



*Finale*, 2013, detail, mixed media, 31h x 132w x 36.25d in (78.7h x 335.3w x 92.1d cm)

## **Valeska Soares: *Neither Here Nor There***

November 1 – December 16, 2017

Alexander Gray Associates is pleased to announce *Neither Here Nor There*, Valeska Soares' first exhibition with the Gallery. The artist, who has lived and worked in Brooklyn since 1992, has maintained deep connections to her native Brazil while positioning herself in New York's multi-faceted art scene. With the works on view in *Neither Here Nor There*, Soares re-interprets the neutral gallery spaces as domestic zones, affirming Alexander Gray Associates as a new home for her work in her adopted city.

On view on the ground floor are four paintings from her *Doubleface* series. In these works, Soares modifies vintage portraits of women to suggest the allure and mystery triggered by covered objects. The artist re-stretches the sourced canvases, painting the verso in a monochrome selected from the palette of the original painting. She then cuts and folds over a piece of the assembled oil painting to reveal the portion of the original portrait that she finds most evocative, thus disrupting a small fragment of the monochromatic plane. Through her restoration and appropriation of portraits of anonymous women, she rescues the sitters from obscurity; through her monochromatic intervention, she emphasizes the dichotomy of figuration and abstraction. These paintings are shown in tandem with her rugs from her ongoing series *Ground*, which are similarly cut, folded, and painted. These works draw on historic connotations of carpets as objects of religious practice, decorations, and non-monetary currency in numerous cultures. Together, these objects conjure a personal living room, or familial gathering space; however their monochrome modifications make them simultaneously universal and anonymous. Together, these bodies of work also upturn Modernist paintings' formal explorations of figure and ground, color field and representation.

In the Gallery's large second-floor space, Soares has created a variant on her iconic large-scale installation, *Finale* (2013), in which she amasses domestic objects into an environment that evokes fictional narratives and recalls memories. *Epilogue* (2017), expands this signature work, in both scale and intention, and is comprised of five antique tables in a variety of styles, each with a mirrored surface that she tops with a surfeit of mismatched antique cups, filled to varying degrees with spirits. The work, which appears to be a dining room at the end of some unknown and unknowable celebration, underscores the participatory impulse throughout Soares' oeuvre. Mirroring a party scenario in which one invites guests into their home, making the private public, Soares captures the private moments after a celebration ends, when the space remains charged by the memories and traces of a fleeting moment and space; in this way, the viewer provides a narrative for this *mis en scene*. As curator Jens Hoffmann describes, "just as there is no way for visitors to know what joyful event is being capped off with a toast,

there is no way for them to know their absent drinking companions. The incomplete scenario is a challenge: to invent memories in place of lacunae, or to hang out in the blank spaces, acknowledging that there's more to be gained by leaving things unsettled.”

Valeska Soares' is the subject of the major mid-career survey, *Valeska Soares: Any Moment Now*, currently on view at the The Santa Barbara Museum of Art, CA, in conjunction with the J. Paul Getty Museum as part of the multi-venue initiative, *Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA*. The exhibition has been co-organized by and Phoenix Art Museum, and was co-curated by Julie Joyce and Vanessa Davidson. Previous surveys of Soares' work have been presented by the Museum de arte da Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, Brazil (2002); and the Bronx Museum for the Arts, New York (2003). She will be featured in the upcoming exhibition *Out of Sight! Art of the Senses*, Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, NY;

Soares has participated in numerous international exhibitions, including two Venice Biennales (2011, 2005), several São Paulo Biennials (2009, 1998, 1994), the Sharjah Biennial (2009), the Taipei Biennial (2006), the Liverpool Biennial (2004), inSITE San Diego/Tijuana (2000-01), and the Havana Biennial (1991). Other group exhibitions include *Jardin infini. De Giverny à l'Amazonie*, Centre Pompidou-Metz, Metz, France (2017); *99 Cents or Less*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit, MI (2018); *Permission to be Global: Latin American Art from the Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2014); *Seduções: Valeska Soares, Cildo Meireles, Ernesto Neto*, Daros Collection, Zurich (2006); *Puro Teatro* at Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City (2002); *Virgin Territory: Women, Gender, and History in Contemporary Brazilian Art*, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC (2001); and the landmark Latin American exhibition, *Ultra Baroque: Aspects of Post Latin American Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego (traveled) (2000-03). She has been the subject of many solo exhibitions including shows at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT (2017); The Jewish Museum, New York (2015); Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey, Mexico (2003); Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City (2002); Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, CA (1999); Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, OR (1998); Laumeier Sculpture Park and Museum, Saint Louis, MO (1996); and The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (1995).

Valeska Soares' artwork is included in many private and public collections, including the Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, DC; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; Museum d'Art Contemporany de Barcelona, Spain; Solomon R. Guggenheim, New York; Tate Modern, London; Fundacion "la Caixa," Barcelona; The National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C.; Museu de Arte Contemporânea-MAC in São Paulo; Museu de Arte Moderna-MAM in Rio de Janeiro; Inhotim-Centro de Arte Contemporânea in Brumadinho, Brazil; Museo de Art Contemporânea-MARCO in Monterrey, and others. Soares was the recipient of multiple grants and awards including the Coordenao de Aperfeioamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES) fellowship, Brazil's Ministry of Education; *Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA*, The Getty Foundation, Los Angeles; Ida Ely Rubin Artist in Residence Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge; Anonymous Was a Woman Award, New York; and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, New York. Valeska Soares is also represented by Fortes d'Aloia & Gabriel in São Paulo, Brazil.