

***La hora de la estrella* [The Hour of the Star]**

I prefer the truth in the omen.
Clarice Lispector

Hilma's Ghost is defined as a feminist art collective created during the global quarantine of Covid-19 by Sharmistha Ray and Dannielle Tegeder. Both artists have taken on the difficult task of painting with four hands with the aim of mobilizing the inert spirit of painting. At the same time, they seek to reanimate the necrotic soul of contemporary art through performances and actions that appeal to the spiritualist lineage of abstract painting practiced in the tradition of the pioneer Hilma af Klint. In this sense, Hilma's Ghost has set out to recover, with breadth, tenacity, and archaeological dispossession, the transformative and often underappreciated capacity of the mystical-feminine origin of abstract painting. Such origin—reduced by canonical historiography to the sphere of esoteric forces—is often interpreted as a detriment to an effective and genuine recovery of ancestral consciousness, regenerative will, community action, and empathy. These principles reflect the true measure of feminine creative power throughout different periods of history.

The Hour of the Star [La hora de la estrella] is the eponymous title of the last novel published during her lifetime by the Brazilian-Ukrainian writer Clarice Lispector. It is about the vicissitudes of Macabea, a girl from the Northeast who migrated to Rio de Janeiro as a child and was suddenly killed by a car after having her fortune read by a medium. Lispector presents us with a sort of anti-biography of a poor, solitary woman caught in the spiral of a modernization process forged in the orphanhood of an anodyne life spent in the working-class fringes of a large city. It has been argued that the Brazilian novelist's great contribution to literature has been to expand the experience of reality and rationality to pre-rational, magical spheres, or even to the realm of madness. Lispector's fiction has also been compared

to the experimental art of Lygia Clark, whose therapeutic actions sought to reconnect reality with human emotions and the body.

Hilma's Ghost's geometric painting is constructed through hermetic keys and draws from transcultural chromatic references. It often unfolds temporal layers while elaborating exercises in intertextuality and appropriation that seek to expand the possibilities of experience toward intuition and the spiritual. Feminist reflection nourishes myth and symbol with new meanings as sociocultural plots still intact within a universe in transformation and possible disappearance. The circle is the symbol (and the shape) that occupies a large part of the work including a video in this first solo exhibition at RGR Gallery. The extraordinary round wooden paintings, inspired by the *Hex Signs* depicting star patterns, typically applied to barns on farms in rural Pennsylvania as crop protection, attest to an artistic vocation that synthesizes science and magic, activism and contemplation. Based on the need to recognize the legacy of women in both art and science, Hilma's Ghost has built a Feminist Altar for which it has requested contributions from Mexican artists as a tribute and meditation on the role of women in the country where the exhibition is taking place.

Gabriela Rangel
Curator