

LILIANA PORTER

b. 1941, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Lives in New York, NY, USA

“My work is ... like watching a movie with the lights on...”

Liliana Porter first studied art at the Manuel Belgrano School of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires, where she enrolled at the age of twelve. Five years later, she moved to Mexico City, where she entered the Universidad Iberoamericana and studied printmaking with Guillermo Silva Santamaría; during her studies, she also participated in an experimental workshop with Mathias Goeritz. She subsequently studied at the Escuela de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires. In 1964, on her way to Paris, Porter visited New York. Drawn to the opportunities and museums in the city, she postponed her trip to Europe and moved permanently to New York. In 1965, along with artists Luis Camnitzer and José Guillermo Castillo, she co-founded the New York Graphic Workshop, which produced prints while redefining conventional models for making and distributing art.

Porter's work often places carefully chosen small figurines and other objects in monochromatic empty backgrounds, addressing larger philosophical questions and emotional states. Alongside printmaking, she has also worked extensively in the media of photography and video, and has created works on canvas, drawings, collages, and installations. She writes, “Many of these pieces depict a cast of characters that are inanimate objects, toys and figurines that I find in flea markets, antique stores, and other odd places. The objects have a double existence. On the one hand they are mere appearance, insubstantial ornaments, but, at the same time, have a gaze that can be animated by the viewer, who, through it, can project the inclination to endow things with an interiority and identity. These ‘theatrical vignettes’ are constructed as visual comments that speak of the human condition. I am interested in the simultaneity of humor and distress, banality and the possibility of meaning.”

In 1973, Porter had a solo show in the Projects Room at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and in 1980, she received a Guggenheim Fellowship. The Bronx Museum of Art held a retrospective exhibition of her work in 1991 and she has had solo exhibitions at the Museo Tamayo and the Phoenix Art Museum, among many other institutions in Europe, Latin America, and the United States. Most recently, the Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA) held a solo exhibition of her work in 2013. Porter was a professor at Queens College, CUNY from 1991 to 2007. She lives and works in New York.

Liliana Porter's works are represented in several major collections including Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zürich, Switzerland; Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, TX, USA; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, USA; Museo Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico;

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), TX, USA; Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, NY, USA; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; Tate Modern, London, UK and The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, USA.