

STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY

Threaded Stories

Tonico Lemos Auad, Mark Barrow, Geta Brătescu, Sheila Hicks, Ruth Laskey, Lucas Samaras, Fred Sandback

29 November 2013 – 25 January 2014

Private View Monday 28 November, 6 – 8pm

11 & 25–28 Old Burlington Street, London, W1S 3AN, UK



Stephen Friedman Gallery is delighted to announce its winter exhibition, *Threaded Stories*, which will take place in both gallery spaces. The exhibition brings together the work of seven international artists who incorporate threaded material in their multidisciplinary practices: Tonico Lemos Auad, Mark Barrow, Geta Brătescu, Sheila Hicks, Ruth Laskey and Fred Sandback.

Presenting both historical and contemporary artists, 'Threaded Stories' offers insight into different generations of artists working across the traditions of Minimalism and domestic craft.

Though Brazilian artist Tonico Lemos Auad (b. 1968), Romanian artist Geta Brătescu (b. 1926) and American artists Lucas Sheila Hicks (b. 1934) and Lucas Samaras (b. 1936) use different methods in creating their work, they are united in their attention to texture and process through the manipulation of fibre and thread.

A selection of works from Geta Brătescu's 'Vestigii' (Vestiges) series of 1978 feature patches of scrap fabric layered to form a textured collage. Installed on the wall, their tattered edges and patchwork quality appear to hover on the edges of abstraction and figuration. Scraps of bright fabric patterns and hues are mixed and muddled, as their layers often expose the wall behind. A leading figure of Romanian Conceptualism, Brătescu has been the subject of a recent major solo exhibition at MUSAC (Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León) and was recently included in the 2013 Venice Biennale and the 12th Istanbul Biennale in 2011. Brătescu's work blurs the lines between art and the everyday, enhanced by her focus on the process and production of art and the linking of her upbringing in Communist Romania.

Based in London but Brazilian born, Tonico Lemos Auad's inspiration is similarly found in the rituals and traditions of his native country. Presented in the exhibition is a selection of the artist's linen collages and hanging fabric screens, inspired by the movement of sailboats across the river in his home town of Belém, North-East Brazil. A further work hangs from the ceiling and includes multiple elements of rope, delicate lace and hand-crafted linen. Auad revels in the organic fibre that transforms under the artist's hand while poetically retaining a sense of its natural structure.

Sheila Hicks has been creating work for over half a century which speaks of her global influences and sits at the intersection of arts and crafts, design and architecture. Classically trained, Hicks describes her work as 'unbiased weaves'; working in both two and three dimensions, she exposes and celebrates the inherent nature of the material. Included in the exhibition, 'Drunken Sailor' features a linen canvas marked in diagonal white lines, across which intertwined strands of cotton are bound together. Deep blues, purples and greens build out of the grid and into our space. The title further evokes a sense of movement as the work conjures up a dynamism that emits a vibrant rhythm.

Exhibited alongside Auad, Brătescu and Hicks, Lucas Samaras employs techniques such as splicing, stitching, interweaving, doubling and repetition, combined with numerous fabrics which create a single continuous surface of kaleidoscopic patterns and colour. Displayed in the back gallery, 'Reconstruction #13' forms part of an important series of 'fabric reconstructions' by Samaras which first appeared together in the late seventies and responded to developments in Minimalist and Post-

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Minimalist art. Using textiles Samaras mimics the gestural spontaneity of Action Painting and considers the geometric possibilities integral to two-dimensional works. The controlled energy of this grid like patchwork composition and the saturated spectrum of colours compliments the more subtle tone and palette of the other works in the space.

Mark Barrow (b. 1982) and Ruth Laskey's (b. 1975) geometric and mathematical compositions complement the clean lines in the works by Fred Sandback (1943 – 2003) and offer a contrasting view to the more textured and lyrical works of Auad, Bratescu and Hicks.

Sandback incises the inhabited space with lines of yarn that create substructures and transform its context. The exhibition will feature two works: 'Untitled' features a single 'yellow ochre' yarn marked diagonally across two cornered walls. Its shadow duplicates and pulsates the single bright line. Also installed is a sculpture of black and maroon threads which cross a corner in parallel lines interplaying with the surrounding architecture. The intentional use of yarn in Sandback's sculptures provides a soft and matte contour that resides in the space distinctly and discreetly. While inherently simple and succinct, Sandback's work bears a dependency on the fibre itself which is mirrored in the accompanying works by Barrow and Laskey.

Ruth Laskey has been crafting tapestries using a weaver's loom since leaving the California College of the Arts in 2005, after growing unhappy with the restrictive process of painting. By learning the method of weaving, Laskey embraces a direct involvement with her entire practice: she hand-dyes her own yarn, then interweaves it into the underlying geometric structure of the linen. The graduating colours in the exhibited 'Twill' series toy with our perception and present the conscious result of a meticulous study of the threaded medium.

Mark Barrow's labour intensive works draw a parallel with Laskey's in their method which encompasses the entire structural fabrication. Barrow paints onto linen hand-woven by his wife Sarah Parke, to create collaborative works featuring abstract inter-planar blocks of colour. As the planes of pigment cross each other, the flecks and intonations of the thread are exposed and adapt as we shift our gaze. Barrow titles his works according to the colour and composition in just a few letters such as in 'YMCK8'. Similarly, Laskey titles her works accordingly with the series and dye intonations. While each artist avoids a lyrical title, there is an inherent lyricism in the final outcome which speaks outwardly on the history of the use of the tapestry in art.

Each artist in the exhibition engages with the medium of thread in a variety of ways and yet shares a common focus of elevating this simple and multifaceted material through the manipulation of its natural qualities. 'Threaded Stories' offers a timely exploration into the rising and divergent use of thread in contemporary art and provides unique insight into the parallels of these divergent artists.

Tonico Lemos Auad (born 1968) lives and works in London, England. Notable solo exhibitions include; *Paisagem Noturna*, Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo, Brazil (2013); Stephen Friedman Gallery, London (2012-2013); *Figa*, CRG Gallery, New York (2012); *Carrancas and Reflected Archaeology*, Special commission, The Folkestone Triennial, Folkestone (2011); *Sleep Walkers*, Centro Cultural São Paulo (2011); Aspen Art Museum, Colorado (2007). Recent notable group exhibitions include; *3am: Wonder, Paranoia and the Restless Night*, The Bluecoat, Liverpool, UK; travelling to various UK destinations (2014-2013); *Site: Place of Memories, Spaces with Potential*, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima, Japan (2013); *Labour and Wait*, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, California, USA (2013); *Além da Vanguarda*, Bienal Naifs do Brasil, SESC Piracicaba, São Paulo (2012); *Mythologies*, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris (2011) and *Textiles Art and the Social Fabric*, MUHKA, Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp (2009).

Mark Barrow (born 1982) lives and works in New York, USA. Notable solo exhibitions include *RGB*, Elizabeth Dee, New York, USA (2012); *Synesthesia*, Galleria Zero, Milan, Italy (2012) and *White Room: Mark Barrow*, White Columns, New York, USA (2008). Notable group exhibitions include *Mingei: are you here?*, Pace Gallery, London (2013); *To Open Eyes: Art and Textiles from the Bauhaus to Today*, Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Germany (2013); *DECORUM*, Musée d'art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France (2013) and *Four Rooms*, Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland (2012).

Geta Brătescu (b.1926 in Ploiesti, Romania) lives and works in Bucharest. Recent notable solo exhibitions include: *Museum der Wünsche*, MUMOK - Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien (2011); *A Complicated Relation - Part I*, Kalmar Konstmuseum (2011); *Resources*, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest (2007); International Center for Contemporary Art, Bucharest (2003) and *Retrospective Geta Bratescu*, National Museum of Art, Bucharest (1999). Notable group exhibitions include: *Ostalgia*, New Museum, New York (2012); *L'Internationale*, Museu D'Art contemporary, Barcelona (2011); *Image at Work*, Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation, Stockholm (2010); *Gender Check. Femininity*

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and Masculinity in Eastern European Art, Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna (2009) and *Old Masters*, P74 Center and Gallery, Ljubljana (2008).

Sheila Hicks (born 1934) lives and works in Paris, France and New York, USA. Recent notable solo exhibitions include *La Pêcher Dans La Rivère*, Alison Jacques Gallery, London (2013); *Sheila Hicks: 50 years*, Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, USA (2010) travelling from the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, and the Mint Museum in Charlotte, USA (2011); *Sheila Hicks: One Hundred Minimes*, Museum of Decorative Arts, Prague, Czech Republic and Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2011); *Sheila Hicks – Hors Normes, Sculptures Textiles*, Passage de Retz, Paris, France (2011). Recent notable group exhibitions include; *Decorum: Tapis et Tapisseries d'artistes*, Musée D'art Moderne, Paris, France (2013) and *Every Thing Design*, Die Sammlungen des Museum für Gestaltung, Zürich, Germany (2010). Hicks will be included in the 2014 Whitney Biennial.

Ruth Laskey (born 1975) lives and works in San Francisco, USA. Notable solo exhibitions include *Ruth Laskey*, Ratio 3, San Francisco, USA (2010) and *Six Weavings*, Galerie Cinzia Friedlaender, Berlin, Germany (2009). Notable group exhibitions include *SECA Art Award Exhibition*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, USA (2011); 'SOLACE', Austrian Cultural Forum New York, USA (2010); *Dogtooth and Tessellate*, The Approach, London, England (2008); and *Material World*, Alliance Francaise, San Francisco, USA (2006).

Lucas Samaras (born 1936 in Greece) lives and works in the USA. Notable solo exhibitions include; *Lucas Samaras XYZ*, Pace Gallery, New York (2013); *Lucas Samaras: Photoworks*, Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery, University of the Arts, Philadelphia, USA (2011); *Lucas Samaras*, Stephen Friedman Gallery, London, England (2007) and *Lucas Samaras: A Retrospective*, National Gallery of Greece, Alexandros Soutzos Museum, Athens, Greece (2005). Recent notable group exhibitions include; *Isole Mai Trovate-Island Never Found*, Genova Palazzo Ducale, Italy; travelled to State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, Greece; Musée d'Art Moderne de Saint-Etienne Métropole, France (2011-2010); *Return to Reason*, Istanbul Museum of Modern Art, Turkey (2010); *Artists Making Photographs: Chamberlain, Rauschenberg, Samaras, Ruscha, Warhol*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA (2009).

Fred Sandback (1943- 2003) will be the subject of a major museum exhibition *Fred Sandback: Drawings*, at the Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Switzerland (2014) touring to Josef Albers Museum, Bottrop and Museum Wiesbaden (2014-2015). Recent notable solo exhibitions include *Fred Sandback*, Lumber Room, Oregon, USA (2013); *Fred Sandback*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2011); *Fred Sandback*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, USA (2011); *Fred Sandback*, Pori Art Museum, Pori, Finland (2011); *Fred Sandback: Sculpture and Works on Paper*, Davis Museum and Cultural Center, Massachusetts, USA (2010); *Fred Sandback*, Musée de Grenoble, France (2007). Recent group exhibitions include *Dialogues with the Horizon*, Fundació Miró, Barcelona, Spain (2013-2014); *Open Places/Secret Places. Sites*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA (2009); *Now You See It*, Aspen Art Museum, USA (2008); *Think with the Senses—Feel with the Mind. Art in the Present Tense*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA (2005) and *Specific Objects: The Minimalist Influence*, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, California, USA (2004).

Gallery hours are: Tuesday to Friday, 10am - 6pm and Saturday, 11am - 5pm. For further details please contact Mary Tagg on +44 (0) 20 7494 1434, mary@stephenfriedman.com