

Jesús Rafael SOTO

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Jesús Rafael Soto

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Jesús Rafael Soto
Materia y Vibración, 1956–1974

Mar 5th — Apr 16th
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Galerie Perrotin
130 Orchard Street

New York
Lower East Side

What a dream it would be to travel back to 1973 when Jesús Rafael Soto created his kinetic work *Trpitico amarillo* at his Paris studio. The 6.5-by-7-foot painting—which currently hangs at Perrotin, where half of the gallery walls are painted terracotta red—has foot-long nylon threads protruding from its metal and wood surface that dance as you move past them, like the

surface of the sea. Better still to witness the reactions of viewers to the mind-bending kinetic work 50 years ago, when attention spans were not yet warped by social media filters and augmented reality programs.

Many of Soto's transfixing, weightless creations could have been made today: *Untitled (Díptico de Tes sobre blanco y negro)* (1974), *Vibración pura* (1960) and *Tableau objet* (1962), for instance, offer new interpretations of the malleability of space, time and perception.

Soto could be considered an oracle of the interpenetration of the digital and the analog, and the increasing inextricability of our realities from what we view on screens. The artist's fascination with optical transcendence and open-ended participation are as prescient as his works' ceaseless fluctuation. Think of today's immersive spectacles, such as Random International's *Rain Room* or Tomás Saraceno's *Free the Air: How to hear the universe in a spider/web* now on view at The Shed. Their departure from real into virtual space occurs by simpler means on the kinetic surfaces of Soto's paintings. His work allows us to experience a sense of touch without contact and enter a place that is neither fully physical nor dematerialized, not unlike the immersive art of our time.

A 180-degree tour of *Trpitico amarillo* yields ever changing impressions of light and mass. Fickle in its appearance, the painting's sculptural surface transforms with each flicker of movement. The urge to pull out an iPhone is pressing yet futile. The eye-twisting orchestration of the work's thorny nylon threads resist conveying the same effect on an Instagram feed. Instead, the work invites you to dive into the present moment before it passes into the next. —*Osman Can Yerebakan*

Jesús Rafael Soto, *Tableau objet*, 1962. Painting on wood and canvas, metal and wire, 10 x 20 x 4 inches. Photographer: Tanguy Beurdeley. © Jesús Rafael Soto / ADAGP, Paris 2022. Courtesy Atelier Soto - Paris and Perrotin