

The conceptual keys to Ohtake's painting are definitely situated beyond the labels to which it was confined, in the abyss excavated by the reductionist approach of skimming glances or the ethnocentrism of rationalists in the Brazilian market. The problem was not in her painting or her discreet personality, but the systematically distorted reception of her work by certain critics. Against the reductionism of confining her to the heading "Japanese-Brazilian artists" – a ghetto outlined by Mário de Andrade –, a more in-depth assertion is required to demonstrate that she is indeed a Japanese-Brazilian artist.

Paulo Herkenhoff, "Tomie Ohtake – Construtiva" (Rio de Janeiro, 2004).

Born in Kyoto in 1913, Tomie Ohtake moved to Brazil in 1936. Her career as an artist began at the age of 37, when she became a member of the Seibi group, which brought together artists of Japanese descent. In 1957, invited by critic Mário Pedrosa, she presented her first solo exhibition at the Museu de Arte Moderna in São Paulo, which was followed four years later by her participation in the São Paulo Biennial in 1961.

Initially a painter, Ohtake began to experiment with various printmaking methods during the 1970s and, beginning in the late 1980s, undertook large-scale sculptural projects and public works in São Paulo and neighboring cities. She featured in several biennials, including the São Paulo Biennial, Brazil (1961, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1989, 1996, 1998, and 2003); XI Venice Biennale, Italy (1972); 1st and 2nd editions of the Latin American Biennial in Havana, Cuba (1984, 1986); the 5th edition of the Cuenca Biennial (1996); among others. She has had solo exhibitions at Hara Museum of Contemporary Art (Tokyo); Mori Art Museum (Tokyo); Barbican Centre (London); Bass Museum of Art (Miami); Museum of Modern Art in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo; MASP (São Paulo); Fundação Iberê Camargo (Porto Alegre); among other institutions. Her works are included in the collections of Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; MASP, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo; MAM-SP, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, São Paulo; MAM-RJ, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro; MAC-USP, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo; MAC-Niterói, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói, Niterói; Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection, Caracas; and Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo.

Pinturas Cegas (Blind Paintings, 1959-1962)

In the early 1960s Tomie Ohtake painted blindfolded. These works form a corpus of around forty paintings produced between 1959 and 1962. Ohtake's absence of sight is self imposed. In these works, her brush does not demarcate, compose, take possession or map a territory; it passes through the canvas. In this way, Ohtake offers herself to the transient act of painting, beyond its physical register on the surface. The artist once stated "When I made that series with the eyes closed, I was trying to remove form and color to find the bone of painting." (Tomie Ohtake, interviewed by Paulo Herkenhoff in 2000).

Untitled, 1959. Oil on canvas, 97 x 77 cm

Exhibited:

Pinturas Cegas (solo exhibition), Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2013). Previous iterations include: Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2012); Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil (2012).

30x Bienal (group exhibition), Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2013).



Untitled, 1960. Oil on canvas, 83 x 61 cm

Exhibited:

Pinturas Cegas (solo exhibition), Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2013). Previous iterations include: Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2012); Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil (2012).



1962 - 1965

Towards the end of 1962, Ohtake's pictorial investigation underwent major change. Instead of gestural brushstrokes and surfaces of expansive color, she transitioned to more defined areas with thin homogenous layers of color and trembling borders. Her formal investigations now centered on the balance of forms, which she conveyed through the presence of imposing earthy fields of color, built up by layers of paint.

Paintings from this period are worked through an interplay between layering and overlay, blotching and effacing. These paintings represent the artist's first conscious attempt to define paintings as forms of movement.



Untitled, 1962. Oil on canvas, 60 x 120 cm

Geometria Sensível (Sensitive Geometry)

From 1965 onwards, Ohtake employed repetition as an integral part of her work. Beginning in 1973, the curve, in different forms, was developed in the artist's body of work: arches (1973-1982), oval or capsular forms (1976-1979), tubular forms (1978-1982), and organic forms (1979-1982). Each painting, including those featuring similar geometrical shapes and organization, suggested different perceptions; colors resulting in sensations of weight, balance and harmony.

During the early 1970s, the artist experimented with engravings for the first time. Produced as a set of silkscreen prints, she juxtaposed solid colors which resulted in rich textures and overlays. Informed by her silkscreen pieces, Ohtake's compositions of the mid 1960s gained subtly defined outlines.



Untitled, 1976. Oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



Untitled, 1979. Oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



Untitled, 1980. Oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



Untitled, 1984. Oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm

Ogival Paintings

Form, during the 1980s, dissolves into a spatial organicity that negate the figure - ground relation, a previous concern of the artist, especially in the square paintings of the mid 1970s. Paintings from this period are characterized by monochromatic hues with curved lines and rounded forms. These works, in which Ohtake harmonizes delicate color contrasts, are also characterized by the presence of triangular forms set either on a horizon line or on the lower part of the canvas, so as to suggest a subtle three dimensionality.



Untitled, 1987. Acrylic on canvas, 150 x 150 cm

Exhibited:

Tomie Ohtake na Visão de Miguel Chaia (solo exhibition), Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil (2004).

Cosmic Representations

The “cosmic phase” within Ohtake’s oeuvre is characterized through the recurring presence of full, segmented or concentric circles, spirals and ellipses. Constructed by superimposing layers of color dissolved in water and thick, multidirectional brushstrokes, they encircle the void: “Creating a space with depth and transparency, using color brushstrokes in the intervals between them to render visible second and third levels. When I say painted layers, I mean precisely those layers that are not flat, I mean overlapping brushstrokes that create a certain dimension for the painting’s background.” (Tomie Ohtake, interviewed by Miguel Chaia in 2004).



Untitled, 1989. Acrylic on canvas, 180 x 180 cm

Exhibited:

Tomie Ohtake na Visão de Miguel Chaia (solo exhibition), Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil (2004).



Selected Solo Exhibitions

2015

Tomie por Tizuka Yamasaki, MIS, São Paulo, Brazil

Tomie Ohtake 100-101, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

2014

Galeria Nara Roesler, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Tomie Ohtake – Litogravuras, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

2013

Gesto e razão geométrica, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

Pinturas cegas, Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Pintura e pureza, Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil

2012

Pinturas Cegas, Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre, Brazil

2011

Pinturas Cegas, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

2010

Pinturas novas. Um Passeio Pelo Círculo, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

Tomie Ohtake - Pinturas, Gravuras e Escultura, MAMAM, Recife/PE, Brazil

2009

Tomie Gráfica, Museu de Arte (MARP), Ribeirão Preto/SP, Brazil

2008

Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil

2007

Tomie Gráfica, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro/Salvador, Brazil

2006

Aproximações geométricas, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

2005

Tomie Ohtake na Trama Espiritual da Arte Brasileira, Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2004

Tomie Ohtake na visão de Miguel Chaia, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

2002

Novas Gravuras, Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil

Antes da obra pública, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

2001

Retrospectiva, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

2000

Retrospectiva, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Paço das Artes, São Paulo, Brazil

1997

Fundação Guayasamin, Quito, Ecuador

1995

Americas Society, New York, USA

1994

New Paintings, Concourse Gallery, Barbican Center, London, UK
Bass Museum of Art, Miami, USA

1993

Novas Pinturas, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro MAM-RJ, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

1991

Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud, São Paulo, Brazil

1989

Ópera: Um Baile de Máscaras, Teatro Municipal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

1988

Retrospective, Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan

1983

Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil
Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM), São Paulo, Brazil

1976

Brazilian American Cultural Institute, Washington DC, USA
Centro Cultural Ítalo-Brazileiro, Milan, Italy

1975

Galeria de Arte da Embaixada do Brasil, Rome, Italy

1969

Associação dos Amigos do Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil

1968

Pan American Union, Washington DC, USA

1965

Galeria de Arte Ipanema, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

1960

Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP, São Paulo, Brazil

1957

Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP, São Paulo, Brazil

Selected Group Exhibitions

2014

O artista e a bola, Cidade das Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2013

30 x Bienal, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
Vontade construtiva, Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Correspondências, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

2012

Modernismo no Brasil, Museu de Arte Contemporânea (MAC/USP), São Paulo, Brazil

2011

Modernismo no Brasil, Museu de Arte Contemporânea (MAC/USP), São Paulo, Brazil

2010

Museu de Arte Moderna Aloísio Magalhães (MAMAM), Recife, Brazil

2009

Olhar da Crítica: Arte Premiada da ABCA e o Acervo Artístico dos Palácios, Palácio dos Bandeirantes, São Paulo, Brazil

2008

Arte no Espaço e no Tempo, Museu Oscar Niemeyer (MON), Curitiba, Brazil
Panorama dos Panoramas, Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM), São Paulo, Brazil
Arte Brasil – Japão, Museu de Arte Contemporânea (MAC/USP), São Paulo, Brazil

2007

Mulheres Artistas, Museu de Arte Contemporânea (MAC/USP), São Paulo, Brazil

2006

Método Projeções da Década de 50, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil
Itaú Contemporâneo: Arte no Brasil 1981-2006, Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil

2005

A Poética da Forma exposição com Oscar Niemeyer e Franz Weissmann, Museu Oscar Niemeyer, Curitiba, Brazil
Coleção Nemirovsky, Estação Pinacoteca, São Paulo, Brazil

2004

Gesto e Expressão: O Abstracionismo Informal, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
Tomie Ohtake na Trama Espiritual da Arte Brasileira, Museu Oscar Niemeyer Curitiba, Brazil

2002

Antes da Obra Pública, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

2000

Mostra do Redescobrimento, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
O Bardi dos Artistas, Memorial da América Latina, São Paulo

1993

Coleção Gilberto Chateaubriand, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP; Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro MAM, Brazil
Panorama de Arte Atual Brasileira, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP, São Paulo, Brazil
Paixão do Olhar, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro MAM-RJ, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Athos Bulcão, Rubem Valentim, Tomie Ohtake, Centro Cultural 508, Brasília, Brazil
Bienal Brazil Século XX, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil

1989

Panorama de Arte Atual Brasileira, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP, São Paulo, Brazil

1988

Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan
Arte Brasileira Contemporânea, Museu Charlottenburg, Copenhagen, Denmark

1987 / 1988

Modernidade – Arte Brasileira no Século XX, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France

1984

Tradição e Ruptura, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil

1983

Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand MASP, Brazil
Panorama de Arte Atual Brasileira, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP, Brazil

1982

Women Artists of the Americas, Center for Inter American Relations, New York, USA

1981

Arte Transcendente, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP, Brazil
Arte Latino-Americana Contemporânea e o Japão, Museu Nacional de Osaka, Japan

1979

Women Artists, University of Maryland Art Gallery, Maryland, USA
Panorama de Arte Atual Brasileira, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP, Brazil

1978

As Bienais e a Abstração, Museu Lasar Segall, São Paulo, Brazil

1974

Acervo de Arte Brasileira do Museu de Ontário, Canadá; Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, MAM-SP, São Paulo; Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro MAM-RJ, Brazil

1973

Panorama de Arte Atual Brasileira, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP, Brazil

1965

Brazilian Art Today, Royal College Art, London, UK
Coletiva do Grupo Seibi, Pan American Union, Washington DC, USA
Nippo Brazilian Painting Today, Tokyo, Japan

1960

Contribuição da Mulher às Artes Plásticas no Brazil, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP, Brazil

1958

9 Pintores de San Pablo, Galeria Antígona, Buenos Aires, Argentina

1957

12 Pintores Abstratos, obra / conceito, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo MAM-SP, Brazil

Biennials

2003

23º Bienal Internacional de São Paulo (Special Room), São Paulo, Brazil

1998

XIV Bienal Internacional de São Paulo, Brazil

1996

XXIII Bienal Internacional de São Paulo, Brazil

V Bienal Internacional de Cuenca (Special Room), Cuenca, Ecuador

1989

XX Bienal Internacional de São Paulo, Brazil

1986

Bienal Latino-Americana de Arte Sobre Papel, CAYC, Buenos Aires, Argentina

II Bienal Latino-Americana (Special Room), Havana, Cuba

1984

I Bienal Latino-Americana (Special Room), Havana, Cuba

1981

III Bienal de Arte, La Paz, Bolivia

V Bienal de Arte de Medellín, Medellín, Colombia

1979

I Bienal Latino-Americana de Gravura, Buenos Aires, Argentina

1975

II Bienal do Uruguai, Montevideo, Uruguay

1974

Bienal Internacional de Gravuras, Modern Art Museum of Kyoto and Modern Art Museum of Tokyo, Japan

1972

XI Bienal de Veneza, exhibition Graffica d'Oggi, Venice, Italy

1970

II Bienal de Arte de Medellín, Medellín, Colombia

1964

II Bienal Americana de Arte, Córdoba, Argentina

1961 a 1967

VI a IX Bienal Internacional de São Paulo, Brazil

AGUILAR, Nelson. Salas especiais. 23rd São Paulo International Biennial catalogue. São Paulo, Fundação Bienal, 1996.

AMARAL, Aracy. "O espaço nas pinturas de Tomie," in *Pintura de Tomie Ohtake*. São Paulo: Galeria de Arte Global, 1974.

ARAÚJO, Olívio Tavares de. "Tomie e os abismos do mistério". *Novas Gravuras*. Catalogue. São Paulo, Monica Filgueiras Galeria de Arte, 1993.

_____. "Tomie Ohtake". *Revista Veja*. São Paulo, 02 Oct 1974.

BARDI, P. M. "Prefácio". *Tomie Ohtake*. São Paulo, Editora Ex Libris, 1983, translated.

BRINKER, Helmut. *O Zen na arte da pintura (Zen in the art of painting)*. São Paulo, Editora Pensamento, 1995, translated from the Portuguese.

CAMPOS, Haroldo de. "As esculturas dissipatórias de Tomie Ohtake". *Tomie Ohtake*. Catalogue. São Paulo, Galeria Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud, 1991.

CHAIÁ, Miguel. "Tomie Ohtake: à procura da essência da arte". *Revista Arte em São Paulo*. São Paulo, Ed. L. P. Baravelli, n. ° 7, May 1982.

CHAIÁ, Miguel. "A dimensão cósmica na arte de Tomie Ohtake". São Paulo: 2004.

_____. "Construção; cor e forma". Catalogue of the exhibition *Três Séries de Gravuras*. MAMAM, Recife. São Paulo, Galeria Nara Roesler, November 1999.

COCCHIARALLE, Fernando. Salas especiais. 23rd São Paulo International Biennial catalogue, Fundação Bienal, 1996.

COSTA, Marcus de Lontra. "Tomie Ohtake-a criação; do mundo". *Tomie Ohtake: new paintings*. Catalogue. Rio de Janeiro, Museu de Arte Moderna, 1993.

HERKENHOFF, Paulo. "Para Tomie Ohtake". *Gabinete de Arte*. São Paulo: Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud, 1985.

HERKENHOFF, Paulo. "Tomie Ohtake". Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Tomie Ohtake, 2000.

HERKENHOFF, Paulo. "Pinturas Cegas". Rio de Janeiro: Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro, 2013.

MENDONÇA, Casimiro Xavier de. *Tomie Ohtake*. São Paulo, Editora Ex Libris, 1983.

_____. *Tomie Ohtake*. Catalogue. São Paulo, Galeria Gabinete de Arte Raquel Arnaud, 1991.

Selected Bibliography

MORAIS, Frederico. “Tomie Ohtake : estrela no céu da arte brasileira”. Tomie Ohtake. Catalogue. Rio de Janeiro, Thomas Cohn Arte Contemporânea, 1987.

PEDROSA, Mário.”Entre a personalidade e o pintor”. Jornal do Brasil. Rio de Janeiro, 21 Feb 1961.

SPANUDIS, Theon. “Arte Transcendente”. Arte Transcendente. Catalogue. São Paulo, Museu de Arte Moderna, 1981.

SPINELLI, Joao 1. “Tomie Ohtake - O antigo e o novo na obra de Tomie Ohtake”. Master’s dissertation in Visual Arts, University of São Paulo’s School of Art and Communications (ECA-USP), 1985.

TELLES, Claudio. “Tomie Ohtake-mistérios de color y forma”, Revista El Urogallo. Madrid, Ed. Prensa de la Ciudad S. A., n. 110/111, Jul-Aug 1995, translated.

Selected Public Collections

Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan

MAC-USP, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

MAC-Niterói, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói, Niterói, Brazil

MASP, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil

MAM-SP, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

MAM-RJ, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Museu de Arte da Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection, Caracas, Venezuela

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Galeria Nara Roesler

Frieze Masters, Spotlight

Booth **G18**

13 - 18 October

Contact

Nara Roesler > nara@nararoesler.com.br

Daniel Roesler > daniel@nararoesler.com.br

Alexandre Roesler > alexandre@nararoesler.com.br

Alexandra Garcia Waldman > alex.garcia@nararoesler.com.br

Fabiola Ceni > fabiola@nararoesler.com.br

Dates and Times

Preview

13 October, Tuesday

11 am - 8.30 pm

14 - 18 October

Wednesday - Saturday, 11 am - 7 pm

Sunday, 11 am - 6 pm

Location

Regents Park, London, UK

