

# STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY

## Tonico Lemos Auad

23 November 2012 - 19 January 2013

Private View 22 November 2012, 6 - 8pm



Stephen Friedman Gallery is delighted to announce a solo exhibition of new works by Tonico Lemos Auad. Brazilian born and London-based, Auad's work is inspired by both his cultural heritage and by notions of chance, faith and superstition.

Following recent inclusion in the Folkestone Triennial, Além da Vanguarda Bienal Naífs do Brasil and 'House of Cards' at Waddesdon Manor, this will be the artist's second solo exhibition in the gallery. For this presentation, Auad will create a 'planted archaeology' with recognisable forms and everyday materials subverted under his hand. Inspired by the rich symbolism of his native hometown of Belém in Northern Brasil, these works each carry their own narrative and hidden references.

On entering the main gallery space, a tall brick house greets the visitor. Its imposing construction appears like a building as our natural inclination calls on us to circle its structure and seek an entrance. We find there is no opening but instead a host of seemingly abstract offerings: a rope; a branch; a metal chain. Creeping out of the interlocking cement, these elements each relate to the rich symbolism of the artist's hometown. Here, Auad references the Cirio de Nazaré procession where gifts of thanks and hope are offered to the gods: a brick proposing a wish or gratitude for a house. The structure acts as an intervention within the gallery space, its presence seeming to offer a solid permanence rich in embedded iconography. The brick house becomes emblematic of hope and stability, while paradoxically it raises questions of inclusion and exclusion, the domestic and the foreign.

In the back gallery space, the artist presents a new group of works. Here, the conceptual focus is the sea, rooted by a group of excavated chalk mass blocks. Their dense weight is contradicted on closer inspection as we find delicate elements and charms interlocked within the natural rock. Letters and words appear and disappear within the stone as their seemingly abstract shape is transformed into a multilayered site akin to a repository of thoughts washed up in the sea. A group of beautiful wooden screens with hand-embroidered textiles accompanies the stones, their intricacy offering a poetic juxtaposition.

This exhibition of new works continues the artist's powerful dialogue with materiality and cultural symbolism. The playfulness of the artworks is imbued with a more serious undertone as a sense of mortality pervades, reminding us that life, as indeed luck, is an unpredictable force.

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Tonico Lemos Auad (b. 1968 in Belém, Brasil) lives and works in London, England.

Recent solo exhibitions include; 'Figa', CRG Gallery, New York (2012); 'Carrancas and Reflected Archaeology', Special commission, The Folkestone Triennial, Folkestone (2011); 'Sleep Walkers' Centro Cultural São Paulo (2011); 'Mouth, Ears, Eyes...Just like us', Stephen Friedman Gallery, London (2009); 'Silent Singing', CRG Gallery, New York (2008); Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado (2007).

Group exhibitions include; 'Além da Vanguarda' Bienal Naífs do Brasil, SESC Piracicaba, São Paulo (2012); 'Mythologies', Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris (2011); 'Undone: Making and Unmaking in Contemporary Sculpture', Henry Moore Institute, Leeds (2010); 'Epílogo', Zapopan 'Museum, Zapopan, Mexico; 'Going International,' The Flag Art Foundation, New York (2010); 'Textiles Art and the Social Fabric', MUHKA, Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp (2009); 'Blooming: Brazil-Japan Where you are', Toyota Municipal Art Museum, Japan (2008); 'This is Not a Void', curated by Jens Hoffman, Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo (2008); 'The British Art Show 06', Hayward Gallery touring exhibition, UK (2006); 'Art Circus (Jumping from the Ordinary)', International Triennial of Contemporary Art, Yokohama, Japan (2005) and 'Adaptive Behavior', New Museum, New York (2004).

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Gallery hours are: Tuesday to Friday, 10am - 6pm and Saturday, 11am - 5pm

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