

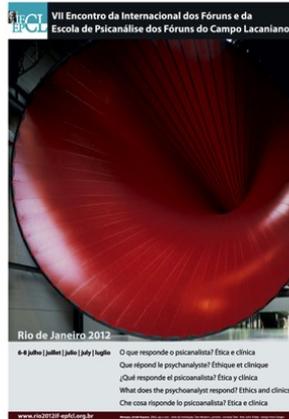
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HOTEL SOFITEL – COPACABANA
RIO DE JANEIRO – BRASIL

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VIIth Meeting of the IF-SPFLF

WHAT DOES THE PSYCHOANALYST RESPOND? ETHICS AND CLINICS

July 2012, 6th – 9th

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Preliminar 16:

'CIRCUMSCRIBING AN APORIA'¹

Patricia Muñoz

[...] A psychoanalyst has the right to take only one advantage from his position, even if this is consequently recognized as such: to remember, with Freud, that in his domain the artist is always ahead of him, and that he does not need to play the part of the psychologist where the artist clears the way for him... I recognize this in the ravishment of Lol V. Stein, in which Marguerite Duras shows that she knows what I teach without me.²

The advertisement for the theme of our encounter shows a photograph of a contemporary work, a monumental sculpture exhibited in London in 2002 and

¹ From J. Lacan's 'La méprise du sujet supposé savoir'.

² J. Lacan. Homage à M. Duras. *Autres écrits*.

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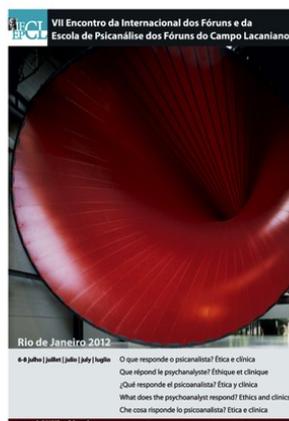


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created by an English artist of Indian descent, Anish Kapoor. The name of the work is *Marsyas*. It is composed of three steel rings joined by a PVC membrane; two of the rings are placed upright at each of the ends of the work, while the third, placed at the centre, is suspended horizontally. Nobody can have a complete visual image of the work, and the object appears to be bigger than the space it occupies.

I do not want to miss the opportunity of entering at least a little in what this work throws to our faces. The first thing that impresses us when looking at the poster is the red colour, the immensity of the work's size and the hole. It looks like something swollen that is about to burst. It is an image that attracts and repels simultaneously: the gaze moves away and flees. This strange object has a raw, visceral appearance, but even so it imposes itself upon us; it is a hollow that sucks in and swallows us, while at the same time it is a large trumpet that expels, exhales and screams.

It is a work of art with a topological structure like that of object *a*, object forever lacking which Lacan represented first with the figure of the torus and then

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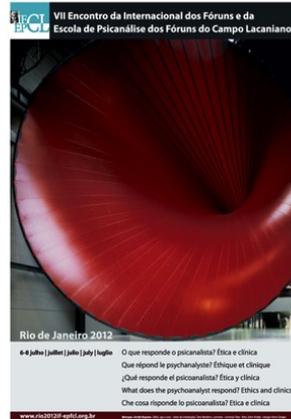
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with the cross-cap and Klein's bottle. Lacan says that these figures can only be designated with the term 'hole'. In the 'Preface' to the English edition of *Seminar XI*, Lacan says that he produced the only conceivable idea of the object a : that of being the cause of desire, namely, that which lacks.

The name of the sculpture, *Marsyas*, refers us to the myth of the satyr that marvelously plays the aulos (a double-reed wind instrument), and who believes that he can play better music than Apollo with his lyre. Apollo challenges him to a contest in which the winner may do whatever he wants with the loser. Apollo wins, and as a punishment sends him to be flayed alive, hanging upside down from a tree. Then Marsyas' skin is put to hang from the tree, and his blood becomes a river that bears his name. All myths have different versions; in this case, some tell that the river was formed by the tears of the others satyrs, nymphs and shepherds of the forest. I pick the version that says that it was with the blood coming out of Marsyas' veins that the fields became fertile. Thus, the satyr is transformed into a river that makes the earth productive.

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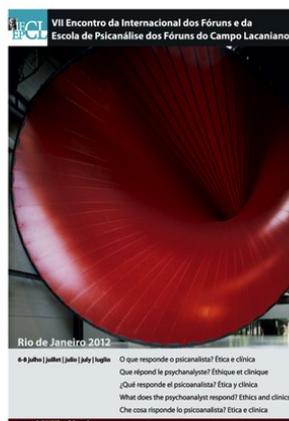
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There is something striking about the leap, the gap between the work of art as it is presented to us and the name that evokes the myth. It is as if they belonged in different orders; it is a question of creating something on the basis of garbage; it is like having been torn away from oneself, as Ovid in his version of the myth has Marsyas saying. It is not possible to occupy the position of an analyst that can respond with the analytic act unless there has been a transformation, a structural change. Beyond the fall of identifications, the crossing-over of the fantasy, the letter of jouissance and the identification with the symptom there is that which has been revealed to him: that there is a knowledge that the subject finds impossible to reach, a real outside sense and impossible, as well as the verification of the irreducible in castration and the symptom. This illustrates what Lacan calls a *position of the subject that is inscribed in the real*.³

Having been through the experience of the flight of sense is like 'being within the exterior of a hole', as it is said of the sculptures of Kapoor. It is also the

³ The words in italics are from Lacan's conference, '*La méprise su sujeto supposé savoir*'.

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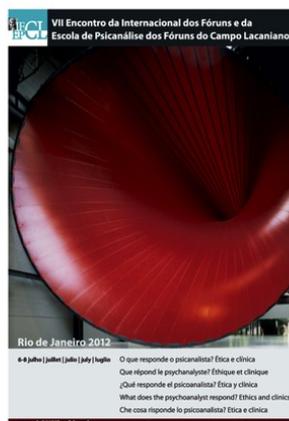


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*unprecedented atopia of the theory.*⁴ There is an equivalence between the positions of the artist and of the analyst in relation to the act. It is the *aporia of the act*, as Lacan calls it, in which *the object is active and the subject is subverted*. It is in the structure of *equivocation*, punctual and evanescent, that the psychoanalyst must find the certainty of his act and the hiatus that makes his law. Lacan says that interpretation must always be... the ready-made of Marcel Duchamp.⁵

“The beauty of being an artist is that the meaning is always work-in-progress. The work is only pointing towards a probability. This allows for the advent of poetry⁶ (Anish Kapoor).

Medellín, May 2012.

Translated by Leonardo Rodríguez

4 Ibid.

5 J. Lacan. *La troisième*.

6 Interview conducted by Fietta Jarque. *El País*, Spain, 28 January 2006. Cf. also the Web site Arsgravis, University of Barcelona: an article by R. Aola: 'Reflexiones sobre la obra de Kapoor. Una alegoría de un nuevo cuerpo'.

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Rio de Janeiro 2012

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