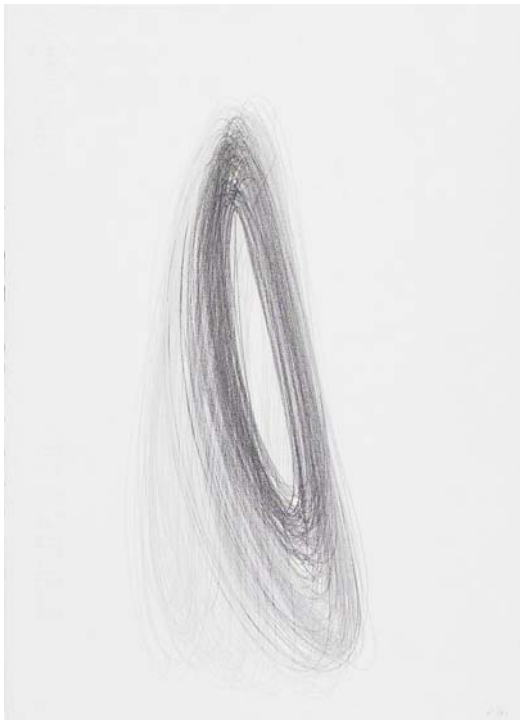


PRESS RELEASE



Drawing #1 (from the series Meadas e Novelos), 2006
graphite on paper, 35 x 25 cm

Conceição Abreu

Within

19 June – 28 July, 2007

Opening Tuesday, 19 June at 10 pm

Guided Tour on Saturday, 23 June at 5 pm

Caroline Pagès Gallery

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Opening Hours: Monday-Wednesday 12am-5pm, Thursday-Friday 12am-8pm, Saturday 3-8pm and every day by appointment.

The exhibition *Within* shows the presence of the artist Conceição Abreu via a collection of distinct works that possess an underlying common dialogue. The sculptures found throughout the five gallery rooms that simulate nests, needles and bags, a web and a rug were all made using elastic bands and a painstaking interlacing technique, as if this were lace making or knitting. These three-dimensional pieces are exhibited alongside graphite and colour pencil drawings on paper and a series of four black and white photographs.

The concept behind *Within* comes from the intimate perspective that Conceição Abreu sought to express; all of the exhibited works are balanced on the same thematic language that is found in the bridge built through the view of Nature that is exterior and visible, protecting and extolling what is interior and invisible at the same time.

Within the bird that builds the nest, the spider that weaves the web and the needle that unites the threads there is the notion of a constant movement that belongs to the act of construction and that, in this sense, eventually reunifies the essence of the different areas that time marks according to its own pace and a repetitive gesture. For Conceição Abreu, one does not foresee the abandoning of the project

regarding the persistence of the act because it is this that is crucial to the survival of Nature (exterior and interior). "Submerging myself in the process of the repetitive gesture, I let myself enter (*Within*) a place free of rationalisations, where the emptiness and the silence allow me to simply be." (Conceição Abreu) The specific example of the nests points to these considerations at a formal and conceptual level; the weaver bird builds its nest with that spherical volume that becomes suspended as the nest is extended. However, the nest in this context allows a universe of metaphors to be created that are relevant to the content of this proposal, situated not only in objective Nature, but also and especially on a personal experiential level, subjective. The nest becomes a space of change and interaction between the exterior and interior world, it is synonymous of an intimacy where the sensation of protection does not collide with the emptiness of which it is the result, on the contrary, that same emptiness seeks serenity. Assuming that the silence produced is the result of a choice, there is the notion that these forms could not be from another sphere other than the private one, where the desire for refuge is regularly proclaimed.

Conceição Abreu's work has been closely connected with a view of Nature, seeking to build a bridge with that world via elements and signs that she has explored, most of all via her main area of study, the medium of painting. The choice of the natural exterior as medium of observation and subsequent artistic intervention is demonstrated in her work as a personal challenge that puts perspectives of urbanity to one side.

In her previous solo exhibitions this thematic and conceptual proximity was finding its way, and with this exhibition, eventually interconnecting not at a pictorial level but in the continuous exploration of spaces that are established by the pace and ambiguity of the senses.

Conceição Abreu was born in 1961 in Portugal and lives and works in Madrid.

In 1989 she finished her studies at the *Escola Superior de Dança* and in 1998 completed her course in Painting at the Ar.Co school, where she also finished her individual Painting project in 2000.

In 2003 she had her second solo exhibition, *Jardins de Água*, at the *Galeria Diferença* in Lisbon, when the critic and journalist Ana Ruivo wrote "Based on an exercise in repetition [...] the gouaches alternate the dissolution of the stain with the impasto of the paint that marks its boundary. They create patterns, they build ambiguous spaces, where mobility is suggested by the circularity of forms, they define possible maps and cartography to the human eye." in the *Expresso* weekly, p. 35, April 5th 2003.

Between 1997 and 2006 the artist participated in collective exhibitions within the context of her work at Ar.Co. and between 2001 and 2006 she was also involved in collective exhibitions at the *Galeria Diferença* in Lisbon.

Her works are part of various private collections in Portugal.

Rita Santos, May 2007

Caroline Pagès Gallery

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