

nara roesler

laura vinci



laura vinci

b. 1962 in São Paulo, Brazil, where she lives and works

Laura Vinci is best known for her sculptures, large installation works and interventions. Her research is based on exploring the relationship between body, ephemerality and space. Vinci views the latter as a complex organism that mediates the interactions between the elements that inhabit it, all while remaining susceptible to the constant passing of time. As such, her work seeks to investigate how matter moves or is altered, showcasing its transitory nature and stimulating new understandings of our surroundings.

Vinci began her artistic career in the mid-1980s, first dedicating herself fully to painting. Rather than turning to figuration, the artist sought to achieve almost tri-dimensional pieces, which quickly lead her to focus on sculpture. Her interest for changing matters is notably visible in the idea of erosion—captured in her intervention known as ‘hourglass’, which she created for the project *Arte/Cidade 3* (1997) in São Paulo—and in the idea of condensation, present in her use of cooling coils that form frozen words. These interests also characterize Vinci’s work with Teatro Oficina, where she has undertaken the role of artistic director, participating in the theater’s set and costume design work. She is currently working with Mundana Companhia.

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selected solo exhibitions

maquinamata, Nara Roesler, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2022)
mundana +: Medeamaterial, mundana cia, Sesc Pinheiros, São Paulo, Brazil (2019)
Todas as Graças, Instituto Ling, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2018)
Papéis Avulsos, Art Center/South Florida, Miami, USA (2014)
Carpe Diem Arte e Pesquisa, Lisbon, Portugal (2010)
Warm White, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, Brazil (2007)

selected group exhibitions

O rio dos navegantes, Museu de Arte do Rio (MAR), Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil (2019)
Past/Future/Present: Contemporary Brazilian Art from the Museum of Modern Art, São Paulo, Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, USA (2017)
Exposición 13, La Conservera, Murcia, Spain (2014)
Beuys e bem além, ensinar como arte, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil (2011)
26ª Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2004)

selected collections

Inhotim, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, Brumadinho, Brazil
Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), São Paulo, Brazil
Museu de Arte do Rio (MAR), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

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folhas avulsas e galho 2019

solo exhibition

museu de arte moderna de são paulo
(MAM-SP), são paulo, brazil

Laura Vinci's *Folhas avulsas e galho* were installed in 2019 in São Paulo's Museum of Modern Art's 'Sala de Vidro'—a glass room located at the forefront of the museum—of which curator Felipe Chaimovich said, 'These works by Laura Vinci show the cycle of leaves falling off trees, in metal sculptures. Their shimmering coat reflects the changing lights, [...] and thus, the leaves seem to survive their detachment from the branch and have their process of decomposition, foretold by their fall, suspended in time. The use of gold-plating transforms this ephemeral moment of vegetation into a relic, as if creating a precious souvenir for future generations that are to confront the enormous challenges that come with the transformation of nature.'

installation view

Folhas avulsas e galho, 2019
Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM-SP)
São Paulo, Brazil, 2019

→

installation view
Folhas avulsas e galho, 2019
Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM-SP)
São Paulo, Brazil, 2019















sem título 2019

group exhibition

a terceira margem, 3ª bienal de arte
contemporânea de coimbra

Sem título (2001-19) develops from Laura Vinci's career-long interest in time and engagement with the concept of the hourglass. The work consists of a metal pyramidal structure attached to the dome of a convent's underground vault, from which a thin thread of sand constantly falls to the floor. The piece reenacts the hourglass, with the sand passing through as time goes by and progressively assembling on the floor into a mass. More specifically to this piece, the falling sand alludes to the passing of millions of years during which bacteria eroded stones by inserting themselves into microscopic fissures, crumbling natural structures. In evoking the hourglass, Vinci also represents humanity's compulsive strive to tame the intangible and uncontrollable nature of time.

installation view

Sem título, 2019

3ª Bienal de Arte Contemporânea
de Coimbra, 2019
Coimbra, Portugal

→

installation view

Sem título, 2019

3ª Bienal de Arte Contemporânea
de Coimbra, 2019
Coimbra, Portugal



todas as graças 2018

installation

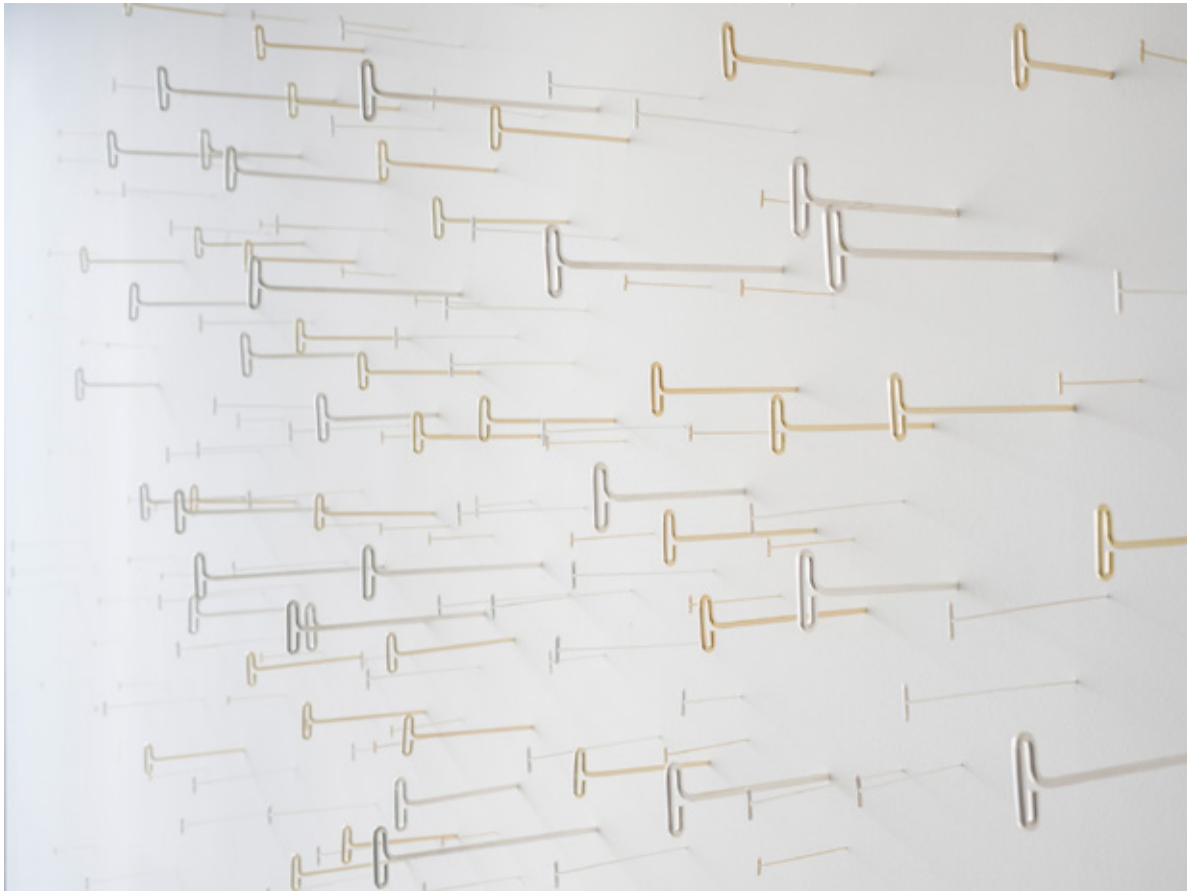
instituto ling, porto alegre, brazil

Todas as Graças displays a particular strand of Laura Vinci's work. Though it still engages with the idea of time, the work addresses the question differently focusing on a play with formal references. Beginning with the fluid and voluptuous shape, the works hint at the female body and evoke the Three Graces—which inspire the title of the series—from Greek mythology. Having been widely represented, in styles as diverse as those of Raphael, Rubens, Canova, Maillol and thus, is above anything, the image of an image that has crossed generations. The installation conveys the art historical trajectory of the image by including dozens of units, in different sizes and metals, rather than just three. Simultaneously, the mirroring surfaces create a choreography of reflections as the viewer passes through, activating the works' surroundings and inserting the audience into the historical timeline. 'All this history is contained in my Graces,' says the artist, seeing the pieces as condensations of time.²



²Aita, Virginia H. A., *Todas as Graças*, Instituto Ling, 2018. pp.7.





←
installation view
Todas as graças, 2018
Instituto Ling, Porto Alegre, Brazil
Photo © Fábio Del Re

installation view
Todas as graças, 2018
Instituto Ling, Porto Alegre, Brazil
Photo © Fábio Del Re



installation view
Morro mundo, 2017
Galeria Nara Roesler,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Photo © Pat Kilgore

morro mundo 2016–2017

installation

cubo branco, museu do louvre pau brazil,
edifício louvre, são paulo, brazil
galeria nara roesler, rio de janeiro, brazil

Morro Mundo is a tubular structure made of glass, that releases smoke when triggered by motion sensors—as the audience walks by the tubes, they set the sensors off and cause the release of vapor. Thus, the installation allows for the viewer to accompany the vapor’s trajectory through the tubes, before reaching the end and diffusing through the air. As the smoke is discharged from the machine, it progressively takes over the space, making the structure almost indiscernible and invading the viewers’ surroundings, causing them to lose themselves in the space.

Carlito Azevedo, in the text for the exhibition *Morro Mundo* at Galeria Nara Roesler in 2017, wrote, ‘in the beginning, concretely, it is the glass pipeline, that mystery’s enemy, that already exhibits the smoke, that is still contained, almost tied, like an animal, about to jump, until it is finally released by the activation of the presence’s sensor and entangles its body for every corner of space, swallowing it and swallowing us. [...] Everything is smoke, but to paraphrase D. H. Lawrence, any compass, any scale, we are touching the inaudible sign of our presence in chaos.’





papéis avulsos 2014

installation

art center/south florida, miami, usa | made
by... feito por brasileiros, hospital matarazzo,
são paulo, brazil

Papéis Avulsos is an installation made up of dozens of blank white sheets of Japanese cotton paper, liltly suspended from the ceiling with wires and pulleys that pull and release their movements, creating ongoing pulsations. Vinci first conceived this installation while working as a set designer for a play written by Anton Chekhov. Inspired by a scene where wind blows through an open window causing papers to fly erratically through the room—in her play acted using an electric fan fastened to the character’s body—the artist decided to play with the idea of chaos and arbitrariness embedded in the scene. With this in mind, Vinci hung the papers from the ceiling in a seemingly random fashion evoking the sense of chaos inherent to items free-falling through agitated air. The artist understands chaos as a positive state whereby one feels forces and energies, which are constantly moving and determining us, with what she describes as ‘a sense of imminence, a looming presence of events that await us all: an ever-present combustible element.’¹

¹Cerejido, Elizabeth, *Transformative materials reconfigure space and perception*, Vitruvius, 2014.



installation view
Papéis avulsos, 2014
Hospital Matarazzo,
São Paulo, Brazil

→
installation view
Papéis avulsos, 2014
Hospital Matarazzo,
São Paulo, Brazil





Thus, Vinci once more offers an alternative production in her investigation into the intricacies of transience, creating an installation that engages with a liminal space of tension between levitation and collapse.



installation view
Papéis avulsos, 2014
Hospital Matarazzo,
São Paulo, Brazil

→ →
installation view
Papéis avulsos, 2014
Art Center South Florida, Miami, USA







batéia 2014

installation

art center/south florida, miami, usa | made
by... feito por brasileiros, hospital matarazzo,
são paulo, brazil

Possibly as a development from *Papéis Avulsos*, Laura Vinci created the work *Bateia* [Panning], where she placed huge numbers of gold leaf pieces to fall from the top of the Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil in Rio de Janeiro's building's ceiling, all the way to the floor where visitors stood. The idea eventually evolved into engaging with the idea of natural leaves, which she sculpts, plates with gold and pins to the wall in different assemblages, evoking a process of taxidermy and engaging with humanity's positioning towards nature, questioning and perhaps criticizing, modern and contemporary society's distancing from it. In her own words, 'this subject of giving more thought to our relation with nature is a subject that is very much part of my work as a whole. Those leaves to me are like relics of a future ahead. They have some sort of surgical quality, with their small hole, through which one places a thin pin that attaches the leaf to the wall. I am very strongly affected by the sense that as a modern, contemporary society, we have come to separate ourselves from nature.'

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installation view
Papéis avulsos, 2014
Art Center South Florida, Miami, USA

installation view
Bateia, 2014
Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de
Janeiro, Brazil





← ←

installation view

Batéia, 2014

Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

installation view

Batéia, 2014

Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



no ar 2009–2019
installation

No ar is an installation that is based on the use of extremely highly pressurized sprinklers of cold water. In the several iterations of this piece, Laura Vinci imbued outdoor spaces—with high foot traffic—with a vapor that is released with such pressure that it takes on a rare state between liquid and gas. The work emerged as a result of the artist's interest in theater and more specifically in the body preparation technique named 'Body Mind'. The method relies on the theory that our skin is porous and therefore, our body is constantly in contact with the outside. Through *No Ar*, Vinci created a piece that could physically penetrate our own bodies and merge with the viewer, altering both our internal and external states and thus, highlighting once more, the constantly changing nature of our existence.

installation view
No ar, 2017
Museu Brasileiro de Escultura e
Ecologia (MuBE), São Paulo, Brazil











installation view
No ar, 2010
Carpe Diem Arte e Pesquisa,
Lisbon, Portugal
Photo © Mauro Restiffe





máquina do mundo 2004–2010
installation

Máquina do mundo was inspired by a poem, which bears the same title, written by Carlos Drummond de Andrade—Laura Vinci describes her work as a machine that transports every grain of marble, almost unit by unit, in solemn silence, as if carrying the history of sculpture from no place, to nowhere. Perhaps the most poignant aspect of this installation is the question of time, as the artist creates a mechanical hourglass meant to converse with the transitory nature of human life and the history of our passing. The idea also takes shape through the use of marble, considered one of the most permanent materials in Western and Eastern cultures, where Vinci says ‘man imprints a permanence, and finds a possibility for permanence,’ alluding to both the ephemerality of human life and our constant strive to leave behind a permanent mark or trace of a past existence.

installation view
Máquina do mundo, 2005
//Paralela, São Paulo, Brazil
Photo © Fabio Del Re e Carlos Steinf

On the occasion of the 5th Bienal do Mercosul, the artist installed the work by the River Guaíba in Porto Alegre, Brazil. In this instance, Vinci used the river's own sand for the work to epitomize Drummond's idea of the eternal return—indeed, under this setup, the sand would have emerged from the river, passed through the Máquina do mundo and ultimately returned to its origin.

installation view
Máquina do mundo, 2005
5th Bienal do Mercosul,
Porto Alegre, Brazil
Photo © Fabio Del Re e Carlos Steinf

→
installation view
Máquina do mundo, 2006
Inhotim, Minas Gerais, Brazil
Photo © Eduardo Eckenfels







estados 2002

solo exhibition

centro cultural banco do brasil,
são paulo, brazil

Estados (States), was made up of three large-scale installations. The first occupied the entire entrance hall with numerous glass plates spread throughout the floor, some filled with water, and all interconnected with electric cables, which in turn were linked to the building's heating system. When turned on, the heat on the plates produced vapor creating ephemeral drawings that arose in the air, taking shape and dissipating before the viewers' eyes. Vinci's practice is anchored in an investigation into changing natural states, which she describes as, 'a desire to work with the idea of transformation a little like an analogy of ourselves, of our situation, of our permanence here. We are also transitory and we are in transformation, we are transformed with each and every breath we take, aren't we?' Vinci would later experiment with materials, notably creating marble basins, which she exhibited at the 26th Bienal Internacional de São Paulo in 2004 and at the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo in 2007.

installation view
Estados, 2002
Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil,
São Paulo, Brazil

The second installation was set up in the building's underground, where she hung refrigerated metal boxes inscribed with short, poem-like sentences that referred to the movement of a river, while alluding to the circular nature of the space it occupied and creating an 'opposite', or rather complementing, state of water to that of the entrance. When turned on, the structures produced condensation and froze, covering every piece with ice. Once more, Laura Vinci captured the nature of the space and transformed its state, turning its air and humidity into not only a tangible and visible object, but also emphasizing the transient nature of the installation, and perhaps most importantly, of our surroundings.

Lastly, she occupied the building's old safe with a huge mass of marble powder which spread through the space and into the shelves creating a deep white pile—the artist says that upon entering the room, one just had to wait for one's pupils to accommodate to the whiteness of the space, bringing us back to the fundamental question of our own bodily transformations and adaptations.





installation view
Estados, 2002
Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil,
São Paulo, Brazil





sem título 1997

group exhibition

arte/cidade 3, são paulo, brazil

In 1997, Laura Vinci participated in an urban intervention project curated by Nelson Brissac Peixoto, which had begun in 1994 with the aim of revitalizing cultural spaces throughout the city and expanding cultural diffusion. Her installation took over the abandoned building of Moinho Central, with fifty tons of sand which the artist placed on the third floor, creating a three meter high and nine meter wide mass. In fact, Vinci states that she wanted the mountain of sand to reach the ceiling, but was limited by the frail infrastructure of the building. She subsequently made an extremely thin hole (12 mm) that pierced the floor between the third and second floors, allowing for the sand to pass and progressively fall through the building as time passed. In other words, the artist created a monumental hourglass, that relied on the infrastructure of the exhibition space and that physically captured the abstract and intangible idea of passing time. This installation has been said to be the exoskeleton for the artist's future works —embodying the very core of Vinci's guiding preoccupations with time, place and the changing state of matters.

installation view
Sem título, 1997
Projeto Arte Cidade,
São Paulo, Brazil, 1997



installation view
Sem título, 1997
Projeto Arte Cidade,
São Paulo, Brazil, 1997



set design 1997

group exhibition

arte/cidade 3, são paulo, brazil

In 1998, Laura Vinci was invited by José Celso Martinez Corrêa, who was the director of the iconic Teatro Oficina in São Paulo, to create the scenography of the play *Cacilda!*. This marked the beginning of the artist's prolific relationship with the performing arts. In the following years, she coordinated stage workshops and was responsible for the artistic direction of *Os Sertões* (2013) also at Teatro Oficina. Since 2010, she has collaborated with the Mundana Companhia, whereby she has created stage props and apparatus for several plays, including *O Idiota* (2010), *O duelo* (2013) and *Máquinas do mundo* (2017), amongst others. Vinci's visual and theatrical practices intertwine in the engagement with spatial thinking and the creation of atmospheric experiences in environments that stimulate our senses. Both practices are marked by exchange and fluidity, as many of Vinci's installations can be reinvented for display on stage, while the scenographic structures are able to adapt to the space of the gallery.

set view

Máquinas do Mundo, 1997

Sesc Pinheiros, São Paulo, Brazil

Photo © Renato Mangolin







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set view

O Duelo, 2013

Serra da Capivara, Piauí, Brazil

Photo © Renato Mangolin

set view

Cacilda, 1998

Teatro Oficina, São Paulo, Brazil

Photo © Mauricio Shirakawa

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