





exhibition view - galeria nara roesler | rio de janeiro, 2017











from left to right

**box 337 d**, 2017  
oil on wood  
38 x 23 x 7 cm

**box 339 d**, 2017  
oil on wood  
38 x 23 x 7 cm

**box 338 d**, 2017  
oil on wood  
38 x 23 x 7 cm

cover image

**box 336 d**, 2017  
oil on wood  
38 x 23 x 7 cm

**box 340 d**, 2017  
oil on wood  
38 x 23 x 7 cm



**terceiro fundo**, 2016  
oil on wood  
53 x 29 x 17 cm





from left to right

**vermelho dante**, 2016  
oil on canvas  
30 x 20 cm

**amarelo drama**, 2016  
oil on canvas  
30 x 20 cm

**cinza e prata**, 2016  
oil on canvas  
30 x 20 cm



from left to right

**escuro e luminoso**, 2017  
oil on canvas  
30 x 20 cm

**fió terra b**, 2016  
oil on canvas  
30 x 20 cm

**magentinha**, 2016  
oil on canvas  
30 x 20 cm



from left to right

**roxo sobre vermelho, 2014**

oil on canvas  
30 x 20 cm

**vermelho da china, 2017**

oil on canvas  
30 x 20 cm

**azul, 2015**

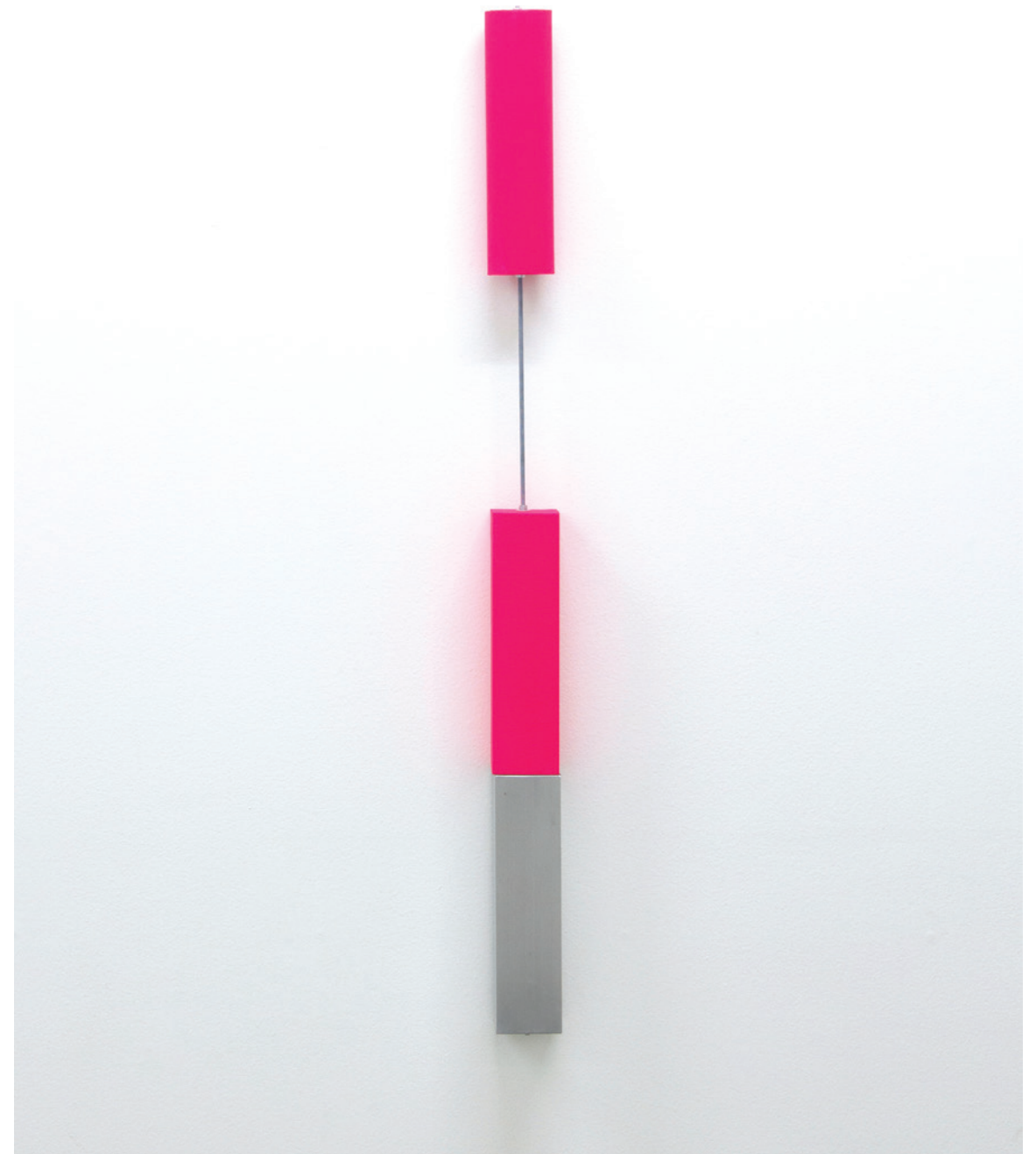
oil on canvas  
30 x 20 cm



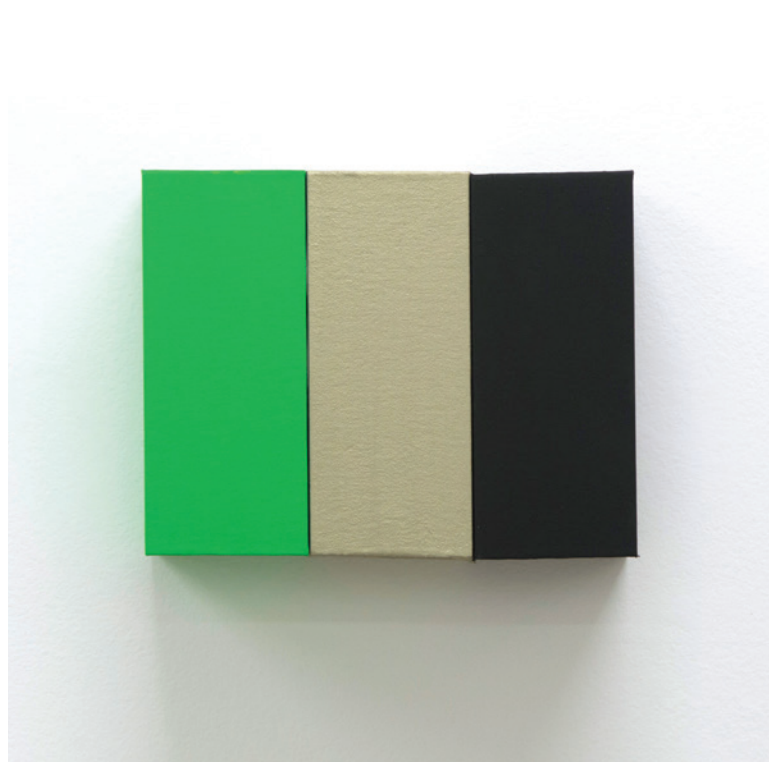
**pontalete # 25**, 2016  
oil on canvas glued on aluminum and wood  
and aluminum tube  
160 x 200 cm



**tijolo**, 2017  
oil on canvas, aluminum and steel cable  
100 x 6,8 x 6,8 cm



**tijolo**, 2017  
oil on canvas, aluminum and steel cable  
100 x 6,8 x 6,8 cm



**tijolino**, 2013  
oil on canvas on wood  
18,4 x 23,5 x 8 cm

## Pintura com ar, sombra e espaço

For this exhibition, Sérgio Sister pulls together parts of his output that had been shown separately a few years ago.

Barring works on paper, which are absent here, this show features both his two-dimensional canvas paintings and what we may call three-dimensional paintings, subjected to relationships with space, shadows, and air.

But color always comes first, because he is an artist of the color field. In his 2D paintings, he shapes up abstract spaces by combining layers of paint and brushstrokes on a plane. Combinations of closely related colors become heterogeneous and varied. Thus, a monochromatic plane – many are featured in this exhibition – can display numerous variations. He is not interested in the immediate perception of the differences between things. The contrast happens between similar elements. It shows in a meditative way. It makes us see what was once monotonous as variegated. This is achieved in a subtle way. Sister paints delicate passages of hue and light.

He hardly ever uses violent contrasts or pure colors straight out of the tube. The colors seem to transform and take on luminous differentiations. He relies on wax to impart a heterogeneous visage to a sparse palette. Mixed with paint, the wax evidences the brush marks, making the material in the painting more solid and opaque. The color often comes mixed with metallic pigments as well. These lend a mildly flickering appearance to the plane, emphasizing the multiple directions that the brush moved in. Even ordinary colors, run-of-the-mill oranges, vibrant yellows take on the complexity of colors that have no name.

It had been long since 2D paintings had had as prominent a role in a Sérgio Sister show as in this “Ordem desunida.” It’s worth pointing out that much of his effort went to creating 3D pieces and reliefs that carry the questions of his painting into a common space. That gave way to series such as *Ripas*, *Pontaletes*, *Caixas*, and *Tijolos* (*Slats*, *Rods*, *Boxes*, and *Bricks*). Very different from one another, these object-looking artworks are very present in the show; the new thing this time around seems to be the fact that they’re sharing space with the canvases. One can see similar color relationships, and most of all a less head-on interaction with the object. What happens on the sides of the paintings as is important as in the 3D work.

However, what jumps to attention the most is the use of intervals in these paintings. This was learned by making sculptures and objects. For the slats and boxes, the joints between pieces of wood are interrupted by a fissure, a fracture, an interval. Something seems to happen between one piece of color and the other that makes the relationship between those elements more indeterminate.

In this exhibit, the artist brings three new groups of paintings. These are series of artworks in which a few procedures repeat themselves. There are smaller, near-monochrome pictures and one large diptych with two dominant colors. Even though they differ greatly from one another, this idea of interval, which originates from 3D work, is featured prominently in all of them.

Never is the surface completely taken by the main element in the painting. In the smaller, near-monochrome paintings the dominant layer does not cover the full length of the surface. We see other layers, other forms of painting at work underneath the foremost plane. The number of elements grows and an arrangement that might be attributed to the picture takes on increased complexity.

That relationship is more evident in the diptych. It’s made of two large canvases covered almost entirely in one color. In one of them, for instance, a predominantly blue canvas is placed three centimeters away from an almost completely orange one. The color field for each of them is built through gestural, repetitive, rhythmic brushstrokes. The brush marks in each canvas are very different. The colors are very different. Some are elaborate, made from unique combinations of pigments, while others are vulgar, featuring colors which, modified as they may be, are akin to the palette of industry and of a more kitsch-oriented output.

Underneath the paint that dominates the surface there appears the color that’s on the neighboring painting. As if one color had moved sideways. One color might have expanded while the other contracted, or the other way around, or else both might have contracted, losing their vigor. In truth, it doesn’t really matter. What’s important here is the dynamics of painting for Sister, whose attention to detail goes back as early as his eighties and nineties monochromes, for instance, takes on new, added variables. Thus, we see colors along the sides that aren’t either of the dominant ones in the monochromes on the left or on the right. The boundaries of colors, of what appears in covered-up form, are as important as the way color behaves on the surface.

In the diptych or in the small paintings, the artwork seems to articulate events that have been interrupted, split, articulated in a complex way. The painting forms a unit of disarticulated phenomena, much like in Degas and Seurat. Thus, the lilac blot that appears only on the side of the canvas seems as important as the red that covers the length of the surface. Everything seems to bear weight in these paintings.

In a brilliant way, Sérgio Sister suggests a less hostile relationship with the gaze. Nothing is identifiable at first look. Relationships prove more complicated. The artist seeks a way for delicate materials to coexist in a civil way despite irreconcilable differences. He achieves that without pacifying or homogenizing them. Amid the sense of harshness and scant rationality that grips society in Brazil and the world, maybe this is all that’s needed.

## Tiago Mesquista

#### about **Sérgio Sister**

Sérgio Sister (b. 1948, São Paulo, Brazil) lives and works in São Paulo, Brazil. Sérgio Sister is best known for the found wooden beams he arranges into sculptural paintings that resemble crates, porticos, or window frames. Sister paints the beams various colors, dresses them in canvas, and assembles them into configurations that allow for various depths, shadows, and experiences of color to emerge. "My objective was to allow space and air to operate with, and in, the relationship between the colors," he says. Sister's practice pulls color field painting into three-dimensions and re-contextualizes classical ideas about the canvas as a window. Today, his work combines painting and sculpture while using supports derived from found structures and from systems designed to serve our everyday needs. The *Caixas* (crates or boxes), *Ripas* (strips) and *Pontaletes* (posts) appropriate the names of the manufactured products from which they are derived. Sister's work relates to the US tradition of minimalism and to the Neo-Concrete movement of the 1960's in Brazil. As a part of Geração 80, Sister revisits an ancient theme in painting: the interplay between surface and three-dimensionality, in an attempt to liberate painting in space. What marks his production is a superimposition of chromatic layers, causing distinct fields of colors to coexist harmoniously side by side while preserving its autonomy.



