

Lenora de Barros

To See Aloud

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28.2.–11.5.2025

Press briefing: Wednesday 26, February 2025, 11 am

Opening with artist talk and performance: Thursday, 27. February 2025, 7 pm

Press Release

The Badischer Kunstverein presents the work of poet and artist Lenora de Barros (*1953, São Paulo) in a first extensive solo exhibition in Germany. *To See Aloud* includes diverse facets of her artistic practice, ranging from early text works, videotext poems, publications and printed matter to photographs, objects, object poems and installations, all the way to her most recent performances and artworks in public spaces, including sound-based and collective activations. De Barros expands our understanding and experience of language by carrying the 'Verbivocovisual' approach into the 21st century. 'Verbivocovisual' is a neologism that was coined by James Joyce and later used in Concrete Poetry. Lenora de Barros adopts the term as a guiding principle of her artistic work and explores the interplay between the verbal, vocal and visual on multiple levels while subverting any hierarchy or restriction. 'I literally chose to go out of the space of the page, to depart for space' (de Barros, 2018).

The exhibition is therefore designed as a network of different thematic spaces (library, kaleidoscope, labyrinth, or radio station), which invite visitors to a multisensory, non-linear, and participatory experience that dissolves the boundaries between art and poetry. *To See Aloud* shows a large number of works from the 1970s to the present day and includes such central works as *Poema (Poem)* from 1979 – photographed by Fabiana de Barros – which explores the poem as a love story between language and the tongue, or *ONDE SE VÊ (Where you can see)* from 1982 featuring visual poems taking the form of early video texts. The video texts will be reactivated for the first time using their original technique. *Mínimo Som Mínimo (minimum sound)* embodies an attempt to reach a primal sound through the repetition of a fragment, of a sound splinter and was realized in 1983 as a visual poem and later as a sound performance. *Ping-Poema* is the title of a series of works from the 1990s comprising object poems, sound installations, and photo performances, where the table tennis ball becomes a carrier and sonic interpreter of texts. Later works incorporate other elements of the game, such as paddles and tables, engaging in a dialogue with Russian Constructivism. The photo and video performance *NÃO QUERO NEM VER (I DON'T WANT TO SEE NOTHING, 2005)* explores female subjectivity while critically engaging with stereotypically feminine activities such as knitting. The library section of the exhibition contains publications and texts by Lenora de Barros as well as rare printed matter and catalogues contextualizing Brazilian Concrete Poetry, with the Noigandres group as a pioneering collective, which also influenced de Barros' artistic practice from the early stages - alongside other concrete and intermedia artists from the second half of the 20th century.

Lenora de Barros cultivates a special interest in the interplay between various languages, in particular of their verbal, visual and acoustic elements, which enrich one another and provoke playful yet radical and engaging reflections on the body, gender, and social issues. New forms of language emerge, generating a diverse universe of meanings.

Curated by Alex Balgiu and Anja Casser

Lenora de Barros (*1953) lives and works in São Paulo, BR. After studying Linguistics at the Universidade de São Paulo, she began her career in the 1970s. Her early works can be placed in the field of visual poetry, associated with the concrete poetry movement of the 1950s. In 1975, she co-edited the single-issue art and poetry publication *Poesia em greve (Poetry on Strike)*, and in 1983, her first book *ONDE SE VÊ (Where you can see)* was published (Klaxon, São Paulo). From 1993 to 1996, de Barros wrote the weekly column *Umas (Some)* for the *Jornal da Tarde* in São Paulo. Lenora has built a poetic marked by the use of various languages: video, performance, photography, sound installation, and objects.

Lenora de Barros' most important group and solo exhibitions include the 59th Venice Biennale – *The Milk of Dreams*, IT, (2022); *Não Vejo a Hora*, Gomide&Co Gallery, São Paulo, BR (2023); *Minha Língua*, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, BR (2022), *RETROMEMÓRIA*, MAM-SP - Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, BR (2022); *Tools for Utopia: Selected Works from the Daros Latinamerica Collection*, Kunstmuseum Bern, CH (2020); *Radical Women: Latin American Art, 1960-1985*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, USA, (2017), Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA (2018), and Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, BR (2018); *ISSOÉOSSODISSO*, Oficina Cultural Oswald de Andrade, São Paulo, BR (2016); the 4th Thessaloniki Biennial of Contemporary Art, GR (2013); the 11th Lyon Biennale, FR (2011); and the 17th, 24th, and 30th Biennials of São Paulo, BR (1983, 1998, and 2012).

Works by the artist can be found in international collections, including the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, USA; MACBA - Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Barcelona, ES; the Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, CH; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, ES; MAM-SP, and Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, BR.

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