

## SQUATTING

The English language term “squatting” describes the often-illegal practice of occupying buildings that have lost their original use and have been abandoned. In this context, old industries, churches and even residential constructions have become the object of “squatters” in many cities around the world. Recently, however, the term has gained a somewhat broader designation in reference to the artistic manifestations, such as painting, sculpture and musical presentations, that have begun to appear in these spaces.

In launching a new phase in her career, the artist Ilca Barcellos has approached the concept of “squatting” in art. Her ceramic sculptures have departed from the traditional space of museums to be displayed in gardens, as if they were, so to speak, "new dwellers." This contemporary initiative, which explores the poetics of the pulse of life, is possible only through the extreme adaptation of her artistic production to the so-called natural spaces.

Moreover, as we shall see, this practice opens up a new possibility for understanding her sculptures. Museum space is usually built for the purpose of hosting all kinds of artistic works, while the space of nature, in turn, far from being neutral, entails unavoidable coincidences and accidents. In this sense, the works of Ilca Barcellos create an interesting dialogue between the intentional and the artificial in art and its connection to “the natural” of the gardens. And it is precisely this potential for dialogue that permits the extension and broadening of the meaning of the ceramic art of Ilca Barcellos.

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