

GOODMAN GALLERY
LONDON



*Amilcar de Castro:
a thought about space*
3 February - 5 March 2022

Amilcar de Castro, *Untitled*, c. 1980

Goodman Gallery is pleased to present *Amilcar de Castro: a thought about space*, the first UK solo exhibition by seminal Brazilian artist Amilcar de Castro (1920 - 2002). Over a period of more than six decades, de Castro became one of the most celebrated South American artists of the mid-20th-century. 'Amilcar de Castro: a thought about space' aims to trace de Castro's contributions to abstraction, minimalism and various forms of concrete art through his inventive approach to material as well as an acute awareness of the relationship between space, object, volume and mass.

Amilcar de Castro: a thought about space brings together a selection of works including sculptures, drawings and works on canvas made in a single gesture using brushes and brooms. The exhibition offers audiences a rare view into the artist's working methods in conversation with 20th-century principles of the concrete art movement and Neo-Concretism. In 1959 de Castro co-signed a manifesto which became known as the Neo-Concrete Manifesto, written by Brazilian poet Ferreira Gullar and signed by fellow artists Lygia Pape, Reynaldo Jardim, Franz Weissmann and Theon Spanudis. Neo-Concretism sought to challenge linear principles of abstraction and sculptural language of the past, suggesting a move towards more organic, sensorial, lyrical and experienced-based art.

This exhibition draws attention to the artist's long-term fascination with geometric discovery and experimentation. Whether steel, wood, granite or glass, large scale or small scale, de Castro's sculptures are a configuration of cutting and folding. The artist asserted that "sculpture is the discovery of a form of silence where light holds shadow and moves". Within his drawings, such as those included in the exhibition, de Castro pays particular attention to the line as the perfect tool to delineate space. Grounded in geometry, the drawings portray an array of irregular shapes — seen again in the works on canvas, wood sculptures as well as steel sculptures. Each work proceeds along a line of one kind or another. In an undated text "Amilcar de Castro and the Line" written by Rodrigo de Castro (2014), the artist is quoted as saying; "The line for me has a fabulous importance. And, according to the organization of this line in space, it can become a sculpture, a drawing, but it is always the line that is the structure of my sensibility."

De Castro's works present a kind of intuitive geometry exploring complex assemblages expressed in lines and strokes. The artworks constituted in the exhibition are some of the final pieces the artist produced prior to his death — many of which were presented in his exhibition *Amilcar on the edge of the world* at Museu Brasileiro da Escultura e da Ecologia in São Paulo, in 2021. He was the first Brazilian artist to be awarded the Guggenheim Foundation Prize in 1965 as well as achieving local acclaim with major presentations at the 15th International Biennial of São Paulo and a presentation at the Imperial Palace Cultural Center in Rio de Janeiro, among others. De Castro's expansive practice serves as a touchstone for a generation of artists not only in South America but the world over.

