



galeria nara roesler

vik muniz
landscapes

untitled, art online
31 july – 2 august, 2020

COVER Vik Muniz. **Repro: *Ten Hummingbirds, after Martin Johnson Heade*, 2020** [detail]

On the occasion of the Untitled Art Fair, Galeria Nara Roesler is delighted to showcase a solo presentation by Brazilian artist Vik Muniz. The selection offered is uniquely focused on the matter of the natural landscape as a genre and the Muniz's recurrent experimentation with the subject. In including works that appear to be landscapes, but are in fact puzzle-like constructions made of, or crested from other images, which are manipulated to re-create the appearance of nature, the presentation also engages with the very idea of the virtual experience in attempting to reenact the physical realm. The works challenge our perception of reality and are set within a mirrored context.

[Register here for Untitled, Art Online](#)



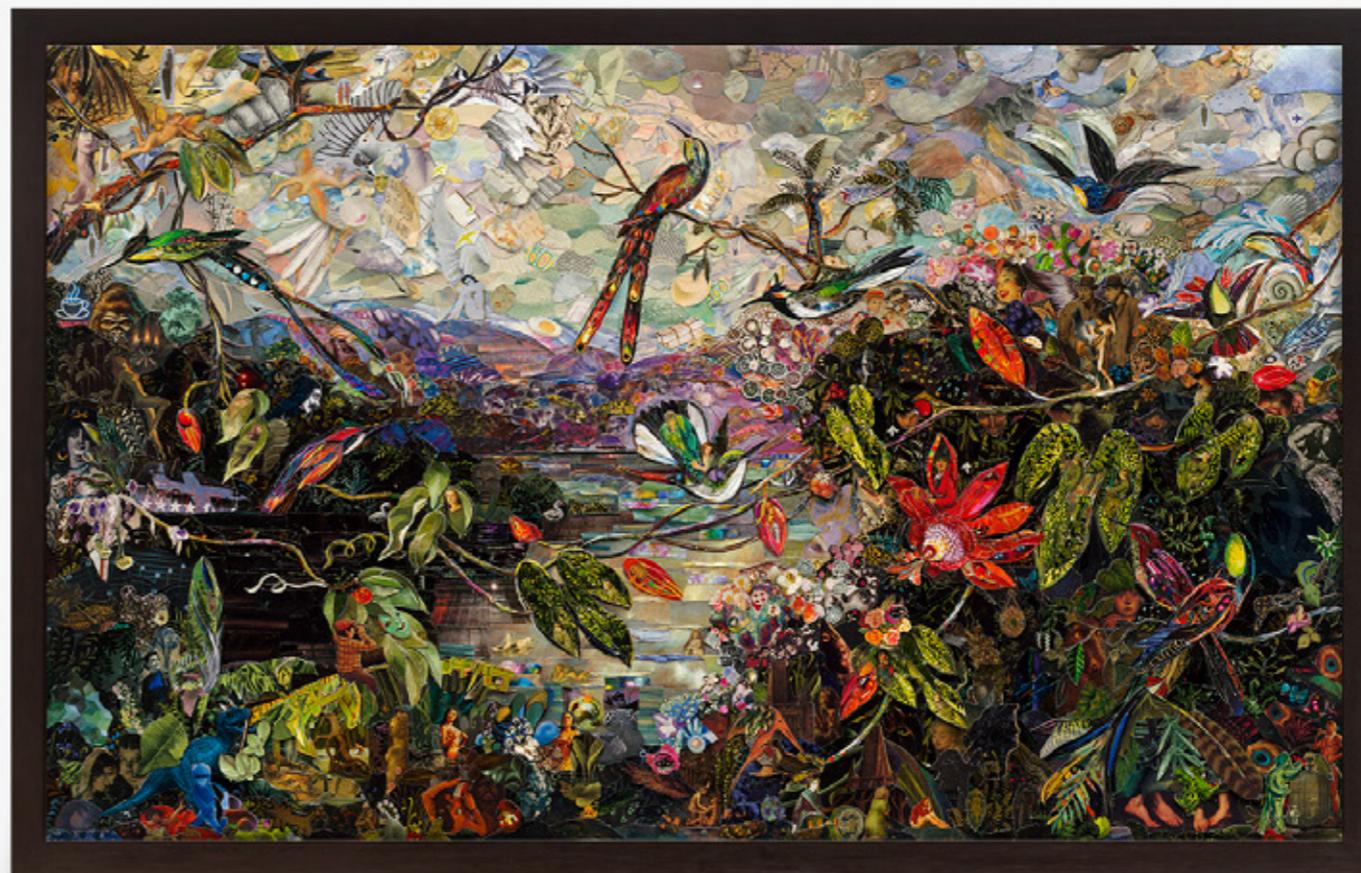
'Using the vicissitudes and ambiguities of visual ideas to probe their structure, the artist evokes superficial abysses—for whatever lies behind what we see and perceive can only be created.'

—Vik Muniz



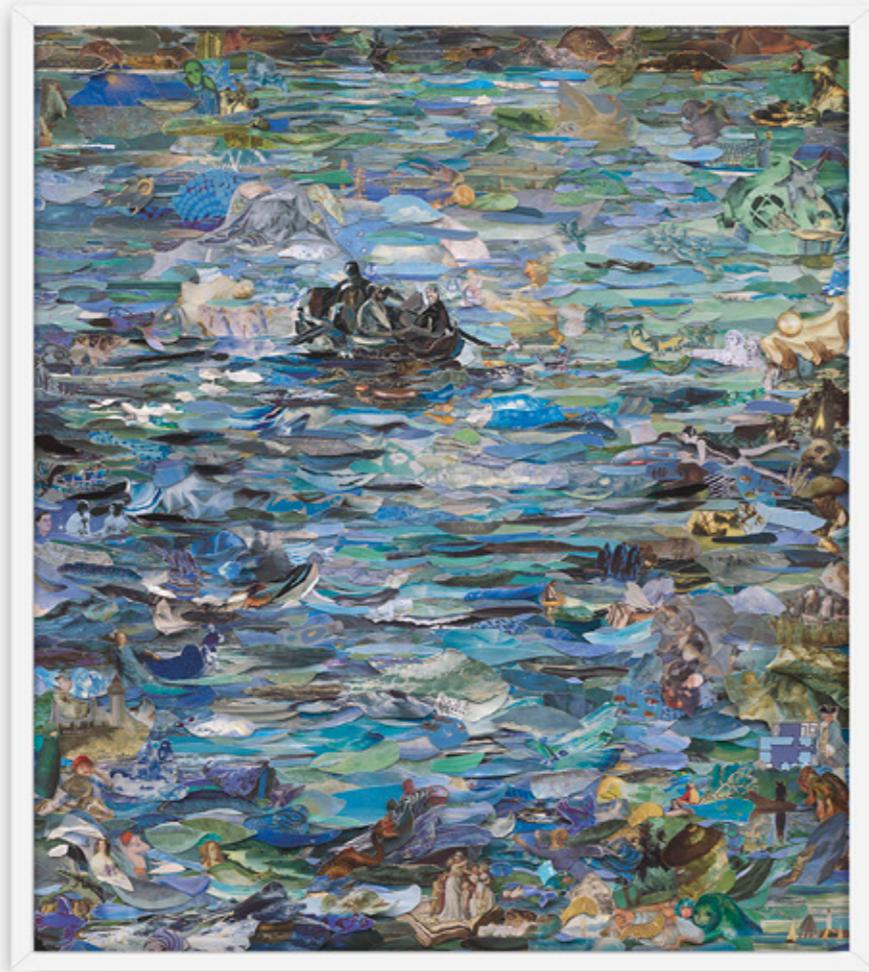
Vik Muniz' practice is characterized by a process of appropriation, recreation and referencing historic works of art, all of which are at the core of both series, **Reproductions** and **Pictures of Magazines**. At first sight, the large format images seem familiar, they mirror Monet's iconic *Nymphéas*, Klimt's *Italian Garden* and Manet's *Rocheport's Escape*, for example; however, as one takes a closer look, one begins to discover hundreds of other images, cut and organized into a collage that takes on the shape of another painting only from afar. The works are mosaics of superimposed images—taken from magazines covering a variety of issues, going from automobiles to weaponry—which dissolve the composition into an infinite number of focal points. Muniz scans and amplifies images, with such resolution that even allows for the public to discern the fiber of the cut magazine pages, making them almost seem tridimensional. In these series, Muniz employs photography as a form of glue, keeping all the pieces of the collage together and revealing the dense, underlying layers of media imagery.

[Watch Vik Muniz talk about *Pictures of Magazines*](#)



Repro: Ten Hummingbirds,
after Martin Johnson Heade, 2020
archival inkjet print
edition of 6 + 4 AP
152,4 x 250,2 cm/60 x 98.5 in
also available in 101,6 x 166,4 cm/40 x 65.5 in



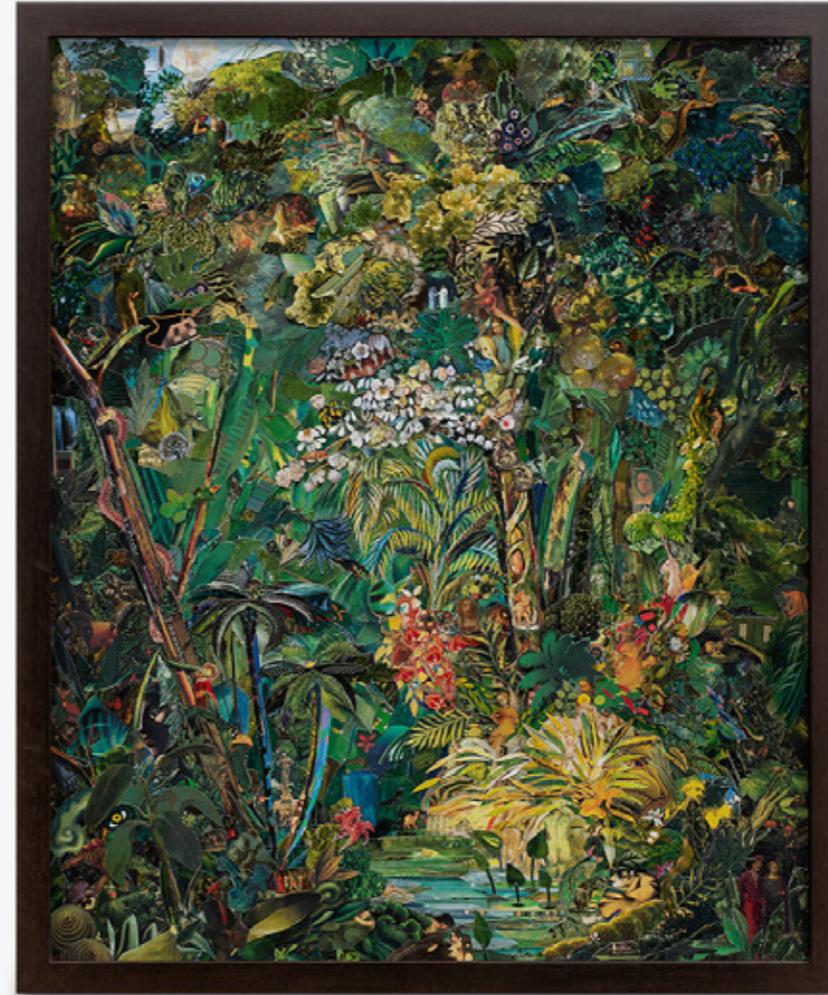


Repro: Musee d'Orsay
(Rochefort's Escape, after Manet), 2016
digital C print
edition of 6 + 4 AP
204 x 180,3 cm/80.3 x 71 in
also available in 114,8 x 101,6 cm/45.2 x 40 in



'The multiplicity of imagery used to compose his collages adds a mediating, third layer that further ensnares the viewer and makes reference to all the cultural and visual baggage they bring to their encounter with art. The individual pieces that make up the overall jigsaw are pictures in themselves that draw in and slow down the movement of the eye, frustrating any smooth reading. It is hard to resist the search for meaning, but Muniz tries to resist whimsical juxtapositions, preferring a maze of surreal non sequiturs.'

—Christopher Turner



Repro: *Brazilian Jungle, after Rugendas*, 2019

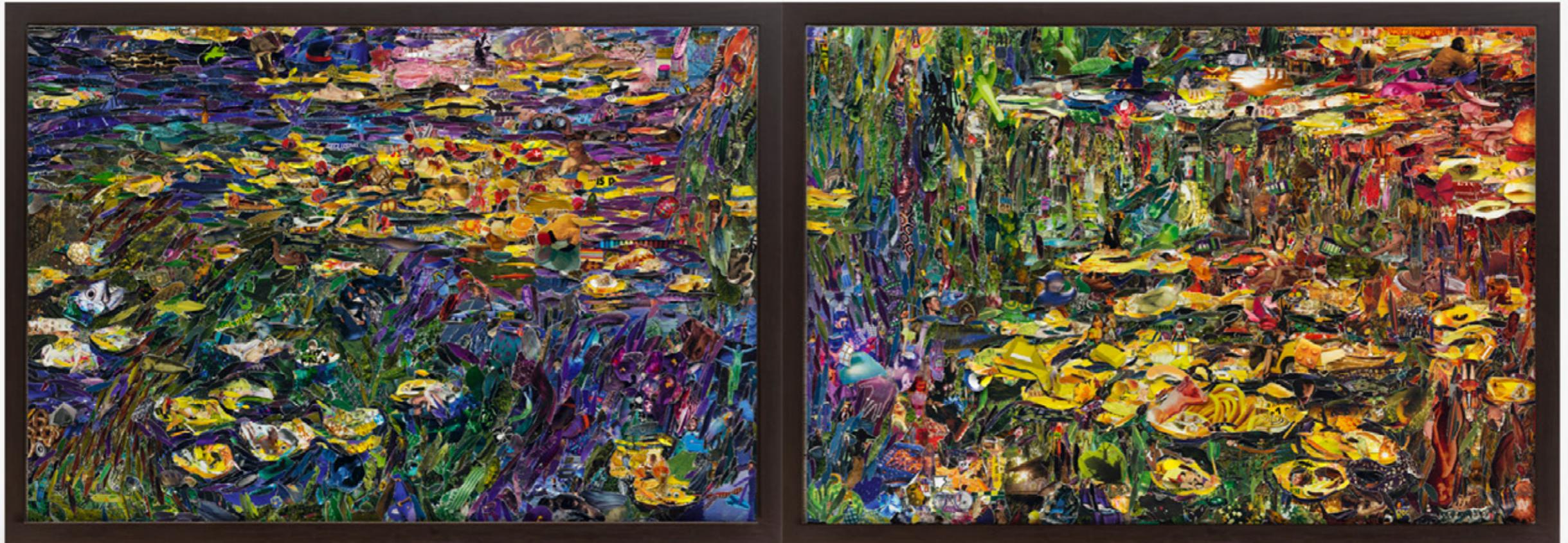
archival inkjet print

edition of 6 + 4 AP

195,6 x 160 cm/77 x 63 in

also available in 124 x 101,6 cm/48.8 x 40 in





Pictures of Magazine 2: Nympeas,
after Claude Monet, 2013
digital C print
edition of 6 + 4 AP
180 x 530 cm/70.9 x 208.7 in



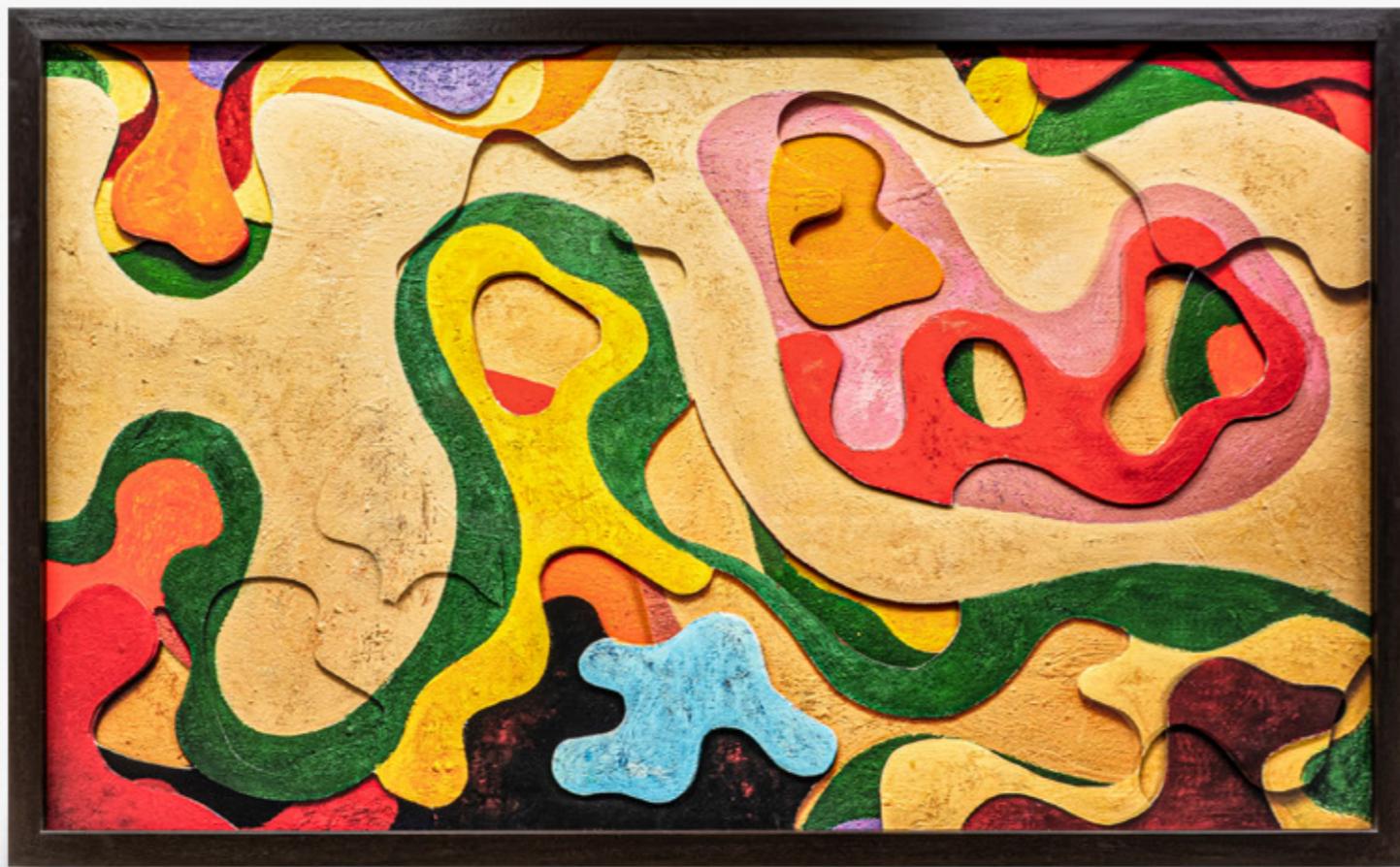
Superficies [Surfaces] is the title of the artist's most recently completed series. As is characteristic of his practice, the body of work engages with iconic abstract paintings. Vik Muniz creates formally similar works, photographs them and collates them—some parts are actual collages, others are photos of collages—eliciting a play on depth and dimensionality. In doing so, Vik plays with the role of photography as a source of documentation, making it instead a tool for illusion. The resulting pieces are not pictorial images, but rather photographs of paintings that are mounted so as to create subtle reliefs and shadows—contrasting and juxtaposing both artistic mediums.

[Watch Vik Muniz talk about *Superficies*](#)

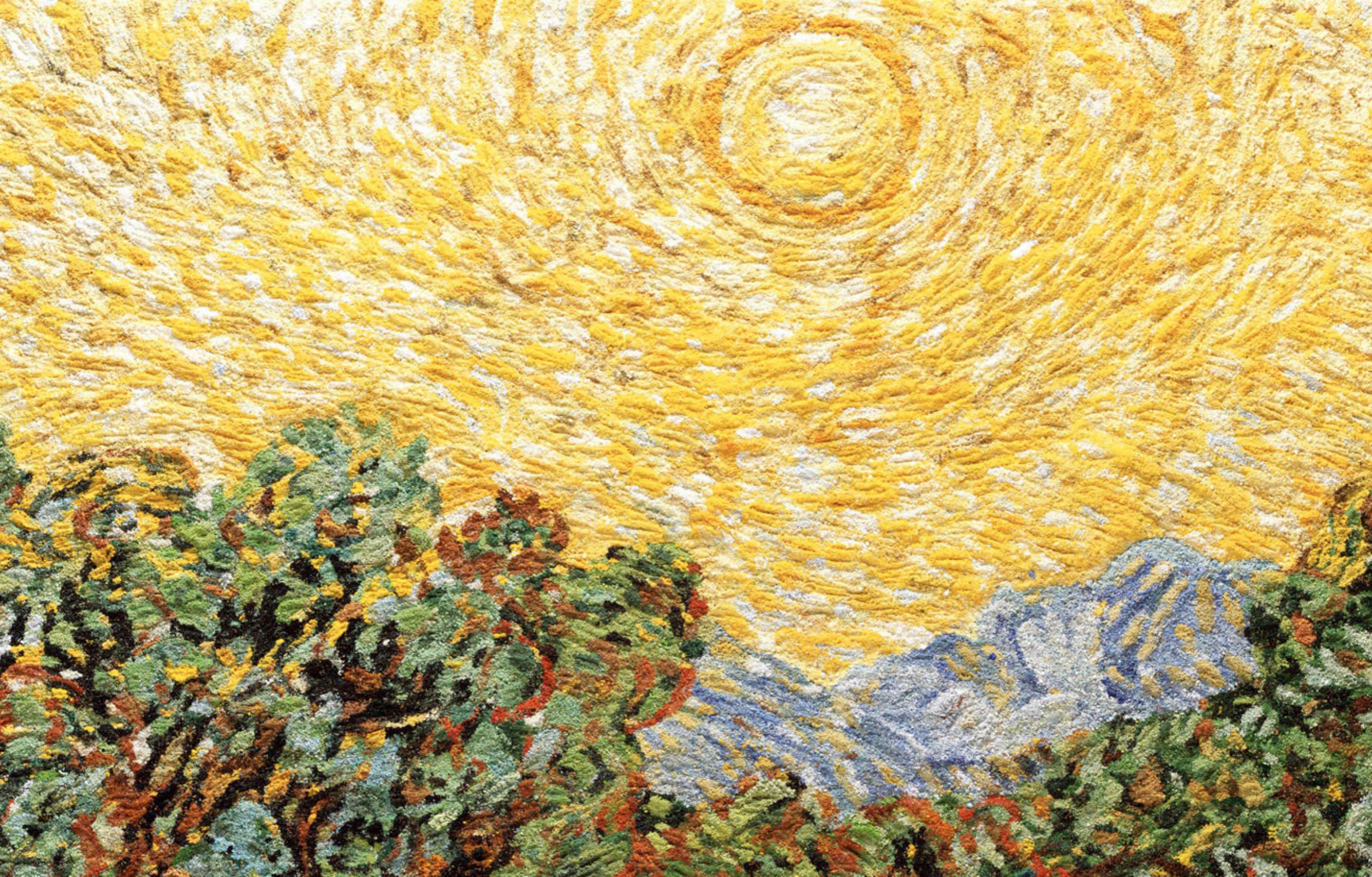


***Surfaces: Landscape,
after Milton Avery, 2019***
archival inkjet prints
assembled in layers
unique
106,7 x 139,7 cm/42 x 55 in

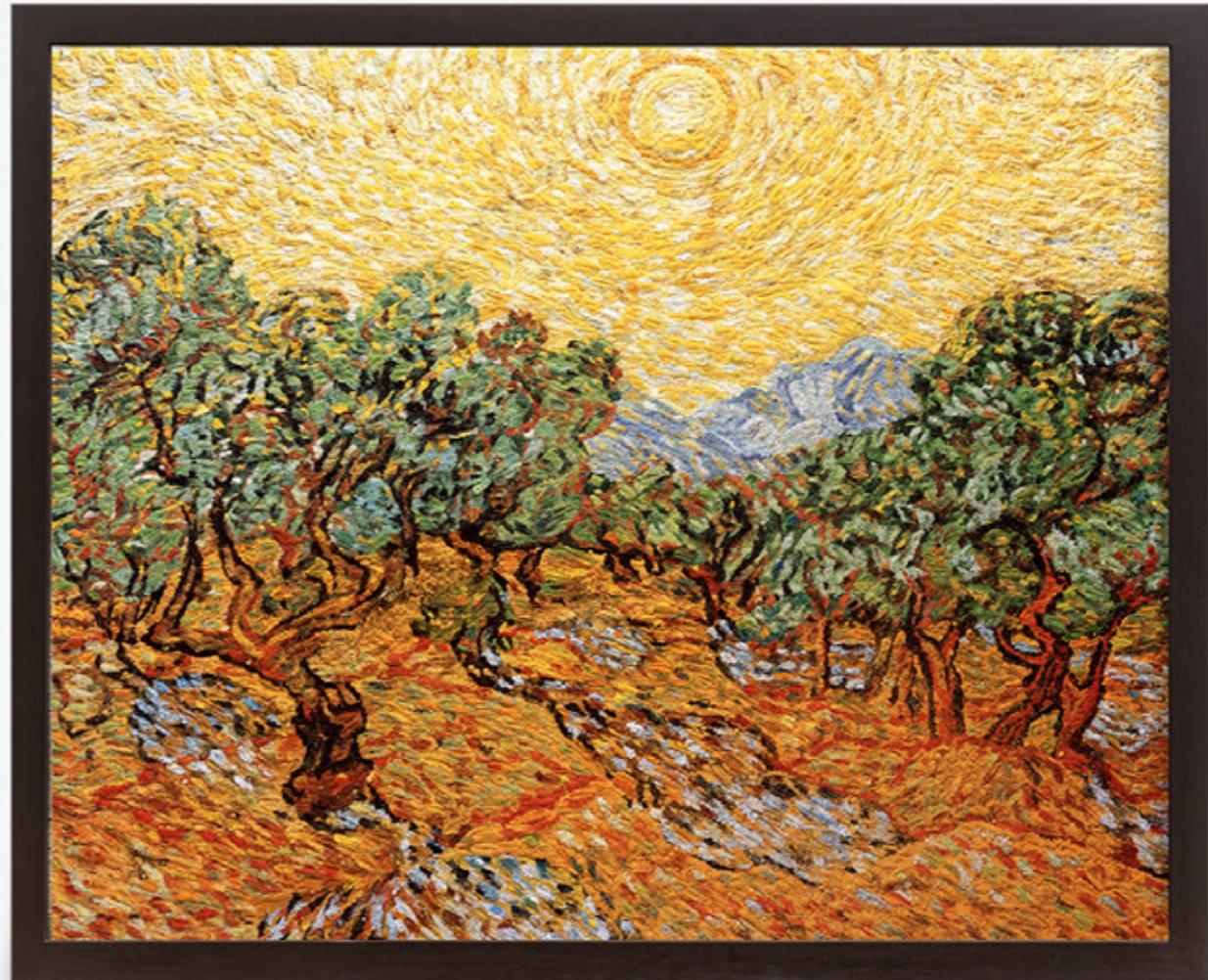




**Surfaces: Garden Design 2,
after Burle Marx, 2019**
archival inkjet prints
assembled in layers
unique
109,2 x 185,2 cm / 43 x 72.9 in



Pictures of pigment is a series of works dedicated to the reproduction of iconic paintings of Art History through a process of layering powdered and stick pigments. Through the use of brushes and spoons, Muniz minutely sprinkles the pigment unto a designated surface. Due to the toxicity of some pigments and the dispersing nature of the medium, the technique and handling is extremely meticulous—the image is made on a scale of approximately 30 centimeters wide and is unmodifiable once the powder touches the surface, making it a tedious and time-consuming process. Once the composition is finished, it is immediately photographed and enlarged. The resulting works play with and uproot visual perception. In the artist's words, 'Vision is first of all a form of intelligence, and recognition or identification a sort of comfort.' In reproducing highly known images through rather unique and often unprecedented techniques, Muniz merges familiarity and unfamiliarity challenging and unsettling our process of identification.



***Pictures of Pigment: Olive Trees with
Yellow Sky and Sun, After Van Gogh, 2007***

digital c-print

edition of 6 + 4 AP (last available edition)

180,3 x 228,6 cm/71 x 90 in





Metachrome: Italian Garden,
after Klimt, 2016
archival pigment print
edition of 6 + 4 AP
160 x 160 cm/63 x 63 in
also available in 101,6 x 101,6 cm/40 x 40 in





Traces: Tree, 2016
archival pigment print (inkjet)
edition of 10 + 5 AP
110 x 160 cm/43.3 x 63 in

detail of *View of Itamaracá Island in Brazil*, painted by Frans Post in 1637



Muniz' famous series **Verso**, consisted of recreating to the exact scale, including every detail, scratch, splinter and label, the backs of iconic paintings such as that of Picasso's *Les demoiselles d'Avignon*, Seurat's *La Grande Jatte*, and Frans Post's *View of Itamaracà Island in Brazil*. In order to do so, the artist worked closely with the curatorial and conservation teams of important institutions like the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the Guggenheim and the Art Institute of Chicago. Throughout a period of six years, Muniz researched and built these works with the help of other artists and of specialists in Art forgery, creating a series that in critic and curator Luisa Duarte's words, 'demands a retrospective gaze from the public. In order to "read" his photos, one must question and analyse the process of making, the materials used, as well as identify the original image, so as to attain the meaning of the image. Vik's work brings into play a series of questions for our "gaze" and creates a space for doubt, which is where we build our understanding.'

[Watch the making of Verso](#)



Verso (Back of the Painting):

Ilha de Itamaraca, 2016

mixed media object

edition of 3

82 x 108 x 6 cm/32.3 x 42.5 x 2.4 in



'On the *Pictures of Earthworks*, I use the earth as a canvas, a support, perhaps saying that no matter how we try to distill the materiality that shapes our consciousness into a symbolic, linguistic environment, we are only left with that same primitive material canvas as the unexceptional means of fixing and transmitting our knowledge.'

—Vik Muniz

Earthworks, stemmed from Muniz's interest in the paradoxical nature of site-specific works created by artists such as Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer, and Walter de Maria, in the 1960s and 1970s. The artist was particularly intrigued by the fact that most of these works are known only through photographs and drawings. In 2002, Muniz created two sets of works using earth. One consisted of line drawings of household objects ranging between four-hundred and six-hundred feet long and photographed from a helicopter. The other had dimensions of approximately thirty centimeters, but was also photographed from above. The images were taken with the same camera, printed following the same technique and in the same size, making it difficult to tell the difference between the two versions. In 2005, Muniz returned to a large scale production and created a third set of enormous drawings, with hundreds of meters in length, further pursuing his investigations into scale, perspective and ephemerality.

[Watch the making of *Earthworks*](#)



inkjet prints
editions of 10 + 5 AP (each work)

1
Pictures of Earthworks: Outlet
(Fabrica, Iron Mine), 2005
50,8 x 61 cm/20 x 24 in



1

2
Pictures of Earthworks: Footsteps
(João Pereira, Iron Mine), 2005
50,8 x 61 cm/20 x 24 in



3

3
Pictures of Earthworks: Faucet
(Azul, Manganese Mine), 2006
50,8 x 61 cm/20 x 24 in



5

4
Pictures of Earthworks: Shovel
(Sossego, Copper Mine), 2006
61 x 50,8 cm/24 x 20 in



4

5
Pictures of Earthworks: Pointing
Hand (Itabira Iron Mine), 2005
50,8 x 61 cm/20 x 24 in



2



vik muniz

b. 1961, São Paulo, Brazil

lives and works in New York, USA and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Vik Muniz' body of work explores the limits of representations within visual arts, twinning his production with an urge to grasp the world's current state of affairs. Using raw materials such as thorn paper, cotton, sugar, chocolate or waste, the artist meticulously composes landscapes, portraits or other depictions offering alternative representations and understandings of these materials and the images they render. According to critic and curator Luisa Duarte, 'his work demands a retrospective gaze from the public. In order to 'read' his photos, one must question and analyse the process of making, the materials used, as well as identify the original image, so as to attain the meaning of the image. Vik's work brings into play a series of questions for our 'regard' and creates a space for doubt, which is where we build our understanding.'

In tandem with his artistic practice Vik Muniz has headed social projects that rely on art and creativity to aid low-income communities in Brazil and has also produced artworks that aim to give visibility to marginalized groups in society.

Vik Muniz was born in 1961 in São Paulo. He lives and works in New York and Rio de Janeiro. Recent solo shows include: *Vik Muniz*, at The Sarasota Museum of Art (SMOA), Ringling College of Art and Design (2019), in Sarasota, USA; *Imaginária*, at Solar do Unhão, Museu de Arte Moderna de Salvador (MAM-BA) (2019), in Salvador, Brazil; *Vik Muniz: Verso*, at Belvedere Museum Vienna (2018), in Vienna, Áustria; *Afterglow – Pictures of Ruins*, at Palazzo Cini (2017), in Venice, Italy. He has featured in several biennials, such as the 56th Venice Biennale, Italy (2015); 24th Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil (1998); among others. Recent group shows include: *Naar Van Gogh*, at Vincent van GoghHuis (2018), in Zundert, The Netherlands; *Troposphere – Chinese and Brazilian Contemporary Art*, at Beijing Minsheng Art Museum (2017), in Beijing, China; *Look at Me!: Portraits and Other Fictions from the "la Caixa" Contemporary Art Collection*, at Pera Museum (2017), in Istanbul, Turkey; *Botticelli Reimagined*, at Victoria & Albert Museum (2016), in London, UK. His works are included in the collections of: Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France; Guggenheim Museum, New York, United States; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain; The Tate Gallery, London, UK; among others.





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