

ERNESTO NETO

From What Are We Made, Made, Of Of

October 21-November 25, 2006

Opening reception: Saturday October 21, 6-8pm

Gallery one

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is very pleased to present Ernesto Neto's fifth solo exhibition at the gallery, *From What Are We Made, Made, Of Of*. Continuing his exploration of sculpture's narrative capacity, Ernesto Neto's most recent work addresses culture and experience from the cellular level to the mythic, from the micro to the macrocosmic. Using a formal vocabulary that draws from the natural world, Neto collapses the distinction between architecture and biology, making the viewer aware that the natural world should not be thought of in contrast to human creation and social interaction. The exhibition also explores our perception of color and space, as nothing remains fixed or static in Neto's work, but rather, everything reacts; to the laws of physics, to the properties of other elements; or to the actions of the visitor.

From What Are We Made, Made, Of Of represents Neto's most intense exploration of color since the artist's early spice works. On the main entry wall, Neto presents "Colors, Cultures, Knots, and Time" a new large-scale work from the "Dry Color Series." Colored lengths of cotton fabric are pulled tightly from a central ring to a circular perimeter, like the spokes of a wheel. A coagulation of cellular colonies are formed from tight painterly lines, creating works that are at once painting, sculpture, tapestry and elastic wall-relief.

In the main gallery space, Neto presents, "From What Are We Made, Made, Of Of" a large organic architectural installation that glows with light and color, turning its encapsulated space into a tactile world in which form, material, and scale are investigated. An interior curve reveals a fetal floor plan, as a thick foam floor serves as a platform for numerous small soft sculptures that can be read as amoeba-like forms or characters from an ancient alphabet. Neto uses these symbols to suggest the parallel emergence of living organisms and organized culture. These smaller elements pop with color, red, pink, green, and yellow, echoing and complimenting the more subdued but still luminous color of the ceiling. As the visitor enters and activates the space, the floor elements are rearranged and moved, presenting an ever-changing composition of color, or writing and re-writing a story that never ends.

This installation follows a dynamic series of works by Neto that serve as both sculpture and built environment and illustrate the artist's uncanny facility for structural engineering and architectural design. Using simple material such as Lycra and Styrofoam, cotton, ground spice, sand or rice, to transcend their more banal purpose, Neto makes reference to his Neo-concrete and Arte Povera forebears, turning these materials into complex spatial configurations that challenge notions of stasis, equilibrium, gravity and tension.

Among the most influential artists of his generation, Ernesto Neto has had numerous international museum solo exhibitions including Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston; the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus; Museum of Contemporary Art, LA; Museum of Modern Art, NY (project); Aarhus, Aaros, Denmark; Kolnischer Kunstverein; Kunsthalle Basel; Institute of Contemporary Art, London; among many others. His recent shows include: *Leviathan Thot*, 35th Festival d'Automne, Panthéon, Paris, 2006 (solo); Daros-Latinamerica, Zurich, 2006 (group); *Surprise Surprise*, ICA, London, 2006 (group); *Tropicalia*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; 2006 (group), traveling to Centro Cultural Belem, Lisbon, and Bronx Museum, New York; *Forum 57*: Luisa Lambri and Ernesto Neto, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, 2006 (group); Ernesto Neto-The Malmö Experience, Malmö Konsthall, Sweden, 2005 (solo); among others.

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