

Cinthia Marcelle

em-entre-para-perante
in-between-to-towards

05 April – 21 June, 2024

Preview: 04 April 6–8 p.m.



Sprovieri is delighted to present with *em-entre-para-perante* [in-between-to-towards], Cinthia Marcelle's third solo exhibition at the Gallery.

Internationally recognised Brazilian artist Cinthia Marcelle's practice is a consistent continuation of socio-political art production in 20th-century Brazil, combining material experimentation with conceptual rigour and unique participatory practice. Since the late 1990s, Cinthia Marcelle has been creating material-intensive and performative installations and video works, many of them made in partnership with Tiago Mata Machado, as poetic-metaphorical images that question conventional ways of perceiving and behaving, how we see the world and our role in it, and disrupt habitual routines and categorizing patterns. Marcelle repeatedly blurs the supposedly fixed binary opposition of concepts such as order–chaos, fiction–reality, rule–exception, submission–resistance, or inside–outside. She points out that conventions and norms are never fixed and that the meaning of things always depends on the specific perspective and context of consideration.

The exhibition at Sprovieri is centered on the eponymous installation *em-entre-para-perante #2* [in-between-to-towards #2] (2015/2024), which was created for her survey exhibition “Disobedient Tools” at Marta Herford Museum in 2023 and is re-staged here. It is a new version of a work that she had originally developed in 2015 for the gallery Silvia Cintra + Box4 in Rio de Janeiro.

em-entre-para-perante #2 consists of a floor installation made of metal objects that are bound with black shoelaces and arranged in a grid-like formation, six “paintings” and two clipboards with fax printouts hanging on the wall.

The shape of the objects on the floor suggests that they could have been employed to break open or break out of something. Here, however, they lie carefully wrapped in black shoelaces, thereby robbed of their potential function as tools. The binding and bandaging is a protective, caring gesture that gives them a cult-like quality. The once hard, cold metal tools become warm and dysfunctional objects. Their object status and thus their meaning have changed.

The neutralized “tools” are framed by six painting-like works on the wall – a continuation of a line of work that runs through the artist's entire oeuvre in various forms: Single-colored, vertically striped cotton sheet of which the artist manually paints the machine-printed stripes with white paint. The vertical stripes of the fabric might evoke associations with the bars of a prison, which are seemingly canceled out by the white paint; thus, the act of overpainting appears like an act of liberation. As Cinthia lifts the contrast of the stripes, she disorganizes the fabric's defining pattern – a thoroughly political gesture, not least because of the political connotations of the colors. The width of the stripes, identical to that of the laces, also creates a connection between the neutralized stripes of the painting and those that defuse the tools. Marcelle never stretches her “paintings” on frames, in the manner typical of the Western painting tradition. Marcelle subverts the expectations of painting, which in the Western painting tradition usually takes the form of stretched canvases on frames. Instead, she knots her canvases, hangs them on two corners like drying laundry, or presents them hanging on wooden slats like flags. In other instances, they are bound together in a bundle or are tied around architectural structures. The canvas, which is traditionally a picture support, is transformed by Marcelle into a sculptural object, for example to mark something.

The third component of the installation has its own title: *Manifesto (2023/24)*. Every day the artist sends a fax to the gallery with the same image of a manhole into which a rope disappears, that is then attached to a clipboard on top of the previous day's version. Over the course of the exhibition, the dated daily printouts accumulate, whereby the image-defining black on the light-sensitive fax paper increasingly fades due to the impact of external factors. For the first time, Marcelle decided to present here not only the faxes that are arriving daily over the duration of this presentation. She is now also displaying the collection of 115 faxes that arrived and were collected over the corresponding period of its previous presentation at Marta Herford. Both *Manifestos* are a materialization of the temporal component of the respective work.

In the creation of *em-entre-para-perante*, the work of the legendary Brazilian artist Arthur Bispo do Rosário was a key reference for Cinthia Marcelle. Diagnosed with schizophrenia, Bispo do Rosário spent decades in a psychiatric clinic in Rio de Janeiro, where people were admitted who were considered "abnormal" due to a mental disorder or alcoholism and were therefore marginalized. Over the course of nearly five decades, he created an extensive body of work in which he disassembled the uniforms of the supervisory staff and used the yarn to wrap objects found in the clinic or to embroider bed sheets. The resulting works can be read as Bispo's encyclopedic chronicle of his view of this world and the hereafter. The utilization and distortion of uniforms become a symbolic act of liberation and the basis for the self-determined formation of new narratives. They are a manifestation of his resistance to the pressure of conformity to the normative structures of society.

Cinthia Marcelle alludes in *em-entre-para-perante #2* to the same metaphor of imprisonment and escape from it to reflect on how hegemonic systems of knowledge hold us back like walls of jail and determine and limit our thinking. The (visual) determinants of binary opposites, through which a certain idea or narrative is formulated and reproduced, are broken down in several ways. Clear attributions become shaky. The functionality of tools and the capacity to create order through the use of rational categories is defused.

In her essay *Disobedient Tools* ^[1] (2018), Mexican author Gabriela Jauregui speaks of language as a constructive means of escaping entrenched modern, patriarchal systems of thought and dismantling them. She argues that speech is not merely a passive product of a social system and its thought structures but actively shapes this system and can bring about long-term social change. It is therefore up to us to use language as a tool, to adopt it in order to actively shape new thought patterns.

Anna Roberta Goetz

¹ Gabriela Jauregui, "Herramientas Desobedientes" in *TSUNAMI* (Mexico City, 2018), pp.87-100.

Credits:

em-entre-para-perante [in-between-to-towards]

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Ava Miranda, Dominic Stephenson, Julie Mons, Michaela Tibaldo (objects)

Rhymes

Review: Alyne Azuma