SPROVIERI

Luiz Zerbini

Bicho do mato

23 Nov – 19 Dec 2026

Palazzo Borghese
Largo della Fontanella Borghese 19, Rome



Luiz Zerbini, *Bicho do mato*, 2026 and details of the summer bedroom, second half of the XVIII century

Sprovieri is pleased to present *Bicho do mato*, an exhibition of new works by Brazilian artist Luiz Zerbini, at Palazzo Borghese. The exhibition charts the complex, multi-layered visual vocabulary the artist has developed over more than forty years—a practice existing at the fluid intersection of geometric abstraction, botanical reality, and the architectural memory of the Global South.

Zerbini's exploratory approach to painting brings geometric abstraction into a direct, critical dialogue with the political and ecological realities of the Global South. By depicting dense foliage, forests, and intricate vegetal networks, Zerbini translates the raw interactions of ecosystems into a contemporary pictorial language. His practice masterfully combines meticulous textures, patterns, and organic figures with highly structured compositions built through grids, repetitions, and sharp chromatic rhythms.

Within Zerbini's work, geometric abstraction acts as a primary driving force, shaping how images are constructed, layered, and perceived. These proliferating organic forms systematically intersect with hard-edged geometries and modular structures. The resulting dynamic tension between growth and order evokes both the physical vitality of tropical environments and the complex legacy of modernist abstraction in Brazil.

Referring to nature's critical status, Zerbini revisits national art history—ranging from traditional landscape painting to collective identity. In Bicho do mato, this investigation is brought into a direct, site-specific dialogue with European neoclassical culture. The painting titled Bicho do mato (2026), was conceived specifically to interact with the palace's 18th-century summer bedroom, where historic frescos by artists Angelo Stringini and Gioacchino Agricola simulate a domesticated, indoor garden panorama.

Zerbini interacts with this European ideal of controlled nature by inserting the real, expanding weight of tropical landscapes into the space. Rather than a passive backdrop, the architecture serves as a formal foil for Zerbini's process, where tension, coexistence, layering, and proliferation govern the canvas. The dialogue extends into the adjacent anti-chapel, where the strict Neoclassical geometries of a ceiling designed by Giovan Battista Marchetti and painted by Francesco Smuglewicz mirror the rigid grids underlying Zerbini's vibrant compositions. Through a dynamic distribution of visual information, Zerbini's paintings complete these historical structures, immersing the viewer in a hypnotic, transformative atmosphere.

Luiz Zerbini was born in 1959 in São Paulo and lives in Rio de Janeiro. He is one of Brazil's most influential artists. Recent solo exhibitions are Estrelas Escolhidas, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo (2026); Paisagens Ruminadas, CCBB – Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Brasília e Rio de Janeiro (2024); A mesma história nunca é a mesma, MASP – Museu de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo (2022); Intuitive Ratio, South London Gallery, London, UK (2019). Prominent collections include LACMA in Los Angeles, the Fondation Cartier in Paris, the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, and Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin.