

**Erez Nevi Pana:
Consciousness**

Friedman Benda Project Space
May 3 - June 9, 2018



"In a way, the earth became my town and I roamed - digitally and physically on the move - working with the flow of materials beyond borders, adjusting and joining all together at a meeting point in my mind."

-Erez Nevi Pana

New York, NY – Friedman Benda is pleased to present *Consciousness* – the first exhibition in the US by Israeli designer Erez Nevi Pana, opening May 3rd.

For his solo show, Nevi Pana will present three series made from salt, asphalt and plant fibers that examine the impact of human interaction with the environment. By interrupting, enhancing or combining natural processes, he creates objects with the intention to reveal life forces and dormant energies and conjure what he calls "intangible blueprints of our consciousness."

The centerpiece of the exhibition, *Bleached*, is the product of a five-year investigation of the material applications of salt. Motivated by the devastating consequences of mineral extraction in the Dead Sea, with this series Nevi Pana imagines a possible constructive outcome from humanity's interference with nature. For *Bleached*, Nevi Pana submerges wooden structures encased in luffa into the Dead Sea—leaving them to crystallize like coral formations. Transforming these minerals into otherworldly, architectural forms, Nevi Pana comments on the convergence of the organic with the ornate.

Inspired by Nevi Pana's studies in India, a second experimental trajectory is informed by the grit of New Delhi's streets. *Wasted* explores the principles of balance and harmony in Hinduism as he grapples with the global environmental crises. With this series, Nevi Pana tests, observes and acknowledges his own consumption by transforming discarded trash into an imaginative series of intricately woven baskets. Coated with a dark glaze created by Nevi Pana from the fibrous by-product of cashew harvesting, these works recontextualize the aesthetic of local materials and the essence of traditional craft methods.

A third series, *Unravel*, consists of elaborate Soumak banners of knotted twill. Through *Unravel*, Nevi Pana expresses the principle of *ahimsa*, a cardinal virtue of eastern philosophy with the premise of nonviolence toward all living beings. While traditional silk manufacturing techniques involve boiling the silkworms alive inside of their cocoons, *Ahimsa Silks* (or 'peace silks') harvest the yarn after the pupae's metamorphosis occurs collecting the cocoons once vacant to allow them to live on as moths. Nevi Pana then unravels the cocoons as well as the straw baskets he takes from inhumane silk manufacturers, uniting them into one. His fascination with textiles was passed down from his Middle Eastern ancestors, who were yarn traders within the Indian village of NabiPanah (the origin of Nevi Pana's surname).

About Erez Nevi Pana

Erez Nevi Pana was born in Bnei Brak, Israel in 1983. Raised on the grounds of a plant nursery, the fertile soil and evolutionary thoughts compelled him to make order from the processes around him. Nevi Pana earned his BA in Design from the Holon Institute of Technology and an MA from the Design Academy Eindhoven where his thesis focused on the recrystallization of salt. In 2015, Nevi Pana formed *La Terrasse* in Eindhoven as a platform for designers, artists, writers and thinkers to work closely together, share their idea on a central theme and realize their visions. The Design Museum Holon recently acquired three of Nevi Pana's salt pieces and one work he developed from an organic material mixture of soil and fungi for their permanent collection. A vegan and animal rights activist, Nevi Pana incorporates this spirituality into his practice; he is currently researching the topic of vegan design as a doctoral candidate at the University of Art and Design in Linz, Austria.

About Friedman Benda

Friedman Benda is dedicated to presenting established and emerging designers who create historically significant work and are at the forefront of their practice. Founded in 2007, the gallery's exhibitions and publications have played a vital role in the development of the contemporary design market and education, and take a comprehensive approach to work that intersects the fields of design, craft and art. Friedman Benda represents an international roster of designers spanning six continents and multiple generations. For further information please visit www.friedmanbenda.com

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