



IRAN DO ESPÍRITO SANTO – *SHIFT*

SEPTEMBER 8 – OCTOBER 21, 2017

OPENING RECEPTION: SEPTEMBER 7, 6-8PM

Sean Kelly is delighted to present *SHIFT*, a major one-person exhibition by Brazilian artist Iran do Espírito Santo. Known for his wryly-subversive sensibility and precisely defined practice, this will be Espírito Santo's first solo presentation in New York since 2012 and his fifth with the gallery. An opening reception will take place on Thursday, September 7, from 6-8 pm. The artist will be present.

SHIFT debuts three new bodies of work comprising sculpture, site-specific wall drawings, and works on paper. Continuing to engage the illusory effects of perception and scale, Espírito Santo will present ten pristine stainless steel sculptures in the main gallery space. Based on the specifications of standard industrial nuts and bolts, each work has been meticulously produced at a scale of 1:20, in two fully functional parts weighing 600 lbs. total. Installed throughout the gallery in a grid-like pattern that underscores their mechanical precision, these elegant and surreal works are milled by machine and then painstakingly hand-finished. Simultaneously lush and austere, these works embody the paradoxical qualities that define all Espírito Santo's work in disparate media.

Like the minimalist artists that preceded him, Espírito Santo treats the floor as an integral element for his industrially produced sculptures, though he makes clear the distinction between his own work and minimalism. "I don't make conscious reference to minimalism in particular, but certainly those registrations are embedded, [sharing qualities of] repetition, industrial materials, and industrial finishing. There is a fundamental difference, however, which is representation, a quality minimalism opposes." In a related but different vein, Espírito Santo will also produce site-specific, monochromatic wall drawings in each of the main gallery's four corners. Painted in 56 carefully calibrated shades ranging from white to black, the works gradate subtly from light to dark, creating a perspectival illusion that suggests the wall is gently curving into the corner. Titled *Compression/Clockwise*, the four drawings suggest a clockwise movement that parallels the movement of a nut and bolt, linking them closely to the sculptures throughout the gallery. The artist and a team of assistants will create these labor-intensive works over a three-week period leading up to the opening of the exhibition.

Grounding the mechanical in the domestic and vice versa, a group of watercolors that reference geometric patterns of parquet flooring will be presented in the front gallery. Espírito Santo also sees these works linked to the sculptures, noting that those industrially made objects might bring to mind the factory floor or world of heavy machinery, whereas the watercolors have a domestic format and are informed by personal memories of places he has lived. Alongside these will be shown fastidiously rendered line drawings that allude to the spinning motion of the industrial lathes used to produce the bolts on view in the main gallery. Although these drawings have the crisp facture of computer-

generated diagrams, they are carefully hand-drawn using ink and templates the artist projected and cut especially for this series.

Espírito Santo's works are included in the collections of many prominent international museums including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, Brazil; Museu Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain; and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, amongst others. His work was featured in the 2007 Venice Biennale and in a touring retrospective that included stops at MAXXI, Museo Nazionale delle arti del XXI Secolo, Rome; The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; and the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. Espírito Santo's work was also included in the 28th São Paulo Biennale in 2008 and the Mercosul Biennial in Porto Alegre in 2009. In 2011, Espírito Santo was the subject of a major exhibition featuring site-specific wall works at the Illingworth Kerr Gallery in Calgary. Espírito Santo's first public work in the United States, *Playground*, was installed in Manhattan by The Public Art Fund in September of 2013 and is currently on view at The Fields Sculpture Park at OMI International Arts Center in Ghent, New York. Espírito Santo lives and works in São Paulo, Brazil.

Image: Iran do Espírito Santo, *Thread and Nut 2*, 2016, stainless steel, 27 9/16 x 13 3/4 x 15 3/4 inches (70 x 35 x 40 cm). © Iran do Espírito Santo, Courtesy: Sean Kelly, New York.

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Sean Kelly Gallery will be open by appointment only for the month of August. Beginning on September 8th, the gallery hours are Tuesday through Friday from 11am until 6pm and Saturday from 10am until 6pm.

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