

Gopnik, Blake.  
"At Alexander and Bonin, Jonathas de Andrade  
Spells Out Brazil's Troubles."  
*news.artnet.com* (March 9, 2015)

**artnet**® news

## At Alexander and Bonin, Jonathas de Andrade Spells Out Brazil's Troubles

Blake Gopnik, Monday, March 9, 2015



**THE DAILY PIC:** In 2014, the Brazilian artist Jonathas de Andrade photographed sugar-plantation workers as they used cane stalks to spell out an ABC; he's showing the results in his solo show at Alexander and Bonin gallery in New York. The piece seems to return some kind of power to the workers: Maybe it imagines their hard labor plotting its own demise at the hands of literacy – and of art-making. But the truth is, not being from Brazil or knowing enough about its issues, I hesitate to claim that I can understand a piece like this. I think that's a good thing. Our globalized art world often pretends that it addresses problems brought in from the "periphery", whereas all it really does is generate more cultural goods suited to its established tastes. After watching de Andrade's work over the last couple of years, my gut instinct is that he's making art that's truly about where it comes from. Maybe the less I understand it, the better it is. *(Photo by Eduardo Ortega, Museu de Arte do Rio, 2014, courtesy Alexander and Bonin, New York)*