

# ARTFORUM

## New York

### Valeska Soares

ALEXANDER GRAY ASSOCIATES

510 West 26th Street

October 26–December 16

"This is a true story," begins the text on a page torn from the back of a book, humbly framed and inconspicuously placed at the start—or is it the finish?—of Valeska Soares's first show here. Located on the second floor, the piece isn't on the checklist. It both is and is not part of the show. It marks a new beginning and at the same time signals continuity, introducing the installation *Epilogue*, 2017, an epic variation on *Finale*, 2013. *Finale* consists of an antique dining table topped with mirrored glass and covered with dozens of dainty vintage drinking glasses, all of them filled with spirits. *Epilogue* features five such tables, end to end, with many times more glasses and an almost overwhelming smell of alcohol. To walk into the room is to wonder: What kind of extravagant party was this, and what cleared out the revelers so quickly that none of them downed their drinks? The text on the page continues: ". . . although some names and details have been changed to protect the guilty."



Valeska Soares, *Epilogue* (detail), 2017, mixed media, 3' 11" x 18' 3" x 3' 10".

Born in Brazil in the 1950s and based in Brooklyn since the 1990s, Soares specializes in a kind of domestic terror that is familiar to an international generation of feminist artists whose works span old worlds and new, intimations of home and exile, evocations of liberation and restraint. Where Soares differs from her contemporaries is in how she finds and alters pre-existing materials. The new series of paintings "Doubleface," 2017, includes four portraits of women, variously procured, which have been turned to face the wall, painted monochromatically, cut, and folded to reveal eyes, a nose, and, in one case, hands. They are ambiguous objects, and perhaps not totally convincing as images, but they are wholly in keeping with Soares's love of mystery and drama.

— Kaelen Wilson-Goldie