

ANNA PAOLA PROTASIO



NOHRA HAIME GALLERY

ANNA PAOLA PROTASIO
TRAWL

November 18, 2013 - January 11, 2014

In the broad and varied context of the rich artistic production in Brazil in the post-war era, Anna Paola Protasio is situated in the difficult but fruitful construction of a third way — which perhaps consists of a true civilisatory project for the country — between a strong constructive legacy, linked to rationalising concepts of progress and ordering of the world, very much in vogue especially in the 1950s; and another, no less vigorous, related to the poetics of the precarious, the orgiastic, and the sensory, whose formal and theoretical origins date back to our early Modernism, in the 1920s, recovered by art movements of the 1960s. This means that if, on the one hand, in Protasio's work, the practice of displacing everyday objects (alongside traditional and noble materials) into the art realm is not equivalent to maintaining their social or cultural meanings, for they are full of intense symbolism and personal connotations; on the other hand, these meanings, in the context of her works, are subject to a formal and grammatical rigour that prevents any excess of subjectivity or mere sensory experimentation.

However, such characteristic moves — or suspends, a word which, as we will see, seems to indicate something dear to the artist — the work of Anna Paola Protasio away from the immediate context of Brazilian art history's parochial dilemmas, in order to place it within the broader context of western art's intellectual research, or, rather, the history of the western individual since the Enlightenment, with their harrowing and concomitant need for (philosophic) transcendence and (scientific) control. Based on these strong elements of research and intellectuality — which mark, but do not deplete, Protasio's work — her output may be understood as a visual and material language, which follows a law (her language's law) to produce symbolism, metaphors, and allegories that incessantly point to their own limit, in which the individual (and the spectator) feels imprisoned, using the fetters of her own language to forge, or at least point toward, possible states or spaces for transcendence or suspension (of law; of time and space).

Anna Paola Protasio's work can therefore be located between the crushing imprisonment of the constructive and the precise, and the horror of chaos and dissolution of consciousness — like a utopian point, always to be conquered — like a possible project of individual, ultimately transcendent and present. Such effort is present, to a greater or lesser extent, in all works of this exhibition, from the installation "Transe," in which an aluminium lighthouse casts its beams into infinity while we hear the deep and languorous hymn to Yemanjá (goddess and queen of the oceans), to the poetic installation "Horizon," in which a see-through acrylic boat sails without moving (suspended in time and space, or frozen) towards a horizon forever unreachable, drawn on the wall (transformed, therefore, into an infinite background) by a laser level; to sculptures and paintings (in metal, defining a kind of water — which is the element that serves as leitmotif for the reflections and questions raised by the works of this exhibition — which is hard, that is, what is naturally shapeless acquires shape and rigidity) which are, in their successful attempt to grasp with nobility and stoicism the subtle transition from a state of non-being to a state of being — to a third shore, where human existence finds and invents itself — pure poetry.

- Renato Rezende, Brazilian Writer, Essayist, Critic and Poet

The work of Anna Paola Protasio highlights the heritage of constructive art. However, the artist introduces the abstraction of geometry and her yearning for universality, elements that come to disturb the rigidity of mathematics and change the building tradition. As in predictable structures and the decided world, the stupor of the mundane hours with its dreams and pain, loneliness and fears, would claim its place and occasion.

On one hand, the references to the repertoire of constructive art are evident, on the other, the fragments inserted into the world of abstract structures become visually provocative and sensitive. We seek to answer a question increasingly urgent for the artist: how to make art that responds to the human experience in all its complexity? How to make this world open to the subtleties and small sensibilities?

For the artist, it was not enough to just move mundane objects into the context of art, emptying them of their meaning and usual function, but instead to conserve socially determined meanings of such objects. It was taking them in all their symbolic intent, and at the same time amplifying and modifying it, creating a confrontation between the asceticism of abstractions and impregnation of significant objects, often as objects externalizing affective states. If art is to be invaded by the languor and jolts of everyday life, then daily life must be emptied of the familiarity of art, to explain its eccentricity. Therefore Protasio usurps the objects of the world and returns them in small poetic reverberations and estrangements.

- Marisa Florido Cesar, Brazilian Art Critic and Curator



UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS, 2011, fish, anchor and acrylic bench, 19 5/8 x 51 1/8 x 13 3/4 in. 50 x 130 x 35 cm.



ETERNAL THIRST, 2012, glass, tap and marble, 11 3/4 x 12 5/8 x 15 3/4 in. 30 x 32 x 40 cm.



HORIZON, 2013, acrylic, laser level, 11 3/4 x 31 1/2 x 94 1/2 in. 30 x 80 x 240 cm.



MARKING TIME, 2013, white marble and brass, 51 1/8 (diam) x 31 1/2 in. 130 (diam) x 80 cm.



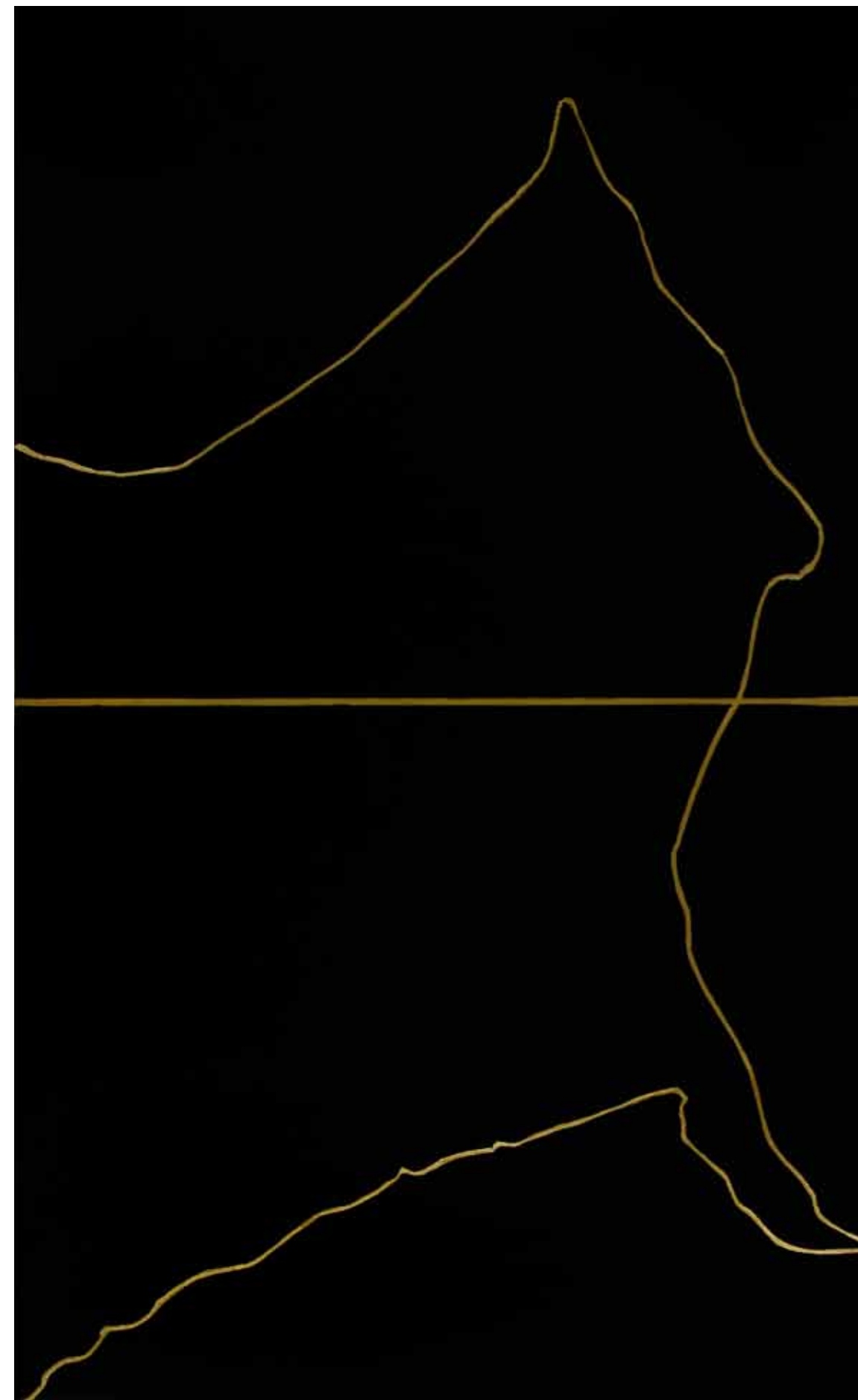
TRANSE, 2013, aluminum lighthouse, sound, 67 x 19 5/8 (diam) in. 170 x 50 (diam) cm.



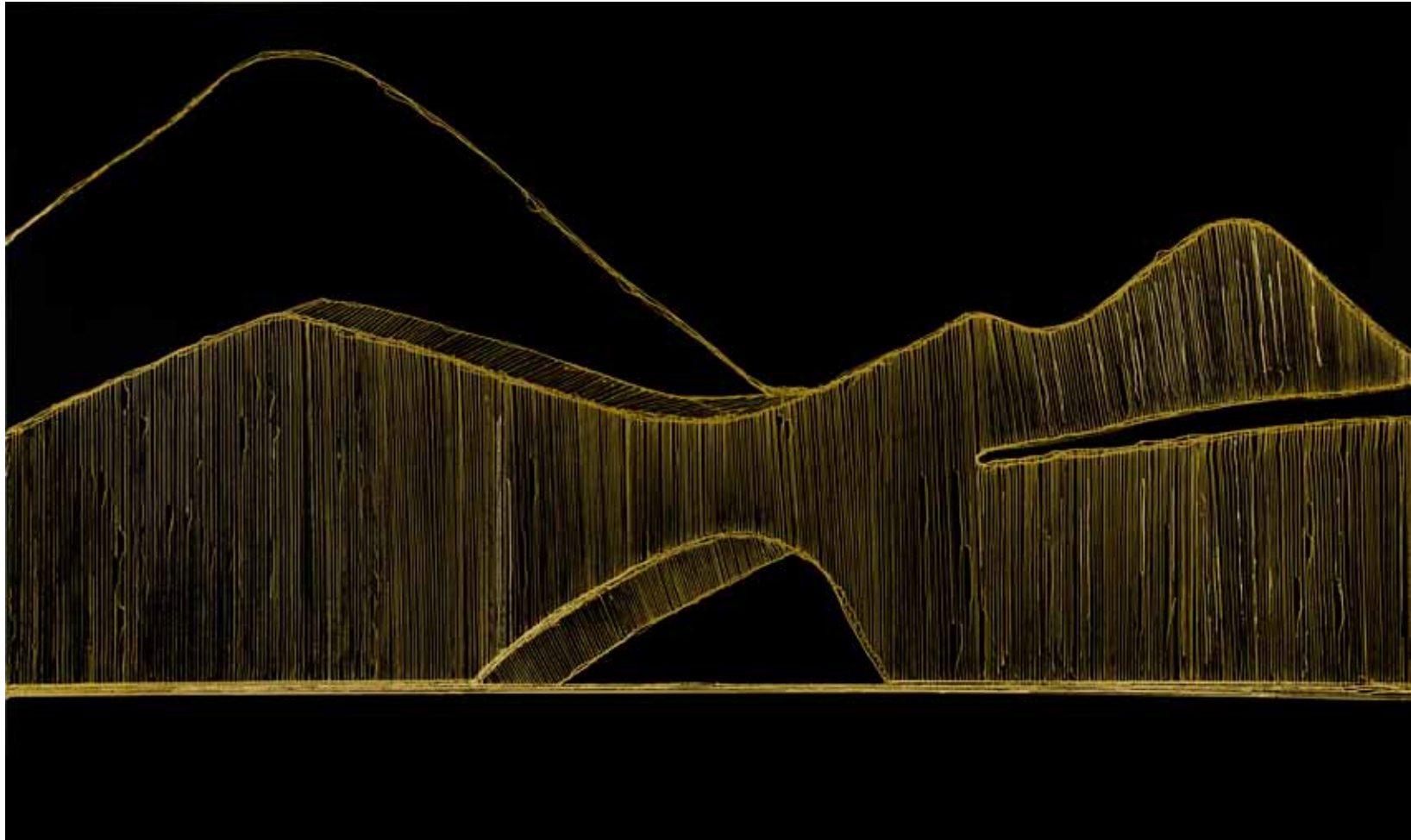
REACH, 2012, brass, hook, globe and black marble, 47 1/4 x 39 3/8 x 15 3/4 in. 120 x 100 x 40 cm.



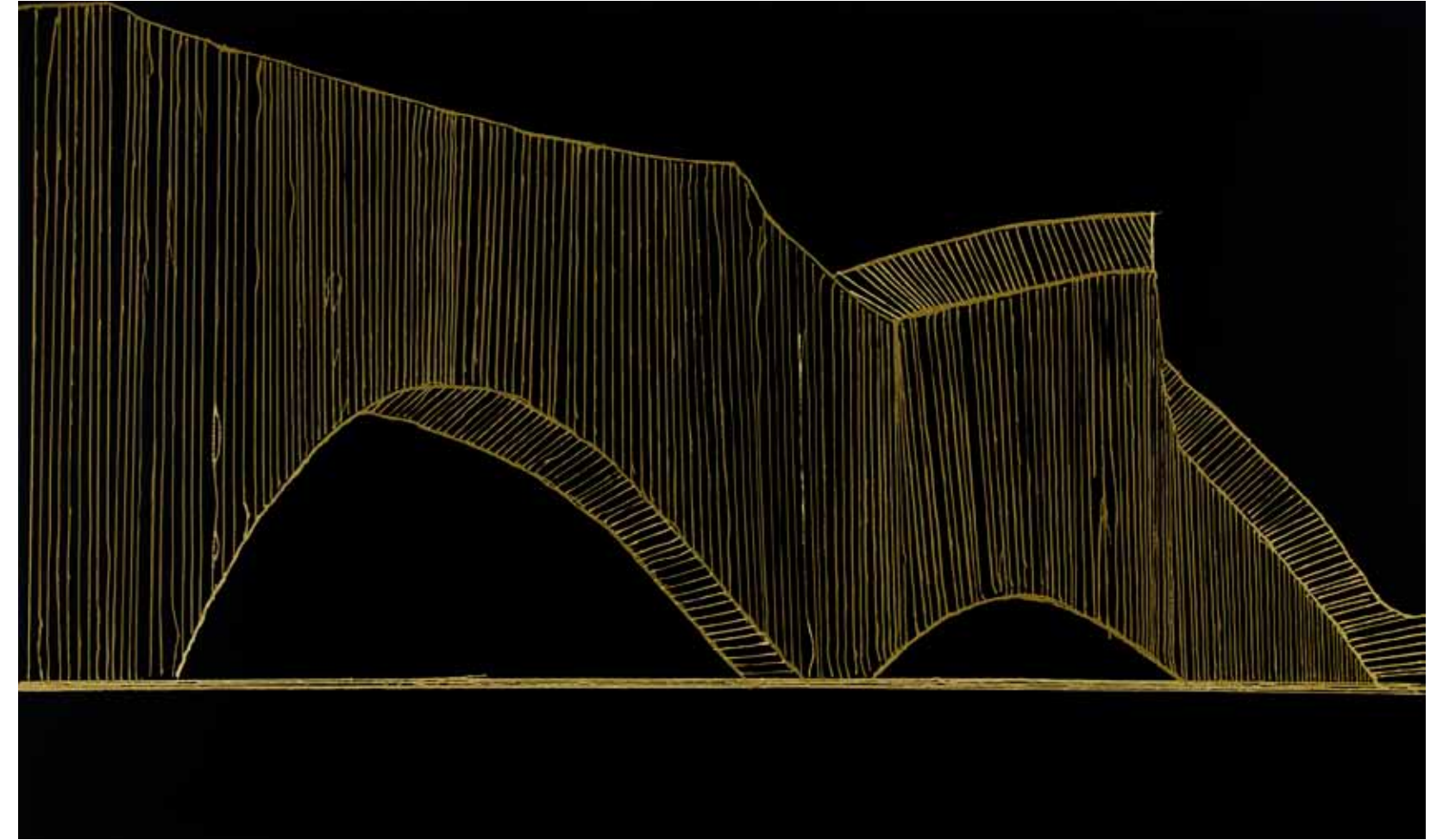
TRAWL (INSTALLATION), 2013, trawl, shell, 78 3/4 x 78 3/4 x 118 1/8 in. 200 x 200 x 300 cm.



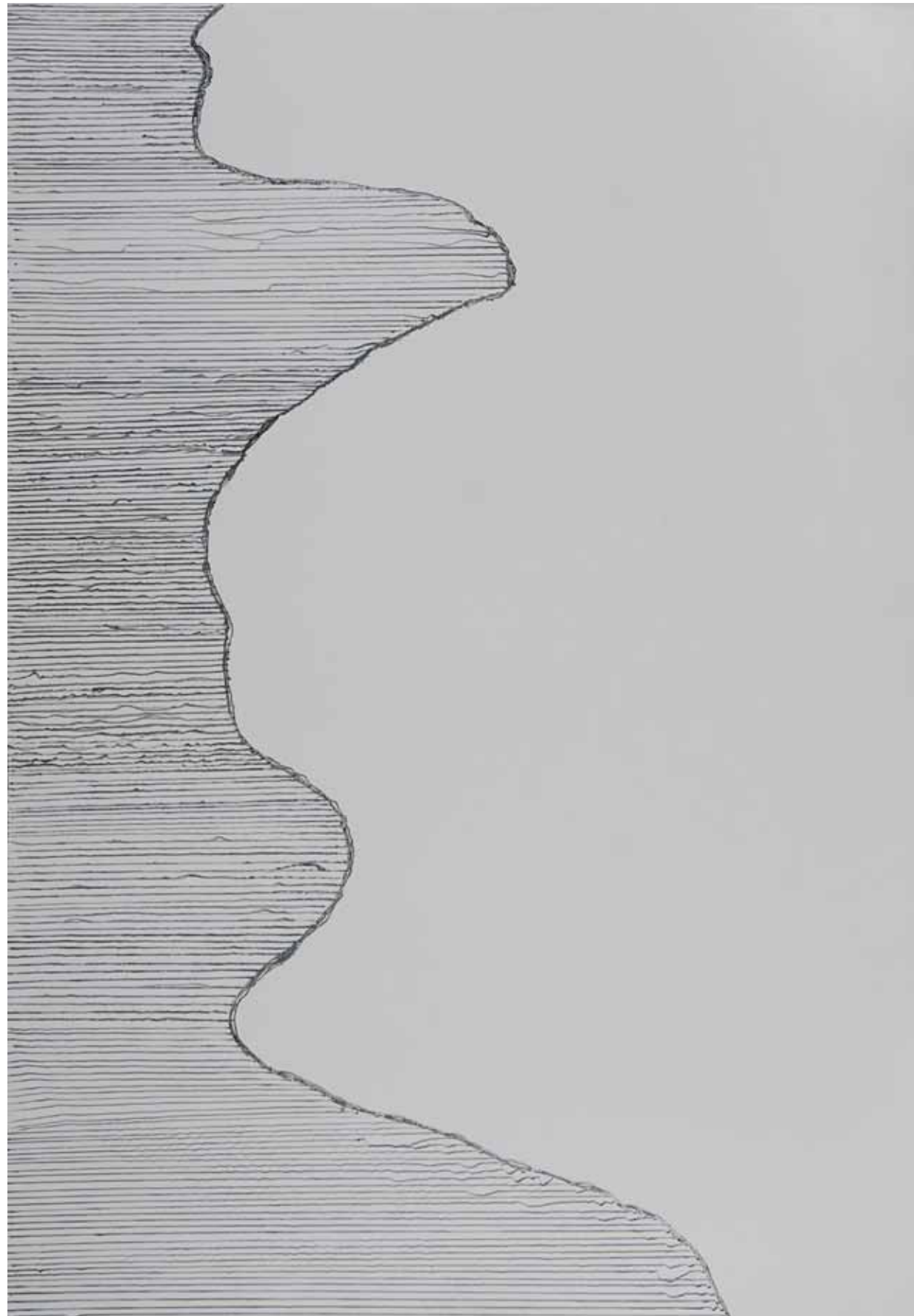
FRAGMENT III e IV, 2013, brass with dark blue electrostatic painting, diptych, 39 3/8 x 47 5/8 x 3/4 in. 100 x 121 x 2 cm.



FRAGMENT I, 2013, brass with dark blue electrostatic painting, 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 x 3/4 in. 60 x 100 x 2 cm.



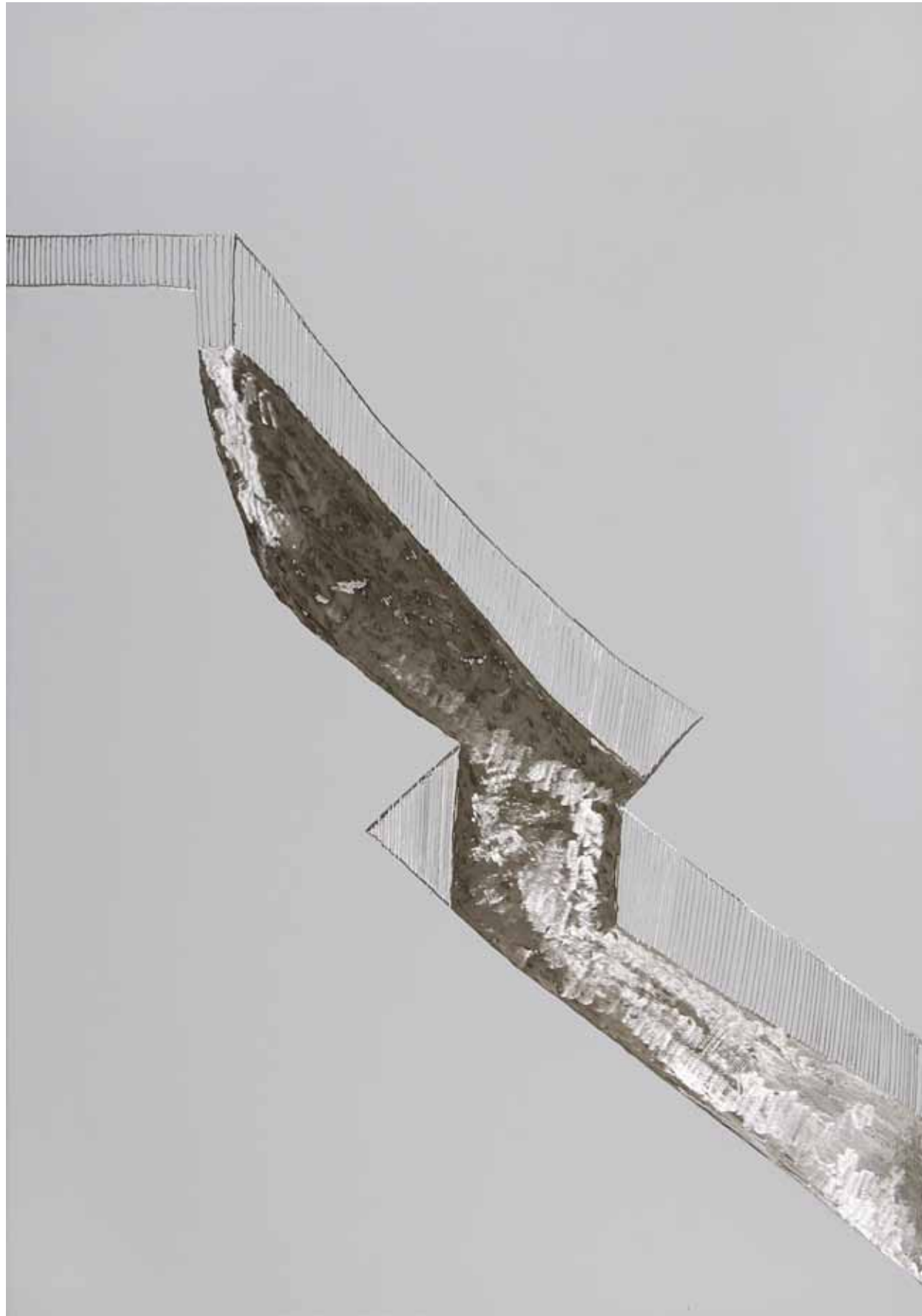
FRAGMENT II, 2013, brass with dark blue electrostatic painting, 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 x 3/4 in. 60 x 100 x 2 cm.



FRAGMENT V, 2013, gray electrostatic painting with tears in aluminum, 39 3/8 x 27 1/2 x 3/4 in. 100 x 70 x 2 cm.



FRAGMENT VI, 2013, gray electrostatic painting with tears in aluminum, 39 3/8 x 27 1/2 x 3/4 in. 100 x 70 x 2 cm.



FRAGMENT VII, 2013, gray electrostatic painting with tears in aluminum, 39 3/8 x 27 1/2 x 3/4 in. 100 x 70 x 2 cm.



MOONSTRUCK IN THE SUMMER, 2013, gray electrostatic painting with tears in aluminum, 39 3/8 x 27 1/2 x 3/4 in. 100 x 70 x 2 cm.



ANNA PAOLA PROTASIO

Anna Paola Protasio was born in 1966 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil where she lives and works. She has worked as an architect and furniture designer, and specialized in design and art history. In 2006, she diverted her path to the visual arts.

Protasio's work explores different languages, from sculpture to installations. She has held solo exhibitions in museums and cultural centers in Rio de Janeiro, such as House France Brazil in 2008, the National Museum of Fine Arts in 2010 and the Cultural Center of the Post Office in 2010. In São Paulo, she exhibited at the Brazilian Museum of Sculpture in 2012, and Sescs (Social Service of Commerce of São Paulo state) in Bauru, São José do Rio Preto, São José dos Campos and Ribeirão Preto between 2007-2009. She also participated in the Contemporary Art Salon of the Foreign Ministry in 2012, 27th Annual Arts Hall Embu das Artes in 2010 and the exhibition New Brazilian Sculpture in 2012 in Rio de Janeiro. Awards: winner of the Contemporary Art Salon of Foreign Ministry in the category Sculpture in 2012, 3rd place in the category Other Languages (installation, video, photography and performance) at the 27th Annual Arts Hall Embu das Artes 2010.

Music - João Nabuco
Photography - Renato Velasco



NOHRA HAIME GALLERY

730 Fifth Avenue New York, NY 10019 212-888-3550 gallery@nohrahaimегallery.com