

portfolio - 2024

Christina Elias



With a solid practice in the fields of performance and contemporary dance, with emphasis on butoh, Elias built for herself a body that unequivocally operates as an existential territory and space of creation, putting dualisms such as body and spirit, nature and culture, instinct and language on a collision course. Through performances, videos and photo performances, the artist creates a work structured around the body and image, and crossed by concerns related to domesticity, eroticism and spirituality. In this core of questions raised by the works, we find resonances and dialogues with the production of artists from previous generations, such as Letícia Parente, Sônia Andrade and Márcia X", Ícaro Ferraz Vidal, curator of the solo exhibition by Christina Elias at LONA Galeria (Sao Paulo, 2023).

Christina Elias

Visual artist, performer and choreographer. São Paulo, 1978.

She works on the borders between dance, visual arts and literature. In her process, movement performance expands to other media: photography, video, installation and other art objects are expansions of her practice and discourse of the body, which develops from contemporary dance and Butoh. Her research involves language, its various means and its constructions and deconstructions. Her main themes are the passage of time, the perishing of the body and objects, the Feminine and its relations with everyday domestic time and subjective time. She carried out several solo and relational projects in museums and galleries in Brazil and Europe, such as Museu da Língua Portuguesa (São Paulo), MAM-SP, MIS-SP, MAC-USP, MAXXI Roma, Studio Stefania Miscetti (Rome), Radialsystem (Berlin), Uferstudios (Berlin) between others. She participated in performance and dance festivals in Brazil, Europe and North America such as PLATFORMA BERLIN, DANCE EM FOCO RIO DE JANEIRO, MIRADA IBERO AMERICAN FESTIVAL OF PERFORMATIVE ARTS SESC SANTOS (BRAZIL), BUMP'N GRIND TORONTO and received some important awards such as FUNARTE WOMEN IN VISUAL ARTS, Aldir Blanc - PROAC for CAREER HISTORY among others. MASTER in Movement Studies from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (London, 2011). DOCTORATE in Design from Universidade Anhembi Morumbi X (Sao Paulo, 2020). Post-Doctorate in Communication and Semiotics - Body Arts from the Pontifical Catholic University (PUC-SP, 2021). She was a trainee assistant director to choreographer Sasha Walz in the creation of the dance opera Matzukaze (2010) and has collaborated and studied with several Butoh artists such as Minako Seki and Yuko Kaseki (Berlin) and Tetsuro Fukuhara (Tokyo). Recently, she has continued her performance research at CEM-Centro em Movimento (Lisbon). She has works in some private and public collections such as the Luciano Benetton collection, the Museum of Contemporary Art of the University of São Paulo (MAC-USP), the Ribeirão Preto Art Museum (MARP) and the University Art Museum of the Federal University of Uberlândia (MUNA).

[Website](#)

[Instagram](#)

Performances

HERE & THERE [or Somewhere InBetween] (2011)

Video performance - [Trailer](#) - [Versão integral](#)

Duration: 17 minutes

Direction/Concept/Text: Christina Elias

Performance: Anca Huma

Video: Virgis Puodziunas

Set Design: Annisa Jabour

Radialsystem, Berlin, 2011

Studio K77, Berlin, 2012

Boddinale, Loophole Berlin, 2013

Festival Dança Em Foco, RJ, 2016



Photo: Virgis Puodziunas

HERE & THERE [or Somewhere InBetween]



Photos: Virgis Puodziunas

Here and There [or Somewhere Inbetween] began with a series of interviews with immigrant women. Despite the diversity of sociocultural contexts and geographical origins of each of them, a similar basic structure was visible in each of its paths: the inevitability of the “journey” and the confinement in one’s own body as protection against others and the outside world. The result was a mosaic of seven fragments of stories that together make sense as a whole. The choreography reflects these same principles: an endless play between dualities as within and outside, center and surface, masculine and feminine, circular and linear, self and non-self, forward and back... The main question that arises in this work is how to approach performatively the place where the diverse feminines meet.

Phonetic fragments of a self (2014)

Audiovisual and movement installation - [Video](#) - [Trailer](#)

Direction/Concept/Text: Christina Elias

Performance: Corposignalizing (collective of deaf performers)

Video: César Meneghetti

Music: Yuko Matsuyama and Leigh Thomas

FUNARTE Women in Visual Arts Award (2013)

Plataforma-Berlin Festival (2013)

UFER Studios/ADA Studio Berlin (2013)

MIS - São Paulo (2014)

MAM - São Paulo (2014)

Casa Guilherme de Almeida (2015)



Photos: César Meneghetti

Phonetic fragments of a self



Photo: César Meneghetti

"Phonetic Fragments of a (Self)" is a performance and audiovisual installation, which addresses the limits of communication through translations and re-translations of Clarice Lispector, "The Passion according to G.H.". Text fragments in Portuguese, Italian, English and German make up a soundscape that during the live event is "retranslated" by deaf performers into a silent lexicon of movement, by a video artist into images and by a sound artist into abstract sounds. The creative process of "Phonetic Fragments of a (Self)" starts from the re-creation of the word through the language of signs and their subsequent artistic and performative treatment in performance workshops and movement.

Music Box (2017 - 2023)

Video

Video recording: Giona Ferrara

Paço das Artes Project Season (2017)

Studio Stefania Miscetti (Rome, 2018)

Artech Portugal (2019)

MUNA (University Art Museum – UFU, Uberlândia, 2020)

Sarau Taz (São Paulo, 2021)

MIRADA-Ibero-American Performing Arts Festival (SESC-Santos, 2022)

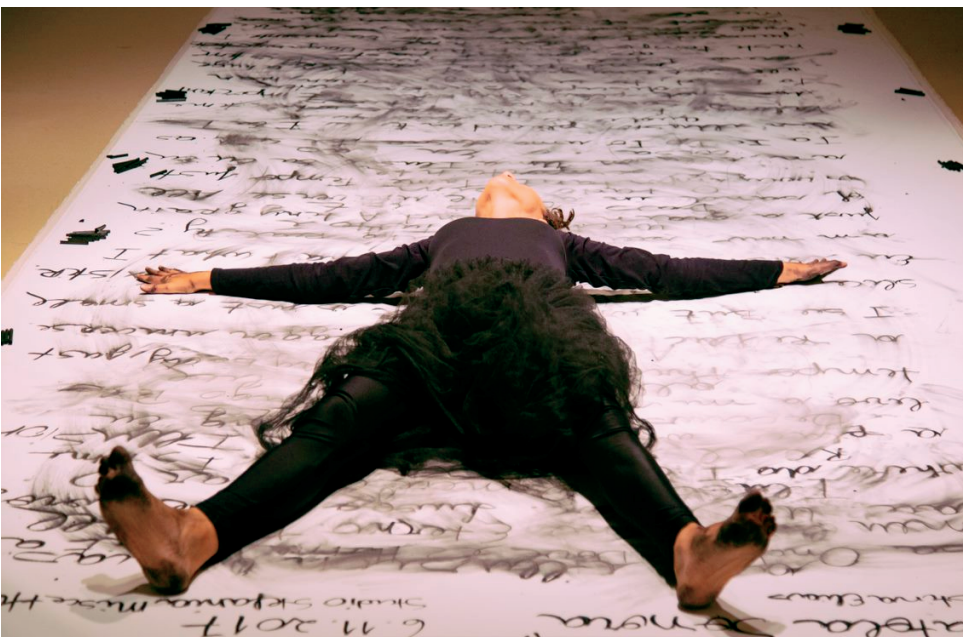
LUX Performance Festival (São Paulo, 2022)

Portuguese Language Museum (São Paulo, 2023)



Photo: Morteza Nazeri

Music Box



Photos: Morteza Nazeri

In Music Box (performance), Christina Elias writes a diary in real time on a large canvas. With each page that ends, she blurs the text with the movement of the body, in a process that repeats itself successively. In this work, two layers of expression are explored: in one, the woman who offers the observer what he is used to receiving – the objectified exposure of a woman inside a box; and, in another, the creation of an intimate, safe and protected space, where words acquire physicality through silent movement of the body.

Infinite Performance (2019)

Video performance - Full version

Duration: 8 minutes, loop

Camera: Christina Elias

Editing: César Meneghetti

Supernova Arts (São Paulo)

LONA gallery (São Paulo)

Absent body, solo by Christina Elias MUNA-UFU (Uberlândia), 2020



Walking on a floor of dried flowers. Without wanting to get to a specific place or produce something. While walking, the artist gives voice to what she feels. Walking as a concept trigger. Video performance inspired by the poem "Walking Meditation" by Thich Nath Hahn.

Skin (2019)

Video performance, HD - [Full version](#)

Duration: 20 minutes

Camera/Video editing: Karla da Costa

ARTECH (Braga, Portugal, 2019)

Absent body (individual MUNA-UFU 2020)

MAC-USP Collection



The skin as a film that, at the same time, separates and connects the body and the environment. What is the self? One unit finished, molded into a format that excludes all which is outside the limits of epidermis? Or a continuous process of exchanges and intercontamination between Inside and outside, between the individual and the other?

Photos: Karla da Costa

Every Woman (2020)

Video performance -[Full version](#)

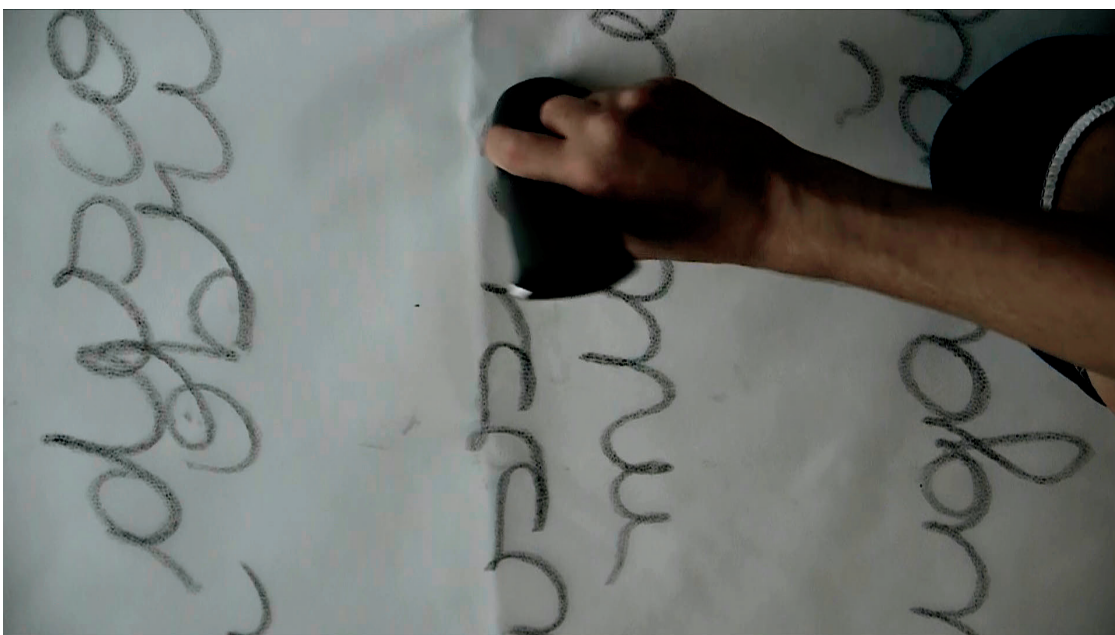
Duration: 8 minutes

Video: César Meneghetti

Paço das Artes, 2020

Absent body (individual MUNA-UFU 2020)

Women essence (Unesco, Rome, 2020)



Photos: César Meneghetti

Every Woman



Photo: César Meneghetti

Problematizing themes such as gender, identity and society, this work places the body of women in a place where opposites try to coexist: an individual body and a political/collective; the right to the visibility of the naked body and the danger of exploiting this same nudity; a body that fits into a reality already written by social traditions, cultural, family... and a body that searches, in and on these same words, to weave its own text.

Carmen (2020)

Video performance – [Full version](#)

Duration: 8 minutes

Camera and video editing: Cesar Meneghetti

Music: Leigh Thomas

Audio editing: Robert Cummings

MARP exhibition season (Ribeirão Preto), 2020

Absent body, solo by Christina Elias MUNA-UFU (Uberlândia), 2020

Rome Art Fair, 2020

Venice Art Fair, 2020

London Art Fair, 2020

Work belonging to the MARP collection



Photos: César Meneghetti

Addressing three current themes, the pandemic, migrations and, as a result of these, the conflict between the collective good and the good individual – Christina Elias tells in images, text and movement the story of his great-grandmother Carmen who, as a newborn, embarked on an immigrant ship from Granada (Spain) to Brazil. It was Spanish flu season and, in the Atlantic, Carmen had a fever. Her mother, who would have to throw her to the sea, hid with her in the hold of the ship throughout the trip. Upon arriving on Brazilian land, Carmen was registered with a different name than hers. She lost her original name, but gained the chance to start over.

I don't forget that I forgot (2020)

Video performance, HD - [Full version](#)

Duration: 16 minutes

camera: César Meneghetti

Editing: Cristina Elias

Music: Leigh Thomas

Production: FUNARTE

FUNARTE Respirarte Award 2020



Photos: César Meneghetti

I don't forget that I forgot



Photo: César Meneghetti

In the video performance "I don't forget that I forgot" (2020), Christina Elias reinterprets in different languages – performance, dance, image, spoken and written text – the short story "The woman who killed the fish" (1968) by Clarice Lispector. In this (supposedly children's) text, Clarice makes public the internal world of a woman who, forgetting to feed the fish entrusted to her, ends up "accidentally" killing them. Forgiveness and guilt, love and violence are themes that permeate Clarice's text and that make up the ground on which Christina transmutes words into gestures.

By a Thread (2022)

Performance - Video recording

Music: Yuko Matsuyama

Historic center of São Paulo – LUX art space (2022)

NowHere Lisboa (2023)



Photo: Helena Marc

By a Thread



Photo: César Meneghetti



Photo: César Meneghetti



Photo: Helena Marc

In "By a Thread", the line of writing turns into knitting. Fingers on needles. The body is a platform for bonds to occur. Knots are tied to successive other knots forming a visceral braid that gives birth to obscured narratives of women. Words are stitched to words in a collective process of creating discourse.

Make up (2023)

Performance - Full Version

Duration: 20 minutes

"As Palavras e as Visceras", solo show at Lona Galeria (São Paulo), 2023

"Nenhumlugaragora", collective exhibition, Ed. Vera (São Paulo), 2023



Make up



Make up: "The act of making small changes to something to make its appearance more attractive. Act to disguise something." In "Make up", Christina Elias paints a canvas with pencils eyes, lipstick and blush, displacing this ritual performed daily by women in their homes to the political territory of the female body.

One Minute Diaries (2015 - 2023)

Short video performances - [Collection of videos](#)

VERBO Festival of performances (Red gallery), 2015

Paço das Artes project season (São Paulo), 2018

PROAC 05/2023 holding new performances, 2023



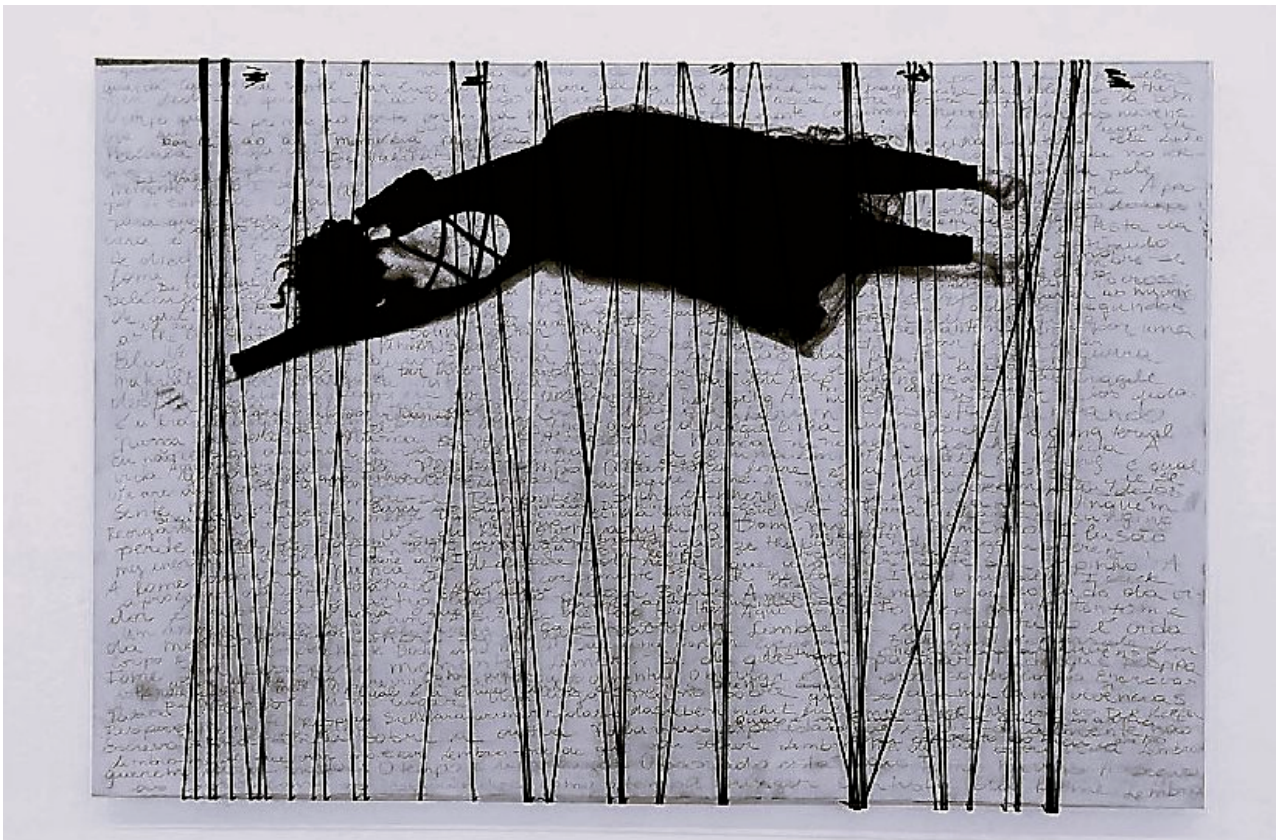
In this series of mini video-performances, the written or spoken text works as a soundtrack for the visual narrative, seeking to concentrate on audiovisual works of approx. one minute, several pages of a diary, several days of a life. This is of the metaphor of the situation of a woman, who, "boxed" in a closed system, looks for loopholes in that same system to undermine it through the use of their own structures. It is also a critique of the demands of a society of consumption in which everything must be reproducible, marketable, capable of appropriation and, above all, function as an economic good. The One-Minute Diary reproduces the conception of time in capitalism that suggests the consumption of the greatest amount of items possible within a limited time frame: quick consumption, express. Everything in one Minute.

Objects

To hold the Clouds (2017)

Residual object from the performance "Music Box"

Photographic print in acrylic on canvas written in charcoal. 80 x 120cm



Unborn Reality (2017)

Residual object from the performance "Music Box"
Photographic print in acrylic on canvas written in charcoal.
30 canvases 15 x 15 cm





Remains of Myself (2018 - 2023)

Residual objects from the "Music Box" performances

Charcoal on canvas

300 x 200cm



Clock (2018)

Residual object from the video performance "Objects of everyday life" Photographic print in acrylic on canvas written in charcoal.
20 x 20cm



Infinite Performance (2020)

Residual object from the video performance "Infinite Performance"
Photography, mineral pigment fine art print on Hahnemülle paper
93 x 123 cm



Reread (2021)

Residual object from the performance "Absent body: at night I cry"

Dry pastel on parchment paper

144 x 110 cm



Aerial 2 (2021)

Residual object from the performance "Absent body: at night I cry"

Dry pastel on parchment paper

100 x 108 cm

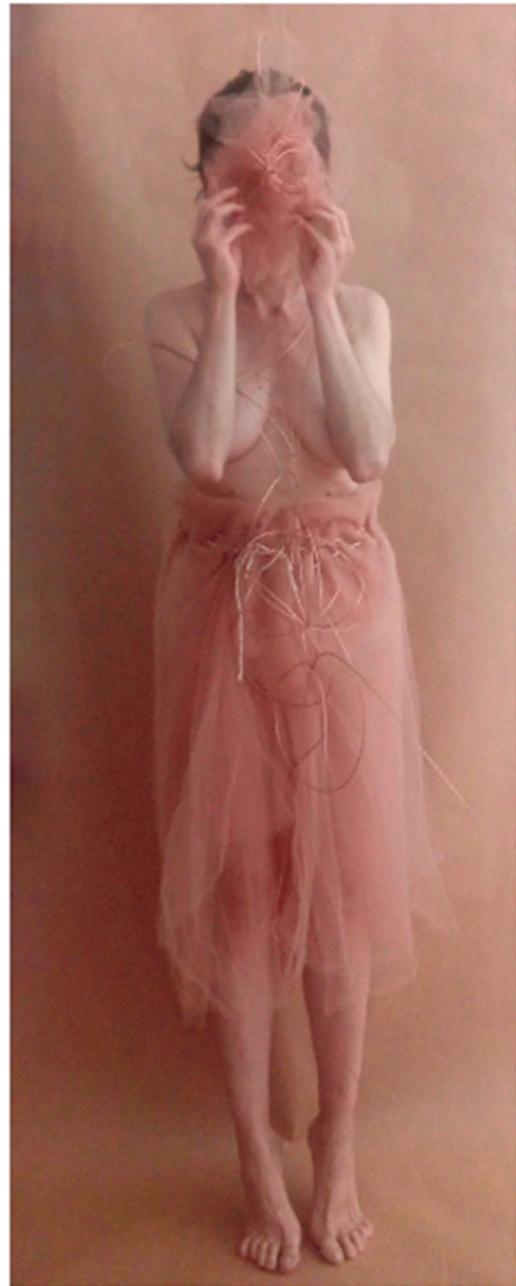


Life in Pink (2023)

Photoperformance

Photographic printing on paper

40x30cm



Life in Pink rescues the physical and metaphorical language of classical Ballet stored in the artist's body during long years of training to pose a series of questions and reflections on behavioral patterns, mainly related to gender, that go far beyond dance techniques: A angel woman, light, fragile, abstract and floating far from the ground.

Cows (2023)

Photoperformance

Fine art print, mineral pigment on canvas

85 x 60cm (each)



Cobra (2023)

Finger knitting, recyclable mesh, acrylic, Jatobá, jute thread
172 x 70 cm





Self-portrait (2024)

Tulle, steel cable, hanger, jute thread, paper box 145 x 68 cm



Ballet shoes (2024)

Finger knitting, synthetic wool, ballet shoes, elastic and pin
22 x 13 x 7cm



Awards

2013 FUNARTE – Women in Visual Arts

2020 FUNARTE Respirarte Visual Arts

2020 Aldir Blanc PROAC Visual Arts by Career history

2020 Bump'n Grind Video and Performance Festival (Toronto, Canada). Best movie activist (for the work Toda Mulher, 2020)

Public collections

MAC USP – Museum of Contemporary Art at the University of SP

MARP – Ribeirão Preto Art Museum

MunA – University Art Museum of the Federal University of Uberlândia

Private Collections

Luciano Benetton Collection (Italy)

Isadora Cohen (Brazil)

Leonardo Lin (Brazil)

Educations

2011–2012 Master in Movement Studies at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (University of London, United Kingdom)

2015–2020 PhD in Design from Anhembi Morumbi University (São Paulo)

2021 – Post-Doc PUC São Paulo Communication and Semiotics – Art, Activism and Feminism

Solo exhibitions

2023 Writing with Exu. Write with Iansã. Performance (SESC POMPEIA, São Paulo).

2023 Words and viscera. LONA gallery (São Paulo).

2023 Music box. Museum of the Portuguese Language (São Paulo)

2022 The Book of Time. LUX art space (São Paulo)

2021 At night I cry. CLAREIRA MAC-USP (Museum of Contemporary Art of University of Sao Paulo)

2020 Absent Body. MUNA (University Art Museum – Federal University of Uberlândia)

2020 Cristina Elias: Every Woman. Paço das Artes, São Paulo

2017 REGISTRATION: Performance, objects and video. Paço das Artes, SP. Season Projects 2017.

2017 Cristina Elias. Music Box. Studio Stefania Miscetti, Rome

2015 PER-FORMARSI: L'AZIONE COME FORMA DI PERCEZIONE. MAXXI National Museum of 21st Century Art, Rome

2014 PHONETIC FRAGMENTS OF A (SI) Funarte Women in Visual Arts Award

2013 MAM (São Paulo Museum of Modern Art); MIS (Museum of Image and Sound, São Paulo)

2011 Here and There [or Somewhere InBetween], Radial System, Berlin

2009 SUSPENDED EPIPHANY, Casa Fernando Pessoa, Lisbon

2006–2007 PASSAGENS DE LISBON, High Commission for Immigration and Dialogue Intercultural, Lisbon

Group exhibitions

2023 Nowhere Now (VERA Building, São Paulo)

2022 From drawing the line to superficiality (Lona Galeria, São Paulo)

2022 Unknown (LONA gallery, São Paulo)

2022 The body language (The room, Venice)

2022 Open archive (Lona Galeria, São Paulo)

2021 Venice International Art Fair (The Room, Venice)

2021 London Contemporary Art Fair (The Line, London)

2021 Rome International Art Fair (Medina Art Gallery, Rome)

2021 MARP Ribeirão Preto Art Museum – Exhibition season.

2021 Do you see me? Are you listening me? Digital Narratives. (Casa Niemeyer, Brasília).

2020 Interações I (Lona Galeria, São Paulo)

2020 Women Essence (MUSA ARTS SPACE / UNESCO, Rome).

2020 Women on stage (Paço das Artes, São Paulo).

2018 Retrotopias (Edifício Madalena Laura, São Paulo).

2018 Asymmetric Crossings: Text and Movement (Ateliê Alê, São Paulo).

2018 BURGOS #2 (FUNARTE, São Paulo).

Performance and Video Festivals

2013 Plataforma–Berlin, Uferstudios, Berlin.

2013 Boddinale – International Experimental Video Festival, Loophole, Berlin.

2015 VERBO, Galeria Vermelho, São Paulo.

2015 Transfusion. Casa Guilherme de Almeida Museum, São Paulo.

2015 Ada Studio / Uferstudios, Berlin. Performance season.

2016 Dança em Foco, Rio de Janeiro.

2018 SheDevil, Studio Stefania Miscetti, Rome.

2020 Bump'n Grind Film and Performance Festival, Toronto.

2022 PerformAR Performance Festival (São Paulo)

2022 LUX Performance Festival (São Paulo)

2022 MIRADA Ibero–American Performing Arts Festival (SESC, Santos)

Critical Texts and Essays

Article with Priscila Arantes about the rewritings of Christina Elias

Entrevista Com Luca Curci (Curador Itália)

Critical Text by JAMIL CHADE

Article by Christina Elias about her artistic research in the magazine Danza e Ricerca do Dept. of Arts at the University of Bologna

Academic articles

RRewritings of the body. USP manuscript.

Looks of the invisible: Flesh, ornament, baroque and zen in Kimiko Yoshida's self-portraits

Suspending Space and Time: The body seen through the lens of the Japanese concept of Ma

Suspending Space and Time: The body through the lens of the Japanese Concept of Ma

Fabulating the Japanese Body Inside and Beyond Performance and Choreography Through Butoh

WORDS AND VISCERA

text by Ícaro Ferraz Vidal Jr (2023)

*An inhabited house ceases to be a space
to become what surrounds
a body, which is different.*

Gonçalo M. Tavares [i]

Christina Elias' creative processes are inscribed on the thresholds between the body and the language. This reading key to the works gathered here has little to do with the recognition of the artist's body and her writing, observable in some of the works that are part of this, which is his first solo exhibition at Lona Galeria (São Paulo). Such diagnosis emerges, more deeply, from a listening to this poetics, in which tensions stand out that contemporary thought never tires of trying to overcome, but which remain polarized in the pairs of body and spirit, nature and culture, instinct and language.

With a solid practice in the fields of performance and contemporary dance, with a strong focus on butoh, Elias built for herself a body that operates unequivocally as existential territory and space of creation, placing the dualisms mentioned above. Through performances, videos and photo performances, the artist creates a work structured around the body and image, and crossed by concerns related to domesticity, eroticism and spirituality. In this core of questions raised by the works, it is to notice resonances and dialogues with the production of artists from previous generations, such as Letícia Parente, Sônia Andrade and Marcia X.

If the languages of performance, video and photo performance often provide for the body a status of catalyst for the work, it is necessary to recognize that such statute expands in Elias's poetics and affects, in a more or less evident way, about all of her production. On the ground floor of the gallery we brought together an unprecedented set of objects produced from different procedures and materials, but which preserve the inscription of the artist's body as nucleus: a body that bifurcates, unfolding on a representational plane and another on a crudely material level.

The garments, knitwear and assemblages hanging on hangers or in frames allude to the absent, ghostly and, at times, eviscerated body of the artist. But these pieces are, at the same time, residuals from the profoundly bodily doing that defines the practice of Elias. Thus, we can claim that the body is not simply a theme that repeats itself in the artist's production; it is, more profoundly, an anchorage contiguous to the materiality of the world and which is inscribed, not without friction, on the materials that they remain and display themselves in front of the public, when the action fades away.

The intestine-necklaces knitted by the artist with her own fingers preserve in its structure subtle variations in strength and tension of the threads, resulting from the duration the process of making the pieces itself. They are, ultimately, condensations of time, body and matter. This is certainly one of the most outstanding aspects of Elias's poetics. More evident in the work that we know results from actions performance, this aspect becomes radical when we think that every act, in the work of Christina, is performative: either because it operates a transformation in the space where the work happens – as I saw in the recent presentation of the work *Music Box* at Estação da Luz/ Museum of Portuguese Language (Sao Paulo) – whether because it transforms the artist herself, through repetition of gestures that resembles the chanting of mantras, modulating their conscience.

The relationship established by Elias with scripture testifies to this modulation of consciousness associated with the progressive suppression of the distances that separate the body, the nature and instinct of spirit, culture and language. Some performances from artists begin with canvas or blank paper on the floor and writing repetitive use of the same word – pain, for example, in *Maquiagem n. 1* – or the opening of the floodgates of the verb that, poured by the body onto the surface, for hours on end, it reaches illegibility – as in *Self-Portrait, Cows or Fish*. In one case as in the other, the ability to discern signifiers, fundamental to communication, becomes blunted, in favor of the affective vertigo of the real of the body and its durations.

The tensions between the intimate character of the elaboration of affections from which a body results, and the public nature of the exhibition of this work and its residues are explored, with cunning, by Elias. The signs and materialities around which the artist's body transits and stumbles while creating, remind us, in their banal domesticity, of the investments of power over women's bodies, now privatized under the pater families, sometimes public and subject to all types of violence. The imaginary house we remitting objects and images of Elias does not encapsulate or protect his body; she prolongs and enhances.

In the fine articulation that operates between the body, the home and language, Christina Elias builds a work that refuses discursivity and denunciation as political operators of her poetics, which is, therefore, no less feminist. Without neglecting the responsibility implied in the artistic gesture of bringing new images and objects to the public sphere, Elias opts for the development of strategies that allow us to grope the absurdity of our existence, made of viscera and words. The house is a residue: instinct and language.

[i] TAVARES, Gonçalo M. *Atlas of the body and imagination: theory, fragments and images..* Porto Alegre: Dublinense, 2021.

Christina Elias

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