

nara roesler

**frieze
new york
2021**

cristina canale
carlito carvalhosa
amelia toledo

may 5–9
the shed, hudson yards
new york



On the occasion of Frieze New York 2021, Nara Roesler is proud to present a conversation between works by three Brazilian artists: Cristina Canale, Carlito Carvalhosa, and Amelia Toledo. The presentation examines each of the artists' practices in terms of their engagement with frontality and the self, a notion imbued with the historical weight of Leon Battista Alberti's statement that Narcissus conceived painting as he tried to embrace his own image reflected on the fleeting surface of the water. The myth contains complex theoretical implications ceaselessly discussed by critics and art historians: painting as mirror, painterly images as solidified liquid reflections, and ultimately the idea of a primordial painting being that of a frontal face which becomes a formless image. The selection presented hereby offers an opportunity to understand how widely different practices—as are that of Cristina Canale, Carlito Carvalhosa, and Amelia Toledo—have come to coincide in their attempts to capture and embody reflections of the self.

The core of the presentation rests on a formal and theoretical juxtaposition of Carlito Carvalhosa's

iconic works on mirror and Cristina Canale's engagement with portraiture. Canale's most recent pieces have focused on the representation of faceless figures that appear to exist in a state of impending dissolution into abstraction, while certain elements hint at personal stories and social depictions. The few constitutional figurative components included in the composition invite the viewer to fill the gaps by establishing a sense of intimacy that allows the audience to construct personal narratives around the depicted characters. The lack of exactitude combined with the frontality of the figures awards the spectator freedom to either project or absorb, perhaps in a similar way as the water reflection of Narcissus' figure. On the other hand, Carvalhosa's work on mirrors addresses the phenomenological and theoretical implications of the medium of painting, such as the idea that painted images have been considered artificial means of mirroring reality. Paradoxically, his use of mirrors as a support for painting annihilates the possibility of setting reality within the image, while forcing an inescapable frontal and reflexive encounter with each passing figure and itself. Finally, Amelia Toledo's works offer

reverberations of these notions—Toledo's *Singing Dragons*, rock fragments that have been molded by the movement of the tides, emit sounds when the viewer hits them with small wooden hammers. The sculptures thus vocalize the nature of the interaction, the sound varying according to the way in which each individual touches it, perhaps reflecting what the interacting viewer externalizes. In emanating noise, the *Singing Dragons* also take on a sense of individuality, as their intrinsic form shapes the type of sound it may utter.

Ultimately, by articulating Canale, Carvalhosa, and Toledo's works, stressing the similarity of their forms and marks, while also emphasizing their diverging, yet coinciding engagement with the self, the presentation emphasizes these works as a projection of a self, an ephemeral reflection, or merely as offering its viewers the liberty to construct a narrative around the self.



Canale's recent production has intertwined both the fluidity of her early work and the minimalism or lucidity of her later pieces. Her compositions are characterized by figurative elements always on the verge of an impending dissolution into abstraction. In curator Clarissa Diniz' words, 'in her paintings, it is mainly through color that these intensities are configured and negotiate space, density, and movement among themselves. In the artist's production, from the outset it has been color that has "dimensional power", founding pictorial arrangements that organize levels in the space, even though they do not behave in accordance with the planar preciseness of the Euclidean tradition.' With a unique use of color, her landscapes seem to portray a fluid, almost liquid-like world, which has distinguished her work since the beginning of her career, while her portraits display uncircumscribed figures, uprooting the traditional settings of a defined subject and a subsidiary background. Ultimately, her iconography is featureless and somewhat non-hierarchical, and yet, the few recognizable elements that emerge in her compositions, between fields of color, anchor the work into our reality.



Cristina Canale
Empatia, 2020
oil paint on canvas
110 x 90 cm | 43.3 x 35.4 in





Carlito Carvalhosa's engagement with the practice of painting began as he joined the Casa 7 Group, along with artists Rodrigo Andrade, Fabio Miguez, Nuno Ramos, and Paulo Monteiro. The group was known for painting large sheets of kraft paper using synthetic enamel paint, allowing for a more flexible and investigative relationship with painting. In the 1990s, following the disintegration of the group, Carvalhosa began to experiment with caustic and pigmented wax. Carvalhosa ascribes deep eloquence to the materiality of the media that he uses, always transcending their formal aspects to explore matters of time and space. In his practice, one encounters tension between form and materiality through a disjunction of the visible and the tactile—what we see is not what we touch, and what we touch is not what we see. Since the beginning of the 2000s, the artist has created a series of paintings produced on mirrored surfaces, notably inverting the notion of the canvas as a place where things are projected, with the mirror doing the exact opposite through its reflection. With this, Carvalhosa 'puts our presence inside the paintings', in the words of curator Paulo Venancio Filho, producing a sense of disquiet that challenges the phenomenological and theoretical implications of the medium of painting, such as the idea that painted images have been considered artificial means of mirroring reality.

Carlito Carvalhosa
Untitled (P92/11), 2011
resin on mirror
70 x 50 cm | 27.6 x 19.7 in



The sculptural language is a major component of Amelia Toledo's oeuvre. This production began in the late 1950s, when she undertook an investigation based on the transition from the two-dimensional to the three-dimensional, drawing inspiration from the works of Max Bill and Jorge Oteiza, which had been exhibited in the early editions of the Bienal de São Paulo. Over time, the artist's sculptural production expanded and notably began to experiment with the plurality of rocks, eventually becoming another quintessential aspect of Toledo's poetics, which investigated the colors, brightness, transparency, and shape of the Earth's 'flesh'. In particular, *Singing Dragons* (2007) are rock fragments that have been molded by the movement of the changing tides, creating unique shapes that in turn emit unique sounds when the viewer hits their surface with a small piece of wood.

Amelia Toledo
Singing Dragon, 2007
perforated sound stone
on concrete column
148,8 x 56 x 31 cm
58.6 x 22 x 12.2 in







Cristina Canale
Paisagem, 2020
oil paint on canvas
200 x 175 cm | 78.7 x 68.9 in



Carlito Carvalhosa
Untitled (P61/19), 2019
oil on mirrored aluminum
188 x 122 cm | 74 x 48 in



Carlito Carvalhosa
Untitled (P27/20), 2020
oil on mirrored aluminum
188 x 122 cm | 74 x 48 in







Amelia Toledo
Singing Dragon, 2007
perforated sound stone on concrete column
121 x 67 x 27 cm | 47.6 x 26.4 x 10.6 in



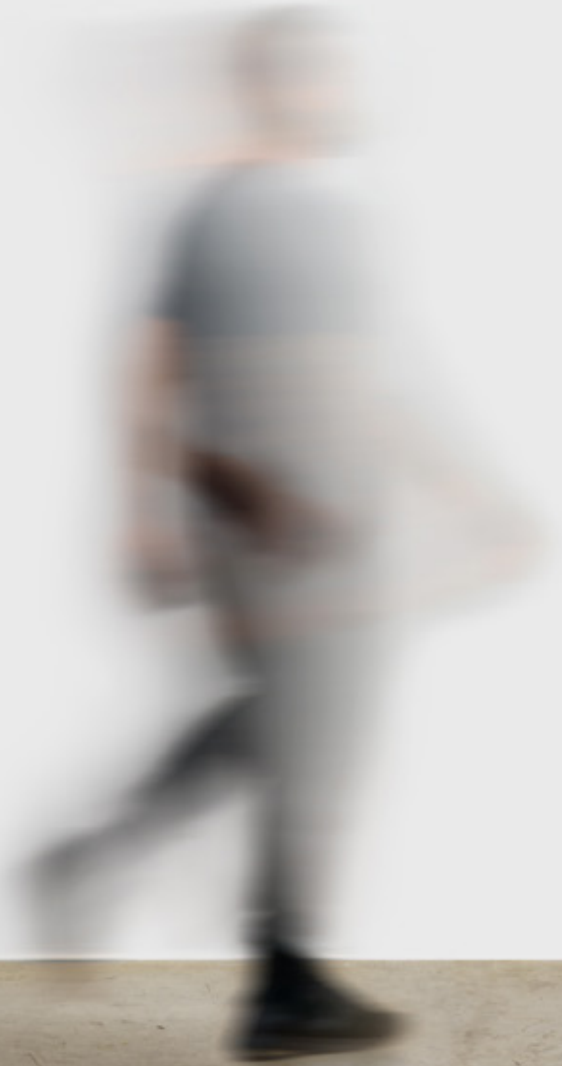




Cristina Canale
mulher pássaro, 2020
acrylic, oil and fabric on canvas
70 x 50 cm | 27.6 x 19.7 in



Carlito Carvalhosa
Untitled, 2011
oil, aluminum and glass
167 x 122 cm | 65.7 x 48 in





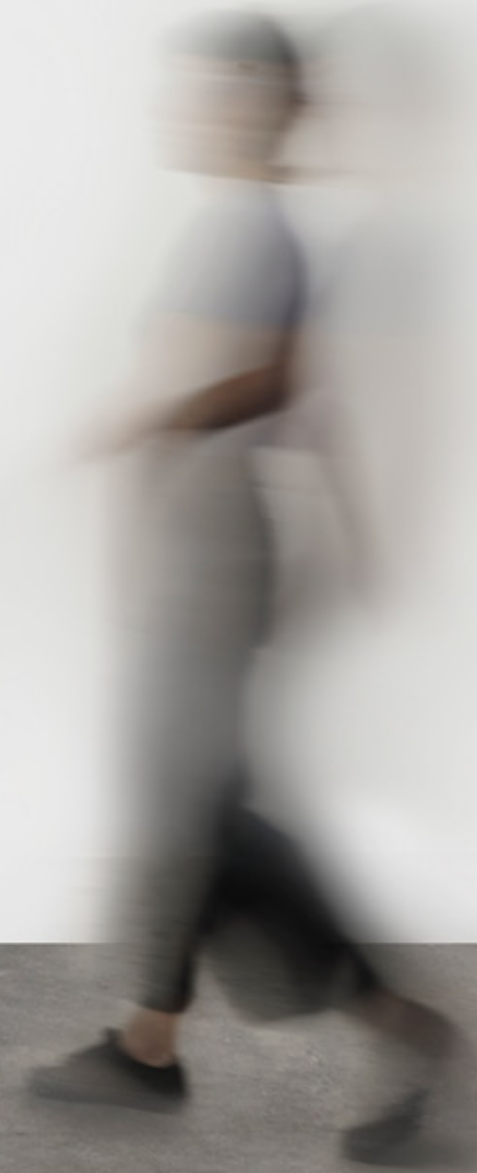


‘I usually work simultaneously with a group of about ten paintings, all dealing with the same or similar subject matter. The whole process takes about a year, with each canvas pointing to the next. I confess, I am kind of slow in my decision-making. Everything can inspire me... They are all doors that open up when I walk into a certain “corridor,” like a flow of thoughts and images.’

—**Cristina Canale**

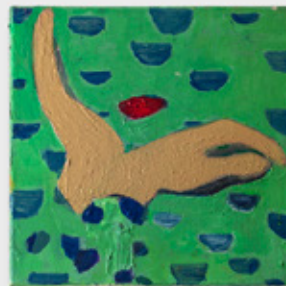


Cristina Canale
Victorine, 2020
oil paint on canvas
110 x 100 cm | 43.3 x 39.4 in





Cristina Canale
Muxoxo, 2020
oil paint on canvas
30 x 30 cm | 11.8 x 11.8 in



Cristina Canale
Sorrisinho, 2019
oil paint on canvas
30 x 30 cm | 11.8 x 11.8 in



Cristina Canale
Hut, 2019
acrylic, oil and fabric on canvas
50 x 40 cm | 19.7 x 15.7 in



‘A painting organizes the relationship between the elements that make it up, but the mirror does not allow them to fixate on a defined plane. To paint on a surface is a powerful form of bringing physical reality into a painting. The mirror does not allow for this: it does not allow for reality to establish itself. The best reaction was one that a friend gave when he looked at the mirror closely and said, “I like this work a lot, it is so me.”’

—**Carlito Carvalhosa**





Carlito Carvalhosa
Untitled (P03), 2013
acrylic, mirror and glass
160 x 90 cm | 63 x 35.4 in



Carlito Carvalhosa
Untitled, 2008
oil, mirror and glass
100 x 70 cm | 39.4 x 27.6 in





‘Working with large blocks of stone involves and surprises me. I learned that stones benefit the environment. I live with them in my daily life and share this experience through creation. From the gem to the boulder, I do only the minimum to highlight the stone’s qualities and guide the work towards adapting it to space.’

—**Amelia Toledo**

Amelia Toledo
Singing Dragon, 2007
perforated sound stone on concrete column
140 x 30 x 36 cm | 55.1 x 11.8 x 14.2 in







Cristina Canale
Listras e lágrimas, 2020
oil paint and fabric on canvas
110 x 100 cm | 43.3 x 39.4 in





Cristina Canale
Blondie, 2020
oil paint and fabric on canvas
100 x 90 cm | 39.4 x 35.4 in







Carlito Carvalhosa
Untitled, 2011
oil, mirror, and glass
70 x 50 cm | 27.6 x 19.7 in





Carlito Carvalhosa
Untitled (P02/17), 2017
oil paint on aluminum
30 x 20 cm | 11.8 x 7.9 in



Amelia Toledo
Singing Dragon, 2007
perforated sound stone on concrete column
138 x 44 x 40 cm | 54.3 x 17.3 x 15.7 in



cristina canale

b. 1961, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Cristina Canale rose to prominence following her participation in the iconic group exhibition *Como vai você, Geração 80?*, at Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque Lage (EAV Parque Lage) in Rio de Janeiro in 1984. Like many of her colleagues from the so-called 'Generation 80', her early works reveal the influence of the international context as painting resurfaced, especially impacted by German Neo-expressionism. Loaded with visual elements and thick layers of paint, her early paintings have material and textural characteristics that are reinforced by her use of contrasting and vivid colors.

In the early 1990s, Canale moved to Germany to study in Düsseldorf under the guidance of the Dutch conceptual artist Jan Dibbets. Her compositions soon acquired a sense of spatiality, as she began to incorporate the use of planes and depth, while also adding greater fluidity to her use of colors

Cristina Canale's work is often based on prosaic everyday scenes, sometimes extracted from advertising photography. Her paintings result in elaborate compositions that blur the boundaries between figurative and abstract. According to the curator Tiago Mesquita, Canale's production opposes the quest for constituting structures of the image, which artists such as Gerhard Richter and Robert Ryman engage with, tackling instead 'images and the established genres of painting in a subjective manner, whilst believing in a singular experience.'

[learn more about the artist](#)

selected solo exhibitions

- *Cabeças/Falantes*, Galeria Nara Roesler | São Paulo, Brazil (2018)
- *Cristina Canale: Zwischen den Welten*, Kunstforum Markert Gruppe, Hamburg, Germany (2015)
- *Entremundos*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2014)
- *Espelho e Memória – Spiegel und Erinnerung*, Galerie Atelier III, Barmstedt, Germany (2014)
- *Arredores e rastros*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2010)

selected group exhibitions

- *Cristina Canale*, Vojtěch Kovařík, Brice Guilbert and Paulo Nazareth, Mendes Wood DM, Villa Era, Italy (2020)
- *Xenia: Crossroads in Portrait Painting*, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, United States (2020)
- 8th Beijing Biennale, Beijing, China (2019)
- *Ateliê de Gravura: da tradição à experimentação*, Fundação Iberê Camargo (FIC), Porto Alegre, Brazil (2019)
- *Mulheres na Coleção MAR*, Museu de Arte do Rio (MAR), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2018)
- *Alucinações à beira mar*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2017)
- *Land der Zukunft*, Lichthof–Auswärtiges Amt, Berlin, Germany (2013)

selected collections

- Coleção Gilberto Chateaubriand, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Coleção João Sattamini, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói (MAC-Niterói), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP), São Paulo, Brazil
- Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Sparkasse Oder-Spree, Frankfurt an der Oder, Germany
- Museum No Hero, Delden, The Netherlands

exhibition view
Cristina Canale
Cabeças/Falantes
Nara Roesler São Paulo
Brazil, 2019



carlito carvalhosa

b. São Paulo, Brasil, 1957

lives and works in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Carlito Carvalhosa's oeuvre is predominantly made up of painting and sculpture. In the 1980s, Carvalhosa was a part of the São Paulo-based collective Grupo Casa 7, alongside artists Rodrigo Andrade, Fabio Miguez, Nuno Ramos, and Paulo Monteiro. Along with his colleagues, he produced large-scale paintings with an emphasis on pictorial gesture, an approach that was characteristic of the Neo-Expressionist production. In the late 1980s, following the group's disintegration, Carvalhosa began to experiment with encaustics and wax, either pure, or mixed with pigments. In the mid-1990s, he turned to sculptures, making organic and seemingly malleable pieces using a variety of materials, which gave rise to his so-called 'lost waxes'. During this period, he also experimented with porcelain sculptures.

Carvalhosa ascribes deep eloquence to the materiality of the media that he uses, always transcending their formal aspects to explore matters of time and space. In his practice, one encounters tension between form and materiality through a disjunction of the visible and the tactile—what we see is not what we touch, and what we touch is not what we see. Since the beginning of the 2000s, he has created paintings on mirrored surfaces which, in the words of curator Paulo Venancio Filho 'put our presence inside them'. Beyond Carvalhosa's recurrent techniques and materials, the artist has also frequently experimented with objects such as tissues and lamps, mainly in his creation of installations.

[learn more about the artist](#)

selected solo exhibitions

- *I Want to Be Like You*, Galeria Nara Roesler, New York, USA (2019)
- *Sala de espera*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP), São Paulo, Brazil (2013)
- *Sum of Days*, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA (2011)
- *Roteiro para visitaçã*o, Palácio da Aclamação, Salvador, Brazil (2010)
- *Apagador*, Solar do Unhão, Salvador, Brazil (2008)
- *Já estava assim quando eu cheguei*, Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2006)
- *Duas águas*, Museu Brasileiro da Escultura e Ecologia (MuBE), São Paulo, Brazil; Paco Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1999)

selected group exhibitions

- *Passado/futuro/presente: arte contemporânea brasileira no acervo do MAM*, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), São Paulo, Brazil (2019)
- *Troposphere – Chinese and Brazilian Contemporary Art*, Beijing Minsheng Art Museum, Beijing, China (2017)
- *Rio (River)*, Performance, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA (2014)
- 30th and 18th Bienal, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2013 and 1985)
- *Côte à Côte*, CAPC, Bourdeaux, France (2001)
- 3rd Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2001)

selected collections

- Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation (CIFO), Miami, USA
- Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

exhibition view
Carlito Carvalhosa
I Want to Be Like You
Nara Roesler New York
USA, 2019



amelia toledo

b. são paulo, brazil, 1926

d. cotia, brazil, 2017

Amelia Toledo began studying visual arts at the end of the 1930s, as she began to frequent Anita Malfatti's studio. During the following decade, she continued her studies with Yoshiya Takaoka and Waldemar da Costa. In 1948, she started working as a project designer for the architecture studio Vilanova Artigas. Her contact with iconic figures of Brazilian Modern Art encouraged her to develop a multifaceted oeuvre, which entwines diverse artistic languages such as sculpture, painting and print making. According to curator Marcus Lontra, 'the wealth of Amelia's work comes close to that of silence: to understand her production, it is first necessary to understand that the half empty part of a glass is as important as its full counterpart. We are only able to communicate because of the existence of emptiness, silence, the breath between two words, between two sentences. Amélia Toledo invests in and investigates that space, that moment, that passage.'

Starting in the 1970s, the artist's production abandoned its constructive grammar—characterized by geometric elements and curves—, turning instead to organic shapes. Toledo began to collect various materials, such as shells and stones, which served as sources of inspiration, and on which she also performed punctual interventions. Quickly, the landscape took on a fundamental role in her practice as she began to incorporate it in her works; notably, her steel sculptures play with the environment creating optical illusions through reflection. In parallel, Toledo's paintings took on monochromatic characteristics, revealing her interest for investigating color and its behavior.

[learn more about the artist](#)

selected solo exhibitions

- *Amelia Toledo – Lembrei que esqueci*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil (CCBB-SP), São Paulo, Brazil (2017)
- *Amelia Toledo*, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2009)
- *Novo olhar*, Museu Oscar Niemeyer, Curitiba, Brazil (2007)
- *Entre, a obra está aberta*, Museu de Arte de Santa Catarina (MASC), Florianópolis, Brazil (2006)
- *Viagem ao coração da matéria*, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil (2004)

selected group exhibitions

- *Modos de ver o Brasil: Itaú Cultural 30 anos*, Oca, São Paulo, Brazil (2017)
- 10th Bienal do Mercosul, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2015)
- *30x Bienal: Transformações na arte brasileira da 1^a à 30^a edição*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2013)
- *Um ponto de ironia*, Fundação Vera Chaves Barcellos, Viamão, Brazil (2011)
- *Brasiliana MASP: Moderna contemporânea*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil (2006)

selected collections

- Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal
- Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), São Paulo, Brazil
- Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- Instituto Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil



exhibition view
Amelia Toledo
Amelia Toledo: 1958–2007
Nara Roesler New York
USA, 2021

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