

Press Release

David Batchelor | Alfredo Volpi

11 May – 11 June 2022

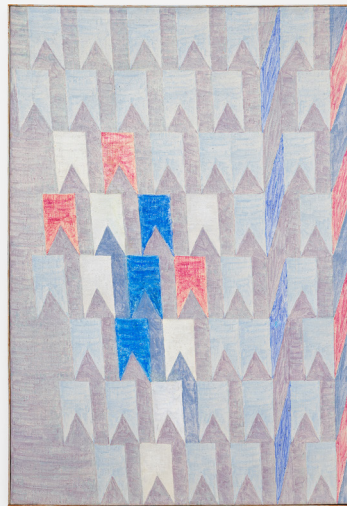


David Batchelor, *Covid Variation*, 2020, wool tapestry, produced with the Taller Mexicano de Gobelinos, Guadalajara, 255 x 322 cm

Cecilia Brunson Projects is delighted to present a joint exhibition by David Batchelor (b. 1955, Dundee) and Alfredo Volpi (1896 - 1988, São Paulo). This show celebrates Batchelor's long relationship with Latin American art, and Brazilian art in particular.

We're excited to announce that Batchelor will be the first British-born artist to be exhibited at Cecilia Brunson Projects and we're delighted to be celebrating the rich history of exchange, influence, and interaction between European and Latin American artists. Batchelor's prioritisation of colour, geometry, and abstraction has often led to him being associated with - or compared to - Brazilian artists. He participated in the 26th Bienal de São Paulo in 2004 and has exhibited in Brazil multiple times since.

The exhibition will revolve around an especially commissioned tapestry - a reproduction of one of Batchelor's *Covid Variation* paintings from 2020 - which was hand-woven at the Taller Mexicano de Gobelinos, a workshop in Guadalajara that specialises in transforming, or transposing, artworks into this new medium. This textile iteration has faithfully depicted all the imperfections of the original painting such as the drops of paint and bleeding of colours. It will be complemented by a variety of other works by Batchelor including some from the same series as the *Covid Variation*, which use colourful, zigzagging lines as the formal framework. The show will also feature examples of his *Concreto* sculptural works and *Colour Chart* paintings. Batchelor's work will be accompanied by a viewing room presentation of paintings by Alfredo Volpi.



Alfredo Volpi, *Untitled*, 1976, tempera on canvas, 102 × 67.5 cm

Batchelor wrote that, in his opinion, ‘much of the most interesting post-War Brazilian and Latin American art touches on three broad areas: abstraction, the city, and colour’. He also identifies these as three important pillars of his own work and that of Volpi. Colour is undoubtedly important for both artists. In Batchelor’s work, he deals with colour as it is experienced in the city: he has in his mind the colours we see on shiny plastics, advertising hoardings, and LED screens. Volpi lived, for the majority of his life, in one neighbourhood of São Paulo, Cambuci. His understanding of colour in painting would undeniably have been influenced by the light and colours which he was accustomed to seeing in his home-city. Despite this shared importance of the urban realm – the tone, texture, and weight of the two artists’ work is very different.

As a young man, Volpi had various practical, manual jobs: he worked as a woodcarver, bookbinder, decorator, and mural-painter. As an artist he was entirely self-taught and absorbed influences from fellow artists and his surroundings in his neighbourhood of Cambuci. This selection of works includes examples of the artist’s depictions of *fachadas* [facades] and *bandeirinhas* [little flags] in addition to works which allude to nautical scenes, with boats and sails standing in for facades and flags. These loosely figurative elements serve as a carefully constructed geometric framework within which Volpi demonstrates his skill as a colourist. His paintings all use egg tempera which lends them a transparency, and in turn reveals the short, deft, horizontal brushstrokes that characterise the artist’s predominant style. Batchelor first encountered Volpi’s work in São Paulo in 2004. Like many people in the UK, he had never heard of Volpi and was stopped in his tracks by a small *bandeirinhas* at the Pinacoteca in São Paulo. Volpi is well-known and highly celebrated in Brazil. However, it is only in the last few years that his work has caught the attention of wider, international audiences. We’re delighted to have the chance to bring together the work of these two artists.

This selection of Alfredo Volpi is made possible thanks to the support of Almeida e Dale Art Gallery, São Paulo.

Opening reception: Wednesday 11 May | 18:00 - 20:00

Brunch with the artist: Saturday 14th May | 11:30 - 13:00 (London Gallery Weekend)

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