

SETAREH

Cybèle Varela

Between Spaces

April 28, 2023 – June 3, 2023

SETAREH is thrilled to announce ***Between Spaces***, our first exhibition with Brazilian artist **Cybèle Varela**. Consistently questioned her contemporary landscape through painting, photography and video, Varela's oeuvre now spans over half a century. With graphic sophistication, her work from the late 1960s astutely reflects on popular iconography to picture the 'poetry of the peripheries' in Brazilian daily life. A prominent figure of *Tropicalismo*, her Pop Art aesthetic of flattened and graphic images foregrounded the modern female in urban environments, capturing incipient feminism set amongst a multicultural yet essentially patriarchal modern life.

For our exhibition we will present a selection of these historic works in conversation with paintings from the last decade which incorporate a similar flat and graphic style. The artist describes these new works as a "journey through the night where the stars, flowers and objects which create dreams interlace" in a dynamic contemporary Latino Futurism. Fantastical Sci-fi feminists set about battling environmental devastation in otherworldly spaces where they enact their cosmic reflections, battles which "last until the sun doesn't rise on the horizon." The exhibition will also feature *Unknown*, a series of portraits which activate decolonial narratives for forgotten individuals largely left unrecognized by imperialist histories.

Varela has presented solo exhibitions in galleries around the world, including the Museum of Contemporary Art MAC Niteroi (2013) and National Museum of Fine Arts (2003) in Rio de Janeiro, the Museum of Contemporary Art of São Paulo (1980, 2005), the Museum of Fine Arts in Lausanne, Switzerland (1980) and the Art Museum of the Americas in Washington DC (1987). Her first retrospective was held at the Brasília Stiftung in Basel, Switzerland in 2018 and Varela will receive a retrospective of the 1960s work at the Museum of Contemporary Art MAC-USP in São Paulo this summer. Her work has been included in the São Paulo Biennials of 1967, 1969, and 1981. This will be the artists first exhibition with the gallery and debut in Germany.

At this time, SETAREH is thrilled to announce *SPOTLIGHT*, an occasional series of projects which shine a light on important and innovative practices.

For our first iteration, we will feature ***Kate Craig : Flying Leopard***. The exhibition will present early works by Canadian video pioneer Kate Craig (1947–2002), whose documented performances grew out of the vibrant FLUXUS infused experimentation which was happening in 1970s Vancouver. A founding member of the internationally renowned Western Front, an artist driven, multidisciplinary outpost of conceptual art, Craig's practice merged art into all aspects of her life. This project will focus on the first years of her production.

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In 1969, Craig met artist Eric Metcalfe who had been performing as the parodic „Dr. Brute“, and became „Lady Brute“. Their seven-year collaboration imagined the fictional world of *Brutopia*, to play on the capitalist foibles of western society. „Active participants in the *Mail Art* scene, and the *New York Correspondence School* of Ray Johnson, they transmitted their cacophony of leopard material across the world to examine the aesthetics of autocratic social formations. Initially Craig's performances were informal, happening in the real world rather than on stage, where attending an opening or a dinner in leopard regalia was considered the work. In 1974 she performed *Flying Leopard*, sailing through the open air on an extended cable clad in a winged leopard guise. Captured on 16mm and 8mm film, the exhibition will include a recently compiled digital video by Craig's long-time collaborator Hank Bull. The exhibition will also include her first two video works, *Skins: Lady Brute Presents her Leopard Skin Wardrobe*, 1975, and *Still Life: A Moving Portrait*, 1976, which also capture the artists engagement with this fictional persona.

Over the decades Kate Craig achieved an international reputation and her videos have been widely exhibited including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Canada and the Biennale de Paris of 1980. In 1998, Craig received a retrospective exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery. Dedicated to furthering video as a medium for artistic production, Craig established and curated the Artist-in-Residence program at the Western Front in 1977 and produced works with an impressive list of international creators including Kathy Acker, Stan Douglas, Mona Hatoum, and Robert Filliou. This will be the artist's first solo exhibition in Europe.