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LUCIA NOGUEIRA SWING...SLIP...STEP AND DRAWINGS 8 JUNE – 16 JULY 2011

The reputation of Lucia Nogueira has continued to grow internationally since her early death in 1998. In 2005, The Drawing Room in London mounted an exquisite exhibition of her works on paper. Three years ago, a complete survey of her sculptural work was staged by the Museu Serralves in Porto and was singled out as one of the exhibitions of the year. Earlier this year, an intense survey show of sculptures and drawings at Kettle's Yard in Cambridge brought her work to the attention of a new audience in her adopted country. Several works were recently acquired for the Tate Collection. The current exhibition brings together three important three-dimensional works not seen in Cambridge, together with a group of over twenty works on paper

Several commentators on Nogueira's work have discussed the notion of a gap and the negotiations that take place either side of that gap; a gap of materials, of mass, of space, of energy, of light and dark. Here a wooden pole high on the wall bears the finger marks of a past leap; a chip in a glass bell-jar is healed with a vivid stop of red wax; a decorative oriental rug has its intricate design spilled out on the floor in a scattering of broken glass. All these things speak of an action on the edge; a gesture of transformation; a hint of danger.

...I can spend long periods gathering, adjusting, reading, drifting purposefully, and suddenly, in a quite remarkably short and concentrated moment of time, the elements are fixed at that precise point at which they are neither one thing nor the other but the infinitely precise space that exists between. It is rather like an electrical experiment where an arc of energy is able to leap the gap; or the point at which two magnets repel or attract... (Lucia Nogueira, 1997)

As Ian Hunt wrote in his essay for the recent exhibition at Kettle's Yard in Cambridge... *it is a measure of her depth as an artist that her work can be seen as in dialogue not just with [arte povera or her British contemporaries] but with artists as different as Joelle Tuerlinckx, Cathy Wilkes or the Rio de Janeiro collective Chelipa Ferro... Nogueira's work can sustain such diverse comparisons because it is sophisticated in its awareness of sculpture as a spatial art while being motivated by human concerns that are broadly shared but never vague or imprecise... Her drawings show this humanly appealing and idiosyncratic mind at work in a quite different arena... Amongst other things, they show clearly that the expressive urges of the art of the 80's did have somewhere to go... (A signal box that folds: Lucia Nogueira's sculpture, Kettle's Yard 2011)*

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