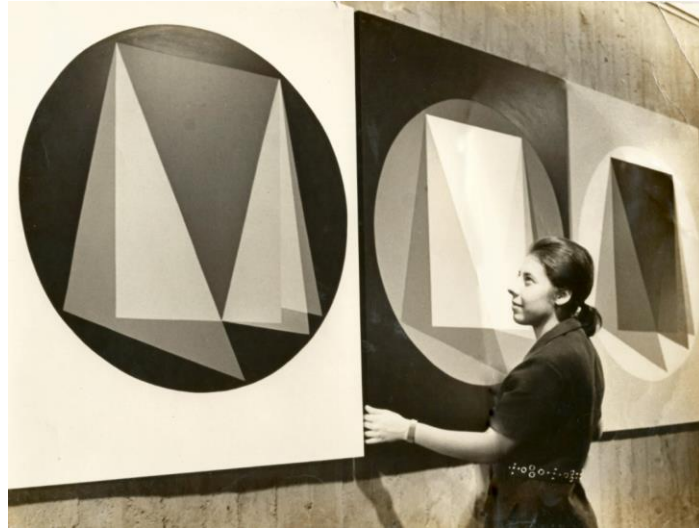


UNTITLED, ART, Miami Beach.



IRENE BUARQUE

(born São Paulo, Brasil, 1943)

José de la Mano Gallery is focusing a new spotlight on the geometrical art of the Brazilian artist Irene Buarque, presenting it in USA for the first time at UNTITLED Art Miami 2021. As early as the 1970s the prestigious critic, art historian and honorary professor at the University of Lisbon José Augusto França, declared that: *“Buarque had nothing to learn from the Portuguese with regard to painting.”* The Portuguese were in fact completely unaware of the significant number of artists who, from the mid-1930s onwards, embarked on their artistic careers in Latin America with a focus on geometrical art, rethinking it and contributing new elements that established a difference between their compositions and their European points of reference. For this reason the arrival of a number of these artists in Portugal in the last years of the Salazar regime was of outstanding importance. Nonetheless, they did not receive the recognition that they merited, particularly in the case of Buarque, who was truly exceptional as a woman who decided to come to Europe alone in order to pursue her artistic career. This new focus on the artist by the José de la Mano gallery can to some extent be compared to the recent rediscovery of the Cuban painter Carmen Herrera, who sold her first painting at the age of 89.

Irene Buarque was born in São Paulo in 1943. At the age of 21 she enrolled in the Visual Arts faculty of the Fundación Armando Álvares Penteado where she trained for three years. Soon after completing her studies Buarque took part in the 9th São Paulo Biennial in 1967 and the following year showed her work

in a group exhibition at New York University. Her first solo exhibition soon followed and on 17 March 1971 the Ars Mobile gallery in São Paulo opened a month-long exhibition featuring a number of her paintings in acrylic on wood, as well as three serigraphs. The invitation to the event was a reproduction on paper of one of Buarque's works: an empty circle in two shades of blue. Next December some of these emblematic geometrical compositions will be shown at UNTITLED 2021.

Buarque's work can be located with the context of geometrical abstraction, a type of art defined by the equilibrium between its evocative palette of colours and its carefully proportioned forms. Using circular surfaces, Buarque explores painting's spatial and chromatic aspects, taking her starting point from a way of creating new forms by changing the colour. In some of these works, for example, it is evident how a square unfolds through multiple triangles created from the vibrant transitions of colour characteristic of the Hard Edge movement. The colours allow the different chromatic areas to be defined with particular precision and to suggest the proximity or distance of the planes in the two-dimensional space, generating striking optical effects. This procedure allows Buarque to modify the form through her use of colour and by constructing various planes which recreate the third dimension.

Before she moved to Lisbon in 1973 a number of artists were important for Irene Buarque's artistic development. Among them were the Brazilian-Italian printmaker Maria Bonomi and the Portuguese-Brazilian painter Fernando Lemos, who influenced her use of colour. She learned an enormous amount from conversations in the studio with Amelia Toledo, with whom she worked at New York University, and was also inspired by the works of the Japanese painter Kumi Sugai, whom she met at the São Paulo Biennial. After she was awarded a grant by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in 1973 Buarque went to Lisbon where she settled permanently following her marriage to the Portuguese architect Nuno Teotónio Pereira. Thanks to the support of the prestigious Gulbenkian, Buarque was able to exhibit her most recent works in the gardens of the Foundation in 1975, representing her first solo exhibition in Europe.

The artist's work was extremely well received in Portugal by the public and critics alike and Buarque was the first foreign artist to exhibit in the Gulbenkian's gardens, out of the exhibition spaces. She noted that at this period one of her greatest satisfactions was seeing how: *"the Foundation, which up to that point had been an 'island' in Lisbon in terms of cultural events (only attended by the intellectual elite) suddenly started to be visited by people of all types. It had a wonderful, huge garden and my works were installed on the gravel, standing on invisible easels that blended in with the ground."* The exhibition, entitled Walls of Lisbon, consisted of 19 paintings from the Walls series. The concept that gave rise to the title was the sadness that Buarque felt when she moved to Portugal. During her first few months there she found it difficult to relate to Portuguese people and at the same time struggled with the country's isolation from the rest of Europe and the population's subjection to the long dictatorship of Salazar. *"I arrived in a sad, desolate Lisbon"*, Buarque said in one of her interviews.

The military uprising of 25 April 1974, better known as the Carnation Revolution, which brought down Salazar's dictatorship of 48 years was of enormous significance for the artist. Not only did it make it easier for her to integrate better in Portugal but it also had a positive influence on her in artistic terms. This change is clearly evident in the works that featured in the exhibition at the Gulbenkian Foundation. In the eight painted before the revolution broke out Buarque made use of more muted tones, while the eleven painted after it are in much brighter colours. Red makes its first appearance in her compositions at this point. Once again the circular panel reappears, as does the use of acrylic, although on this occasion the geometries are created from parallelograms similar to the walls. Buarque reconfirmed her interest in the theme of walls on her visit around this time to the Portuguese village of Arraiolos where she found Arabic walls of exactly the same shape as the ones she had conceived herself. Some of the Walls exhibition will be recreated on the booth of José de la Mano at UNTITLED 2021.

Another of the fundamental groups that the gallery has reassembled is the series of triangular compositions entitled “Um Jardim Bem Fechado” [A well-made Garden], which Buarque exhibited at Galeria Diferença in 1987 and later at the Museu de Arte Contemporânea in São Paulo in 1989.

During this same period Buarque also studied theatrical design at the Conservatorio Nacional in Lisbon where she said that she “*greatly enjoyed the course given by Mário Barradas as he created abstract sets that had a lot to do with my painting. As a result, set design became a major source of inspiration for my work.*” Buarque also took a lithography course at Galeria Grafil in Lisbon. Shortly after this, in June 1975, she participated in her first exhibition in Spain at Galeria Durero in Madrid. With the title of *Grabadores Brasileños* Buarque exhibited alongside four other young artists: Dalton Salem Asseff, Waltércio Caldas, Sergio Fingermann and Norberto Stori, whose works were notable for their meticulous treatment of colour. This was not the only occasion on which Buarque exhibited in Spain and her works were shown on three further occasions. In 1979 she was one of the artists selected for the collective exhibition *Sacon 2* held at the Museo Vostell Malpartida in Cáceres. In 1992 she took part in the *1st International City of Ourense Mini-prints Exhibition*, while in 2001 she again showed work at the Museo Vostell in the collective exhibition *Portugueses en el Museo Vostell*.

While most of Buarque’s exhibitions have been held in Brazil and Portugal her works have also been included in solo and collective exhibitions in museums, galleries and art spaces in other cities, including Antwerp, Brussels, Paris, New York, Budapest and Ein Hod. In the present day Irene Buarque continues to work in her Lisbon studio. Her most recent exhibition was entitled *Yellow Blue*, organised by Galeria Diferença in Lisbon in 2016 and comprising paintings on wood created by the artist that year. While her best known works are her paintings and prints, over the course of her career Buarque has also produced a considerable body of sculptures. Some are large-scale public works, such as the sculptural group for the Plaza del Municipio in Covilhã and the entrance way to the city of Montijo, both in Portugal. All Irene Buarque’s sculptures share the economy of means found in her painting and work on paper, revealing the refined, pared-down nature of this artist’s work.

Training

- 1964/67 – Facultad de Artes Plásticas, Armando Álvares Penteado Foundation (São Paulo, Brazil)
- 1973/75 – Granted by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon, Portugal); theatrical design at the Conservatorio Nacional in Lisbon and lithography course at Galería Grafil (Lisbon)
- 1977 – Photography at AR.CO [Centro de Arte y Comunicación Visual] (Lisbon)
- 1990 – Ceramics at AR.CO [Centro de Arte y Comunicación Visual] (Lisbon)
- 1994 – Sculpture at Centro Internacional de Escultura (Sintra, Portugal)

Principal Solo Exhibitions

- 1971 – Ars Mobile Gallery (São Paulo, Brazil)
- 1972 – Pinturas Circulares. Arnaud Gallery (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
- 1975 – Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon, Portugal)
- 1976 – Múltipla Gallery (São Paulo, Brazil)
- 1978 – Leitura e Contra Leitura de un Espacio Limite: Janela. Quadrum Gallery (Lisbon)
- 1981 – Centro Nacional de Cultura (Lisbon). Choice of the art critic Ernesto de Sousa
- 1983 – Instalation Passo-a-Passo. Diferença Gallery (Lisbon)
- 1987 – Instalation Um Jardim Bem Fechado. Diferença Gallery (Lisbon)
- 1989 – Instalation Um Jardim Bem Fechado II. Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de São Paulo (Brazil)
- 1994 – A Lectura da Piedra. Colares Gallery (Sintra, Portugal)
- 1994 – Instalation Vislumbre. Campo Santo Chapel, Palacio Nacional de Mafra (Portugal)
- 1995 – Um Jardim Zen para Salette Tavares. Casa Fernando Pessoa (Lisbon)
- 1996 – Instalation Pessoa Astral. Casa Fernando Pessoa (Lisbon)
- 1996 – Jardim Zen II. Galería Municipal de Alverca (Portugal)
- 1997 – Instalation Pessoa Astral. Centro Cultural Calouste Gulbenkian (Paris)
- 1998 – Instalation Pessoa Astral. Maison du Livre (Brussels)
- 1999 – Instalation Pessoa Astral. Centro Cultural Berchem (Antwerp)
- 1999 – Trem e Arco Galleries, Faro and Diferença Gallery (Lisbon)
- 2002 – Geométrías Variáveis. Ratton Gallery (Lisbon)
- 2003 – Piedras Labradas. Giefarte Gallery (Lisbon)
- 2006 – Pinturas sobre madeira. Giefarte Gallery (Lisbon)
- 2007 – Bolhas y Bolas. Flores do Cabo Gallery (Sintra, Portugal)
- 2008 – Pinturas sobre madeira. Teatro Municipal (Almada, Portugal)
- 2012 – Tábua con Tiago Farinha, Diferença Gallery (Lisbon)
- 2016 – Yellow Blue. Diferença Gallery (Lisbon)
- 2019/20 – “Livros À Par Te – Seleção de 1976/2019”, Casa da Cerca (Almada, Portugal)

Principal Collective Exhibitions

- 1967 – Bienal de São Paulo (Brazil)
- 1968 – New York University EUA (USA)
- 1971 – 5º Jovem Arte Contemporânea MAC São Paulo Prémio de Aquisição (São Paulo, Brazil)
- 1972 – MAC Campinas Prémio de Aquisição

- 1975 – Grabadores Brasileños. Durero Gallery (Madrid, Spain)
- 1976 – Panorama da Arte Contemporânea Brasileira MAM (São Paulo, Brazil)
- 1978 – Artistas Portugueses de Hoje LTPC Milão
- 1979 – Arte Moderna da Funarte (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
- 1979 – Sacom II, Vostell Museum (Malpartida de Cáceres, Spain)
- 1981 – 25 Portugueses de Hoje MAC (São Paulo, Brazil)
- 1984 – Artistas-Fotógrafos em Portugal MAC (São Paulo, Brazil)
- 1985 – Collective exhibition at the Janco-DADA Museum (Ein Hod, Israel)
- 1985 – Experimental Art. Club of Young Artist (Budapest)
- 1991 – “Geração 60 Revisitada” MAC (São Paulo, Brazil)
- 1992 – 1st International City of Ourense Mini-prints Exhibition (Ourense, Spain)
- 1993 – III Bienal de Fotografia Vila Franca de Xira e III Bienal de Cerâmica Artística de Aveiro (Portugal)
- 1995 – Collective exhibition, Museo de Arte Moderno (São Paulo, Brazil)
- 1999 – “Van Revolutie tot Evolutie” Cultureel C. Berchem Antuérpia
- 2000 – Cerâmica Brasileira São Paulo (Brazil)
- 2001 – Portugueses en el Museo Vostell. Vostell Museum (Malpartida de Cáceres, Spain)
- 2003 – Ratton Gallery (Aveiro, Portugal)
- 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 – Colectivas Temáticas Galeria Diferença (Lisbon, Portugal)
- 2012 – “Tarefas Infinitas”, Livro de Artista, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon, Portugal)
- 2013 – “Sob Signo de Amadeo – um século de Arte” – 30 Anos do CAM. Centro de Arte Moderno, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon, Portugal)
- 2017/18 – Collective. Collection. Vostell Museum (Malpartida de Cáceres, Spain)
- 2018 – ARCOMadrid & ARCOLisboa Pinturas dos Anos 71/88, José de la Mano Gallery (Madrid, Spain)
- 2019 – Colectiva dos 40 Anos Galeria Diferença (Lisbon, Portugal)
- 2019 – “Luz Água” MAEDS/ Museu de Arqueologia e Etnografia do Distrito de Setúbal (Portugal)
- 2020 – Arco Madrid, José de la Mano Gallery (Madrid, Spain)
- 2021 – Reposição “Percurso” 1985/2020, Colectiva “EARTHKEEPING / EARTHSHAKING. Arte, feminismos e ecologia”, Galeria Quadrum; 21 Mulheres no Azulejo Ratton, Galeria Ratton
- 2021 – Meu Amigo, Obras da Coleção Ernesto de Sousa, MNAC (Lisbon, Portugal)
- 2021 – Bocage e Eu, a procura da Liberdade, MAEDS (Setúbal, Portugal)

Public Projects

- 1997 – Rehabilitation of Paços do Concelho, Lisbon, C. M. L. Sculpture and floor design
- 1998 – Repartir o Sol, sculptural group for the Repsol station at the A6 highway, Vendas Novas (Portugal)
- 2000 – Monumental sculpture at the entrance way to the city of Montijo (Portugal), with the architect Nuno Teotónio Pereira and the engineer Teixeira Trigo
- 2001 – Sculptural group for the Plaza del Municipio de Covilhã (Portugal)
- 2002 – Artistic intervention at the Ameixoeira Station, Lisbon Metro Awards
- 1971 – 8th edition Joven Arte Contemporáneo, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Campinas de São Paulo. Acquisition Prize
- 1972 – Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Campinas de São Paulo. Acquisition Prize
- 1988 – Rehabilitation of the Santa Justa Lift, Lisbon. 1st Award, Architect Team Nuno Teotónio Pereira
- 1998 – Repsol Award, sculptural group at the A6 highway, Vendas Novas (Portugal)
- 2000 – Contest of ideas for the new stations of the Lisbon Metro, Honorable Mention

Work in Public and Private Collections

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de São Paulo (Brazil)
Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Campinas (Brazil)
Pinacoteca de Estado de São Paulo (Brazil)
Senado de Brasília (Brazil)
New York University (USA)
Vostell Museum (Malpartida de Cáceres, Spain)
Centro de Arte Moderna Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon)
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Library (Lisbon)
Museo de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (Brazil)
Nicole Altonian Collection (Paris)
Brazilian Art Museum-Armando Álvares Penteado Foundation (São Paulo, Brazil)
Museo Municipal de Ourense (Spain)
Camões Institute (Lisbon, Portugal)
Câmara Municipal de Vila Franca de Xira (Portugal)
Carmona e Costa Foundation (Lisbon, Portugal)
Leon e Freda Kunstler Collection (Antwerp, Belgium)
Helga de Alvear Foundation (Cáceres, Spain)