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Nosso Barco Tambor Terra
2024
CRIVELLI, Jacopo – Nosso Barco Tambor Terra. MAAT: Lisbon.

Autor
Artista

Jacopo Crivelli Visconti
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Nosso Barco Tambor Terra is one of the largest sculptures Ernesto Neto has ever made. Its shape is a product of months of work, in dialogue with MAAT's architectural space and the museum's surroundings, richly imbued with history and symbolism as the departure point for the caravels that set sail for what would come to be known as the Americas.

To create the work, Neto used mostly chintz, a relatively cheap cotton fabric that is extremely common in Brazil, often printed with brightly coloured flowers and plants. The fabric was cut into strips and crocheted by various assistants, based on a technique developed over the years in the artist's studio in Rio de Janeiro: *ateliernave*. The material thus obtained was used to create the cells that together compose the sculpture. The work's overall plan is developed freehand, through tests and adjustments supported by specific software that allows for precision but also sufficient malleability to adapt to the characteristics of the space at the time of mounting in situ.

In recent years, alongside his activity as an artist, Neto has also devoted himself to percussion. Throughout the exhibition, the sculpture, which incorporates a series of instruments, will be periodically activated by a musical programme, devised by musicians and groups from various parts of the world, with particular emphasis on the rhythms of African and Asian diasporas. Symbolically, the meeting of rhythms and beats in *Nosso Barco Tambor Terra* [our boat drum earth] forms a counterpoint to the multitude of languages spoken around the world, alluding to the possibility of finding, in proper moments and contexts, common languages that allow a communication that transcends the verbal and facilitates authentic and profound encounters. Consistent with the artist's desire to create a truly collective and diverse work, various drums from a range of provenances that inhabit the installation can also be played by visitors to the exhibition.



Production photographs, *ateliernave*, Ernesto Neto, 2024.
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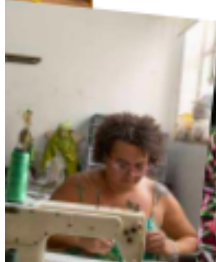
Jacopo Crivelli Visconti
Ernesto Neto

Over the last few decades, the work of Ernesto Neto (Rio de Janeiro, 1964) has expanded and diversified in terms of the materials used, the scale of the sculptures and the installations designed and executed, as well as the constantly expanding sphere of the artist's own interests and the agents he works with. Despite this evolution, what has driven him since the start of his career is a deep-seated and authentic connection with the forces that organise the earth and the cosmos – like gravity, which, although invisible, rules and regulates our world. Neto's universe frequently incorporates allusions and references to life and its cycles, to processes of fertilisation, gestation and birth, to the fecundity of nature. The most recurrent shapes in his work are abstract, but one immediately recognises and senses them as animal, organic, even alive. Consistently with this, his vocabulary and imagery often include seeds, cocoons, eggs; his creations emerge over time, in gradual processes of germination and growth.

For his first exhibition at MAAT, those references materialise in a large-scale sculpture, whose shape and name can simultaneously suggest a ship, a primordial beast, a forest or even, and more likely, all of those things and infinite others at the same time, because the artist portrays the world as a whole, that "Gaia world", as he defines it: ancestral, pre-colonial and even pre-human – a planet obviously shaped by violent events and occurrences, such as the enforced displacement of millions of enslaved people during the colonial processes that marked history and the relationship between Portugal and Brazil, among many other countries; but also a planet where, from the mix of races, populations and peoples emerge surprising cultures and worldviews whose strength and beauty one must recognise, reaffirm and celebrate.

Before or besides the possible symbolic and metaphorical readings of this exhibition and the various elements that compose it, *Nosso Barco Tambor Terra* is, in the artist's own words, a dance. Neto's work always has at its core a physical relationship in which the spectators' and the work's bodies meet and touch, defining the space based on the relationship between the latter and the first and, before, with gravity itself. The "trees" that populate the interior of the sculpture allude to the eternal and essential relationship between sky and earth, they are the backbone around which life can organise itself. In that sense, the dance that *Nosso Barco Tambor Terra* inspires and evokes is a gesture of spiritual alignment with the forces of nature, but also the celebration of a process carried out cell by cell, over months, on opposite sides of an ocean that, like the air we breathe, brings us together and separates us at the same time.

Jacopo Crivelli Visconti
Curator



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Ernesto Neto was born in 1964 in Rio de Janeiro, where he lives and works. His work deals with relationships, whether between materials, forces, or beings. Gravity and balance appear as mediating elements in this relationship, challenging and expanding the vocabulary of sculpture. Considering the legacy of avant-garde movements such as the neo-concrete, minimalism and Arte Povera, he understands the body as a fundamental political issue in his poetics, so that his sculptures evoke living organisms, as well as activate multiple senses in the viewer's body. In recent years, Neto has turned to natural materials, such as cotton, wood, and leaves, and invites us to enter meditative states and reconnect the cultural body with the spirituality of being alive. Recent solo exhibitions include *Blow* (Centro Cultural La Moneda, Santiago, Chile, 2020; Pinacoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil, 2019; MALBA – Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2019); *GaiaMotherTree* (Zürich Hauptbahnhof, Fondation Beyeler, Zurich, Switzerland, 2018); *Boa* (Kiasma – Finnish National Gallery, Helsinki, Finland, 2016); *Rui Ni / Voices of the Forest* (Kunsten Museum of Modern Art, Aalborg, Dinamarca, 2016); *Ernesto Neto and the Huni Kuin: Aru Kuxipa / Sacred Secret* (TBA21, Vienna, Áustria, 2015); *The body that carries me* (Guggenheim Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain, 2014); *Haux Haux* (Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck, Remagen, Germany, 2014). He has also participated in the biennials of Venice (2017, 2001), Lyon (2017), Sharjah (2013), Istanbul (2011) and São Paulo (2010, 1998). His work is featured in renowned collections such as Centre Pompidou (Paris, France), Inhotim (Brumadinho, Brazil), Guggenheim (New York, USA), MoCA – Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago, USA), MCA – Museum of

Contemporary Art (Los Angeles, USA), MoMA – Museum of Modern Art (New York, USA), Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid, Spain), SFMOMA – San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (San Francisco, USA), Tate Modern (London, United Kingdom), TBA21 (Vienna, Austria), among others.

Ernesto Neto, *Nosso Barco Tambor Terra*, 2024
Cotton chintz crochet, cotton rug (dyed with black tea), cotton mesh bags (dyed with indigo), cushions, soil, bark, sand, cinnamon, cloves, turmeric, pepper, cumin, corn, beans, rice, coffee, vegetable sponge, herbs and musical instruments;
10.55 × 48.64 × 22.30 m
Courtesy of the artist and Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro; Tanya Bonskdar Gallery, New York, Los Angeles.

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Ernesto Neto
Nosso Barco Tambor Terra
02/05 - 07/10/2024

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Lima, Sheila Santos, Zilda Lima;
sewing: Marcia Regina Alves
(coordination), Carla Almeida,
Rafaelle Alves, Marluce Alves,
Terezinha de Oliveira, Selma
Gouvea; music: Rodrigo Scofield,
Ricardo Cotrim, Ma. Mangueirinha,
Liliane Kemper, Fernanda Aranha

Agenda
Bum Bum Paticumbum Prugurundum
Visit-talk and concert with
Ernesto Neto, Jacopo Crivelli
Visconti and musical entourage:
02/05/2024, 18.30.

Publications
Catalogue with new essay by Jacopo
Crivelli Visconti and views of
the installation at MAAT to be
published during the exhibition.

Go to maat.pt for more
information.

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visit guide



02/05/2024 → 07/10/2024

