

## Stephen Friedman Gallery

### Frieze Los Angeles

Luiz Zerbini

29 February – 3 March 2024

Booth E09



Stephen Friedman Gallery presents a new body of work by Brazilian artist **Luiz Zerbini** for Frieze Los Angeles, marking the artist's debut exhibition in the city. The solo presentation includes dynamic paintings and monotypes and shows the immersive and seductive quality of Brazil's natural environment.

In a career spanning over three decades, Zerbini has developed a complex visual vocabulary rooted at the intersection of figuration and abstraction. He first emerged within the generational and global 'return to painting' of the 1980s, centred in Rio de Janeiro around the Parque Lage School of Visual Arts. The artist was subsequently defined by the landmark exhibition 'Como vai você Geração 80?' (How Are You Doing, 80s Generation?, 1984).

Juxtaposing hard-edged geometry with organic pattern, Zerbini's paintings are an optical sensation, and evoke a blend of modernist architecture and lush tropical flora. By incorporating sweeping curves, fluid textures and vivid colours, the artist emulates the intoxicating effects of the sights and sounds of the rainforest. The works are "a reflection of the place I live," Zerbini explains. "Rio de Janeiro has a huge forest just inside of the city. Everything is mixed. It's an urban landscape, but it's really full of nature."

The grid – an emblem of modernism – is typically associated with the static, antinatural and systematic. Zerbini often uses a quadrangular grid as a primary structuring device, which subtly nods to the mosaic pavements and façades of Brazilian tower blocks. In the vibrant painting *Erótica* (2023), Zerbini transforms the grid's tight squares into lenses of a kaleidoscopic vision. Monstera leaves and Calla lily flowers are layered over the work's gridded structure, revealing appropriated patterns found in nature that were incorporated into his own vernacular. The artist takes elements of the grid in *Sea Bubbles* (2023) to lend the expressive composition a rhythmic quality, recalling the movement of water or trees swaying in the breeze. Flooding the viewer's perception, Zerbini seeks to convey the impression of "being in the painting as you could be in a forest."

Zerbini's monotypes echo the collaged appearance of his paintings, combining abstract mark making with figurative elements drawn from his everyday surroundings. "For me, I would pass the whole world through the press," the artist declares. In these new monotypes, Zerbini hand-paints the frames, marking a significant development in the artist's monotype series.

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## Luiz Zerbini

Luiz Zerbini was born in São Paulo in 1959 and lives and works in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

In 2023, Zerbini had a solo focus in the group exhibition 'We Are Forest' at the Triennale Milano, Milan, Italy; touring from Fondation Cartier Pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France (2020). A major exhibition by the artist opened at Museu de Arte de São Paulo, Brazil in March 2022. Zerbini's second solo show at Stephen Friedman Gallery took place in January 2021, following his exhibition in 2020 at Oi Futuro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. 'Luiz Zerbini: Intuitive Ratio', his first solo exhibition at a UK public institution, opened in 2018 at South London Gallery, London, UK.

Zerbini has been the subject of major mid-career surveys at Casa Daros, Rio de Janeiro (2014); Instituto Inhotim, Brumadinho, Minas Gerais, Brazil (2013); and Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (2012). He has represented Brazil at notable biennales including the São Paulo Biennial (2010 and 1987); Bienal do Mercosul, Brazil (2001); Bienal de La Habana, Cuba (2000); and the Bienal Internacional de Cuenca (1996).

## Stephen Friedman Gallery

Stephen Friedman Gallery is a contemporary art gallery that was founded in 1995 with a focus on representing exceptional artists from around the world. Since its inauguration, the gallery has been based in Mayfair, London. In October 2023, the gallery expanded and relocated to Cork Street. In November 2023, the gallery opened its first location outside the UK at 54 Franklin Street in Tribeca, New York.