

FORM-OBJECTS

A solo show by Geraldo de Barros, Brazil

Galleria Michela Negrini, Lugano

Preview: 08.03.2022, h. 14.00-19.00

Opening: 09.03.2022, h. 16.00-20.30

Exhibition: 10.03 - 31.03.2022

Michela Negrini is delighted to present Geraldo de Barros. FORM-OBJECTS.

FORM OBJECTS is the latest collaborative project between the Geraldo de Barros Archive and Michela Negrini.

Brazilian painter, photographer and designer, Geraldo de Barros (1923 - 1998) also worked in engraving, graphic arts, and industrial design.

He was a leader of the concrete art movement in Brazil, cofounding Grupo Ruptura and was known for his trailblazing work in experimental abstract photography and modernism. Since the mid '50's he was also active as a designer of furniture (Unilabor), where he devoted himself until the late '80's (Hobjeto).

The exhibition features a selection of original serigraphs, photographs from the 1940's, alongside his most recent photographic works from the late 1990's, as well as a modernist shelving unit. Very different works, all expression of a visual vocabulary that refers to continuous interconnections between art and society.

Geraldo de Barros moved from geometry to pop art, from industrial design to photography. Influenced by concrete art and constructivist movement, he changed his view on representation of reality and applied new rules. Just nearly about twentyfive years after his passing, his works are accompanying us along a path that not only shows the use of different means and techniques, but also goes beyond spatial boundaries.

The exhibition

FORM- OBJECTS revolves around the new and original limited edition published by the Geraldo de Barros Archive, with the support of Galleria Michela Negrini.

This original work is presented for its first time in Lugano and its release coincides with the exhibition Geraldo de Barros at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MAMCO) in Geneva, February 23 to June 19, 2022).

“Da retomada de alguns objetos-forma da arte concreta”, is an artwork by Brazilian artist Geraldo de Barros (1923 - 1998) exhibited in 1979 at the XV Bienal Internacional de São Paulo. This limited edition presents an expanded reflection on the work and its manifesto, alongside an original contribution by the critic Heloisa Espada and comprises 66 different serigraphs divided into 6 series of 11 plates. Each plate is printed on Arches 88 300g paper, 30 x 30 cm in size, in 5 numbered and signed copies, with 3 artist's proofs.

Aside a tribute to Concrete Art, this original work aims at further investigate the explorations pursued by Geraldo de Barros' restless creative mind.

Remaining an indisputable pioneer of abstract photography, displayed is also a selection of his series of photographs 'Fotoformas' (1946-1951) in which de Barros experimented with a variety of techniques: solarization, manipulation of the image, drawing with ink on negatives, and multiple exposures. Geraldo de Barros was twenty-eight years old when Fotoforma opened at MASP. Many images reflect the formal modern repertoire: close-up or low-angle shots. His experimentation was widespread, but predominantly abstract, showing his interest in texture and geometric form.

Also on display is a small selection from the 'Sobras' (remains) collages of old family snapshots from the 1950s on glass plates. The series is his last, which he began in 1996 and worked on up until his death in 1998. This kind of concrete photography is not completely divorced from his work of the 1940s and 50s, but rather represents an evolution from that period and shows the merging of photographic experiment and painterly collage.

With its iron armature and customizable components, Shelving Unit MF 710 is a prime representation of Unilabor's production system. The "MF" in the unit's name designates the two main materials: wood (madeira) and iron (ferro).

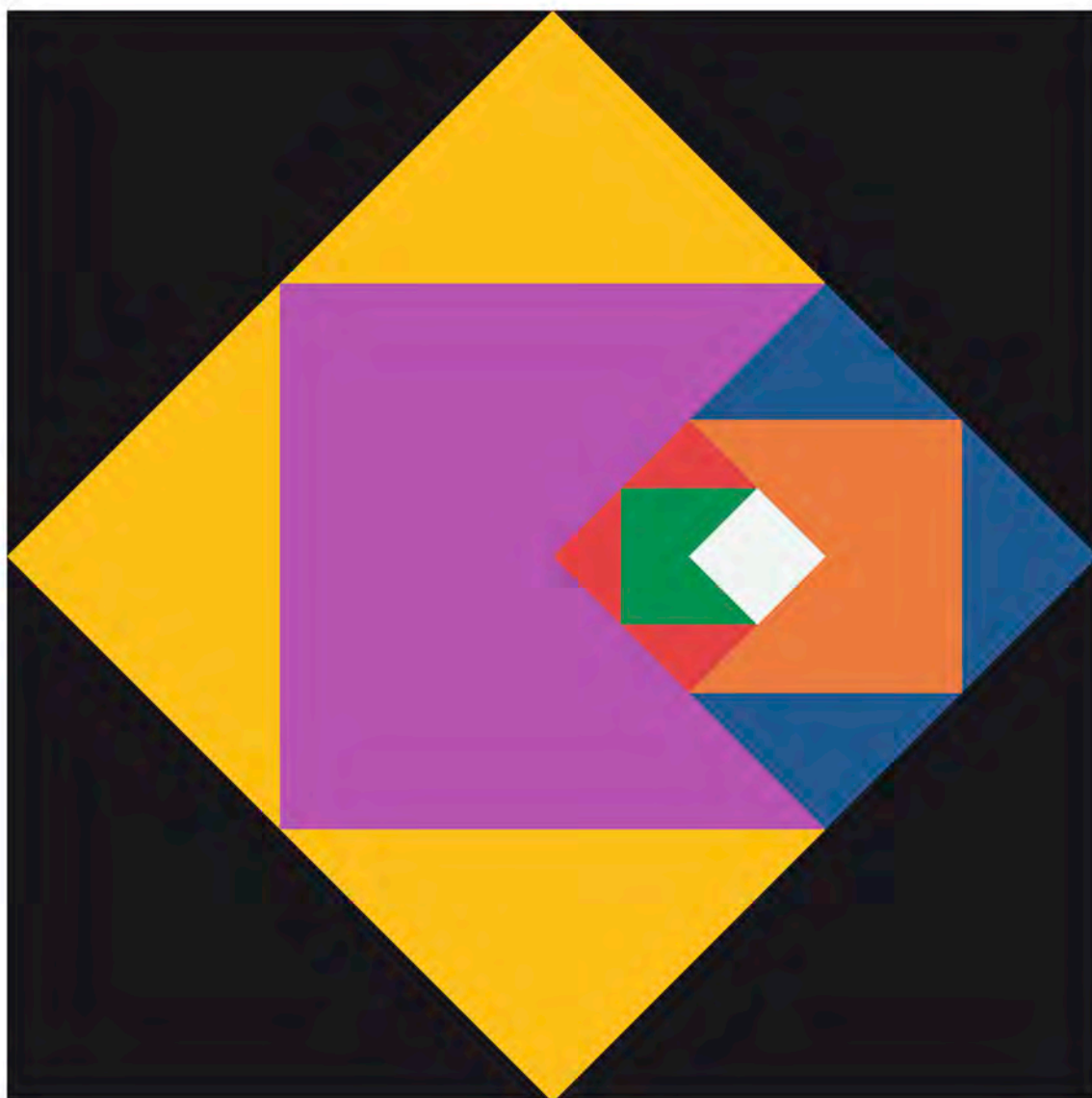
The exhibition includes Unilabor's signature Formica drawers and jacaranda (rosewood) -laminated cabinets, while the planes and shapes recall de Barros's concrete paintings and abstract photographs.

Unilabor's projects epitomized de Barros's forward-thinking aesthetics and socially oriented practice. These pieces were characterized by the many influences de Barros himself had cultivated over the years; Ulm school minimalism and the geometric rigor of concrete art, for instance, appear unmistakably in Unilabor's Estante Bookshelf. Geraldo de Barros's Unilabor designs were clearly aligned with Bill's teachings on concrete art (non-representational art), and he also understood his designs within the Bauhaus legacy of combining art and industry.

Geraldo de Barros

Geraldo de Barros was born in São Paulo in 1923 and lived there until his death in 1998. He started his career as a traditional painter, but began an intense period of experimentation with the photographic medium in 1946. Invited by a friend to photograph soccer teams, de Barros's first camera was built from a kit. Intrigued by the medium, he soon lost interest in pursuing commercial photography. He built a small photo studio and bought a 1939 Rolleiflex and, in 1949, he joined the Foto Cine Club Bandeirante, which was one of the few forums for the city's photography enthusiasts. Members of the group were interested in pictorial photography and de Barros's explorations of abstraction were met with little interest; his photographs were almost never included in the club's exhibitions. Indeed, de Barros's work from this period is characterized by scraped negatives, multiple exposures, and an interest in chance occurrences. He met art critic Mario Pedrosa and became interested in Gestalt theory and occupational therapy. Adon Peres writes, "The experience was to prove crucial for Geraldo, opening the way to far-ranging considerations on figure and form in relation to freedom of representation. Geraldo's work, likewise, took on an ethical and human dimension that it was to retain throughout his life." In 1950, the Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP) invited him to exhibit his photographs, and he showed a selection from his Fotoformas series. The exhibition led to a fellowship opportunity to study abroad in Europe, more precisely to study engraving in Paris. Ironically, his studies in Europe would redirect his artistic work away from photography. While traveling, he studied painting and printmaking, and met important artists and theorists including Max Bill, Giorgio Morandi, and Francois Morellet, as well as encountering key movements in art and design. In 1952, de Barros returned to Brazil, and he became a central figure in São Paulo's Concrete art movement. Interested in industrial design and modernization processes, he founded a collectivist furniture factory, Unilabor, in 1954. "(He) became interested in concepts such as the industrialization of the artistic gesture, the reproducibility of works of art, and, as a natural progression, in design and graphic art," Peres writes. His work was included in the 1956 Exposição Nacional de Arte Concreta in São Paulo and in the 1960 exhibition *Concrete Kunst, 50 Jahre Entwicklung*, organized by Max Bill in Zürich. In the mid-1960s, he left Unilabor and founded Hobjeto furniture factory. He also became interested in the social criticisms offered by Pop Art; in 1964, he showed figurative paintings with Nelson Leirner. Although internationally known for his innovations in photography, de Barros actively worked with the medium only during two periods of his life: 1945-1951, and 1996-1998. In 1993, his photographs from the earlier period were shown at the Musée de l'Élysée in Lausanne. This series of work, called the Fotoformas, drew from the techniques of engraving and collage. De Barros made montages, superimposing images from the urban landscape of São Paulo over geometric forms. In failing health in the late 1990s, he returned to photography, creating a series of work called Sobras, in which he used family photographs as his support for collage, montage, and new geometric explorations.

Geraldo de Barros's works are included in numerous important collections, such as Chateaubriand Museum of Art, Brazil; Cisneros-Fontanals Art Foundation (CIFO), Miami, FL, USA; Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, New York, NY, USA; Contemporary Art Museum, Grenoble, France; Contemporary 3 Art Museum of São Paulo, MAC-USP, Brazil São Paulo Assis; Curitiba Museum, Parana, Brazil; Elysée Museum, Lausanne, Switzerland; Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Germany; Max Bill Collection, Zürich, Switzerland; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Houston, TX, USA; Museum of Image and Sound, São Paulo, Brazil; Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, NY, USA; and Pinacoteca of the State of São Paulo, Brazil, among others



Geraldo de Barros
Untitled, from the series "Da retomada de alguns objetos-forma da arte concreta", 1979-2022
Arches 88 300g paper,
30 x 30 cm
Edition of 5 + 3 AP

Geraldo de Barros

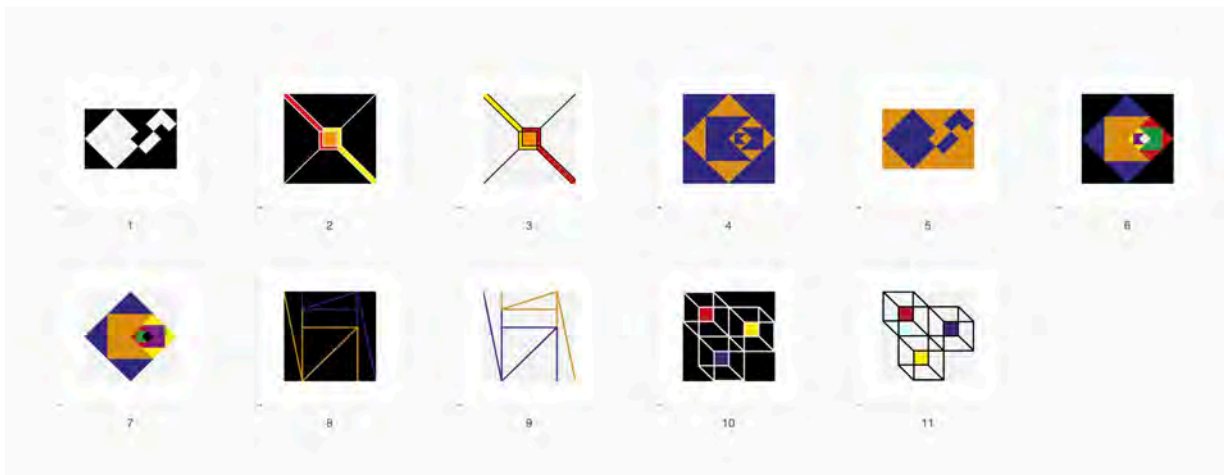
Untitled, from the series "Da retomada de alguns objetos-forma da arte concreta", 1979-2022

Serigraph on Arches 88 300g paper / 6 series of 11 different plates

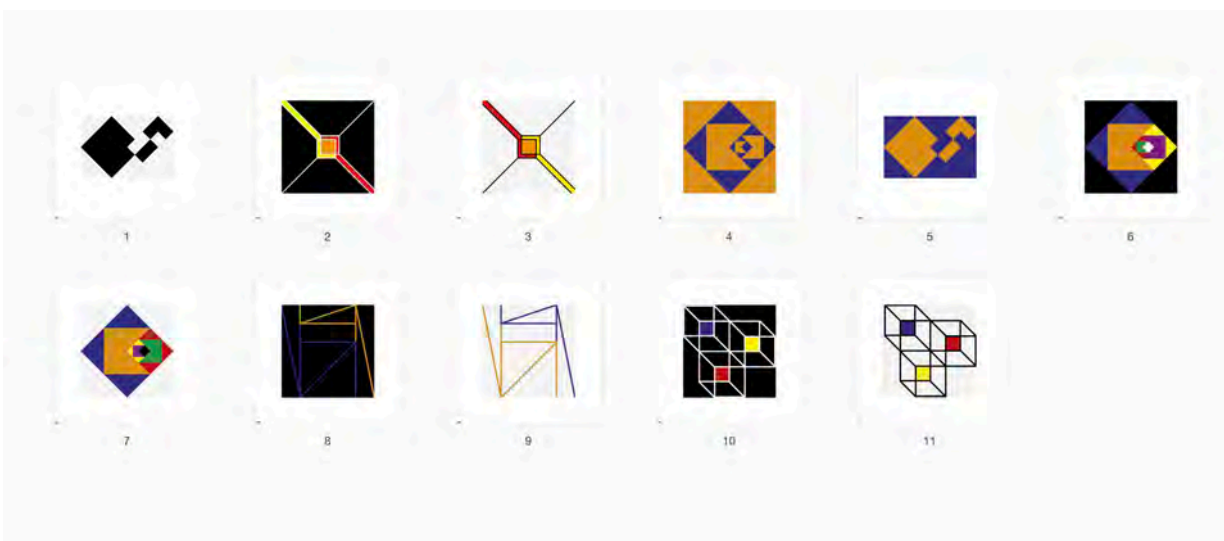
30 x 30 cm

Edition of 5 + 3 AP

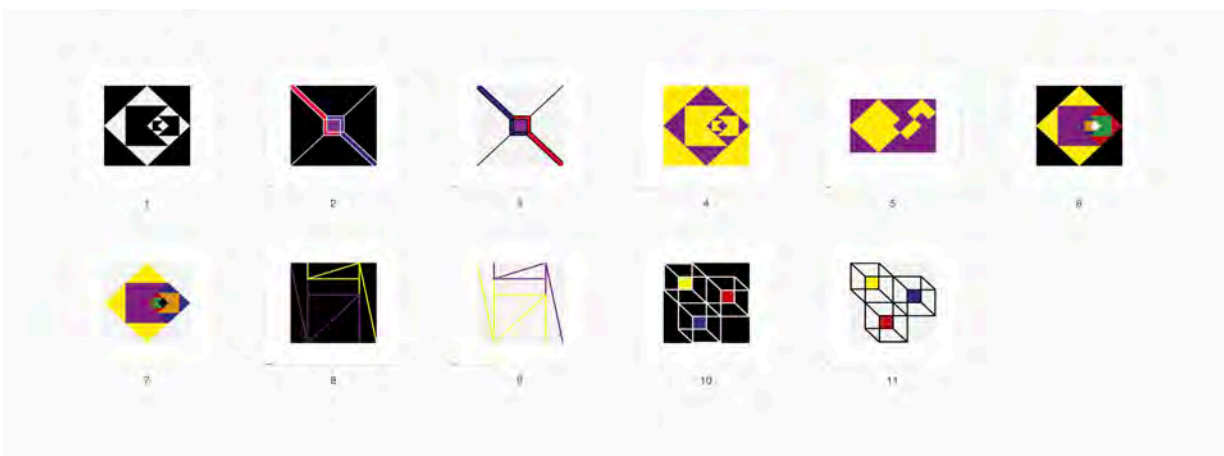
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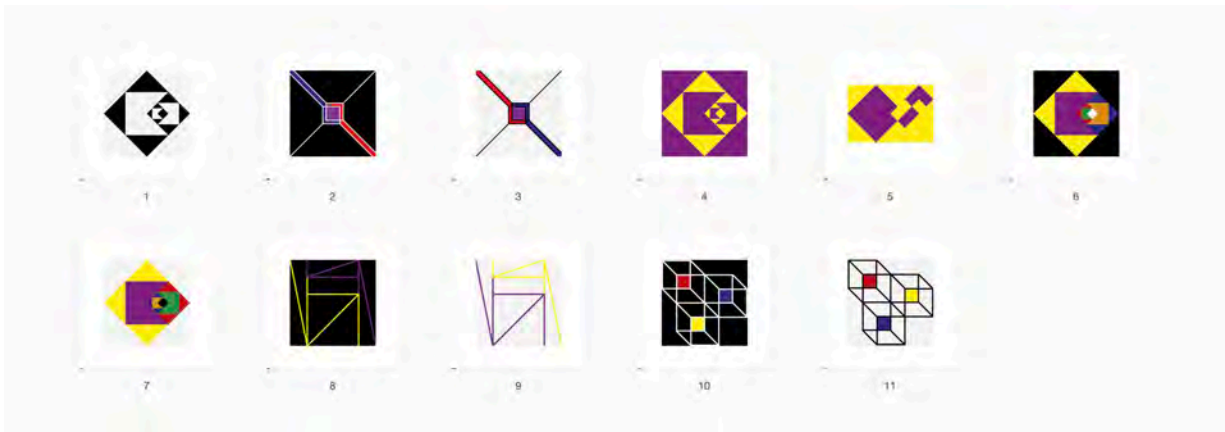
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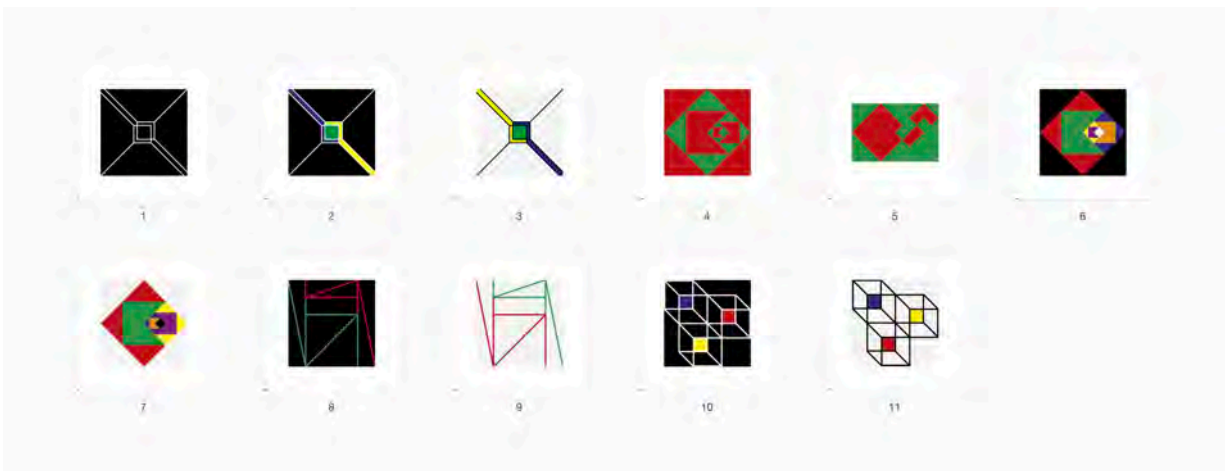
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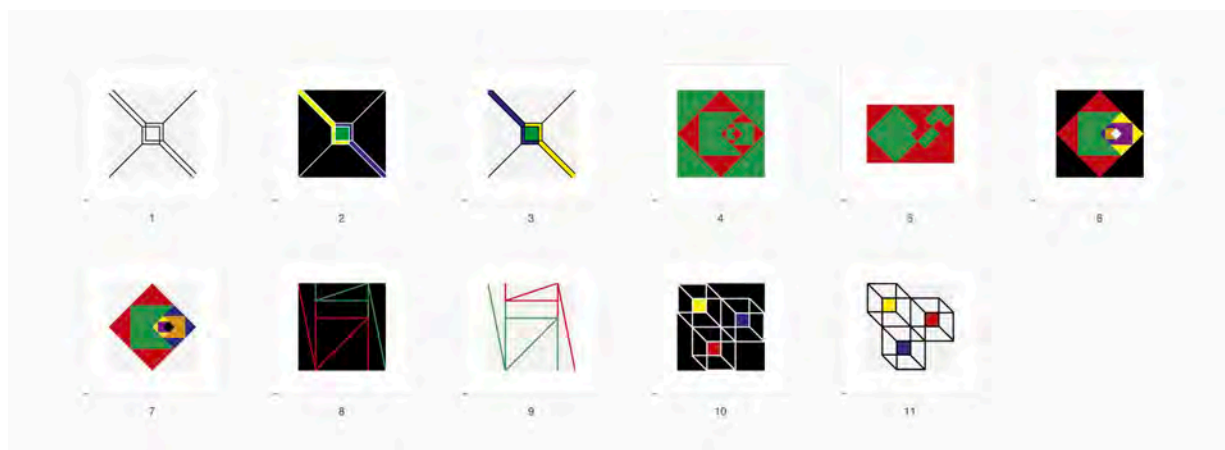
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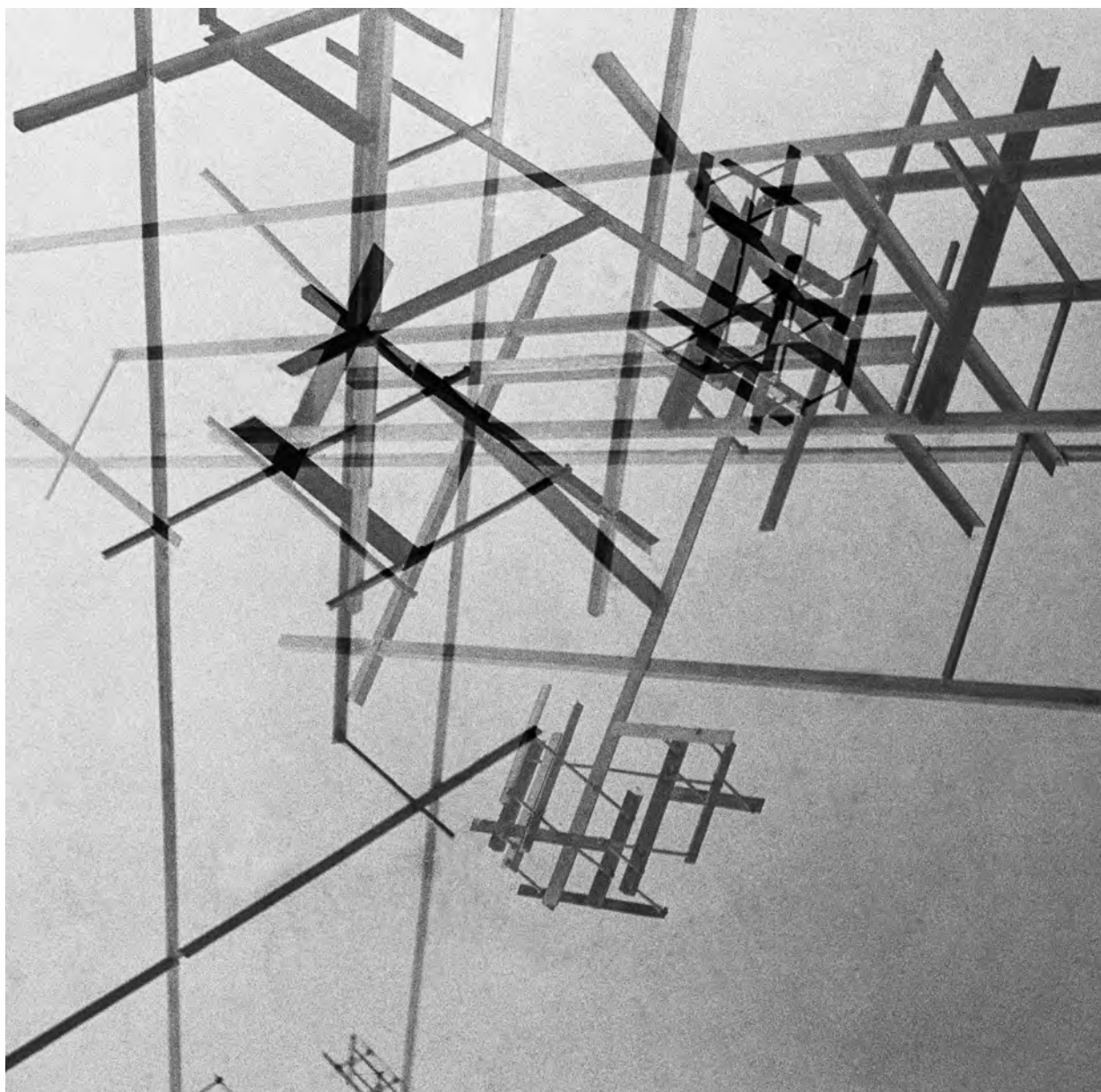


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Set N. 6/6





Geraldo de Barros
Untitled, from the series "Fotoformas"
1949 -1951
Gelatin silver print /modern print
30 x 40 cm
Edition of 15



Geraldo de Barros
MF 710, 1950s / Dpot modern edition from 2013
wood, iron
200 x 206 x 43 cm

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