

Laura Vinci Explores The Fragile State Of The World In Her New Exhibition 'Diurna'



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Jul 31, 2018, 08:31am • 55 views • #DeLuxe

Brazilian artist Laura Vinci brings her background as an artistic director in the theater world to her art practice, often drawing the connections between body, space and ephemerality. In her latest exhibition, *Diurna*, on view at Galeria Nara Roesler New York through August 17. In the exhibition, which marks the artist's New York debut, Vinci forms delicate gold-plated brass into different shapes, like fragile leaves that are recreated from the ones she sees during her near daily walks through the Atlantic Forest near her home in São Paulo, or outlines of the continents, dangling from one pin as commentary on the fragile state of the world in which we live. Vinci invites viewers to play a role within her work, reflecting on their position within it. I questioned Vinci about her practice, the exhibition, and how her work in theater informs her work.

How does your background as a set designer inform your work?

My experience with the theater has influenced a transformation in my work's relationship to the spectator; it demands a more active attitude.

Why the name *Diurna*? What are you trying to convey with the show?

The act of opening the windows of the Nara Roesler gallery in New York for the first time is the manifestation of a desire to communicate directly with the city at the height of summer, when sunlight is at its most intense. *Diurna* takes a set of leaves from a virtual autumn in the Southern Hemisphere and transfers them to a celebration of the new season in the Northern Hemisphere, as though in a migratory movement. Scattered across the gallery, the brass-cast, gold-plated leaves punctuate the architecture of the space as though they have arrived through the recently opened windows. The loose leaves are attached directly to the walls with thin pins, like relics of a future in which the singular eccentricities of our

Earth have ceased to be noticed. The external light takes shelter in the gallery space, varying in its intensity and tonality and establishing a solar coloration in the environment. *Diurna* invites the viewer to see themselves as an integral part of this pulsation, with the viewer's own body present within the continuum. Scattered amongst the leaves, small measuring and orientation objects raise questions about the place we occupy amidst continuous transformations and uncertainties.



Detail of Laura Vinci, Loose Leaves, 2018 PHOTO BY SPENCER HARRISON, COURTESY THE ARTIST AND GALERIA NARA ROESLER.

Tell me about your process. What goes into making one leaf?

I walk almost daily in a small reserve of Atlantic Forest near my house in São Paulo. That's where I watch the leaves. I take pictures of them. These photos are interpreted in a program for 3D printing. The leaves are then cast in the traditional method of lost wax casting.

Why leaves?

The leaves are here representing nature. *Diurna* proposes to reflect on the state of the current world, and seeks to draw attention to the delicacy of our moment.

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Laura Vinci, Morro Mundo Pin [Hill World Pin], 2018, gold-plated brass, Edition of 5 + 2 AP, dimensions variable. PHOTO BY SPENCER HARRISON, COURTESY THE ARTIST AND GALERIA NARA ROESLER.

Explain *Hill World Pin*. Why did you hang outlines of each continent on to one pin?

We live in a complex geopolitical and ecological period. The work exposes this fragility. We have to rethink our relationship with nature. Thomas Jefferson said, "The earth belongs in usufruct to the living." He apparently understood that when you hold something in usufruct, you gain something of significant value, but only temporarily. We are not fulfilling this temporary right to the earth.



Installation view of Laura Vinci, Morro Mundo Mundo # 1 [Hill World World # 1] 2018 with Morro Mundo Mundo # 2 [Hill World World # 2], 2018 in Laura Vinci: Diurna (2018) at Galeria Nara Roesler | New York. PHOTO BY SPENCER HARRISON, COURTESY THE ARTIST AND GALERIA NARA ROESLER.

What about *Hill World #1*? Why are they all in a delicate glass sphere?

This work also exposes our fragile state. The glass sphere is a representation of the world itself and when I put all the continents together within it, I want to indicate that this fragility is an issue for every continent, without hierarchies of social, racial or economic power.

Where are we is a compass on a glass disc. What does this piece represent?

I see this work as a kind of orientation and disorientation point in the installation. With a tiny, ambiguous stone “x” to “mark the spot”. But where are we? And where are we going? For me this device of the compass does not point the way, so much as it questions what our direction will be. What are the solutions to the complex issues we face?



Laura Vinci, *Duas medidas* [Two measures], 2017, gold-plated brass and 7 x of a grenade Edition of 5 + 2 AP, 11.8 x 7.1 x 7.5 in, 30 x 18 x 19 cm. PHOTO BY SPENCER HARRISON, COURTESY THE ARTIST AND GALERIA NARA ROESLER.

In Two Measures, what are the scales supposed to be balancing?

This work of course references the ancient symbol of the “scales of justice”, and the right to equality. But the scales also express a desire to weigh and consider nature, of which we are an intrinsic part, and vice versa. The anthropologist Viveiros de Castro, who studies the Indigenous peoples of the Amazon, distilled this powerful concept from their traditions that everything alive is human. The trees, the animals, the atmosphere, the microorganisms, everything is human.

What's next for you?

This fall I will present in São Paulo a hybrid theater, visual art and literary work, entitled *Machines of the World*. The work is created collectively, with the lighting designers, costume designers and musicians that are a part of my theater group.

I'm a Brooklyn-based writer who covers everything under the lifestyle realm — mostly art and fashion, but also travel, beauty, design and food. I travel the world to discover how culture impacts people's lives, whether through an art fair, a museum exhibition or an innovativ... MORE