

ARTFORUM

By Simone Menegoi December 2013

Fernanda Gomes

CENTRE INTERNATIONAL D'ART ET DU PAYSAGE



Fernanda Gomes, untitled, 2013, silk and nylon

There is a thread linking Brazilian Neo-concretism, which began in 1959, and the work of Fernanda Gomes, a Brazilian artist born one year later. Like the artists of that key movement, she marries abstraction with subjective expression and a phenomenological experience of space. But she carries both aspects to extremes. On the one hand, Gomes loves the geometry of the line and the right angle, and she uses no colors other than white in her work, laying claim to some of the most radical instances of twentieth-century abstraction (from Malevich on). On the other hand, she systematically chooses ordinary materials and objects, from used furniture to cigarette papers, and her work entails a total immersion in the here and now of the places where she exhibits.

For her current exhibition in France, she chose not to survey the venue before exhibiting there, nor did she have any previously created works sent there. A new, sprawling untitled installation occupies all the spaces of the building and has been created entirely with objects found on site, in a process of discovery, assimilation, and appropriation of the place that lasted three weeks. In a large corridor on the ground floor, building materials organized on the floor—bricks painted white, planks of wood, detached ceiling lamps—seem to articulate an elementary grammar of construction.

In the spaces on the second floor, the selection of materials arranged on the floor and walls allude to daily life: eating (white ceramic dishes, glasses and bottles, chicken bones); sleeping (Japanese mats), playing (white Ping-Pong balls). The natural landscape visible from the second-floor windows (those on the ground floor were covered with white paint) materializes inside the rooms in the form of handfuls of dry leaves that cover part of the floor. Finally, in the tower that flanks the main body of the building, Gomes has placed a single object, both incongruous and poetic: a silk parachute that hangs from above and gently sways in the draft. The color of the fabric? White, of course.