

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Tonico Lemos Auad

Auad's varied practice investigates materiality, sensuality, process and how people negotiate the space around them.

Tonico Lemos Auad was born in 1968 in Belém, Brazil. He now lives and works in London, UK.

Auad explores physical manifestations of belief, specifically looking at the personal or cultural significance afforded objects in everyday life. Often encompassing notions of architecture and landscape, Auad's unique way of working subverts traditional techniques associated with craft such as embroidery, woodcarving and stonemasonry.

Jane Won, former Head of Exhibitions at De La Warr Pavilion, writes that Auad's works "are instantly appealing to many for their tactility and for the intense labour that is evidently involved in creating them. Close observation of the works is rewarded by finding intricate and delicate details. Go one step further and one becomes aware of their poetic associations enhanced by the considered space they are placed in – the result of the artist's process of thinking through materials."

In recent years, different modes of textile production such as knitting, crochet, needle work and weaving have featured in Auad's practice. George Vasey, Curator at Wellcome Collection, London, writes that the artist demonstrates an "emotional acuity with his use of colour and material... While his work is often laboriously constructed, there is a refreshing simplicity in the way it looks, reminding us of the potential of the human hand." His textiles are defined by the process of their making, slowly revealing each individual stitch, crocheted loop and interwoven thread.

His works currently feature in the Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition 'Material Worlds: Contemporary Artists and Textiles', Mead Gallery, Warwick, UK (2024).

A solo exhibition by Auad opened in October 2021 at Cample Line in Nithsdale, Scotland. In 2020 the artist exhibited at Biennale Gherdëina VII in Ortisei, South Tyrol, Italy. In 2019, Stephen Friedman Gallery presented two separate solo projects by Auad and Mamma Andersson at Frieze London, winning the 2019 Frieze Stand Prize. In 2016, Auad was the subject of a major solo exhibition at De La Warr Pavilion in East Sussex, UK. In 2011, a collection of specially commissioned sculptures titled 'Carrancas and Reflected Archaeology' were exhibited as part of the Folkestone Triennial in Kent, UK.

Other notable solo exhibitions include 'Unknown to the World', Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo, Brazil (2022); 'Tonico Lemos Auad', Pivô, São Paulo, Brazil (2015); 'Paisagem Noturna', Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo, Brazil (2013); 'Tonico Lemos Auad', Stephen Friedman Gallery, London (2012); 'Sleep Walkers', Centro Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2011); 'Epílogo', Zapopan Museum, Zapopan, Mexico (2010); and Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado, USA (2007).

His work is included in the public collections of Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, New York, USA; Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, Ohio, USA; San Diego Museum of Art, San Diego, California, USA; West Collection, Collegeville, Pennsylvania, USA; FLAG Art Foundation, New York, USA; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, California, USA; Zabłudowicz Collection, London, UK; Tate, London, UK; Museum of Contemporary Art, Vigo, Spain; British Friends of the Art Museums of Israel, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel; Pinacoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil; and Instituto Inhotim, Brumadinho, Minas Gerais, Brazil.