

JR presents *Patamar* at Galeria Nara Roesler

The French artist opens his first solo exhibition in Brazil and celebrates the 10th anniversary of Casa Amarela, a culture initiative he created in 2009 at Morro da Providência

opening nov 21, 2019 | **exhibition** nov 22 – feb 21, 2020



JR. *GIANTS, Cleuson LIMA DO ROSARIO from Brazil, Barra da Tijuca, from the beach*, © Comité international Olympique, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2016. color print, mounted on dibond, plexiglas 49.1 x 71.2 x 2.7 in. Courtesy of the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

It is with great pleasure that **Galeria Nara Roesler** presents **JR: *Patamar***, the first solo show by the renowned French artist in Brazil. The exhibition, opening on November 21 at the gallery in Rio de Janeiro, features works that deal with the global issue of migration flows. The artist is also celebrating the 10th anniversary of Casa Amarela, a cultural space conceived and founded by JR in 2009, in the carioca neighborhood of Morro da Providência.

Known mainly for his large-scale urban art projects, JR has spread his art on buildings in the French *banlieues*, walls in the Middle East, bridges and trains in Africa and *favelas* in Brazil. His practice creates connections and brings people together in places affected by conflict or social vulnerability, blurring the frontiers between art actors and spectators.

In the artist's own words, ***Patamar*** refers to "the moment when things change and people are about to take the next step". The concept behind the exhibition title, which in Portuguese evokes the idea of an entrance or threshold, encompasses all the artworks that make up the show, as we can see in the brand-new pieces specially commissioned for the gallery. These are wooden rows, onto which photographic prints are applied, in typical JR style. As a tool to move people from one

place to another, the rows evoke the displacement of migrants and symbolize a step towards a new life.

The exhibition expands on the series *Giants*, produced by JR in Rio de Janeiro in 2016, during the Olympic Games. Here, the artist portrayed migrant athletes, creating giant sculptures with scaffolding, which showcased athletic moving bodies inserted into the urban landscape.

The relationship between the city of Rio de Janeiro and JR is not something new. It began in 2008 in Morro da Providência, with the project *Women are Heroes*, which began the previous year in Africa. The French artist was attracted to the *favela* in Rio de Janeiro by the internationally notorious story of three local young men who were kidnapped by the military police and handed as trophies to the drug dealers of the rival *favela*, where they were tortured and killed.

As part of the project *Women are Heroes*, JR covered a large portion of the *favela's* façades and walls with large-scale images of the eyes and faces of local women who were in some way connected to the murdered youths, including their mothers and grandmothers. All of a sudden, the gaze of these women could be seen from the wealthier neighborhoods meaning Morro da Providência hit the news for something other than misery and violence. The community not only gained a face but a voice. "The city saw the area as a violent place, the dwellers were seen as monsters. The power of art is to change the perception of things. It does not provide answers, but it generates lots of questions", said the artist in [El País in 2017](#).

In 2009, with the help of photographer and historian Mauricio Hora, JR created *Casa Amarela*, a cultural space on top of the hill where Morro da Providência is located. The site offers English, art, music and reading lessons for local children. The initiative, which is marking its 10 years anniversary, has benefited from the engagement of several artists: its façade is covered by an installation by artists Takao Shiraishi and Diirby, as well as paintings from OSGEMEOS. In 2017, *Lua* [moon, in Portuguese] – a new space dedicated to art residencies and community workshops – was built on the roof of the house as a symbol of Casa Amarela's mission: to help dwellers reach the moon.

opening

nov 21, 2019 | thursday, 7pm

exhibition

nov 22 – feb 21, 2020

monday to friday, from 10am to 7pm

saturday, from 11am to 3pm

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about JR

After finding a camera in the subway of Paris in 2001, JR decided to travel Europe to meet those who express themselves on walls and facades, making their portraits and exhibiting them in the streets. Thanks to his large scale installations on the urban space, he forces us to see phenomena and people that we usually ignore. He creates drastically simplified portraits with enquiring, penetrating, watchful yet solemn expressions that draw our attention and remain in our conscience long after we have seen them. Collaborating with New York City Ballet, OSGemeos, Agnès Varda, Robert De Niro, and many other artists he conceived films, installations, interventions, and other works in different medias.

Through his process, JR stroves to involve the local population in the development of his projects. JR catches the attention of people who are not typical visitors of a museum, spreading unsolicited works on the buildings of slums around Paris, on walls in the Middle-East, on broken bridges in Africa or the favelas in Brazil. In each of his projects, he seeks to act as a witness for a community. And their members don't just see them, they make them. Elderly women become models for a day; kids turn into artists for a week. JR practice do not separate the actors from the spectators and promotes the encounter between the subject/protagonist and the passer-by/interpreter, raising questions, creating a social link, bringing communities together, making people more aware, always preserving humour.

JR was born in Paris, in 1983. He lives and works between Paris and New York. Some of his latest solo shows and projects include: *JR: Chronicles*, at Brooklyn Museum (2019), in New York, USA; *The Chronicles of San Francisco*, at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SF MoMA) (2019), in San Francisco, USA; *Momentum. La Mécanique de l'Épreuve*, at Maison Européenne de la Photographie (2018), in Paris, France; *Chroniques de Clichy-Montfermeil*, at Palais de Tokyo (2017), in Paris, France; *Kikito*, a temporary installation at the Mexican/US border (2017); *JR at the Louvre*, at Musée du Louvre (2016), in Paris, France. Recent group shows include: *JR, Adrian Piper, Ray Johnson*, at Museum Frieder Burda (2019), in Berlin, Germany; *Refuge*, at 21c Museum (2019), in Bentonville, USA; *Post No Bills: Public Walls as Studio and Source*, at Neuberger Museum of Art (2016), in Purchase, USA; and *Tu dois changer ta vie*, at Tripostal (2015), in Lille, France. His works are included in major public collections such as those of: Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA; Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France; Hong Kong Contemporary Art Foundation, Hong Kong, China; among others.

Galeria Nara Roesler is a leading Brazilian contemporary art gallery, which represents established and prominent emerging Brazilian and international artists, with headquarters in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and New York. Founded by Nara Roesler in 1989, the gallery has fomented the development and the diffusion of its artists' work through a consistent exhibition program, solid institutional partnerships and constant dialogue with leading curators in the contemporary art scene. Since 2002, the gallery fosters the Roesler Hotel program, which is aimed at promoting dialogues between national and international art communities, inviting artists and curators to develop artistic experiments at the gallery space.

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press

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