

Niobe Xandó & Ernesto Neto

09.06 — 30.07.2022

Gomide&Co and Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel are pleased to present Niobe Xandó & Ernesto Neto. In the exhibition, fantastic flowers paintings by Niobe Xandó (1915-2010) are juxtaposed with the works in crochet and other organic materials by Ernesto Neto (1964). A critical essay by Julia de Souza accompanies the show, which opens on June 9th, from 4 pm to 8 pm, at Gomide&Co (Alameda Ministro Rocha Azevedo, 1052).

This unprecedented encounter offers the public a rare reading on both artists. Xandó's paintings developed between the 1950s and 1990s and Neto's sensorial works are in dialogue not only with each other but also with Flávio de Carvalho's modernist house. The selection of pieces reveals uniquenesses of spirituality and a magical sensibility that the artists established in their practices, each in their own way. At every moment, we are met with a mirroring of the order of nature that reveals a strong will to metamorphosize the world.

Since the early 1940s, Xandó has investigated the mysticism of the fauna and flora when working on the skulls of dead monkeys collected during trips to the coast of São Paulo. In the following years, her paintings on tree trunks reveal a type of pictorial experimentation that assumes organic residuality as matter and image, thus paving the way for her Fantastic Flowers series. In her paintings, flowers and plants are presented in gargantuan proportions imbued with an explosive organicity. Her plants are carnivorous to the extent that they devour rational and scientific organization. By representing mutant vegetation of mystical species and amorphous birds, the artist subverts the natural order of things, and her plants engage in fantasy. Associated with a "primitivism" of the image, her vocabulary can be seen as the opposite: a reinvention of the natural qualities so sensitive to human experience.

In his practice, Neto seeks to challenge and expand the vocabulary of sculpture, exploring formal and symbolic connections between different materials, with the force of gravity as an implicit element. His works operate as living organisms in constant transformation. Investigating the mutation of nature's elements in other ways, using spices and nuts within his pieces — turmeric, cumin, ginger, pepper, and walnuts —, the artist understands the organicity of experience by incorporating these materials into a practice that requires one to relinquish oneself. In other terms, his work requires availability from the public, and the imagery he elaborates on is both highly sensitive and communal.

The conversation between Xandó and Neto reinforces an exercise of relating bodies of work by artists from distinct periods and context, but who still dedicated themselves to essential questions of the order of nature and that which we hold most dear to heart: subjectivity and the will to concoct and make the human experience something magical.