



Front Image:  
*Interview #6*, 2013  
Oil on canvas  
39 x 32 inches / 100 x 80 cm

# Read Between the Lines

By Fernando AQ Mota

...the body and ones own embodiment. How one behaves with and relates to the environment around oneself might be an old question; even so, it remains an open one simply because of its mutant nature. As Heraclitus once said: "Everything flows, nothing stands still." However, the exact moments of transition are hardly noticed in daily life. Luckily, some people manage to capture these events in time and space. One of them is Tatiana Blass, whose exquisite art breaks the rules of physics and proposes not only a logic but also an anatomy of what is out there.

Her precise use of different media, and ability to twist each one of them into something new every time, is what makes Tatiana Blass one of the most promising and cutting-edge artists in the Brazilian contemporary art scene. Regardless of whether the final work is a painting, sculpture, performance or installation, its uncanny aspect certainly provokes the public. She has been able to create quite an innovative output through the manipulation of numerous materials - as aesthetically appealing and humorous as Urs Fischer, and as conceptually instigating and human as Bruce Nauman. Her interdisciplinary practices are often inspired by music, theater and literature. *Metade da fala no chão* (Half of the speech on the ground) is a series where musical instruments have been turned mute and the audience finds themselves temporarily "deaf"



*Hard Water*, 2012  
Video performance, 11 min.  
Gasworks, London

while music becomes silence: it suggests the troubles with communication nowadays. *Fim de partida* (Endgame), based on Samuel Beckett's play, is made out of wax sculptures that are imitations of the original characters; as they melt down due to the heat of the stage lights, the spectator watches the show of their disappearance. Her works go beyond mere dematerialization of the object - they permeate the field of ideas as well. Art here is similar to magic: it transforms things, reshaping perceptions.

This time around, Blass is a puppeteer. *Hard Water* (the title comes from the texture of the water in London, as it contacts the human body), her residence project for Gasworks, is a performance on video. Two actresses sit on chairs next to each other in a white room: sewn to their clothes are spools strung with colorful threads that attach to bigger spools placed onto the walls; the bodies are literally connected to the space. The women start a strange dialogue and, as it develops, one can conclude they are not on good terms. As they argue and walk around the room, the spools start to unwind, and they have to remove some of their clothes in order to move, weaving a physical and simultaneously social web. The messy dialogue visibly falls all the way to the ground until the tangled end of the game. The final scene is like a lively painting in which brushstrokes are crossing the white cube.

The artist has already worked before with threads that spread around a space, in a massive installation in a chapel in Sao Paulo -- the work made reference to and was named after the Greek myth of Penelope. Yet in this new story, the tracks left by these contemporary Ariadnes do not lead out of the labyrinth. Instead, they place the public inside a trap along with them, unable to leave the room: what are the real knots we make for ourselves, and also, are we able to unravel them? How often do we talk the talk or walk the walk and what are the things we truly lose along the way? The lines coming out of their mouths and the ones visible to our eyes could be read as links between the human body and the environment surrounding it -- perhaps a new version of Lygia Clark's *Baba Antropofágica*? Like any good maverick, Tatiana Blass knows how to pull strings. Ironically, there is no way to tie it all up, given that the work, like life, is in a constant flux(us). Nevertheless, as the piece metamorphosizes on screen one's caught along the hard path of realizing ones own embodiment...



*Penelope*, 2011  
Installation  
Capela do Morumbi, Brazil





*Half of the speech on the ground - Deaf Piano*, 2010  
Performance with grand piano, wax, pianist and video  
29th Biennial of Sao Paulo



*Blinding light - Seated, 2010*  
Wax, cast brass, chair, and light  
59 x 59 x 59 inches / 150 x 150 x 150 cm  
PIPA Prize, MAM, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



*Unsaid/Spoken*, 2012  
Five drum sets and microcrystalline wax  
CIFO, Miami



*Hung*, 2010  
Wax, leather belt, brass sheet, and electrical resistance  
124 x 67 x 39 inches / 315 x 170 x 100 cm







Top: *Reporter #1*, 2013

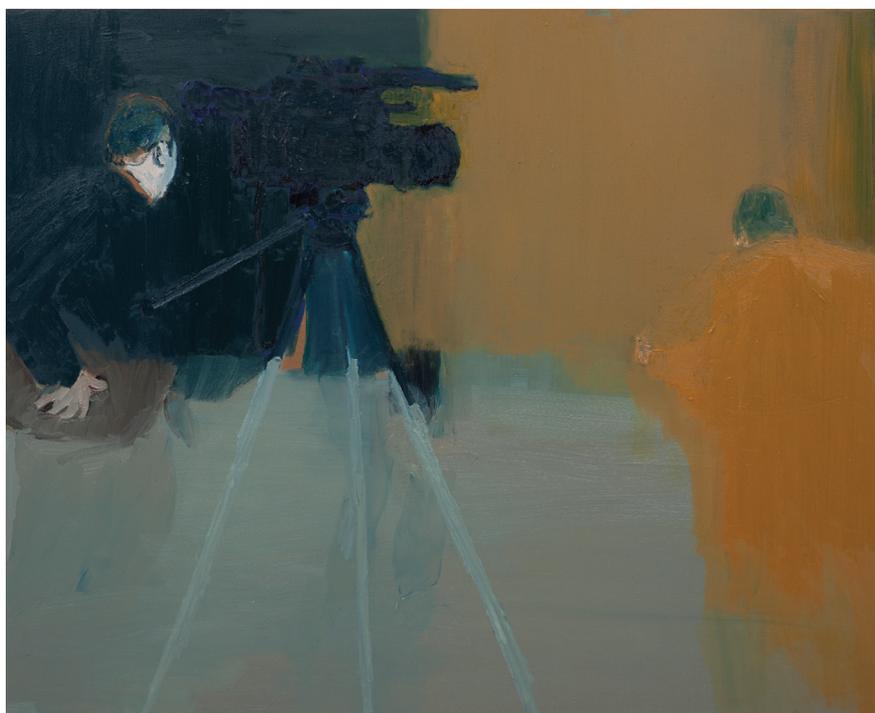
Oil on canvas

51 x 63 inches / 130 x 160 cm

Previous page: *Interview #1.2*, 2013

Cast iron

12 x 28 x 16 inches / 30 x 70 x 40 cm



Top: *Reporter #2*, 2013

Oil on canvas

51 x 63 inches / 130 x 160 cm

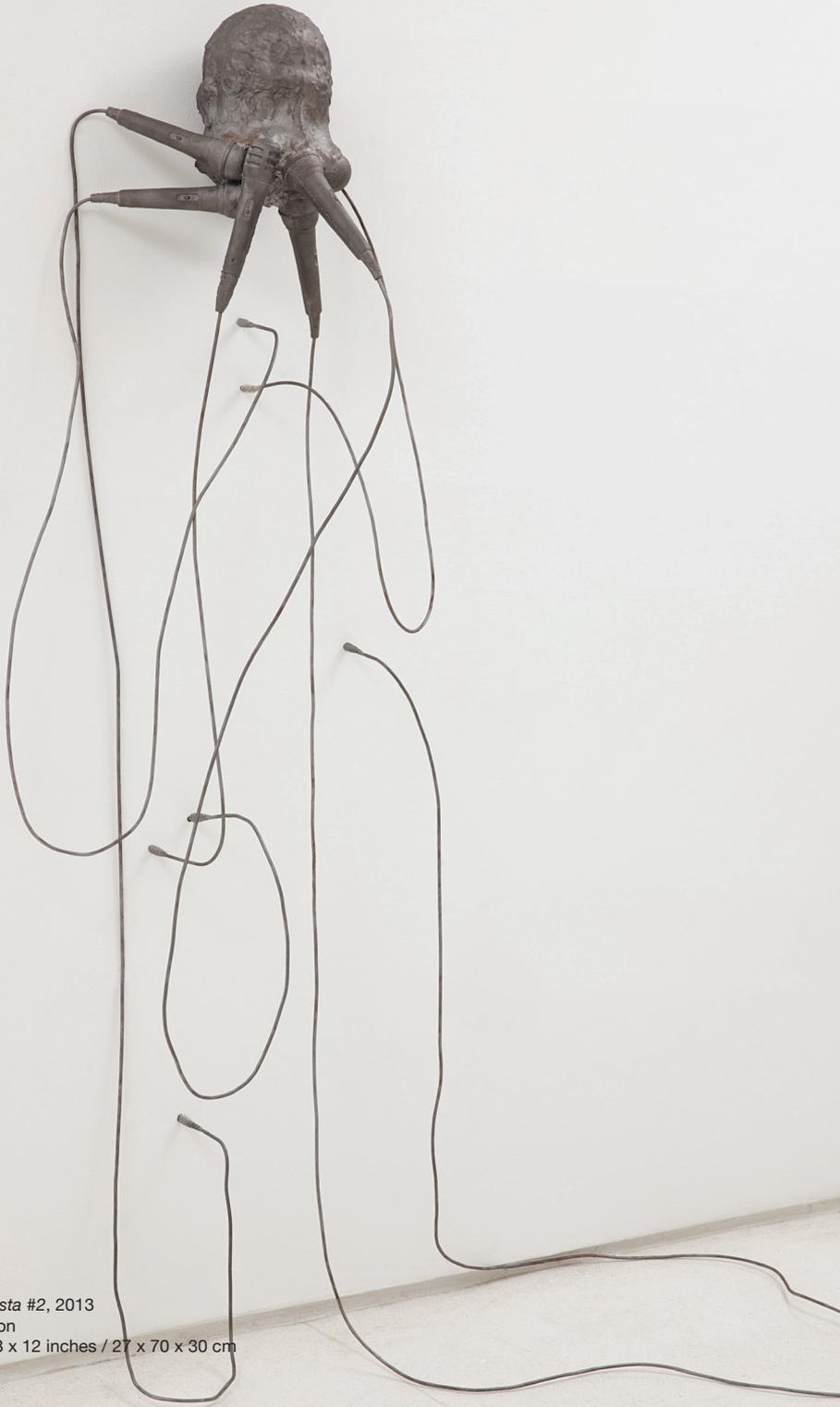
Following page: *Interview #1*, 2013

Oil on canvas

51 x 71 inches / 130 x 180 cm



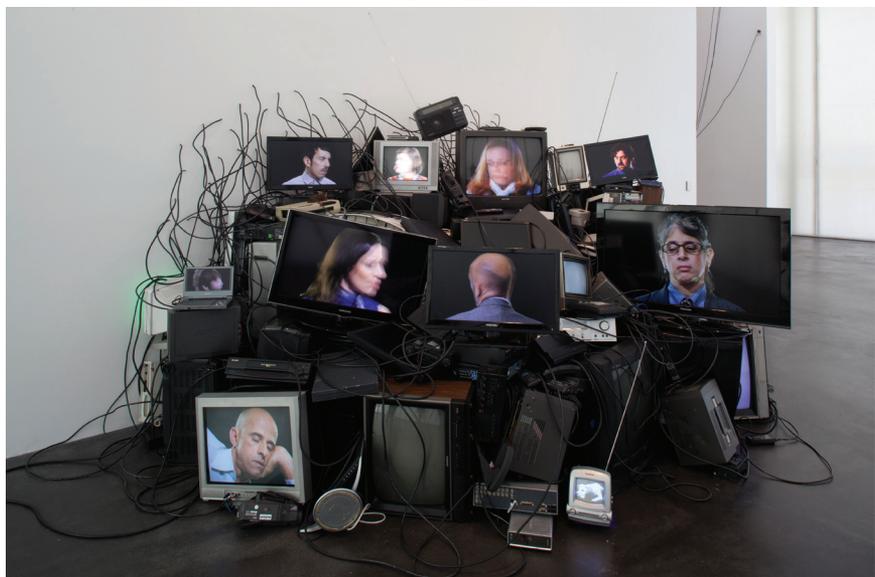




*Entrevista #2, 2013*

Cast iron

11 x 28 x 12 inches / 27 x 70 x 30 cm



*Electrical Room*, 2013  
Video installation  
MCA Denver

# Tatiana Blass

Tatiana Blass was born in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1979. Her work spans sculpture, painting, video and installation. She has been featured in the 2010 Sao Paulo Bienal with a performance based piece called "Piano Surdo." She was nominated for the famous PIPA Prize in both 2010 and 2011. She succeeded to win the prize in 2011 with her piece "Blinding Light - Seated" that was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in Rio de Janeiro. In 2013 Blass was given her first US solo show at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver. Her works are part of collections such as CIFO, Miami and the museums of modern art in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. She is featured with a profile in the 2013 September issue of Modern Painters and was shortlisted as one of Art+Auction's "50 most collectible artists under 50."

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