



Paulo Nimer Pjota
The history in repeat mode — image
29/06 – 05/08 2017

Germano Dushá

Paulo Nimer Pjota's work is developed based on the nature of collectively originated phenomena. His research and practice concentrate on a profound study of a kind of popular iconography which can only be developed through complex processes conducted by countless sets of hands. We can thus think of his body of work as the representation of a dialogue that is pluralist and unsettled, whose understandings are in constant transformation, spanning multiple streams of consciousness. A conference of many voices with open channels of research in a time and space that is not homogenous, nor linear.

As a rule, the artist uses large canvases, sacks and sheets of metal as media. Most of these materials are found in junkyards, to be later subjected to processes of negotiation and displacement. Naturally, the pieces selected arrive with inscriptions from other times and uses, in such a way that they create an initial terrain — graphic and spiritual — for what will take shape on these surfaces. From there, global fables emerge that combine art history with mass culture, universal canons with everyday banalities and universal symbols with regional themes.

By addressing the complex web of contemporary social imagery, Pjota underlines the clichés of classical painting and sculpture with things we come across all the time, in any old hole in the wall. And it is then that Fang Mask, known for its influence on Picasso, can be found next to scribbles and refrigerator magnets; Greek vases can exist as part of a compositional set alongside advertising stickers; and Tibetan skulls stuck on an old auto body can form new totems alongside emojis and Mickey Mouse figures.

In this exhibition, aside from the known, sharply stylistic paintings, the artist also displays part of his empirical research by way of a video and three photographs. From the inventive aggressiveness of rap shows to the lush passivity of display cases in stores and museums, these registers recorded on his cell phone reveal his movements on the street and what he learns from the daily bombardment of information, as well as his sociocultural concerns. Each one juxtaposes the language of the outer city limits with the codes of high culture and the mainstream, freely dialoging with traumas and public catharses, without any protagonism previously defined in his narrative stream, nor any easily reached resolutions. We are left with disputes and convergences in a jumble of noise.

Mendes
Wood
DM

13 Rue des Sablons / Zavelstraat
1000 Brussels Belgium
+ 32 2 502 09 64
www.mendeswooddm.com
@mendeswooddm



In the tension between the freedom of random choice and the precision of a meticulous composition, his works combine representations in a void without gravity. The result is a series of intense scenes permeated by literality, metaphors, analogies and suggestions that reformulate the world through a constellation of suspended bodies. Driven by a sharp wit and a state of constant consternation, the relationships between the elements generate anachronisms that address the handling of icons and indexes and their roles in the power relationships that linger through history.

Pjota is interested in, above all, the mechanisms and processes that produce, edit and disseminate human manifestations in the age of the internet and extreme communication — in which demands are increasingly more global while conditions of production are increasingly more local. Through rhythm, rhyme and repetition, images are brought to light that index the common perceptions of a globalized planet and which, consequently, expose its profound inequalities.

The tales that emerge from this process do not correspond to a single understanding, putting countless possible contextualizations into circulation. Consequently, even as we see ourselves trapped in a historical circle of oppression, it is now possible to question the way we formulate information and distribute our affections, reconfiguring our sensibilities according to what surrounds us and fostering possibilities for social interaction that were previously unthinkable.

Paulo Nimer Pjota (São José do Rio Preto, 1988) lives and works in São Paulo. His exhibitions include: *Synthesis between contradictory ideas and the plurality of the object as image I*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2016); *Synthesis between contradictory ideas and the plurality of the object as image II*, Maureen Paley, London (2016); *Sistema Relacional*, Paço das Artes São Paulo, São Paulo (2013); *1º Mostra do programa de exposições*, Centro Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo (2012); *PAINTING |OR| NOT*, The KaviarFactory, Lofoten, Norway (2017); *New Shamans/Novos Xamãs: Brazilian Artists*, Rubell Family Collection, Miami (2017); *The World is Made of Stories*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2015/2016); *Imagine Brazil*, DHC/Art Foundation for Contemporary Art, Montreal (2015/2016); *19º Here There, Here There*, QM Gallery Al Riwaq, Doha (2015); *Imagine Brazil*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2013); *Entre-temps... Brusquement, et ensuite*, 12e Biennale de Lyon, Lyon (2013).

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