

ART

Teresa Burga

Through Oct. 12.

Alexander Gray Associates
508 W. 26th St. Chelsea

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In the delightful centerpiece of this exhibition, the octogenarian Peruvian Conceptualist presents two new sculptures based on her “Máquinas Inútiles” (Useless Machines) drawings, from 1974. The details of her careful schematics—a shapely vase that could never hold water, an ornate table lamp without a light-bulb socket—might escape notice on a smaller scale, but as Brobdingnagian welded-steel objects they are elegantly comic. A third piece, a mural depicting a checkered origami-like abstraction, dated 1989/2019, is based on one of Burga's “Insomnia Drawings.” The artist executed such hypnagogic works during her long career in a customs office, an experience that informs her interest in labor, utility, and bureaucracy. Her recent drawings feature vibrant figures in traditional Andean dress, accompanied by strings of numbers in the margins—a log of the hours she spent making each one.

—*Johanna Fateman*