
on the nature of figures:
amelia toledo and
cristina canale

curated by luis pérez-oramas

new york
may 12
may–jul, 2026

Nara Roesler Gallery will be showing, throughout the year 2026, coinciding with the celebration of 50 years of activity in the arts, a series of exhibitions organized as encounters between artists from diverse generations, whose works significantly resonate through common leitmotifs and visual resolutions, embracing the whole temporal arch of the gallery. Notable among these shows will be an installation devoted to the works of Amelia Toledo [1926-2017] and Cristina Canale [1961], two Brazilian artists that Nara Roesler has particularly championed throughout the years.

Amelia Toledo counts among the most significant artists working in Brazil during the Twentieth Century. A paramount figure, Toledo fulfils the great arch of women Brazilian late-modern artists, alongside Lygia Clark, Mira Schendel and Lygia Pape. Her work pioneered the ecological turn of contemporary art, as Toledo delved (literally) in the realm of nature to re-invent abstraction grounding it on the eventfulness of *physis* and the aesthetics of the organic. Moreover, as she was trained by the two most significant modern women artists from Brazil, Anita Malfatti and Tarsila do Amaral, and as she worked under one of the most praised modern Brazilian architects, Joao Batista Vilanova Artigas, Amelia Toledo's work has become among the most eloquent links between High Modernity and Contemporary art in Latin America. Formally daring and always truthful to beauty, Toledo championed the challenges of in-situ art and public space as very few artists in her country.

Cristina Canale's works are necessarily resonant vis-à-vis this story as she has become a central figure in the landscape of contemporary painting in Brazil, a country known for an exceptionally large number of women artists throughout the last 130 years. A master colorist and an impressive figurative painter, Canale is known for her dense, carefully achieved and colorful backgrounds, where figures surge as in-the-process of becoming or, conversely, as if sinking within their magmatic, oceanic and formalizing fields. Both Toledo's and Canale's works reveal an artistic perception extremely attentive to the presence of landscape and natural forms informing their works, but more importantly both artists are assertively sensible to the hidden structures commanding the organization of visual fields. Their works, while extremely distinct from each other, share a common trait as they ceaselessly feature the very surging of forms, either as forces of nature or as striking figural intentions.

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– Luis Pérez Oramas