

**carlos bunga**  
inhabiting together

nara roesler são paulo

opening february 24

exhibition february 24 – april 20, 2024



Carlos Bunga in his studio, São Paulo, 2023. Photo: Flávio Freire.

Nara Roesler is pleased to present *Inhabiting Together*, Carlos Bunga's (Porto, Portugal, 1976) first solo show at the gallery. Bringing together works recently made in Brazil and new installations, the show is accompanied by a text by Ivo Mesquita and presents key elements of the artist's research. For over 20 years, he has used expanded painting as the core of his production, forging close relationships with architecture, installation, video, and performance.

In a polarized and fractured world, Carlos Bunga invites us to imagine a world in which we can inhabit together. The title of the show also gives us clues to understanding the poetics and themes that arouse the artist's interest. Since the beginning of his career, Bunga has explored architecture in his work, as well as the idea of home and domesticity. In his view, architecture is not just a formalist experience, where form follows function. For him, spaces, enclosures,

and structures are designed to house relationships between individuals and their subjectivities, memories, and feelings. From this perspective, the house is a privileged space for understanding the human and 'living' aspect of architecture.

Another very relevant aspect of his practice is the use of materials of a transitory and ephemeral nature, such as cardboard and adhesive tape, which are widely used by the artist in installation works that form hybrid spaces, susceptible to being modified, as was the case with the *Mausoleum* intervention, carried out in 2012, which occupied the octagon of the Pinacoteca de São Paulo, and more recently, the *Contra la extravagancia del deseo* intervention, which occupied the Crystal Palace of the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid, Spain, in 2022. Using precarious and ephemeral materials, the public is invited to go beyond contemplating the project by walking through the structures and integrating themselves into the works.

For the gallery, the artist has proposed two works using the material: one in the showcase, which will be occupied by architectural structures made of cardboard; the other, based on the idea of the loss of geographical and social territories, is similar to *Occupy*, a recent installation done in 2020 at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Toronto, in which cardboard boxes occupied a large part of the exhibition space and through which the public had to walk and cross to reach the other spaces.

Even in participatory, installation, and performance works, the pictorial element is almost always present. According to Bunga: 'Painting is directly or indirectly present in all my work. It is the basis of my thinking, a multifaceted place full of layers, perspectives and smells.' This process is evident in works recently produced in Brazil, in which the artist makes use of overlays of found packaging, beeswax, leaves of local vegetation, and acrylic paint on plywood.

The colors he uses in his works, although bright and vibrant, are discontinuous and crackled, evoking transience, which is deeply related to nature and the human experience, both of which are transitory. Carlos Bunga's crackled paint in vibrant colors could recently be seen by the Brazilian public during the 35<sup>th</sup> São Paulo Biennial – Choreographies of the Impossible, in which the artist presented *Habitar el color*, a site-specific commissioned work that invited visitors to a sensory experience of walking on a thick layer of crackled paint and feeling the color and its ephemeral nature with their feet.

Layers of crackled colors can also be seen in other works in the exhibition. The artist inscribes layers of paint on collected carpets and local fabrics, which end up forming not only new textures, but also shapes that resemble maps and

cartographies, which raises questions related to territoriality and belonging, which are both recurrent in the artist's research, as well as sculptural and installation works that make use of pieces of furniture, such as the installation *Ilhas* (Islands), conceived specifically for the exhibition, in which a translucent curtain in the gallery's highest room creates spaces where suspended objects defy the notion of gravity and approach the universe of ideas.

### carlos bunga

Carlos Bunga (b. 1976 Porto) attended the Caldas da Rainha School of Art and Design in Portugal. He currently lives and works near Barcelona. He creates works with a procedural component in various formats: sculptures, paintings, drawings, performances, video and, above all, in situ installations, which relate to and intervene in the architectural space in which they are inserted. Although he often uses common and unpretentious materials, such as cardboard and adhesive tape, Bunga's work involves a highly developed degree of aesthetic care and delicacy, as well as a conceptual complexity derived from the interrelationship between making, undoing and remaking, between the micro and the macro and between investigation and completion. Situated on the border between sculpture and painting, his deceptively delicate and fragile works are characterized by an intense study of the combination of color and materiality, while emphasizing the performative aspect of the creative act.

Bunga's works on paper, closely related to his sculptures and installations, often involve superimpositions, both of compositional elements in the paintings and of translucent sheets of paper in the drawings. The analytical/descriptive result, like a double photographic exhibition, mimics the dual experience of memory and imagination underlying the sculpture.

Carlos Bunga has been holding solo exhibitions since 2002, such as: *Reassembling Split Light: An immersive installation* (Sarasota Art Museum, Sarasota, USA, 2023); *Something Necessary and Useful* (Whitechapel, London, UK, 2020); *Carlos Bunga: Architecture of life* (MAAT, Lisbon, Portugal, 2019) and *Capella* (MACBA, Barcelona, Spain, 2015). He has also participated in group shows such as: 35<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo – Coreografias do Impossível (São Paulo, Brazil, 2023); *Meia Noite* – Bienal de Coimbra (Coimbra, Portugal, 2021) and *Quote/Unquote: entre apropriação e diálogo* (Museu de Arte, Arquitetura e Tecnologia de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal, 2017). He is also

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part of important institutional collections, such as MoMA (New York, USA); Perez Art Museum (Miami, USA); Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona - MACBA (Barcelona, Spain) and Museu Calouste Gulbenkian (Lisbon, Portugal).

**nara roesler**

Nara Roesler is a leading Brazilian contemporary art gallery, representing seminal Brazilian and international artists who emerged in the 1950s as well as preeminent mid-career and emerging artists who dialogue with the currents put forth by these historical figures. Founded by Nara Roesler in 1989, the gallery has consistently fomented curatorial practice while upholding the utmost quality in art production. This has actively been put into practice through a select and rigorous exhibitions program created in close collaboration with its artists; the implementation and fostering of the Roesler Curatorial Project, a platform for curatorial projects; and continued support to artists beyond the gallery space, working with institutions and curators in offsite shows. In 2012, the gallery doubled its São Paulo exhibition space, in 2014 it expanded to Rio, and in 2015 it opened in New York City, continuing its mission to provide the best platform for its artists to show their work.

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**nara roesler são paulo**  
avenida europa, 655

**opening**  
february 24, 11am–5pm

**exhibition**  
february 24 – april 20, 2024  
mon – fry, 10am–7pm  
sat, 11am–3pm

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