



Victor Grippo, "Transformation," 2014,
installation view.

VICTOR GRIPPO

MUSEO UNIVERSITARIO ARTE CONTEMPORÁNEO
(MUAC), MEXICO CITY
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Titled "Transformation," this exhibition brought together 56 works by Argentine artist Victor Grippo (1936–2002). Together they synthesized the artist's experience as a chemistry student, as a pioneer in the area of dematerialized art in the early 1970s, and as an engaged observer of the "Dirty War," waged by Argentina's military dictatorship against political dissidents between 1976 and 1983.

In Grippo's work the humble potato becomes a symbol of possibility. *Analogy I* (1970–71), a partitioned wooden box holding 40 raw potatoes, each implanted with zinc and copper electrodes, tailors process art to the production of energy. A voltmeter allowed visitors to read the amount of electricity being generated: .7 volts per potato; an accompanying text drew a comparison between potatoes and consciousness. The work was exhibited here with *Analogy I, Second Version, or Energy* (1977), a spectacular installation employing hundreds of potatoes on a plinth under a great tangles of wire suspended from the ceiling.

In the more overtly political *Life, Death, Resurrection* (1980), beans germinate within geometrical shapes made of lead, which crack and fall away as the plants grow larger. Employing what the show's curator, Alicia Chillida, calls "a technology of poverty," Grippo suggests that human beings can become aware of their own energies and harness them as action.

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