

## GEGO (Gertrude Louise Goldschmidt)

b. 1912, Hamburg, Germany - d. 1994, Caracas, Venezuela



Gego was a German-born Venezuelan artist and sculptor. She attended the *Technische Hochschule of Stuttgart*, in 1932, where she studied under the popular masonry artist, Dr. Paul Bonatz. In 1938, she received a diploma in both Architecture and Engineering.

In 1935, once the Nazis seized Germany, Gego was forced into exile and moved to Venezuela at the age of seventeen. Through her partner, the artist Gerd Leufert, Gego was introduced to a number of artists practicing Kinetic Art, Constructivism, and Geometric Abstraction, as modernist art movements reached their peak in Venezuela.

It was not until the mid-1960s that Gego departed from her previous platform of Kinetic Art, and instead, informed her work by engaging with the line as a formal structure. For Gego, a line inhabits its own space, and as such, it is not merely a component of a larger work, instead, it is the work itself. Therefore, the artist did not use the line to represent an image, the line is the very image. The strength or purpose of the line was enhanced by her use of different materials, such as steel, wire, lead, nylon, and various metals.

Gego's idea of a series of artworks that would be titled "Drawings Without Paper" reflect her view of space. She considered space as its own form, as if her artwork was occupying the room itself. Since her pieces are made from nets and grid-like materials, negative space is everywhere, causing the negative as well as the positive space to be appreciated. But it is the shadows created by her works that reveal the integral connection between the sculpture and the room it occupies.

Gego was thus allowed to play with the idea of the stable and unstable elements of art.

The artist's work has been shown all around the world in countless group exhibitions and numerous solo exhibitions, and her work is found in important public collections such as MoMA; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Museo Reina Sofía; the Tate Modern; and the Art Institute of Chicago.

### Selected Public Collections

Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York

Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Texas

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Houston, Texas

Chicago Art Institute, Chicago

New York Public Library, New York

Pratt Graphic Art Center, New York

Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain

Tate Modern, London, UK

Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA), Buenos Aires, Venezuela

Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami

Cisneros Collection, Caracas, Venezuela

Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela

Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zürich, Switzerland

Alte Oper, Frankfurt, Germany

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Barcelona (MACBA), Barcelona, Spain

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas, Caracas, Venezuela

Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela

Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela

Diane and Bruce Halle Collection, Houston, Texas

Grunwald Art Center, Los Angeles, California

University of New México Art Museum, Albuquerque, New Mexico

**Solo Exhibitions**

- 2016 *Gego: Autobiography of a Line*, Dominique Levy Galler, London, England
- 2015 *Gego: Autobiography of a Line*, Dominique Levy Gallery, New York,
- 2014 *Gego: La poetique de la Ligne*, Colección Mercantil, La Maison de la Amerique Latine, Paris, France  
*Gego: Line as Object*, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany; Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK
- 2013 *Gego: El trazo transparente*, Museo de la Estampa y el Diseño Carlos Cruz-Diez, Caracas, Venezuela  
*Gego: Tejedoras, Bichitos y Libros*, Periférico de Caracas / Arte Contemporáneo, Caracas, Venezuela; Centro de Arte Los Galpones, Caracas, Venezuela  
*Gego: Line as Object*, Hamburger Kunsthalle; Kunstmuseum Stuttgart; Henry Moore Institute, Leeds
- 2012 *Gego: Origin and Encounter, Mastering the Space*, The Americas Society, New York  
*Gego: Construcciones Tangents*, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela  
*Gego, Obra Abierta. Testimonios y Vigencia*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas, Venezuela  
*Gego: Procedencia y Encuentro*, Sala Mendoza, Universidad Metropolitana, Caracas, Venezuela  
*Gego*, Colección Mercantil, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2008 *Gego: Estructuras diluídas*, Museo de Barquisimeto, Barquisimeto, Venezuela  
*Gego: Prints & Drawings 1963-1991*, Federico Sève Gallery, New York
- 2006-07 *Gego arquitecto*, Trasncho Arte Contacto, Sala TAC, Caracas, Venezuela; Centro de Arte de Maracaibo Lía Bermúdez, Maracaibo, Venezuela; Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela; Galería Universitaria Braulio Salazar, UCV, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2006 *Gego: Defying Structures*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto, Portugal; Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), Barcelona, Spain
- 2005-07 *Gego: Between Transparency and the Invisible*, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Houston, Texas; Colección Costantini, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA), Buenos Aires, Argentina; Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá, Colombia; The Drawing Center, New York
- 2004 *Gego: Anudamientos*, Sala Mendoza, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2003 *Gego (Gertrud Goldschmidt)*, Sicardi Gallery, Houston, Texas
- 2002 *Gego: Works on Paper 1962-1991*, Latin Collector Art Center, New York  
*Questioning the Line: Gego, A Selection, 1955-1990*, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Houston, TX, USA; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey (MARCO), Monterrey, Mexico; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico
- 2000 *Gego 1955-1990*, Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas, Venezuela
- 1996 *Gego, Drawings, Engravings, Weavings*, Centro Cultural Consolidado, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1994 *Gego, A Look at Her Work*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas, Venezuela
- 1990 *Weavings*, Galería Sotavento, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1988 *Gego: Recent Works*, Galería Sotavento, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1985 *5/85 Drawing Without Paper*, Museo de Barquisimeto, Barquisimeto, Venezuela
- 1984 *Drawing Without Paper*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1982 *Acuarelas de Gego*, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1981 *Environmental*, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela (permanent installation)
- 1979 *Variaciones sobre reticuláreas – poema de Alfredo Silva Estrada en homenaje a Gego*, Sala Cadafe, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1977 *Gego*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas, Venezuela
- 1975 *Gego: Drawings for Projects*, Instituto de Diseño, Fundación Neumann – INCE, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1973 *Recent Drawings*, Galería Conkright, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1972 *Structures (Double Curves)*, Galería Conkright, Caracas, Venezuela

- 1971 *Gego: Sculpture and Drawing*, Betty Parsons Gallery, New York  
*Gego: Sculptures 1971*, Galería Conkright, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1970 *Recent Works*, Galería Conkright, Caracas, Venezuela  
*Gego Drawings*, The Graphics Gallery, San Francisco, California
- 1969 *Reticulárea (ambientación)*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1968 *On paper: Lithographs by Gego*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela  
*Drawings by Gego*, Galería Conkright, Caracas, Venezuela  
*Lithographs by Gego*, Galería UD, Bogotá, Colombia
- 1967 *Gego: Sculptures, 1957-1967*, Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Banco de la República, Bogotá, Colombia;  
Galería Conkright, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1964 *The Never Projected*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela  
*Lines and Inter-lines: Engravings and Drawings by Gego*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1961 *Recent Drawings by Gego*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1958 *Gego: Sculptures and Gouaches*, Librería Cruz del Sur, Caracas, Venezuela

### Awards

- 1981 Orden Andrés Bello (Promotion), First Class (Honor Band), Caracas, Venezuela
- 1979 National Plastic Arts Prize, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1976 Acquisition Prize, Salón de la Artes Plásticas en Venezuela, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela  
Orden Andrés Bello (medal), Venezuela
- 1972 Work Scholarship, Exhibition Hall of Plastic Arts in Venezuela, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1968 National Prize in Drawing, 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Official Exhibition of Drawing and Engraving, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1967 Acquisition Prize, XXVIII Salón Oficial Anual de Arte Venezolano, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela  
First Prize (Sculpture), XII Salón D'Empaire de Pintura Escultura, Maracaibo, Venezuela
- 1966 The Tamarind Lithography Workshop, Los Angeles, CA, USA (Scholarship)
- 1962 Council for Scientific and Humanist Development] (CDCH) of the UCV, to specialize in architecture-related teaching systems in institutes throughout the U.S. and Europe (England, Germany and Switzerland) (Scholarship)  
Fourth National Exhibition of Drawing and Engraving, Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela (First Prize in Drawing)

### Architecturally Integrated Work

- Banco Industrial de Venezuela, main building, Caracas, 1962
- Centro Comercial Cediaz, Caracas. Torre Cediaz. Iron, nylon ropes and neon, 24.5 m high, 1967
- Centro Comercial Chacaito, Caracas. Aerial Structure Structural assembly, galvanized aluminum and nylon ropes, 9 x 9 m, 1968
- Instituto Venezolano de Investigaciones Científicas (IVIC), Miranda State, Five Screens, Steel and anodized aluminum tubes, 3.50 x 7m, 1968-1971
- INCE main building, Caracas. Mural INCE (Southeast façade) Aluminum plates, enameled steel supports, 1969
- INCE main building, Caracas. Mural INCE (Northwest façade) Anodized aluminum tubes, mosaic wall background, 1969
- Parque Central, Caracas. Cuerdas. Nylon ropes, aluminum, iron and copper joints, 17 x 20m (extending 4 levels), 1972
- Pasaje Concordia, Caracas. Nube (environmental net). Aluminum tubes and bronze joints, 4.30 x 4.30 x 3m, 1974
- La Hoyada subway station, Caracas. Cuadrilátero. Aluminum tubes and iron joints, 3 x 5 x 5m, 1982