

Ernesto Neto

Ultimatum

57, rue du Temple, 75004, Paris

12 March – 16 April 2022

Opening: 12 March, 6 – 9pm

Ultimatum, Ernesto Neto's first solo exhibition in Galerie Max Hetzler's Paris space, seeks, through an important installation as well as other works of different formats, to alert humanity to the short amount of time it has left to reduce the inexorable consumption of the planet's resources. It urges visitors to reconnect with nature and, through it, with themselves.

Through his holistic vision, Neto wishes to bring humanity face to face with its responsibilities as a reminder that this countdown also concerns us. The artist encourages viewers to physiologically feel this belonging. Although we, as humans, are inclined to place the intellect above the body, we depend nevertheless on the same organic system as all other living beings, animals and plants. Thus, Neto seeks to revive the link that has gradually broken between mankind, Earth and the universe.

With his immersive installation at Galerie Max Hetzler, the artist invites viewers to pause and meditate on a tree trunk, absorbing the energy of the surrounding environment. The murmured audio of a ceremonial song can be heard, making amends for the barbaric violence that cut down the trees, "*without a prayer, a song or a rite*", prompting participants to reflect on the way nature is exhausted and insatiably swallowed by humans.

Here, the plywood tree trunk, along with the soybeans at its core, on the walls and on the paintings in the first room, speak to the excesses of the commercial industry, with the overproduction of soy and plywood leading to the inexorable deforestation of the Amazon. Neto's paintings also denounce our consumerist society which abandons itself to the supremacy of money. In these works, brass, beans and banknotes take the shape of the exponential profits of agribusiness, with the use of plastic and leather also contributing to this devastation. The dark backgrounds of the paintings not only evoke the colour of oil, but the luxurious black velvet displays often used to present gold rings to clients in the jewellery industry, reminding us that oil spills and gold mining are both disastrous for the environment.

«*Who is consuming the Amazon? Who is buying soy, gold, and plywood?*»

Ernesto Neto asks these questions in order to underline the critical situation in which we find ourselves today. Global warming has long concerned the artist and so this exhibition, the culmination of many years of research which has been delayed due to the pandemic, poses an ultimatum to humanity: a last chance awakening.



Offering for a new conscience, 2022

Preparatory sketch of the installation

Image: Studio of the artist



Iaia Kui Dau Arã Naia, 2021

Photo: © Studio Ernesto Neto/ Paulo Schettino

Ernesto Neto has gained international acclaim for his large experimental sculptures and installations that activate the senses and invite participation. *Ultimatum* continues the artist's biomorphic work, first developed in the 1990s, and strives to create intimacy between the viewer and his art. Neto encourages multisensory experimentation and often incorporates herbs, seeds and elements such as spices, moss, cotton, shells and sand, into his works, whose ephemeral and vulnerable character recall the human body, evoking both the passage of time and the fragility of the world. He also regularly sets up Indigenous peoples as a model, who in their therapeutic rituals, harmoniously associate the human and the environment as part of an inseparable entity. As these guardians of our Mother-Earth have been doing forever with their ancestral rites, the artist invites us to reconnect with others in a dynamic and updated relationship with the reality of the contemporary world.

Ernesto Neto (*1964, Rio de Janeiro) lives and works in Rio de Janeiro. The artist participated in the Venice Biennale in 2001 and 2017. In recent years, his work has been the subject of solo exhibitions in public institutions including The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (2021); Centro Cultural La Moneda, Santiago (2020); Pinacoteca de São Paulo, and Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires - MALBA (2019); Fondation Beyeler, in the Zurich Main station (2018); Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (2017); Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary - TBA 21, Vienna (2015); Aspen Art Museum, Colorado, and the Guggenheim Bilbao (2014); Espace Louis Vuitton, Tokyo (2012); and Museum of Modern Art, New York (2010), The Art Museum of Nantes (2009); The Panthéon, Paris (2006); among others.

Neto's work is represented in institutional collections worldwide including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate, London; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo; Boijmans van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Hara Museum, Tokyo; Contemporary Art Center of Inhotim, Brumadinho; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Centre Pompidou, Paris.

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Window Gallery, Goethestraße 2/3, Berlin

11 February – 16 April 2022

Hans Josephsohn

Goethestraße 2/3, 10623 Berlin

12 February – 16 April 2022

Ida Ekblad

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3 March – 21 April 2022

Jeff Elrod

41 Dover Street, W1S 4NS London

Press contact

victoria.mirzayantz@maxhetzler.com
+33 1 57 40 60 81

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