

In December 2021, Lia Chaia suffered a bicycle accident that forced her to undergo reconstructive surgery on her left hand, her dominant hand. A second surgery took place in July 2022, to complete the reconstruction and to remove the pins that were installed to stabilize her muscles and bones. The setback, which would be a challenge for anyone, directly affected Chaia's artistic practice, as drawing is a constant element in her work.

Not by chance, her 11th exhibition at Vermelho begins with the mobiles from the series "Como vai? Como vai? Como vai?" [How are you? How are you? How are you?] (2023), a set of 7 pairs of hands moving through the gallery space, sometimes greeting, sometimes avoiding each other. The title, besides referencing a classic Brazilian children's song recorded by the clown Arrelia in 1957 (Chaia has the practice of Clown as one of the instruments of her performative work), refers to a cultural shift that the artist had already noticed during the Covid-19 pandemic: the automatic act of greeting someone by saying "how are you?" or "everything okay?" was no longer valid. Not only because of the tensions caused by the virus, but also because of the political instability faced by the country and now, by the loss of her manual autonomy. Chaia's mobiles pose the question - "How are you?" - but do not provide an answer.

Lia Chaia also mentions magicians, cheiromancy, and butterflies as structuring references of the series, alluding to the intersection between the divine and science. Magicians, or illusionists, although they seem to defy the laws of physics, typically utilize physics itself to create astonishment. Palm reading, although widely regarded as a pseudoscience of divination, is advocated by individuals who connect it to Chinese medicine and ancient Indian traditions. Butterflies carry various symbolic representations, primarily based on their process of metamorphosis. Many legends and myths in Mexican culture relate butterflies to death, while spiritism connects them to renewal, for example.

The patterns painted by Chaia on the mobiles point to a turn in her practice. The artist is known for her works that explore the insertion of the body into urban and natural

landscapes and is one of the names that defined the Generation 2000 in Brazil. This group has an intense focus on the models of urbanization that took place in Modern Brazil, a developmentalist model from the mid XXth century that believed in the logic that the country was destined for a grandiose future, but which never materialized.

Chaia's paintings, drawings, and videos now turn inward to the body, with abstract patterns that evoke the epidermis, dermis, hypodermis, organs, bones, and muscles. Their structures, however, also recall undefined pathways or tribal patterns. Much of this "loose" abstraction came with the use of the right hand that Chaia started using for her work.

The interior of Hall 1 was darkened and painted crimson red to receive the video installation "Desenho dançante" [Dancing Drawing], from 2022. Two monitors float in the center of the room, back-to-back. In the images, we see Lia Chaia's naked body, upon which drawings are projected and manipulated by two hands. The drawings resemble the patterns from "Como vai? Como vai? Como vai?" and are structured like arabesques and volutes that twist and turn, as if Chaia's interior body could be seen from the outside. Each monitor shows one side of the body: the front or the back, which alternate during the exhibition. The sound of the installation reproduces different wind chimes, with sounds of shells, bamboo, and crystals. The wind is the only external element that appears in the exhibition, both in the sound of "Desenho dançante," which permeates all the spaces of the exhibition, and by the wind itself, which can enter the rooms through screens that the artist used to close the large doors of Hall 1. The screens darken the space but allow the wind to pass through the exhibition, making the mobiles dance and bringing sensory experience to those who visit the show.

In Hall 2, a large woven Glassine paper mural creates a wall-device for Chaia's drawings. Some of the drawings form sets that were used in the projection of "Desenho dançante". Together they form a large system inspired by a conversation Lia Chaia had during one of her visits to the hospital when someone mentioned organoids to her.

The organoids recreate, in vitro, a physiological system that allows researchers to investigate complex multidimensional issues such as the emergence of diseases, tissue regeneration, and interactions between organs. Organoids are a type of 3D cell culture that contains specific types of cells from organs, which can exhibit their spatial organization and replicate some functions of a particular organ. Chaia's Organoids, which give name to the exhibition, are amoeboid mobiles that occupy the space of Room 2. Here, they no longer have recognizable forms, they are pieces of organic shape joined by steel wires, dancing as the wind passes through them. The reconstruction of her hand by science led the artist to celebrate the progress of research that makes natural what is synthetic, or that synthesized the natural.

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