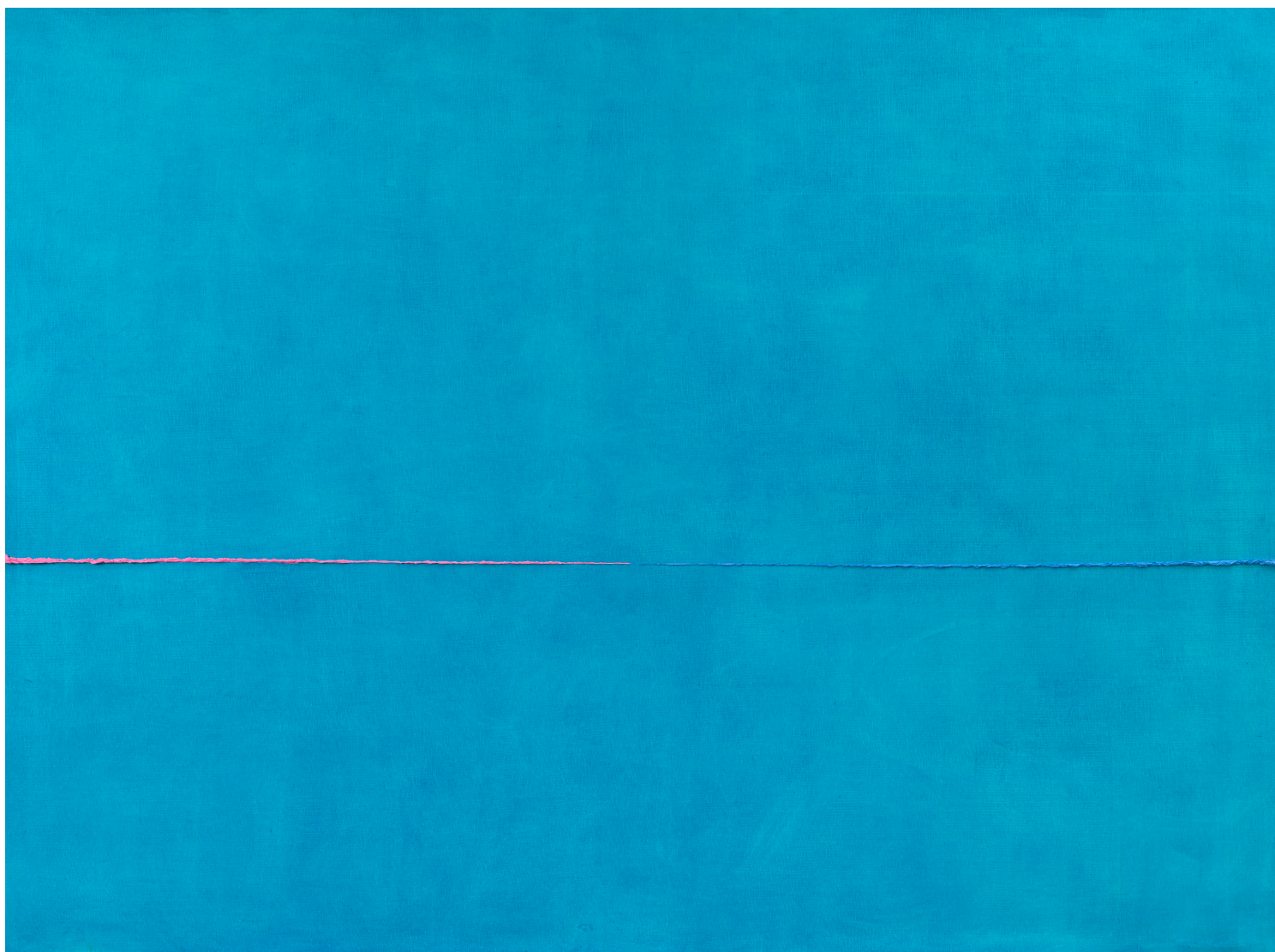


INHABITED

28.05.26 — 17.07.26

PAULO MONTEIRO



L'APPARTEMENT

THEA MONTAUTI d'HARCOURT LYGINOS

Laís Amaral, Jaider Esbell, Sonia Gomes, Amadeo Luciano Lorenzato, Mestre Didi, Paulo Monteiro, Antonio Oba, Heitor dos Prazeres, Chico da Silva, Tadáskia, Rubem Valentim.

INHABITED

28.05 – 17.07.2026

The group exhibition, INHABITED, at L'Appartement Gallery brings together the work of eleven Brazilian artists active across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, tracing a set of shared concerns that persist through time: the relationship between form and belief, material and memory, abstraction

and lived experience. The central idea of the exhibition is that form is never neutral in the Brazilian context. It is always inhabited by something invisible: a belief system, a memory, a lived experience. Across painting, sculpture, and assemblage, form in the Brazilian context operates as a carrier of meaning—shaped by Afro-Brazilian religions, Indigenous cosmologies, and everyday experience. It becomes a site where material and immaterial dimensions intersect, where the visible holds within it systems of belief, ritual, and memory.

Rather than tracing a linear trajectory from modern to contemporary, INHABITED reveals a set of ongoing conversations. Bringing into dialogue key representatives of modern Brazilian art with contemporary artists who draw from and reactivate this legacy, the exhibition considers how artistic practices in Brazil are deeply intertwined with spiritual, cosmological, and vernacular systems of knowledge.

In the works of Mestre Didi and Rubem Valentim, abstraction becomes a structured spiritual language. Drawing from Candomblé and Yoruba symbolic systems, their practices transform geometry into a coded vocabulary, where repetition, rhythm, and sign articulate systems of belief. Valentim, in particular, took the free-flowing and syncretic universe of popular and spiritual traditions as a starting point to develop a precise and rigorous visual language. Integrating symbols such as the arrow, triangle, circle, and the double-edged axe associated with Candomblé deities, he translated sacred emblems into a refined geometric lexicon.

In his hands, these forms—removed from their ritual context—are reorganised into compositions of striking clarity, where colour and structure attain a sense of balance between the rational and the metaphysical. A deeply religious man who described himself as an “artist-priest,” Valentim understood his practice as a form of spiritual transmission. His paintings, sculptures, and reliefs become sites where making itself is an act of belief—where, as he stated, “there is no salvation outside of making.” Through this process, geometry becomes not only a formal device but a vehicle for spiritual elevation, where symbolic systems are both preserved and transformed. This lineage finds a contemporary resonance in the work of Antonio Obá, whose practice similarly engages with ritual, symbolism, and the body as sites of spiritual and cultural inscription, reactivating religious imagery within a critical and deeply personal framework.

This relationship between image and cosmology extends into the work of Jaider Esbell and Tadáskia. Engaging with Indigenous and Afro-diasporic perspectives, their practices collapse distinctions between figuration and abstraction, constructing images that operate simultaneously as narrative, map, and symbolic field. Their works propose other ways of seeing and understanding the world, grounded in relational and non-Western epistemologies, where the spiritual and the material are inseparable.

Alongside these practices, artists such as Chico da Silva, Heitor dos Prazeres, and Amadeo Luciano Lorenzato articulate forms of vernacular modernity. Developed outside dominant art historical frameworks, their works draw from landscape, imagination, and daily life, yet are structured through pattern, repetition, and intuitive systems. In their hands, modernism becomes something lived rather than theorised—rooted in experience rather than ideology, and often shaped by an underlying symbolic and spiritual sensibility embedded in everyday life.

Material itself becomes a site of memory in the work of Sonia Gomes and Laís Amaral. Through processes of accumulation, layering, and transformation, their practices foreground tactility and making as forms of knowledge. Fabric, pigment, and surface retain traces of gesture and time, carrying histories that are both personal and collective, where material becomes a vessel for memory, affect, and spiritual resonance. In parallel, the work of Paulo Monteiro explores the tension between materiality and form through a more restrained and introspective language, where subtle shifts in surface, line, and colour evoke a contemplative engagement with painting as both object and process.

Across these diverse practices, recurring themes emerge: the persistence of symbolic systems, the inseparability of material and meaning, and the continuity of cultural knowledge across generations. What connects these artists is not a shared style, but a shared understanding of form as something inhabited—by memory, by spirituality, and by lived experience.

“

I use somewhat the same strategy in physical space and on paper [...] It's abstract, but it's an element in space that obeys a certain strategy, the same one I use in drawing

”

PAULO MONTEIRO

Paulo Monteiro (b. 1961, São Paulo, Brazil) develops a practice that moves fluidly between painting, drawing and sculpture, exploring the tension between material and form. His work is characterized by a reduced visual language, where marks, lines and volumes emerge through processes of repetition and transformation.

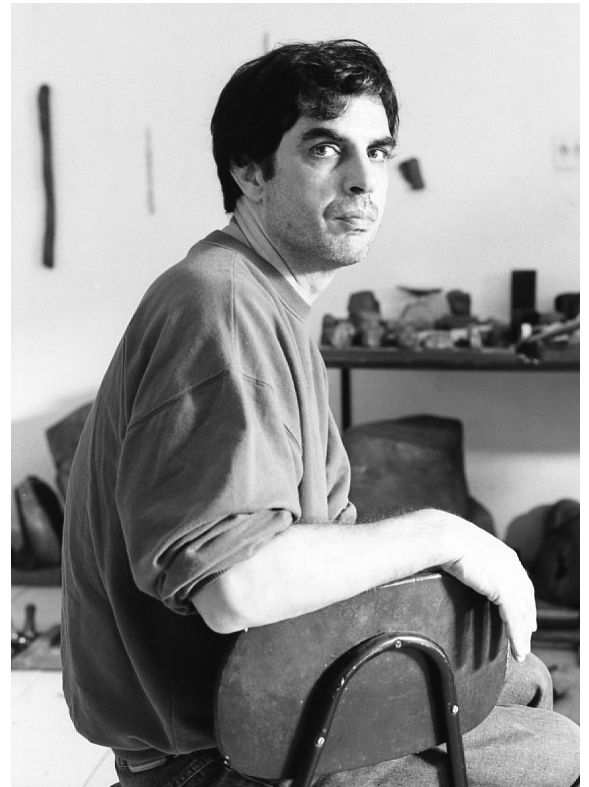
Monteiro studied at Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado (FAAP) in São Paulo and was a key member of the Casa 7 group during the 1980s, alongside artists such as Carlito Carvalhosa and Nuno Ramos. This period marked a return to expressive painting in Brazil, positioning gesture and materiality at the center of artistic production in response to earlier conceptual tendencies.

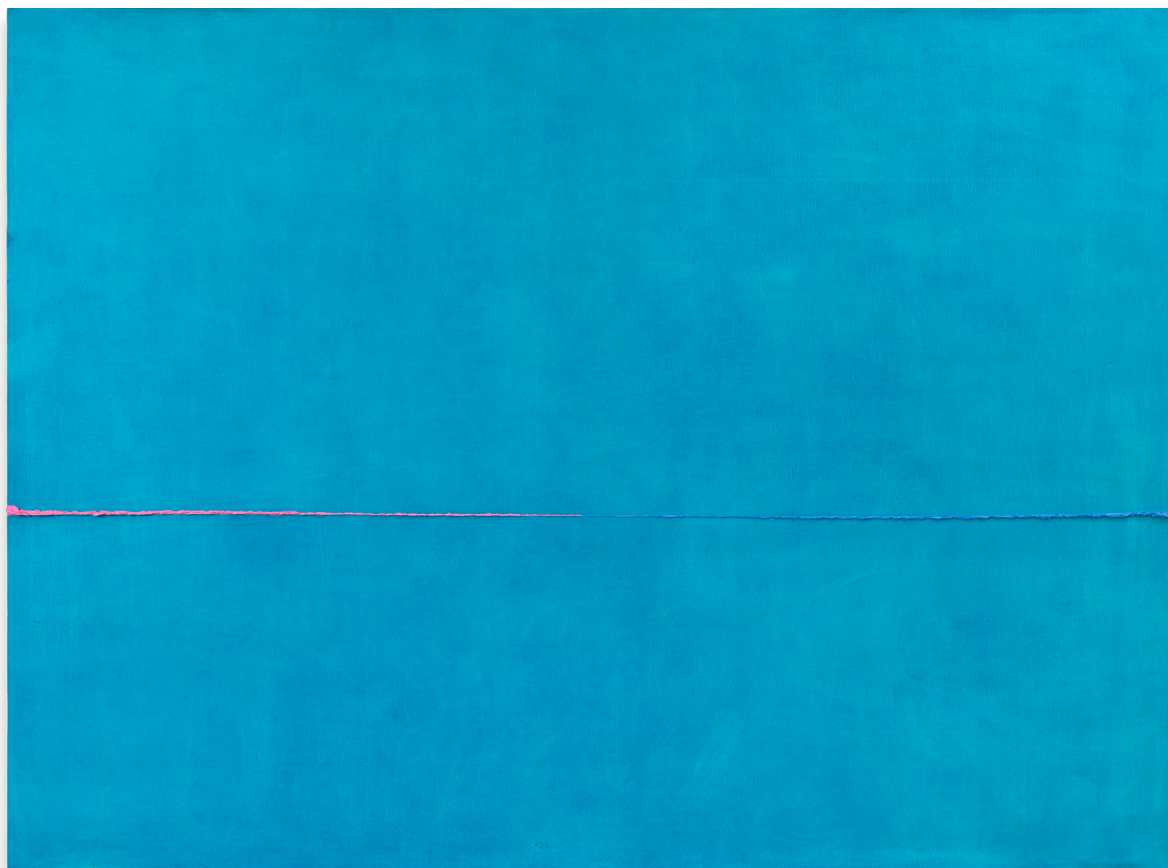
Across his practice, Monteiro often works with modest materials such as paper, plaster, bronze or canvas, allowing their physical properties to guide the development of each piece. In recent decades, Monteiro has refined a quieter, more introspective approach, emphasizing balance, rhythm and the presence of the void. His works suggest a process of accumulation and subtraction, where each gesture carries both immediacy and restraint.

His work has been widely exhibited in Brazil and internationally, including solo and group exhibitions at institutions such as the Pinacoteca de São Paulo, the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo and the Museu de Arte do Rio.

He has also participated in major exhibitions including the São Paulo Biennial, contributing to ongoing dialogues around abstraction and materiality in contemporary art. Monteiro's work is held in important public and private collections, both in Brazil and abroad.

Paulo MONTEIRO





Paulo **MONTEIRO**

Sem título [Untitled], 2015

Oil on canvas

145 x 185 cm

57 1/8 x 72 7/8 in.

(PMO-01)

Price (excl. VAT): 75'000 ^{USD}

Sem título, 2015 is representative of Paulo Monteiro's mature painting practice, in which the artist reduces visual elements to minimal compositional structures. Executed in oil on canvas, the work is organized through a largely monochromatic field interrupted by a single horizontal line, establishing a clear yet restrained spatial division.

Monteiro's work has been consistently defined by an economy of means and a focus on gesture as a structuring principle. Since the 2000s, his paintings have moved toward increasingly simplified compositions, often built from limited chromatic variation and minimal intervention, emphasizing subtle shifts in surface and tone rather than expressive mark-making.

In **Sem título, 2015** the horizontal line functions as both a formal and perceptual device. It introduces a point of tension within the otherwise continuous field, while also suggesting a division that can be read spatially, though not fully resolved. This strategy aligns with Monteiro's broader interest in the boundaries of painting—where distinctions between figure and ground, surface and depth, or presence and absence remain deliberately ambiguous.

The restrained composition reflects a broader tendency in his practice to treat painting as a unified whole rather than a composition of discrete elements. His works are often described as operating through minimal, expressive gestures that condense visual information into a reduced formal language.

Within this context, **Sem título, 2015** can be understood as part of an investigation into the limits of pictorial reduction, where meaning is generated through slight variations, spatial tension, and the controlled use of line and color rather than through representational or narrative content.

Provenance

Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo

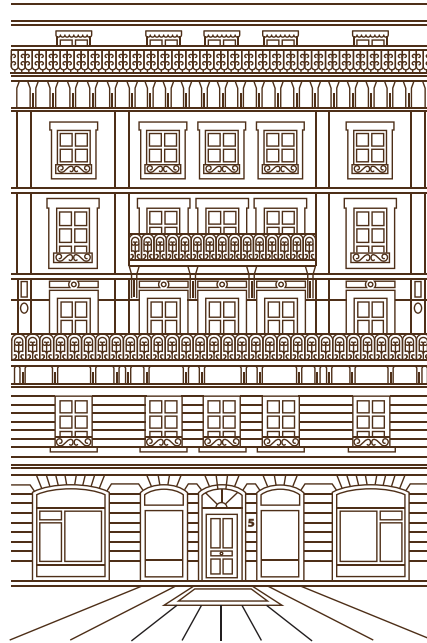
Private collection

Exhibited

Paulo Monteiro: The inside of distance, Mendes Wood DM,
São Paulo, 3 October - 7 November 2015

L'APPARTEMENT

THEA MONTAUTI d'HARCOURT LYGINOS



Our overarching ambition is to cultivate a dynamic community that engages both seasoned collectors and younger generations, while revitalising the Geneva art scene.

Founded by Thea Montauti d'Harcourt Lyginos, L'Appartement is a space dedicated to hosting focused exhibitions that highlight specific artists projects and dialogues.

Through diverse exhibitions, collaborations and off-site projects, L'Appartement Gallery, Geneva aims to create a dynamic podium for emerging and established artists worldwide and to create a dialogue between modern, contemporary art and design. At the core of the gallery's vision is the nurturing of emerging talents alongside historically significant artists.

Embracing a modern, hybrid gallery model, L'Appartement seeks to build connections between the art industry and other sectors, thus expanding the influence of art on diverse audiences. Nestled on the second floor of a historic building in Geneva, the gallery offers an intimate setting for collaborative initiatives, involving artists, international galleries and independent curators. Complementing the gallery's presence in Geneva, in July 2026, the gallery will host an off-site exhibition in the cycladic island of Antiparos, curated by Craig Burnett.