

TATE^{ETC.}

Fernanda Gomes, Tate etc., September 2013

MIRA SCHENDEL AT TATE MODERN

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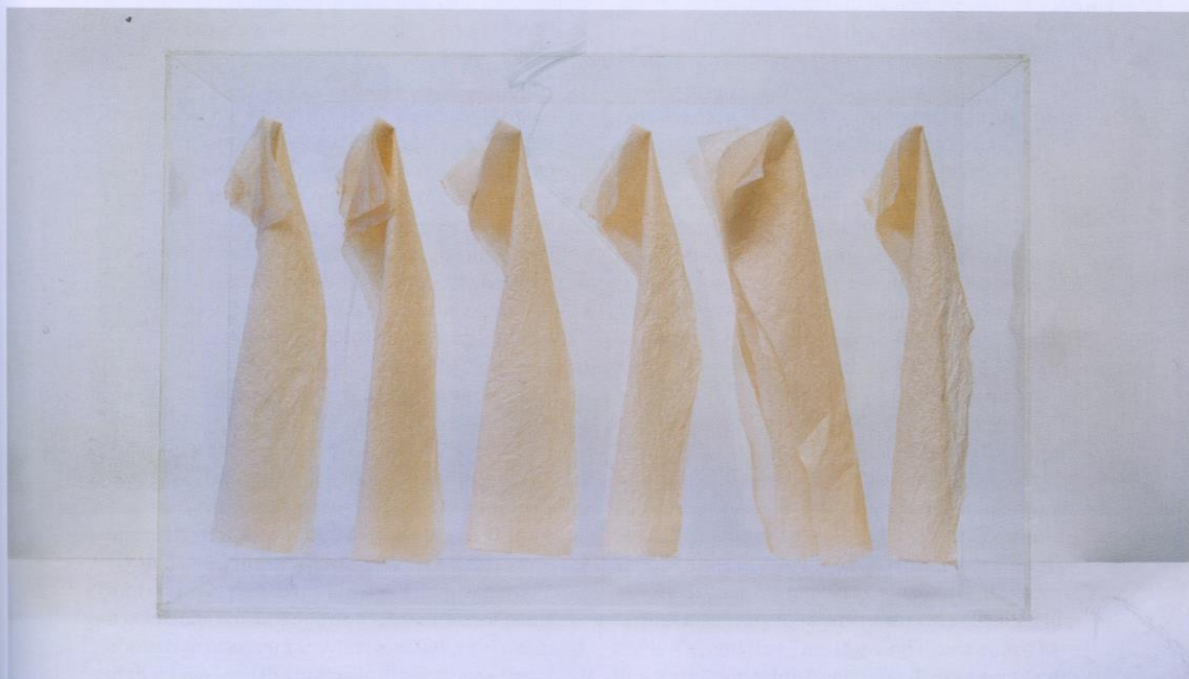
In a Word, Beauty By Fernanda Gomes

Accepting that life has no meaning leaves me relatively unfazed. What does make sense is beauty, sentiment, art. Beauty reveals whatever equilibrium is possible in this chaos we inhabit. I need just one word to write about Mira Schendel's œuvre, so close to my own view of things, a word that she drew with great emotion: beauty.

Having said it all, I could then move on, simply because that is what we do, until the end: move on. And even with the overwhelming amount written on art, there is always something lacking. Words, too, are missing, albeit being so many they are not enough. I like to write to develop my ideas in a different register, noncommittally. Writing about Mira Schendel could be a lovely and playful exercise, but I admit that I am feeling disconcerted; my only wish is to pay her tribute.

I could ramble on pointlessly about something that you have to see with your own eyes. It would be more coherent in handwriting. Inverted? Perhaps something more permeable: overlapping transparent pages. Mira drafts a writing that I apprehend in a natural way, a language that supplements what is missing without attempting to fill the blanks.

"World" is another word I feel vibrating in Mira's poetry. Everything is fundamental, supplementary: simple and complex. Black lath on white field, surface and space. Opaque paint of sheer colour, and gold. Pondering the work is seeing it from memory. I retain details of things and my feelings there, so many years ago. It is part of my mental collection, in which I hold everything I cherish, intact and impregnated in my imagination.



Left to right: Mira Schendel, *Untitled (Notebook)* (1971), ink and Letraset on paper, 19.5×21.7cm; Mira Schendel, *Untitled* (1980s), tempera and gold leaf on wood, 135×90cm; Mira Schendel, *Untitled (Little Train)* (c.1965), rice paper and nylon thread, 46×65×15cm

• FERNANDA GOMES is an artist living and working in Brazil.
• Translated from the Portuguese by Izabel Murat Burbridge.