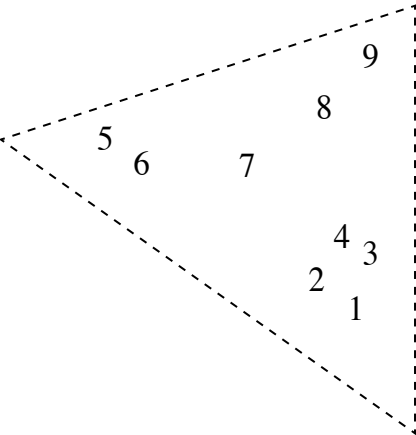


Maria Lira Marques

Araçuaí, MG, Brazil, 1945

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Untitled , 2024 | natural pigments on stone |
| 2 | Untitled , 2024 | |
| 3 | Untitled , 2021 | Courtesy of the artist |
| 4 | Untitled , 2024 | and Gomide&Co |
| 5 | Untitled , 2024 | |
| 6 | Untitled , 2021 | |
| 7 | Untitled , 2024 | |
| 8 | Untitled , 2024 | |
| 9 | Untitled , 2022 | |



Maria Lira Marques’s works celebrate the movements of nature and its eternal cycles of transfiguration. With nearly five decades of production, the artist uses ceramics and drawings made with natural pigments on paper and stones to depict intense natural phenomena and establish rich symbolism. Mineral landscapes, scenes from fauna and flora, elemental beings, and diverse hybridizations connect in the time of vital creation, revealing the ceaseless motion of life in expansion and eternal transformation. In this way, she translates the mystery that surrounds and constitutes us through a rare combination of elegance, humor, and precision. Her deep connection with the Vale do Jequitinhonha—where she was born, grew up, and still lives—is reflected in the creation of a vocabulary that is as broad as it is cohesive, as simple as it is complex, and which raises ecological and aesthetic questions from the Brazilian *sertão* [hinterlands]. The intense heat of the region manifests in the vibrant colors and gestures of her figures, highlighting the crucial moment when things transmute in response to the demands of life. In this sense,

the artist weaves echoes and presences of archaeological sites, Indigenous cultures, *quilombola* communities, and the successive occupations of this territory. Between the spontaneous revelation of matter and the affirmation of her Black and Indigenous identity, her work is also informed by historical issues, synthesizing the resistance and struggle of historically oppressed peoples. Through her pieces, the artist celebrates the strength and resilience of the cultural matrices of her formation, reflecting on the erasure faced by certain communities and reaffirming their roots as a source of inspiration and creative power.