

Abel Rodríguez
Adrián Balseca
Alfredo Jaar
Alice Shintani
Amie Siegel
Ana Adamović
Andrea Fraser
Anna-Bella Papp
Antonio Dias
Antonio Vega Macotela
Arjan Martins
Beatriz Santiago Muñoz
Belkis Ayón
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Clara Ianni
Claude Cahun
Daiara Tukano
Daniel de Paula
Darcy Lange
Deana Lawson
Dirk Braeckman
E.B. Itso
Edurne Rubio
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Gala Porras-Kim
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Giorgio Morandi
Grace Passô
Guan Xiao
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Hanni Kamaly
Haris Epaminonda
Hsu Che-Yu
Jacqueline Nova
Jaider Esbell
Jaune Quick-to-See Smith

Joan Jonas
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Juraci Dórea
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Marissa Lee Benedict
and David Rueter
Mauro Restiffe
Melvin Moti
Mette Edvardsen
Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi
Nalini Malani
Naomi Rincón Gallardo
Neo Muyanga
Nina Beier
Noa Eshkol
Olivia Plender
Oscar Tuazon
Paulo Kapela
Paulo Nazareth
Philipp Fleischmann
Pia Arke
Pierre Verger
Regina Silveira
Roger Bernat
Sebastián Calfuqueo
Silke Otto-Knapp

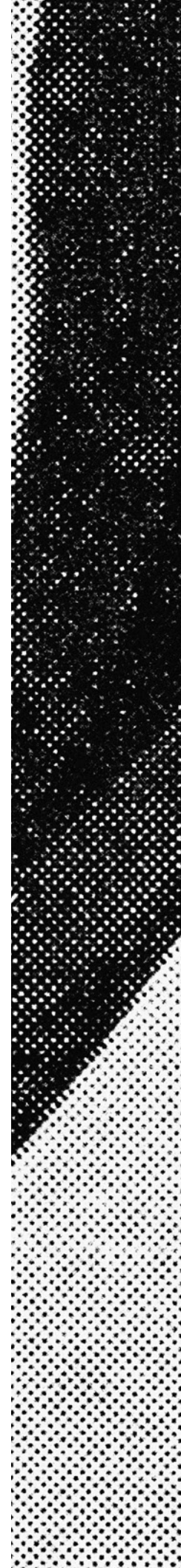
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Though it's dark *still I sing*

34th Bienal de São Paulo



With the idea of an open rehearsal as one of its curatorial premises, the 34th Bienal de São Paulo has been constructed publicly, assuming the procedural and changeable character intrinsic to the holding of an international show of this size. When we close the doors of the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion on December 5, 2021, the 34th Bienal's programming, begun in February 2020, will have extended for nearly two years.

With the challenges ushered in by the pandemic, the 34th Bienal – which had already embraced the aim of expanding in time and space – gained another year. Thus, the venues taking part in its extensive programming also changed, and spread within the virtual world. While online actions had already been present in the various editions of the Bienal de São Paulo since 1996, they inevitably gained another proportion in this edition.

This dynamics makes the 34th Bienal unique not only in its configuration – which includes partnerships with institutions throughout the city of São Paulo – but also in the relationships that the public can establish with it. Over the course of the last year, we made it possible for everyone to accompany, from close up, the institutional, curatorial and artistic processes and reflections that always emerge during the preparation of a Bienal, but which, due to the project's timeframe, are normally restricted to those immediately concerned with them.

Coupled with the exhibitions in the network of partners, the opening of the show *Faz escuro mas eu canto* [Though it's dark, still I sing] in the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion is the high point of a process carried out publicly and collaboratively, and whose construction will continue throughout the three months of the exhibition itself – because the meaning of the artworks and of the show is not given beforehand and will never be finished. Rather, it is the sum of the experiences and interpretations carried out by each of our visitors, based on their unique repertoires and life stories, which will configure, in their plurality, the 34th Bienal de São Paulo.

Since its first edition in 1951, the Bienal de São Paulo has attracted millions of visitors interested in new experiences and in expanding their knowledge through contact with leading examples of contemporary art from around the world. Beyond that, since its second edition, in 1953, the exhibition has been accompanied by activities seeking to introduce the aesthetic experience to education and to multidisciplinary and citizen development.

Almost as old as the exhibition itself, the Bienal de São Paulo's education program has consolidated itself as an important space for mediation between works brought to the Bienal and their different publics. As the Bienal gained prominence as both a reference in art and an educational event, activities designed for the public were added to those specifically for teachers and students. With this front deepening, every Bienal since 1998 has been accompanied by an educational publication, distributed at no cost to millions of teachers and students throughout Brazil.

Its reach, longevity, and educational vocation have made the Bienal de São Paulo a landmark of Brazilian culture. Throughout its 70 year history – an anniversary it celebrates now in 2021 –, it has been devoted to a mission to increase access to art and bring together national and international production. It has also consistently strived to equip each of its millions of visitors with the tools to understand canonical interpretations of exhibited works while, at the same time, stimulating and enabling them to form their own readings.

This year, in which the Bienal celebrates its 70th anniversary and presents its 34th edition, the Federal Government, through the Special Secretariat for Culture and the Ministry of Tourism, is proud to stand beside this initiative that reflects the core values of cultural public policies: promoting free exposure to art, carrying out educational activities, and stimulating encounters between different people and social groups. It is through actions like these that culture can enrich our country and transform our citizens.

After more than 30 years of operations, Itaú Cultural (IC) has cemented its role as one of the most active institutions in the Brazilian cultural scene. By listening and interacting with the other, the organization reinvents processes for realizing its goals and dialoguing with society.

This intuitive and intellectual journey has resulted in a systematic thinking and in continuous activities, which most notably include events related to visual arts, such as various exhibitions, courses, debates and support to partners. With the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, for example, the partnership has already spanned 12 years.

With the pandemic decreed in 2020, and understanding the importance of art and culture in times of crisis, IC sought to reinvent and offer activities and contents that users could take part in virtually, without leaving home. It created the *Palco virtual* [Virtual Stage], with shows broadcast online, and also launched the Escola IC [IC School], which offers permanent and temporary courses, as well as Itaú Cultural Play, a platform for free streaming dedicated to national productions.

It also reinforced its production of digital contents, with new columns on its website, an intense production of reports, interviews and articles, and launchings of podcasts. At its headquarters, in São Paulo, it has continued with its programming of exhibitions, creating protocols to adapt the shows to the needs of the moment.

Itaú Cultural continues to innovate and to seek to generate transformative experiences in the world of Brazilian art and culture. Because inspiring and being inspired are an essential part of life.

José Olympio da Veiga Pereira

President – Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

Mario Frias

Special Secretary of Culture
Ministry of Tourism – Federal Government

Itaú Cultural

Working within a network is a fundamental dimension of the actions carried out by Sesc in the state of São Paulo. Spread between the capital, the metropolitan region, the interior, the seacoast, and, also, the virtual environment, the various cultural and leisure centers maintained by the institution compose a grid that extends through different regions and realities, seeking to leverage each of its nodes, understood as units of a wider complex. As an integral part of the territories in which they are located, these “nodes” participate in the local dynamics with the aim of augmenting them.

The very notion of a network includes being open to new interconnections. In this sense, Sesc furthers its social extension and penetration by entering into partnerships with different sectors and entities of society, enlarging the reach of its actions – while the exchanges that come about through these cooperations also bring benefits to its organizational thinking and proposals. The constant and already long-standing collaboration between Sesc and the Fundação Bienal reiterates this policy, suggesting that through a combination of efforts the cultural initiatives become more effective and wider ranging.

In the present edition of the Bienal, due to the event's expansion in time and space of the show, which proposes its presence in other institutions of the city of São Paulo, Sesc is receiving a solo show that is part of the Bienal's general curatorship. This exhibition has its own specific educational project, in order to enhance its reception by the public. Besides this participation in the capital, Sesc is mobilizing its network of units in the interior of the state, aiming to accomplish various actions for the training and continuing education of educators from the public and private educational networks, as well as the third sector. With this decentralized arrangement, Sesc and the Bienal articulate their expertise and resources in order to broaden the field of contemporary art as much as possible.

We are very pleased to be sponsoring the 34th Bienal de São Paulo. Since 1951, the show has remained committed to featuring innovative works, in both the national and international context, through an admirable selection. Once again, the constant debate of concepts and ideas – which is essential to the creation of quality artworks – is present in this edition of the event.

We identify with this goal and result. Innovating and knowing how to choose are part of our daily activities. Debating clearly on what to do and how to do it with excellence is fundamental for us to achieve the goals of our stakeholders.

Instituto Cultural Vale believes in the transforming role of culture, which expands the world view and creates new perspectives for the future. Vale, with more than two decades of investment in the sector, launched in 2020 the Vale Cultural Institute with the purpose of expanding support and valuing Brazilian art and culture in its multiple manifestations and in all its diversity.

The Institute is proud to sponsor the 34th Bienal de São Paulo, which multiplies the opportunities for meeting art, the various identities and artistic expressions that make us who we are. Its diversified agenda generates new knowledge, inspires and promotes reflection on artistic and cultural manifestations with the different audiences that experience them. The Bienal brings to the country's cultural scene a mix of popular and sophisticated elements, showing that art is for everyone. And it is this path that Instituto Cultural Vale seeks, access, exchange and sharing of knowledge and actions with the amalgamation of the creative economy.

Through culture we can express truths, reflect, discover and be inspired to transform the simple into the extraordinary. The Bienal de São Paulo claims the need for art as a field of encounter, resistance, rupture and transformation. It acts as a space for knowledge and coexistence, projecting a future that we want in the actions of the present.

By the diversity of cultural manifestations in society, we grow and evolve together.

Danilo Santos de Miranda
Regional Director of Sesc São Paulo

Bahia Asset Management

Instituto Cultural Vale

Jacopo Crivelli Visconti
Paulo Miyada
Carla Zaccagnini
Francesco Stocchi
Ruth Estévez

The starting point for the curatorial project of the 34th Bienal de São Paulo was the desire to unfold the show, to activate each moment of its construction and to sharpen the vitality of an exhibition of this scale. Seeking to dialogue with the very large and very distinct publics that have been visiting the Bienal for decades, we proposed to expand this edition of the event in both space and time. Officially inaugurated on February 8, 2020, with a performance and a solo exhibition, the Bienal would continue with events held in partnership with several cultural institutions in the city and culminate in the large group exhibition to be held in this pavilion in December of that same year. In the new scenario imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, various aspects of this choreography were modified, exhibitions and performances had to be canceled and the exhibition *Wind* was born, conveying the sense of distance and absence that still pervades our lives. A long year later, we still believe in the potential of an exhibition conceived to multiply the opportunities for an encounter between works and people, in which their singularities intersect and transform each other. This Bienal is certainly not the same it would have been a year ago. Some of the works will be clear, other opaque; some messages will be heard as screams, other as echoes. We do not have to understand everything, nor everyone; rather, the aim is to talk in our own language while knowing that there are things that other languages name and which we do not know how to express.

Searching for a language to delineate the force fields created by the combined presence of artworks from very different places and times, we proposed some objects, coupled with their stories, as *statements*: a bell that was rung at different moments of a story that is repeated; the images of the most portrayed man at a time when almost no one was portrayed; the embroideries that another man would not have made if not in a concealed way; letters which, to arrive to a child, had to get past jail bars and the eyes of censors; a set of objects that survived the same fire in different ways... These statements are scattered around the exhibition, suggesting a tone for the artworks around them to be read in, conveying the curatorship's concerns and reflections, making them tangible. In this sense, they operate like the tuning fork that helps to tune a musical instrument, or the beginning of a song. In the curatorship of an exhibition, we also look for something like a tuning process, an adjustment that cannot be devoid of faults, accidents and detours, which the expanded time of the 34th Bienal allowed us.

Operating as the first of these statements, rather than as a theme, the title of the 34th Bienal de São Paulo, *Faz escuro mas eu canto* [Though it's dark, still I sing], is a line from a poem by Amazonian poet Thiago de Mello, published in 1965. Through this poetic phrase, we recognize the urgency of the problems that challenge life in the current world, while underscoring the need for art as a field of resistance, rupture and transformation. Since we found that line, the darkness that surrounds us has been thickening: from the fires of Amazonia that darkened the day to the mourning and lockdowns brought on by the pandemic, along with the political, social, environmental, and economic crises that were ongoing and are now deepening. Throughout these months of work, surrounded by collapses of every sort, we have repeatedly asked the question: what forms of art and ways of being in the world are currently possible and necessary? In dark times, what are the songs we need to listen to, and to sing?



Terraza Vajo, 2020

Ink on paper. 50 × 70 cm. Private collection. Courtesy of the artist

Abel Rodríguez (1944, Cauca region, Colombia), or “don Abel,” as he is known, is a Nonuya *sabedor* [literally, “knower”], born in the Colombian Amazonian region and trained since a child to be a “namer of plants,” that is, a repository of the community’s knowledge about the various botanical species in the forest, their practical uses and their ritual importance. After spending a large part of his life in the forest, don Abel (whose Nonuya name is Mogaje Guihu, that is, “shining hawk feather”) moved to Bogotá in the early 2000s, and only then he began, without never having a formal education, to draw the forest by memory. His drawings cannot be considered only “works of art,” in the current sense of that definition

in Western culture. They operate first of all as a language used by don Abel to preserve and convey his knowledge.

More than “representing” the plants, his drawings actually “present” them: the trees and other sorts of plant life are patiently constructed on the paper, leaf by leaf, branch by branch, fruit by fruit. Moreover, the plants are almost never presented without the animals that eat their fruits and leaves, or the plants that grow around them. Thus, most of don Abel’s works constitute a faithful, precise and potentially endless portrait of the forest, that is, of an ecosystem where each element is inseparably related with everything around it. Great part of his drawings integrates more

or less extensive cycles, which portrait certain ecosystems in different moments of the year and distinct phases of growing.



Medio Camino [Half-way], 2014

Still of the video. 15'41". Artist's collection. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: PCAI – Polyeco Contemporary Art Initiative

Although he has frequently used photography and installation in his work, Adrián Balseca (1989, Quito, Ecuador) favors the moving image, either or not associated to the presentation, in the exhibition space, of the key players of his videos or films. Balseca's work deals with issues very specifically related to the context of Ecuador and the country's recent history, but which in a certain way are common throughout the Latin American continent. Over the course of the last few years, the main focus of his research has been the extractive dynamics and its environmental impact, a central issue in the politics of various countries in South America, including Brazil, and whose results are visible and dramatically known.

With his works, Balseca has been gradually constructing an incomplete and programmatically open index of symbols and metaphors of specific ecosystems in the region, which can be either natural (Amazonia, the rugged Andean region or the unique context of the Galapagos Islands, among others) or sociopolitical, based on episodes and objects, mainly industrial ones, which summarize the weakness of the attempts at modernizing the country and, metonymically, the continent. For *Medio Camino* [Half-way] (2014), Balseca researched the first car produced in Ecuador, the Andino, a result from the collaboration between the Ecuadorian company Aymesa (Automóviles y Máquinas del Ecuador S.A.) with Bedford/Vauxhall

and General Motors, in the context of the BTV (Basic Transportation Vehicle) program for developing countries, during the great oil price spike of the 1970s. The video is a record of an action performed by the artist, who took out the gas tank from an Andino and drove it the 437 kilometers that separate the cities of Quito and Cuenca without gasoline, relying only on the spontaneous help of people he met along the way.

A Hundred Times Nguyen, 1994

Installation view. 24 framed pigment prints, large framed matrix print, unique collage, video. Dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist, Kamel Mennour, Paris, and Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio – Gobierno de Chile



Born in Santiago in 1956, Alfredo Jaar grew up in Martinique until the age of 16, when his parents decided to return to Chile in order to personally experience the socialist experiment installed by Salvador Allende, which would be brutally interrupted by the coup d'état a few months later. Until 1982, when he moved to New York, Jaar remained in Santiago, studying cinema and architecture and beginning his artistic production with artworks extremely critical of the moment the country was going through. In recent decades, Jaar has been constructing an extremely broad and diversified body of work in which a utopian desire of "changing the world," as he himself puts it, is a pervading element that lends consistency

to his works using a wide range of techniques and media, often going out of the aseptic white cube and occupying the streets. The artist seeks to be an eyewitness of momentous historical episodes, recording the slave-like conditions of workers in the mines at Serra Pelada, the humanitarian disasters in Ruanda and Angola, or visiting refugee camps in Asia.

In an effort to expand and deepen his knowledge about places he considers emblematic, Jaar has repeatedly visited some countries and regions, as Hong Kong, to where he travelled for the first time in 1991, with the purpose of knowing personally the life conditions of the Vietnamese refugees who were facing threats of repatriation. Through the following years,

he would come back many times, creating a set of works collectively identified as "The Hong Kong Project", from which *A Hundred Times Nguyen* (1994), a work included in the 34th Bienal, is probably the most emblematic one. When visiting the Pillar Point detention center for refugees, the artist was followed by a girl, called Nguyen Thi Thuy, of whom he took five pictures. The massive repetition of this compact set of images displayed along an enormous installation becomes an elegy in honor of Nguyen and of all the refugees and the wretched of the earth.



Guaraná. Mata series [Guarana. Forest series], 2019-2021
Gouache on paper. 75 × 55 cm. Artist's collection. Courtesy of the artist

Having studied and worked in computer engineering, Alice Shintani (1971, São Paulo, Brazil) transferred her practice to the arts in the beginning of the 2000s. Even though much of her work could be referred to as painting, she avoided restricting her production to the settings and structures of the established arts circuit. The artist feeds on direct experiences with the urban environment, the societal events and their historical contradictions, experimenting at the same time with ways of circulating in varied contexts, among audiences less familiar with the liturgy of exhibition spaces.

Menas [Less] (2015-2021) is an installation whose arrangement and composition change

within each context and space that it occupies. The artist devised its elements during a period when she was distanced from the conventional contexts of contemporary art, when she worked directly on the streets, selling *brigadeiros* [chocolate homemade candies] and observing gradual changes to co-existence in a country in a profound dismantling of its social and political structures. The work employs a light and decidedly handcrafted materiality that can be packed up and transported with little effort, and that unfolds in a similar way to assembling a market vendor's or street seller's stall.

Mata [Forest] (2019-2021) has been developing gradually, without a pre-established

project. The work consists of a series of gouaches based on the Brazilian flora and fauna images, especially the Amazon rainforest. The option for a classic pictorial subject, as well as the inviting and flat iconography, seems to suggest a self-referential and pacified work; yet most of the elements explicitly or implicitly portrayed are at risk of extinction. In this sense, the gouaches' intensely black background contributes to highlighting the color luminosity the artist uses to represent the vivacity of something. But it can also be read as a metaphor for the uncertainty and opacity that characterizes our time from an ecological, social, and political point of view.



Asterisms, 2021

4K multichannel video installation, color/sound (video still). Courtesy of the artist and Thomas Dane Gallery

One way to approach Amie Siegel's (1974, Chicago, USA) work – be it a film, video, photograph, installation or painting – is to consider each piece as a case study. Siegel often focuses on the way things work, seeing through their appearances and taking in consideration layers of circulation, economical influxes, patterns of gaze, and processes of constructing value. Such commonly ungraspable aspects of the world are made visible through a long research and investigation process that allows Siegel to discover and highlight connections between apparently disconnected elements, and then record, inscribe and/or even mirror their movement. Montage and the remake are also constant resources in Siegel's universe, not only

when directly creating films or engaging cinematic tropes, but also as underlying relations between different pieces that together form constellations or *genealogies* (to cite the title of a 2016 work) at once subtle and extremely precise, introducing further entanglements and complexities to her broader narratives of contemporary society.

In *Asterisms* (2021), a video installation co-commissioned for the 34th Bienal, Siegel explores geological and social displacement processes on a planetary scale, in this case focusing on the specific context of the United Arab Emirates. Within it, Siegel leads us through migrant labor camps that supply workforce for gold factories and oil refineries; through

the surreal landscape of a royal palace where Arabian horses are bred and trained for show; through the process of constructing artificial islands in Dubai; through an abandoned village almost completely submerged by the desert sand... Each of these segments unfolds in a different cinematic aspect and is projected onto a shape that floats between being a wall and a sculpture. Derived from the superposition of the various projection formats, the shape resembles a stylized star, or asterism – an informal group of stars and the lines used to mentally connect them, whose form we can identify in the night sky, if we look hard enough.



Two Choirs, 2013-2014

Video still. 2-channel HD video installation. 2'03".
Artist's collection

Ana Adamović (1974, Belgrade, Serbia) belongs to a generation of Serbian artists who were born under marshal Tito's government and who lived, in childhood or in adolescence, through the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Many of her works deal with the final years of the republic that no longer exists: its values, its customs, its imagery. *Two Choirs* (2013-2014) begins with a photograph found on the album made by the Institute for the Education of Deaf Children in Zagreb, in 1962, as a gift to Tito, where there is a photograph of a choir where the children sing songs that they themselves cannot hear. Unlike what is pictured in the photo, Adamović's video shows children performing a 1960s patriotic song in

sign language. What we see is a silent group, moving its arms and hands simultaneously, like in a choreographed routine. If in a choir each voice contributes its timbre to create a single mass of sound, in this video we see how the same gesture gains unique characteristics when inhabiting each body.

My Country is the Most Beautiful of All (2011-2013) also begins with the image of a children's choir, the Kolibri, founded in 1963. It is the documentation of a concert in Belgrade in 1987, in which ex-choir members joined the children to sing the song that titles the work, a song that exalts the landscapes of spring and winter, speaks of glory and heroes. In reference to this moment, which brought different

generations of the Kolibri choir together on stage, Adamović, another 24 years later, gathered some of the children from 1987 to sing the same song in the same city – but in a different country, where a recent war killed 130,000 people. The landscape might have been the same, but speaking of glory and heroes evoked other memories. In both the works Adamović presents here, there is an element of history repeating itself, although in this recurrence some differences are also revealed.



Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk, 1989

Performance documentation. Philadelphia Museum of Art. Photo: Kelly & Massa Photography. Courtesy of the artist

In her performances and installations, Andrea Fraser (1965, Billings, Montana, USA) seeks to stimulate public awareness of how the art system directly participates in structures of domination. Connected to institutional critique and to feminism, Fraser has dissected neoliberal globalization, plutocracy, patronage, and identity-based domination in the art world from the perspective of a wide range of cultural agents, including artists, collectors, gallerists, sponsors, and the public itself. For her, the art world is not the institutional space but a field of interconnected structures and social relationships in which we are all involved. Whether through discursive formats, such as texts and books, or through

performance and installation, Fraser creates situations often imbued with humor, staging the different social positions that she herself is involved in.

Reporting from São Paulo, I'm from the United States (1998) is a performance-based video Fraser developed for the 24th Bienal, in 1998. The project took the form of a series of television reports in which the artist played the role of a reporter from TV Cultura (a Brazilian state-sponsored television network), interviewing artists, patrons, and political figures about the Bienal. The idea was for these news reports to be broadcast nationwide on TV Cultura, but in light of events at the time – tumultuous elections, floods that devastated the country

and the global economic crisis – they were never transmitted. The 24th Bienal, which was curated by Brazilian critic Paulo Herkenhoff, addressed the extended concepts of anthropophagy and cannibalism from different points of view and geographies; concepts that Fraser applied to the very fabric of the Bienal, in its financing and international relations, fruits of a perpetual neocolonial dependence.



Untitled, 2015

Clay. 32,5 × 30 × 3,5 cm. Courtesy of the artist

Anna-Bella Papp's (1988, Chişineu-Criş, Romania) artistic practice is centered around a medium-sized, rectangular tablet of clay, usually left unfired or unglazed to allow its naturally variant tone to remain visible while preserving the natural delicacy of the material. While her sculptural practice might seem limited by this rigid format, Papp is actually able to infuse it with intimacy and to convey elements from the external environment. Each time she relocates to a new city, adaptations are felt in her practice, which becomes a sort of diary. When living in Rome, for example, her subjects were inspired by ancient sculptures, religious art, and Baroque luxury and revolved around the philosophical idea of

beauty. Later, having moved to Brussels, she became interested in the Romanian diaspora, strongly represented figuratively by workers in her pieces, in which she explored questions of identity, culture, and social representation.

Usually exhibited laying bare on long tables, without any protection, the works suggest a need to be sheltered, as does the fact that their appearance is often slowly changing through time. The great economy of means turns every small intervention on the clay essential, especially in the abstract works. Her geometric, at times architectural lines and forms could evoke the style and poetics of modernist sculpture but, on the other hand, they could also be intended as referencing the

immemorial use of clay, or even childhood and universal memories of the first contact with this simple, malleable and accessible material. More recently, Papp expanded the scope of her work by incorporating photographs and texts in her sculpture, and also practicing a strongly poetic writing.



The Image, 1972

Acrylic on canvas. 120 x 120 cm. Private collection

Originally from the state of Paraíba, Antonio Dias (1944, Campina Grande, Brazil) moved with his family at the age of 13 to Rio de Janeiro, where he became outstanding as a young artist in the 1960s. His emotionally charged figurative paintings critically assimilated tenets of concrete art in voluptuous shapes painted in red, bones, and silhouettes in black-and-white, along with icons of explosions and weapons. Extrapolating the plane of the painting with the signs of his open narratives, Dias was recognized by Hélio Oiticica as an inevitable reference for the Nova Objetividade Brasileira [New Brazilian Objectivity] movement. In late 1966, having won an award from the Paris Biennale, Dias faced difficulties

in obtaining travel documents and went to Europe with a dubious passport. Having witnessed the events of May 1968 in France, Dias moved to Italy, also in political turmoil.

It was in this period that the explicit signs that characterize his work were reduced and condensed until he arrived at a radically concise work: canvases based on a graphic mass, often in black monochrome, on which a thin framing and some words painted in white evoke scenes and ideas.

Often seen as a result of Dias' adherence to conceptual art – characterized by metalanguage and distancing from representation –, the textual paintings he started producing from 1968 onwards could also be read as an

aesthetic mourning after the worsening of repressive policies in Brazil or, as he defined them, as exercises of “negative art for a negative country”. In these works, each set of words forms an open statement, associated with graphic elements that function as diagrams to be freely translated by each observer.



Project for **The Q'aqchas Ballade: Ghost Blankets, 2021**

Commissioned by the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo for the 34th Bienal. Courtesy of the artist

Antonio Vega Macotela (1980, Mexico City, Mexico) develops his projects through lengthy research and fieldwork processes, in dialogue with specific communities. His artistic practice is intimately related to these contexts, which are generally semi-closed systems, such as prisons or mines, where individuals work in a clandestine or precarious state. The outcome of these processes and the exchanges created between the groups depend on the strong bonds of trust and exchange that the artist develops. In Macotela's work, the conventional relationships of exploitation and subordination between the bodies and the power of capital are subverted, proposing more humane and more equitable forms of

production and interaction that are not based on money.

In 2016, Macotela started traveling the world with a group of hackers, forming a bond of trust and understanding with them. Out of this relationship came the work that is presented at the 34th Bienal, in which the artist relates the hacker's activities to those of the Q'aqchas, illegal miners active in Bolivia's Potosí region in the 18th century. Maintaining the distance of time, Macotela draws parallels between the power structures surrounding both contexts: on one side, the colonial system of Nova Espanha [New Spain] in Bolivia, on the other, present-day capitalism. For this work, Macotela designed a series

of leather and skin screens printed with "uv maps" generated by a program designed to create racialized avatars and 3D characters. Though at first glance the panels only contain pieces of skin, for those who know how to find it, they also hold part of the lost story of the Q'aqchas and contemporary information on relationships between the political systems of a number of Latin-American countries and big multinationals, encrypted in the texture of the skins.



Untitled, 2020

Acrylic on canvas. 300×200 cm. Artist's collection.
Photo: Wilton Montenegro. Courtesy of the artist

Arjan Martins (1960, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) constructs past and present scenes steeped in personal and collective memories. His years of artistic training – during which he had several different jobs – were characterized by experimentation with diverse artistic languages, from installation to performance. Drawing, however, became his first recurrent tool, which he used to assemble and disassemble elements from a manual on human anatomy – first on paper and later on walls. The lines of Martins' drawings became associated with the lettering of words and symbols, and the reference to the inside of the body shifted to cartographic studies, mapping atavistic memories. He has been developing

his relationship with the pictorial practice ever since.

Based in the Santa Teresa neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro, the artist brings contemporary and historical characters to his canvases, often positioning them in front of representations of the Atlantic Ocean. In the alternation of more and less detailed areas, to the point of leaving the texture of the canvas apparent, his cartographies and maritime images invariably recall the crossings back and forth that began with the perverse formation of the “Atlantic Triangle” and that fed the slave economy between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Martins thus puts the spotlight on the black diaspora of which he himself is a part, not only for his

origins but for the opportunities he finds, through exhibitions and residencies, to travel to the different continents that make up that history. In his paintings, the artist recombines symbols found in different latitudes and longitudes – such as the silhouette of a mountain in Guanabara Bay, the structure of a 19th-century British ship, and the enigmatic face of a girl photographed in New York in the 1960s – often existing together in the same pictorial space.



Binaural, 2019

Film still. Six 16mm projections loop. Courtesy of the artist

In one of her essays, Beatriz Santiago Muñoz (1972, San Juan, Puerto Rico) considers the practice of filmmaking as analogous to the performance of a ritual, insofar as a ritual transforms the conditions of attention and perception of its participants, in a dynamic relation of fluid and interchangeable roles and positions. She also proposes a shift in the focus of cinematographic thought, from the experience of the spectator to the states of consciousness and the agency of the filmmakers. This is why, although there are evident similarities between Santiago Muñoz's processes and ethnographic cinema – including the careful research of contexts and personal proximity with the participants gained through

prolonged shared experience – she is always willing to subvert the conventions of this model. Her films and installations juxtapose documental records, historical memories, random discoveries, material investigations, and fictional explorations.

Taking Puerto Rico as their starting point, many of her films contribute to create an imaginary of an authentically decolonized Caribbean, rooted in alternative ways of seeing and experiencing the contradictions of the region. That is why Santiago Muñoz's work has addressed the clash between an “imported” idea of progress and the extremely rich local culture, as well as examples of hybridizations of various sorts, such as the translation of

Proust's *Recherche* into the Haitian Creole, undertaken by Haitian playwright and director Guy Régis Jr. In various of her recent works, as well as in the installation proposed for the 34th Bienal, the limits of what can be understood as cinema are carefully expanded, on the physical point of view, through many stages of the work production and presentation processes. In the installation, she also incorporates objects (some of them already used in the shootage). Such objects, placed in front of the lenses, distort and modify the projections.



Mokongo, 1991

Matrix for collagraphy. 200 × 141 cm. Belkis Ayón Estate Collection

The production of Belkis Ayón (1967-1999, Havana, Cuba) revolves around the presence of a secret, veiled by myriad symbols of silence and darkness. During her studies, she familiarized herself with collagraphy – a printing technique where the printing matrix is made up of various materials collaged onto a rigid support – and researched Abakuá, a secret Afrocuban society founded during the colonial period, with many of its rituals known only to its exclusively male initiates. In time, Ayón had not only adopted collagraphy as her principal language but had pushed it to unexpected limits, working on large scales and developing, at first, elaborate combinations of colors and textures, and later, combinations in black and

white, with shades of gray. Meanwhile, she adopted elements from the Abakuá culture as recurring metaphors in her work, giving shape to entities usually described only in words.

In her reworkings of myths from a culture she had initially learned about through books, Ayón focused on Sikán, a princess who, when fetching water from a river, accidentally captured Tanzé, an enchanted fish who could guarantee the prosperity of her people. There are many versions of what happened next, but a constant element of the story is that this accident resulted in the death of the fish and the loss of its divine speech. Sikán was thought to have absorbed its power, or to have shared its secret with a lover who came from

another ethnicity (called Efor), and so she was imprisoned and sacrificed by her own people (called Efik). There is, however, an even more dramatic version of Sikán's story, recorded in a text by the poet and anthropologist Lydia Cabrera in 1969: "the true owner of the Power was a woman whom the men killed in order to possess her Secret".



Boca do Inferno [Hellmouth], 2020

Monotypes on silk and paper. Dimensions variable. Artist's collection. Photo: Carolina Caliento. Courtesy of the artist

The group of works that Carmela Gross (1946, São Paulo, Brazil) presented at the 10th Bienal, in 1969, referred to veiled or hidden urban elements, usually unseen by passersby. In the context of the intensification of censorship and violence by the state during the military dictatorship, a large greenish-gray tarp covering a large metallic structure, *A carga* [The Load] (1968), appeared as something more than a mysterious sculpture: it bore connotations of threat and danger. *Presunto* [Ham] (1968) and *Barril* [Barrel] (1969), the other works in this set, were also exercises in registering an urban landscape charged with an ambivalence between opacity and morbidity.

Aside from the works shown in 1969, Gross also exhibits an unseen work at the 34th Bienal.

Composed of over 150 monotypes, *Boca do Inferno* [Hellmouth] is the result of, in the artist's words, a "daily exercise of making and remaking dark masses, explosive smudges, muddy holes, black fire, clouds of soot...". Gross built a collection of images of volcanoes before processing them digitally until she had generated a group of symbols in high contrast and with clear outlines. She then reworked these images, sketching hundreds of small drawings onto paper in pencil and India ink. Next, working at a printing studio, she directly applied paint onto metal plates, creating dark masses that would later be imprinted onto paper or silk, in a process that involves a certain degree of chance. Thus, by accumulating multiple stages

of synthesis and transference, the artist created an immense panel of convulsed stains that, in their repetitions and differences, metabolize her revolt against the contemporary Brazilian context. It is because of this sense of unburdening and defiance that Gross named her work after the nickname given to Gregório de Matos, the poet from Bahia State, in the 17th century. The work was produced at the Ateliê de Gravura da Fundação Iberê Camargo.



Red Goat, 1961

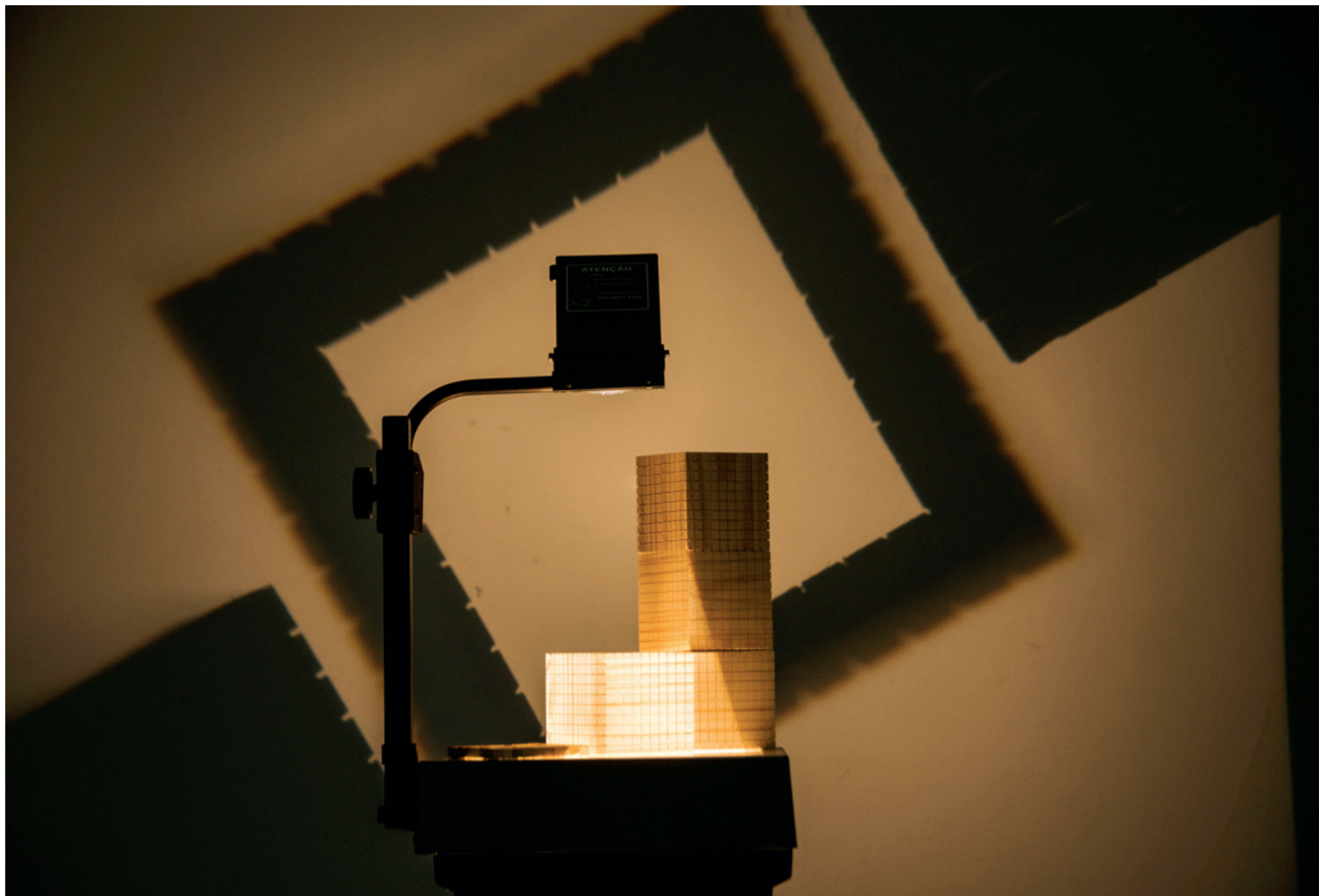
Yfasmatography [fabric]. 162×109 cm. Collection Yiannos Economou and Yioula Economou. Photo: Louca Studios, Nicosia

Christoforos Savva (1924, Marathovounos, Cyprus – 1968, Sheffield, United Kingdom) was arguably the most important Cypriot artist of the 20th century. Born in a village in what is now the Turkish part of the island, Savva fought for the British army in the Second World War (in a company of soldiers from the British colonies, at the time including Cyprus), which allowed him to study in London and later in Paris, once the war was over. He returned to Cyprus at the end of the 1950s, settling in Nicosia. There, in a very short period of time, he produced a unique collection of paintings, sculptures, furniture pieces, architectural features, very free experiments with wire and cement, and a series of patchworks from

fabric leftovers, which he called *yfasmatografias* (literally meaning writings or drawings on fabric). With the same ease with which he moved from one technique to another, Savva could produce figurative and abstract works in the same period, as though technical and stylistic questions did not concern him.

In May 1960, having recently arrived in Nicosia, Savva and the Welsh painter Glyn Hughes founded *Apophysis*, an independent cultural center, the first in the brand-new Republic of Cyprus, which had just conquered independence. *Apophysis* means “decision”, and the diversity of the events organized there demonstrates how the decision to create a space was a highly conscious and necessary

gesture of expanding and rupturing with what, until then, had been considered art: in addition to exhibitions by both founders and by other artists of the same generation, the space presented performances, theatrical plays, poetry readings, film screenings, a show of drawings by children and, significantly, a collective exhibition of both Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot artists, a particularly courageous statement of intentions considering that the ethnic fractures that would lead to a bloody division of the island in 1974 were already more than evident.



Educação pela noite [Education Through the Night], 2020

Six overhead projectors and Golden Material [wooden math blocks]. Dimensions variable. Commissioned by the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo for the 34th Bienal. Documentation of the exhibition *Vento* [Wind], at the Bienal Pavilion. Photo: Levi Fanan / Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

In her practice, Clara Ianni (1987, São Paulo, Brazil) explores the relationship between the materiality of space and social practices. As their field of reference, her works consider the history of Brazil, spanning from its colonial formation to the recurrent cycles of authoritarianism, often questioning what is understood by modernization. Many of her works take this history as a field of dispute whose documents and narratives are found in the present time in order to develop possible futures. Attentive to the ways in which the powers that be regulate what is recognized as a fact and what is relegated to the field of rumors or to the marginalia of footnotes, she works with dissonant voices and happenings, promoting clashing

between official discourses and possibilities of other expressions. This operation involves an interdisciplinary practice resulting in actions, installations, videos, objects, and graphic sets, frequently in the format of essays.

In *Educação pela noite* [Education Through the Night] (2020), the mathematics pedagogical material used for learning calculus is employed to play with perception, materiality, abstraction, projection, and distortion. The installation consists of small wooden block figures that, placed on overhead projectors, project shadows and convert geometry – the part of mathematics that studies space and its occupying figures – into an apparatus that produces distortions. In the intervention *Derrubada*

[Cutting Down] (2021), Ianni proposes cutting down the masts of Praça das Bandeiras, which flanks the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion. The term “derrubada”, commonly associated with logging, appears here as a different kind of pruning. Originally erect as phallic signs of national power, the fallen masts pair at ground level in a temporary sculpture that questions the preservation of this space, today a relic or a latency that refers to the “national representation” model that for decades shaped the São Paulo Biennials.



Untitled (Hands and Table), 1936

Gelatin silver print. Collection Jersey Heritage Museum. Courtesy: Jersey Heritage Collections

Born into an upper-class family, artist Lucy Schwob, alias Claude Cahun (1894, Nantes, France – 1954, Saint Helier, Jersey, USA), benefited from an advanced education, which included studies in philosophy and literature at the Sorbonne University in Paris. Arguably best known as a photographer, Cahun is one of the most important authors of Surrealist photography, alongside Lee Miller and Dora Maar. At the same time, she was also a remarkable poet and essayist, as well as a theatre-woman, thus epitomizing the figure of complete artist, whose practice is inseparable from her personal life. An active member of the French resistance during World War II, Cahun was arrested in 1944 and, even though

sentenced to death, was saved as German occupation came to an end.

Most of her photographs are staged and carefully constructed “photographic tableaux” that humorously play on the notion of identity. Still today an ineludible visual reference in the field of gender studies, Cahun’s photographs were radically original for their time. In many of her self-portraits, the artist disguises herself, uses masks, displays outrageous femininity or, on the contrary, assertive masculinity, shaves her hair and alternates between as diverse characters as a dandy or a sportsman. Hers is an art of metamorphosis, the portrayal of a performance which is both intimate and public, an outspoken affirmation

of uniqueness and the refusal of abiding the dominating status quo and its precepts. Beyond the multiplicity of characters and personalities she displays, the recurrence of reflections, symmetries or even multiplication of images confirms the desire to escape from the binary and from the predictable. Often shot at home with the collaboration of Cahun’s romantic partner Marcel Moore (born Suzanne Malherbe), those photographs had not been publicly exhibited in 1954, when she passed away.



Ñokõá tero po'ero [Flood of the Stone Necklace, Pleiades Constellation], 2018
Acrylic on canvas. 100×100 cm. Courtesy of the artist

Daiara Tukano (1982, São Paulo, Brazil), whose traditional name is Duhigô, belongs to the Uremiri Hãusiro Parameri clan of the Yepá Mahsã people, better known as the Tukano, from the Amazonian region of Alto Rio Negro at the border between Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela. An artist, teacher, activist and communicator, Daiara is a researcher on human rights with emphasis on indigenous peoples' right to memory and truth. She also coordinated Rádio Yandê, the first indigenous online radio in Brazil. Her work is inseparable from the ancestral culture of the Tukano people who, like other indigenous Amazonian groups, use the native ayahuasca medicine in their rituals. Influenced by this practice, whose visions, known as *Hori*,

permeate all Tukano visual culture, Daiara produces images that evoke aspects of existence that are usually invisible to the eye.

Daiara rejects the easy categorization of her work as “art” in the Western sense of the term and considers the images that she produces, whether figurative or abstract, as “messages” with a value that transcends aesthetic enjoyment. In the 34th Bienal, Daiara will present *Dabucuri no céu* [Dabucuri in the Sky], a set of four suspended paintings presenting the sacred birds harpy eagle, king vulture, capped heron, and red-macaw – the *miriã porã mahsã* – who live on the layer of the sky which prevents the sun from burning fertile soil. On the back of each painting is a mantle

made of interwoven feathers, a reference to the traditional great feathered mantles that, in the artist's words, “stopped being made with the land invasions, the genocide of indigenous peoples, and ongoing extinction of sacred birds. This work says much about the sacred, but also speaks of the mourning for the loss of so many elders, who were the guardians of these stories, that I have lived through and shared with relatives”. In the moment in which we live, after the “falling sky”, a work invites us to contemplate this encounter, between the sky and the earth, celebrating the memories and the possibility of appreciating the transformation of the universe.



Marissa Lee Benedict, David Rueter and Daniel de Paula

Project for **deposition**, 2018-ongoing

Collection Daniel de Paula, Marissa Lee Benedict, David Rueter. Support: Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, the Resource Center (Chicago, IL), the University of Oregon, and the Oregon Arts Commission

A central axis in the work by Daniel de Paula (1987, Boston, USA) is the constant process of rereading and nearly physical confrontation with the references and models that inspire him, and mainly with the artists linked to the practices of minimalism, conceptual art and land art of the 1960s and 1970s. Another nerve center of his practice is the negotiation between the historical references and the demands and particularities of an oeuvre extremely focused on the current moment, especially when we consider that negotiation (with academic, political, social, industrial, or bureaucratic spheres, depending on the context and specificities of each project) is key to the realization of his work, to the point of often

being included by the artist in the description of the work, among the elements that went into it.

In 2018, De Paula, Marissa Benedict and David Rueter managed to rescue, from the Chicago Board of Trade, a “trading pit” that had been used through decades for the negotiation of grains. The device would be discarded as part of a definitive shift to digital transactions. The resulting work, *deposition* (2018-ongoing), presented for the first time at the 34th Bienal, is at the same time a kind of anti-monument and a platform for public encounters of different natures, which were conceived with the purpose of emphasizing the meeting and confrontation atmosphere prompted by the

structure itself. The artists plan for the “pit” a series of public appearances in cultural institutions along the next years, with the aim of promoting discussions beacons by the different political, social, artistic and philosophical views that the object can symbolize.



Studies of Teaching in Four Oxfordshire Schools (Gerald Howatt, History Teacher, First Year Sixth, Radley College), 1977

Photographic still. Courtesy Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and Darcy Lange Estate

Darcy Lange (1946, Urenui, New Zealand – 2005, Auckland, New Zealand) was a videoartist who made realist, social and experimental work. A participant in the 1970s international artistic vanguard, Lange was an innovator in his chosen mediums and became a pioneer of video-documentary, rooted in the tradition of American photographers Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange. His well-known *Work Studies* (1972-1978) consist of recordings of people at work. Lange documented English workers in heavy industry and small workshops, people in their domestic environments, and students and teachers in schools. He also made forays into the world of rural Spain, on farms and ranches. While still living in

London, Lange travelled to his native country in 1974 to continue his work studies in rural areas, and again in 1977 and 1978 to document Maori struggles over their land rights.

Lange shot using long takes, exhaustively documenting everyday stories without relying on editing. Many of his recordings were shared with the protagonists involved, documenting their opinions and criticisms of their working and living conditions. *Work Studies in Schools* (1976-1977) is a series of video recordings in various education centers in Birmingham and Oxfordshire, in the United Kingdom. Lange filmed classes in different subjects, as well as interviews with students and teachers about the recording themselves. Lange was

interested in investigating the idea of teaching as a form of work, illustrating both the teachers' skills and the students' responses to learning methodologies. Abandoning any form of visual strategy or mannerism, Lange made visible the details of the education system, revealing the striking class differences in the student environment in 1970s England.



Untitled (Provisory title), 2018
Video still. Courtesy of the artist

The work of Deana Lawson (1979, New York, USA) materializes the intersection between lived experiences, as imagined narratives, and photography itself as a testimony of the encounters between the artist and her models, which she attends in close collaboration.

Prosaic situations and everyday objects of the photographed subjects, unknown people that Lawson encounters by chance or actively seeks, are transfigured into magical and mythical scenes, delineated by memories and by the rhizomatic cultural references of the African diaspora in the United States and around the world. Lawson starts from the historical portrait, documentary photography and the family album, but her unique and idiosyncratic

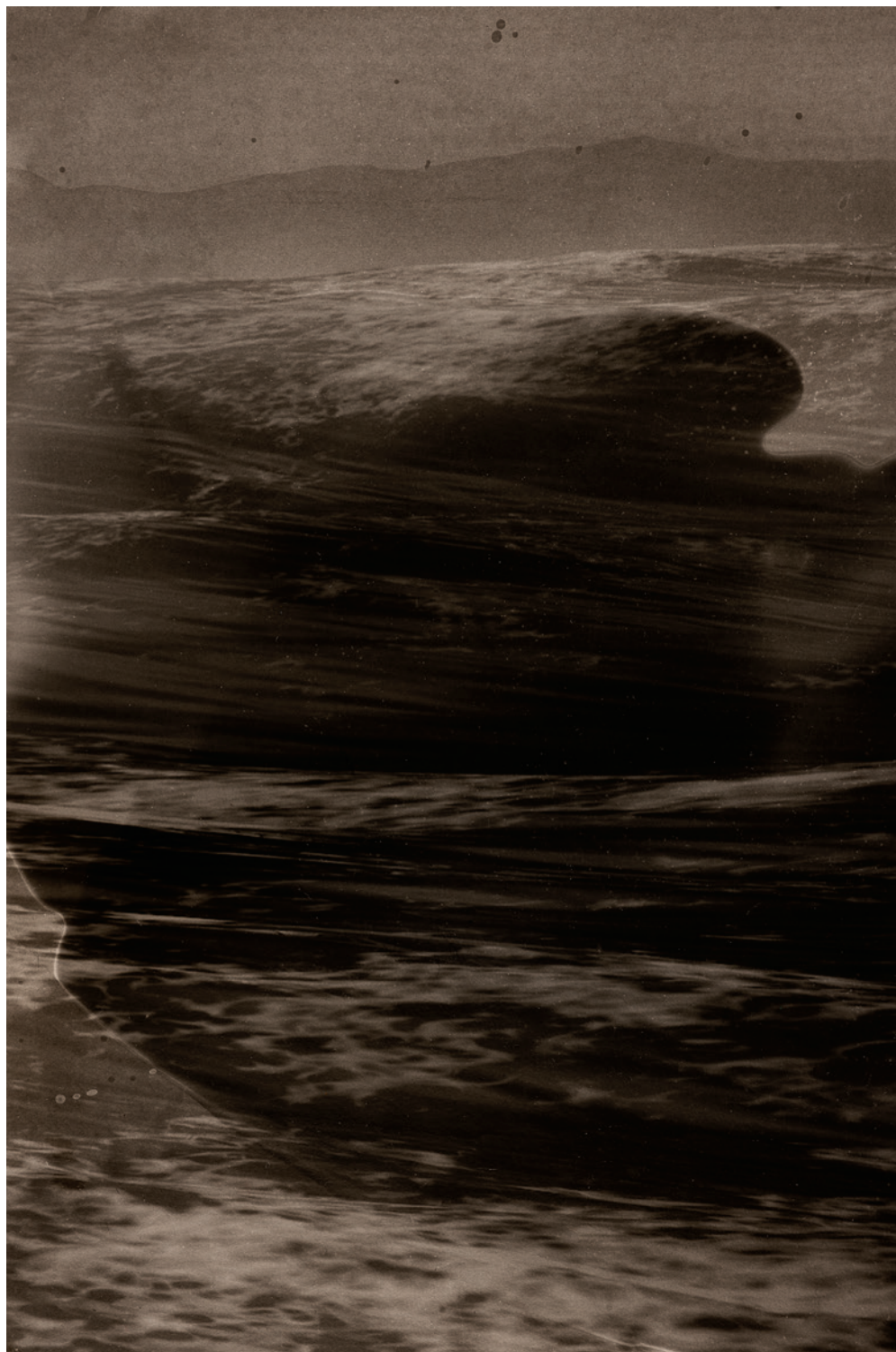
look, extremely attentive to details, makes her images transcend the models bequeathed by tradition: the solemn and almost tactile presence of the people, the profusion of prints and decorative objects, worship and affection, positioned and loaded with meanings and references, create scenes that seem to evoke intimacy and spiritual communion.

For the 34th Bienal, Lawson was invited to add another city to the already long list of places she has visited and photographed: Salvador, Bahia, considered the blackest city in Brazil and where the elements of African culture, music and rituals meet more intensely in the country. In a strongly authorial way, Lawson's photographs, which frequently expand toward

the theatrical and feature ritualistic objects or props, synthesize a historical, tragic but also fertilizing process of displacements and creolization. In this sense, the images converge an aesthetics and an intergenerational connection, with aspects of cultural hybridization and local sociability, portraying and at the same time creating an index of what the artist calls an "extensive mythological family in constant expansion". In the context of the 34th Bienal, this is particularly significant – a historical context discussed at length in the writings of Édouard Glissant, one of the main literary and philosophical references of the exhibition.

U.C.-T.C.I #5-21, 2021

Ultrachrome inkjet print mounted on aluminium in stainless steel frame. 180 × 120 cm. © Dirk Braeckman, Courtesy Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp, Thomas Fischer Gallery, Berlin, and Grimm Gallery, NYC



Dirk Braeckman (1958, Eeklo, Belgium) considers himself an image-maker rather than a storyteller. As a student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent, Braeckman was initially interested in painting, and even though he later turned to photography, one could argue that his artistic beginnings influenced the way he would deal with the process of creating images. Often resorting to re-photographing existing pictures made by him or available on the media, Braeckman invests a large part of his artistic labor in the darkroom, where he develops and manipulates the negatives, in a physical process that leaves visible marks on the final work. While the artist can use the same negative as the subject or starting

point for several different prints, each print is unique, as it bears the traces of its passage through the photographic development and the enlargement process, of the gesture and the manipulation performed by the artist, thus reinforcing the analogy of Braeckman's *modus operandi* with that of a painter.

A similar ambiguity characterizes the photographs from an iconographical point of view. Braeckman subjects are often merely emerging from darkness, blurred, hardly recognizable. Whether they are portraits, self-portraits, nudes or interiors, it is difficult to define their contours. An architectural detail and a retouch by the artist merge and become inseparable: the subject and the process are one. The artist

seems to be aiming at neutralizing whatever he portrays, in such a way that he does not establish any deliberate narrative – his main objective is to create a document conveying a state of mind. On the other hand, this ontological vagueness is also a declaration of freedom: the beholder is also the author, the one who creates the story that the images, maybe, are suggesting.



Carl August Lorentzen's Escape, 2014

Video stills. Installation with monitor, bench, wool blanket, light bulb, HD video, mute. 10'38" loop, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Nordic Culture Fund, Danish Arts Foundation and Iaspis – the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists



E.B. Itso (1977, Copenhagen, Denmark) is interested in the spaces between, the hidden cracks and unseen margins that allow us to live uncounted. He searches for these blind spots in the system where it is possible to exist without becoming another gear in the machinery, without contributing to the chain of involuntary movements that continues to drive the world in a direction that, more and more, is known to be wrong. What we see are photographs, films, and sometimes partial reconstructions of spaces that we could not visit. We see records of actions that needed to be invisible in order to be possible, actions that could only take place at the limits of the law, just outside the spaces we have mapped

to inhabit and the social behavior we have tacitly agreed upon.

Carl August Lorentzen's Escape (2014) is an installation reconstructing the main elements of a cell once occupied by the legendary Danish burglar. On a bench that reproduces the one on which Lorentzen slept, beside a blanket like the one he would use to keep warm, it plays the video made by the police when trying to re-enact his nearly impossible escape from Horsens State Prison on Christmas Eve 1949. If *Carl August Lorentzen's Escape* is about searching for and building a way-out that is not supposed to exist, the photographic series *We Resist Therefore We Exist* (2015) registers the construction of barriers

that, in closing the ways-in, allow us to remain inside properties we are not supposed to inhabit. The photos were taken from inside a squatted building, registering the wooden shield as it is built by the inhabitants in order to keep the police force out. The choice to not see daylight, the choice to be confined, is a means to be protected. They are two forms of understanding space and transit in relation to structures of power, thus finding strategies for navigating and inhabiting the fissures that always subsist.



Ojo Guareña [Guareña Eye], 2018

Film still. 52". Artist's collection. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: AC/E – Acción Cultural Española

Edurne Rubio (1974, Burgos, Spain) works with video, cinema and performance, drawing from the fields of documentary filmmaking and anthropology, using shared methods of research. Many of her projects involve people or architectural spaces with political, cultural and social significance for certain groups of individuals or places. The artist investigates situations and histories that have endured in the collective memory in a diffuse way, subject to different interpretations and points of view, thus lying on the border between fiction and reality. In *Ojo Guareña* (2018), for example, Rubio overlays distinct times in a cinematographic journey set against the backdrop of a complex of caves in the province

of Burgos, in Spain. The plot is inspired in the artist's family history, and becomes an homage to her father and uncles, which as fans of Jules Verne's novels and fed up with a socially and politically oppressive context, in the late 1960s began to visit the caves in the region, searching for a place to get away from the rigid control and to enjoy some moments of freedom.

Daqui [From Here] (2020), commissioned for the 34th Bienal, is a sound artwork that reconstructs a decisive time and place for experimental art and the freedom of expression in Brazil, by considering the role played by the Museu de Arte Contemporânea of the Universidade de São Paulo (MAC-USP) as a key place for radical artistic experimentation in

the 1970s, during Brazil's military dictatorship. At that time, the MAC was housed in the same building where the Bienal is held today. The audio consists of a series of interviews with artists, curators, the institution's staff, and frequent visitors of the museum, who witnessed the happenings. The reports and arguments are mixed within the space of the Bienal Pavilion, establishing connections between their memories and the place itself.



se o título fosse um desenho, seria um quadrado em rotação – ação #1: cadeiras [if the title was a drawing, it would be a square in rotation – action #1: chairs], 2018

Permanent exchange between four public institutions: chair from Colégio Estadual Tiradentes is delivered at Teatro Guairá, chair from the theater is delivered at Hospital de Clínicas da Universidade Federal do Paraná, chair from the hospital is delivered at the Câmara Municipal de Curitiba and chair from the town hall is delivered at the school. Monday, April, 2 2018. Festival de Teatro de Curitiba. Collaboration: Vinicius Arneiro, Elilson, Felipe Ribeiro and Mariah Valeiras. Curators: Marcio Abreu and Guilherme Weber. Photos: Felipe Ribeiro and Humberto Araujo. Courtesy of the artist

Since 2008, the streets have been the primary space for Eleonora Fabião (1968, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), being the place where her actions are born and to which they converge. She usually begins her actions after defining a set of notations – which she calls programs – for a determined territory. For example, in *Ação Carioca #1: converso sobre qualquer assunto* [Carioca Action #1: I will have a conversation about any subject] (2008), she performed in the streets of Rio de Janeiro, oriented by the following lines: “Sit on a chair, barefoot, in front of another empty chair (chairs from my kitchen). Write on a large sheet of paper: ‘I will have a conversation about any subject.’ Show the announcement and wait.”

Exactly for being clear, precise and simple, her programs can be faithfully followed, creating an opportunity for the intense happening of everything the artist neither can nor wishes to predetermine – the infinite variability of life and of encounters in the public space. In recent years, besides the unit consisting of the “artist” and the variable made up by the “citizens,” Fabião’s actions have relied on the complicit cooperation of “collaborators” previously invited to take part in some stages. At the same time, her propositions have focused on possibilities of mediation and intercrossings between various public contexts, as *nós aqui, entre o céu e a terra* [we, here, between sky and earth], commissioned work by the 34th

Bienal, in which borrowed chairs from public institutions surrounding the Ibirapuera Park, such as schools, theaters and hospitals, are the objects invited by Fabião to compose the work, that oscillates between sculpture, drawing, installation and performance. Fabião’s actions are thus experienced as collective exercises, through which visible and invisible properties of places, objects, people and paths are set into the same vibration.



Tulipas sobre fundo rosa [Tulips on Pink Background], 1985
Tempera on canvas. 73×92 cm. Private collection, São Paulo

The work and life of Eleonore Koch (1926, Berlin, Germany – 2018, São Paulo, Brazil) were guided by an understanding of art as a unique craft, fueled by constant dedication. Deciding to reject the conventions of marriage and gender of the era and social environment she lived in, Koch thus maintained a certain autonomy for the study and practice of art. Her education relied on constant visits to the studios of more experienced artists, including Yolanda Mohalyi, Bruno Giorgi and Alfredo Volpi. The artist attributed her adoption of painting with tempera and the intensification of her reflections on how colors are used to her conversations with Volpi.

The pictorial work that she started making in the 1960s was also an exercise of autonomy.

Without assimilating resources from informal abstractionism or from the post-war concretists, Koch produced silent figurative paintings, composed of forms and fields of colors planned and organized around the horizontal line. Her still lifes and landscapes were often created from successive studies that started from photographs or postcards and which sought a synthesis of the elements, leading to the point where the space between the shapes became more dominant than the actual objects being represented. She then focused on giving color to the planes and forms, creating scenes that evoked feeling, even if they were stripped of human figures, narratives or any signs of the passage of time.

Despite having participated in important exhibitions, including four editions of the Bienal de São Paulo, Koch is still not universally recognized, as she deserves to be, as being amongst the most important Brazilian artists of the second half of the last century.



Un Film dramatique [A Dramatic Film], 2019

Film still. 114'. Artist's collection. Courtesy of the artist, Poulet-Malassis Films. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Institut français à Paris

Most of Éric Baudelaire's (1973, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA) work is born at the intersection of distinct and apparently distant fields: accounts of lesser-known historical events that interconnect with broad political or social analyses; studies of cinematic iconography that reveal revolutionary visions of the world; imaginary correspondences that anticipate or echo real exchanges; in-depth and meticulous socio-political research that transforms, almost imperceptibly, into fantastical stories. A graduate of social sciences, Baudelaire often draws on fieldwork strategies to construct his work's framework, which is later deconstructed and transformed, as is the case in *FRAEMWROK FRMAWREOK FAMREWROK...* (2016), a

collection of over 400 diagrams taken from academic publications that attempt to explain the terrorism phenomenon from the perspective of sociology, game theory, economics, psychology...

At the 34th Bienal, Baudelaire presents *Un Film dramatique* [A Dramatic Film] (2019). The documentary film follows the daily lives of elementary students at the Dora Maar school in Saint-Denis, a Parisian suburb home to mostly first- and second-generation immigrants, who are often marginalized and discriminated against by French society. Made from almost weekly interactions with a group of volunteer students over four years, the film reveals their development as filmmakers and the perception

of the difficulties and challenges that await them. At once extremely direct and poetic, the film is a masterful, honest, and, after all, joyful portrait of the world we live in, where references to the great French cinema of the 20th century meet and merge, from Jean Rouch's *cinéma-vérité* to François Truffaut's light and ironic *nouvelle vague*.



Untitled, 2019

Collage with paper pins mounted on aluminium. 118 × 108 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Nordenhake Stockholm. Participation in the 34th Biental supported by: Nordic Culture Fund and Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA)

The work of the artist, sociologist and former social worker Frida Orupabo (1986, Sarpsborg, Norway) amplifies and reveals the violent processes of the objectification of the black woman's body, from colonial times to today. Orupabo is essentially a digital artist, insofar as she uses images available on internet, which she assimilates, elaborates and transforms through decontextualizations and digital collages. On her Instagram profile (@nemiepeba), Orupabo has been constructing since 2013 a sort of endless digital collage constituted mainly by both found and her own images, texts and videos. In this way, Orupabo records and exposes the long-standing legacy of colonialism in scenes and images that range

from extremely explicit racism and sexism to examples of domestic violence as well as issues involving gender and identity.

This same digital archive also constitutes the starting point for most of her physical sculptures, photomontages and collages, in which Orupabo engages in an effort to free her subjects. The artist operates emphasizing their rights to look, and not merely be looked at: "My works are not silent – they speak to whomever that looks. As with my collages – most of the figures stare directly at you; forcing you to see them, but they also see you. To create work that 'stares back' challenges, for me, a 'white gaze' and its perception of the black body." Although her working process is directly

related to the fluidity of internet, Orupabo uses an almost craft method of composition. The process of cutting and collaging gives these images a profoundly intimate, personal and affective flair, which starkly contrasts with the violence exposed in the fragmented bodies of black women, their limbs and trunks reunited in strange, afflictive, articulated marionettes, staring back at us.



27 offerings for the Rain at the Field Museum, 2021
Color pencil and Flashe on paper. 123×153 cm. Courtesy of the artist

Gala Porras-Kim (1984, Bogotá, Colombia) investigates the political, social, economic and spiritual contexts that determined the value of objects in history. Her interest is centered on human remains and on material and immaterial goods from indigenous cultures that have been converted into cultural assets preserved within the political and intellectual supremacy of the West. The artist's analysis ranges from the violent processes of extracting and circulating such objects to the methodologies of storage and classification used by the collectors and cultural institutions that receive them, especially museums of history and anthropology. Porras-Kim seeks to expand both the language and operations of power that impose

a unilateral form of understanding and writing history. She explores, for example, how the methods employed by museums to define the physical and spiritual value of certain artefacts can be in conflict with their true meanings and purposes, and the identities of the cultures that produce them.

These questions appear in a clear, ironic, and poetic way in *Precipitation for an Arid Landscape* (2021), a work the 34th Biental commissioned. Fascinated by Mexican cenotes (porous limestone depressions that serve as a water repository common in the Yucatan peninsula and considered by the Mayans portals to communicate with the gods), Porras-Kim thoroughly researched the process and laws

that allowed the transfer of the underwater objects found in the sacred cenote of Chichén Itzá, at the beginning of the twentieth century, to its current location, at the Peabody Museum at Harvard University, in Boston (USA). In the installation, the artist creates a copal paralelepiped (a fossilized resin similar to amber, which had sacred powers for the Mayans) of equal volume to the objects taken from the cenote, mixed with dust that has fallen from some of the artefacts in their current storage at the Field Museum (Chicago, USA). Then, the institution is invited to figure out a way to get rainwater onto it and reunite the material with the rain.



Nurkoszop, 2019

Acrylic on canvas. 278×192 cm. Work cycle: Shaman. Artist's collection. Photo: Giulio Caresio. Courtesy: Archivio Giorgio Griffa

From the late 1960s onwards, Giorgio Griffa (1936, Turin, Italy) started to move away from figuration to turn to abstraction, thus participating in a certain renewal of painting, in a constant, but rarefied dialogue with major artistic movements. Griffa works in long series in which some common parameters are in place, and this adds to the sense of continuity that is felt when facing the body of work he has been developing for over five decades now. While the sparse presence of graphic signs on a neutral background is ontologically minimalist in style, Griffa distances himself from the precepts of the movement by rejecting a systematic approach and mathematical repetition, maintaining a programmatically

loose and lyrical approach to the act of painting. The modest roughness of the canvas he often uses suggests a proximity to Arte Povera, but his choice of materials has changed through time, and his gesture began to accept its own imperfection.

Despite the initial impression one might get, there is no actual repetition in his pictorial language: each stroke is unique, subject to the irregularity that characterizes every human action. Griffa displays an array of signs, lines, curves, arabesques, numbers and letters that together do not compose a narrative, moving away from the linearity of works based on pre-existing concepts. With Griffa, painting becomes physical: the movement of the body in

space dictates the meeting of the paint, almost liquid, with the canvas previously laid out on the ground. The result of the artist's action is unpredictable, as there is no initial project, and each stroke depends on the previous. Coherently with the artist's open-ended approach, the canvases are typically left unframed and unstretched, in a gesture which might make them look unfinished, but should be read as the desire to bestow upon the beholder the freedom to complete the action that the artist suspended.



Natura Morta [Still Life], 1953
Oil on canvas. 23,5 × 45 cm. Collaboration
Paulo Kuczynski Escritório de Arte

Giorgio Morandi (1890-1964, Bologna, Italy) is widely considered the greatest Italian painter and, more generally, one of the most influential artists of the last century. His painting is limited to a very reduced range of themes, such as landscapes of the village of Grizzana or his many celebrated still lifes of bottles and vases, painted with minimum variations over the decades. Morandi lived his whole life together with his three sisters in the small apartment of Bologna where he was born; he taught printmaking for nearly thirty years at the local Academy of Fine Arts; he spent all his summers, from 1913 to his death, in Grizzana. His predictable and methodical biography constitutes a fitting backstory for his paintings,

in which the objects and motifs are repeated to the point of boredom, as his detractors would say, or until the objects themselves and what is reflected on them become tangible: the subtle shifts in the afternoon light, the dust that has settled on the objects, the passage of time made apparent in material changes in the bottles that sporadically reappear, painting after painting, year after year...

Morandi stands out in 20th-century visual arts history as one of the leading figures of a line of artists (but also writers, musicians and film directors) who developed their work, in an increasingly more strident and cacophonous world, by resorting to almost silent reiteration, parsimony and simplicity. The painting of

Alfredo Volpi, the filmmaking of Yasujiro Ozu, or the poetry of João Cabral de Melo Neto are examples of productions akin to Morandi's in which the things are presented for what they are, in apparent simplicity. After all, as the artist once said to his friend, the Italian writer Giuseppe Raimondi, the subjects of his paintings are "my usual things. You know them. They are always the same. Why should I change them? They work pretty well, don't you think?"



Reference for **Ficções sônicas: TREMORES**

[Sonic Fictions 1: Tremors], 2021

Commissioned by the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo
for the 34th Bienal

Overlapping, or even colliding, narrative layers and distinct registers are common features in the writing of actress, writer, and film and theater director Grace Passô (1980, Belo Horizonte, Brazil). In her play *Vaga carne* [Dazed Flesh] (2016), for example, the main character is a voice that occupies a woman's body. The idea of an autonomous realm of voice and speech, potentially independent from the body, is quite natural in Passô's universe, who, in both her writing and at the moment of interpretation (or, one could say, of performance), occasionally turns to other registers of language, including neologisms, sounds, glossolalia and the obsessive repetition of a few words until they become detached from their

common meaning. "There is enormous power in writing what you yourself will be saying. And being a black person turns my practice into a way of existing closer to freedom", the artist states.

In 2020, at the invitation of Ana Kiffer (curator of the statement of the 34th Bienal that puts in friction the works of Antonin Artaud and Édouard Glissant), Passô devised a rereading of Artaud's classic radio play *Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* [To Have Done with the Judgment of God] (1947), based on the sonic fiction concept developed by the British-Ghanaian writer Kodwo Eshun, whose work delves into the notion of an Afrofuturist musical panorama.

For *Ficções sônicas: TREMORES* [Sonic Fictions 1: Tremors] the image of a "post-radio" gives support to a sound archipelago which brings together the geopoetics of what is conventionally called Brazil. For Glissant, the archipelagos are places through which multiple territorialities converge, places which are interconnected by imaginaries that crossed oceans, and this multiplicity corresponds to the unpredictable trembling of the whole-world. In *Ficções sônicas: TREMORES*, texts by Artaud collide and meet with speeches of a trembling Brazil.

Things I Couldn't Forget No. 6, 2019

Exhibition view, *Guan Xiao, Products Farming*, Bonner Kunstverein, 2019. Stainless steel tube, fiberglass, aluminium clamps, transport belt, diving lead, weight, cable. Bracket: 280 cm; figurine: 62 cm; pipe: 270 cm (overall height adjustable with cable); fiberglass element: 100 × 127 × 25 cm. Courtesy of the artist; Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin; Antenna Space, Shanghai; Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, 2019. Photo: Mareika Tocha



Guan Xiao's (1983, Chongqing, China) work draws from the artist's own experiences on the internet and how our visual and auditory perceptions are redefined as we navigate this world of information and images. Her extensive catalog of images, both still and in motion, is often the basis for sculptures, videos, and installations, where the artist brings together and superposes diverse phenomena according to her own logic. For her, all elements in the world – living or non-living, imagined or real, natural or artificial, artisanal or industrial – are equivalent in their present state and state of becoming, and part of her work consists of demonstrating that parity. "The primordial past and the future that has yet to come, or

may never come, are indistinguishable," says the artist, for whom the only reality we share is the present.

In her videos, Guan Xiao juxtaposes images found on the internet that are apparently unrelated, and investigates the distinction between them and objects in real life, negotiating the disjuncture between the physical world of objects and the virtual experience on screen. Her expansive installations and sculptural assemblages combine ready-made and crafted elements, often assimilating traditional media or artisanal techniques within works that are designed on the computer and produced with the aid of digital models and technologies such as 3D printing. Guan Xiao's

strange sculptural objects allude to alien or futuristic lifeforms, suggesting a kind of animism. Characterized by humor, exaggeration, and the absurd, these works seem to propose fictional alternatives to how to inhabit planet Earth in a context of huge influx of information and technology. The artist does not lead us to solid conclusions, but opens the possibility of doubt in terms of our perspectives on time, space, and identity.

Kanau'kyba [Stone Paths], 2020
Installation and animation film. Dimensions variable.
Courtesy of the artist. Commissioned by the
Fundação Bienal de São Paulo for the 34th Bienal



Hammocks and roots are recurring elements in Gustavo Caboco's drawing, embroidery, animation, and writing. Born in Curitiba (Paraná, Brazil) in 1989, the artist experienced his indigenous identity through the words and actions of his mother, Lucilene, who was uprooted from the Wapichana community in the indigenous territory Canaüaním (Roraima) at the age of 10. In 2001, Caboco accompanied his mother on her first return to the community, a visit that made him see the multiple ties he had to his people's worldview and history of struggle. It is on these journeys of returning to the land, of strengthening his roots with the land and his relatives, that Caboco produces his multiform and procedural work, echoing the voices of the Wapichana

people and the beings they know how to listen to, like plants, stones, mountains, skies, and rivers.

In the book *Baaráz Kawau*, meaning "the field after the fire" in the Wapichana language, which Caboco wrote and illustrated after the 2018 fire at the Museu Nacional [National Museum of Brazil] in Rio de Janeiro, he intersects the history of a Wapichana *borduna* (an indigenous weapon) that was in the museum's collection with the stories of Casimiro Cadete, a great leader among his people. Consumed by the fire, the *borduna* was as old as Casimiro had been at the time of his death. This fact unleashed in Caboco a stream of associations and recollections about indigenous lives and memories, which constantly face the predatory

exploitation that is characteristic of Western culture. At the 34th Bienal, Caboco presents *Kanau'kyba* [Stones Paths] (2020), a project he developed with his mother, Lucilene Wapichana, and cousins Roseana Cadete, Wanderson Wapixana, and Emanuel Wapichana. The work derives from a studio in motion, formed in encounters with different landscapes that connect the stones of the sky to the stones of the ancestral land. On this journey, the Wapichana family retrace the tracks of old *bordunas* so that visions of present *bordunas* can continue. The work takes shape through an installation composed of recordings of performances, photographs, videos, drawings, paintings, animations, and objects.

Crutcher, 2017-2019

Steel. 270 × 184 × 136 cm. Courtesy of the artist.
Photo: Santiago Mostyn. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Nordic Culture Fund, Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) and Iaspis – the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists



Hanni Kamaly (1988, Hamar, Norway) develops films, performances and publications in which they investigate how colonial paradigms, and their residues, can be found in public monuments, scientific discourse and museum collections. The alienation of the subject and the persistence of colonial models are brought together in works that examine the museologic display of human remains or the artistic interpretation of ritualistic masks. Kamaly's films are journeys in which we embark willingly, carried away by the tone of the voice that connects the images we see to things we already know and others that still surprise us. At times the links are at first visual, the connection made by our eyes being then explored

by a patient narrator. In other moments it is the logic discourse what sews the fragments of appropriated imagery that continue to flow. Sometimes well-known objects and iconic photographs; sometimes unforeseen realities, unknown angles, extreme examples of a story that still needs to be told.

In the 34th Biennial, Kamaly also presents another segment of their production, which consists of sculptures that could be called abstract. Frequently titled after a person who has been a victim of State violence, these sculptures are silent monuments. Made of metal pipes, they are mere structure: bones, joints, ligaments; nothing that could be removed. Screws and welding marks are all apparent,

revealing the sculptures' construction mechanisms. Like alien or futuristic creatures, they stand on thin legs, almost in suspension, as if still unsure of wanting to belong to this time and place. They seem to observe us in tension, fragile and fierce, while we look at the sharp forms in cold metal and remember other stories silenced by institutionalized violence.



Chronicles XV, 2012

Film still of digitised super 8 film, color, silent. Unique. 3'28". Courtesy of the artist, Rodeo, London/Piraeus; Casey Kaplan, NY; Maximo Minini Gallery, Brescia. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen)

Some artists' work has its own, unique tone, which makes it immediately recognizable. In the case of Haris Epaminonda (1980, Nicosia, Cyprus), this tone permeates her collages, videos, films, artist books and even the elements that come together in her always carefully arranged installations. These installations often include simple objects of timeless beauty, such as vases and bowls, and sculptures of a lightness that makes them almost ethereal. These elements are always arranged on, near or behind bases, in an extremely self-aware balance, where nothing can be removed without profoundly changing the sense of the whole.

In Epaminonda's work, everything is significant, including, or principally, the

spaces, the voids, the remains: "I consider the exhibition space as part of the work – not only the occupied zones, but equally the empty gaps, rhythm, distances", she says. It is in this ability to shift the viewer's gaze, to lead them to see what seemed, until then, irrelevant, that we can identify a distinctive quality in Epaminonda's work. The short films which make up the series *Chronicles*, filmed in distinct locations over a number of years, can be seen as a programmatically dispersed and yet coherent index of possible suspended narratives: the numbers of the page of a book, small ancient sculptures against colored backgrounds, tree branches moving in the wind, at times letting the sunlight in, a lone palm tree against a blue

sky... For the work commissioned by the 34th Biennial, *Grids* (2021), Epaminonda delved into the huge archive of 35mm photographs she has been taking since 1997. Guided by her intuition, Epaminonda puts these works in relation to each other, identifying and making almost tangible the forces of attraction that, invisible, operate in the world.



Single Copy 副本人, 2019
Video installation with sculpture. 21'17". Courtesy of the artist

Hsu Che-Yu (1985, Taipei, Taiwan) devises ways of accessing individual, family and collective memories. To this end, he uses methods ranging from testimonies and reenactments to constructing simulated documents of what would otherwise exist only as reminiscence. Often, he takes the possessor of a memory back to the place where the original event occurred, or involves that person in some form of reenactment of a past situation. Frequently, he develops – or asks a collaborator to write – a text on recollections that the viewer will never know whether fictional or not, and to what extent. He also often uses digital animation and three-dimensional rendering, as well as combines forensic procedures used by the

police with journalistic methods of composing narrative images to report on crimes. In all cases, Hsu Che-Yu avoids disguising the artifices he uses, preferring to assume them as part of the form and content of the work.

Single Copy 副本人 (2019) is a video essay investigating the memories of Chang Chung-I, who was born conjoined to his Siamese brother Chang Chung-Jen in Taiwan in 1979, during a period of martial law that kept the region under strict control and in a fragile and tense autonomy from the People's Republic of China. The brothers' separation was televised to the whole of Taiwan and was interpreted as a metaphor for the geopolitical separation of a nation. Before the surgery, the doctors tried to

make a silicone mold of their conjoined bodies, but it was impossible because the babies would not hold still. Hsu Che-Yu worked with Chang Chung-I – who became an actor and grew up as a celebrity – to recount Chung-I's life while producing a three-dimensional photogrammetric model of his body in fiberglass. This work is a cooperation with his long-time collaborator, screenwriter Chen Wan-Yin.

Jacqueline Nova

PIANO

CLUSTER HVY DENSO

RASPAR CUERDAS GRAVES (ENTORCHADAS)
CON OBJETO DE MADERA
PEDAL

(GOLPE EN LA
CAJA
INTERIOR)

GOLPES SOBRE CUERDAS
(MANO ABIERTA)
PEDAL

DEJAR CAER OBJETO
DE MADERA SOBRE
CUERDAS

PIZZ. SOBRE
FRECUENCIA
ALTA

INTENSIDAD VARIABLE

HK70, 1970

Music score. Courtesy: Centro de Documentación Musical, Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia; Ana Romano G.; Festival En Tiempo Real

Jacqueline Nova (1935, Ghent, Belgium – 1975, Bogotá, Colombia) was a pioneer of electro-acoustic music in Colombia and one of the most important Latin American experimental composers of the 20th century. The daughter of a Belgian mother and a Colombian father, she moved to Bucaramanga (Colombia) in early childhood, started her musical education at the age of seven and moved to Bogotá aged twenty, where she enrolled in the Conservatorio de la Universidad Nacional in 1958. Nova contributed to breaking the tradition that confined women to roles of interpreter or muse, becoming the first female trained in musical composition in Colombia and starting a profound research into the use of new technologies in

music. Between 1967 and 1969, Nova studied at the leading Centro Latinoamericano de Altos Estudios Musicales (CLAEM), in the Torcuato di Tella Institute in Buenos Aires (Argentina), where she had contact with major vanguard composers.

Returning to Colombia in 1969, Nova fought for vanguard music in her country and played an important role as a cultural actor in a repressive context, becoming a reference for composers interested in contemporary musical composition. In some of her productions of that time, she merged electronic noise, orchestral instruments, and indigenous voices, creating a hybrid kind of music that radically revised musical norms. In *Creación de la tierra*

[Creation of the earth] (1972), probably her best-known work, she interwove her interest in electronic transformations of the voice with the search for an almost mythical idea of ancestry. In this piece, Nova incorporated chants about the creation of the earth by the Colombian indigenous U'wa people, and distorted and modified them electronically, alluding in a sense to the impossibility of a translation or linear appropriation of one culture by another.

The version of *Creación de la tierra* presented at the 34th Bial was conceived by Ana Romano G.



A guerra dos Kanaimés [The Kanaimés War], 2020 (series)

Acrylic and Posca pen on canvas. 110 × 145 cm (each). Courtesy of the artist. Commissioned by the Fundação Bial de São Paulo for the 34th Bienal,

Born in the region currently demarcated as Raposa Serra do Sol Indigenous Land, Jaidier Esbell (1979, Normandia, Roraima, Brazil) is a Macuxi artist and writer. Since 2013, when he organized the I Encounter of All the Peoples, Esbell has played a central role in the movement for consolidating contemporary indigenous art in the Brazilian context, acting in a multiple and interdisciplinary way, combining the role of artist, curator, writer, educator, activist, promoter, and cultural catalyzer. In his first literary work, *Terreiro de Makunaima – mitos, lendas e histórias em vivências* [Terreiro de Makunaima – Myths, Legends and Stories in Experiences] (2010), Esbell identifies himself as the grandson of the demiurge, and encourages the re-appropriation

of this myth by the indigenous people, considering that, in the Macuxi culture, Makunaimi is one of the “children of the Sun”, and is the creator of all the natures, and when his world was on the brink of extinction, he cut down the Wazak’a tree, giving life back for ever, which is therefore very different from the “characterless hero” in the eponymous novel by Mário de Andrade.

Combining painting, writing, drawing, installation, and performance, his work intertwines indigenous myths, criticisms of hegemonic culture, and socio environmental concerns, sometimes drifting into the poetic realm, sometimes taking a clear political and activist stand. *A guerra dos Kanaimés* [Kanaimés War]

(2019-2020) is a series of paintings made by Esbell for the 34th Bienal. In a succession of allegorical scenes, the artist evokes the idea of the Kanaimés – often described as deadly spirits who cause the deaths of those who come across them – and projects it onto contemporary conflicts experienced by the Macuxi people and their relatives, who are constantly attacked by official and non-official offensives intending to exploit their land. Depending on their allegiances, the Kanaimés can be seen as protectors or as predators. In a context characterized by both veiled and direct threats, where what kills is often seen as a remedy, Esbell rethinks the tangible presence of these spirits in the life and struggle of the Macuxi people.



I See Red: Herd, 1992

Mixed media on canvas. 152,4×381 cm. Collection Garth Greenan Gallery, New York. Courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York

Born at the St. Ignatius Indian Mission, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (1940, Flathead Reserve, Montana, USA) is a member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Indian Nation. She grew up in constant displacement, accompanying her father who traveled working as a horse trainer. Her formal education as an artist was long and intermittent, being constantly interrupted by financial issues or by prejudices of class, race and gender. Her work gained ground in the late 1970s precisely because it confronted the Eurocentric and formalist standards of the official art circuit and, since 1980, her artistic practice has been intertwined with her work as a curator, educator and cultural coordinator, in efforts that have

had a huge impact in the struggle for the recognition of American Indian art.

Quick-to-See Smith entered the field of modern painting, joining the debates about culture and language that had been fomented by pop art, and subverted the declarative nature of such work by using it as a catalyst of the divisions and relationships between, on the one hand, Indian knowledge and culture and, on the other, the paradigm of consuming and silencing differences that pervades North American society. At times close to collage, at times to palimpsest, her painting encourages the juxtaposition of systems of representation and ways of understanding the world, provoking shocks that can produce critical, ironic

or enigmatic effects. Often, the immediate reading of a symbol or phrase employed by Quick-to-See Smith is challenged by it being covered in layers of paint, or in its combination with elements associated with other symbols and discourses.



Performance drawing from *The Shape, The Scent, The Feel of Things*, 2008
Acrylic on paper. 272×560 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels

Joan Jonas (1936, New York, USA) is a pioneering video and performance artist. In the 1960s, Jonas often worked in tune and in collaboration with artists, musicians and performers of the New York scene. She developed a unique style, at the intersection between performance, drawing, action and video, where mystical or ritualistic elements converge and theatrical, choreographic and everyday gestures mix together. In the film *Wind* (1968), for example, the cinematographic record of an action carried out on a Long Island beach on one of the coldest days of 1968, Jonas shows the efforts of a group of performers executing a choreographed piece despite the freezing temperature and strong wind. In a combination

of movements that are sometimes banal, sometimes enigmatic, transiting between choreography, ceremony and improvisation, the dancers struggle against the wind, which blows violently against their bodies.

Wind is part of a series of performances made by the artist in the late 1960s in outdoor locations – including both natural, as in this case, and industrial sites – in which she introduces the use of mirrors, masks and other props. In that era, Jonas had already started, particularly through the use of mirrors, to create doubles and characters that could be considered authentic alter egos. In the decades that followed and until today, Jonas has continued to experiment with overlapping layers

of discontinuous time, multiplying images in combined and sometimes antithetical narrative shots, creating large scale immersive installations. Drawing remains a central element in most of these performances/installations, with animals being the most recurrent theme. If, on the one hand, the presence of animals reinforces an almost mystical relationship with nature, as is the case in *Snake Drawings*, which features in the 34th Bial, it also reflects the artist's engagement with the environment, in which she has been actively involved over the last few years, particularly in regard to protecting the oceans.



Jota Mombaça and Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi

2021: Spell to Become Invisible, 2019

Performance documentation. Nothing Gets Organized, Johannesburg, South Africa. Courtesy of the artists.
Photo: Caroline Lima

Jota Mombaça (1991, Natal, RN, Brazil) self-identifies as a “non-binary *bicha*, born and raised in northeastern Brazil.” Mombaça experiments with forms of writing linked intensely to the body’s and voice’s enunciation possibilities. Analogously and complementary, the artist creates performances and videos that are in themselves writing exercises unfolded in time and space. The artist’s production exposes the death and silencing policies that subjected racialized bodies throughout colonial history and reflects on the perverse reiteration of such policies today and in the future, which can also materialize as another class, gender, and race privilege. Despite their awareness of violence, Mombaça avoids reaffirming it as the first sign

of self-representation. Furthermore, Mombaça seeks to break away with the very logic of representation as a matrix of understanding and segregation implemented by the colonial gaze concerning subjects and groups.

Having written the short story “Veio o tempo em que por todos os lados as luzes desta época foram acendidas” [Came the Time When, Everywhere, the Lights of this Time Were Turned On] in 2019, Mombaça has been questioning luminosity and transparency as eminently positive values considering how instances of power impose them as synonyms of surveillance, exclusion, and authoritarianism. Conversely, the artist has been discussing the role of secrecy, opacity, and darkness as protection and

even of communication resources. *2021: Spell to Be Invisible* is a work in progress that Mombaça and Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi started in 2019, in the context of the *Ecos do Atlântico Sul* [South Atlantic Echoes] project. Imagined as a prophecy or a spell, *2021* takes place in different performative stages. Mombaça and Mattiuzzi get together to read and discuss texts in a study process in which they write quotes and thoughts on large sheets of paper. At that moment, there is no audience. Only on the next stage, when they read the sentences aloud and immediately erase them, in a drawing and orality process in which sharing and protection converge, the audience is invited.



Voice 10, 2019

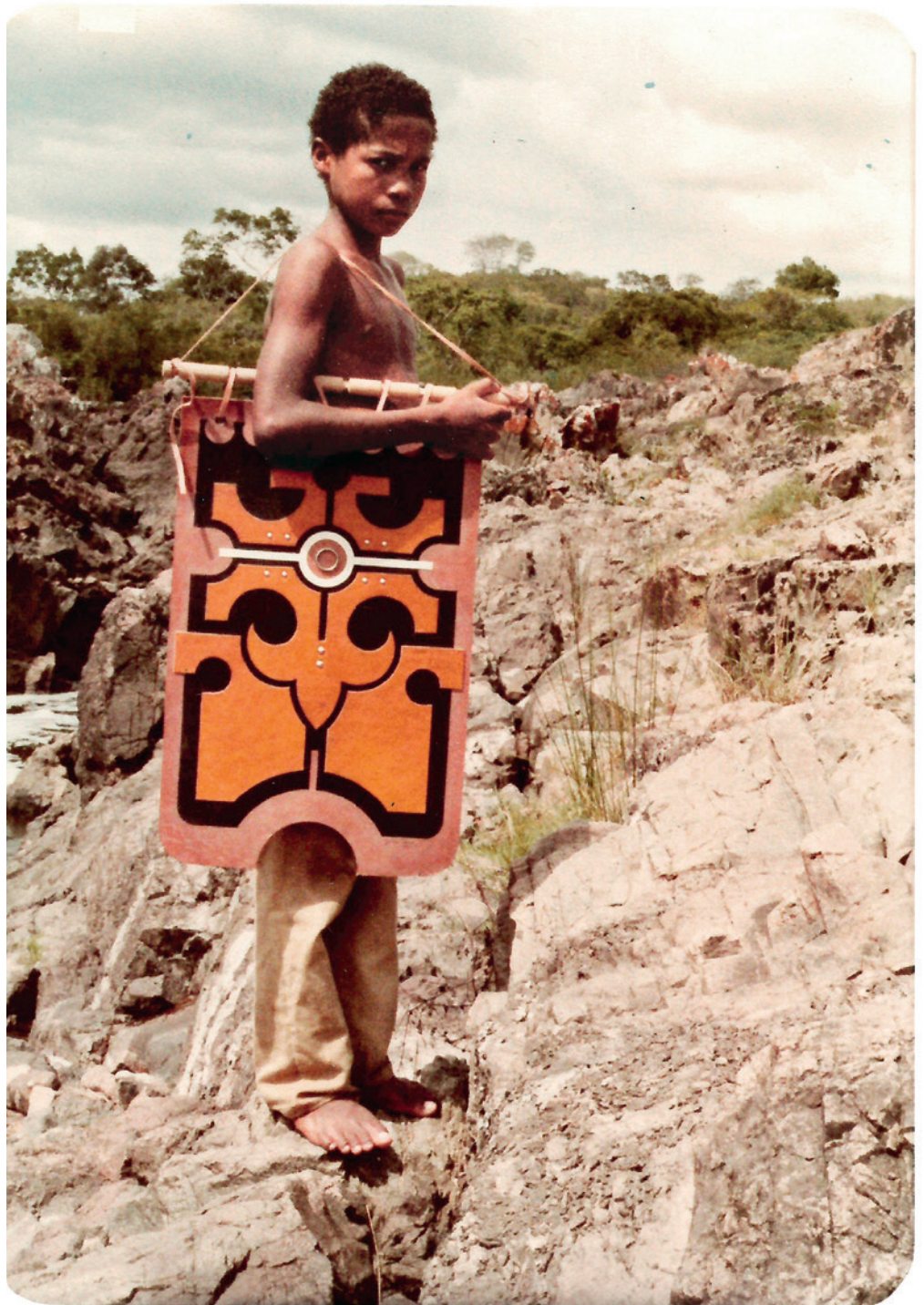
Archival Pigment Print. 152,5×213,3 cm. Courtesy of the artist

Painstakingly printed onto *hanji* paper – a traditional Korean handmade material –, Jungjin Lee's (1961, Seoul, South Korea) photographs invite prolonged study, in stark contrast to the instant consumption of photographic images that has become hegemonic in contemporary media. Her large-scale images are defined as much by their subjects as by the way the black and white film grain merges with the dense paper, resulting in a richness of visual and tactile information that is rare in contemporary photography. *Voice* (2018–2019) is one of the more recent results of Lee's reflection on time and landscape in photography. In the series as a whole, and especially in the four photographs presented at the 34th Biental, the landscapes

photographed seem to be arranged according to the framing, as if they molded themselves according to the limit of the photographic field. This characteristic, added to the density of the graphic textures and the synthetic clarity of the compositions, makes each photograph a complex, yet silent, visual phenomenon.

In the series *Buddha* (2002), Lee took a collection of portraits of Buddhist statues in Thailand. The artifacts have accumulated the marks of time and are poised between maintaining their recognizable form and merging into their setting. They could be treated as crumbling ruins, but the artist chooses instead to contribute to restoring their sense of eternity after life. To this end, she captures

a frontal view of each silhouette and transfers it onto the handmade paper, onto which she then manually applies ink and photosensitive emulsion and begins the enlargement process, allowing her to emphasize and transform the light, contrasts, and textures registered by the photographic film.



Documentation of **Estandarte do Jacuípe XXXIII**
[Banner of Jacuípe XXXIII], 1982
Photography: Gurunga, Jacuípe River, in 1983.
Courtesy of the artist

To study architecture, in the 1960s Juraci Dórea (1944, Feira de Santana, Bahia, Brazil) moved from Feira de Santana to Salvador, where he witnessed the intense cultural production that arose there out of the encounter between the experimental vanguardist attitude and the singular experience of a territory steeped in an Afro-Brazilian heritage. After earning his degree, Dórea returned to his hometown, the municipal seat of the metropolitan region of Portal do Sertão. There, he began to construct a consistent oeuvre, which gradually brought about a convergence of contemporary visual languages with *Sertão* [backcountry] roots and traditions, creating his own poetics. His *Estandartes do Jacuípe* [Banners

of Jacuípe] (1975), for example, are rhythmized and symmetric abstract compositions made of treated cowhide, sewn with the same processes used in the common production of saddles and clothing for cowboys.

In the 1980s, Dórea's telluric connection took on another power of magnitude. After beginning his *Projeto Terra* [Project Earth] (1982-ongoing), also presented at the 19th Bienal, held in 1987 with general curatorship by Sheila Leirner, he not only assimilated backcountry artisanal know-how, but also traveled deep into the Bahian backcountry to implant his works in that landscape, often making use of the materials he found in the fields and pastures. Due to this new focus, the process of art

circulation in that context was reversed: the primary public of his work was no longer the urban visitor of cultural institutions but rather an audience consisting largely of backcountry dwellers, transforming the *Sertão* into an open-air museum and integrating art into the ordinary flow of life. The records produced in this context, in the form of photographs, films, reports and texts, document not only Dórea's creative trajectory, but also countless shocks and rearrangements between conceptions of art, language and territory.



Notebook 10, Childhood of Sanbras, 2021

Paper, wire structure, mortar and acrylic. 15 × 19 cm. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: © Soul. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Institut français à Paris and Ministère de la Culture – DAC Guadeloupe

When looking at Kelly Sinnapah Mary's (1981, Guadeloupe) recent production, it is fruitful to begin with *Cahier d'un non retour au pays natal* [Notebook of No Return to a Native Land], a series of installations, paintings, tapestries, and objects that the artist started making in 2015. The suggestive title, which references the most important work by Martinican poet Aimé Césaire, synthesizes much of her production since then. If the poem was already dealing with diaspora and colonialism in 1939, being one of the bases of the *négritude* movement, Sinnapah Mary underscores the impossibility of return in response to her own origin. The artist's ancestors moved from India to Guadeloupe in the 19th century following

an agreement by the French government that sought to replenish the French colony with laborers after slavery had been abolished. Many families that crossed the ocean at the time believed they would only be there for a predetermined contracted period, but very few had the conditions to return to their countries and ultimately came to set up a new diasporic chapter in the Caribbean islands.

Identifying herself as part of this story, Sinnapah Mary collects scraps of memories (whether her own or borrowed from her research), assembling them by juxtaposition and superposition. These memories might take the form of illustrations of European fairy tales and biblical stories, reference

Hindu rituals with animal offerings, emulate the density of the Caribbean forest, or suggest associations with a childhood beset with threats. In her paintings, the characters' skin is often impregnated with plant leaves, as is the case of Sanbras, a girl who wants to flee the current society to create a small ecosystem occupied mainly by children, inspired by a tale by Caribbean author Chris Cyrille.



Abstracted/Family, 2019

Format: filming, acting, painting, expressing, writing, cooking, talking, digging, eating, etc. Elements: films, paintings, photographs, radio, artist's note, end credit, table, chairs, etc. Film still. 110' aprox. The project is co-commissioned by Aichi Triennale 2019 and Singapore Art Museum for Singapore Biennale 2019, also supported by ASO GROUP. Courtesy of the artist, Vitamin Creative Space, Guangzhou, Aoyama Meguro, Tokyo

Through seemingly simple proposals, Koki Tanaka (1975, Mashiko, Tochigi, Japan) invites those who participate in his actions to create something unexpected, encouraging them to reconsider their usual gestures. Such is the case in the series conceived and produced in response to the earthquake and tsunami followed by Fukushima nuclear disaster in March 2011, as a way to freely investigate the event. For the artist, the work sought to capture the utopian period that followed the disaster, in which people “didn’t have compassion for others but simply shared uncertainty, and people started to help each other to get over that uncertainty”.

Analogous sensations and reactions can be provoked by banal or unusual events, not

only by extremely traumatic ones. In fact, in his work, Tanaka almost always operates on a scale that could be defined as “micro”, dealing with the everyday lives of ordinary people who he invites to take part in his actions and proposals. Despite the underlying optimism of his work, which gives us a glimpse into a more understanding and empathetic society, where interpersonal relationships are based on dialogue and a willingness to listen, Tanaka’s work should not be considered pacified or simplistic in that it also shows the failings in the processes he puts forward, whether in conflicts of egos, personal incompatibilities, or in frictions caused by coexistence. In some cases, such as in *Abstracted/Family* (2019), these idiosyncrasies

transcend the characters Tanaka has called upon, becoming wide-ranging and profound analyses of contemporary society. The artist reflects on the difficulty of Japanese society to accept any kind of racial and cultural miscegenation, but the installation is clearly metonymic: conflicts and tensions analogous to those he describes are largely diffuse in the contemporary world, marked by growing polarization and increasingly dramatic identity-related conflicts.



Floresta crepuscular [Twilight Forest], 1956

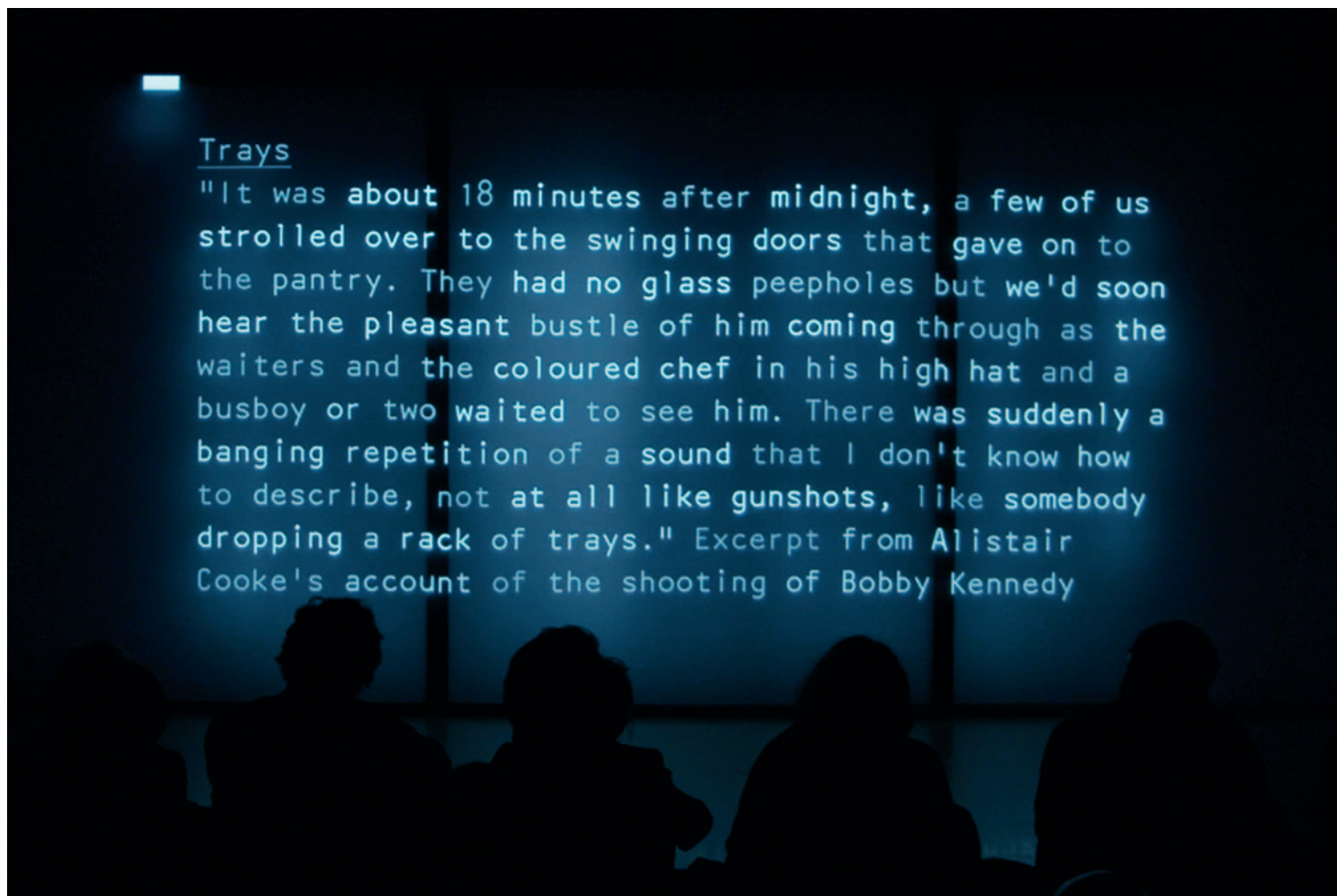
Oil and sand on canvas. 131×97,5 cm. Collection Museu Lasar Segall – IBRAM / Ministério do Turismo

Lasar Segall was born in 1889, in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, and died in 1957, in São Paulo, Brazil. From 1906 to 1923 he lived in Germany, where he completed his academic studies. Having known social misery since his childhood, Segall joined the expressionist movement in 1914, allying formal experimentation with his humanistic aim to portray subjects directly impacted by the war, poverty and exile. These two commitments remained as constants in his work throughout his career, despite changes of context and aesthetic approach. Having presented, in 1913, the first exhibition of a modernist vein ever held in the city of São Paulo, Segall moved definitively to Brazil in 1923. After having been practically

ignored on his first visit, he was received with greater interest and commentary upon his return, as the anti-academic modernist movement linked to the Week of '22 was then in full sway. On tropical soil, he took up the challenge of relating his production with the local flora, fauna, society and lighting: his palette was modified with the addition of reds, earth-tone ochers and yellowish greens. Years later, during the Holocaust, he took up the ethical imperative of reflecting the barbarity through paintings with somber hues.

His last works very notably include the *Florestas* [Forests] series, obtained by the dense juxtaposition of rhythmic vertical bands. They rarely contain any indication of the sky,

leaves or the ground. The pictorial framing is on the level of the schematized tree trunks, and the naturalist air of each scene is conveyed through the color palette. Unlike the work he did soon after his arrival in Brazil, the paintings of that series lack any explicit indication of a tropical character; rather, they seem to combine the dense and impenetrable aspect of the tropical jungle with chromatic temperatures and atmospheres reminiscent of the European forests that Segall depicted in his youth, perhaps reactivated by the landscape of the cooler mountainous region of Campos do Jordão, where he went into the forests to draw and paint.



After SFX, 2018

Installation view. Tate Modern, London. Photo: Jarred Alterman. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: British Council

Lawrence Abu Hamdan (1985, Amman, Jordan) considers himself a “private ear”. His research often revolves around meticulous and articulated investigations of noise and speech, or even silence, in order to emphasize their importance in contemporary societies and, more specifically, their deeply political nature. Originally inspired by music, Abu Hamdan got more and more interested in sound and voice as mediums and witnesses of violence and injustice, coherently building a body of work where voices emerge as eminently political, ideal tools for an analysis of contemporary society at large, and more specifically of relationships of power and domination. For Abu Hamdan, the language is constantly listened

to, transformed and manipulated by political and social structures in positions of power. Through videos, audio documentaries, installations and workshops, the artist pushes the use of speech by social and political structures to its strictest limits.

At the same time, the artist also tests the limits that conventionally define what an artwork is. His analysis of recorded speeches and sounds has been used as evidence in judicial investigations, ultimately helping to reveal episodes of abuse, violence and repression. At the 34th Bienal, Abu Hamdan presents a new version of *After SFX* (2018), a video and sound installation derived from the eponymous performance, described by the artist as a “loud

cacophony of objects, a looping list of acoustic debris and sonic memories of violence inseparable from cinema sound”, which emphasizes how our sonic memory is a deeply cultural and mediated act.



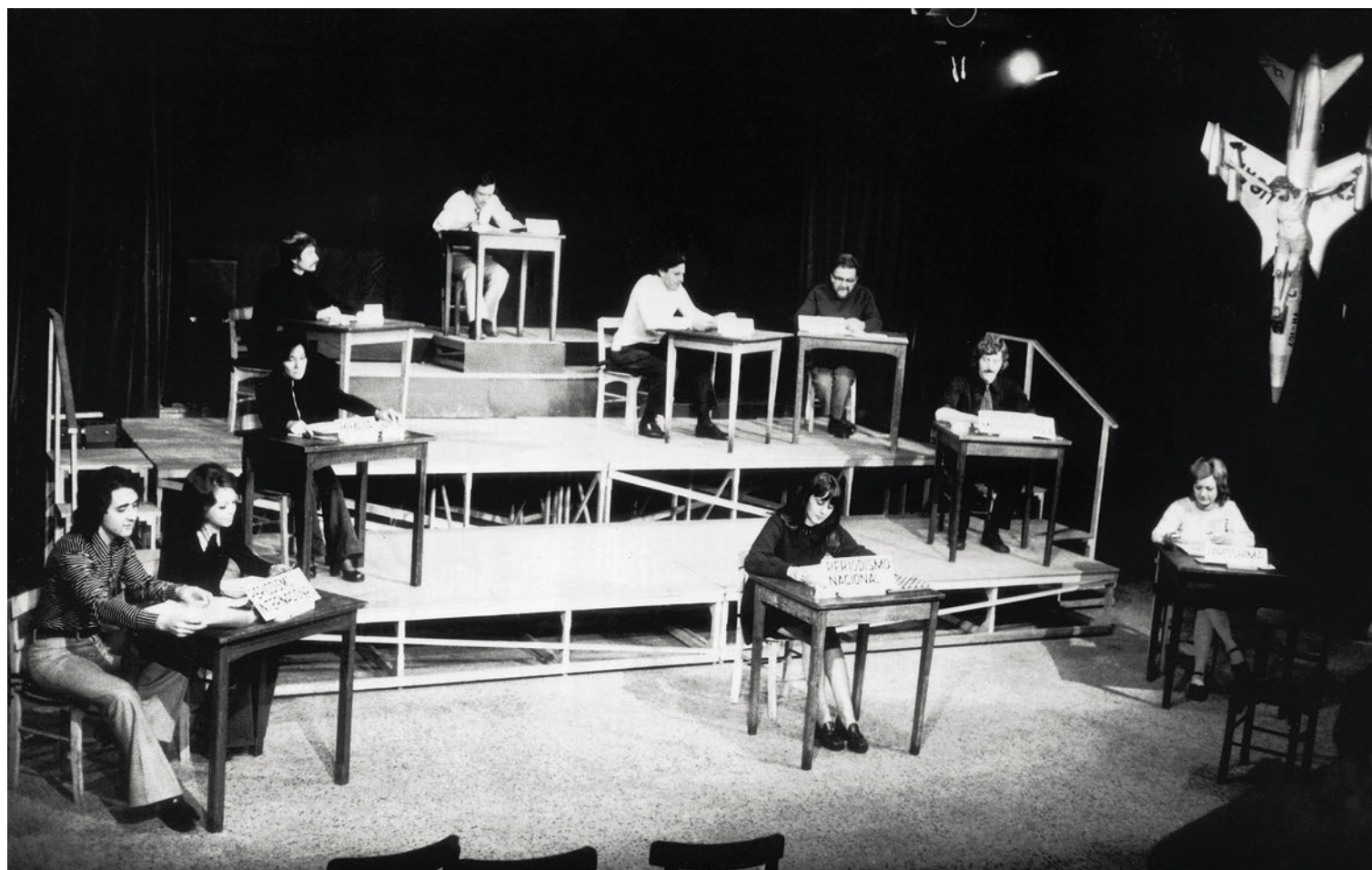
Installation view at Haus zur Liebe, Schaffhausen, 2018. Installation comprised of collage on canvas. Courtesy: suns.works and the artist. Participation in the 34th Bialal supported by: COINCIDENCIA – A programme by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia

Lee “Scratch” Perry (1936, Kendal, Jamaica) is widely known as a musical icon of his native country Jamaica. An innovative and visionary producer, Perry contributed hugely to the expansion of the Jamaican musical art scene throughout the 1960s and 1970s. During that time, many important musicians were produced and recorded at Black Ark, the recording studio Perry built behind his family’s home in Kingston. The history of reggae, dub, and even hip-hop cannot be told without mentioning Perry’s frenetic and ground-breaking production, as much as it cannot be detached from wider narratives from the African diaspora that go back and forth over the Atlantic Ocean. Around 1979, Perry started covering the whole

of Black Ark with indecipherable drawings and scribbles, to some extent anticipating some of his later installations and artworks. The studio was closed (or burned down, allegedly) a few years later, and Perry led a nomadic life before settling in the Swiss countryside where he still lives.

Over the decades, Perry developed a practice of visual creation that runs parallel to his musical work and that shares with it the combined interest of reaching harmonies and upsetting sensibilities. Drawings, paintings, and texts are assembled on the walls of his studio, or on vinyl covers, later becoming autonomous and independent pieces. Perry thus creates a universe, contrasted and

crossed by syncretic influences that range from Catholic figures to Obeah, a system of spiritual and justice-management practices developed among enslaved West Africans in the Caribbean, as well as explicit references to West African religions, such as Akan. The artist’s work intersects different genres by interweaving written words, images, mirrors, photographs, and appropriated objects, among other elements that are often also cut, burned, or painted on.



Operativo: "Pacem in terris", adaptation of León Ferrari's play *Palabras Ajenas* [The Words of Others], 2017. Archive Adriana Banti

The work of León Ferrari (1940-2013, Buenos Aires, Argentina) is driven by the desire to reveal the history of Western violence and authoritarianism, showing the mechanisms employed in the construction of power. Throughout his career spanning various decades, Ferrari investigated and decried the relationships between military, political and religious forces that established societal standards and the social imaginary. Ferrari's production transits between different languages, such as drawing, calligraphy, assemblage, sculpture, installation and video, often resorting to irony to question the values that pervade the various institutions (Church and State, primarily) which define a good part of the Western societies.

In *Palabras ajenas* [The Words of Others], published in 1967 by the Argentine publishing house Falbo, Ferrari carries out a sort of "literary collage" – as he himself defines it – composed of excerpts from history books, literature, the Bible and, mainly, the written press (national newspapers and magazines and telegrams from foreign agencies). The episode that catalyzed the work was the Vietnam War, which had intensified in 1965. Ferrari condemned the way the press was manipulating the human horror and suffering, neutralizing critical thought and overexposing the public to shocking images. In *Palabras ajenas* there is an extensive dialogue between characters such as Adolf Hitler, Pope Paulo VI, God, us President Lyndon B. Johnson and war

correspondents, local journalists, soldiers, prophets, and political advisors. Ferrari's aim was to collect the discourses of those who constituted the prevailing Western thought and take them out of context to confront them, underscoring the atrocities and the camouflaged messages of violence in the political and religious rhetoric.



Monument for the Native Societies of South America, 1978–1982

Site-specific wall painting. Dimensions variable. Presented at documenta 7, Kassel, Germany, 1982. Courtesy: Lothar Baumgarten Studio and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York. Photo: Nic Tenwiggenhorn

Lothar Baumgarten (1944, Rheinsberg, Germany – 2018, Berlin, Germany) inherited his knowledge of ethnographic methods and aesthetics, as well as his interest in the European relationship to indigenous peoples and cultures, from his ethnographer father. At the same time, he shared an awareness of power structures and their connection to epistemological systems with some of the conceptual artists of his generation. From his earliest works, Baumgarten was concerned with systems of information and the translation of ideas across cultures and time. The artist scrutinized scientific methodologies and collections, which he could only see as being part of the colonial violence perpetrated

by “discoverers”, “conquerors”, and explorers. This is evident in works such as *Unsettled Objects* (1968–1969), a projection of 81 slides taken at the Pitt Rivers Museum, in Oxford. The photos of museological vitrines containing ethnographic artifacts are overlaid with the artist’s own text, a list of adjectives such as displayed and imagined, celebrated and lost, collected and forgotten, valued and typified, polished and ignored.

In 1978 and 1979, Baumgarten spent long periods in Kashorawë-theri and Yapitawë-theri, two Yanomami villages in the Venezuelan-Brazilian border region. During this period, the artist produced a series of films, photographs, and audio recordings documenting the

environment and daily life he was experiencing. These eighteen months of coexistence in the Amazon changed Baumgarten’s worldview and his artistic practice. The work *Monument for the Native Societies of South America*, originally presented at the documenta 7 in Kassel, in 1982, consists of a wall painting displaying these and others names of South American indigenous peoples – all endangered by colonial violence, European diseases, and the destruction of the forest caused by extractivist economy.



Word for Gardens, 2004

Sound installation view. 5'43". Collection Fundação Serralves, Portugal. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Daniel Malhão. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: República Portuguesa – Cultura / Direção-Geral das Artes and Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian

Luisa Cunha's (1949, Lisbon, Portugal) works can manifest as drawings, paintings, photographs, videos, texts or sounds. But whichever medium, there exists in all of them an interest in language, in the ways we find to say what we understand or question in the world, the place we occupy and how we move within it. The artist does not seek out big subjects, but finds their reflections in small everyday absurdities and in the different ways we have to see and communicate them. The majority of her sound works belong to the realm of conversation. They are words that are thought, written, spoken, recorded and repeated for every one of us, for every person who listens. In many of these works the speech describes features of

the architecture where we find ourselves listening to them, modifying with a few words the perception of the context of the situation, in the meeting between the work and the public. Such is the case in *É aqui* [It's Here] (2008), in which her voice appears, unexpectedly, pronouncing the words of the title alone, and in *Artista à procura de si própria* [Artist Looking for Herself] (2015), where she repeatedly calls her own name – "Luisa".

1.680 metros [1,680 meters] (2020) was born out of the unique characteristics of the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion, the historic headquarters of the Bienal de São Paulo, designed by Oscar Niemeyer. The artist first tells us her own height and the length of her stride

– immediately we compare ourselves to her, we are taller or shorter, we walk with longer or shorter strides, or we realize that we have never thought about the length of our walks. In the phrase that follows, Cunha calculates the time it would take her to walk the empty pavilion – we try to imagine it – and reflects on the impossibility of defining how long it would take to visit an exhibition in the same place. This exhibition, a previous one, or another, some day?



this is the normal procedure when flying in the hours of darkness, 2020

Installation view. Digitised 8mm film. 39'. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: British Council

In the majority of her recent exhibitions, the interventions by Lydia Ourahmane (1992, Saïda, Algeria) have been scarce, almost imperceptible. The artist's goal seems to be to make the visitors doubt what they are seeing or hearing, or even whether there is in fact *something* there to be seen or heard. In *Solar Cry* (2020), for example, she installed inside a wooden wall a series of speakers, which reproduced the sound of silence, recorded in a remote cave in the Tassili n'Ajjer plateau, in the Algerian Sahara. Despite being inaudible, the recording became perceptible through the vibrations it produced, which were amplified by the wood. A similar strategy underlies the decision to insert lead capsules into bronze

molds of her body (*bronze belly I-IV*, 2019), which, little by little, are thus transformed by decay from within, in a process that is lengthy and almost entirely invisible.

It is not by chance that one of the most recurrent concepts in critical writing about Ourahmane's work is that of faith, of the predisposition to believe in the existence of something that cannot be seen or proven. If, on the one hand, this concept helps understanding the artist's universe as poetic and vibrant, characterized by opacity and the impossibility of explaining and making explicit all the aspects of a work, it also allows for a connection with her biography, and with the political implications of her practice. Raised in England, the

artist recently returned to Algeria, where she had spent most of her early years during the explosive context of a civil war (1991-2002). In fact, in another aspect of Ourahmane's work, critical reflection on the dramatic reality of her country of origin becomes more direct, and in some cases is intertwined with her biography and even with her own body, which today bears the marks of an intense commitment to artistic creation: for example, a tooth implanted for *In the Absence of Our Mothers* (2015-2018).



Amazoninos vermelhos [Red Amazoninos], 1989-2003

Iron and automotive paint. View of the exhibition "Lygia Pape", Hauser & Wirth New York, 69th Street, 2008. ©Projeto Lygia Pape. Photo: Genevieve Hanson, NYC. Courtesy Projeto Lygia Pape and Hauser & Wirth

Lygia Pape (1927, Nova Friburgo, Brazil – 2004 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) is a leading artist of the generation that expanded art's experimental field in the second half of the twentieth century. Pape deepened her direct relationship with concrete reality from the late 1960s onwards when she took part in the *Grupo Frente* [Front Group] and the Neo-Concrete Movement. With the motto "Espaço poético – qualquer linguagem a serviço do ético" [Poetic space – any language at the service of ethics], Pape discussed the contradictions of Brazilian society that gathers precariousness and vivacity in its polyphony. Part of her approach to social reality implied a critical review of the anthropophagic proposition of the 1920s modernist generation. Pape examined in

her dissertation, *Catiti-Catiti, na terra dos brasis* [Catiti-Catiti, in the Land of brazils] (1980), the twofold movement that would simultaneously digest cosmopolitan avant-garde and indigenous cultures. This study made her rethink Rio's urban context as a whole.

It seems Pape understood that the presence of the indigenous anthropophagic practices the colonizers registered – the Tupinambá culture – became an uncomfortable contemporary void, no longer visible, felt only by some impalpable and reminiscence identity since the Guanabara Bay's occupation. Using the scarlet ibis bright red feathers, which the Tupinambá employed in their ritual robes (whose remaining pieces are in European collections), the artist explored

this presence-absence in her late 1990s and early 2000s works. Before that, Pape had already created works dealing with a similar subject, like *O olho do guará* [Guara's Eye] (c. 1980), which combines neon lines with patterns referring to the fauna from Amerindian mythologies, and *Amazoninos* (c. 1990), which works the iron sheets as if they were light as paper, balancing weights and flexions in abstractions evocating the Amazonian fiction. Together, these works show Pape's experimentalism with the wounds of the colonialism.



Manthia Diawara and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o
Sembène: The Making of African Cinema, 1994
Film still. 60'. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in
the 34th Biental supported by: Institut français à Paris

Both the work and the biography of Manthia Diawara (1953, Bamako, Mali) are marked by a personal experience and a deep academic and intellectual knowledge of black African and Afro-American history and culture. Writer, filmmaker, critic and professor of comparative literature and cinema, Diawara follows in his films the precepts of ethnographic cinema by auteurs such as Jean Rouch, whose importance is both acknowledged and questioned in *Rouch in Reverse* (1995). Describing the film, Diawara explains: "I made this film on Rouch as a rite of passage for myself. [...] I wanted to pass through Rouch in order to render visible new African voices and images: the ones that defy stereotype and primitivism". This desire to

subvert the conventional dynamics of anthropology, turning the former "object of study" (the black African) into the questioning agent, is what drives the majority of Diawara's films. In them, it is the director who leads the narrative in the scene, asking questions, looking for explanations, taking on the Socratic role of someone who admits (or pretends) to not knowing in order to get to the heart of things.

Through his films, Diawara has constructed an extremely rich and stratified repertoire of portraits of thinkers from various parts of the world, who are called to an imaginary dialogue in the installation conceived for the 34th Biental, a kind of "parliament" of thinkers who have been fundamental to the

development of the artist himself and to the understanding of the world we live in. With Édouard Glissant among its protagonists, a fundamental reference in the exhibition's concept, the installation brings together writers, artists, poets, politicians and thinkers from various places and eras, in a conversation composed of talks recorded by Diawara over the last decades.

Mariana Caló and Francisco Queimadela

Efeito orla [Edge Effect], 2013

Video still. Installation composed of HD projections, colour, sound. 14'40". Courtesy of the artists. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: República Portuguesa – Cultura / Direção-Geral das Artes and Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian



Mariana Caló (1984, Viana do Castelo, Portugal) and Francisco Queimadela (1985, Coimbra, Portugal) met at the School of Fine Arts of Porto and have been working in collaboration since 2010. In their practice, they combine film, photography and sculpture to create intimist and immersive installations, where the boundaries between dream, reality, fiction, objectivity and spontaneity are constantly shifted and blurred. The work happens in-between all these different realms, and despite the fantastic atmosphere they often transmit, most projects are based in processes that develop throughout time, be it in research and investigation, or field work, or in internal metamorphosis of their daily practice, displaying

environmental and ecological concerns, and a dialogue between biological, vernacular and cultural elements.

In *Efeito orla* [Edge Effect] (2013), one of their works included in the 34th Bienal, these aspects of Caló and Queimadela's practice are condensed and placed in relation. The work is the result of a search for the Iberian lynx, the most endangered feline in the world, considered practically extinct in the area of Reserva Nacional da Serra da Malcata (Portugal), which was created in the 1980s as an effort to protect this species and where the work was developed. According to some of the inhabitants from the Malcata mountain range that the artists talked to, the lynx "is sensed

but not seen", it's evasive and almost invisible. In mythology it is associated with secrecy and the revelation of obscure truths, with the world of the dead, but also with the sun and light. While the animal itself does not appear on screen, Caló and Queimadela introduce in the landscape various optical disks, a device which, according to them, "deals with notions of apparition, illusion, dazzlement, camouflage, and speed, which we relate to the idea of an invisible presence that continues to orbit that place".



The School of Narrative Dance, 2013-ongoing

Light sculpture and movement workshops. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Italian Council, Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity, Italian Ministry of Culture

Inspired, since the outset of her career, by the fertility of artistic environments of collective creation, such as music and filmmaking, from 2006 onward Marinella Senatore (1977, Cava de' Tirreni, Italy) – who is a teacher as well as an artist – has placed increasing emphasis on the horizontal character and shared authorship of the performances, theater plays and actions she organizes. Various recent works by Senatore, in fact, have been based on a long process of exchange and collaboration that includes meetings, workshops and open events, through which the artist seeks to activate the creative potential of various groups. One of her most ambitious projects in this sense is *Rosas*, a lyrical opera filmed in 2012 in Berlin, Madrid,

and Derby, which involved the participation of approximately 20,000 people.

The School of Narrative Dance, an ongoing project begun in 2013, exemplifies Senatore's open and interdisciplinary practice by proposing a teaching model that uses body language as a means of creating alternative and spontaneous forms of collective narrative. Without privileging any particular method, the school seeks an exchange of knowledge, experience, and techniques of movement, dance, and theater, based on the participants' personal experiences. The school is organized in a collaborative, "horizontal" manner, so that all the participants can significantly contribute to its development. This *modus operandi*

encourages the emancipation of everyone involved, while making them aware not only of the relevance of their individual contributions to the community, but also of the importance of the collective sphere for the realization of each individual. For the work commissioned by the 34th Bienal, Senatore collaborated with the English mindful movement group Esprit Concrete in a series of workshops for groups from Cidade Tiradentes, in the São Paulo metropolitan area.



Marissa Lee Benedict, David Rueter and Daniel de Paula

Repose, 2020

Location: The Arts Club of Chicago (Chicago, IL). Commissioned by The Arts Club of Chicago, supported by a grant from the Terra Foundation for American Art. Courtesy of the artists

Marissa Lee Benedict (1985, Palm Springs, California, USA) and David Rueter (1978, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA) began their artistic collaboration in 2014 with the video installation *Dark Fiber* (2014-2019), that shows the artists burying, pulling, and cutting a single fiber optic cable in the shadows of large-scale infrastructure, oil refineries and a shipping canal. In telecommunications jargon, “dark fiber” is a term for unused or unlit fiber optic cables that have become superfluous in light of technological advances, which increased the quantity of information transmitted via electromagnetic waves. The dormant cable has become a real estate opportunity for private companies who rent this unused fiber to create their own

exclusive networks. *Dark Fiber* refers to the wires and to the flow of information that operates in the shadows of the public internet.

In 2018, the artistic duo, together with Daniel de Paula, rescued from the Chicago Board of Trade a “trading pit” that had been used for decades as a platform for the buying and selling of corn and corn futures contracts. The device would be discarded as part of a definitive shift to digital transactions. The trio started researching the history of the trading floor and the abstract and concrete processes of circulation that surround it. In 2020, they made *Repose* (2020), a sculpture composed of cut-out wooden fragments interweaving in patterns indexical of the Board of Trade’s geometric

floor, that also refers to crates for shipping artworks. As a continuation of their work with the rescued trading pit floor, de Paula, Benedict, and Rueter present *deposition* (2020) for the first time at the 34th Biennial. The Chicago Board of Trade pit is partially rebuilt in the Cicillio Matarazzo Pavilion, serving as a platform for public encounters of different natures, which were conceived with the purpose of emphasizing the meeting and confrontation atmosphere prompted by the structure itself.



Inominável #1 [Unnameable #1], 2019
C-print. 80×120 cm. Courtesy: Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel, São Paulo / Rio de Janeiro

In every photographic series by Mauro Restiffe (1970, São José do Rio Pardo, São Paulo, Brazil) and, even more so, in his body of work as a whole, there is a harmony that comes from the way the artist looks at the world, superimposing and almost merging personal relationships and experiences with the architecture, cities and spaces he passes through. Even when it would be possible to place his photographs in the “architecture” genre, for example, they are characterized by a very particular “temperature”, making them immediately recognizable. The series that depicts Philip Johnson’s Glass House is extremely revelatory in that sense: the architecture itself hardly makes an appearance, fragmented in a sequence of planes and

elements (the external glass, the landscape reflected in them, the artworks, the furniture...) that intersect and overlap, creating the impression of a house that is truly alive.

In the large installation conceived for the 34th Bienal, the artist transcends the personal aspect by juxtaposing two significant moments in the country’s recent history. Photographs in *Empossamento* [Inauguration] (2003), which was produced in Brasília on the day of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s inauguration (1st January 2003), are juxtaposed with the series *Inominável* [Unnameable] (2019), taken exactly sixteen years later, on the day of Jair Bolsonaro’s inauguration. The contrasts, similarities, analogies and discrepancies between

the two series are at once emphasized and condensed by their proximity. Without relying on an explanatory caption for each image, it is up to the viewer to analyze the compositional elements according to their own expectations of sense and meaning. As part of an exhibition that explores how the meanings of a work of art are stratified and shift over time, this work also introduces a reflection on the history of the Bienal itself, and of the works that were exhibited here, considering that the series *Empossamento* was first shown at the 27th Bienal (2006).



Interwoven, 2020

Video still. 32'. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bialal supported by: Mondriaan Fund

Melvin Moti (1977, Rotterdam, Netherlands) primarily makes 35mm films, often shown in conjunction with photography, objects, and artist books. His practice is intimately linked to history and its narrative. His films, books and art objects are often driven by his interest in the power of the viewer's imagination and the deconstruction of history. Thus, Moti explores the non-event, and a fascination with the anecdotal underlies his works: details and accidents that take place on the fringes of a supposedly unified History allow him to reveal the power of what he defines as "black holes". In his film *No Show* (2004), for example, shown at the 34th Bialal as part of the *Vento* exhibition, Moti starts from a historically irrelevant

episode: a visit to the Hermitage offered by a museum guide to a group of soldiers in 1943, in the middle of World War II. What makes the anecdote fascinating is the fact that, as a precaution, all the artworks had been removed from the rooms and kept in a safe place; only the frames of the extraordinary collection of paintings remained on the walls, as a testament to the importance of maintaining at least the memory of artworks.

For the video installation *Interwoven* (2021), Moti recorded, in more than thirty thousand images taken during research and reflection process of more than five years, a series of sacred stones located on Taketomi's western coast, an island of the Japanese Yaeyama

archipelago, worshiped in rituals performed by female shamans from the island. Just as the video bears the traces of the time it took to do the work, the fabrics that accompany it, produced by the Yaeyama women as part of their shamanic practice, are the result of a production process that can take years, whose stages involve the making of the threads from banana leaves, dyeing them with natural pigments and a complex weaving technique called double ikat.



Time Has Fallen Asleep in the Afternoon Sunshine, 2010

Performance and installation. Photo: Elly Clarke. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biental supported by: Nordic Culture Fund, Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) and Performing Arts Hub Norway

Mette Edvardsen (1970, Lørenskog, Norway) started her career in 1996 as a dancer in various companies and began developing her own work, bringing together choreography and performance, in 2002. In many of her staged works, Edvardsen uses text as a structure where reading and writing become tools for moving in a space and interacting with the public, like a choreography. The voice functions as a vehicle for generating situations, creating spaces that are made visible by a word or, conversely, by the absence of one. Edvardsen uses language in order to subvert it, challenging cultural connections and the spatiotemporal divisions that commonly influence our daily routines.

For Edvardsen, repetition and memory are ways of looking at the past and the future. For the artist, repetition and remembering are the same exercise, but in opposite directions, in the sense that the act of remembering is also a form of repeating a past action. This cyclic economy engenders a type of entropy that Edvardsen calls “non-concept”: the repetition of a pattern that is never the same but is familiar enough to be recognized. *Time Has Fallen Asleep in the Afternoon Sunshine* (2010-ongoing) is a work based on exercising repetition and memory, in which a group of performers chooses a series of books with which each of them has a certain affinity. As they read the books, they memorize them, so

they can later recite them from memory to visitors of the exhibition. By repeating the book’s content from memory, each performer becomes the publication itself. The idea of a library of “living books” was inspired by Ray Bradbury’s famous novel *Fahrenheit 451*, in which the author imagines a society where any hint of knowledge is considered a threat to human happiness, and books are banned and burned.



Experimentando o vermelho em dilúvio [Experiencing the Red in Flood], 2016

Video still, 7'53". Photography: Matheus Ah. Editing: Luciano Carneiro. Conception: Elton Panamby and Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi. Courtesy of the artist

Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi (1983, São Paulo, Brazil) is a performer, visual artist, film director, writer, and researcher of black radical thought. Mattiuzzi investigates the marks of sexist, racist and colonial violence left on her own body, and the social and historical stigmas that constitute the subjectivity of black women in Brazil. In her performances, she appropriates the mechanisms that objectify and exotify the black female body, and subverts them: they become instruments of visibility and recognition of a body that is, at the same time, an object of desire and of dehumanization in the white cisnormative imagination. Mattiuzzi is interested in the power of the monstified, disproportionate and non-symmetric body. Her

actions, in the artist's words, "are micro-political acts of resistance" which free her "from the rejection of her own body, which means going towards it at full speed in the will to live, to re-exist".

Mattiuzzi deepens her meditation on what she defines as "a radical black Brazilian female poetic construction". Authors like Grada Kilomba and Denise Ferreira da Silva are explicit references in the preparation of these works, which also allude to historic performances like *Interior Scroll* (1975), by Carolee Schneemann. Mattiuzzi thus inserts the fight for racial affirmation into the expanded lineage of performance as a privileged platform, within the contemporary art world, to demand

change in society as a whole. In *Experimentando o vermelho em dilúvio* [Experiencing the Red in Flood] (2016), she takes the path leading to the Zumbi dos Palmares monument, in an allegorical reenactment of the suffering and violence that the black Brazilian population has been subjected to for centuries.



Onanism, 1969

Film still. 16mm film transferred to video (black and white, sound). 3'51". Courtesy of the artist

The city of Karachi was still a part of India when Nalini Malani (1946, Karachi, Pakistan) was born. The very next year, however, the division of land between India and Pakistan drove her family, like many others, into forced exile. Malani took refuge in what was then called Calcutta and Bombay, respectively, where she finally settled. The brutality of this division is a constant theme in the artist's work and statements, sometimes citing Simone Weil's famous phrase, "The destruction of the past is perhaps the greatest of all crimes". Destroying the past, in this sense, means erasing the memories of violence that, though painful, must be remembered so we can recognize it in the present. In her videos,

installations, performances, drawings, paintings, and animations, Malani contributes to the durability of memory, renewing our capacity to be affected by it.

Considered a pioneer in the arts, Malani has been committed to experimentation since the very start of her career. Soon after graduating from the Sir Jamsetjee Jeejebhoy School of Art, in Bombay, she became the youngest artist to attend VIEW (Vision Exchange Workshop) – an initiative that provided the infrastructure for her first photographs and films in 8 and 16mm. Among these experiments is *Onanism* (1969), a film that opens with an overhead view of a young girl lying on a bed. Her movements become more and more convulsive, while the

shots close in on details of her body and facial features. The character's actions are ambivalent and oscillate between eroticism and agony – there seems to be an enormous charge of energy contained in her body, framed by the bed, the room, and by the camera. The opacity generated by these many framings adds to the title of the work to challenge conventions of gender and domesticity.



Sangre Pesada [Heavy Blood], 2018

Video still. HD video, 3 channel installation. 18'45". Courtesy of the artist. Support: Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte 2019-2022 del Fondo Nacional para La Cultura y las Artes

Artist and researcher Naomi Rincón Gallardo (1979, North Carolina, USA) moves between performance and video to construct imaginary narratives, often inspired by Mesoamerican myths, stories and accounts of resistance against heteropatriarchal and colonial dispossession. In her stories, ancestral beliefs combine with contemporary aesthetic references, such as DIY and queer aesthetics, creating a universe that is visually saturated and abundant, but also familiar in its almost handcrafted construction. Rincón Gallardo uses strategies from militant feminist theory and radical theatricality, areas where she acts as both an artist and a provocateur, to come up with queer models of interaction and of social

encounters. The direct and explicit reference in some works to episodes where indigenous women have struggled for their territory affirm the complexity of a practice that is current and exigent, but also enmeshed with the dense indigenous cosmology of Mesoamerica.

Sangre Pesada [Heavy Blood] (2018) was born from an investigation into the mining universe in Zacatecas, in north-central Mexico, where silver extraction began as early as the 16th century. In the three-channel video installation, the artist puts local myths and wisdom into conflict with the destructive inheritance of colonial and neocolonial processes of exploitation. Similarly, in works like *Resiliencia Tlacuache* [Tlacuache Resilience] (2019) she

reflects on the expropriation processes taking place in Oaxaca territory. In dealing with contemporary and pressing issues through legends and fables that are often hidden and silenced, and in putting great emphasis on musicality, Rincón Gallardo's work addresses some of the issues central to the very conception of the 34th Bienal, such as the freedom that can emerge from production that happens in conditions of seclusion and invisibility, and the importance of singing in resisting trauma and threats of all kinds.



Neo Muyanga (in collaboration with Coletivo Legítima Defesa and Bianca Turner)

A Maze in Grace, 2020

Documentation of performance at the opening of the solo exhibition at the Bial Pavilion. Photo: Levi Fanan / Fundação Bial de São Paulo. Participation in the 34th Bial supported by: British Council and Institut français à Paris

A composer, sound artist and librettist, Neo Muyanga (1974, Johannesburg, South Africa) produces works that reverberate with the tones of a present time rooted in violence and fed by revolt. With a work that includes new opera, jazz improvisation and traditional songs of the Zulu and Sesotho cultures, the artist carries out a continuous research into the various sounds that compose the history of protest song in the pan-African and diasporic context. Recently, this investigation has led him to the intricate history of the Christian hymn “Amazing Grace” written by the British poet and clergymen John Newton, in 1772.

“Amazing Grace”, a song that arouses deep feelings and a sense of bonding, is associated

with black music and the narratives of the abolitionist struggle. Little is said, however, about the author of this song. The Englishman John Newton played a significant role in the trafficking of African slaves to the Americas, including to Brazil. After several near-death experiences, Newton claims to have had a divine epiphany, after which he became an Anglican priest and abolitionist, and composed the verses and music of the famous “Amazing Grace”. The song, one of the best known and most performed in the history of music, known particularly for its roles in the construction of black musical identity and the fight for abolition, was in reality composed by a white slaver looking for redemption. Addressing the

paradoxes of this history, Muyanga developed *A Maze in Grace* (2020), a large-scale collective performance, in collaboration with the Legítima Defesa collective and the artist Bianca Turner, which opened the 34th Bial in February 2020. In the installation presented at the exhibition, images from rehearsals of the performance shown together with other recordings, preparatory sketches, musical scores, and historical documents with interventions by the artist amplify the subversion of the original song, from which Muyanga reclaims the complexities between cruelty and compassion.



The Complete Works, 2009

Exhibition view of *What Follows Will Follow II*. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, 2010. Dancer: Muriel Maffre. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Nordic Culture Fund, ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen) and Danish Arts Foundation

The Complete Works (2009), by Nina Beier (1975, Aarhus, Denmark), is a performance in which retired dancers dance, individually, every piece of choreography they performed in their careers, re-enacting them in chronological order, without interruptions. One after the other, the movements are drawn in the space. The same body, many years later, moves from one position to the next, carried by muscle memory, dancing to imagined music and accompanied in memory by a now absent corps de ballet. In this visit to their own past, each dancer recounts the history of choreography and contemporary dance. The performance takes place at the threshold between mental space, where each dancer searches for the

memories of their now finished career, and the visual manifestation of those memories in sketched-out movements. Each gesture is not only itself but an echo of what it once was.

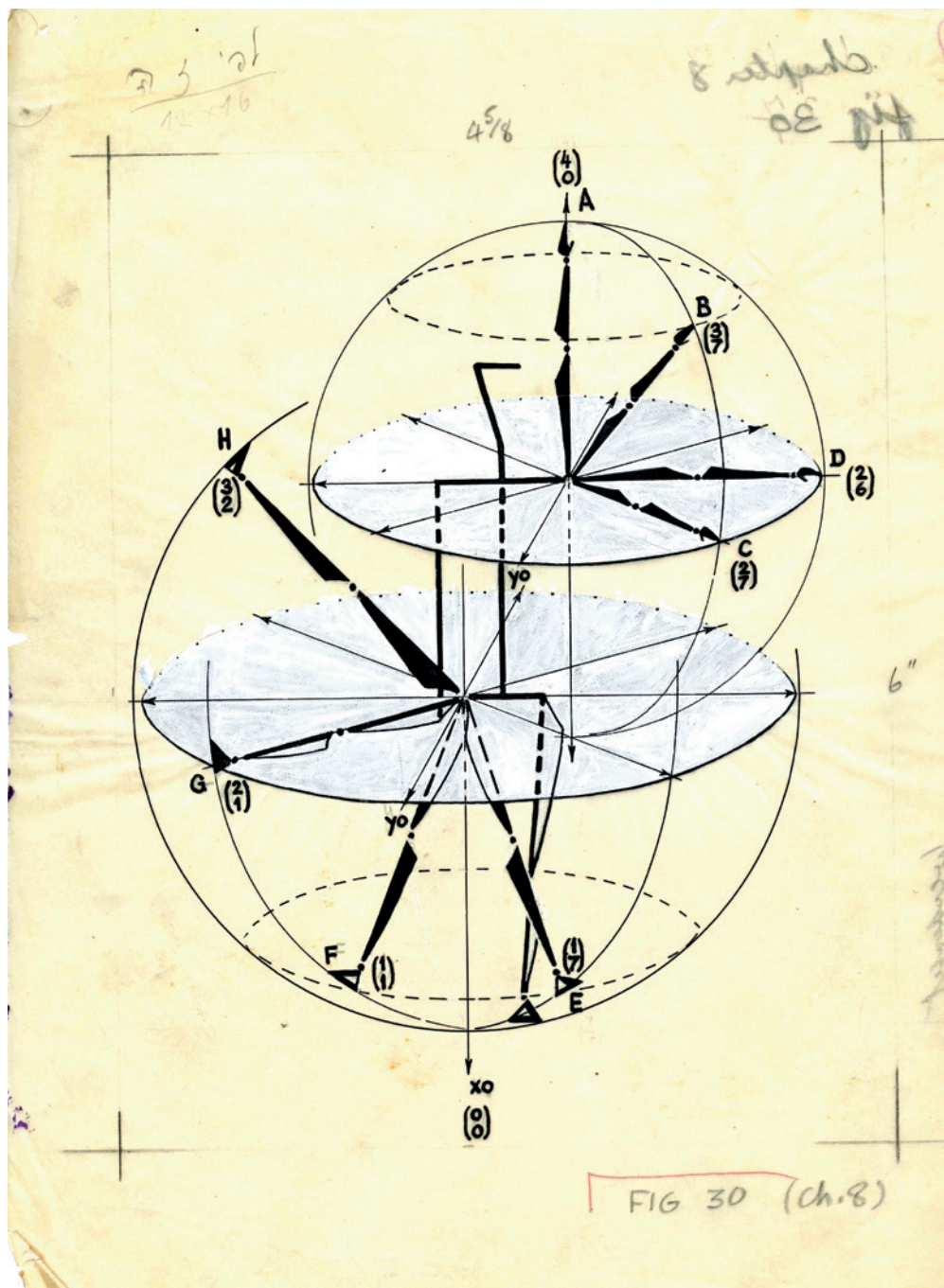
Beier is interested in the presence that pulses between representation and the thing itself. In many of her installations, the artist uses objects that when removed from their environment and devoid of their function are capable of assuming new behaviors and evoking new voices, without losing their usual appearance and the purposes they have assumed throughout the history of their use, nor the economy of their presence in the world. In bringing these objects together, coming from different cultures and laden with

different stories, new meanings are created. In the installation *Plug* (2018), for example, a cigar is still a cigar when embedded into a porcelain sink, but what conversation is established in the meeting of the tobacco leaves, worked on by hands for the enjoyment of smokers, and the waterproof sterility of sanitary ware?

Avraham Wachman

**The Individual Systems of Reference of the Body
Limbs are Parallel to Each Other and to the Overall
Reference System, 1950s**

China ink and collage on paper. 30×20 cm. Courtesy:
Noa Eshkol Foundation for Movement Notation, Holon,
Israel, and neugerriemschneider, Berlin. Participation
in the 34th Bienal supported by: Artis and Consulado
Geral de Israel em São Paulo



Noa Eshkol (1924, Palestine – 2007, Israel) was an artist, choreographer, dancer and professor. In the 1950s, together with architect Avraham Wachman, Eshkol developed a system of movement notation (Eshkol Wachman Movement Notation – EWMN) which uses a combination of symbols and numbers to note down the movements of the body and organize them into categories which can then be studied and repeated. Eshkol developed various choreographies with the help of the EWMN system, in which, without depending on the music or the costume, dance becomes a process of interaction between bodies in space and a communitarian activity. EWMN thus transcended the field of dance and can be a tool for observing

the relationship between any body and its surroundings, and can be applied in various fields, including studies of language and of behavior.

In 1973, during the Yom Kippur war, Eshkol stopped dancing and began the production of her *Wall Carpets*. This work was made only with used materials, never bought ones: the artist collected cast-off clothes and rags, and the carpets were sewn in a joint effort together with her dancers. These compositions varied between abstractions and still lifes. In *The House of Bernarda Alba* (Virgin) (1978), for example, an arrangement of light colors surrounds a square of green fabric. The title alludes to the play of the same name by Federico García Lorca, in which there are

growing tensions between a manipulative mother and her five daughters. In the composition, the square represents a sort of window, suggesting a possible escape from the repressive conditions in the house.



Hold Hold Fire, 2020

Video still. Courtesy of the artist and Maureen Paley. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: British Council and Iaspis – the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists

Olivia Plender's (1977, London, United Kingdom) work is based on historical research that analyzes pedagogical methods and revolutionary, social, political, and religious movements mainly of the 19th and 20th centuries. Plender finds her resources in institutional archives, as well as in literature and anonymous and popular narratives. In recent years, her focus has been on investigating situations, processes, and narratives that arise from movements organized by social minorities, particularly with feminist and socialist associations. Though she has a particular fascination for past events, Plender is interested in experiencing these ideas in the present, comparing forms of social participation, and ultimately

seeking new alternatives for collectivity and public intervention that transcend neoliberal foundations.

While researching at a feminist archive in London, Plender came across a script for the play *Liberty or Death* (c. 1913), by Sylvia Pankhurst, one of the leaders of the women's suffrage movement and one of the founders of the United Kingdom Communist Party. There was no record in the documentation found of any publication or staging of the play, which is inspired by the East London Federation of the Suffragettes' fight to improve living and working conditions for women. In the video *Hold Hold Fire* (2020) and in a series of pencil drawings, Plender uses Pankhurst's play as

a starting point to discuss the present day in relation to domestic violence, the pay gap, and the housing crisis, from the perspective of women in the UK. The artist held a series of meetings in community centers with groups of female activists and, together with a theater director, reworked scenes and dialogues from Pankhurst's play to make them topical.



Mind Pipeline, 2020-21

Aluminum. Dimensions variable. Site-specific installation in the Hoh Rainforest, WA (2020-21). Photo: Oscar Tuazon. Courtesy of the artist, Luhring Augustine, New York, Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, and Eva Presenhuber, Zürich, New York

For Oscar Tuazon (1975, Seattle, Washington, USA), the artistic practice is a principle of life. His works are de facto inseparable from what can be called a life project, which includes living on the fringe of society, at the periphery of social codes, in pursue of a total harmony with the environment that surrounds him. Tuazon's work is thus born out of a strong desire, deeply rooted in North American culture, to create a refuge, the archetypical "hut in the forest". Based on those premises, Tuazon has explored throughout his career both new forms and historic alternative prototypes of architecture, as an expression of an urge for a renewed way of life. This ethic of life is plastically translated in the use and recycling of materials from the

environment, both natural and industrial, such as wood, steel and glass.

While Tuazon's practice can be considered mainly sculptural, the artist tests the boundaries of the medium by programmatically shifting the focus of his interest: from the material employed or the final shape of the artwork to the implicitly transitory nature of his creation. The artistic gesture desacralizes the materials by freeing them from any symbolism and from the function originally imposed upon them. Tuazon also challenges their physical qualities, always seeking the limit of breakage, the culmination of their fragility. The process of building or transforming the object becomes as important as the final result, even more so

as this process is often performed by the artist through and with an expanded network of collaborations with fellow artists, craftsmen, activists, researchers, designers and architects. Although reflecting on the idea of the shelter, his work does not seek social isolation, but rather to recreate, to collectively invent new forms of living together.



Untitled, 2007
Mixed media on paper. Hall de Lima Collection

Born in the Uige province, Paulo Kapela (1947, Uige, Angola – 2020, Luanda, Angola) flew to the Republic of the Congo and studied at the Poto-Poto School of Painting in Brazzaville before returning to Angola and settling in Luanda, where he lived and worked in often precarious conditions. Settling in the downtown area and surrounded by materials that fed his practice, he built a creative continuum where life and art were difficult to tell apart. “Mestre Kapela [Master Kapela]” soon established himself as a reference and inexhaustible source of inspiration for younger generations of Angolan artists, thanks both to the extraordinary power of his paintings and to his charismatic, prophetic character. His practice should

be read as an intrinsically political act, an effort of appropriating and rewriting Angola’s colonial history, in the search for a “creolization” between elements of Western domination and the local cultural and social reality.

Kapela’s paintings are imbued with a strong syncretism, where direct references to Catholicism, Bantu philosophy and Rastafarianism are juxtaposed and placed in direct contact. Likewise, in his installations, Kapela used profane objects from consumer society and sacred objects, often displaying them alongside portraits of personalities from Angola’s political and financial sectors. There is a hint of religious iconography in the way the artist’s installations combine objects and

paintings in compositions reminiscent of altars, where human figures can appear surrounded by mirrors, crosses, circles, or statuettes that weave a direct link to Nkisi culture. Another strong component of his practice is the written word: many of his paintings are covered in writing, often referring to friends and acquaintances, but also full of intimate and personal testimonies and anecdotes.

Paulo Kapela died of Covid-19 in November 2020.



[A] LA FLEUR DE LA PEAU [[ON] THE FLOWER OF SKIN], 2020

Documentation of performance at the opening of the exhibition *Wind*, at the Bienal Pavilion. Photo: Levi Fanan / Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

Displacement, communication and circulation are the primary resources in the development and language of Paulo Nazareth da Silva, Awa Jeguakai Nrendá's (old man born in Borun Nak, Vale do Rio Doce, state of Minas Gerais, Brazil) work, which is manifested in actions, immaterial art or behavioral art. Anchored by ethical commitments to indigenous and Afro-Brazilian peoples – which form a part of his ancestry –, Nazareth traces routes of contact with the world, taking as a starting point his upbringing at the top of the Morro do Palmital [Palmital Hill], in Santa Luzia, a natural overlook point in the North Zone of Belo Horizonte, where the People of Luiza, or People of Lagoa Santa, would have lived. He enacts his own mixed-race identity on

these routes, challenging norms and prejudices, and searching for rituals and conceptual, historical and emotional connections with figures of struggle and resistance, from past and present.

Nazareth deals consciously with the circulation of his works. One of the main areas of his production is the editorial platform P. NAZARETH ED. / LTDA., printing pamphlets at low costs and in large quantities, which are then distributed for free or for voluntary amounts. Their content includes realized and unrealized projects, stories, concepts, and memories, generating critical debates about dominant ideologies and their mechanisms of violence and structural racism. In exhibition spaces, Nazareth combines documentary practices and installation and

sculptural assemblages, using ordinary materials, with performative practices, which involve elements of ritualization and catharsis. In the performance *[A] LA FLEUR DE LA PEAU [[ON] THE FLOWER OF SKIN]* (2019/2020), for example, a sack of white flour hangs from the ceiling and is rhythmically stabbed by two immigrant men. The white powder falls to the ground until the men leave the scene and a woman, also an immigrant, organizes all the powder into a precise circle with a broom – alluding to white Western culture and its use of rationalism as a tool to repress other cultures in the world, including the African and Islamic origins of mathematics and geometry.



Untitled (34bsp), 2021

Film still. 35mm film, silent. 5'10". Commissioned by Fundação Bienal de São Paulo for the 34th Bienal. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Phileas – A Fund for Contemporary Art and Federal Ministry Republic of Austria – Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport

Philipp Fleischmann's (1985, Hollabrunn, Austria) films constitute a rare example of a work that manages to be simultaneously physical – or “concrete,” as he himself puts it – and purely conceptual. Inspired by the great names of Austrian structuralist cinema, such as Peter Kubelka, Kurt Kren and Peter Tscherkassky, Fleischmann wound up subverting the cinematic view of these filmmakers, which has the single film frame as an essential element. Considering that the individual frame is not inherent to the film material per se – but rather merely a trace of the passing of the film through the cinematographic camera –, Fleischmann developed an entirely new type of camera that

allows the film to be exposed all at once, thus abolishing the film frame.

In the artist's view, the conventional cameras carry “a clear conception [of] how reality should be transmitted and represented. I wanted to get rid of the single frame, because it is a core element of the representational operations and political organizations that I do not agree with.” It is in this sense that Fleischmann's practice is physical, as it is based on the inescapable physicality of the film itself, but it is also eminently theoretic, insofar as it makes its potential criticism explicit. Consistent with this view, in his films the artist has concentrated on representing, nearly exclusively, the architecture of iconic

cultural spaces, thus confirming the intellectual affinity of his practice with the tradition of conceptual art, whose recurrent motifs include the criticism of the “white cube.” After portraying spaces as diverse as the Secession in Vienna and the Austrian pavilion at the Venice Biennale, in his work commissioned for the 34th Bienal Fleischmann responds to the architecture of the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion, creating his most expansive work, in which he walks the building from the ground floor, surrounded by Ibirapuera Park, to its roof.



Untitled (Double Exposure – Portrait in Interior), 1990

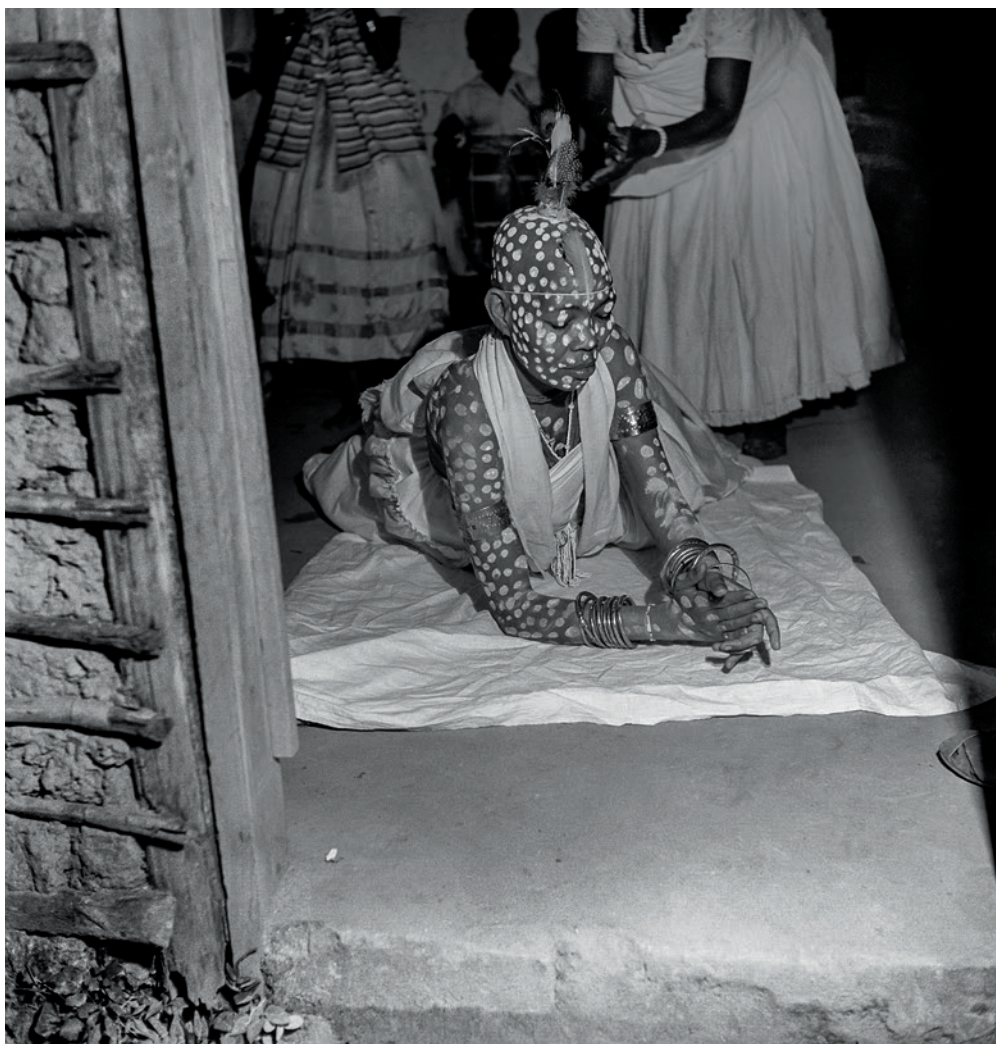
Digital file of color double exposure self-portrait in interior (exhibition copy). 14,8 × 21 cm. Courtesy: Søren Arke. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Nordic Culture Fund and Danish Arts Foundation

Born to a Danish father and a Greenlandic mother, Pia Arke (1958, Ittoqqortoormiit, Greenland – 2007, Copenhagen, Denmark) spent her childhood in Greenland without being taught to speak the local language. In her work, Arke combined her own image and mixed heritage with historical and geopolitical references in order to address the power relations and the identity problems that arise from colonial exploitation. Through her conceptual and performative practice, Arke gave new meaning to appropriated materials such as photographs of her mother taken by her father, annotated maps, traditional clothing, objects found in the vicinity of a military base, and journals and photos from Nordic explorers.

Her own body, her face, and Greenlandic natural landmarks are repeated subjects for her large-scale pinhole camera and double exposure photographs, in which different layers of negotiated reality are juxtaposed.

In her video titled *Arktisk hysteri* [Arctic Hysteria] (1996), Arke makes reference to a mental illness that Inuit women allegedly suffered from. The video shows the artist crawling naked across a black-and-white photograph of Nuugaarsuk Point, a landscape she inhabited as a child and that is present in many of her works, also appearing as the background in a large series of self and group portraits. *Jord til Scoresbysund* [Soil for Scoresbysund] (1998) is an installation comprising used coffee filters

wound with string and displayed as a square on the floor. The work is connected to one of the artist's stays in Scoresbysund, when her sister-in-law told her that used coffee grounds should be thrown out of the window to fertilize the otherwise stony soil. If in its origin the installation refers to "the whole idea of Denmark's right to Greenland's underground", as Arke once wrote in a letter, in São Paulo, a city built on the profits of coffee plantations, new layers of readings surround this imperfect geometric form and the smell it exhales.



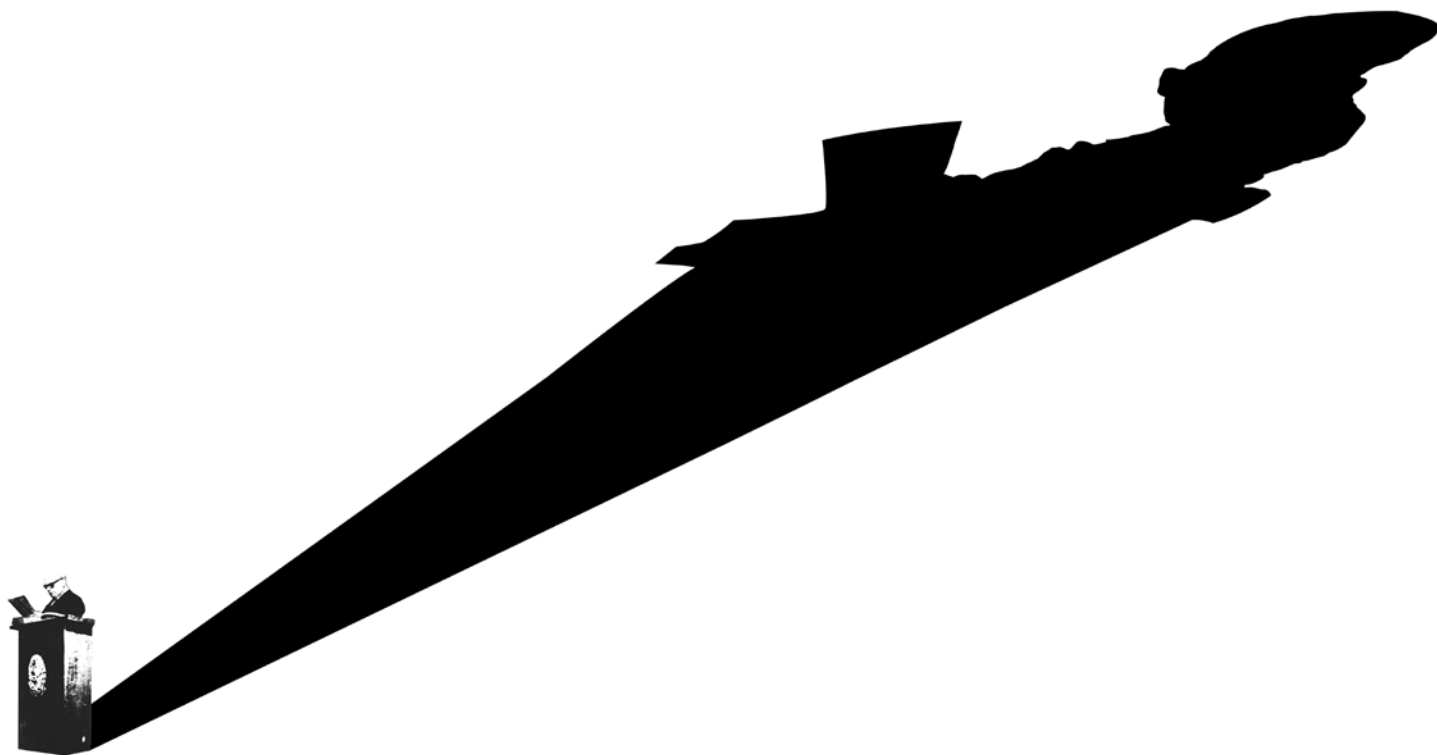
Uma Iaô de Oxum na sua primeira saída quando é apresentada ao público [A Oshun Iao in Her First Leave, When Presented to the Public], 1950-1951
Candomblé do pai Cosme series. Gelatin silver print. 50 × 50 cm. © Fundação Pierre Verger. Courtesy Fundação Pierre Verger. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Institut français à Paris

Pierre Verger's (1902, Paris, France – 1996, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil) stories about himself invariably begin with his discomfort at the moralism that ruled the bourgeois life of his family in Paris. Searching for alternatives, Verger started working with photography and left Paris to spend over a decade traveling the world. In 1946, he visited the city of Salvador for the first time, which would become his most lasting home, and became involved in Afro-Brazilian culture. Verger was initiated into Candomblé and started transiting between Bahia State and West Africa, seeking to compare and connect the religiosity of the Yoruba peoples with their diasporic descendants. This pendular transit became the main drive in Verger's life: through

it, the photographer was initiated as a Babalawo [Yoruba priest] and rebaptized as Pierre *Fatumbi* Verger, assuming an important role with the *terreiros* [Candomblé temples] and *pais* and *mães de santo* [saint-fathers and saint-mothers, "priests and priestesses" who run *terreiros*] of Salvador.

At the beginning of the 1950s, Verger was invited by Father Cosme to photograph an initiation ritual, including the private and trance stages. The resulting study, which combines the intensity of the ritual moments with a direct photographic approach, remained almost unseen, with only three of the photographs being published in the books *L'érotisme* [Eroticism] (1957) and *Les larmes d'Eros* [The Tears

of Eros] (1961) by Georges Bataille. In 1951, after photographs of a Candomblé initiation ritual were published in an exoticized edition of the magazine *Paris Match*, the magazine *O Cruzeiro* asked for Verger's help in producing a similar story, but he dodged it because he considered this issue disrespectful. The photographer José Medeiros was then sent to Salvador to produce a photographic study that was published in the same year, while Verger only reconsidered his veto of his own photographs years later when he included some of them in his book *Orixás* (1981), where he could be certain they were being contextualized by his research and experience.



Dilatáveis [Dilatables] series, 1981/2020
Adhesive vinyl on wood. Dimensions variable.

Regina Silveira (1939, Porto Alegre, Brazil) received her first training as an artist in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and in Madrid, Spain, but it was in Puerto Rico, from 1969 onward, that she developed the first exercises that delineated the core of her work. Invited to implant an experimental teaching model at the University of Puerto Rico, Silveira experimented intensively with graphic techniques for the reproduction of images and participated in an environment that was debating art as a territory for the circulation of images, discourses and ideological systems of representation. After her return to Brazil in 1973, Silveira continued her work as a university professor in São Paulo committed to contemporary

methodologies of creation and, as an artist, she became established as one of the key investigators of the specificities of the technical means and languages of art.

The artist studies how the optical apparatus processes what we see and how the drawing can manipulate these processes, dilating them, distorting them, leading them to the absurd. Silveira developed the set of works *Dilatáveis* [Dilatables] (1981) as part of the research for her PhD, entitled *Simulacros* [Simulacra], at ECA-USP. In the series, the artist appropriated photographs from widely circulated prints and reproduced them in high-contrast using the original heliograph technique, which today has been lost. Beginning the use of

projections distorted by exaggerated variables of perspective technique, which in the following decades would become a recurring area in her experimentation, Silveira created disproportionate shadows from the figures, imbuing them with symbolic connotations. In doing so, the artist emphasized the significance of iconic signs in Brazilian political and cultural life at the time (which still very much exist), embodying their oppressive presence in the national imagination whilst also highlighting the threatening nature assumed by promises of happiness, progress and order when they became unavoidable slogans, pillars in the propaganda of the dictatorial regime in force in Brazil at the time.



Roger Bernat / FFF

Domini Públic [Public Domain], 2012

Brasília, 2012. Photo: Blenda. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: AC/E – Acción Cultural Española and Institut Ramon Llull

Roger Bernat (1968, Barcelona, Catalonia) usually teams up with collaborators from diverse areas, including internet art, sound design, and documentary theater. Though his projects have predominantly been shown in theater settings, his devices have also been exhibited in art contexts, particularly in the last decade.

Bernat's work demonstrates the paradox between the crisis of representative democracy and how it unfolds in direct action and in new forms of producing and sharing knowledge, fostered by computer-based technologies, where the roles of sender and receiver are undone. In all his work, expanded theater becomes a device for an audience that is summoned to be an actor in history.

Pim-pam (2021), work commissioned by the 34th Bienal, is an onomatopoeia, a rhythmic game encapsulating an instant that goes back and forth, like a ball hitting the wall in a game of squash. For this installation, Bernat and his group FFF created a simple game, with few rules, for whoever wants to play it. Headphones are distributed on trolleys inside the pavilion. By following the instructions whispered into the headphones, visitors can initiate a strange visit to the Bienal and, at the same time, parasitize it.

Pim-pam evokes a world of direct and indirect protocols in which people are subjected to external forces, successive attacks that emancipate or destroy. The piece makes us aware of a

game that we can only understand as long as we continue to play. The artist himself defines it as a playground that, "instead of being formed by architectural objects, is articulated by sounds. It contains orders extracted from approximately half a thousand Brazilian sound documents of the last 50 years: excerpts from political speeches or songs, fragments from television shows, advertisements, yoga and meditation tips, Forró and Zumba steps, military instructions, GPS indications, etc".



Alka Domo, 2017

Video still. Videoperformance and sculpture. 17', 1920×1080 cm. Direction and production: Sebastián Calfuqueo. Camera and editing: Juan Pablo Faus. Translation to English: Jorge Pérez. Acknowledgements: Cristián Inostroza. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio – Gobierno de Chile

In most of their work, Sebastián Calfuqueo (1991, Santiago, Chile) touch on or expose, in a militant and critical manner, their Mapuche ancestry and the discrimination the artist faces in daily life for belonging to an indigenous group and, beyond that, for not fitting into dominant heteronormative narratives. These issues are addressed directly and with impact in one of their first works, *You Will Never Be a Weye* (2015), a filmed recording of a performance in which Calfuqueo reveals how the history of the Machis Weyes (individuals who do not conform to gender binarism) was erased as a result of the Catholic indoctrination imposed by the colonizers and of the politics of the Chilean state.

At the intersection and in the juxtaposition of domination and repression, Calfuqueo finds fertile ground to instigate reflections on the political, cultural and social status of the Mapuche people and culture in contemporary Chilean society. It is significant, in this sense, that beyond their artistic practice, Calfuqueo belongs to the feminist collectives Mapuche Rangitulewfü and Yene Revista, and has collaborated in publishing texts in the Mapuche language, working towards its stimulation and preservation. Their work often starts from the broad field of performance art, whether in its more classic sense, or as a moment to be recorded on video and shown later in an exhibition space together with elements used

in the action itself, or inspired by and related to it conceptually, such as in the ceramic replicas of water gallons used in *Ko ta mapungey ka* [Water is Also Territory] (2020), in which the artist contrasts the neoliberal capitalist violent exploitation of water in Chile with the symbiotic relationship the Mapuche people have with lakes and rivers.



Stack, 2020

Watercolor on canvas. 300 × 370 × 2 cm. Courtesy: Regen Projects, Los Angeles; Galerie Buchholz Berlin/ Cologne/ New York; greengrassi, London. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen)

The work of Silke Otto-Knapp (1970, Osnabrück, Germany) is influenced by images and concepts from 20th-century dance, theater, and performance. With medium- and large-format works that function both autonomously and in almost architectural groupings, Otto-Knapp draws inspiration from the long-established tradition of painted panels and set design. In her paintings, she alternates between natural, idealized landscape backgrounds and subtle, mysterious interior scenes, where figures in motion evoke recent episodes in the history of modern and contemporary dance. Her works occasionally take reference from other, mostly female, artists, from American dancer Anna Halprin to Russian painter

and set designer Natalia Goncharova, both key figures in shifting paradigms of modern dance and art, respectively.

Otto-Knapp has developed a particular pictorial language. First, she transfers her drawings to canvas, developing the forms with layers of black watercolor paint, which she later sprays with water. As the paint dissolves, the artist cleans the surface so the color drains from certain areas and settles in others as it dries. In the 34th Bienal, Otto-Knapp presents a series of medium- and large-format paintings that form a kind of setting, both in terms of their subject matter and their arrangement inside the pavilion. The paintings rest on panels or function as folding screens and

autonomous structures. The motion exists not only in the action of the choreographic and/or theatrical subject itself but also in the way the public moves around the work. Meanwhile, the human-sized painted landscapes portray an artificial nature that contrasts with the vegetation surrounding the pavilion in Ibirapuera Park, creating a dualistic setting.



Mõgmõka xupep [The Hawk Leaving], 2005
Watercolor. 26×21 cm. Courtesy of the artist.
Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by:
Instituto Inclusartiz

Sueli Maxakali (1976, Santa Helena de Minas, Minas Gerais State, Brazil) is a leader of the Tikmũ'ũn indigenous people, better known as the Maxakali. Forced to leave their ancestral land to survive the aggressions that accumulated over the centuries to the point of leaving them at risk of extinction in the 1940s, the Tikmũ'ũn have maintained their language and culture and today are divided into communities distributed in the Vale do Mucuri, in Minas Gerais. Village life is largely organized around and based upon their relationship with a myriad of spirit-people from the Atlantic Forest, the Yãmĩxop, and their respective sets of chants. Many of these chants are sung collectively, as the most fundamental way

of relating to the Yãmĩxop spirits, who are invited to visit the villages to sing, dance, and eat during the ritual. Every Tikmũ'ũn individual owns and is responsible for a part of the Yãmĩxop chant repertoire. Together, all the chants compose the Tikmũ'ũn universe, which is made up of everything that this people see, feel and interact with, but also of the memories of plants and animals that no longer exist, or that remained in their original land, from which the Tikmũ'ũn people were expelled during the colonial war.

Besides being a leader, educator, and photographer, Sueli is a film director. In the 34th Bienal, the artist presents the installation *Kũmxop Koxuk Yög* [The Spirits of My

Daughters], a collection of objects, masks, and dresses that refer to the mythical universe of the Yãmĩyhex – spirit women. All the work for the exhibition was made with women and girls in the community who take care of each one of these Yãmĩy spirits. The collective process of creating the work is coherent with the organization of the Tikmũ'ũn community itself, and in a sense stretches and shakes up the meaning, limits, and relevance of artistic production in such a specific context, presenting us with other regimes of authorship and creativity.



No Gods, No Masters, 2017

Video still. HD video and 4-channel sound. 19'13". Courtesy of the artist, Emalin, London, and Sfeir-Semler, Beirut / Hamburg

Sung Tieu (1987, Hải Dương, Vietnam) uses a wide range of media, including installation, sound, video, sculpture, photography and performance. Not engrossed in creating a recognizable style or in maintaining a practice that can be easily catalogued and circumscribed, she accumulates, superimposes and contaminates factual, fictional, plausible and possible narrative layers until they become inseparable from one another. Her research departs from issues of migration and displacement to explore the political interests that regulate these movements. In works such as *In Cold Print* (2020) the artist alludes to the so-called “Havana Syndrome” and its lasting impact on the geopolitical tensions between the United

States and Cuba; in *Zugzwang* (2020) she analyzes the bureaucratic state apparatus through the life and workplace of a fictional employee.

In other works, Tieu deepens the psychological and spiritual dimensions of collective trauma within situations of conflict. In her video *No Gods, No Masters* (2017), for example, the artist investigates the military operation *Wandering Soul*, carried out by the psychological operations of the US army in Vietnam in the 1960s, and the United State’s creation of a psychological sound weapon titled “Ghost Tape No. 10”, which consisted of a recording in which the spirit of a dead Vietnamese soldier urges his companions to desertion. Tieu juxtaposes this recording, which was broadcast via

military helicopters flying over the jungle at night, with images filmed in her family home in Hải Dương, in the north of the country. The footage enigmatically documents a ritual, which equally summons spirits of the dead. The series of textual works titled *Newspapers 1969-ongoing* (2017-ongoing), included by the artist in this and other installations, contributes further to a less univocal reading of her works.



Tamara Henderson and Nell Pearson

The Canberra Characters, 2020-2021

Series of 13 sculptures, various materials, dimensions variable. Photo: Brenton McGeachie. Courtesy of the artist and Rodeo, London / Piraeus. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Canada Council for the Arts

The practice of Tamara Henderson (1982, Sackville, Canada) covers a wide variety of mediums, such as performance, painting, poetry, film, textiles, sculpture and installation that can incorporate found objects. Her work often departs from an open-ended investigation of different states of consciousness. While the notes, observations, patterns or ideas that she includes in her work might be derived from what she sees in her everyday life, Henderson then elaborates on them in order to compose a kind of oneiric mythology that she further complexifies through different filters of perception. A key aspect of her work is thus the transformative power that is generated by the energy between the conscious and the unconscious.

Some of her works might verge on the funny, others on the openly arcane or indecipherable, subverting the boundaries between inside and outside, both in her own body and in those of the viewer. Despite the fact that the human figure is largely absent from her work, it does offer a possibility to reconnect with the body, to the idea of what a body is, should or can be. Objects replace human figures and become characters that spiral into being through their own dreamy, meditative, narrative journeys: by sewing dilated pupils on a set of curtains, for example, the artist turns them into eyewitnesses or observers. In other series of works, the artist creates animistic, hallucinatory scenes by revisiting a wide

range of techniques borrowed from the early years of cinema or the avant-garde of theatre and performance.

What if we could vote as equals?

Evil.27: Selma, 2011

Video still. HD video, color and sound. 9'. Courtesy of the artist, Greene Naftali, New York, Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles, and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York

The vast majority of the works Tony Cokes (1956, Richmond, Virginia, USA) produced in the last decade consist of videos in which texts are presented on monochromatic or abstract backgrounds, accompanied by music, usually from the broad universe of pop. In many cases, the texts analyze and contextualize the music itself, or the musical genre it belongs to, intertwining considerations that relate to the history of music with others of a broader nature, where cultural, political, racial and social spheres converge. In the series *Evil* (2001-ongoing), Cokes addresses the concept of evil in contemporary society. The artist juxtaposes statements from a variety of sources (from speeches by political leaders to stand-up

comedy sketches, to pop lyrics and even academic texts) in order to stress the way the media levels discourses, confuses the production of meaning and makes certain languages and events either visible, or invisible.

The work *Evil.27: Selma* (2011), for example, can be read as a reflection on such systems of visibility and silencing. The work is based on a historic event: the Montgomery bus boycott, a milestone in the civil rights movement in the mid-1950s in the United States, which began with the refusal of a young African-American woman, Rosa Parks, to give up her seat on the bus to a white man. In the video, Cokes presents a text called *On Non-Visibility* by the Our Literal Speed

collective, which argues that the episode generated enormous commotion and succeeded in mobilizing thousands of people because there were no images of the moment when Parks refused to give up her seat and ended up being arrested. This idea resonates even more strongly in an historic period like the one we are living – marked by the fight for visibility and for the end of historical structural violence – and in the practice of an artist who gives up the image to emphasize the power of the message.



Dancer of the Year, 2019

Kanal Pompidou, Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Brussels.
Photo: Orpheas Emirzas. Courtesy of the artist

In his choreographies, Trajal Harrell (1973, Georgia, USA) combines references from mainstream history of dance – mainly the 1960s North American avant-garde trends – with elements and movements from other contexts and histories, such as voguing, the hoochie koochie and butoh. These bold and extremely fertile encounters reveal connections between different fields of the performing arts, as bodies, identities and voices that clash with the conventional narrative of contemporary dance gain visibility. Harrell thus constructs a unique body of work, marked precisely by this hybrid and rhizomatic character, urging the spectator to imagine alternative histories of dance.

The point of departure of *Dancer of the Year*, the work included in the 34th Biental, is a personal one: Harrell's nomination as 'Dancer of the Year' by *Tanz* magazine in 2018 and the reflection on (self)worth which this triggered. The work is a dance performance accompanied by *Dancer of the Year Shop #3*, a performative installation in the form of a shop where Harrell puts up for sale personal objects of inestimable value such as family heirlooms. Questions about origins and legacy, (self)worth and the valorization of art, connect the dance solo with the installation, which also represents a new chapter in Harrell's commitment to testing the limits of his performative practice in the context of museums and exhibition

spaces. Another example of this interest is *The Untitled Still Life Collection*, a performance first conceived and interpreted by Harrell with a long-time friend, installation artist Sarah Sze, who collaborated to generate movement using a thin blue line of string. Rather than employing a conventional collaborative model (i.e. a visual artist creating a set for a choreographer to perform in), the two artists create a dialogue of mediums where the choreographic and sculptural minds entangle themselves transforming their individual properties and generating a new collective potential.



Elementar (Chão da mata) [Elemental (Forest Floor)], 2018

Photograph. 79 × 120 cm. Photo: Lisa Hermes. Courtesy of the artist

Uýra (1991, Santarém, Pará, Brazil) is a hybrid entity, an interweaving of scientific biological knowledge and the ancestral wisdom of the indigenous people. They call plants by their popular and Latin names, but evoke their medicinal properties, their tastes, their smells, their powers. The result is an intricate and complex understanding of the jungle, a web of knowledge and research. Uýra presents themselves as “a tree that walks” and was born in 2016, during the process of Dilma Rousseff’s impeachment, when biologist Emerson decided to expand their academic research and search for ways to bring debate about environmental conservation and LGBTQIA+ rights to communities in and around Manaus. In biology

classes or photographic performances, in make-up and camouflage, in texts and installations, Uýra talks both from and with the forest.

In the 34th Bienal, two preexisting photographic series – *Elementar* [Elemental] and *Mil quase mortes* [A Thousand Near Deaths] – are interconnected in a montage inspired by the undulations of a snake’s body. The images are at once records of actions of denunciation and evocations of ancestral or futuristic beings, between utopian and apocalyptic, of disturbing beauty. The series *Retomada* [Recovery] (2021), developed especially for this Bienal, is set in places in Manaus that, whether for their history and social function or for their architectural characteristics, could be associated with

ways of life inherited from Eurocentric culture. But what the apparition of Uýra awakens, what it makes us see, are the plants that gradually recover the space that once belonged to them.

Complementing this series is an installation, also being shown for the first time, entitled *Malhadeira* [Enmeshment] (2021), which superimposes a sinuous network of organic cables and rubber tree seeds onto a drawing of the mesh of roads connected to Constantino Nery Avenue, in Manaus. The wires made of seeds snaking over the straight lines bring back the river’s outline, the memory of the songs it sings.



Carcen, 2018

Enamelled lava plate. 50×42 cm. Photo: Jean-Baptiste Barret. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biental supported by: Institut français à Paris and Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication – DAC Martinique

Victor Anicet's (1938, Le Marigot, Martinique) works are a continuous exercise in restoring the testimonies of the Martinican people. His father a fisherman and his mother a worker at the sugar mill of a *habitation* (an extension of the colonial production regime based on slave labor), Anicet's first contact with the ceramics of the Amerindian Arawak people was as a child. Years later, while studying in Paris, he visited the Musée de L'Homme and realized how far he and his people had distanced themselves from their history, which had remained in the hands and voices of the colonizers. Anicet returned to Martinique in 1967, and since then his work has been taking place both in and outside the studio, whether joining

other artists interested in debating Caribbean aesthetics to found the group FWOMAJE (1984), dedicating himself to fostering an institutional space for Martinican art, or indeed creating public works.

One of Anicet's most important public works is a ceramic piece that marks the grave of Édouard Glissant in the Diamant cemetery, in Martinique. Titled *La présence de l'Est multiple* [The Presence of the Multiple East] (2011), the work was named by Glissant himself when an earlier work with the same composition was shown in an exhibition he organized in the 1970s. This recurrence of compositions and symbols sums up the way his production has developed over the last five decades.

Meanwhile, Anicet has been exploring recollections of the lives of African slaves and their descendants, as well as of Caribbean Amerindians and Hindu families who immigrated to Martinique in the last century. Many of these memories are charged with violence, such as those of the "carcans", iron instruments used to hold enslaved men and women by the neck, or natives' accounts of seeing the colonial ships appear on the horizon for the first time.



Juste un Mouvement [Just a Movement], 2021
Film still. 108'. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biental supported by: Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles and Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI)

Artist and filmmaker Vincent Meessen (1971, Baltimore, USA) combines criticism of colonial models used to write history with an affective attention to certain disruptive actions of the past. In a number of his works, his objects of interest are linked to the work of Situationist International, the revolutionary movement (active between 1957 and 1972) which gave rise to an integral criticism of society. Meessen investigates gaps in the movement's history, such as the existence of situationist direct influence on the African continent and the Caribbean. The film *Juste un Mouvement* [Just a Movement], shown at the 34th Biental inside the spiral-shaped installation *The Sun Will Always Rise* (2018-2020), was born within the

scope of this research, more specifically of the encounter with a photograph picturing the young anti-colonial militant and Senegalese philosopher Omar Blondin Diop reading the last edition of the magazine *Internationale Situationniste*.

Diop entered the cinema history with his appearance in the film *La Chinoise* (1967), by Jean-Luc Godard, where he played himself teaching a class on Marxism and Maoism to a group of young people, who have gathered in an apartment to prepare a transition from student movement into armed action. Meessen revisits a method used by Godard at the time – making a film as a process of registering the making of another film –, moving it to

present-day Dakar, Senegal, where colonial legacies are being reshuffled as the French influence gets surpassed by the complex alliances with Chinese government and companies. In this way, he both pays tribute to and criticizes the 1967 film, inverting its geographical and political focus in the present. In *Juste un Mouvement*, history and cinema are experienced as one continuous polyphonic movement, replete with spiral overlaps, throughout which a narrative is woven by Diop's friends and family, reunited today to remember his ideas and attitudes, and to demand the truth about his political imprisonment and death.



Insurgencias botánicas: *Phaseolus Lunatus* [Botanical Insurgencies: *Phaseolus Lunatus*], 2017/2020
Installation: hydroponic structure and plants of species *Phaseolus Lunatus*; MDF wooden box with broad bean seeds; ceramics; acrylic painting on wall. Dimensions variable. Documentation of the solo exhibition at the Bienal Pavilion. Photo: Levi Fanan / Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

The complex Peruvian imaginary, characterized by the clashing between the age-old Andean culture and the violence, idiosyncrasies and contradictions introduced and fueled by the processes of colonization, are often the basis for the work by Ximena Garrido-Lecca (1980, Lima, Peru). The variety of techniques and resources used by the artist in a certain way reflects the impossibility of translating this complexity, of pasteurizing the clashings within the Latin American reality in a pacified or linear work. In recent years, Garrido-Lecca also produced a series of installations characterized by the use of processes of construction or growth that can be observed over time by the public, recovering techniques

and materials employed in handicraft, art and architecture throughout Peruvian history.

One of her most emblematic works, *Insurgencias botánicas: Phaseolus Lunatus* [Botanical Insurgencies: *Phaseolus Lunatus*] (2017-2020) is an installation in which seedlings of the species *Phaseolus lunatus* are planted in a hydroponic structure, in a symbolic reactivation of the supposed communication system of the Moche culture, a pre-Incan Peruvian civilization that developed complex irrigation methods and which, according to theories, made use of the spots present on these beans as signs for an ideogrammatic writing system. In the environment of the 34th Bienal, the installation was shown for the first time in February 2020,

in a solo show marking the opening of the exhibition, and again in November, when part of the group show *Vento* [Wind], the second stage in the public construction of the Bienal and a moment of collective affirmation of the desire to resist and to keep believing in art and culture despite the despair of the pandemic. With its emphasis on the unending transformation of all living things (from plants to culture), it came to symbolize the curatorial strategy of thinking of an exhibition as a process rather than as something fixed or crystallized.

Orochi (Serpent) AM 88.2 MHz, 2019

Exhibition view of *Slower Than Slowly*. Courtesy: Mother's Tankstation Limited, London. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan (Bunka-cho Art Platform Japan) and Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)



Intangible elements such as space, light, magnetism and gravity are fundamental in the assemblages and installations by Yuko Mohri (1980, Kanagawa, Japan). She often uses everyday elements to create objects or devices with moving parts, which can emit sounds or light, or generate fields of magnetism or energy. Randomness and improvisation – central elements in the intersection between the visual arts and music – are present in many of the artist's works, in which the sounds produced by the movement of the objects are never entirely controlled, and largely unforeseeable. Mohri's installations constitute autonomous and permeable ecosystems, in which the artist explores the clashing between the various elements that compose

them. Often, the idiosyncrasies of the venue where the works are shown also play a determinant role in the behavior of these sets of objects.

In Mohri's work, the voice, one of the ecosystem elements, can act as discourse, as pure sound or even as an element that stitches together different contexts and stories. The artist conceived for the *Vento* exhibition a sound installation in which we hear the distorted voice of Daisetsu Suzuki saying "I can't hear you". In Mohri's universe, Suzuki's voice is the counterpoint to the writing of Marcel Duchamp, who, in a letter addressed to Maria Martins in 1951, shortly before the first Bienal de São Paulo, reported the anguish caused by the voice heard on the telephone, distorted by distance and at

the same time so present that it exposed the futility of the written word.

In *Orochi (Serpent) AM 88.2 MHz* (2019/2021), the passage of a sound signal through a coiled cable generates a magnetic field that makes a small metal object moves. The sound converts to magnetic force, and although the music is playing, the only thing the visitor hears is the faint sound of objects trembling. Thus, electromagnetic fields, music, movement, sound and vibration are mixed in a multidimensional arrangement.



Discurso de Promoción [Promotion Speech], undated. Action documentation. Photo: Musuk Nolte. Courtesy of Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani

Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani (1971, Lima, Peru) is one of the most important representatives of so-called group theater in Latin America. The group is a pioneer in collective creation, experimentation, and political performance. “Yuyachkani” is a Quechua word meaning “I am thinking”, “I am remembering”, a metaphor that has served to investigate and analyze the syncretism of theatricalities found in Peruvian traditions and indigenous culture in the Peruvian political and social context since the group started in 1971, also incorporating the repertoire of universal theater. In their work, Yuyachkani frequently features the presence of bodies in the space, as well as theatrical text, elements of documentary archive,

photography, installation, dance, and play, arranging the dramaturgy according to what creation demands throughout the process.

The group’s members, directed by Miguel Rubio, define themselves not only as creative actors and actresses, but as citizens and activists seeking to reactivate social and historical memory through themes as diverse as land struggle, migration, marginalization, political violence against women, justice, the dilemma of the displaced returning to their native countries, and the disappeared. These urgent themes do not exclude broader themes, such as reflections on the human condition and the hope for a future that includes all lives on the planet. The group’s trajectory ranges from

direct collaboration with political militancy alongside leftist parties to the exercise of theatrical creation as a social tool for change. Today, their theater-house is a space dedicated to the community, where they present their works and carry out workshops with theatrical methods to promote inclusive experiences. The presentation of its archive at the 34th Bienal is the first attempt to openly and performatively exhibit the documents, images, personal magazines, booklets, videos, and photographs that the group used to compose its works and to engage with the work’s context over five decades of existence.



The Re(a)d Forest, 2021

Video still. Video installation. Courtesy of the artist

Born in Nigeria, raised from infancy in the UK and currently residing between Los Angeles (USA) and Port Harcourt (Nigeria), Zina Saro-Wiwa (1976, Port Harcourt) is an artist who, as she puts it, “lives within many cultures, worlds and psychic dimensions.” Her task as an artist as she sees it, has been to try to understand her place and the place of humanity “in the worlds on this earth.” After more than a decade working in journalism, Saro-Wiwa began her artistic career investigating her complex and tragic family history, closely linked to the destructive processes of oil extraction in Ogoniland, her ancestral homeland in southern Nigeria. Saro-Wiwa uses video installation, photography, film and documentary production, writing,

curatorial projects and food initiatives, to build a concept of environmentalism that integrates and includes emotional and spiritual ecosystems, in addition to accepted concerns that define environmentalism such as greenhouse gas emissions and melting ice caps.

In *The Re(a)d Forest* (2021), a video installation commissioned by the 34th Biennial, Saro-Wiwa builds a representation of the energetic and spiritual body of a forest, expressing the ways in which she imagines the interconnection and the interdependence between trees and people. The columns of red light – a colour that symbolizes rebirth and renewal in the Ogoni culture – are also the color that the trees “see”, according to the artist, thanks to

the presence of phytochrome B, a photoreceptor protein that detects red light. In the video triptych *Kum: Soul of the Shadow* (2020) we are confronted with a magnificent ancient tree named “Kum” by the people that live around it. It is a tree that occupies a central place in one of the 111 villages of Ogoniland, where the video was filmed, and around which the community gathers to make important decisions. Interacting with the tree is *The Invisible Boy*, an entity that appears in the works of Saro-Wiwa and represents a messenger between worldly dimensions. The personification of secrecy and epistemic resistance.



Alma no olho [Soul in the Eye], 1973
Film still. 11'. Courtesy of Centro Afro Carioca de
Cinema Zózimo Bulbul

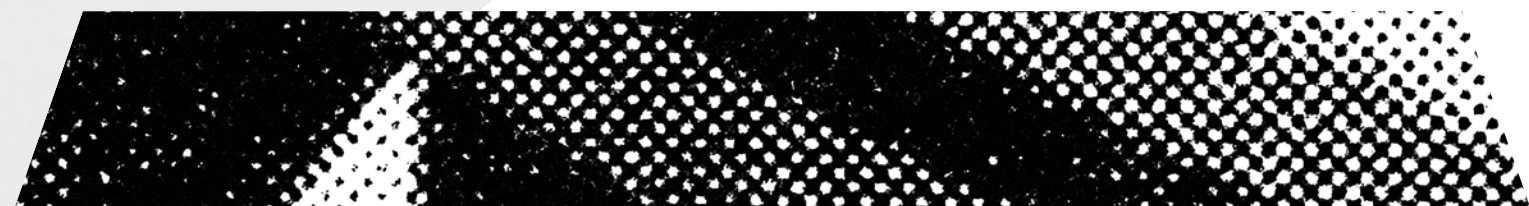
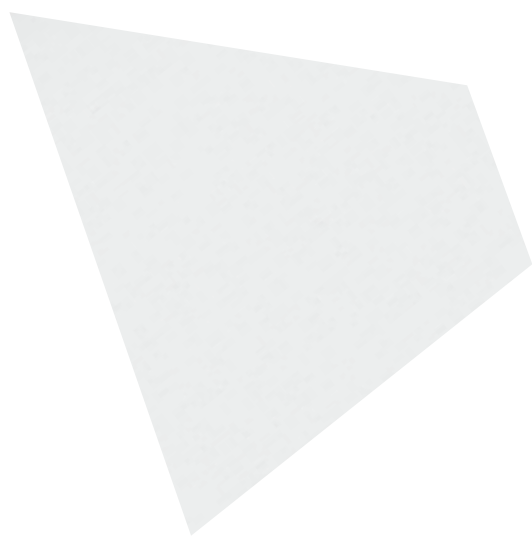
Zózimo Bulbul (1937-2013, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) is a fundamental figure in Brazilian cinema history. Consolidated as one of the most important actors of his generation, he worked with directors such as Leon Hirszman, Nelson Pereira dos Santos and Glauber Rocha. While spending time amid the intellectual and politicized environment of this group of filmmakers, Bulbul participated in debates with the black movements emerging in the country, which led him to rethink his artistic production. His legacy to future generations includes the feature film *Abolição* [Abolition] (1988), a synthesis of debates on the farse of abolition of Afro-Brazilian slaves that supposedly took place in 1888, eight short films, and the founding of both the

Centro Afro Carioca de Cinema [Afro Carioca Cinema Center] (since 2007) and Encontros de Cinema Negro – Brasil, África e Caribe [Meetings of Black Cinema – Brazil, Africa, and the Caribbean], an event, now in its 14th year, dedicated to building the protagonism of the black Brazilian filmmaker, in connection with the African continent and its diasporas.

In 1971, Bulbul starred in the feature film *Compasso de espera*, directed by Antunes Filho. He played a black poet who has achieved a certain prominence in a predominantly white bourgeois and intellectual environment, thus confronting the atavistic racism in Brazilian society, still disguised by the myth of racial democracy. Bulbul then obtained the short

ends leftover from Antunes Filho's feature and used them to direct his first short film, *Alma no olho* [Soul in the Eye] (1973), included in the 34th Bienal. Given the precariousness of the material, which limited the control of photographic contrast and restricted shooting to short takes, Bulbul put himself in the film, in a sequence of iconic shots that experimentally and provocatively condensed stereotypes of the image of the black man in Brazilian history. Apart from being a creation without precedent in Brazilian cinema, this short film was the start of Bulbul's commitment to forming a cinema directed and produced by black people.

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An abstract collage background on the right side of the page. It features a grid of squares with various patterns: a halftone dot pattern, a solid light gray, a solid dark gray, and a pattern of small white stars on a black background. The squares are arranged in a way that creates a layered, torn-paper effect.



Santa Luzia Meteorite, found 1921. Goiás, Brazil. Collection: Setor de Meteorítica – Museu Nacional / Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro

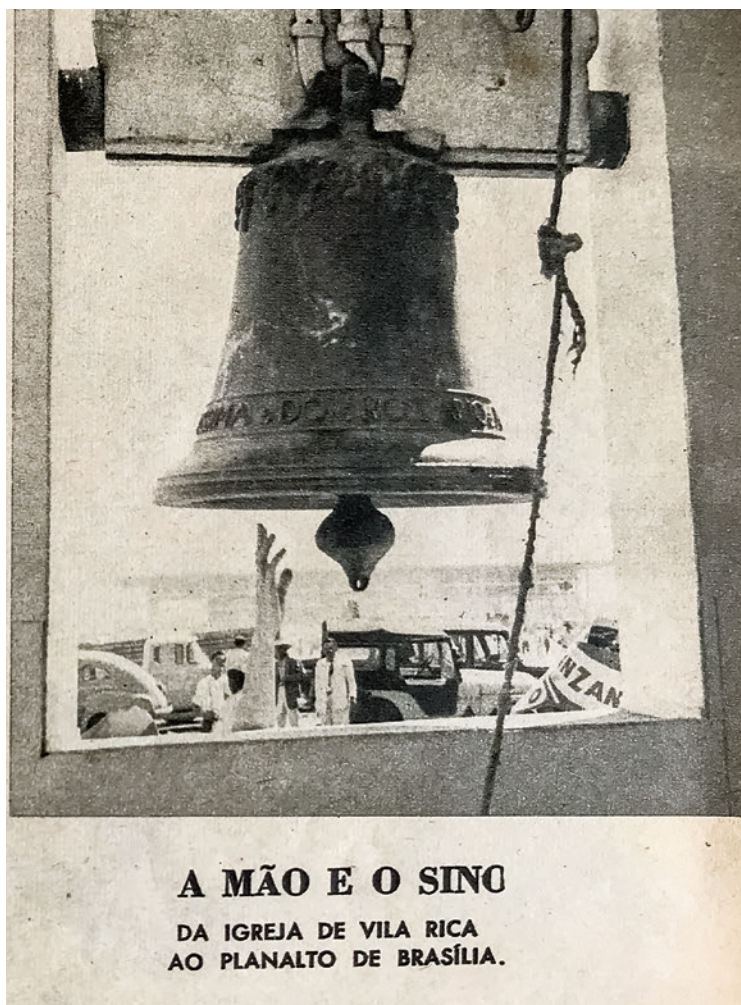
On the night of September 2, 2018, a fire engulfed the National Museum's headquarters in Quinta da Boa Vista in Rio de Janeiro and destroyed almost all of its historical and scientific collections. About twenty million items collected over two hundred years turned into ashes. Working tirelessly through the rubble, the museum's rescue team spent the next few months identifying and cataloging pieces that, in different ways, had gone through the fire. Three of them are displayed here, at the beginning of a Bienal that wants to speak, among other things, about the value and importance of resisting, of moving forward incorporating transformation as an integral part of living and reconstruction as a task of critical reinvention. It is an intentionally reduced group of items as their role is essentially metonymic: these pieces are parts which represent a whole, including other pieces that, for many reasons, could not be exhibited here.

The first of these objects is a stone that changed from amethyst (violet variety of quartz) to citrine (yellow variety of quartz) with the fire's heat. This change in the mineral's structure is evidence that the temperature in the museum must have been around 450°C for several hours. By indelibly absorbing the heat, the stone became a clue, and its color a witness to what happened. It has been transformed, yet it is the same stone. It remains the same because it knew how to transform itself.

The second object is a *ritxòkò*, donated by Kaimote Kamayurá, from the Karajá de Hawaló village, on Bananal Island,

Tocantins, to help rebuild the collection. Symbolically, it replaces a doll lost in the fire, emphasizing how much the meaning of some objects transcends their presence and even their physical existence. If museums are in charge of preserving objects that tell the story of forgotten or decimated traditions, a living community, on the contrary, preserves the objects' uses, manufacturing processes, and the stories and songs that give them meaning. Offering a contemporary piece to the museum, Kaimote Kamayurá acts as a representative of an original people who decide to actively contribute to the reconstruction of the National Museum's collection, implicitly criticizing the colonialist practice of subjugating the knowledge of one people to another.

The last of these objects, Santa Luzia, is the second-largest meteorite found in Brazil, discovered in 1921 in Santa Luzia (currently Luziânia), Goiás. Fragments of asteroids, comets, or planets, when entering the Earth's atmosphere, reach temperatures above 1,000°C, sufficient, in many cases, to completely consume them. The fragments that survive, called meteorites, bring to our planet the memory of a journey through hardly conceivable times and spaces. Tempered by its passage through the atmosphere, the Santa Luzia emerged completely unscathed from the National Museum's ruins.



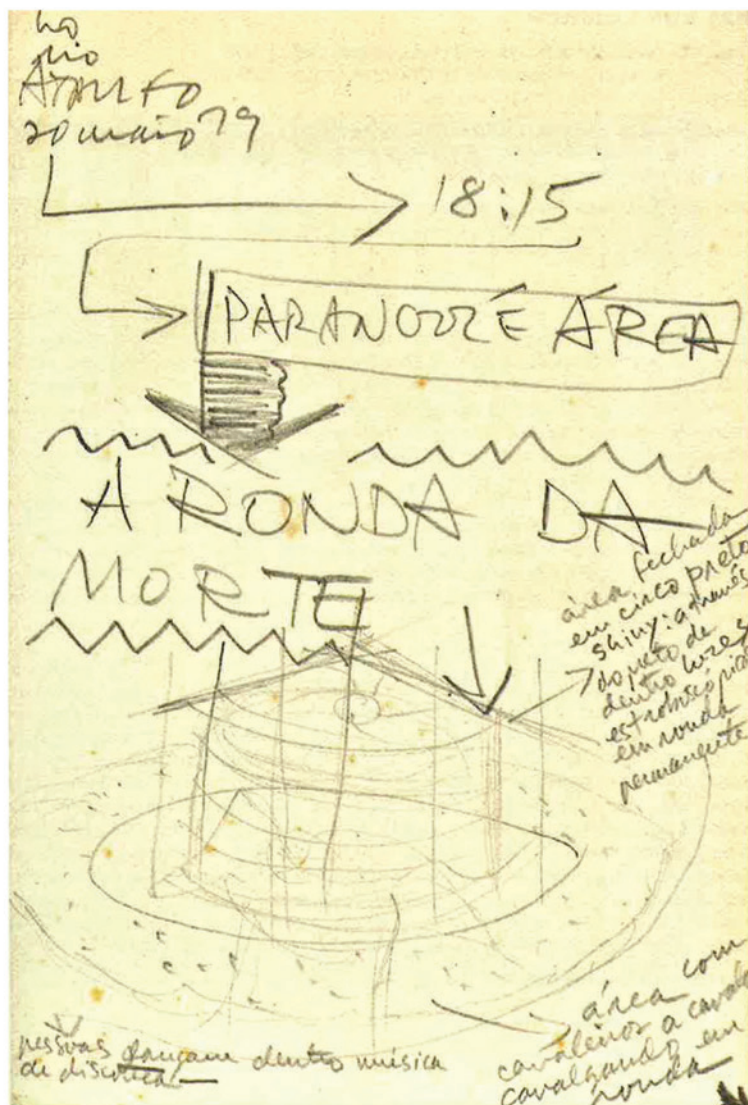
Revista Manchete, 21 April, 1960. Unknown authorship

The Capela de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Brancos [Chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary of the White Men], most commonly known as Padre Faria Chapel, is a small church in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, whose bell tower bears a bronze bell cast in Germany in 1750. On April 21, 1792, this bell was the only one in the colony to toll in open disobedience to the official order that forbade homage to the crown's enemy. The bell tolled as regret for Tiradentes' execution, the only *Inconfidência Mineira* [Minas Gerais Conspiracy] participant whose death sentence was not revoked. With the independence of Brazil and the Proclamation of the Republic, the Minas Gerais' martyr was declared a national hero. And the bell that tolled in his homage became a symbol of the struggle for the country's sovereignty and, in 1960, on another April 21, it was taken to Brasília, hoisted beside a replica of the cross used in the first mass held in Brazil, and rang for the new capital's inauguration. On that occasion, President Juscelino Kubitschek acknowledged in his inaugural speech the desire to greet "the past and future of our country through two events linked by one common idea: that of making Brazil affirm itself as an independent nation."

What does it mean to look back at that bell so symbolically charged by the colonial history, to feel the time that continues to settle on it, to reflect on how much time it spends basically in silence, despite the peals that resonate from time to time? How many peals and chimes would have to be heard today to mark each death caused by the State

– like Tiradentes' –, or by an omisive government that insists that our patriotic duty is simply to forget our past?

Over the 34th Bienal's expanded exhibition duration, some works will be presented more than once, in different contexts and moments, to emphasize that nothing remains the same: not a bell, not those who hear or look at it, not even the world it inhabits. This bell's history and image have already marked their presence in the *Vento* [Wind] exhibition at the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion in November 2020. And some of the works now surrounding the bell have also been exhibited before in the same building, in important moments of Brazil's and Bienal de São Paulo's recent history. To rescue and show them again is a way to reaffirm the desire to build the 34th Bienal based on a *poetics of repetition* inspired by Édouard Glissant's thought, whose writings also spiral back to the same ideas, repeating concepts that are, however, never the same because both the writer and the reader are never the same either. Gathered around the bell, works created in different times and places allude in a more or less direct and poetic way to the return, like tragedy or farce, of dark moments and to the need to resist them with ideas, bodies and songs.



Hélio Oiticica. Draft for the project *Parangolé-área: A ronda da morte* [The Death Watch], May, 1979

An artist trained in Rio de Janeiro's experimental environment in the 1950s, Hélio Oiticica has always sought to break the limits of traditional languages in order to deepen the art experience as an integral part of collective life. Oiticica lived in New York during the dictatorship's most violent years, those after Institutional Act No. 5 (AI-5) promulgation in December 1968. Back in Brazil in 1978, he witnessed the "slow, gradual and safe" dictatorship *distensão* [decompression] shortcomings and contradictions, which the then-president General Ernesto Geisel promised. In an interview after his return, the artist spoke about the sadness of realizing he could no longer meet many of the people he befriended in Rio's favelas and samba parties in the mid-1960s. He attributed these absences to the State's systematic annihilation of part of the population: "Do you know what I found? There is a genocide project, because most of the people I knew in Mangueira were either imprisoned or murdered."

Shaken by the brutal execution of yet another of his friends in the following year, Oiticica wrote a letter to photographer Martine Barrat describing a "parangolé-área" called *A Ronda da Morte* [The Death Watch]. Similar to a black circus tent, it would be an inviting environment with strobe lights and music playing inside for people to come in and dance. While the party would go on inside the tent, horseback men emulating a police patrol would surround it. The music would encapsulate the imminent risk from the outside, a direct allusion to the state

of surveillance and violence that persisted despite the apparent daily life normality.

Amid a contemporary context in which news like those that shook Oiticica are repeated with alarming frequency in Brazil and worldwide, *A Ronda da Morte* was planned to occur for the first time at the 34th Bienal in 2020. Yet, while the Covid-19 pandemic forbade its realization, it did not diminish its relevance. *A Ronda da Morte* – as well as the impossibility of making it happen – continues to synthesize the perversity of simulating normality while genocides are happening. But it also highlights that historical flows and dynamics are not enclosed in the periodization we find in books. Likewise, works that past Bienals already displayed are now re-presented because the present allows revisiting or transforming their original meaning. The past lives in the present, constituting challenges and inspiring struggles that will be fundamental for building the yet-to-come.



Matthew B. Brady. Untitled. [Portrait of Frederick Douglass], c. 1877. Photographic negative (glass, wet collodion). Collection: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Born in Talbot County, Maryland (USA), in February 1817 (or 1818, according to the source), Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey was the son of an enslaved black mother and a probably white father who never recognized him – perhaps the plantation owner or overseer where his mother was forced to work. Despite numerous obstacles, he learned to read and write in his childhood and adolescence. He even organized literacy classes for other enslaved people like him. After some unsuccessful attempts, in 1838 he managed to flee to New York, which had abolished slavery in 1827. However, the dread and insecurity caused by slave catchers forced him to quickly move to New Bedford, Massachusetts, where he adopted the Douglass surname. Eloquent, charismatic and having lived realities that gave him a powerful perspective on society, Douglass promptly began an extraordinary career as a writer, orator, politician and, above all, activist for the abolition of slavery – which only became a reality in the United States in 1865. He became one of the most acclaimed and admired figures in the anti-slavery struggle. In 1895, when he died, Douglass was regarded as one of the most important men in US history.

In 1841, Douglass commissioned his first photographic portrait. He was fully aware that his image as a free black man could reverberate and amplify the anti-slavery fight. In a pioneering way, Douglass realized that the extensive circulation that the photographic medium allowed would be of utmost importance in helping the

anti-racist struggle and the fight against post-abolition segregation. No wonder, over the next five decades or so, he would become the most photographed person in nineteenth century America, demonstrating enormous mastery over his pose, dress, appearance, and framing. This unique portrait corpus is presented here, in almost its entirety, for the first time as part of an art exhibition.

Under Douglass' penetrating and challenging gaze, works produced in different moments and contexts weave a complex and rhizomatic narrative, which reaffirms the importance of looking back, today, to the displacement, violence and resistance processes that scarred and continue to wound the lives of uncountable people. Symbolically connected by the ropes stretched across the Biennial Pavilion by Arjan Martins (an abstract and poetic reference to the triangles drawn by slave ships in their journeys between Africa, the Americas and Europe), flows of images, cultures, and bodies intersect in these works. They are the witnesses of the possibility to metabolize past and present traumas as fuel to demand the construction of the foundations of a fairer future.

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 faz bem, não pode ser impedido
 e que ninguém é obrigado
 a fazer o que a lei não determina

Carolina Maria de Jesus. *Diário* [Diary], 26/10/60 to 03/12/60. Arquivo Público Municipal de Sacramento "Cônego Hermógenes Casimiro de Araújo Bruonswik"

A month before the release of *Quarto de Despejo: diário de uma favelada* [The Trash Room: Diary of a woman from the favela], a book that would sell more than one hundred thousand copies in 1960, Carolina Maria de Jesus wrote, "I know I am going to make enemies because no one is used to this type of literature." The arduous daily life she narrated, in which an entire day spent searching for recyclable materials was almost always insufficient to feed her children, was transformed thanks to the book's commercial success and the interest it attracted among journalists, celebrities, and politicians.

However, her literature proved too disconcerting to her readers in the medium term, as she predicted it would. Born in Sacramento, Minas Gerais, Carolina moved successively until reaching the city of São Paulo, where she began to collect notebooks and used them to experiment herself as a writer instead of selling them. Since then, she saw herself as an author who would frankly speak about her situation, conflicts, revolts, and dreams but who could also write poems, plays, novels, aphorisms, and short stories. A citizen who wanted to leave the favela to live in a brick house and who would like to circulate freely in the high literature's "halls." To progressive readers, such ambitions appeared as signs of alienation, lack of class consciousness, and vanity. For the openly racist, it was nonsense that aggravated the boldness of a poor black woman who should never even have been allowed to publish anything in the first place. And for the more absent-minded,

it was an unprecedented conundrum that would require attention to unravel – attention that the publishing world and the general public were unwilling to offer Carolina.

The quantity and diversity of unpublished manuscripts kept in Sacramento are testimony to the violent silencing of her complex literary voice. The exhibition of a part of that material at the 34th Bienal – all written after the *Quarto de despejo* – emphasizes the importance of looking beyond this book, which tends to concentrate and reduce Carolina Maria de Jesus' complexity. Together with the works gathered here, these unpublished manuscripts are also an invitation to think about the mobility of stories, lives, and bodies – which can occur in a conflicting way but signals the irrepressible need for transformation.



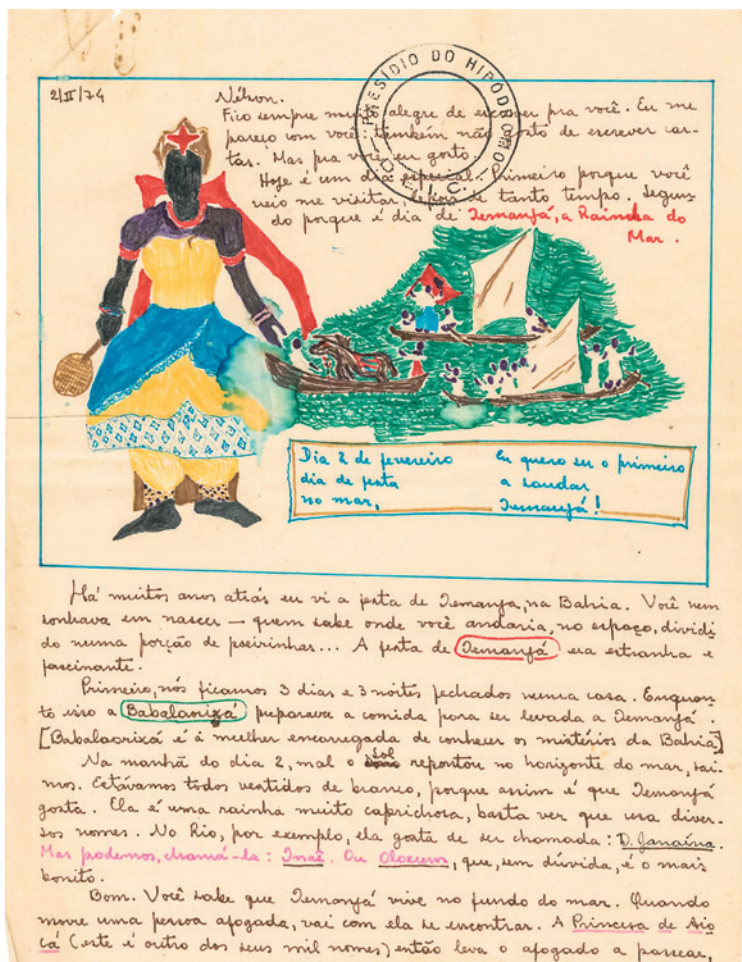
João Cândido. *Amôr* [Love], c. 1910. Embroidery, 50×80 cm. Collection: Museu Municipal Tomé Portes del Rei, São João del Rei, MG

In 1888, with the proclamation of the *Lei Áurea* [Golden Law], Brazil became one of the last countries to legally abolish slavery. Even so, segregation and violence continued, rooted in the structural racism that has characterized Brazilian society until today. In the Brazilian Navy – which in the first decade of the 20th century had begun a process of technological modernization with the purchase of two battleships – white officers commanded crews made up almost entirely of black and mixed-race sailors often enlisted by force, and they had the right to use corporal punishment. After some frustrated attempts to improve working conditions through negotiations, the crew members revolted in November 1910, demanding an end to this practice. In the insurrection, they assumed control of the new battleships and two smaller vessels and pointed the big guns toward Rio de Janeiro. In a letter addressed to the president of the Republic and signed by a leader of the revolt – João Cândido, nicknamed *Almirante Negro* [Black Admiral] – the sailors stated that they could no longer “stand the slavery in the Brazilian Navy.”

The revolt was successful: the government had to capitulate, to grant amnesty to the mutinied sailors, and to prohibit corporal punishment aboard ships. In a short time, however, practically all the leaders of the revolt were arrested, punished or dead. In the dungeon of the penitentiary on Cobras Island, on Christmas Eve 1910, João Cândido watched sixteen of his seventeen cellmates die by suffocation from the

fumes of the quicklime used to disinfect the cell. In the nearly two years that he was imprisoned, Cândido spent much of his time embroidering, producing many works, including the two embroideries that are presented here. In one of them, the word “*amôr*” [love] spreads outside the banner held aloft by two birds above a pierced heart; in the other, the hands of two arms clothed in different uniforms – one an admiral’s and the other a sailor’s – are clasping each other or raising an anchor together, between the words *ordem* [order] and *liberdade* [freedom].

The lyricism of the compositions contrasts with the image projected on this man, the son of enslaved people, and a revolutionary hero. In the solitude of the dungeon, haunted by the death of his shipmates and betrayed by his government, Cândido showed that he was a much more complex man than the narratives about his biography would suggest. Despite being seen as a sort of historical footnote, these embroideries possess an inestimable value, insofar as they condense the need and possibility of expressing our truths and desires even at moments when it seems that there is no escape. They evidence, beyond any doubt, that singing in the dark is possible and is, perhaps, the most courageous demonstration of strength. They vouch for the conviction that for as long as there is life there will be struggle and poetry – as these both, in combination, are inalienable parts of existence.



Joel Rufino dos Santos. Letter to his son, Feb. 1974

Some teachers teach us more than what the school curriculum dictates. Joel Rufino dos Santos must have been one of those teachers, someone capable of transforming the present's understanding and generating new desires for the future when talking about past events and ideas. In the early 1960s, Rufino dos Santos was part of a team, led by Nelson Werneck Sodré, responsible for writing the *História Nova do Brasil* [New History of Brazil] series, a set of textbooks the authors defined as the "Structural Reform in History Teaching." Rewriting and retelling the country's history was part of a nation-building project aimed to eradicate illiteracy with the Paulo Freire method as well as implement structural reforms, which included land democratization, fiscal justice, and the right to housing. It was during these years that Thiago de Mello wrote the poem "Madrugada camponesa" [The Peasant Dawn]: "The land is still dark (it's clearer now) / Working is worthwhile. / Though it's dark, still I sing / for morning is coming soon. / Though it's dark, still I sing."

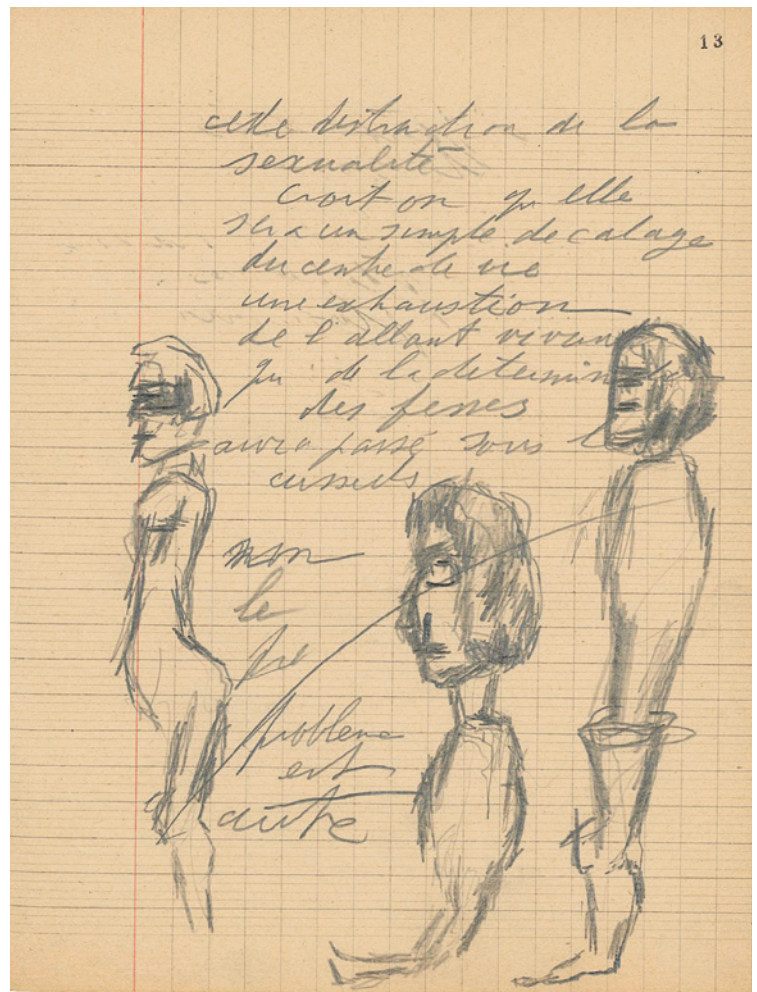
It is difficult not to ponder about the kind of country we would be living in today if João Goulart had not been deposed. But our history is a different one. And the 1964 civic-military coup interrupted the political project geared towards a more egalitarian Brazil, beginning more than twenty years in which the State arrested, tortured, and executed men and women who fought for this ideal.

Thiago de Mello was no exception. Nor was Joel Rufino dos Santos, arrested in 1972, when his son, named Nelson after Werneck

Sodré, was eight years old. During the two incarceration years due to no other charge than the content of his writings, Joel sent his son the letters gathered here. Written in prison, reviewed by censors, stamped, mailed, held in Nelson's hands, silently read, read aloud by Teresa Garbayo dos Santos, kept safe for years, reread, and finally, these letters are made public. Letters that speak of love, nostalgia, daily life in prison; letters that talk about the history of this country, which help to understand the present and forge desires for the future. Like the works around them, these letters point to the cracks that allow us to evade censorship and escape imprisonment, either physically or imaginatively and creatively. They are worth reading. Because they can, as Thiago de Mello writes in the introduction of the book that brings these letters together, "cleanse the adhesions of deceptions that damage our lives, hurt our intelligence and stain the childhood that throbs in man's chest."



Édouard Glissant. *Cahier d'un Voyage sur le Nil* [Notebook from a trip to the Nile], 1988. Bibliothèque nationale de France. Support: Institut français à Paris

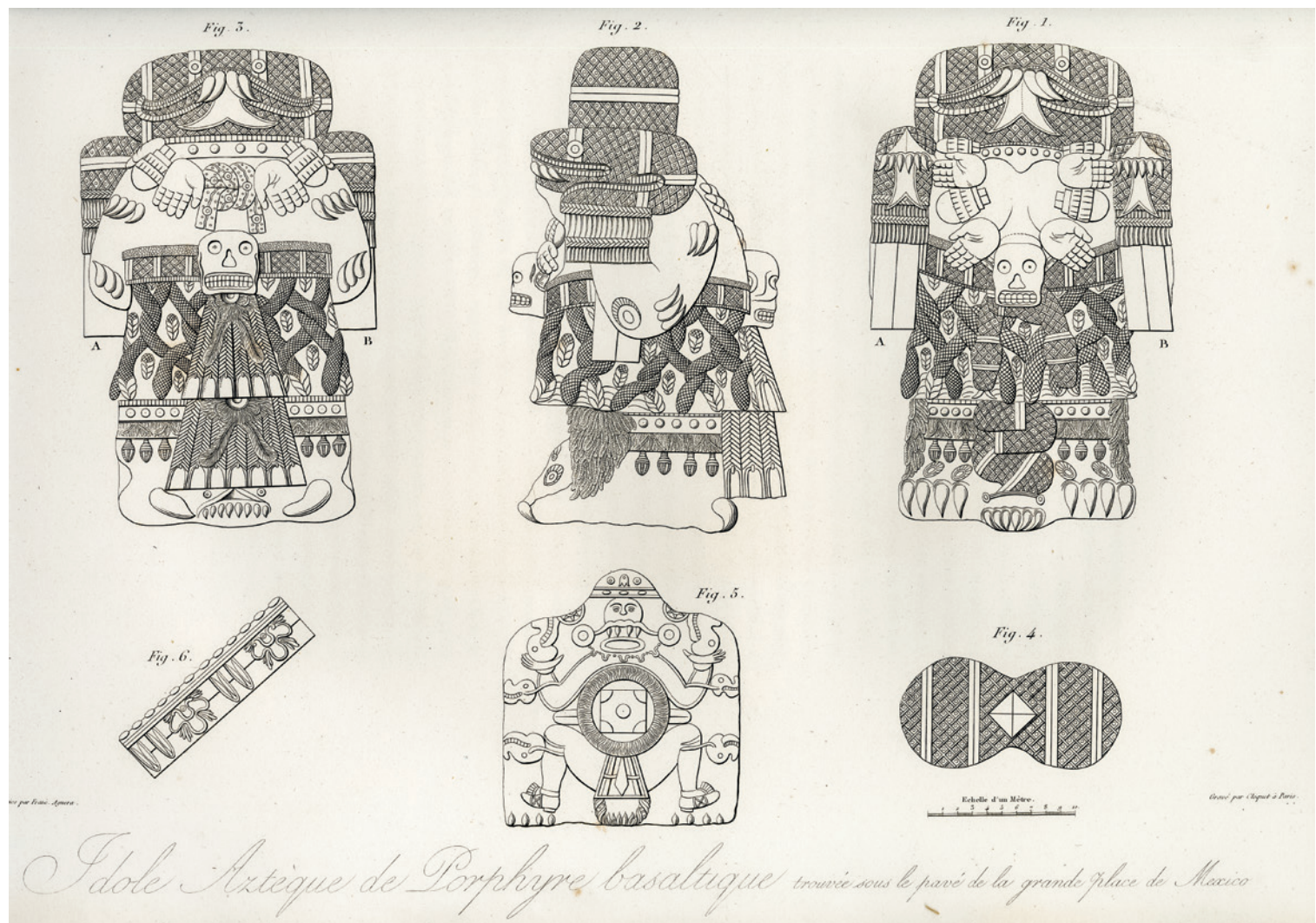


Antonin Artaud. Notebook 371, page 13, recto. Published in Antonin Artaud. *Oeuvres*. Paris: Gallimard, 2004, p. 1.576. Edited by Evelyne Grossman. Support: Institut français à Paris

Reading the Martinican Édouard Glissant's writings can give the impression of walking through spirals and volutes that constantly return to the same places, but from different angles, approaches, and poetic nuances that keep gradual conceptual precisions. Glissant, who valued the baroque's potency, made his work a captivating eulogy of poetics, wandering, imagination and relationship. For this reason, reading and rereading it was a continuous exercise in the 34th Biennial preparation, which from its initial stages emphasized that the meanings of things, works of art, and individual and collective identities are constantly changing, fuelled by encounters with all other things, languages, places, and the *Poetics of Relation*. The nature of these encounters is not always of convergence and harmony, but Glissant helps us realize that even antagonistic groups transform each other, and in a particularly profound and indelible way. Therefore, valuing the relationship does not mean idealizing a world without differences but defending the right to opacity, multiplicity, and transformation in a movement that involves destroying purity and originality precepts that pretentiously justified colonialism.

This tension between the desire for contact and mobility, on the one hand, and the need to break with colonial domination, on the other, is in the background of the dialogue between Édouard Glissant and Antonin Artaud that Ana Kiffer imagined. In her research in Édouard Glissant's archive, now in the Bibliothèque nationale de

France, she found that Glissant conceived a magazine that would have a text by Artaud in its first edition. And from this patch of history, Kiffer wove a web that interweaves texts, drawings, notebooks, voices, and fragments of these seemingly different authors. In the 34th Biennial, this web materializes an imagined encounter, concretizing similarities and contrasts between writing styles that cut through authoritarian regimes of existence and reassemble the world's body around new politics of difference.



Alexander von Humboldt. Aztec basaltic porphyry idol found under the sidewalk of the great square of Mexico City. In: *Vues des cordillères, et monuments des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique. Première partie, Relation Historique, Voyage de Humboldt et Bonplant, Atlas Pittoresque* [Views of the Cordilleras, and monuments of the indigenous peoples of America. Part 1, Historical Relation, Voyage of Humboldt and Bonplant, Atlas Pittoresque]. Paris, 1810. The George Peabody Library, The Sheridan Library, The John Hopkins University

On August 13, 1790, a group of workers excavating in Mexico City's Central Plaza discovered a statue the astronomer and anthropologist Antonio de León y Gama identified as Teoyaomiqui. It was, in fact, the goddess Coatlicue, also known as *Dama de la Falda de Serpientes* [The lady in the snake skirt]. The discovery took place during the construction of a water canal to supply the colonial city built over the former Aztec capital, the great Tenochtitlán. In 1520, when the Spanish hordes led by Hernán Cortez entered the capital, gradually subjugating and annihilating one of the most prosperous cities in all of Mesoamerica, one of the strategies they used to dismantle the Aztec empire was the elimination of its symbols and beliefs through concealment and the replacement of ancient images and traditions. Often, the Spaniards used the Aztec gods' sculptures as the basis for cathedrals and colonial power institutions.

Coatlicue, in Aztec mythology, is the patroness of life and death, mother of Huitzilopochtli – the god of the earth –, and the goddess representing fertility. The sculpture is a double head monolith weighing 24 tons and 2.5 meters high. At its base, a bas-relief representing Tlaloc, the god of rain, was carved in direct contact with the earth; no human eyes could see it, only the earth deities.

Viceroy Revillagigedo ordered Coatlicue to be taken as a relic of the Mesoamerican past to The Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico. But after long discussions, the Spanish authorities decided

to bury her again, afraid that the lady in the snake skirt might spark a revolution. The fear of awakening the memory of the subjugated natives accompanied the dread of Coatlicue's brutal beauty, which was outside the Western canons of harmony and decorum. They buried her under the university cloister until when a curious Alexander von Humboldt asked to see her during his trip to New Spain in 1804. According to the legend, the German explorer began to draw it without, however, completing the illustration because the university clergymen, perhaps fearing that Coatlicue's power would become uncontrollable, hid it again underground. Hence, Humboldt had to let his imagination run wild to immortalize Coatlicue's powerful aura in his sketches.



Unknown authorship. Nomads in a Culture Circle in Kenya, 1975. Photographic print. Collection Instituto Paulo Freire

In 1963, illiterate people did not have voting rights in Brazil. In an extremely tense political context, which would lead to the military coup in the following year, Paulo Freire headed an adult literacy experiment in Angicos, Rio Grande do Norte. This project, which the then President João Goulart attended, attracted huge media attention both nationally and internationally. The reason for such a buzz was the surprising success the project had: more than three hundred adults had become literate in around forty hours of the workshop. In addition to the method's efficiency, Freire understood pedagogy as part of a training process aimed at breaking what he would later call the "culture of silence" – one that prevents subjects from exercising their intellectual and political autonomy.

For years, before Angicos' experiment, Freire was willing to put his knowledge in suspension to be in frank dialogue with educators, students, young people, mothers, fathers, and managers of different pedagogical settings, from the most to the less formal. It is impossible to precise the moment this suspension took place, but it was in this exchange (or as a way of intensifying it) that Freire adopted a specific form as the key element of the experience of education and autonomy: the circle. First, he proposed the Parent and Teacher Circles, which served to summoning family and school tutors to discuss all sorts of problems in a space without hierarchies and inscribing in the group the importance of sharing responsibilities and knowledge. Afterward,

he conceived the Culture Circles, an alternative method to the traditional classroom spatial organization. In the Culture Circles, educators acted as facilitators and promoters of conversations intended to be horizontal and directly addressed the students' reality. In this dialogic context, the generating words, which would be used later for literacy, were registered, and images and words were presented and discussed during the literacy process.

In a sense, it can be argued that the seeds of Freire's pedagogical method – that some treat as liberating and others as threatening – has its synthetic form in this circle of people. It was something so simple that it was also adopted as a premise for theatrical experiments in the 1960s. It is so intuitive that human beings have practiced it from time immemorial around fire or food. That is why it is evoked here, amidst works by artists who, each in their own way, also sought to suspend their knowledge in order to be in contact with others. The conceptions of dialogicity and autonomy will be at the core of one of the mediation practices, which will happen through conversation circles about the exhibition. The purpose of these circles is the collective construction of possible meanings for the encounter with the works and the relationships between them, departing from the subjects' reality while, simultaneously, reflecting upon it.



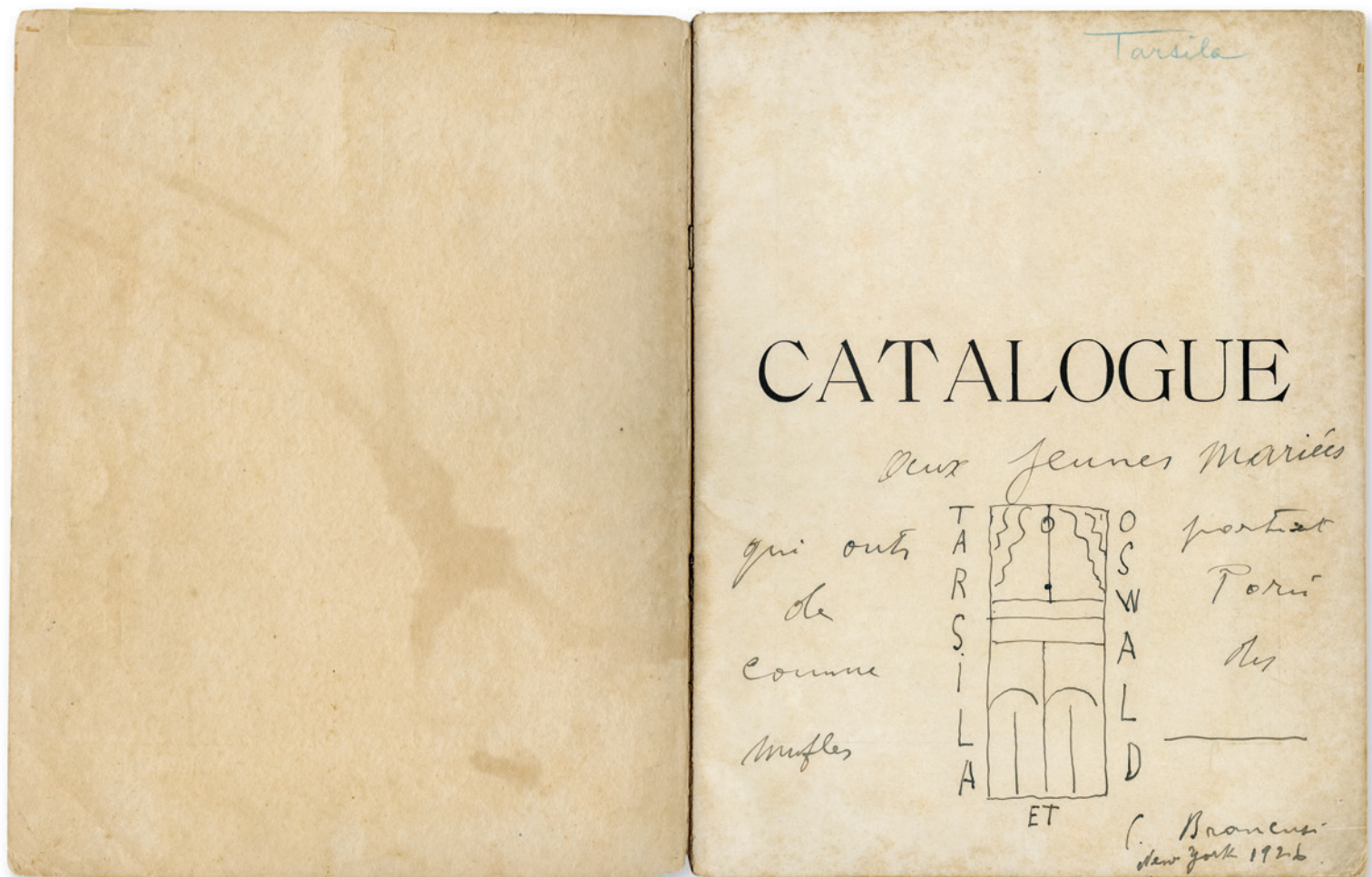
Alain Resnais. Still from *Hiroshima mon amour*. © Argos Films. Support: Consulado Geral da França em São Paulo

A tree grows alongside a gas chamber in a former concentration camp; the unbearable heat of the sun is felt on the skin of someone at a public square/memorial built on the ruins of a nuclear explosion. What is there, in fact, to see and to understand in what survives tragedies, exterminations of populations and cultures? In light of the unspeakable trauma, what can be told by a museum, a monument, a ruin, or a scar? “The reconstructions, for lack of anything else,” “the explanations, for lack of anything else,” “the photographs, for lack of anything else,” says the (French) protagonist of *Hiroshima mon amour*, Elle, in the opening scene of the classic film directed by Alain Resnais in 1959. Elle is referring to what she found in Hiroshima nearly fifteen years after the bombing that killed more than 160 thousand people, but could also be talking about what would be found by anyone who visits the ruins of Nazi concentration camps, or even the museums full of the plunder of colonization – not by chance, themes of short films made by Resnais.

But no. The objects, the photographs, the explanations, the reconstructions are not enough for us to understand. “You saw nothing in Hiroshima. Nothing,” says the other (Japanese) protagonist, Lui: even with her efforts and good intentions Elle will not comprehend what happened in Hiroshima. This is the first phrase in the film, the leitmotiv that pervades it. It is not possible to see because it is not possible to understand. It is impossible to understand because there are things, perhaps the most important things, that are not visible. *Hiroshima mon*

amour does not seek to explain nor to reconstruct, but rather to probe the opacity and untranslatability of what has remained as a witness of tragedy. Perhaps this is why the film does not begin with distancing, but with contact and proximity. The camera frames details of the intertwined bodies of the protagonists, covered with granulated ashes like those that cloaked the bombed bodies, and yet they are also gleaming, with a sparkle which then becomes the shine of the sweat of their encounter, of their exchange of heat.

Like Elle, sometimes we strive to understand, we seek to get closer in every possible way, from every angle: we read the explanations, we visit the wreckage, we look again at each twisted piece of metal, each old photograph. But no. It is impossible to get to know Hiroshima, just as it is impossible to understand the other acts of extreme violence from which our history is made. We will never be able to feel the heat of the sun over Peace Square, but we can try to get closer to the ineffable, try to give shape to what cannot be named. Art is, always, one of these paths along which one seeks the incomprehensible – not to reduce it to explanations, but to give it an outline, to draw the reach of what radiates. Because its translation, although impossible, is nonetheless necessary; because in this failed effort we learn about our desires and fears – the fear of not knowing, not understanding, or the fear of knowing that we are capable of acts that we can never understand.



Constantin Brancusi. Dedication on the catalog of the exhibition at the Brummer Gallery, New York, 1926. Collection: Pedro Corrêa do Lago

In September 1926, Constantin Brancusi arrived in New York to accompany the installation of his second exhibition in the United States together with Marcel Duchamp, the exhibition curator. The arrival of the two, and above all of Brancusi's works, has mythical contours, and goes beyond the scope of art history. The US customs officials, who refused to catalog Brancusi's sculptures as works of art – especially one of his iconic *Bird in Space* – and classified them under the “Kitchenware and Hospital Instruments” category, seized his work. The episode started a famous legal process, which would last for the next two years and have testimonies from various abstract art critics and defenders. In the end, Judge J. Waite declared that “whether or not we are in sympathy with these newer ideas and the schools which represent them, we think the fact of their existence and their influence upon the art worlds, as recognized by the courts, must be considered,” confirming that the conception of art that had been in place for centuries had been replaced.

A few days after Brancusi's arrival in New York, Tarsila do Amaral and Oswald de Andrade, whom the sculptor befriended in Paris, married in São Paulo. It is worth imagining the scene: sitting in one of the wooden boxes where the sculptures traveled, Brancusi receives the news and, pausing the exhibition installation, dedicates a catalog that had just come off the press to the newlyweds, whom, however, he jokingly scolds for the rude way they left Paris without saying goodbye. The catalog's yellowed page, with its unpretentious and

affectionate dedication, condenses countless correspondences, relationships, exchanges, and comings and goings, such as the attraction Paris exerted on artists from all over the world in the 1920s; the penetration of modern art in the United States, which would culminate in the shift from Parisian centrality to New York from the 1940s onwards; the increasingly massive circulation of artworks through their reproduction; and the alliances and networks that Brazilian artists established with other professionals from an avant-garde environment that had become global.

Within the scope of an exhibition built from countless dialogues, exchanges, and discussions in and from various places over the world, it is essential to emphasize how art can bridge the gaps between different contexts, moments, and cosmovision and is always open to being re-signified by the changes that time and history impose. In this regard, both this *statement* and the works surrounding it point to possible encounters and frictions between works from very distinct contexts and periods and serve as a metonymy of the 34th Bienal, of its desire to establish unsuspected and illuminating relationships without giving up preserving the opacity of each of the works.



Zé Antoninho Maxakali. Illustration published in Rosângela Pereira de Tugny (ed.). *Cantos dos povos morcego e hemex – espíritos* [Songs of the peoples Morcego and Hemex – Spirits]. Belo Horizonte: MEC/Literaterras/Museu do Índio/INCTI/FUNAI, 2013

The Tikmũ'ũn, also known as Maxakali, are Indigenous people from the area that today encompasses the Minas Gerais, Bahia, and Espírito Santo states. After countless and recurrent episodes of violence and abuse since colonial times, the Tikmũ'ũn came to the brink of extinction in the 1940s and were forced to abandon their ancestral lands to survive. Songs organize life in the villages, constituting almost an index of all the elements of their daily lives, like plants, animals, places, objects, knowledge, and of their rich cosmology. Often intended for healing, most of these songs are collectively sung. For the Tikmũ'ũn, singing becomes an integral part of life because memories are preserved, and community is constituted through singing. Each village dweller is the depositary of a part of the songs. These songs belong to a spirit called Yãmîy – a word that also means song –, which is summoned and fed during the ritual singing. Together, all songs make up the Tikmũ'ũn universe. Such universe is constituted by everything that these people see, touch, harvest, eat, kill, and feel, but also by the memory of extinct plants and animals and those belonging to the land they had to flee in order to survive. As a community, they live in, and through, their own language, which they vigorously defend by singing.

After the *Vento* exhibition at the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion in November 2020, the 34th Bienal incorporates for a second time some ritual Tikmũ'ũn songs as a poetic counterpoint and symbolic catalyst for a set of works that propose reflections about the forest

as an ecosystem that must be protected, respected and feared. An ecosystem that makes visible, or even tangible, the inextricable relationships between all beings, often through courageously preserved ancient rituals.

It is almost always dark when the Tikmũ'ũn start to sing. Their songs go into the night, summoning the spirits of each being that makes up the world, bringing together what we can and cannot see. In the context of an exhibition conceived, lyrically and metaphorically, in and through the songs' necessity and power, the example of the Tikmũ'ũn resonates powerfully, also from a political point of view: the community effort is renewed constantly through their singing to collectively create a universe. Like in a forest where each element is essential for the survival of the next and the system's equilibrium, each set of songs is indispensable for always reviving and renewing the universe's totality. None of the entities of this rich cosmos can be left behind, except at the expense of missing something unique. In a sick world where necropolitics reigns and consolidates indifference and neglect as governance instruments, this lesson resonates even more urgently.



Plácido de Campos Júnior. Ceramic craftsmanship, Vale do Ribeira, 1980. Gelatin silver print. Collection: Museu da Imagem e do Som, São Paulo

It is common to read in history books about an alleged strategic alliance between a part of the Tupiniquim people and the Portuguese settlers in the conquering project of the territory that constitutes the São Paulo state today. Not far from here, the *Monumento às Bandeiras* [Monument to the Bandeiras] symbolizes this union of different identities in a project to “explore” the country. But what the history books do not tell – and the granite blocks do not represent – are how colonial violence has linked over the years rhetorical strategies and institutional devices to repress Indigenous cultural traces in what we understand as a São Paulo culture. There is a whole structure, from public monuments to school classes and popular stories, which portrays our identity while erasing this memory.

There are forces, however, always working in the opposite direction. Combining historical accuracy, archaeological investigation, and memory restoration, Marianne Sallum and Francisco Silva Noelli’s recent research has contributed to overcoming at least one of the many gaps racism against Indigenous peoples created. These studies show how the so-called *Cerâmica Paulista* [Ceramics from São Paulo], made since the sixteenth century until today, is the result of Tupiniquim women’s original creation, who used a process of exchanging techniques, repertoires, and models with the Portuguese colonizers, as a tactic for identity preservation. Although, at first sight, the *Cerâmica Paulista* is very different from the precolonial Tupiniquim production,

Sallum and Noelli’s in-depth investigation reveals how the Tupiniquim women embedded their culture in the pottery-making process, from the raw material selection, the ceramic paste composition, the *acordelado* technique, and the process duration to the ceramic surface treatment. That is an example of cultural persistence.

Displaying some *Cerâmica Paulista* items is a way to recognize this land’s ancestry – a land never ceded to the Portuguese. It is also a way of showing the importance of memory revitalization to defy the narratives that justify the ongoing processes of dispossession, destruction, and exploitation. But it is also a reminder that things are more complex than they seem and that, often, they bear the seeds to subvert their own meaning. Together with the works gathered around them, these ceramics talk about resilience and persistency, thus referring us back to the elements of the Museu Nacional at the beginning of the visit to the Bienal. In a show that aims at expanding the way an artwork is understood, the *Cerâmica Paulista* history helps to complexify our perception of the present. And perhaps to understand differently the works we see again when we walk through the exhibition in the opposite direction.

Extended program and institutional partnerships

One of the starting points of the curatorial project for the 34th Bienal was the aim to enlarge the show, extending it along several months and expanding the presence of the participant artists through an unprecedented network of institutional partnerships. According to the original design, the collective exhibition in the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion would be preceded by three solo shows and three performances in this same building, while exhibitions in other venues in the city – almost all of them solo shows – would happen simultaneously to it. With the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19, the schedule was changed, accompanying the expansion of the 34th Bienal project itself.

29 jun 2019 – 26 mar 2020 <i>Lasar Segall: Eterno caminhante</i> Museu Lasar Segall	20 mar 2021 – 6 jun 2021 <i>The Stomach and the Port</i> Neo Muyanga Liverpool Biennials, United Kingdom	4 sep – 28 nov 2021 <i>Moquém_Surari: Arte indígena contemporânea</i> Curadoria: Jaider Esbell Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM São Paulo)
oct 2019 - feb 2020 Encontros com artistas Oficina Cultural Oswald de Andrade / Poiesis	13 aug 2021 – 21 nov 2021 <i>Pierre Verger: Percursos e memórias</i> Instituto Tomie Ohtake	4 sep 2021 – 5 dec 2021 <i>Though it's dark, still I sing</i> Pavilhão Ciccillo Matarazzo
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14 oct 2020 – 21 mar 2021 <i>Antonio Dias: derrotas e vitórias</i> Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM São Paulo)	28 aug 2021 <i>The Untitled Still Life Collection</i> Trajal Harrell Instituto Bardi / Casa de Vidro	18 sep – 5 dec 2021 <i>Ocupação Paulo Freire</i> Itaú Cultural
15 oct 2020 – 8 feb 2021 <i>Joan Jonas: Cinco décadas</i> Pinacoteca de São Paulo / Estação	28 aug 2021 – 3 jul 2022 <i>Regina Silveira: Outros paradoxos</i> Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP)	21 sep 2021 – 22 nov 2021 Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil – São Paulo 14 dec 2021 – 21 feb 2022 Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil – Rio de Janeiro <i>O legado de Morandi</i> Giorgio Morandi
14 nov 2020 – 13 dec 2020 <i>Vento [Wind]</i> Alice Shintani, Ana Adamović, Antonio Dias, Clara Ianni, Deana Lawson, Edurne Rubio, Eleonore Koch, Gala Porras-Kim, Jacqueline Nova, Jaider Esbell, Joan Jonas, Koki Tanaka, León Ferrari, Luisa Cunha, Melvin Moti, Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi, Neo Muyanga, Paulo Nazareth, Regina Silveira, Ximena Garrido-Lecca e Yuko Mohri Pavilhão Ciccillo Matarazzo	28 aug 2021 – 5 dec 2021 <i>Frida Orupabo</i> Museu Afro Brasil	25 sep 2021 – 30 jan 2022 <i>Carolina Maria de Jesus: um Brasil para os brasileiros</i> IMS Paulista
1 dec 2020 – 13 dec 2020 <i>Ano X</i> Grace Passô Festival Novas Frequências	31 aug 2021 – 14 nov 2021 <i>Parade – a Drip, a Drop, the End of the Tale</i> Yuko Mohri Japan House São Paulo	oct 2021 – dec 2021 <i>Manthia Diawara</i> Amant Foundation, Nova York, EUA
	1 sep 2021– 18 dec 2021 <i>ANTONIO DIAS/ ARQUIVO / O LUGAR DO TRABALHO</i> Instituto de Arte Contemporânea (IAC)	30 oct 2021 – 16 jan 2022 <i>Debaixo do barro do chão</i> Juraci Dórea Museu Brasileiro da Escultura e Ecologia (MuBE)

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34^a Bienal de São Paulo – *Faz escuro mas eu canto* [Though it’s dark, still I sing]

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“Faz escuro mas eu canto” [Though It’s
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Thiago de Mello

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still

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