

MAM São Paulo shows installation by artist Lenora de Barros in the Glass Room

*Retromemória [Retromemory] establishes a dialogue with Louise Bourgeois's work
Spider, which remained on view in the same space for 20 years*



*Retromemória, which the artist Lenora de Barros wrote with her right and left hands
simultaneously.*

Starting on April 2, the **Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo** presents the art installation **Retromemória**, a work by visual artist and poet **Lenora de Barros**, created especially for the museum's **Glass Room** at the invitation of the chief curator **Cauê Alves**. The installation establishes a direct dialogue with the work **Spider**, conceived by **Louise Bourgeois** in 1996, which was exhibited at **MAM São Paulo** for nearly 20 years in the same space, and has a close connection with the external area of the museum, in Ibirapuera Park, as with MAM's Sculpture Garden.

The images reflected on the mirrors placed near the words—which the artist wrote simultaneously with her right and left hands—are broken into syllables printed on vinyl forming the big metal spider, which reflects the memory of the place in face of its artistic dialogue with **Louise Bourgeois**. The work also comprises a sound installation that echoes the voice of the artist **Lenora de Barros** herself, repeatedly uttering the words “**memória**” [memory], “**aranha**” [spider] “**emaranha**” [entangle]. When intertwined, these words give rise to new sounds and meanings, like a web dominating the space. The word’s graphic and phonetic traits come close to the verbivocovisual dimension devised by the Irish poet **James Joyce**. The sound design is by composer and cultural producer **Cid Campos**.

The installation expresses the fragmented movement of memory through the use of the rearview mirror. The artist develops on the concept of retrovision, looking back in order to walk forward, the movement of coming and going, shaping representations and projecting lights around the room. **Retromemória** brings to the public the recent past, a moment that has passed, so one can look internally in the mirror and walk towards the future.

For the chief curator **Cauê Alves**, “at this moment, when MAM’s program features the second generation of modern art and geometric abstraction, Lenora de Barros makes us reflect on the works that have already been shown at the museum, helping us to overcome losses and face the challenges of the present.”

“The syllabic structure represents these memory fragments, and in the case of this work, it refers directly to the memory of Louise’s *Spider*. The expression in the longhand writing, in the projection of lights and reflections, in addition to the sound dimension created, form this web through the exhibition space,” reflects **Lenora de Barros**.

Bourgeois’s Spider

One of the famous spider sculptures created by Louise Bourgeois from the 1990s onwards, thus 1996 *Spider* arrived in Brazil in the same year it was created to be featured in the 23rd São Paulo International Biennial, curated by Nelson Aguilar (chief curator) and Agnaldo Farias (associate curator). The three-meter-tall sculpture occupied a special room in honor of the artist, whose curators were Jerry Gorovoy and Paulo Herkenhoff.

Acquired by Itaú Cultural, in the following year the work was shown in MAM São Paulo’s Glass Room, on a twenty-year loan agreement. The artist considered it the best exemplary among her spider sculptures. Other pieces belong to such collections as those of the Tate Modern (London) and the National Gallery (Washington).

During the years it was shown at MAM, the work always caught the attention of visitors and connected to the outside area of the museum as well as the surroundings of the Ibirapuera Park. In the 2003 edition of the show *Panorama da Arte Brasileira*, the artist Ernesto Neto struck a conversation with the Spider through the work *Nóós óvos a vida*.

In 2017, the *Spider* was sent by Itaú Cultural to the Easton Foundation, in New York, for study and restoration, in order to guarantee its longevity and allow it to be shown in different exhibition spaces. A year later, the sculpture returned to MAM for three months, before moving on to be exhibited in other Brazilian states. First, Itaú Cultural took it to Minas Gerais, where it was seen by the public at Inhotim's Mata Gallery. Afterwards, it was shipped to the Iberê Camargo Foundation, in Porto Alegre. In 2019, it went to the Museu Oscar Niemeyer, in Curitiba, and, in the same year, it made its way to the Museu de Arte do Rio (MAR).

Altogether, in these exhibitions, the sculpture was seen by more than 188,000 people. The plan to continue touring in 2020, starting in Fortaleza, was put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but is still on Itaú Cultural's plans. While it waits to continue its journey, the *Spider* is safely kept in Itaú Cultural's Collection.

About Lenora de Barros

Visual artist and poet, Lenora de Barros has a degree in Linguistics from the University of São Paulo (USP). She set out on her artistic career in the 1970s. The first works created by Barros can be placed in the field of "visual poetry," in connection with the concrete poetry movement of the 1950s. Words and images were her first media.

In 1983, Barros published the book *Onde Se Vê* [Where One Sees], a set of rather unusual "poems." Some of them dispensed with the use of words, constructed as photographic narratives, where the artist herself represented different characters in performative acts. This book already heralded Lenora de Barros's transition to the field of visual arts, which eventually occurred. Since then, the artist has walked her own path, marked by the use of different languages: video, performance, photography, sound installation and built objects.

Her work is present in collections in Brazil and in many other countries, such as the Hammer Museum (CA, USA), the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (Spain), the Daros Latinamerica Collection (Switzerland), the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM), the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, (Madrid). Among the leading shows in which she took part are: *Radical Women: Latin American Art, 1960- 1985*, Hammer Museum, LA, Brooklyn Museum, New York-NY, USA; *Pinacoteca de São Paulo-*

SP, Brazil; Tools for utopia, selected works from the Daros Latinamerica Collection, Bern, Switzerland; 11th Lyon Biennale, (France, 2011); ISSOÉOSSODisso at the Oficina Cultural Oswald de Andrade (São Paulo, 2016); 4th Thessaloniki Biennial of Contemporary Art (Greece, 2013); 17th, 24th and 30th São Paulo International Biennial; in 2022 she will be shown at the 59th Venice Biennale.

About MAM São Paulo

Founded in 1948, the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo is a non-profit public interest civil society organization. Its collection holds more than 5,000 works produced by the most prominent representatives of modern and contemporary art, mainly from Brazil. Both the collection and the exhibitions favor experimentalism, opening up to the plurality of artistic productions from around the world, as well as to the different interests of contemporary societies.

The Museum organizes a wide range of activities including courses, seminars, lectures, performances, concerts, film sessions, and artistic practices. The content of the exhibitions and activities is accessible to all audiences through guided visits conducted in Libras (Brazilian Sign Language), audio description of the works, and video guides in Libras. The collection of books, periodicals, documents, and audio and video material comprises 65,000 titles. The exchange with museum libraries from several countries keeps the collection alive.

Located inside Ibirapuera Park, the most important green area in São Paulo, the MAM building was adapted by Lina Bo Bardi and offers, in addition to the exhibition halls, studios, a library, an auditorium, a restaurant, and a store where visitors can purchase design objects, art books, and exclusive items with the MAM brand. The Museum's spaces are visually integrated with the Sculpture Garden, designed by Roberto Burle Marx to house works from the MAM collection. All facilities are accessible to visitors with special needs.

PLAN YOUR VISIT

***Retromemória*, by Lenora de Barros**

Exhibition Period: from April 2 through July 3

Location: MAM São Paulo

Address: Ibirapuera Park (av. Pedro Álvares Cabral, s/nº – Gates 1 and 3)

Visiting Hours: Tuesday to Sunday, from 10 am to 6 pm (tickets sales up to 5:30 pm)

Contact: +55 11 5085 1300

Admission Price: BRL 25.00. Free on Sundays. Visits must be schedule in advance.

Tickets available online at www.mam.org.br/ingresso 50% discount for students with a valid ID, low-income youth and elderly (+60). Free for children under 10 years old; people with disabilities and companion; teachers and principals of state and municipal public schools in the state of São Paulo, with valid ID; MAM members and students; employees of partner companies and museums; members of ICOM, AICA and ABCA, with valid ID; employees of SPTuris and employees of the Municipal Department of Culture.

Accessible for people with disability

Restaurant/Café

Air conditioning

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