

SLIGHT AGITATION 4/4: LAURA LIMA

From 15 June to 22 October 2018 Fondazione Prada will present “Slight Agitation 4/4: Laura Lima”, the fourth and last chapter of the exhibition project conceived by Fondazione Prada Thought Council, whose current members are Shumon Basar, Elvira Dyangani Ose, and Dieter Roelstraete.

“Slight Agitation”, a four-part project of newly commissioned, site-specific works hosted in sequence within the Cisterna in the Milan venue of Fondazione, including works by Tobias Putrih (Slovenia, 1972), Pamela Rosenkranz (Switzerland, 1979) and Austrian collective Gelitin, continues with a final instalment by Brazilian artist Laura Lima. .

Lima presents “Horse Takes King”, following Putrih’s installation which engaged with ideas of play, politics and emancipation; Rosenkranz’s intervention that offered visitors a multi-sensory immersion into a new perception of embodiment and collectivity; and Gelitin showcasing a project explicitly addressing classical architectural archetypes and subverting their rhetoric and monumental components. Lima’s work is a whimsical attempt to distort the senses that determine our perception through three large sculptures, displayed in the spaces of the Cisterna, each contributing to the formulation of an apparently absurd taxonomy.

The title of her intervention clearly hints at a chess game, which ultimately creates a illusory space where spectators are invited to move freely, without knowing the broader context that would enable them to understand the artist’s impulse. The works on display, *Bird* (2016), *Pendulum* (2018) and *Telescope* (2018), invite viewers to elaborate what in astronomical terms is described as a “syzygy”, traditionally intended as a straight-line configuration of three or more celestial bodies in a gravitational system. In this case, the connections between displayed elements cannot be reconducted to one univocal definition. The environment “Horse Takes Kings” prompts is in fact a situational one, in which the three sculptures realized by the artist stand for different roles within a game: the bird stands for the horse, the class is a space for collective enquiry and lastly the pendulum represents the game’s challenge. The King, an imaginary central figure at play, remains an immaterial presence, representing an all-compassing power and the main antagonist.

As stated by the curator Elvira Dyangani Ose “this situational game further highlights how Lima’s proposition for ‘Horse Takes King’ is inspired by the language of pataphysics: the law governing all the exceptions, a science impossible to define. To understand pataphysics is to fail to understand it, as explained by its creator, French poet and novelist Alfred Jarry. Trying to describe it is a fundamental mistake. Similarly, Lima’s work borrows the poetic uselessness of a game of possible impossibilities to produce a work that resists interpretation. You are invited to try in; the game is on”.

The central space of the Cisterna is occupied by *Pendulum* (2018), a machine reproducing the movement of Foucault's pendulum, which showcases a painting at its extremity. The viewer is invited to hypothesise on the origins of such painting.

On the left-hand space, the audience is invited to enter *Telescope* (2018), a vertical installation which hosts an astronomer's class. On the first level, a series of astronomy seminars will take place daily at 12.30pm and at 5pm. Conceived by astronomers from LOfficina del Planetario —the association of scientists in charge of the programme at the Civico Planetario in Milan— these seminars are open to all members of the audience. The top level, located about 10 meters from the ground, hosts a telescope pointing to the sky, to be employed by the public only under the guidance of an astronomer.

The right-hand space displays *Bird* (2016), a sculpture created in collaboration with Brazilian artist Zé Carlos Garcia, representing a massive animal that seems to have fallen from the sky, and landed in the Cisterna by mere accident.

The combination of these three works across the exhibition environments question the nature of the audience's engagement with space and place, and challenge the viewers' perception: the artist openly explores the boundaries between the imaginary and the factual to stress the poetic absurdity inherent to the seemingly real.

The title of the project - "Slight Agitation" —was inspired by the expression "une légère agitation", employed by the French historian Fernand Braudel to describe the tidal movement of the Mediterranean. This metaphor reflects the Thought Council's starting point in presenting interventions by artists whose practices differ considerably in philosophical and material terms, all of them commissioned to interfere and dialogue with the spatial context of the Cisterna, and to influence the viewer's physical experience and all her or his attendant senses through their works.

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Laura Lima – biographical notes

Laura Lima (b. Brazil, 1971) born in Brazil's countryside region of Governador Valadares. While still very young, Lima moved to Rio de Janeiro, where she is currently based. The artist received a BA in Philosophy from the State University of Rio de Janeiro in the 1990s and also studied art at the Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque Lage, Rio de Janeiro. In 1999, she founded the Organism RhR (Representative hyphen Representative) and served as its first bureaucratic administrator. As such, Lima created a glossary and an archive of the activities of the group, including ideas such as a philosophy of nothing, the non-functional, emptiness, and failure. Laura Lima is the 2014 recipient of BACA, Bonnefanten Award for Contemporary Arts, the Netherlands; and in 2006, Lima was awarded the Marcantonio Vilaça Prize. The artist was also nominated for the Francophone Prize 2011, and Hans Nefkens Prize 2012. Solo exhibitions of Lima's work have been presented in venues around the world such as Museu de Arte da Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina; MUAC, Mexico City, Mexico; Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich, Switzerland; Casa França Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Fundação Eva Klabin, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden; Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, The Netherlands; SMK-National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen, Denmark and CCA, U-jazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland.