

nara roesler

são paulo
rio de janeiro
new york

www.nararoesler.art
info@nararoesler.art

carlos bunga
fragments for a
cartography of return

nara roesler new york
opening september 11, 6pm
exhibition sep – oct, 2025



Carlos Bunga, *Free standing painting # 61*, 2023 [detail]

Nara Roesler New York is pleased to present *Fragments for a Cartography of Return*, a solo exhibition by Carlos Bunga (Porto, 1976), curated by Luis Pérez-Oramas. Bunga is known for his poetic and radical exploration of the polymorphic materiality of art. As such, in Bunga's work, matter can take the form of shelter, model, performative field, support for mapping, prototype, imprint, mark, remnant, ruin, or larvae. His mastery of diverse media underpins a nomadic practice driven by a fascination with potential forms. The ambiguity of his architectural sculptures and his paintings on cardboard and tapestries situates much of his work between what has been and what could be: past and future, ruin and prototype, absence and utopia.

"This poetic uncertainty informs Bunga's art as a nomadic practice. Contrary to the sedentary, as Deleuze and Guattari noted, the nomad does not move from one point to another—it is the trajectory that matters. In this sense, Bunga continuously maps, marks pathways, and emphasizes the porosity of art. Maps to nowhere, from nowhere—an atopic cartography," states Pérez-Oramas.

Since the outset of his career, Bunga has engaged with architecture, as well as the notions of home and domesticity. For him, architecture is more than a formalist exercise where form follows function; it is a framework for relationships—between individuals, their subjectivities, memories, emotions,

and time. His interest in notions such as self-construction and prefabricated building, as well as his quest on the polar opposition between nomadism and colonialism, have resulted in landmark installations, such as his project for Palacio de Cristal-Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in 2021, a superbe example of both institutional critique and a reflection on the very place of exhibition. For Bunga, building becomes a privileged instance for understanding life in general as well as the temporal dimension of architecture. Equally central to his practice is the use of transient, ephemeral materials such as cardboard and adhesive tape, which he frequently employs in installations that create hybrid, mutable spaces, open to transformation.

Even in participatory and performative works, the pictorial element is almost always present in Bunga's production. The artist himself notes: "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."

Fragments for a Cartography of Return unfolds in three "stations." The first, visible from the street, transforms the gallery's large window into a mural of traces, combining sculptural models, found objects, and video, open to the exterior. Inside, visitors encounter Bunga's signature "maps," textured paintings on cardboard and fabric. Their bright, vibrant colors—discontinuous and crackled—evoke a fleeting dimension, deeply connected to nature's unexpected surging and the human experience of drifting. "As useless cartographies, these works open space to an experience of disorienting passages and expectation. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the nomad knows how to wait; his patience is infinite," adds the curator.

The final station occupies the gallery's largest room: a monumental, site-specific floor painting that invites viewers into a sensory experience—walking across a thick layer of crackled paint, feeling the color's ephemeral nature beneath their feet—surrounded by suspended sculptures Bunga calls Casulos ("Cocoons"), larvae-shaped forms, sculptures in becoming. Together, they suggest a return to potential, to the imminence of forms.

about carlos bunga

While often using ordinary, unassuming materials such as packing 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 relationship between doing and undoing, unmaking and remaking, the micro and the macro, investigation and achievement, quest and closure.

Straddling the divide between sculpture and painting, Bunga's deceptively delicate works, informed by effortless grace, are characterized by an intense delving into color and materiality, while at the same time emphasizing their performative dimension.

Carlos Bunga (b. 1976, Porto) attended the Escola Superior de Arte e Design in Caldas da Rainha, Portugal. He currently lives and works near Barcelona and has been presenting solo exhibitions since 2002, such as: *Carlos Bunga. Inhabit the contradiction* (Centro de Arte Moderna Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal, 2025); *Reassembling Split Light: An immersive installation* (Sarasota Art Museum, Sarasota, USA, 2023); *Against the Extravagance of Desire* (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Espanha, 2022); *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: *Modeling the World* (Aranya Art Center, Qinhuaungdao, China, 2025); 35 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* (MAAT, Lisbon, Portugal, 2017). He is also 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).

about 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

são paulo

avenida europa 655,
jardim europa, 01449-001
são paulo, sp, brasil
t 55 (11) 3063 2344

rio de janeiro

rua redentor 241,
ipanema, 22421-030
rio de janeiro, rj, brasil
t 55 (21) 3591 0052

new york

511 west 21st street
new york, 10011 ny
usa
t 1 (212) 794 5038

info@nararoesler.art

www.nararoesler.art

nara roesler

carlos bunga fragments for a cartography of return

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.

carlos bunga

fragments for a cartography of return

opening

september 11, 6pm

exhibition

sep – oct, 2025

nara roesler new york

511 W 21st St, New York

press contact

kim donica

kd@kimdonica.com

são paulo

avenida europa 655,
jardim europa, 01449-001
são paulo, sp, brasil
t 55 (11) 3063 2344

rio de janeiro

rua redentor 241,
ipanema, 22421-030
rio de janeiro, rj, brasil
t 55 (21) 3591 0052

new york

511 west 21st street
new york, 10011 ny
usa
t 1 (212) 794 5038

info@nararoesler.art

www.nararoesler.art