

deceased. The dead and the places of the dead form what is called the ethos of the community.” This, he explains, is why many migrants yearn to be buried in their home countries. Watching this video in the haunted space of the abandoned Riga Circus, in a country still coming to grips with a legacy of Soviet occupation, one suddenly began to feel the presence of absence.

—Travis Jeppesen

SÃO PAULO

Matheus Rocha Pitta

CASA DO SERTANISTA

Modernist architect and urbanist Lúcio Costa considered *taipa*, or rammed earth, used in the construction of Brazilian colonial houses, an expression of authentic rural life. He considered these structures made using this technique to be “legitimate things of the earth,” like anthills or fig trees, and thus connected to the very soil that gave the rural family sustenance and meaning. But he also considered *taipa* a predecessor of the reinforced concrete that he and his peers would put to use in some of the country’s most revered architectural landmarks. In São Paulo, moreover, the rediscovery of such colonial houses also fed into an idealized image of the seventeenth-century fortune hunters known as *bandeirantes*, remembered less for their brutal oppression of indigenous populations than as daring pioneers who braved the country’s dangerous backlands in order to find riches and open the path for Portuguese settlers.

Casa do Sertanista is a case in point, having been restored as part of the celebrations of the Fourth Centennial of São Paulo in 1954. This is

where Matheus Rocha Pitta installed *Reintegração de posse* (Repossession Suit), 2018, as part of the three-venue exhibition “*Morumbi, Caxingui, Butantã*,” curated by Douglas de Freitas and titled after the neighborhoods where it took place, whose names all derive from the language of the indigenous Tupi-Guarani. Rocha Pitta’s title is ambivalent. On the one hand, it refers to the legal process whereby squatters or the landless are evicted so that a building or farmland may be returned to its legal owner. More often than not, such events are marked by police brutality. On the other hand, and more abstractly in this particular context, the title points to the artist’s proposal to peel back the layers of symbolic and ideological monumentalization that have been imposed on these rather modest types of buildings, not in order to return to a myth of origin but to reflect on the uses of history.

Rocha Pitta’s intervention was very succinct: The whole house was left empty

except for two rings of objects lying in the middle of the floor of the main hall. The outer circle consisted of banal household items such as a mattress, a disassembled kitchen sink, chairs, and an old, broken television set. They were all chained together, perhaps signaling their residual value to a dispossessed person, but also suggesting coercion and violence. Each object in the inner ring was mirrored by a solid cube of *taipa* of the same dimensions. These blocks had been built in situ and bore the marks of the wooden planks used in their making, leaving one with a palpable sense that they had emerged from the ground



Matheus Rocha Pitta, *Reintegração de posse* (Repossession Suit), 2018, *taipa*, secondhand furniture, chain. Installation view. Photo: Matheus Rocha Pitta.

itself. One felt this might have been a model of an ancient city or an archeological site, with the blocks morphing into monumental ziggurats. Both literal and uncanny “things of the earth,” the *taipa* sculptures seemed impervious to the controlled historiographic operations of modernist architects such as Costa.

Returning from their explorations of the dark, empty rooms of the historic building, viewers were necessarily forced once again to face this strange ensemble, somehow made all the more solemn by the light of the fluorescent lamps hanging low from the high ceiling. The disquieting pairing of precariousness and obduracy in the doubling of the objects in the *taipa* blocks was reminiscent of the disjunctive overlaying of historical mythmaking with everyday use and social struggles in the urban arena. The exhibition’s strength lay precisely in the skill and concision with which it evoked such contrasts, offering, as it were, a sculptural snapshot of ideology under construction.

—Sérgio B. Martins

JAIPUR, INDIA

Indian Ceramics Triennale

JAWAHAR KALA KENDRA

In a dimly lit room, a woman dressed in black slowly poured water from an earthenware pot. Cascading into a transparent tray, the water lapped at the walls of an exquisite miniature city painstakingly constructed of clay. This work, *Evanescent Landscape—Svarglok, Jaipur*, 2018, by Juree Kim, was inspired by the pink city of Jaipur and by an eighteenth-century Rajasthani miniature painting of Svarglok, the abode of the Hindu gods. Over the course of “Breaking Ground,” the inaugural Indian Ceramics Triennale, the action of the water gradually dissolved the sculpted earth, leading to the gentle collapse of this partly submerged clay city—a poetic and poignant study in ephemerality and erasure. Across the room from Kim’s scene of disintegration, Ester Beck delivered a powerful ode to creation. In her energetic performance video, *Matter Is a Centre of Dreaming* (Gaston Bachelard), 2016, Beck sliced, stomped, and pummeled a massive block of clay larger than herself, using her entire body to engage with the material. Near the screen lay a small sculpture, strewn with cheerful powdery colors, the residue of her performance at the triennial’s opening.

“Breaking Ground” featured the clay-based practices of fifty-eight Indian and international artists, including works by all of the members of the curatorial team: Reyaz Badaruddin, Sharbani Das Gupta, Vineet Kacker, Anjani Khanna, Neha Kudchadkar, and Madhvi Subrahmanian. As is implicit in the title, the exhibition looked away

from functional objects and studio pottery to explore ways of reimagining the ceramic arts. Outside one of the entrances to the venue, a multiarts facility built in 1993 by renowned Indian architect Charles Correa, visitors were greeted by Jacques Kaufmann’s *To Purify Space*, 2018. Fashioned out of brick, bamboo, fired red clay, and mirrors, the igloo-shaped installation drew its inspiration from the 1986 book *Ceramic Houses and Earth Architecture: How*

Jacques Kaufmann, *To Purify Space*, 2018, brick, bamboo, fired clay, mirrors, 11' 9 3/4" x 9' 10 1/2" x 9' 10 1/2". From the Indian Ceramics Triennale. Photo: Shine Bhola and Jawahar Kala Kendra.



to *Build Your Own*, by the US-based Iranian architect Nader Khalili, and evoked Sufi ideas of fire's cleansing power. Elsewhere, Danijela Pivašević-Tenner's *Do you know, what's behind?*, 2018, resembled a drawing room invaded by a mudslide; Vishnu Thozhur Koller's quirky interactive installation, *Resonance Tower Phase I*, 2018, highlighted his preoccupation with "resonant ceramic voids"; and Kate Malone re-created her London work space in one of the complex's graphic studios, offering viewers a peek into her process. Tallur L.N. chose to work with found fired clay objects: His tongue-in-cheek yet commanding *Man Exhibiting Holes*, 2018, depicted a head, mouth agape, sculpted out of hollowed-out terra-cotta blocks.

In keeping with the long pottery tradition of the Rajasthani capital, a gallery was dedicated to Kripal Singh Shekhawat, a man credited for the revival of what is widely known as Jaipur blue pottery. This collateral exhibition, curated by ceramicist Kristine Michael, proved to be a revelation, bringing to light not only Shekhawat's training as a painter under modern Indian artists Nandalal Bose and Benode Behari Mukherjee but also his study of the Nihonga style of painting in Japan. This *mélange* of influences was apparent in his small-format paintings on Japanese *shikishi* board as well as in the colors and motifs on the vases and bowls on display.

While several of the artworks gestured toward rich craft traditions, Ingrid Murphy's smart objects catapulted visitors into the future. The connected device *I.O. Touch*, 2018, set up a dialogue between ceramic hands placed in Jaipur and in Murphy's home in Wales. Her other works included ceramic artifacts equipped with QR codes offering app-savvy visitors the chance to embark on a journey in which the objects pop up in different places. By harnessing digital technologies, Murphy reminded us that ceramics are not just artisanal objects rooted in a distant past, but will continue to play a role in our futures.

—Meera Menezes

MELBOURNE

Kate Daw and Stewart Russell

SARAH SCOUT PRESENTS

Peter Norman, a white Australian sprinter, is mainly remembered for his role in the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games, where he won silver in the two hundred meters, with African American athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos winning gold and bronze, respectively. At the medal ceremony, Smith and Carlos famously bowed their heads and each raised a clenched, black-gloved fist as the US national anthem played. Norman acted as an ally, donning an Olympic Project for Human Rights badge along with Smith and Carlos. When Carlos realized he had left his gloves in the Olympic village, Norman suggested that he wear one of Smith's gloves (which is why Smith can be seen raising his right hand while Carlos raises his left). This led Smith to later recall that while Norman didn't raise a fist, he did lend a hand.

In Australia, artists across an entire spectrum of identifications have explored the image of Norman. Richard Bell and Emory Douglas are the best known, but Kate Daw and Stewart Russell, too, have been working with the significance and iconography of this event for more than a decade, establishing a close relationship with the athlete, and even conducting and recording the last interview he gave before his death in 2006. Timed to coincide with the semicentennial of the 1968 protest, the exhibition "The Waiting Room" presented a new chapter of their work on and with Norman, here constellated with selected past works that likewise speak to themes of nationalism, systemic racism, and activism in the sporting world.



Peter Norman, 2008/2018, was a set of screen prints on wool, cardboard, and paper, casually stuck to the wall with masking tape. Echoing the vernacular of protest signage, the work quoted excerpts from the artists' interview with the runner, in which he describes his sonic memories of the event—recollections of the sound of "The Star-Spangled Banner" playing as the crowd cheered, booed, whistled, catcalled, and shouted. In the next room, white translucent curtains screen-printed with the Olympic rings in silver metallic foil covered the gallery's large, ornate windows. A photograph of Carlos, Norman, and Smith upon the podium, printed on a small silver canvas, hung on the wall. On the floor were three soft sculptures, each a scaled-up version of the Olympic Project for Human Rights badge, sewn from screen-printed linen and stuffed with feathers. Next door, in the "waiting room" of the exhibition's title, stood a table with a few chairs around it, at which one could read printouts of three stories written by members of the artists' families—reflections on the personal and political significance of 1968. Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus*, 1920, and Walter Benjamin's meditations on the philosophy of history are given as reference points for the artists, but it is Klee's later painting *Simbad the Sailor*, 1923, that Daw reworked and exhibited in this room.

A room across the corridor held the strongest work in the exhibition: a version of Daw and Russell's 2016 *Two Homes, Another World* project, which pivots around the story of Warlpiri footballer Liam Jurrrah and his experience of playing Australian rules football on both the red-dirt pitches of Yuendumu in the Northern Territory and the manicured green lawns of the Melbourne Cricket Ground. In this piece, the Australian national anthem can be heard sung in reverse (thus "Advance Australia Fair" becomes "Riaf Ailartsua Ecnavda"). Between long intervals of silence, a recording of the song played through small speakers, gently infiltrating each of the other rooms and animating Norman's interview fragments in the corridor. Sung operatically, and "upside down and back to front," the anthem, originally in a proud and triumphant major key, somehow falters into dramatic but melancholic irresolution; its colonial English is suddenly rendered barbarous. Although the construct of "the waiting room" was perhaps too coded, and the second-place silver of the screen-printed works all too literal, this song was utterly enchanting. What might it mean to sing backward? A type of time travel, or orientation toward the past as with Klee's *angel*? Could the song's reversal also be its undoing?

—Helen Hughes

View of "Kate Daw and Stewart Russell," 2018. From left: *A Simple Act*, 2008; *Olympic Project for Human Rights Curtain*, 2018; *Olympic Project for Human Rights Soft Badge*, 2018. Photo: Christo Crocker.

CORRECTIONS: In the October issue, in a review of the work of Roy Newell, the artist's life span was erroneously given as 1914–2018. The correct span is 1914–2006. Also in the October issue, in a review of the exhibition "Moon Dancers: Yup'ik Masks and the Surrealists," Leonora Carrington's first name was mistakenly given as Dorothea. And in an October-issue column about queer Chicana zines, it was stated that the exhibition "Chicanarte" took place in 1976, when in fact it was staged in 1975. *Artforum* regrets the errors.