

Victoria Miro Gallery

Press Release

Adriana Varejão
30 January – 28 March 2002

The **Victoria Miro Gallery** presents Brazilian artist **Adriana Varejão's** first solo exhibition in London. **Varejão** will fill the Lower Gallery with a monumental wall based installation, *Macau Wall*, while the Upper Gallery will house new individual floor and wall based work. The fine colour gradations that enliven the apparent chromatic uniformity of **Varejão's** recent painting evoke the traditions of Minimalism or monochrome painting. However, her work is not a strict exercise in abstract painting, but rather a representation of a surface clad in tiles.

Throughout her work **Varejão** has pursued a common pattern of research, examining the complex history of Brazil. The rich Baroque imagery of her earlier work replicated techniques for making such things as porcelain, tiles and tattoos, all of which were imported to Brazil from other cultures. **Varejão** is also fascinated by old methods of medical treatment and often in her work the canvas ruptures or is cut to expose a bodily interior of fleshy sculptural elements.

"My fiction does not belong to any time or place, instead it is characterized by themes dealing with rupture and discontinuity. These are stories about the body, about medicine, about painting, about Brazil, about tattoos, about Ming, Song or Iznik ceramics, about old tiles, either Portuguese or Delft, and also about modern and ordinary tiles, about maps, books, lacquers. Everything is contaminated. In my work, the formation of Brazilian culture from the colonial period onwards is used as a metaphor for the modern world. The works included in the "jerked-beef" series are like contemporary ruins, canvases of wall and rubble that end up losing their stony, insensitive, hard and inhuman nature and become flesh".

Born in 1964 in Rio de Janeiro, where she lives and works, **Adriana Varejão** is one of Brazil's leading contemporary artists. Her work is collected by amongst others the **Tate**, London and she is currently showing at the **Guggenheim Museum**, New York in the exhibition *Brazil: Body & Soul*. In June 2002 she will exhibit her monumental wall installation *Azulejões* at the new MoMA in Queens, New York. **Varejão** has exhibited widely internationally, including in 2000, the **Biennale of Sydney**; *Ultrabaroque* at the **Museum of Contemporary Art**, San Diego, and at the **Museo Reina Sofia**, Madrid; other exhibitions have included the first **Liverpool Biennial of Contemporary Art** at the **Tate Gallery**, Liverpool (1999) and the **24th São Paulo Biennial**, Brazil (1998). She has also had solo exhibitions at **Bildmuseet**, Umeå, Sweden (2000) and the **Instituto de Arte Contemporanea**, Lisbon (1998).

For further press information please contact Kathy Stephenson, 020 7 549 0422, kathy@victoria-miro.com