

nara roesler

angelo venosa



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## angelo venosa

b. 1954, São Paulo, Brasil

d. 2022, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil

At the beginning of the 1970s, Angelo Venosa started attending Escola Brasil, an experimental space for the study of art. In 1974, he moved to Rio de Janeiro, where he enrolled at Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial (ESDI). In the 1980s, Venosa attended open courses at the Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque Lage, where the so-called 'Geração 80' began and developed in. While his generation was known for a return to painting, the artist dedicated his practice to sculpture. His work often evokes organic structures, which he builds using wood covered with textiles, resin, glass fiber or bones, beeswax and teeth.

In the words of critic Lorenzo Mammi: 'An even better commentary on these works may be a passage from The Magic Mountain, by Thomas Mann: "What was life, really? It was... a fever of matter... It was not matter, it was not spirit. It was something between the two, a phenomenon borne by matter, like the rainbow above a waterfall, like a flame. But although it was not material, it was sensual to the point of lust and revulsion".'

'The technical precision of analysis and the artisanal pleasure of construction, always present in Venosa's work, contribute to construct not an object, but a body, with all the echoes of alienation and danger that that term can have. The fly ends up incorporating the machine, or vice versa; in the end, however, life remains as a dull noise, both irreducible and disturbing'.

cover exhibition view, *Quasi*, 2021, Nara Roesler Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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### selected public works

*Angelo Venosa: Escultor*, Casa Roberto Marinho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2023)

*Ghabaah*, Circuito de Arte Contemporânea do Museu do Açude, Fundação Castro Maya, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2016)

*Untitled* (2005), Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2012)

*Untitled*, Parque José Ermínio de Moraes, Curitiba, Brazil (2005)

*Untitled*, Parque da Luz, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2000)

*O Aleph*, Sant'Ana do Livramento, Brazil (1999)

*Untitled*, Jardim do Ibirapuera, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), São Paulo, Brazil (1999)

*Untitled (Baleia)*, Praça Mauá, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1990), transferida para a Praia do Leme, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1998)

### selected biennials

5<sup>th</sup> Mercosul Biennial, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2005)

45<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennial, Italy (1993)

19<sup>th</sup> São Paulo Biennial, Brazil (1987)

### selected solo exhibitions

*Angelo Venosa: Escultor*, Casa Roberto Marinho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2023)

*Clareira Project*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP), São Paulo, Brazil (2021)

*Quasi*, Nara Roesler, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil (2021)

*Decompor. Compor*, Galeria Candido Portinari, Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2019)

*Catilina*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil (2019)

*Penumbra*, Memorial Vale, Belo Horizonte, Brasil; Museu Vale, Vila Velha, Brazil (2018)

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*Angelo Venosa: Panorama*, Museu de Arte Moderna Aloísio Magalhães (MAMAM), Recife, Brazil (2014)

*Angelo Venosa: Panorama*, Palácio das Artes, Belo Horizonte, Brazil (2014)

*Angelo Venosa: Panorama*, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2013)

*Angelo Venosa: Panorama*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2012)

*Turdus*, Casa de Cultura Laura Alvim, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2009)

#### **selected group exhibitions**

*Bestiário*, Centro Cultural São Paulo (CCSP), São Paulo, Brazil (2017)

*Em polvorosa – Um panorama das coleções do MAM Rio*, Museu de Arte de Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2016)

30x Bienal: *Transformações na arte brasileira*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2013)

*From the Margin to the Edge: Brazilian Art and Design in the 21st Century (Da Margem para o Limiar: Arte e Design Brasileiros no Século 21)*, Sommerset House, London, UK (2012)

*O tridimensional no acervo do MAC: Uma antologia*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP), São Paulo, Brazil (2012)

*Paralelos: arte brasileira da segunda metade do séc. XX em contexto*, Colección Cisneros, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), São Paulo, Brasil ; Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2002)

*Modernidade, art brésilien du 20e siècle (Modernidade: Arte brasileira do século xx)*, Musée d'Art Moderne de La Ville de Paris, Paris, France (1987)

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#### **selected collections**

Centro Cultural São Paulo (CCSP), São Paulo, Brazil

Instituto Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil

Instituto Figueiredo Ferraz (IFF), Ribeirão Preto, Brazil

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS), Madrid, Spain

Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói (MAC-Niterói), Niterói, Brazil

Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP), São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Museu Nacional de Belas Artes (MNBA) Rio de Janeiro; Brazil

Museu de Arte do Rio (MAR), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul (MARGS), Porto Alegre, Brazil

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

<b>5</b>	early career
<b>20</b>	1990s
<b>28</b>	public scale
<b>34</b>	2000s
<b>51</b>	recent practice

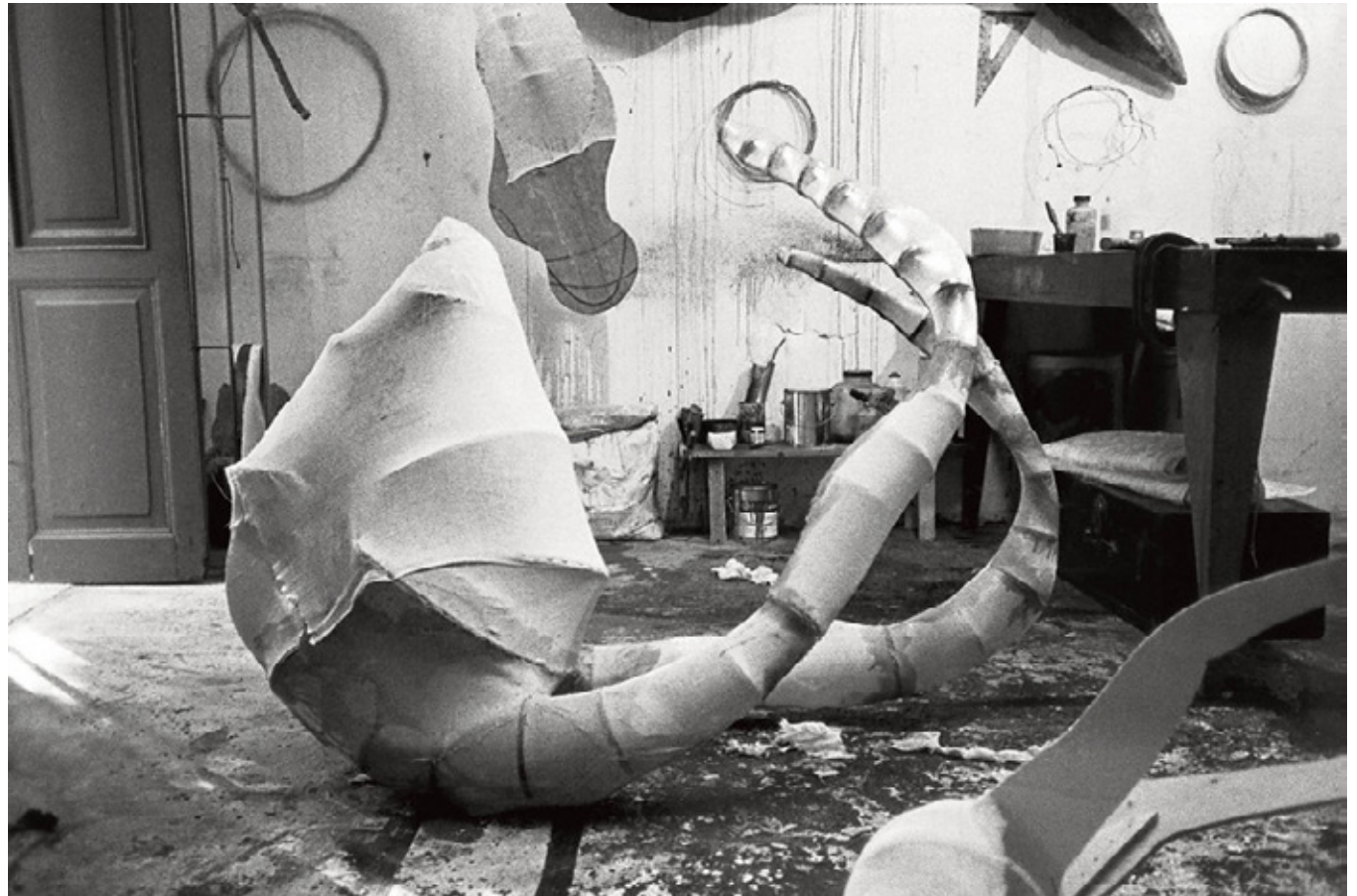


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## early career

‘A period of immobilized time emerges, fossilized and prehistoric, astonishing and unrecognizable. Something that hides and reveals itself through layers upon layers – Angelo works through layers – in a process akin to reverse excavations. These excavations, through reconstruction, present us with incongruous and unusual forms, not quite irrational but rather, following the logic of archaic labor, the millennia-old time of nature, and geological erosion. They are ageless beings, contemporary monsters, ready to return from a forgotten existence, poised to take the first step towards life. The uncanny familiarity of the initial encounter with matter.’

Paulo Venâncio Filho, art critic and curator.



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Lapa studio, 1985  
Sculpture in progress  
Rua Silvio Romero  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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→  
exhibition view  
*Panorama*, 2013  
Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo,  
São Paulo, Brazil



ANGILO VENOLA

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*Untitled*, 1988  
wood, fiberglass and lead  
70 × 180 × 70 cm  
27.5 × 70.8 × 27.5 in  
Lapa studio, 1988  
Rua Sílvia Romero,  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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→  
*Untitled*, 1989  
wood, fiberglass and twig  
124 × 459 × 37 cm  
48.8 × 180.7 × 14.5 in  
exhibition view  
*Panorama*, 2013  
Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo,  
São Paulo, Brazil







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'His art refuses both to imitate nature, unlike the majority of aesthetics of this century and to reduce nature to a system of signs, an image, or a perceptual stimulus, as seen in realist and neo-figurative currents. By simulating organic procedures, it echoes the relationship between skeleton and skin, bone and cartilage, fluid and coagulated materials. Positioned not in front, but behind nature, as if it were produced by his actions, the artist literally assumes the role of creator.'

Lorenzo Mammi, art critic.

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←

*Untitled*, 1987  
wood and fiberglass  
121 × 450 × 143 cm  
47.6 × 177.1 × 56.2 in

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Lapa studio, 1985  
Rua Sílvia Romero  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil





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*Untitled*, 1986  
wood, fabric, plaster and paint  
260 × 80 × 80 cm | 102.3 × 31.4 × 31.4 in





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exhibition view  
*Panorama*, 2013  
Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo,  
São Paulo, Brazil





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←

*Untitled*, 1985  
wood, fabric, plaster and paint  
80 × 220 × 60 cm | 31.4 × 86.6 × 23.6 in

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exhibition view  
Centro Empresarial Rio, 1985  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



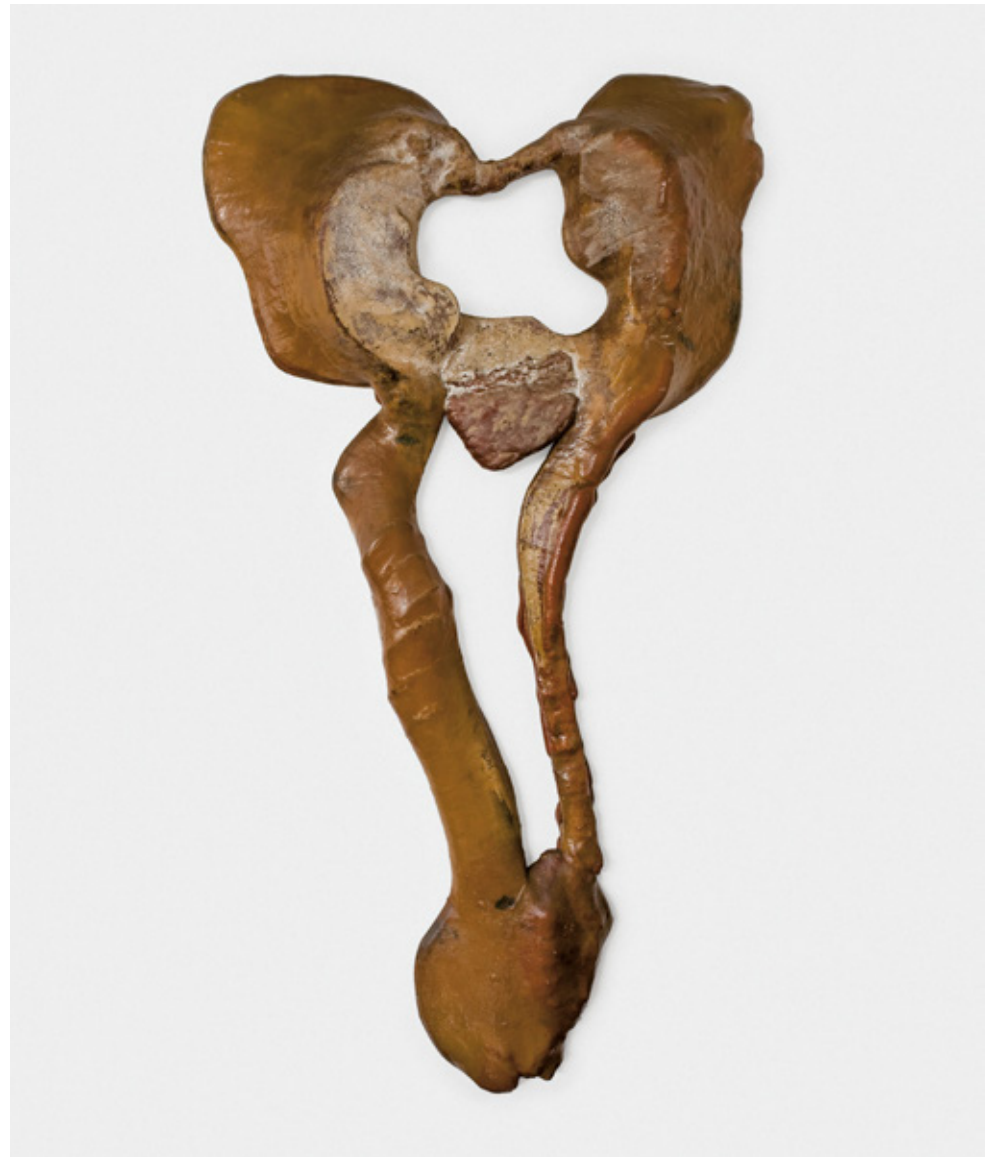


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*Untitled*, 1985  
plaster, wood and fabric  
218 x 64 x 82 cm | 85.8 x 25.1 x 32.2 in



Untitled, 1989  
 wood, fiberglass and talc  
 235 × 125 × 20 cm | 92.5 × 49.2 × 7.8 in



Untitled, 1989  
 fiberglass and wood  
 165 × 130 × 20 cm | 64.9 × 51.1 × 7.8 in







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←  
exhibition view  
*Panorama*, 2012  
Museu de Arte Moderna  
do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio),  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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exhibition view  
*Panorama*, 2012  
Museu de Arte Moderna  
do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio),  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil





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*Untitled*, 2012  
composite aluminum plate  
225 × 200 × 200 cm  
88.5 × 78.7 × 78.7 in  
exhibition view  
*Panorama*, 2012  
Museu de Arte Moderna  
do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio),  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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## 1990s

In the 1990s, the interplay between abstract form and material exploration became crucial in Angelo Venosa's practice. The characteristics of the various materials used – beeswax, cow teeth, bones, wood and glass, among others – appear as ways to approach the organic in tandem with sculptural tradition, developed through the creation of a unique vocabulary.

'They seem like fragments of bodies: carcasses, skulls, skeletons, vertebrae, and teeth. They are traces of astonishing, eccentric, and strange beings, whilst also being segmented images, and examined anatomy. The exhibition space thus resembles a paleontological site or a pathologist's laboratory.'

Marisa Flórido, art critic and curator.

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*Untitled*, 1993  
wax and ox teeth  
64 x 6 cm | 25.1 x 2.3 in





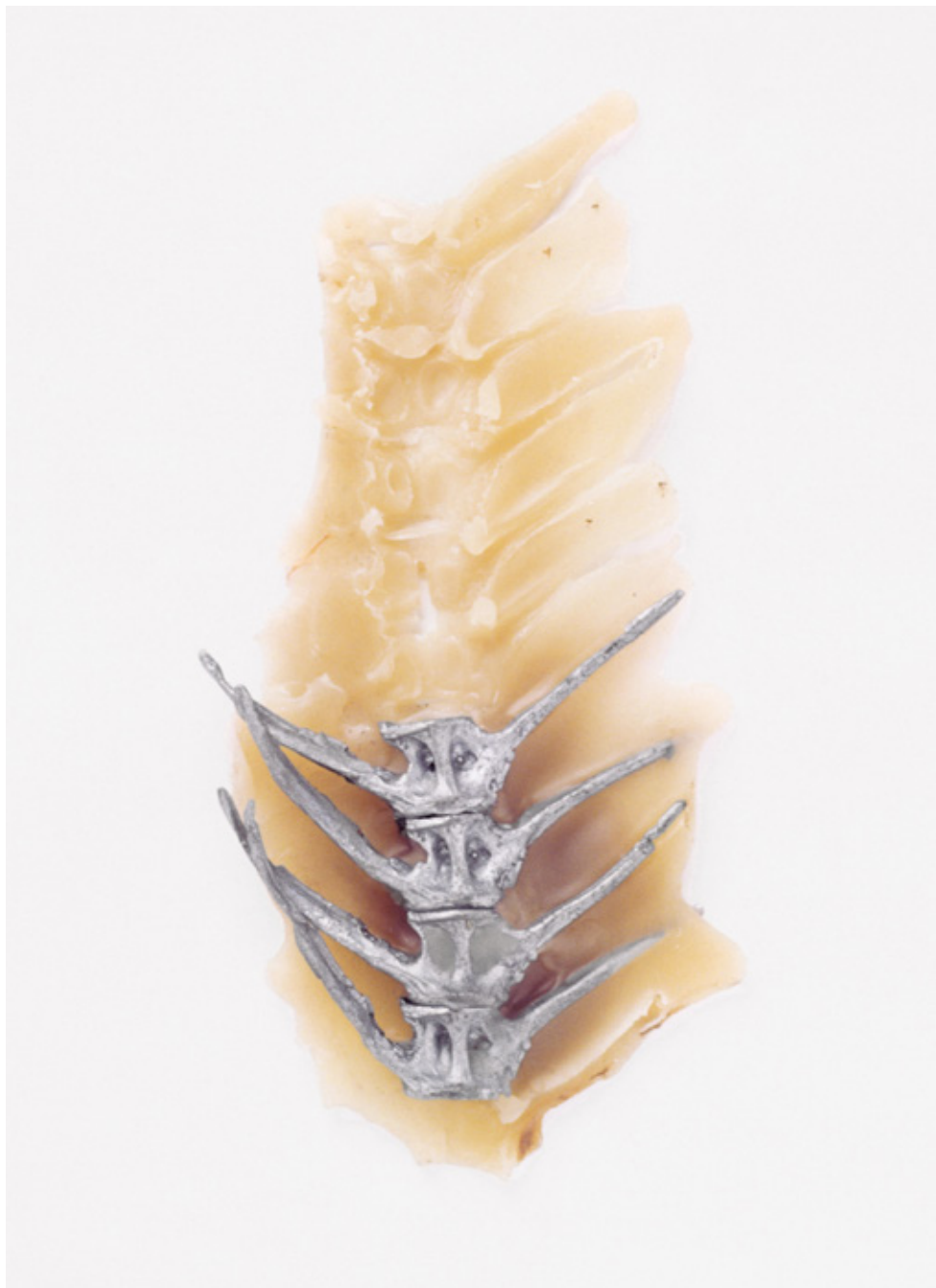
Untitled, 1992  
paraffin, pigment and teeth  
21 x 24,5 x 3,5 cm | 8.2 x 9.6 x 1.3 in



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*Untitled*, 1992  
lead and wax  
21 x 24 x 3 cm | 8.2 x 9.4 x 1.1 in





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‘This tension, woven between contradictory bodily traces, doesn’t merely appear throughout Venosa’s body of work. It also uniquely structures individual pieces and distinct moments. Hence, Ronaldo Brito speaks of “living fossils” in regard to the pieces from the 1980s, while Lorenzo Mammi draws notice, in those from the early 1990s, to the prevalence of “elements where the living being merges with the inanimate object”.’  
Flora Sussekind, critic and essayist.

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*Untitled*, 1993  
paraffin and lead  
25 x 10 x 3 cm | 9.8 x 3.9 x 1.1 in



*Untitled*, 1997  
marble, glass, wire and pitch  
30 × 45 × 25 cm | 11.8 × 17.7 × 9.8 in



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*Untitled* [detail], 1997  
marble, glass, wire and pitch  
30 × 45 × 25 cm | 11.8 × 17.7 × 9.8 in



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*Untitled*, 1997  
glass and salt  
140 × 60 × 120 cm  
55.1 × 23.6 × 47.2 in  
exhibition view  
*Panorama*, 2012  
Museu de Arte Moderna  
do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio),  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil





*Untitled (Maria)*, 1999  
photographs on glass slides  
160 x 120 cm | 62.9 x 47.2 in

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## public scale

In works designed for installation in public spaces, in dialogue with the urban landscape, such as *Baleia* (1989), currently on Leme Beach, the artist's mastery of corten steel is striking. This significant raw material for previous generations of sculptors gains new layers of meaning with Venosa. In the artist's work, the material is imbued with the memory of a figurative image. This body, hinted at, grasped through slices or pieces, is reinforced by the oxidation of corten steel, metaphorically approaching the concept of skin.

For curator Paulo Venâncio Filho, this sculpture is one '... of the few that fearlessly engages with the vastness of urban space. It is no coincidence that the one located in the city, in an open setting on Leme Beach, is titled *Baleia* (Whale) [attributed title] – the largest of living bodies and vertebrate animals. It strikes me as more than metaphorical that it stands there between the sea and the city, not because it is a whale, but because it intrudes, evoking the presence of the organic and the archaic within contemporary virtuality. This intrusion embodies the inherent poetics of the artwork'.

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*Untitled (Baleia)*, 1990  
corten steel  
360 × 660 × 225 cm  
141.7 × 259.8 × 88.5 in  
Praia do Leme,  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil







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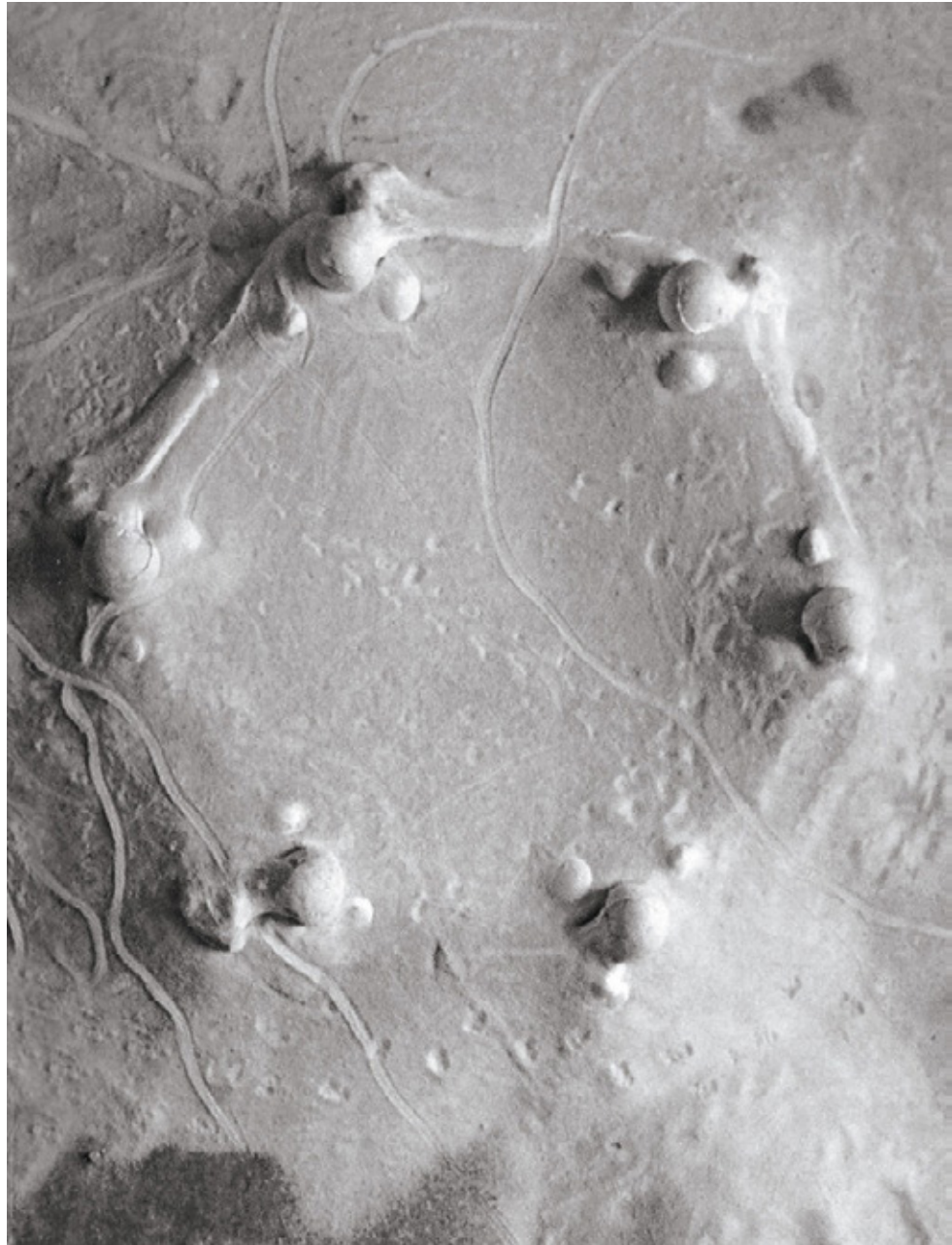
*Untitled (Baleia)*, 1990  
corten steel  
360 × 660 × 225 cm  
141.7 × 259.8 × 88.5 in  
Praia do Leme,  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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*Untitled*, c. 1995  
study  
bones under sand  
(project for public work)

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→  
*Untitled*, 1997  
cast aluminum  
400 x 65 cm | 157.4 x 25.5 in  
Parque do Ibirapuera,  
Museu de Arte Moderna  
de São Paulo (MAM-SP),  
São Paulo, Brazil







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*Untitled [detail], 1997*  
cast aluminum  
400 x 65 cm | 157.4 x 25.5 in  
Parque do Ibirapuera,  
Museu de Arte Moderna  
de São Paulo (MAM-SP),  
São Paulo, Brazil

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→  
*Ghabaah, 2016*  
ceramic epoxy  
260 x 220 x 220 cm  
102.3 x 86.6 x 86.6 in  
Circuito de Arte Contemporânea  
do Museu do Açude  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil









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## 2000s

'The works created during this period unite two poles. Firstly, they once again reveal layers – the digital slices of the human brain – albeit flattened by the artist onto a single plane. Secondly, the choice of two materials – on one hand, iron, subject to the “decay” of time; on the other, immutable aluminum – once again points to the pursuit of balance between chaos and order, a pursuit always pursued by the artist.'

Daniela Name, curator.

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*Untitled*, 2006  
corten steel  
238 × 117 × 0,3 cm | 93.7 × 46 × 0.1 in

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→  
*Untitled [detail]*, 2006  
corten steel  
238 × 117 × 0,3 cm | 93.7 × 46 × 0.1 in







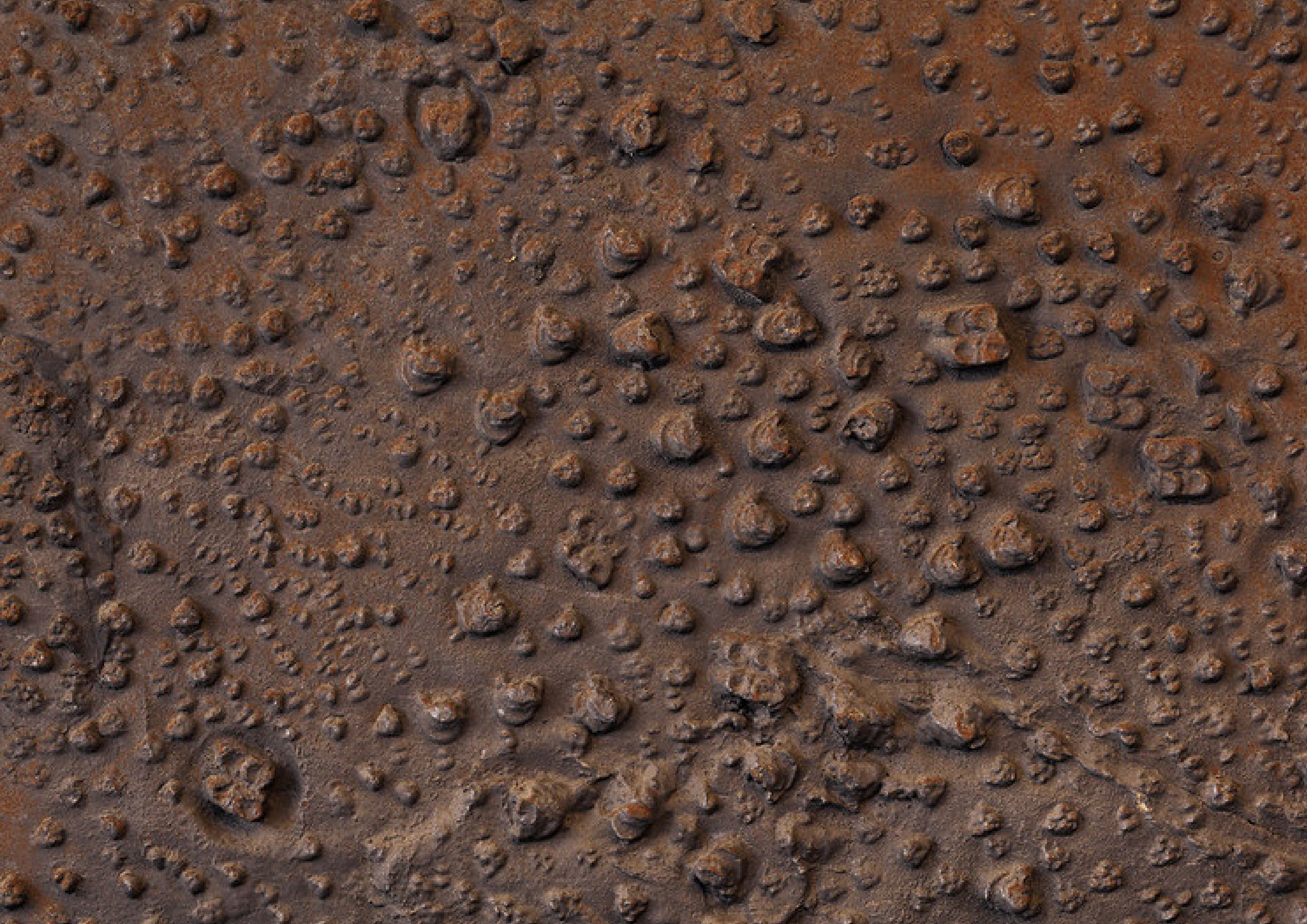


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*Untitled*, 1994  
corten steel  
158 × 94 × 0,3 cm  
62.2 x 37 x 0.1 in

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→  
*Untitled [detail]*, 1994  
corten steel  
158 × 94 × 0,3 cm  
62.2 x 37 x 0.1 in





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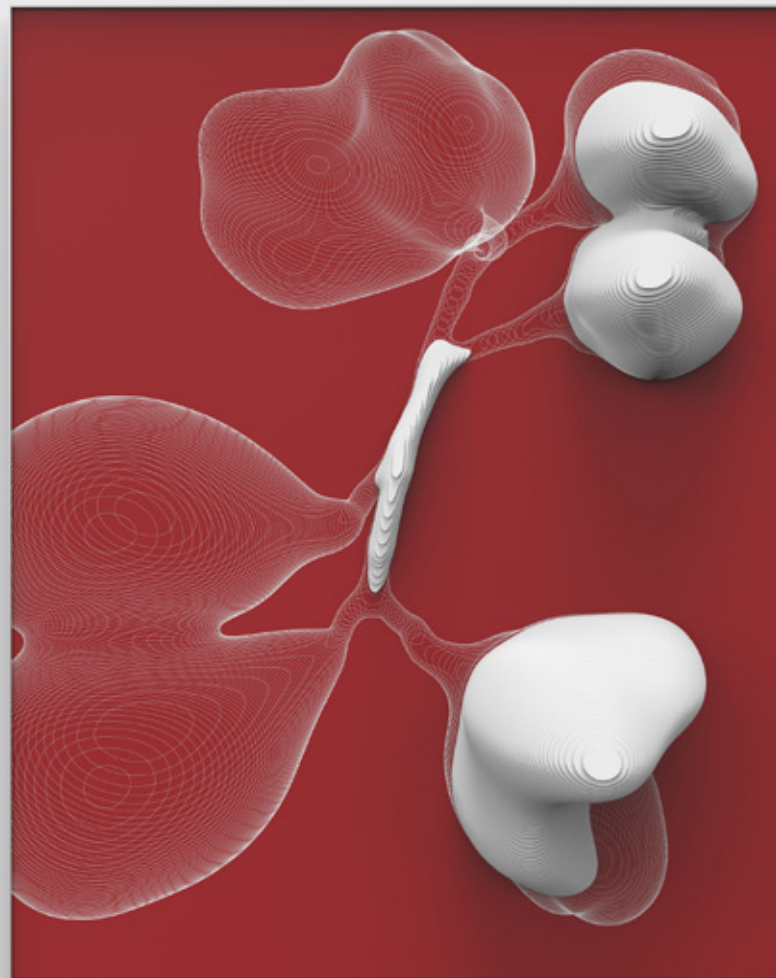
*Untitled*, 2021  
corten steel  
74 × 120 × 197 cm  
29.1 x 47.2 x 77.5 in



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'The volume is carved into virtually infinite planes and reduced to a single plane. This plane, then overlaid on itself an indefinite number of times, generates another volume. What's striking in this case is that the result continues to convey the impression of an organic form: as if what makes an object an organism is not a particular recognizable arrangement of its parts, but an intrinsic quality to each point, independent of its order and disposition.'

Lorenzo Mammi, art critic.



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*Untitled*, 2018  
methacrylate, aluminum  
and UV printing  
148 × 120 × 35 cm  
58.2 × 47.2 × 13.7 in



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'Expanding and contracting, just like the organisms of old. The previous strangeness of the form is replaced by a fascination with the surface, and a new and unusual visual dissonance between volume and surface emerges. However, some resemblance to contour lines remains, simulating distinct geological layers, though no longer forming the obvious corporeal structure of vertebrates. By exploring the visibility of the body, the sculpture becomes less suggestive and more active, projecting rather than internalizing, opening up like a simulation of a natural landscape or artificially altered landscape, creating an architecture of the envelope that expands sinuously and pulsates – metamorphoses of the body.'

Paulo Venâncio Filho, art critic and curator.

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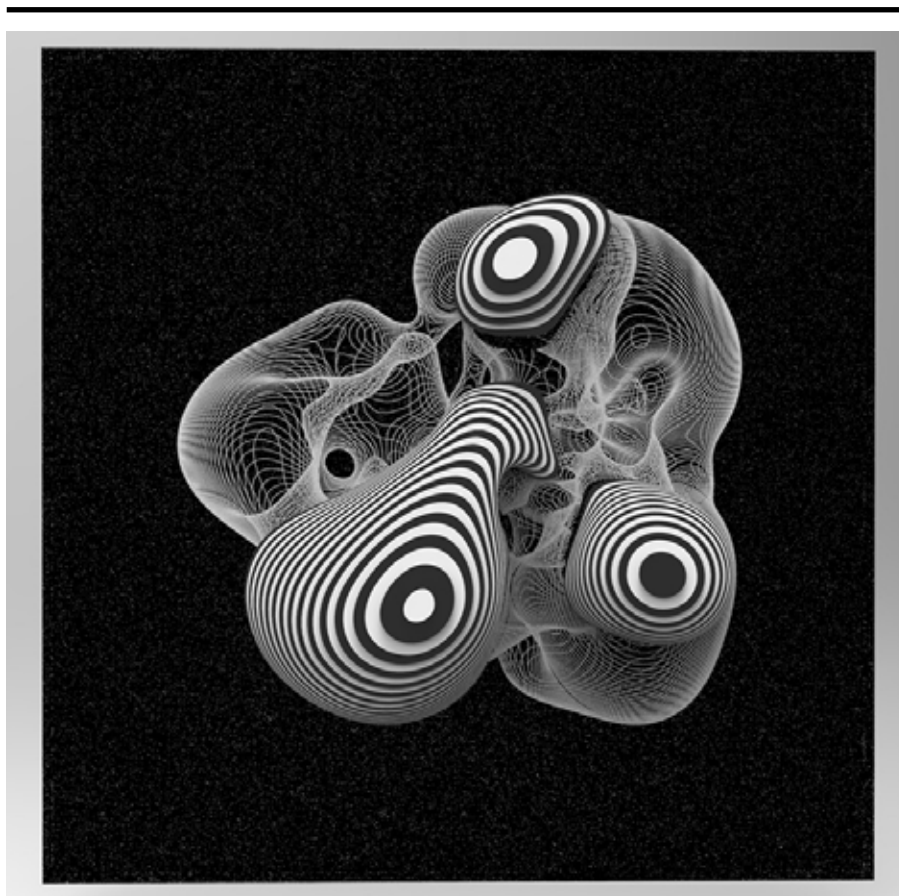
*Untitled*, 2015  
methacrylate  
50 x 44 x 27 cm  
19.6 x 17.3 x 10.6 in

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→  
*Untitled [detail]*, 2015  
methacrylate  
50 x 44 x 27 cm  
19.6 x 17.3 x 10.6 in








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*Untitled*, 2014  
 methacrylate on aluminum  
 and UV printing  
 100 × 100 cm | 39.3 × 39.3 in

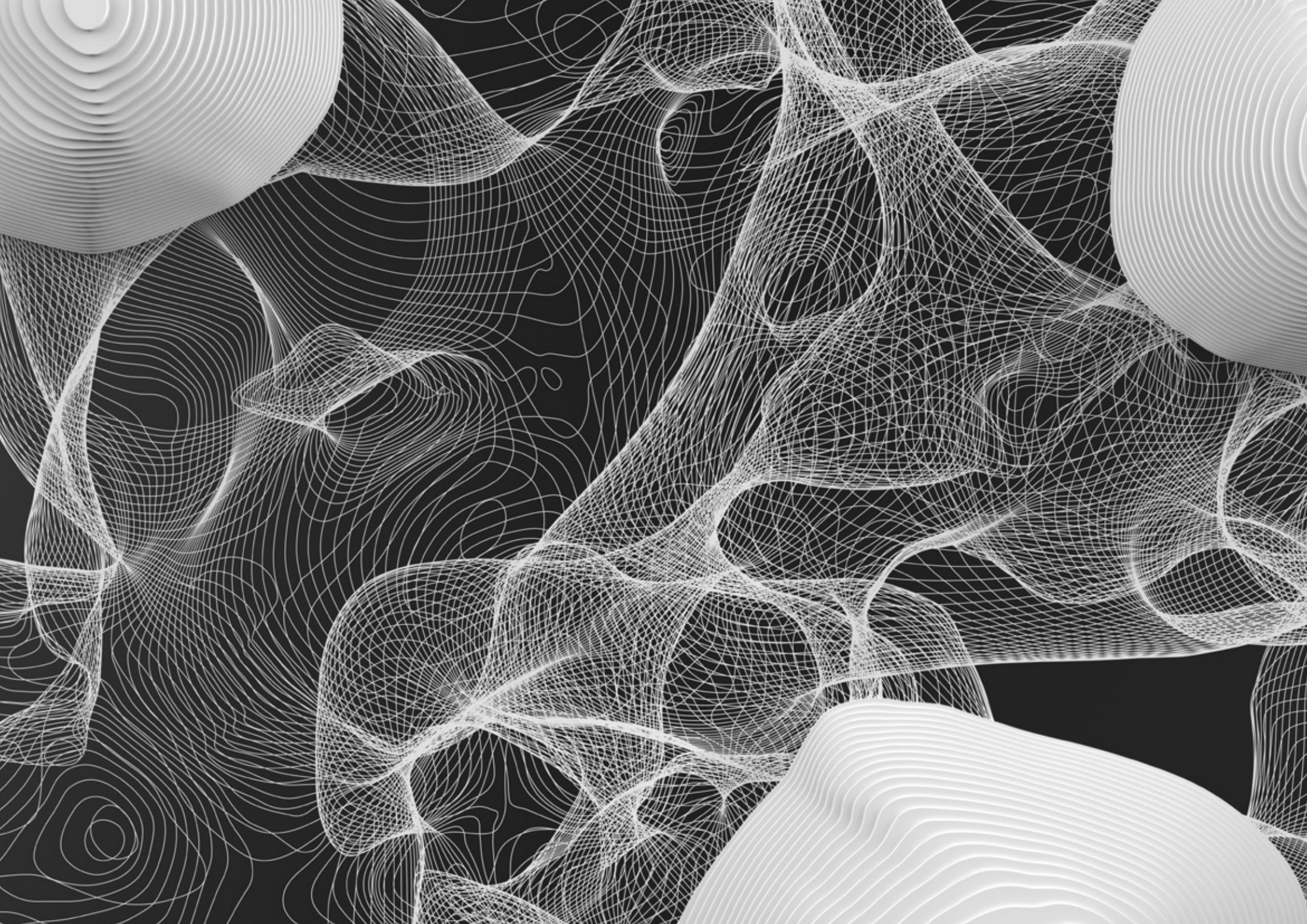
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→  
*Untitled* [detail], 2014  
 methacrylate on aluminum  
 and UV printing  
 100 × 100 cm | 39.3 × 39.3 in

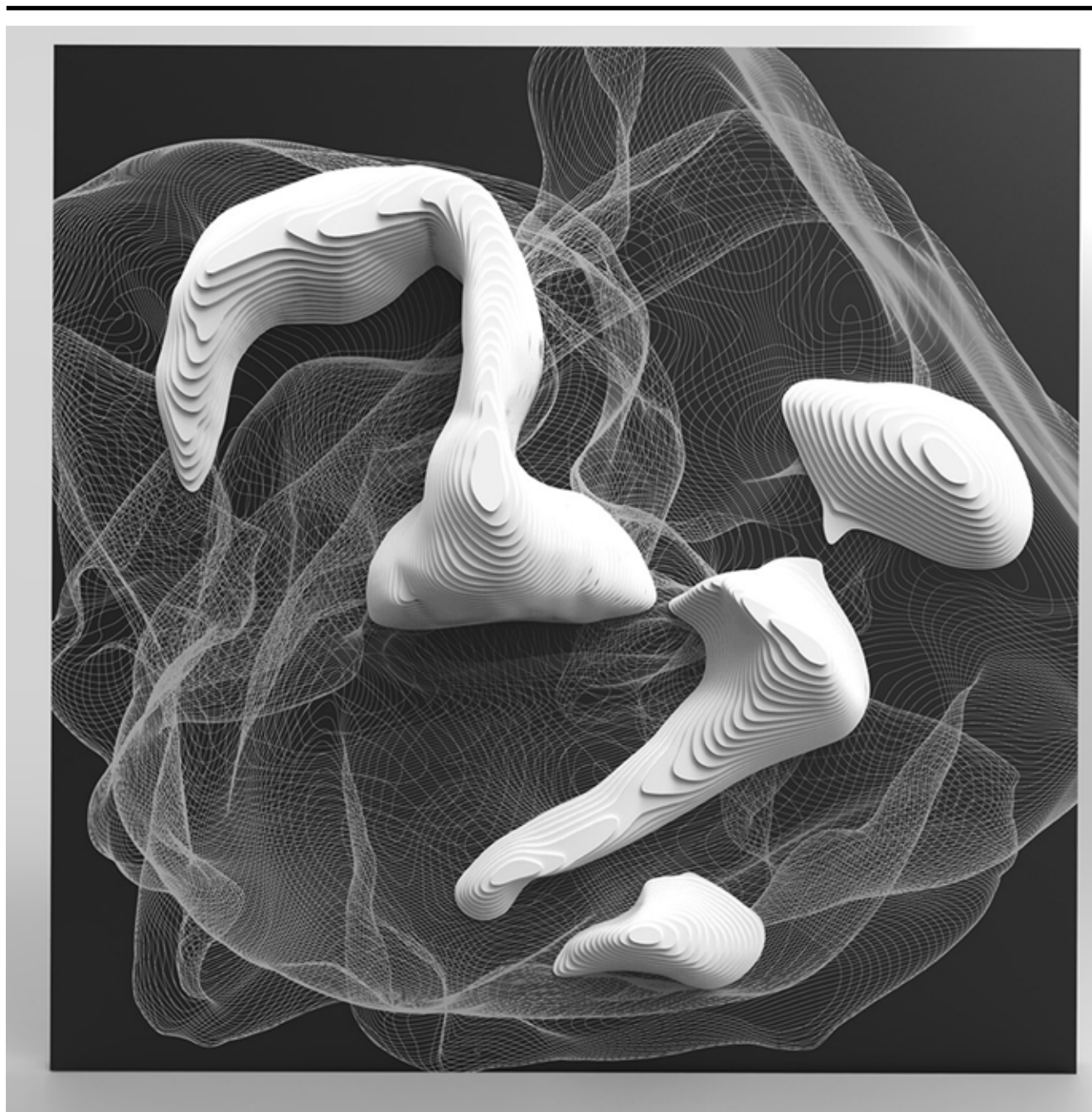



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*Untitled*, 2017  
 methacrylate on aluminum  
 and UV printing  
 148 × 148 cm | 58.2 × 58.2 in







*Untitled*, 2014  
methacrylate on aluminum  
and UV printing  
100 × 100 cm | 39.3 × 39.3 in



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‘Nevertheless, the sinuous structures that invest in the expansion of forms are present, as well as the multiplication of planes that, like geological formations, broaden their limits and can also be understood as cavities, narrows, veins that eliminate straight lines and allow the reemergence of the two archetypes that hover over his work: dwelling and the body.’

Felipe Scovino, curator.



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*HM\_07*, 2016  
methacrylate, aluminum  
and UV printing  
180 × 120 × 30 cm  
70.8 × 47.2 × 11.8 in



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*NHM\_03*, 2016  
methacrylate  
97 × 98 × 46 cm  
38.1 × 38.5 × 18.1 in

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→  
exhibition view  
*Giusè*, 2016  
Nara Roesler São Paulo  
São Paulo, Brazil, 2016  
photo © Everton Ballardín









←  
exhibition view  
*Giuse*, 2016  
Nara Roesler São Paulo  
São Paulo, Brazil, 2016  
photo © Everton Ballardín

*Arquipélago*, 2016  
FDM print  
60 x 60 x 72 cm  
23.6 x 23.6 x 28.3 in





*Arquipélago*, 2016  
FDM print  
60 × 60 × 72 cm  
23.6 × 23.6 × 28.3 in



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## recent practice

Exploring technology as a path to enhance manual craftsmanship and engagement with materials, Angelo Venosa has presented, in recent works exhibited from 2018 onwards, in shows like *Penumbra* (2018) at the Vale do Rio Doce Museum, Vitória, the installation *Catilina*, inaugurated the following year at the Paço Imperial in Rio de Janeiro, as well as the works of the *Clareira Project* at the Museum of Contemporary Art of the University of São Paulo (MAC USP) in 2021. These formal elements seem to evoke the corporeality of the works from the 1980s, yet differing in their working process and in establishing new dialogues between sculpture and space.



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*Untitled*, 2019  
wood, fabric and fiberglass  
420 x 300 cm | 165.3 x 118.1 in

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→  
exhibition view  
*Penumbra*, 2018  
Museu Vale, Vila Velha, Brazil





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*Untitled*, 2018  
wood, fabric and fiberglass  
303 × 130 × 55 cm  
119.2 × 51.1 × 21.6 in

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→  
exhibition view  
*Penumbra*, 2019  
Nara Roesler São Paulo, Brazil











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←

*Untitled*, 2018  
wood, fabric and fiberglass  
350 × 160 × 82 cm  
137.7 × 62.9 × 32.2 in  
exhibition view  
*Penumbra*, 2018  
Museu Vale, Vila Velha, Brazil

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*Catilina*, 2019  
wood, fabric and fiberglass  
420 × 300 cm | 165.3 × 118.1 in  
Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



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‘These works unfold the key characteristics of his practice, intertwining forms, materials, and processes from the inception of his career with current concerns. The majority of these pieces have been crafted using wood, fabric, and fiberglass. Through these materials, Venosa shapes forms that reveal the tension between the organic and the abstract. These pieces evoke fossils, fragments, or entire bodies of unknown creatures, prompting contemplation of the diverse temporalities within our world – the past, present, and future. They also provide us with a contemplation on death and survival. Indeed, his figures consistently bear elements both familiar and strange, tangible through their physicality yet enigmatic, as they withhold a precise referential identification.’  
Daniela Name, curator.

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*Untitled*, 2021  
wood, fabric and fiberglass  
78 × 157 × 222 cm  
30.7 × 61.8 × 87.4 in

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→  
*Untitled*, 2021  
wood, fabric and fiberglass  
78 × 157 × 222 cm  
30.7 × 61.8 × 87.4 in







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'Paraphrasing Walter Benjamin when comparing the painter to the cinematographer, the magician to the surgeon, I would say that in Angelo Venosa, the magician and the paleontologist coexist: the one who creates worlds and beings (already dead) and the one who dissects and examines their death (to make them live again).'

Marisa Flórido, art critic and curator.

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*Untitled*, 2018  
wood, fabric and fiberglass  
390 × 128 × 160 cm  
153.5 x 50.3 x 62.9 in











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←←  
exhibition view  
*Clareira*, 2021  
MAC USP, São Paulo, Brazil

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←  
exhibition view  
*Clareira*, 2021  
MAC USP, São Paulo, Brazil

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exhibition view  
*Clareira*, 2021  
MAC USP, São Paulo, Brazil



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'A singular piece in the global landscape of contemporary sculpture, his work possesses the paradoxical ability to traverse historical ground, yet from the vantage point of critique and transformation, it oscillates between the realm of solids and voids, and above all, it conveys both the intensity of passions and the contemplation of silence.'

Ligia Canongia, curator.

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exhibition view  
*Quasi*, 2021  
Nara Roesler  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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→  
exhibition setup  
Angelo Venosa  
*Panorama*, 2012  
Museu de Arte Moderna  
do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio),  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil









exhibition views  
*Angelo Venosa: escultor*, 2023  
Casa Roberto Marinho,  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil















nara roesler

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