



# GALLERIA CONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HABANA

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## JONATHAS DE ANDRADE

**Eu, mestiço / Me, mestizo**

Opening: Saturday 23 September 2017, via Arco dei Becci 1, 6pm–9pm

Until 7 January 2018, Monday–Sunday, 10am–1pm / 2–7pm

Galleria Continua in San Gimignano is pleased to host a new solo show – *Eu, mestiço / Me, mestizo* – by Jonathas De Andrade, one of the most promising Brazilian artists of his generation.

*Eu, mestiço / Me, mestizo* is part of a wider project by the artist, the point of departure of which was a study entitled “Race and Class in Rural Brazil”, carried out in the 1950s by Columbia University and sponsored by UNESCO. The project has involved three phases. De Andrade presented the first one at Performa NY in 2015 and the second at the SITE Santa Fe exhibition in 2016. The third and final phase, commissioned by the Instituto Moreira Salles (IMS) and realized in 2017, is showing simultaneously at the IMS in São Paulo and at Galleria Continua in San Gimignano.

Between 1950 and 1951, researchers at Columbia University led by the anthropologist Charles Wagley conducted fieldwork in three Brazilian communities. Their aim was to learn more about the economic, political, cultural and psychological factors influencing the manifestation of social racism in the nation. The procedure used for the study, published in 1952, was mainly a combination of empiricism and interpretation, though photography was also used as a research tool. Portraits

of men and women of varying racial origins and social classes were shown to the inhabitants of the villages and cities selected for the research. They were asked to observe the images and to say who, in their opinion, displayed certain personality traits to a greater or less extent, on the basis of six attributes: wealth, attractiveness, intelligence, religiousness, honesty and capacity for hard work. The pictures used by the researchers were not published, just the results of the interviews, ordered and presented in tables together with the analysis.

“Once I had begun to engage with the book *Race and Class in Rural Brazil*”, the artist explains, “I understood that though the methodology is now obsolete and it originated from the reality of life in the 50s, it brought together a series of manifestations of racism and class prejudice which, to my surprise, were still present in everyday life and in contemporary social interactions. Study in hand, I decided to carry out the action in reverse and to investigate how racism is perceived in the United States.” The original study was the result of research supported by images that are not included in the publication, and so De Andrade decided to produce modern portraits of people and to align the images as closely as possible with the text of the book.

The racial mix in Santa Fe is influenced by the city's position on the border with Mexico, with racism being an everyday part of life for immigrants and descendants of the bordering nation; in New York the experience of the project presents an idea of race characterized by heterogeneity and cosmopolitanism, in a city whose identity is shaped by the presence of foreigners and by cultural diversity. In *Eu, mestiço / Me, mestizo*, the installation on show in Galleria Continua's Arco dei Becci space, the artist focuses on Brazil – the target nation of the UNESCO study and his own country of origin.

During the first part of his research, De Andrade invited participants to take on various roles in studios set up in four Brazilian cities: Ilhéus, in the State of Bahia; Imperatriz and São Luís, in Maranhão; and São Paulo. Starting with spontaneous conversations, the artist and the participants evoked emotions, reactions and gestures staged for the camera and exploring the same situation from various perspectives, as in a photographic behavioural study. For the final works, De Andrade printed the photographs on card using UV ink, and accompanied each set of photos with sentences words taken from *Race and Class in Rural Brazil*, trying to recreate something of the atmosphere and the racial and class tensions on which the study focused, and possible parallels and similarities with life today.

The show continues in the gallery's tower space, with *O Peixe / The Fish*, a short film made by De Andrade in 2016 and presented at the 32nd São Paulo Biennial and at the artist's recent solo show at the New Museum in New York. Following the style of ethnographic film, the artist used 16mm film to document the technique used by fishermen in a village on the north-east coast of Brazil. He films them as they

catch the fish, hold it to their chest and stroke it until it dies. Through the analysis of this ritual De Andrade reflects on the dynamics of power, shedding light on the relations of force, violence and dominion established between different species. The series of photographs accompanying the screening capture the most intense moments of the narrative: sensuality, gentleness, intimacy, cruelty, death and compassion.

**Jonathas de Andrade** was born in Maceió, Brazil, in 1982. He lives in the north-east of the country, in Recife, a coastal city rich in contrasts, where old colonial buildings nestle amidst modern skyscrapers, and where the failure of the tropical modernist utopia is a tangible reality. Anthropology, pedagogy, politics and morals are all fields drawn on by De Andrade to explore the paradoxes of modernist culture. The architecture, the images and the texts he creates and gathers together recompose traces of a society that has lost its ideals, which are still embodied, however, in the contemporary mental and material landscape. Recent solo exhibitions include: *o Peixe*, New Museum, New York (2017); *On Fishes, Horses and Man*, The Power Plant, Toronto (2017); *Convocatória para um Mobiliário Nacional*, Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro (2016); *40 Nego Bom é 1 Real – Baca Project* Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht (2014); *Looking for Jesus*, Museo Marino Marini, Florence (2014); *Cartazes para o Museu do Homem do Nordeste* Cartazes para o homem do nordeste, Kunsthalle Lissabon, Lisbon (2013); *4000 Disparos*, Musée d'art Contemporain de Montréal, Montreal (2013). De Andrade showed at the 32nd São Paulo Biennial (2016); the SITE Santa Fe Biennial (2016); the Seoul Biennale (2016); the Performa 15 Biennial, New York (2015); the Gwangju Biennale (2014); the Dak'Art Biennial (2014); the Lyon Biennale (2013); the Triennale of the New Museum, New York (2012); the Istanbul Biennial (2011); and the Sharjah Biennial (2011). His work has also been showcased in group exhibitions at major venues, including: *Prometheus Unbound – Graz* (2017); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2016); Logan Center for the Arts, Chicago (2016); Palazzo Fortuny, Venice (2016); Guggenheim Museum, New York (2014 and 2017); and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (2013).

For further information about the exhibition and for photographs:

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