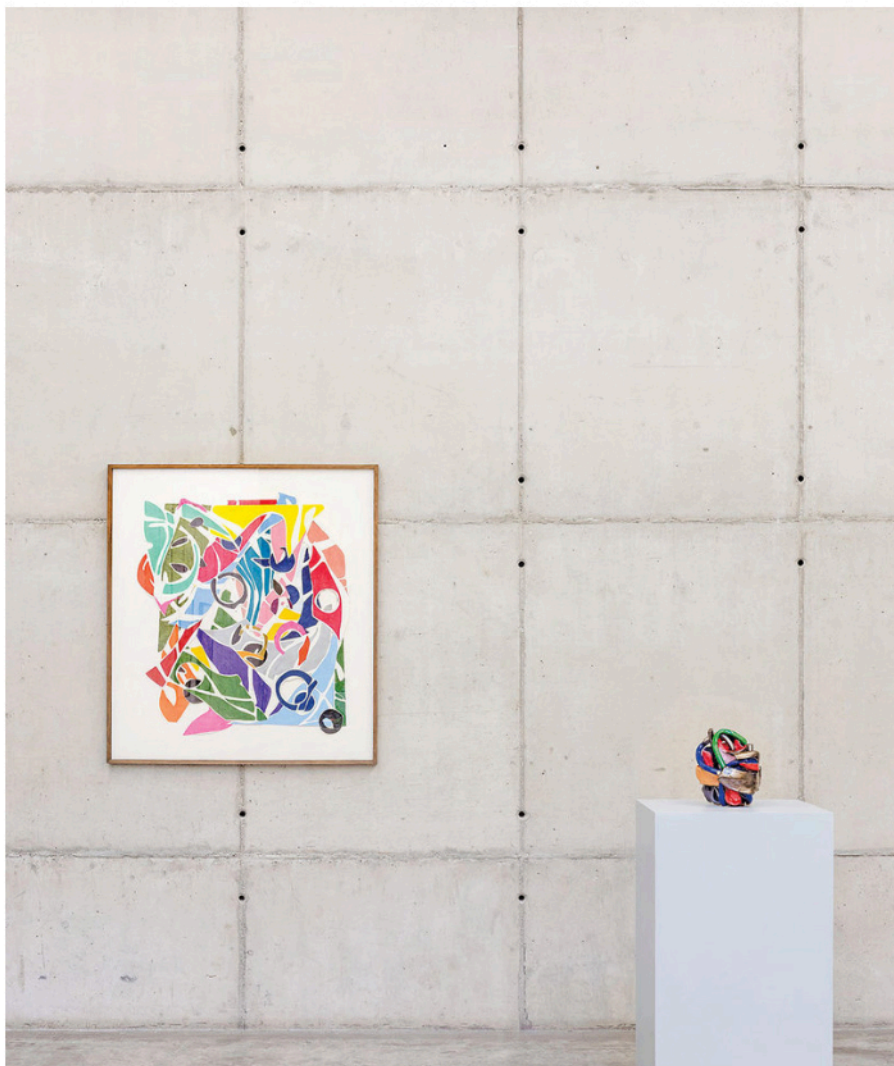




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Marcia de Moraes

GALERIA LEME

Over the past decade, Marcia de Moraes has developed colorful, abstract drawings that explore coexistence, investigating and negotiating dichotomies such as vacuity and solidity, constriction and expansion, corporeality and abstraction, neurosis and calmness. Her use of similar recurring patterns, inspired by objects she photographs, has forged a recognizable visual lexicon that includes shapes reminiscent of abstracted tongues, teeth, eggs, leaves, vines, cylinders, cords, and spheres. This exhibition featured collages and visceral ceramic sculptures alongside her drawings, whose expansive energy seemed to erupt from the picture plane and splinter into three dimensions. The show's title, "*História do Olho*" (Story of the Eye), taken from Georges Bataille's explicitly pornographic novel of 1928, drew attention to the visceral and erotic qualities of the three groups of works on view.

Six drawings hung side by side formed a continuous yet skewed forty-nine-foot lineup along one of the gallery's walls. Displayed at varying heights, these framed works abutted one another, forming one large drawing installation—an immense abstracted body of a fragmented psyche in distress. All of these drawings were diptychs, except for the triptych *As ondas* (The Waves), 2017. With a flurry of multicolored patterns intersected by spheres, fang- and tonguelike shapes, and countless unpainted linear forms that rushed across and divided up the horizontal rectangle, the work's ascending and descending rhythms echoed its title, suggesting a fragmented and fluctuating emotional state. The frenetic lines of de Moraes's large drawings end only because they meet the edges of the paper, suggesting they could expand far beyond those limits, engulfing and contaminating surrounding areas like a chronic disease.

In 2014, de Moraes began cutting up drawings she deemed unsuccessful and using the pieces to build collages that are significantly more compact than the original drawings. But her most recent collages are not made from mistakes: The artist now makes drawings exclusively for the purpose of making collages from them, thus adding complexity to the structure of these works and to the articulation of the layered fragments used to build them. The collage *Luas azuis* (Blue Moons), 2018, for example, has a central circular opening that reveals interlocking colored shapes and superimposed planes several layers deep, emphasizing its three-dimensional quality.

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The sculptures that de Moraes has recently begun making further heightened the tension between psyche and body in the show. Exhibited near her collages, they gave the impression that bits had burst out of the picture plane and taken sculptural form. Painted in glossy enamel, these ten colorful ceramic pieces were displayed on individual plinths of varying heights, echoing the fluctuations seen in the drawing installation. In several works, cords of clay physically penetrated cylinders, for instance in *Os tubos ou a mão* (The Tubes or the Hand), 2018. In *O Olho* (The Eye), 2018, shapes reminiscent of tongues emerged from orifices and cords wrapped themselves around the predominantly oval volume, giving the work a carnality echoing Bataille's lubricious tale. But for de Moraes, any narrative remains implicit. She affirms the primacy of the image; her "story of the eye" ultimately has to do with the experiences of seeing that art can offer.

— Camila Belchior