Linda Kohen: Private Life
my house, my table, my bed, my self

February through March 2014
Opening Reception with the Artist February 6

Beds, hallways, table settings, and fragments of the body are among the intimate subjects portrayed in paintings by the Uruguayan artist Linda Kohen (b. 1924 Milan, Italy; lives in Montevideo, Uruguay). Glimpses into the private life of this prolific artist, whose career extends across six decades, are on view at Cecilia de Torres, Ltd., Kohen's first solo exhibition in New York.

Influencing both her subject matter and faux-naive style, Kohen's biography is critical to her intensely personal oeuvre. On the eve of World War II, Kohen immigrated with her family to Latin America in order to escape anti-Semitism. Landing in Argentina and ultimately Uruguay, Kohen studied drawing and painting with various artists. In 1949, the artist joined the Taller Torres-García, working with Augusto Torres, Julio Alpuy, and José Gurvich. Although her experience at the School of the South had a foundational impact on her career, Kohen broke away from the constructivist style in the 1970s, when, provoked by anxieties caused by the repressive dictatorship in Uruguay, she began using art as a means of recording aspects of her daily life. Since then, Kohen has continued to develop her distinct artistic practice.

Paintings by Kohen dating from the 1980s through the present are on display at Cecilia de Torres, Ltd., and illustrate many of the characteristic subjects and themes found throughout Kohen's oeuvre.

"Bajando de la cama" and "**Subiendo la escalera"** (both 1981) present fragmented views of the artist's body engaged in the daily activities of getting out of bed and walking up stairs. These paintings, in which the viewer is positioned from the perspective of the artist herself, relate to Kohen's earliest series of mature works, *Las Horas (The Hours)*, painted just before her exile to Brazil (1979-1985), where these works were executed. Related to these paintings is Kohen's "**Homenaje a Mantegna"** (1981), an artwork whose art historical allusion speaks to the artist's Italian heritage.

Expanding beyond her body, other paintings on view in ***Linda Kohen: Private Life*** reveal voyeuristic views into the daily life and home of the artist. These works, which often lack any reference to human presence, depict haunting images of such quotidian domestic objects as a kitchen table (**"La mesa para cuatro" 2003)** or bed ("**La cama abierta" 2003**).
Kohen's interest in architecture is apparent in works such as **"A Leopardi"** (1990) and the more recent **"Comedor"** (2011), which portray the deeply recessive spaces of interior hallways. Other images of interior spaces are depicted on the painted panels which make up Kohen's screen-like "**Biombo**." A hybrid between painting and sculpture, "**Biombo**" propels Kohen's paintings off the wall and into physical space.

Also on view are paintings which reference the death of Kohen's husband, Rafael. This traumatic event in the artist's life has imbued her more recent artwork with a new poignancy, as in the painting, **"He dormido sola"** (2010).

Cecilia de Torres, Ltd. is proud to present the work of Linda Kohen to New York audiences for the first time, as part of the continued legacy of the Taller Torres-García.

In conjunction with ***Linda Kohen: Private Life / my house, my table, my bed, my self,*** an exhibition catalogue, including a conversation with Linda Kohen, an illustrated biographical chronology, and twenty-two color plates, is available.

About the Artist

Linda Kohen (b. 1924 Milan, Italy; lives in Montevideo, Uruguay) immigrated with her family to Montevideo by way of Buenos Aires in 1939. Since then, the Italian-born artist has lived and worked in the Río de la Plata region, with an interlude in Brazil (1979-1985). From 1949 until the studio's demise in 1962, Kohen was a member of the Taller Torres-García, where she studied, created, and exhibited her art. After her work at the Taller, she arrived at her own uniquely personal style, creating intimate paintings that offer a glimpse into her private moments, feelings, and experiences. Kohen continues to develop her artistic practice from her home and studio in Montevideo.

Paintings by Kohen are included in international private collections, as well as in such museums as the Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales and the Museo Gurvich, Montevideo, Uruguay; the Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina; and the Museo de Arte de São Paulo, Brazil. This year, a painting by the artist entered the collection of the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach, California.