

Press Release

Geta Brătescu
Atelier Continuu

3 May – 26 July 2014
Opening Fri. 2 May, 6–9 pm
Gallery hours, Tue–Sat, 11 am – 6 pm

Geta Brătescu is one of the pre-eminent figures in Eastern European art. Born in the Romanian city of Ploiești in 1926, Brătescu studied art, literature and philosophy in Bucharest in the 1940s. In a body of work that now spans more than six decades, she has often engaged with questions of identity, history and the legacy of Modernism. In her performances, films, sculptures and collages Brătescu interweaves personal experiences with literary characters in her very own language of forms.

The exhibition title, *Atelier Continuu*, refers firstly to a collection of writings of the same name by the artist and secondly to Brătescu's on-going daily work in her studio despite her advanced age. In this spirit, the exhibition is showing recent drawings and collages alongside selected works from the 1970s and the decades since.

Geta Brătescu's pictorial worlds are inhabited by mythological figures, many of them freely adapted. *Himere* (2005), the title of a 40-part series of drawings, some of which she completed with her eyes closed, refers to the three-headed mythical creature called the chimera, but the works are more reminiscent of chimeras in the sense of fleeting dream images. The *Pre-Medeic Drawings (Form-Inform)* (1975–78) similarly break loose from the figure of Medea, transferring her inner turmoil to dark meditations that always retain an indeterminate aspect. The intertwining of past and present is a recurrent motif for Brătescu: in *Labyrinth* (1992) the architectural elements of a labyrinth appear to be inextricably entangled with Ariadne's thread. Her layered paper collages, *Untitled* (1987), also bespeak memory and stored time. Complex, multi-layered paper arrangements appear frequently in Brătescu's work in connection with the reification of the flow of time: in the three collages, the multi-coloured papers and their material qualities overlap into a tactile, experiential spatiality – surfacing again in *Untitled* (1987/88), a partially rolled strip of paper extending from the wall to the floor, shimmering in earthy colours from black to dark brown to reddish. The title of four photographs of a printing press, *Typography* (1974), brings forth the intrinsic connection between writing and image, alludes back to the title of the exhibition and elucidates the tension between organic and mechanical approaches.

Brătescu's work has gained growing international attention since her 2008 solo exhibition at the Galerie im Taxispalais in Innsbruck. She has since had exhibitions at, inter alia, MUMOK, Vienna (2011); New Museum, New York (2011); MACBA, Barcelona (2011); Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul (2011); Tate Modern, London (2012); Salonul de Proiecte, Bucharest (2012, solo); La Triennale, Paris (2012); 5th Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2013); La Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2013); Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris (2013); MUSAC, León (2013, solo); and MoMA, New York (2014).

Geta Brătescu's work is represented in the collections of distinguished museums including the MoMA, New York; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Tate Modern, London; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest; Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw; MUMOK, Vienna; and Moderna galerija, Ljubljana.