

emptiness. The censored aspect of the artistic body in its decorous exhibition for the *other* is limited to what can be a part of representation and is double protected from gaze and touch; visually, it can be seen, and physically it can be touched. As the artist has said, iron and metal form a protective shield for the lower part of the female body, that part left to the imagination. The outlines of the skirts delineated in iron and metal possess a hardness that can't be compared to the drawn or painted lines that establish the contours of a nude, nor can it be compared to the imaginary lines of a marble sculpture's contour.

Thinking the body in the context of postmodernity's crisis of values, beliefs, concepts, and definitions, Annex Burgos reconstitutes the female body in the way in which scientists and engineers do. Plaster, iron, and metal are metaphors of the organic hybridism of a body that long ago ceased to be just flesh and bones.

Ingrid María Jiménez

#### RIO DE JANEIRO / BRAZIL

##### Matheus Rocha Pitta

Novembro-Arte Contemporânea

The year 1979 marked the return of democracy to Brazil after fifteen years of military dictatorship. It was also the year in which the rural vehicle Belina, by the Ford Motor Company, was first presented. This automobile was notable for its interior space, and it was especially appreciated by growing families during the prosperous 1970s. This kind of confabulation and association of information was present in Matheus Rocha Pitta's installation *Drive-In*, in different layers of meaning and reference, sometimes intentional and taken from the theory and history of art, at other times fortuitous and linked only in the viewer's imagination. As expected, the Belina '79 was also a part of this work. In his first individual show in a gallery, the artist superimposed procedures and discourses, combining videos, photographs, site-specific materials, sculpture, representation, and reality in a grid that enveloped the space of the exhibition and opened up to the viewer's own references, inviting one to add per-

sonal threads to the metaphorical weaving in process.

Rocha Pitta's work was installed in two spaces of a traditional antiques shopping center in Rio de Janeiro. The first was a contemporary art gallery in a commercial neighborhood characterized by the age of the objects available; the second space was in the underground parking garage of the same shopping center. Inside the gallery, a video monitor on a car seat showed horses "parked" in the underground area; the views were fixed and varied in length and were recorded from inside an automobile with the headlights used for lighting. The camera/automobile/horse equation was distorted inside the parking garage, and one felt invited to unmask the strange relationship established between the three elements. How did the horses end up there? Why were they filmed? The almost incidental appearance of the image, its questionable quality, and its circumstantial lighting made one think of a possible documentary, of images found in archives, or of more or less absurd possible uses for horses in parking garages—besides the range of art-historical references to Pedro Américo and Janis Kounellis.

In what was the stage for his video, the underground space, the artist parked the Belina. The whole back section of the automobile was closed off with bricks and concrete. Inside the grotto/car, the back seat was removed; it was not clear if it was the one provided for visitors to sit on while watching the video in the gallery. On the walls of the car/cavern, the artist exhibited his collection of newspaper clippings about horses and weird horse-related news: "Calvary to save an agonized horse," "Stolen horses cross Avenida Paulista," and others; a Prada ad; and equestrian magazines. These clippings were pasted directly onto the concrete wall in the car, referring to Plato's cave projections as well as to adolescent bedroom walls pasted with magazine images of pop and TV idols. The car's rearview mirrors were replaced with intense spotlights that shone into the garage. A hole was opened on the wall and the resulting black-velvet camera could only be touched by one hand at a time. "Strange image and strange prisoners," one might say, as Glaucus paraphrases Plato in the myth of the cave.

What was generated by the artist's proposition was at least one double conundrum provoking a short circuit: the object of a stationary automobile transformed into a cave; the video of moving horses confined inside another cave. However, before confronting the horses or descending to the automobile, one found a discreet surprise at the entrance to the gallery. The artist darkened the typically well-lit space of the art gallery, and one could see with difficulty a series of photographs. Rocha Pitta photographed chalk drawings superimposed on evocative textures found on the walls of the shopping center's garage. Described at the end of a review or starting the exhibition in the gallery, these images inverted the discourse's logical order, and the strategies of inversion and discontinuity traversed the whole exhibition. The diagrams inscribed on the walls of this third cave alluded to the methods that pervade the work. Represented there schematically were: a) the articulation between the exhibition spaces; b) the articulation of object and image; c) the articulation of theme and representation. These images were part study, part commentary. For the artist, they were "conceived anthropological documents. We can call them 'studies a posteriori.'

Rodrigo Moura

#### SÃO PAULO / BRAZIL

##### Lygia Clark

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo

The work of Lygia Clark (1920-1988) is essential for any understanding of the artistic proposals of the 1960s and 1970s in Brazil, years when the paradigm of art moved away from works fundamentally based on the object and focused on other possible artistic practices. Despite the acknowledged relevance of her production—which moved from painting to modulated, folded, and manipulable planes, and from *relational objects* to the "*Structuration of the Self*"—, it would be difficult for a show posited from the standpoint of current exhibitional parameters to foster a deep contact with the most radical part of Clark's oeuvre, for which one would need new ways of mediation and presentation to the public.



Matheus Rocha. *Drive-In*, 2005. Belina Ford 79, bricks, cement, black velvet, newspaper clippings, video projection NTSC, color, 54 minutes. Variable dimensions.



Lygia Clark and Biological architectures II, Paris. 1975-1976.

In that sense, the project "*Lygia Clark, from the Object to the Event*", developed by psychoanalyst Suely Rolnik since 2002, seeks to activate the artist's 26 years of bodily experimentation (1963-88) through interviews captured mainly in Brazil and France, where Clark lived: they represent testimonies by people who had contact with the artist and with the "*Structuration of the Self*," a practice of the artist in her Rio office between 1976 and 1988. According to Rolnik's text in the show's catalog: "The *Structuration of the Self* took place one person at a time, in one-hour sessions, with a regularity of two or three times a week, lasting for months and even years. Lygia used *relational objects* to touch the bodies of her 'patients,' as she herself called those who agreed to go through the experience. Naked, they laid on top of one of those objects, the *Grande colchão*. In the words of the artist, by propping themselves on that couch *sui generis*, the patient's own weight 'already created a furrow' to 'accommodate their bodies'. And thus the session commenced." With his interview project, Rolnik wants to describe an ambiguous, little-studied territory of life during that period of military dictatorship in Brazil, and what was the experience under Clark's production, in order to bring to the surface essential issues in her work and place them in dialog with contemporary issues.

With the same title, the show was presented in Nantes at the Musée de Beaux-arts (October-December 2005) and in Brazil

(January-March 2006,) the later being an extension of the first project, in collaboration with French curator Corinne Diserens. The show comprises 138 objects, one installation, and ample audio-visual and photographic documentation of actions by the artist, as well as 24 of the 56 filmed interviews previously completed by Rolnik. The emphasis placed on the bodily phase of Clark's oeuvre is evident in the chronologically descending arrangement of the show: it begins with the projection of interviews, followed by galleries with photographs, videos, and documents referred to the "*Structuration of the Self*," as well as original objects created by the artist and their respective replicas to be manipulated by the public; later, there is a gallery with earlier *relational objects*, such as "*O Eu e o tu – série roupa-corpo-roupa*" (Me or You, Clothes-Body-Clothes, 1967), or "*Óculos*" Anteojos (Eyes-Spectacles 1968), and their replicas. Clark's works from the 1950s and early 1960s, such as, among others, *Superfície modulada n.5*" (Modulated Surface, 1955), "*Espaço modulado n.4*" (Modulated Space No. 4, 1959), "*Casulo*" Capullo (Cocoon, 1960), are presented, at the end of the show, alongside her "*Bichos*" (Bugs, c.1960). "*Trepantes*" (Climbers, c. 1964), and some projects and books that took her to those works. In the next gallery was a comfortable environment where the videos with the testimonies were at the public's disposal.

While the interviews seek a current approximation to the essence of Clark's pro-

1979 é o ano que marcou o início da abertura democrática no Brasil, após 15 anos de ditadura militar. Também é o ano de fabricação da perua Belina, da Ford, um carro que marcou época pelo espaço interno, especialmente apreciado por famílias em processo de crescimento, nos prósperos 70s. Este tipo de fabulação e associação, camadas de significados e referências, – às vezes propositais e vindas da teoria e da história da arte, às vezes gratuitas e exclusivamente vinculadas à imaginação do espectador – fazem parte da instalação de Matheus Rocha Pitta “Drive-In”. Dela faz parte também, como é de se suspeitar, a Belina 79.

Em sua primeira individual em uma galeria, o artista sobreponhou procedimentos e discursos, reuniu e contrapôs vídeo e fotografia, site-specific e escultura, representação e realidade, numa trama que envolvia o espaço da exposição e se abria às referências do espectador, atraído a adicionar fios à teia. A instalação foi montada em dois espaços de um tradicional shopping de antiquários do Rio de Janeiro: o primeiro deles, uma galeria de arte contemporânea, em uma vizinhança cujo comércio se caracteriza pela elevada idade dos objetos ofertados; o segundo, o estacionamento subterrâneo do shopping. No interior da galeria, uma projeção de vídeo mostrava cavalos “estacionados” no subsolo, à qual assistíamos sentados em bancos de carro; são planos fixos e de duração variada, que foram gravados no interior do carro, usando-o como ponto de vista para uma câmera subjetiva e seus fárois como aparato de iluminação. A equação câmera/carro/cavalo sofre deslocamentos dentro do estacionamento, e somos convidados a desvendar, parcialmente, a estranha relação entre os três elementos: como foram parar ali os cavalos? Por que foram filmados? O aspecto quase incidental da imagem, sua qualidade questionável e sua iluminação circunstancial nos fazem pensar num possível documentário ou documento, imagens encontradas em arquivos ficcionais, ou em possíveis usos, mais ou menos absurdos, para cavalos em estacionamentos (além de uma vasta gama de referências da história da arte, de Pedro Américo a Jannis Kounellis).

No cenário deste vídeo, no subsolo, o artista estacionou de fato a Belina. Toda a parte de trás do carro foi fechada com tijolos e concreto. No interior da gruta-carro, o banco de trás foi retirado. Nas paredes desta caverna, o artista exibiu (uma exposição dentro da exposição) sua coleção de recortes de jornal sobre cavalos e notícias estranhas sobre cavalos: “Calvário para salvar cavalo agonizante”, “Cavalos furtados cruzam a Avenida Paulista”, e assim por diante; um anúncio da Prada, revistas eqüestres. Os recortes foram colados diretamente na parede de concreto do carro, e a referência às imagens projetadas na caverna de Platão soma-se à do culto popular e adolescente a ídolos pop e da TV com recortes colados nas paredes dos quartos de dormir. Os espelhos retrovisores foram substituídos por intensos holofotes que jogam luz para o interior do recinto. Um orifício foi aberto na parede e a câmera negra de veludo resultante pode ser tocada apenas por uma mão de cada vez. “Estranho quadro e estranhos prisioneiros:, diríamos, parafraseando Glaucus a Platão no Mito da Caverna.

Há, portanto, um (no mínimo duplo) estranhamento – que o artista faz questão de alimentar e colocar em curto-circuito: carro parado (objeto), transformado em gruta; cavalos em movimento (vídeo), confinados a outra gruta. No entanto, antes de vermos os cavalos ou descermos ao carro, encontramos à entrada da galeria uma discreta surpresa. O espaço bem iluminado, típico da galeria de arte, foi escurecido pelo artista e uma série de fotografias se fazia ver, dificilmente, no escuro. Rocha Pitta fotografou desenhos feitos a giz sobrepostos a texturas de grande impacto pictórico obtidas nas paredes do estacionamento do shopping. Descritos no fim de uma resenha ou iniciando a exposição na primeira sala da galeria, as imagens invertem uma ordem lógica do discurso da exposição – a propósito, a estratégia da inversão e da descontinuidade permeia a exposição toda. Os diagramas inscritos nas paredes da gruta (a terceira delas) são alusivos aos métodos que informam todo o trabalho. Ali estão representados esquematicamente: a) a articulação entre os espaços da exposição; b) a articulação entre objeto e imagem; c) a articulação entre tema e representação. Estas imagens são parte estudo, parte comentário. Para o artista, são “documentos arquelógicos forjados”. Poderíamos chama-las “estudos a posteriori”.

Rodrigo Moura, maio de 2006  
publicado em ArtNexus # 61