

PRESS RELEASE - ENG

Kunsthalle Lissabon Presents the First Solo Exhibition by Sonia Gomes in Portugal

Exhibition Title: *Torcer, amarrar e pender*

Artist: Sonia Gomes (b. 1948, Caetanópolis, Brasil)

Opening Reception: May 27th, 6 pm

Dates: May 27th to August 16th, 2025

Instagram: kunsthallelissabon

Kunsthalle Lissabon is pleased to present *Torcer, amarrar e pender* (*Twisting, Tying, Hanging*), the first solo exhibition in Portugal by Sonia Gomes, one of the most relevant voices in Brazilian contemporary art. Through a textile-based practice, Gomes reclaims overlooked materials, transforming them into vessels of memory, resistance, and care. Her work is a radical act of reconstructing lives, voices, stories, and traditions through fabric.

The exhibition title, *Torcer, amarrar e pender* (*Twisting, Tying, Hanging*), condenses the gestures that traverse Gomes' work, both in material and symbolic terms. These actions refer to how the artist transforms fabrics into organic sculptures and the intertwining of stories, affections, and support networks that sustain her work. In some pieces, twisted ropes support suspended volumes that defy gravity, while fabrics tied in tension create forms that oscillate between shelter and exposure. These gestures, fueled by donations of old clothes and fabrics from people of diverse backgrounds, become part of a larger narrative, collectively woven together.

Gomes creates her pieces slowly, allowing them to emerge from a tactile conversation between material and memory. She does not follow a fixed plan, instead allowing herself to be guided by the emotional resonance of textures, colors, and fragments. Every piece of fabric, whether lace, a worn shirt, or a discarded lining, carries its own story. Whether used, given, forgotten, or kept, these fragments arrive at her studio imbued with the energy of past lives. Gomes responds through touch, her intuitive and deliberate gestures, transforming sewing into a language that honors labor, survival, and the invisible networks that sustain us.

The exhibition brings together a selection of recent works by the artist, offering a unique opportunity to engage with Gomes' expansive approach to form and storytelling, opening a window into her working process, where the final object is inseparable from the gestures, experiences, and communities embedded within it.

The works presented unfold like bodies in motion, balanced yet precarious, soft yet resilient. They echo the rhythms of her birthplace, Caetanópolis, a small textile town in Minas Gerais, Brazil. For Gomes, fabric is not merely a medium but a way of seeing and relating to the world. Her practice is deeply rooted in creating community and recognizing the collective labor involved in each piece.

This commitment is clearly visible in the works created in collaboration with the *Ocupa e Borda* collective, a group of embroiderers from the *Ocupação 9 de Julho*, which proposes shared authorship and feminist ways of making. The *Ocupação 9 de Julho* is an initiative of the *Movimento Sem Teto do Centro*, a movement led by women and formed by low-income workers who occupy

abandoned buildings in downtown São Paulo, fighting for the constitutional right to housing and for a social transformation that democratizes access to the city.

The collaborative works created with the collective are based on embroidery produced by its members and evoke underground rivers such as the Saracura, which flows hidden beneath Paulista Avenue. They result from a sensitive encounter between memory, body, and creation, materialized in sculptures and embroideries that move between the personal and the collective, between ancestry and invention.

Kunsthalle Lissabon is supported by the Portuguese Republic / DGArtes, the City of Lisbon, and the Vasco Collection. The exhibition *Torcer, amarrar e pender* counts with the generous support of Mendes Wood DM.

About Sonia Gomes

Sonia Gomes (b. 1948, Caetanópolis, Brazil) lives and works in São Paulo. She began her academic journey with a law degree and worked as a lawyer before turning to visual arts in the 1990s, studying at the Escola Guignard of the University of the State of Minas Gerais. Throughout her career, Gomes has gained international recognition with solo exhibitions and has become a prominent figure in contemporary Brazilian art.

Among her solo exhibitions are: *Barroco, mesmo* at MAC Bahia and Museu da Inconfidência, Ouro Preto (2025); *...vivem no compasso do sol*, Mendes Wood DM, Paris (2024); *Sonia Gomes: sinfonia das cores*, Octógono da Pinacoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo (2023); *O mais profundo é a pele (Skin is the deepest part)*, Pace Gallery, New York (2022); *Lágrima*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2021); *When the sun rises in blue*, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles (2021); *I Rise – I'm a Black Ocean, leaping and Wide*, Museum Frieder Burda, Baden-Baden (2019); *Sonia Gomes*, Mendes Wood DM, Brussels (2019); *Sonia Gomes & Marga Ledora*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2018); *Ainda me levanto*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP), e Casa de Vidro, São Paulo (2018); *A vida renasce, sempre*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói (MAC), Niterói (2018); *Linhas em tramas*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2016); *Nascer Uma Vez Após a Outra*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2014); *Stitch In Time*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2012).

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