

nara roesler



angelo venosa

curated by vik muniz

nara roesler new york

opening march 19

exhibition mar 19 – apr 20

Nara Roesler New York is pleased to present Angelo Venosa's first solo show in New York City, curated by Vik Muniz. The exhibition features around twenty works executed in the last years of his career, between 2015 and 2021, as well as a set of studies and small-scale works produced by the artist using 3D printing technology.

Although he began his artistic career amid the 80s Generation in Rio de Janeiro, Venosa dedicated himself to sculpture, differing from most of the artists of his generation, who were marked by their return to painting. His works in wood, wrapped in fabric, resin, and fiberglass, or composed of beeswax and teeth, evoke unusual volumes, housing an ambiguous temporality, emanating references to ancient eras.

Bringing together different bodies of work by Venosa, the exhibition provides an overview of the multiple directions of his production. In his sculptures made of wood, fabric, and fiberglass, the artist creates organic forms that, while they may resemble fossils, have elements that bring them closer to cocoons and other quasi-living forms. Another group of works, in a smaller format, executed in bronze, present structures similar to bones combined with forms that resemble organs. With a malleable aspect,

the forms are in contrast with the raw material in which the works are executed.

Some of these sculptures were developed during Venosa's time at the Further On Artist-in-Residence (FoAir) in Amagansett, New York, in 2017. The artist's personal recordings and photographs bring us closer to his experience of the landscape and the elements of nature incorporated into his production.

In certain works, there is tension between what is alive and what is organic or inorganic; whereas, in other works, the artist explores these elements using digital technology. Procedures such as x-rays and digital cut-outs are explored in more two-dimensional works made of corten steel, which create unusual overlaps between the organic and the digital.

Vik Muniz's curatorial approach takes into account the scientific aspect of Angelo Venosa's work, structuring the exhibition as a cabinet of curiosities. Studies and small-scale works produced by the artist using 3D printing technology, which were scattered around his studio and can be considered the seeds of his large-scale works, have also been selected by Muniz to present a highly relevant part of Venosa's practice, which is still little known to the public.

cover *Untitled*, 2017

right Angelo Venosa with his work

Untitled, 1987 (photo: Bienal de São Paulo)



a sculptor among painters

Angelo Venosa emerged as an artist in the 1980s, having been part of the iconic exhibition *Como vai você, Geração 80?*, which took place at the Parque Lage School of Visual Arts in Rio de Janeiro and brought together a large number of young artists from across the country. Although there was no manifesto, common theme, or direct links between the poetics, most of the artists' output consisted of paintings. Since the mid-1960s, and for most of the 1970s, the practice of painting took a back seat in Brazilian art, which was largely marked by conceptualism. However, with the start of the 1980s, painting once again began gaining ground in the country's art scene (and on an international level as well), now discussed in a contemporary key. Although there were no elements that unified the poetics, there was a strong influence of Neo-Expressionism.

Among the many painters (including some of his very close friends, such as Daniel Senise, Luiz Zerbini, and Beatriz Milhazes), Angelo Venosa concentrated almost entirely on the sculptural practice, taking sculpture in a direction that was still little explored.

Angelo Venosa during
the setup of the exhibition
Panorama, 2012
Museu de Arte Moderna
do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio),
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



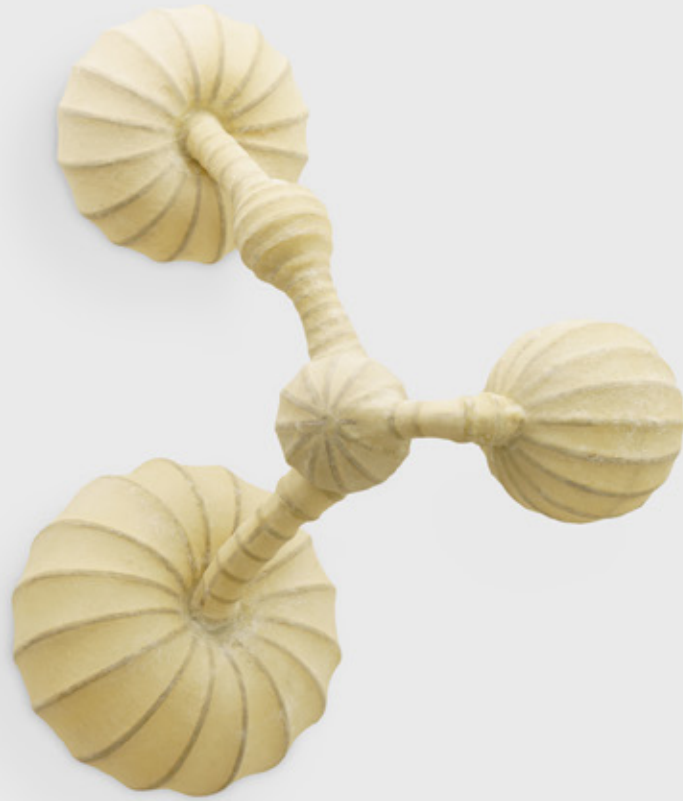


enclosures and skins

At the same time as his research began to explore the volumetric, interiors, and structures of bodies, he also maintained an interest in the wrappings and 'skins' that cover these structures. Venosa had already focused on this element from the beginning of his career, but in more recent years, new results emerged.

Among them, the fibreglass sculptures stand out. Sinuous and snaking, they're made of wooden structures coated with the material, which gives them the appearance of a shell, resembling cocoons or the eggs of strange beings that could burst out at any moment.

exhibition view
Quasi, 2021
Nara Roesler Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



Untitled, 2021
wood, fabric and fiber glass
edition of 3 + 2 AP
126 x 97 x 50 cm
49.6 x 38.2 x 19.7 in



Untitled, 2019/2022
wood, fabric, resin
and fiber glass
edition of 3 + 2 AP
180 x 100 x 99 cm
70.9 x 39.4 x 39 in





Untitled, 2022
wood, fabric, resin
and fiber glass
edition of 3 + 2 AP
100 x 173 x 83 cm
39.4 x 68.1 x 32.7 in





Untitled, 2019
wood, fabric
and fiber glass
unique + 2 AP
160 x 77 x 135 cm
63 x 30.3 x 53.1 in







exhibition view
Clareira Project, 2023
Museu de Arte Contemporânea
da Universidade de São Paulo
(MAC USP), São Paulo, Brazil



Untitled, 2018
wood, fabric, resin
and fiberglass
edition of 3 + 2 AP
310 x 90 x 65 cm
122 x 35.4 x 25.6 in





exhibition view
Panorama, 2013
Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo,
São Paulo, Brazil

Untitled, 2018
wood, fabric, resin
and fiberglass
edition of 3 + 2 AP
224 x 101 x 40 cm
88.2 x 39.8 x 15.7 in





Untitled, 2017
bamboo plywood
edition of 3 + 2 AP
80 x 50 x 75 cm
31.5 x 19.7 x 29.5 in





exhibition view
Penumbra, 2018
Museu Vale, Vila Velha, Brazil



‘His art does not refuse to imitate nature, like most of the aesthetics of this century, nor does it reduce nature to a system of signs, an image, or a perceptual stimulus, like the realist and neo-figurative currents. Simulating organic procedures, it repeats the relationship between skeleton and skin, bone and cartilage, and fluid and coagulated materials. Placing himself not in front of but behind nature, as if it were produced by his gesture, the artist assumes the role of creator’.

—Lorenzo Mammi

Angelo Venosa's studio
in the Lapa neighbourhood
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1985

Untitled, 2017
rubberized fabric
on wood
unique
180,3 x 99,1 x 15,2 cm
71 x 39 x 6 in





Untitled, 2017
bronze
edition of 3 + 2 AP
110,5 x 112 x 31 cm
43.5 x 44.1 x 12.2 in





Untitled, 1989/2017
brass
edition of 3 + 2 AP
220 x 12 x 20 cm
86.6 x 4.7 x 7.9 in







Untitled, 2022
bronze
edition of 12 + 2 AP
49 x 56 x 19 cm
19.3 x 22 x 7.5 in



'If, on the one hand, he presents us with near-dead bodies, which seem to be being calcined and fossilized, on the other he offers us near-living beings, who are perhaps timidly coming out of a state of coma to take heart, to sprout.'

—Daniela Name

Untitled, 1994
paraffin, pigment
and ox teeth
unique
23 x 23 x 4 cm
9.1 x 9.1 x 1.6 in







exhibition view
Panorama, 2013
Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo,
São Paulo, Brazil

o ritmo [untitled], 2000
corten (weathering steel)
gêa particular (private collection)



exhibition view
Angelo Venosa: *Escultor*, 2023
Casa Roberto Marinho,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Untitled, 1987
bone, wood, fabric, resin,
pigment, tar and sand
unique
153 x 20 x 20 cm
60.2 x 7.9 x 7.9 in





Untitled, 2017
carbonized wood
unique
42,7 x 6,4 x 9,9 cm
16.8 x 2.5 x 3.9 in





—
Untitled, 2017
carbonized wood
and paint
unique
40,6 x 30,5 x 12,2 cm
16 x 12 x 4.8 in





Untitled, 2017
carbonized wood
and paint
unique
31 x 31 x 12 cm
12.2 x 12.2 x 4.7 in



Untitled, 2017
carbonized wood
and paint
unique
41 x 31 x 28 cm
16.1 x 12.2 x 11 in

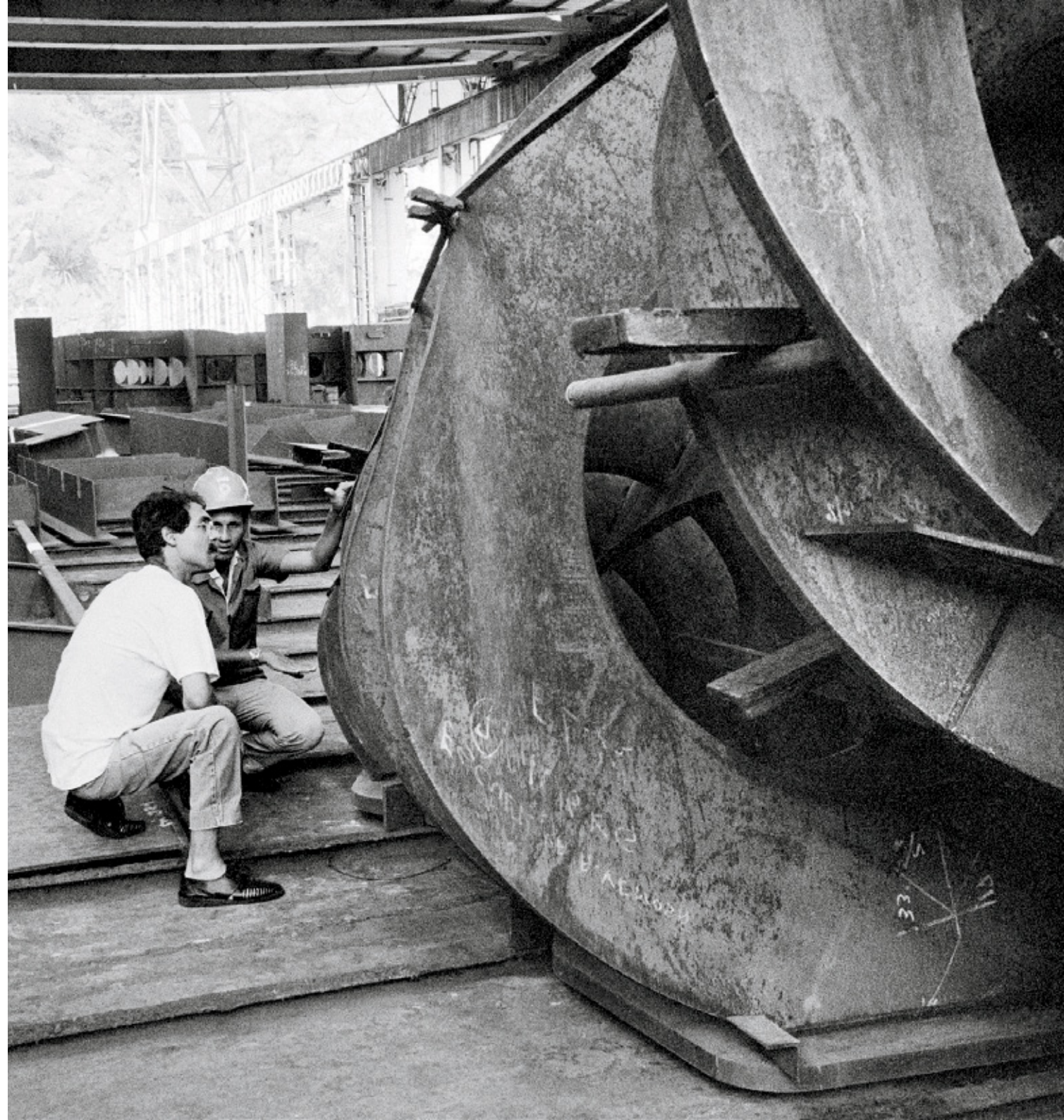
Untitled, 2017
carbonized wood
and 3D printing
unique
42,9 x 9,9 x 6,9 cm
16.9 x 3.9 x 2.7 in



virtual volumes

The tension between the constructive and the organic, the soft and the hard, the living and the dead, runs throughout Angelo Venosa's career and can be summed up as a clash between chaos and order, even when the artist talks about structure.

As a sculptor interested in the characteristic attributes of this language, volumetry has always been on his poetic horizon. Ever since he made the sculpture *Baleia* [Whale], made up of planes that evoke an imaginary volume (since it's not a body, but a structure that evokes it), he became interested in the idea of planes that define an imaginary solid.



Untitled (Baleia), 1990
corten steel
Praia do Leme,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil





Untitled, 1997 [detail]
Parque do Ibirapuera,
Museu de Arte Moderna
de São Paulo (MAM-SP),
São Paulo, Brazil



This interest led to developments, especially from the late 1990s onwards. Based on CT scans, in which a human body is digitally represented and 'sliced' in such a way as to evoke volumetry, he began to use this "virtual" slicing on glass plates, using both moistened salt and wire to create these drawings.

installation view
Panorama, 2012, MAM Rio
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Later, successive acrylic sheets were also used to create the illusion of volumetry. In the work *Turdus* (2009), we see the simulation of a bird skull sliced into acrylic planes and suspended in the air. The identification of the figure, of the 'whole,' depends on the viewer's position, varying according to their movement.



installation view
Panorama, 2012, MAM Rio
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Untitled, 2021
corten steel
edition of 3 + 2 AP
103 x 100 x 0,3 cm
40.6 x 39.4 x 0.1 in





Untitled, 2016
corten steel
edition of 3 + 2 AP
240 x 117 x 0,3 cm
94.5 x 46.1 x 0.1 in



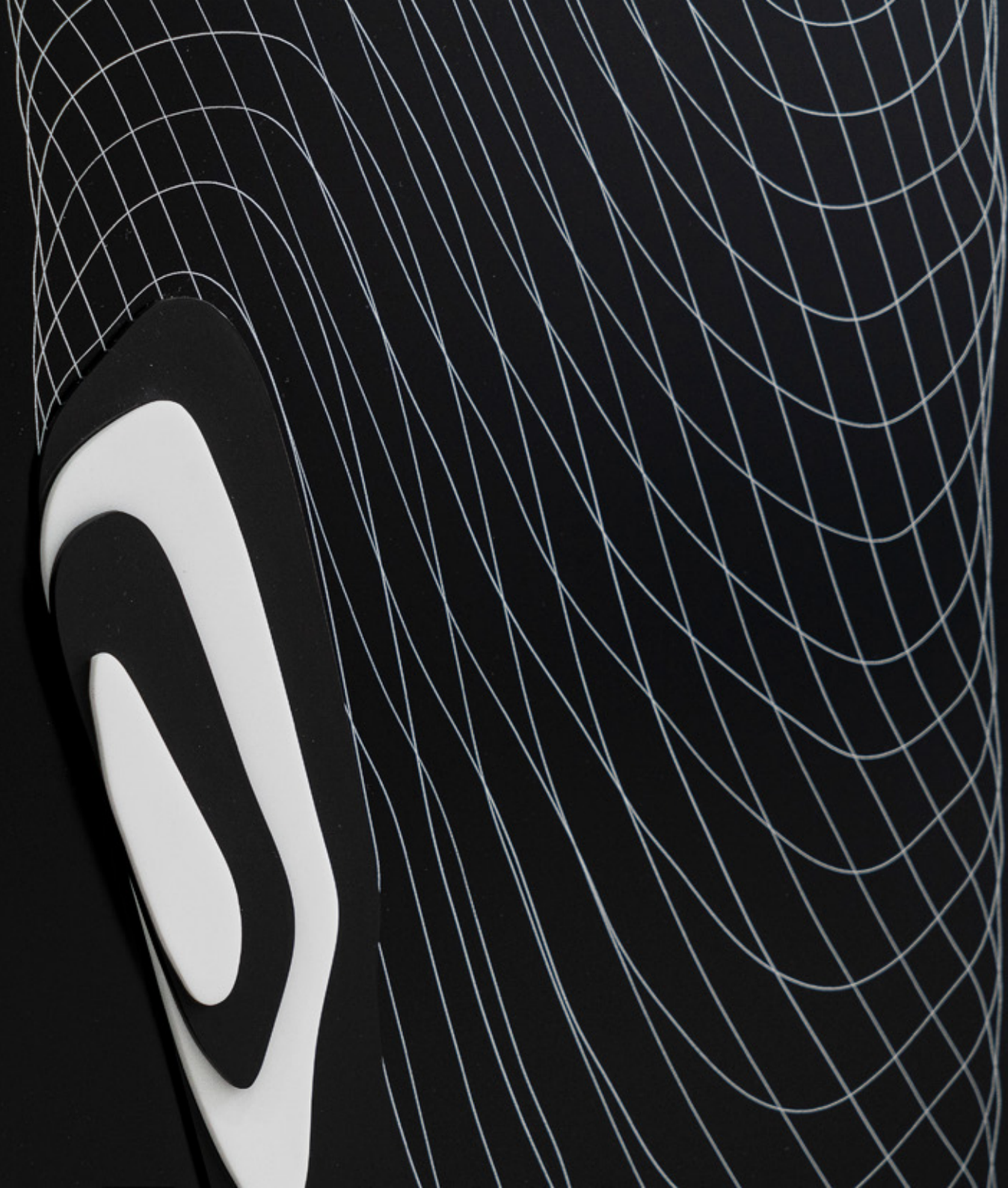


Untitled, 2015
methacrylate, aluminum
and UV printing
edition of 3 + 2 AP
200 x 40 x 19,5 cm
78.7 x 15.7 x 7.7 in

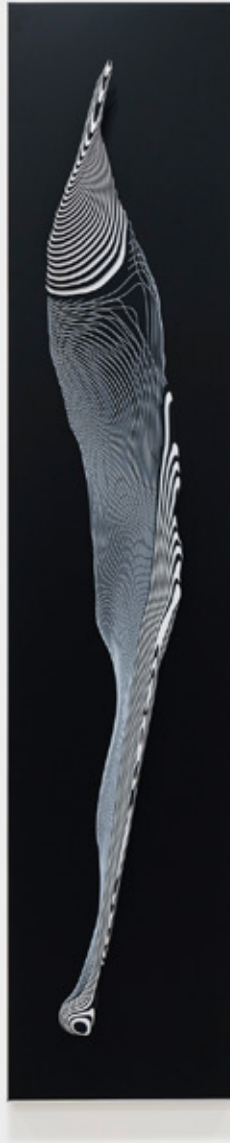


This interest in the virtual curves of bodies also led Venosa to explore various other materials, interspersing, for example, methacrylate with ultraviolet light prints, a procedure widely used in medicine and science for the internal mapping of bodies. Thus, these organic curves are distributed across different supports and materials, sometimes projecting themselves into space as tangible structures, sometimes as phantasmatic impressions.

In this sense, Venosa manages to combine sculptural practice with the most advanced technological and scientific procedures, breaking the boundary of the real and approaching the digital aspect.



Untitled, 2015
methacrylate, aluminum
and UV printing
edition of 3 + 2 AP
200 x 40 x 19 cm
78.7 x 15.7 x 7.5 in

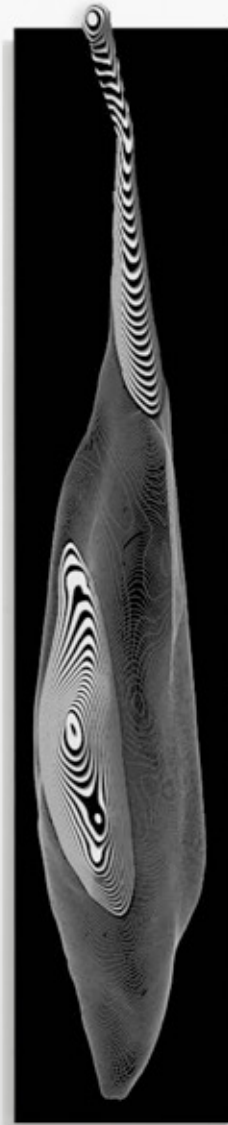




Untitled, 2015
methacrylate, aluminum
and UV printing
edition of 3 + 2 AP
200 x 40 x 17,5 cm
78.7 x 15.7 x 6.9 in







Untitled, 2015
methacrylate, aluminum
and UV printing
edition of 3 + 2 AP
200 x 40 x 21 cm
78.7 x 15.7 x 8.3 in

exhibition view
Giuse, 2016
Nara Roesler São Paulo
São Paulo, Brazil, 2016
photo © Everton Ballardin



3D prints

Another body of work developed over the last few years of Venosa's life was his 3D prints. Arranged in groups and reduced in scale, they resemble organic structures such as corals and echinoderms, forming a constellation of inanimate beings so representative of the artist's poetics and language that they look like seeds of the large-scale works for which Venosa is renowned.

Arquipélago, 2016
FDM print
60 x 60 x 72 cm
23.6 x 23.6 x 28.3 in



Untitled, 2017
3D printing
unique
30,5 x 30,5 x 19,8 cm
12 x 12 x 7.8 in



Untitled, 2017
3D printing
unique
15,8 x 12,4 x 17 cm
6.2 x 4.9 x 6.7 in



Untitled, 2017
3D printing
unique
49,5 x 16,5 x 16,25 cm
19.5 x 6.5 x 6.4 in



Untitled, 2017
3D printing
unique
31,2 x 40,9 x 29,2 cm
12.3 x 16.1 x 11.5 in





Ghabaah, 2016
Museu do Açude,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



exhibition view
Panorama, 2012
Museu de Arte Moderna
do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio),
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

angelo venosa

b. 1954, São Paulo, Brazil

d. 2022, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

At the beginning of the 1970s, Angelo Venosa started attending Escola Brasil, an experimental space for the study of art. In 1974, he moved to Rio de Janeiro, where he enrolled at Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial (ESDI). In the 1980s, Venosa attended open courses at the Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque Lage, where the so-called 'Geração 80' began and developed in. While his generation was known for a return to painting, the artist dedicated his practice to sculpture. His work often evokes organic structures, which he builds using wood covered with textiles, resin, glass fiber or bones, beeswax and teeth.

In the words of critic Lorenzo Mammi: 'An even better commentary on these works may be a passage from *The Magic Mountain*, by Thomas Mann: 'What was life, really? It was... a fever of matter... It was not matter, it was not spirit. It was something between the two, a phenomenon borne by matter, like the rainbow above a waterfall, like a flame. But although it was not material, it was sensual to the point of lust and revulsion.'

'The technical precision of analysis and the artisanal pleasure of construction, always present in Venosa's work, contribute to construct not an object, but a body, with all the echoes of alienation and danger that that term can have. The fly ends up incorporating the machine, or vice versa; in the end, however, life remains as a dull noise, both irreducible and disturbing.'

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selected solo exhibitions

- *Angelo Venosa: Escultor*, Casa Roberto Marinho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2023)
- *Clareira Project*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP), São Paulo, Brazil (2021)
- *Catilina*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2019)
- *Penumbra*, Memorial Vale, Belo Horizonte, Brasil; Museu Vale, Vila Velha, Brazil (2018)
- *Angelo Venosa: Panorama*, Museu de Arte Moderna Aloisio Magalhães (MAMAM), Recife (2014); Palácio das Artes, Belo Horizonte, (2014); Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo (2013); Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2012)

selected group exhibitions

- *Em polvorosa – Um panorama das coleções do MAM Rio*, Museu de Arte de Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2016)
- *30 x Bienal: Transformações na arte brasileira da 1ª à 30ª edição*, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2013)
- *From the Margin to the Edge: Brazilian Art and Design in the 21st Century*, Sommerset House, London, United Kingdom (2012)
- *MAM 60, Oca*, São Paulo, Brazil (2008)
- 5th Mercosul Biennial, Brazil (2005)
- 45th Venice Biennial, Italy (1993)
- 19th São Paulo Biennial, Brazil (1987)

selected collections

- Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS), Madrid, Spain
- Instituto Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP), São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), São Paulo, Brazil
- Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

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