Visual Arts, School of Visual Arts, Rosario, Argentina

1990-1992

Apprenticeship at the Antonio Seguí workshop
Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France

1992-1994

Master of Fine Art, Department of Aesthetics, University of Paris (Paris VIII), France

COLLECTIVE EXHIBITIONS

2017

Art-Paris Outside the Walls, Galerie Wagner, Paris, France

INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITIONS

2017

Weightless Matter, Puerta Roja, Hong Kong

Black and White: Objects of Light, Galerie Edifice, Paris, France

AppArt, Paris, France

2007

Salon Landscapes, Design Center, Marseille, France

1995

Institute of Ibero-American Cooperation, Buenos Aires, Argentina

1992

Natural Architecture, Galerie Olga Soe, Paris, France

1991

Galerie Bernanos, Paris, France

From the Original to the Multiple, Galerie Wagner, Touquet Paris-Plage, France

2016

Affinités Abstraites, Galerie Wagner, Touquet Paris-Plage, France

Homage to the Square, Galerie Wagner, Touquet Paris-Plage, France
Possibilities of Black, Julio-Artist Run Space, Paris, France

2013

Forest Space, Buenos Aires, Argentina

2000 - 2002

Painting Zero Degree, Independent Curators International. Roaming exhibition:

Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, Cleveland, USA

Fuller Museum of Art, Brockton, USA

St. Mary's University Art Gallery, Halifax, Canada

University of Maryland, Baltimore, USA

Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, University of Oklahoma, Norman, USA

Cranbrook Museum of Art, Bloomfield Hills, USA

1997

Specific Dreams, New International Names, Luis Ángel Arango Library, Bogotá, Colombia

1996

Salon of Contemporary Art, Montrouge, France

1995

Transfers, Maison de l'Amérique Latine, Paris, France

1994

Password: Cortázar, Maison de l'Amérique Latine, Paris, France

1993

Salon of Contemporary Art, Montrouge, France

City Sculpture Contest, Voiron, France

Vth Centenary of the Discovery of America, Town Hall of Nanterre, France

Montrouge Salon, Montrouge, France

33 Latin American Sculptors in Paris, Cultural Center of Mexico, Paris, France

Latin-American Sculptors, Pespiau-Wlerick Museum, Mont-de-Marsan, France

1991

Latin America, Galerie Meander, Amsterdam, Netherlands

1989

Interior in Interiores, Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, Buenos Aires, Argentina

1988

Six Young Rosarinos, Fundación San Telmo, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Group of the X, Museo Castagnino, Rosario, Argentina

Five Young Sculptors, Ruth Benzacar Gallery, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Summa Combinatoria, Museo Sivori, Buenos Aires, Argentina

XXII Salon of Modern Art, Museo Castagnino, Rosario, Argentina

Homage to Aldo Paparella, National Fund for the Arts, Buenos Aires, Argentina

1986
Vanguards, Arte Nuevo Gallery, Buenos Aires, Argentina

L National Hall of Rosario, Museo Castagnino, Rosario, Argentina

Untitled 1504
Objets de Lumière Series
Site-specific installation
Variable dimensions
2016

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

1992
Audience Award, Concours Sculpture en Ville, Voiron, France

1990-1992
Grant from the French Government for Apprenticeship at the Antonio Seguí workshop Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France

1988
Mention, Braque Sculpture Prize, Buenos Aires, Argentina

1987
Special mention, Sculpture Prize, Salón de Arte Moderno, Rosario, Argentina

Homage to Aldo Paparella, National Fund for the Arts, Buenos Aires, Argentina

1986
Acquisition Prize, L Salón Nacional de Rosario, Museo Castagnino, Rosario, Argentina



This catalogue was published by Puerta Roja in conjunction with *Weightless Matter* exhibited in Hong Kong in 2017. All rights to images and texts remain to the artist and authors.

Photographs: Gladys Nistor
Text: Adriana Alvarez-Nichol
Design: Laura Zhang

Untitled 1505, Light projection on circular object, variable dimensions, 2015

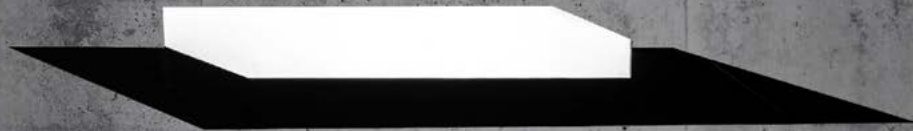
Back: **Untitled 1601**, Objets de Lumière Series, site-specific installation, variable dimensions , 2016

Cover: **Untitled 1701**, Objets de Lumière Series, site-specific installation, variable dimensions, 2017





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