

Extra Spacial

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Press Release



Lucas Samaras
Cube with Mirror Slashes, 1994
Nevamar on wood
91,5 x 30,5 x 30,5 cm
Courtesy of the artis and Xippas
Gallery.

Xippas Punta del Este

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Opening december 30th, 6 pm

EXTRA ESPACIAL

TAKIS, LUCAS SAMARAS, WALTERCIO CALDAS, SAINT CLAIR CEMIN, LEANDRO ERLICH, PABLO ATCHUGARRY, PABLO REINOSO

The group exhibition of seven important sculptors of contemporary art serves as an excuse to inaugurate a new gallery at Xippas.

A new space emerges at Xippas Punta del Este. The gallery proposes a new architecture and presents an innovative space. In this way, it expands and continues to strengthen exhibition projects.

The intrinsic spatial sense shared by both the architectures and the sculptural works in this exhibition also allows for the exploration of conceptual questions related to space—such as the idea of space itself, the generation of space, or spatial dimensions and relationships. All of this takes us to the complex territory of science and the physical realm: space and emptiness? The perceptible and the imperceptible, the material and the energetic, the constructive principles. To communication. To the eternal and the ephemeral. To creation itself.

“Science, boys, is made of errors, but errors that are right to make, since they lead step by step to the truth.”

—Jules Verne, *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1864).

“If art has any relation with science or vice versa’, says Takis, ‘it is that they both study either optic phenomena or organic ones. The scientist, in my opinion, must be considered a creator. What preoccupies the contemporary artist is no longer the human body, except for preliminary study, but what becomes of humanity’ after these discoveries. For him, human space has been changed by science, and this change has as its consequence a radical change in artistic optics. Telemagnetic sculpture, in which elements are kept in suspension in the air by the force of attraction exerted on them by magnets or electromagnets, coincides perfectly with this change in space’. This artist is then wholly committed to space age Romanticism, obsessed with the magic of the other world, hooked on an electric Utopia. For those who care for escapism, and that means most people, I suggest that they sidestep their own problems in this world and renew their sense of the marvelous by visiting this show and experiencing the presence of pure Energy”.

From *The Arts Review*, November 28th, 1964

Artistas (en orden alfabético)

Pablo Atchugarry (born in 1954 Montevideo, Uruguay). His artistic language, inspired by archetypes of classical, Renaissance and baroque statuary, develops and extends into contemporary abstract forms with an harmonious aesthetic and upward compositions.

*“The verticality of his sculptures, that stretch up to the sky, also creates a link between two worlds: the earthly floor in which they are firmly anchored and the impalpable air in which they appear to float. Contemplating them, our gaze is automatically drawn upwards and loses itself beyond the matter. Pablo Atchugarry’s creations are shrouded in mystery and do not give everything away at first glance, requiring us to take the time to observe the sculptures revealing themselves to us as we walk around them, and as the light strikes them”. **

*“At a time when plastic and synthetic resins were gaining currency thanks to their ease of use, Atchugarry chose to work with noble materials that stood the test of time. Whilst he has used wood, cement or metal according to the desired finish, he has primarily favoured marble, even more than bronze. In the case of stone, it is not only the artist’s hand, but his whole body that acts directly, engaged in a kind of titanic combat against the inert block before him. This unforgiving work requires great precision and lots of care”. **

* Extract of the text of Philippe Clerc, *Lien entre deux mondes*, catalog published on the occasion of the exhibition.

Pablo Atchugarry has been exhibiting his works since the age of 11. He currently works in Manantiales, Uruguay, his country of origin, and Lecco, Italy, his country of heart, where his studio is located. He did his first solo exhibition in 1972 at the City Hall of Montevideo, and in 1978 his first solo show in Lecco, Italy. His work has been exhibited internationally; at Palazzo Ducale, Genoa (2018), The Brazilian Sculpture Museum, São Paulo (2014), the Groening Museum, Bruges (2006), and also at the prestigious 50th Venice Biennale (2003).

In 2007 he opened the Fundación Pablo Atchugarry in Uruguay. This institution aims to promote all forms of arts, and offers artists a place of meeting and creation.

Waltercio Caldas (born in Río de Janeiro 1946, where he still live and work). He started his artistic practice in the 1960s, a period marked by the Neo-Concrete movement. Neoconcrete artists rejected the pure rationalist approach of concrete art and embraced a more phenomenological and less scientific art.

Caldas pushes the paradox between presence and absence, and between transparency and opacity, to its extreme. This paradox is reinforced through a play on mirrors, a recurrent technique in his work. Here again, the artist develops the idea of reflection without actually employing mirrors. In creating several planes where lines and objects replace the reflections of one another, the artist reveals a three-dimension mirror and materialises the idea of reflection, a process he considers as a “functional dismantling of

the mirror". Thus Caldas goes beyond the duality between presence and absence, positive and negative, and manages to reach a paradoxical fusion between a tangible reality and thought.

Saint Clair Cemin (born in 1951 Alta Cruz, Brasil, lives in New York). He has always seen art as a natural field of experimentation. For his sculptures, he uses different styles, techniques, and materials and draws inspiration from philosophy, literature, poetry, science, and the history of art. His works, which go beyond abstraction and figuration, in a universe of metamorphosis, evoke both plant and sexual forms as well as molecular structures.

Leandro Erlich (born in 1973 Buenos Aires, Argentina, live and work in Buenos Aires and Montevideo). In his work, Leandro Erlich borrows situations of everyday life by extruding objects such as the elevator, the door or even an entire building from their original context. Through the use of trompe l'oeil, mirrors and double bottoms, he reverses the vision of the world by playing with reality : he transforms the banal into an unusual space. Fascinated by the infinite, the observed subject is always reversed, building a timeless imaginary dimension that takes us into places with unstable borders. The artist's installations question our relationship to what we see and what we believe in. Rarely a simple viewer, the visitor is encouraged to become an actor in the work. His fascination for distorted dimensions allows the public to immerse in a unique and collective experience.

Leandro Erlich participated at the Whitney Biennale in 2000 and represented Argentina at the 49th Venice Biennale (2001) with his installation Swimming Pool, which earned him international recognition. Today, this work is part of the permanent collection of the Kanazawa Museum in Japan (along with Infinite Staircase) and of the Voorlinden Museum in Netherlands.

His monumental piece Bâtiment, first created for the Parisian Nuit Blanche in 2004, is currently presented at 104 in Paris for the Foire Foraine d'Art Contemporain, has toured the world from France to Japan, passing through Australia, Argentina and Ukraine.

He received the UNESCO Award (Istanbul, 2001), El Premio Leonardo (Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, 2000), el Fondo Nacional de las Artes (Buenos Aires, 1992). In 2006, he was nominated for the Marcel Duchamp Prize. In 2017, he received The Roy Neuberger Award.

Pablo Reinoso (born in 1955 Buenos Aires, Argentina, lives and works in Paris). Known for his multidisciplinary practice that transforms functional objects from the world of architecture and design into entities in their own right. Following four principles that he borrows from wild nature – reproduction, exuberance, branching and expansion – he "greens" inanimate elements. Once transformed, they blur the boundaries between figuration and abstraction, but also between inside and outside, and call our relationship to space and landscapes into question.

In his famous series Bancs Spaghetti, he reinvents the every day object with humour and frivolity. His work hides both an ethical aspect – the respect of nature and of its materials – as well as a critical one against meaningless processes of a certain type of contemporary design. His installations and sculptures reveal a deep knowledge of the environment linked to our perception of the world, the landscape and space. As part of a process of deployment and development, his work finds its way within monumentality and at the same time, it keeps a human scale. His sculptures are present in public space and were objects of numerous public commissions for site specific installations, such as in Palais de l'Elysée, on Quai Gillet in the City of Lyon, in Busan, South Korea, at Polygone Riviera, Cagnes-sur-mer, France, among many others.

Lucas Samarras (born in 1936 Kastoria, Greece. Died on October 2023 in New York, USA). Photographs, sculptures and objects are central to Samaras work. In Photo-transformations, the artist constantly reinvents himself by using the polaroid technique in order to stage and reconstitute a great variety of imagined or fantasized identities. His

apartment has thus been transformed into a stage where he explores narcissistically his body and embraces many different roles. The polaroid camera has enabled him to treat chemicals like paint and consequently to manipulate the image before it was fixed. His creative use of the new photographic medium anticipated Photoshop by some 15 years.

His sculptures enjoy a dual status as both objects of use and praxis and as vessels of spirit and meaning. In his sculptures, diverse materials, objects and contexts overlap. This technique results in the creation of various layers that, when juxtaposed, acquire a larger meaning which contributes to the creation of a new identity of the object.

Takis (born in Athens, Greece, 1925, where he died in 2019). A major figure in the post-war European artistic scene, Takis explored invisible forces and the omnipresence of energy in all things. The energy of magnetic fields is one of the foundations of his work, from the very beginning of his artistic experiments. From the end of the 1950s, Takis invented tele-magnetic sculptures, where everyday metallic objects defy gravity with the help of magnets, and float in space. An “intuitive savant”, Takis uses physical laws and technology in order to escape weightiness and “introduce a new, continuous, living force to sculpture”. Whilst Takis is considered to be one of the rare innovators in sculpture today, alongside Calder, Brancusi and Giacometti, the liberation of the forces of nature prevails over esthetic form in his work.

Takis' pieces, made up of industrial or mechanical parts, are situated at the crossroads between art, technology and science. His sculptures are visible in a number of public spaces in Paris and abroad. A monumental basin of Light Signals is visible on the esplanade of La Défense, next to Paris; the Aeolian Signals are outside the Unesco headquarters in Paris, an Aeolian Signal is installed in front of Athens' National Pinacothèque, along with three 7-metre tall Aeolian Signals which are opposite the Benaki Contemporary Art Museum in Athens; his “Solar Energy” Signals are also visible in front of the headquarters of the European Commission in Brussels.