

Salette Tavares

Lex Icon

translated from the Portuguese by Isabel Sobral Campos and Kristofer J. Petersen-Overton

Appearing for the first time in English translation, *Lex Icon* presents everyday objects through the lens of modern art and abstraction. As abstraction distills the geometrical shape of an object by shedding its function, so too do Tavares's poems distill the essence of everyday items in language. *Lex Icon* connects Tavares's early poetry to her later graphic sculptural poems. Foregrounding insights into human sociality, labor, and domesticity that dwell in simple household objects, the poems collected here also present these as almost mystical artifacts that partake in some unnamed ritual.



// Salette Tavares' *Lex Icon* is a tour de force that catalyzes the dualistic tension between word/thing and human/artifice. The book acts upon the distrust of language and reality, foreshadowing contemporary debates between Continental and Analytical philosophy and within the seductive illusions of the disinformation age. [...] Isabel Sobral Campos and Kristofer Petersen-Overton's first collaborative translation awakens Tavares' penetrating, methodical, and pugilist poetry for readers of English and lays a gilded wreath around its astonishing feats. In the prosperous embrace of a translator partnership, this syntactically complex text gains volumes in transmission. Campos and Petersen-Overton have produced a rendition that shimmers with poetic-perceptual intelligence and elevates Tavares' work to symphonic planes.

— MARYAM MONALISA GHARAVI

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Salette Tavares (1922–1994) was a Portuguese writer, theorist, and visual artist. She was a member of the experimental poetry group PO.EX and was involved in the publication of the first issues of *Poesia Experimental*. Her books include *Quadrada* (1967), *Lex Icon* (1971), *Obra Poética 1957-1971* (1992), and *Poesia Gráfica* (1995). Her spatial poems were exhibited at the 2014 retrospective, *Salette Tavares: Spatial Poetry*, at the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon.



Isabel Sobral Campos' new book is *How to Make Words of Rubble* (Blue Figure Press). Other works include *Your Person Doesn't Belong to You* (Vegetarian Alcoholic Press), *Material* (No, Dear and Small Anchor Press), *Autobiographical Ecology* (Above/Ground Press), and *Sobriety Crystal* (The Magnificent Field). She is the co-founder of the Sputnik & Fizzle publishing series.



Kristofer J. Petersen-Overton's writing has appeared in *The Guardian*, *Politics/Letters*, and *WarScapes*. He teaches political theory at Babson College and lives in Cambridge, MA.

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