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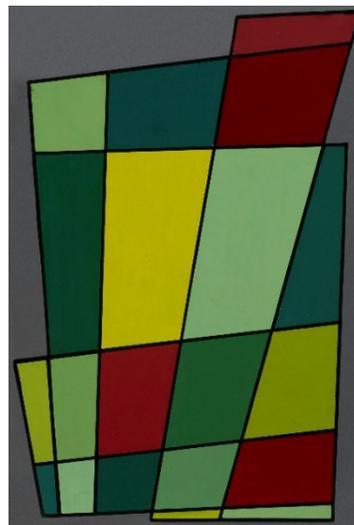
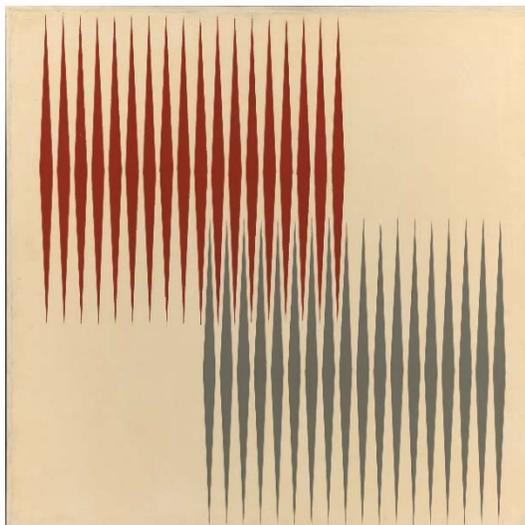
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**GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE AND GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE PRESENT *MAKING ART CONCRETE: WORKS FROM ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL IN THE COLECCIÓN PATRICIA PHELPS DE CISNEROS***

*Exhibition features results from the first comprehensive technical study of artworks by abstract artists working in Argentina and Brazil in the 1940s and '50s*

**Part of Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA, an exploration of Latin American and Latino Art in dialogue with Los Angeles**

On view September 16, 2017 – February 11, 2018  
at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Getty Center



Left: *Alternado 2 / Alternated 2* (1957). Hermelindo Fiaminghi (Brazilian, 1920 - 2004). Alkyd on hardboard. Framed: 61.9 x 62 x 4.5 cm (24 3/8 x 24 7/16 x 1 3/4 in.). The Museum of Modern Art. Promised gift of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros through the Latin American and Caribbean Fund in honor of Catalina Cisneros-Santiago  
Right: *Marco recortado N° 2 / Cutout Frame No. 2* (1946). Juan Nicolás Melé (Argentinian, 1923 - 2012). Oil on hardboard. Unframed: 71.1 x 50.2 x 2.4 cm (28 x 19 3/4 x 15/16 in.). The Museum of Modern Art. Promised gift of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros through the Latin American and Caribbean Fund

LOS ANGELES – In the tumultuous years after World War II, avant-garde artists in Buenos Aires, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro responded to the changing world order both ideologically and aesthetically. They rejected figurative and expressive styles in favor of Concrete art, an approach characterized by abstract compositions of geometric shapes and patterns. The exhibition *Making Art Concrete: Works from Argentina and Brazil in the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, on view September 16, 2017-February 11, 2018 at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Getty Center, marks the first time these works have been comprehensively studied



for both their art-historical and technical innovations. Thirty works from the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, a world-renowned collection of Latin American art, will be displayed alongside key technical findings, didactic videos, and historical documents.

The exhibition draws on three years of extensive scientific analysis and archival investigation led by a team of experts from the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) and Getty Research Institute (GRI), in collaboration with the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros (CPPC). Important discoveries about the paintings and new insights into the artists' techniques resulting from this analysis and investigation will be presented for the first time. Artists represented in the show include well-known figures such as Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica, both of whom have recently received large-scale retrospectives in the United States, as well as lesser-known, but equally important, artists such as Raúl Lozza, Tomás Maldonado, and Willy de Castro.



*Relieve no. 30 / Relief No. 30* (1946). Raúl Lozza (Argentinian, 1911 - 2008). Oil, alkyd, pine resin, wax and acrylic on wood and metal wire. Object: H: 40.6 x W: 53.3 x D: 3.8 cm (16 x 21 x 1 1/2 in.). The Museum of Modern Art. Promised gift of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros through the Latin American and Caribbean Fund

"The mission of the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros is to better understand the history of art from Latin America and its place in global culture," says Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, director and chief curator of the CPPC. "We are thrilled to be able to partner with the Getty on this multi-year research project that will shed new light on a vital moment in the history of modern culture in South America."

### **History of Concrete Art in Argentina and Brazil**

Artists who practiced Concrete art believed that radical forms, which bore no visual relation to nature or national artistic traditions, perfectly represented a new post-World War II age and were essential to the future success of modern and industrialized society. Many Concrete art practitioners stopped using frames and broke away from a rectilinear format, instead creating irregularly shaped artworks decades before the shaped canvas rose to prominence in Europe and North America. Others went even further and rejected conventional materials, such as oil paint and canvas, and experimented with industrial paints and supports as well as new tools and techniques. The objects these Concrete artists created, which often blur the line between painting and sculpture, were in the vanguard visually and tangibly for their compositional and physical properties alike.

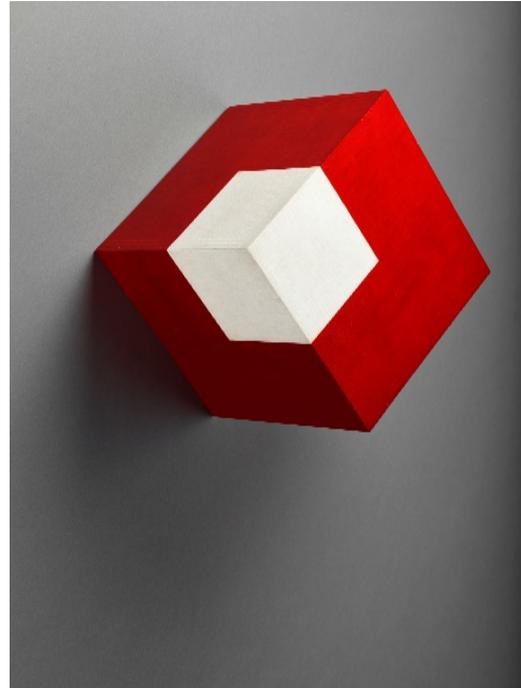
The development of Concrete art in Argentina and Brazil did not happen simultaneously. In Argentina, it was launched with the 1944 publication of *Arturo*, an avant-garde magazine to which several Buenos Aires- and Uruguay-based artists contributed. One of the rare original copies of the magazine will be on view in the galleries. A year later, due to internal tensions, these artists split into two groups – the staunchly rationalistic Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención (AACI) and the more playful Madí group. In Brazil, artists turned to Concrete art in the early 1950s, establishing Grupo Ruptura in São Paulo in 1952, and Grupo Frente in Rio de Janeiro in 1954. Similarly, by 1956, philosophical differences became



insurmountable and the groups splintered, resulting in the creation of the Neo-concrete movement at the end of the decade.

Despite the chronological differences in their adoption of Concrete art, all of these artists were aware of similar debates and theories about geometric abstraction that had taken place in Europe before the war. They saw a connection between the rapid industrialization in their own countries and the European experience a few decades earlier. This was one of the reasons these young artists returned to the utopian approach of Concrete art, a term that had been coined in Paris in 1930 by Dutch artist Theo van Doesburg.

"For years we've been seeking ways to bring leadership to the technical study of modern and contemporary art, primarily by focusing on important or under-studied works and regions," says Tim Whalen, director of the Getty Conservation Institute. "This project has been an unprecedented opportunity to understand how paintings from this part of Latin America were created, how that impacts what we see today, and how best to preserve them for the future."



*Objeto ativo (cubo vermelho/branco) / Active Object (Red/white cube)* (1962). Willys de Castro (Brazilian, 1926 - 1988). Oil on canvas on plywood. Object: H: 25 x W: 25 x D: 25 cm (9 7/8 x 9 7/8 x 9 7/8 in.). The Museum of Modern Art. Promised gift of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros through the Latin American and Caribbean Fund in honor of Tomás Orinoco Griffin-Cisneros

## Insights and Discoveries

Although the histories of these groups have been studied, little was known about the material choices these artists made. Technical analysis of works has revealed the extensive experimentation they conducted with novel industrial materials and processes in order to achieve different surfaces and appearances. For example, several Brazilian artists used a variety of commercial paints manufactured as house paints or automotive paints, not only because they were inexpensive, but also because they also dried quickly leaving a smooth surface devoid of brushstrokes. Lygia Clark began painting with a spray gun filled with automobile lacquer so she could produce perfectly even, glossy or flat surfaces. On view will be Clark's *Casulo* (1959), a work that exemplifies this approach.

"The GCI has spent years developing analytical methods to identify the various types of paint used by artists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it has been fascinating to use this capability to investigate this group of Argentine and Brazilian artists," says Tom Learner, head of science at the GCI. "Their use of such a wide range of household and industrial paints, for example, and how these were manipulated to achieve very particular surfaces, gloss-levels and texture, has been particularly revealing."

Also revealed through analysis were the different paint application techniques used to create the straight lines and edges of geometric shapes, including the use of a ruling pen and self-adhesive tape. Argentine artist Alfredo Hlito was a particular master of the ruling pen, a



tool used by architects and graphic designers to work with free-flowing ink, which Hlito adapted to use with diluted oil paint. By contrast, the use of self-adhesive tape was embraced by many of the Brazilian artists, as they could use it to create a very straight paint ridge.

"The seeming simplicity of the compositions belies the artists' painstaking approach to materials and technique – the truism that the simplest looking things are often the hardest to accomplish applies," says Pia Gottschaller, senior research specialist at the GCI. "In their desire to create 'non-elitist' works with universal appeal, many of the artists strove for the elimination of obvious traces of the hand."

### **An International Effort**

In addition to the exhibition, the GCI is also performing technical analysis on other paintings from the Cisneros collection as part of its Modern and Contemporary Art Research Initiative. In conjunction with this project, and with funding from the Getty Foundation, art-historical and technical studies of the period are also underway by two teams of experts in Argentina and Brazil, including the Instituto de Investigaciones sobre el Patrimonio Cultural; Universidad Nacional de San Martín, in Buenos Aires; and LACICOR, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, in Belo Horizonte. These studies have drawn on major holdings of Concrete art in both countries, including holdings from Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires; Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires; Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro; Museu de Arte da Pampulha, and Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. More recently, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston also joined the research effort.

"With the facilities and expertise available at the Getty, we are uniquely positioned to foster a new kind of art history, one that is based upon joint sustained research on objects both materially and interpretively by art historians, conservators, and scientists," says Andrew Perchuk, deputy director of the GRI.

An exhibition catalogue of the same name will accompany the exhibition, with essays by Pia Gottschaller and Aleca Le Blanc. Another larger volume will be published when the project is complete, and will be a primary reference publication on Latin American Concrete Art.

"The GCI's and GRI's joint technical and art historical study has revealed the outstanding innovative working process and aesthetic expressions of the concrete artists in Argentina and Brazil," says Thomas Gaetgens, director of the GRI. "After this exhibition, the works of these still underestimated artists will enter the collection of The Museum of Modern Art in New York, taking their rightful place alongside the great works of 20<sup>th</sup>-century art."

*Making Art Concrete: Works from Argentina and Brazil in the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros* is on view September 16, 2017-February 11, 2018, at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Getty Center. The exhibition is curated by Tom Learner, Head of Science, GCI; Pia Gottschaller, Senior Research Specialist, GCI; Andrew Perchuk, Deputy Director, GRI; Zanna Gilbert, Research Specialist, GRI; and Aleca Le Blanc, Assistant Professor of Latin American Art, University of California, Riverside.

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**Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA** is a far-reaching and ambitious exploration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles. Led by the Getty, Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA is the latest collaborative effort from arts institutions across Southern California, featuring more than 70 exhibitions exploring wide-ranging aspects of Latin American and Latino arts and culture.

**The J. Paul Getty Trust** is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that includes the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Foundation. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs serve a varied audience from two locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa in Pacific Palisades.

**The Getty Conservation Institute** works to advance conservation practice in the visual arts, broadly interpreted to include objects, collections, architecture, and sites. It serves the conservation community through scientific research, education and training, model field projects, and the broad dissemination of the results of both its own work and the work of others in the field. In all its endeavors, the Conservation Institute focuses on the creation and dissemination of knowledge that will benefit the professionals and organizations responsible for the conservation of the world's cultural heritage.

**The Getty Research Institute** is an operating program of the J. Paul Getty Trust. It serves education in the broadest sense by increasing knowledge and understanding about art and its history through advanced research. The Research Institute provides intellectual leadership through its research, exhibition, and publication programs and provides service to a wide range of scholars worldwide through residencies, fellowships, online resources, and a Research Library. The Research Library—housed in the 201,000-square-foot Research Institute building designed by Richard Meier—is one of the largest art and architecture libraries in the world. The general library collections (secondary sources) include almost 900,000 volumes of books, periodicals, and auction catalogues encompassing the history of Western art and related fields in the humanities. The Research Library's special collections include rare books, artists' journals, sketchbooks, architectural drawings and models, photographs, and archival materials.

## Visiting the Getty Center

The Getty Center is open Tuesday through Friday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Admission to the Getty Center is always free. Parking is \$15 per car, but reduced to \$10 after 3 p.m. No reservation is required for parking or general admission. Reservations are required for event seating and groups of 15 or more. Please call (310) 440-7300 (English or Spanish) for reservations and information. The TTY line for callers who are deaf or hearing impaired is (310) 440-7305. The Getty Center is at 1200 Getty Center Drive, Los Angeles, California.

**Same-day parking** at both Museum locations (Getty Center and Getty Villa) is available for one fee through the Getty's Pay Once, Park Twice program. Visit the Museum Information Desk at the Center or the Villa to obtain a coupon good for same-day complimentary parking at the other site.

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## About the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros

Founded in the 1970s by Patricia Phelps de Cisneros and Gustavo A. Cisneros, the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros (CPPC) is one of the core cultural and educational initiatives of the Fundación Cisneros. Based in New York City and Caracas, Venezuela, the CPPC's mission is to enhance appreciation of the diversity, sophistication, and range of art from Latin America; advance scholarship of Latin American art; and promote excellence in visual-arts education. The CPPC achieves these goals



# Pacific Standard Time: LA / LA at the Getty



September 2017–January 2018

through the preservation, presentation, and study of the material culture of the Ibero-American world—ranging from the ethnographic to the contemporary. The CPPC’s activities include exhibitions, publications, grants for scholarly research and artistic production, and a website that was created to offer a platform for debate concerning the immense contributions of Latin America to the world of art and culture.



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