

nara roesler

**archaeologies  
in the present**  
cao guimarães  
and manoela medeiros

nara roesler curatorial nucleus  
and luis perez-oramas

**opening**  
saturday, november 27

**nara roesler são paulo**  
nov 29, 2021 – jan 29, 2022

Nara Roesler São Paulo presents a dialogue between the work of Cao Guimarães (b. 1965) and Manoela Medeiros (b. 1991), in an exhibition curated by Nara Roesler's Curatorial Nucleus with the curatorial guidance of Luis Pérez-Oramas.

In presenting the work of Cao Guimarães and Manoela Medeiros, the exhibition entwines productions that differ in terms of their disciplines. Guimarães works with capturing occurrences (poetic, accidental, natural), through photographic and cinematographic images, while Medeiros works with intentional material occurrences within the typologies of painting and exhibition space.

Cao Guimarães' works can be understood as an expansion in the manipulation of photographic film, using super-8 cameras, video and photography. Through an attentive and affectionate gaze, Guimarães' oeuvre constructs a poetic inventory of varied and visually striking moments captured from everyday life, expanding the notion and vocabulary of the documentary form.

The exhibition includes new works such as *Ventania* (2004/2021), where the sequence and juxtaposition of images, characteristic of photography, compensate for the absence of movement. The presentation also showcases iconic videos such as *O pintor joga o cinema na lata de lixo* (2008) and *Quarta-feira de Cinzas* (a collaboration with Rivane Neuenschwander, 2006), alongside more recent works including *Reza* and *Vovô* (2016) that in the words of Consuelo Lins propose, “‘micro narratives’ or ‘quasi narratives,’ fragments of the characters’ and of the artist’s experiences, often ephemeral sensorial configurations, on the verge of disappearing.”

On this occasion, Manoela Medeiros will exhibit her work at Nara Roesler for the first time, marking the beginning of her representation by the gallery. In her practice, Medeiros investigates the ambivalence between the act of constructing versus destructing, excavating surfaces such as the walls of exhibition spaces as a means of unveiling the underlying colors and materials that had been applied over the years and forgotten.

Medeiros seeks to create new grounds for one’s temporal experience in exhibiting successive layers that lay within architectural structures, with each carrying the memory of its time.

The *Ruínas* series, also on view at the exhibition, embodies the artist’s process of work whereby she layers paint and plaster onto a surface, subsequently removing parts so as to create paintings that evoke the physical impact of time on architectural structures. In the body of work titled *Continentes*, Medeiros creates imaginary maps using wall fragments. In addition to her plaster and concrete sculptures, Medeiros will also present two site specific installations where the artist intervenes directly onto the material surface of the exhibition space.

Cao Guimarães’ now referential work, which records accidental occurrences, and Medeiros’ investigation into the effects of time on artistic materialities -such as painting and gallery-, collide and coincide as poetic forms of archeologies in the present.



## continente

In Medeiros' work, methods, functions, and forms of Cartography—a science that aims to document the material reality of a territory—are subverted, distorted, and fictionalized. In the *Continente* series (2012-2021), the artist reorganizes fragments of 'ruins' or wall pieces, collected in different locations. These elements from real places, which she collects over time, become re-signified as the artist creates new groupings, referring to an imaginary cartography that organizes by textures, colors, and shapes.



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Manoela Medeiros  
*Continente*, 2021  
wall fragments, plaster  
and aluminum structure  
42 x 30 cm  
16.5 x 11.8 in









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Manoela Medeiros  
*Continente*, 2021  
wall fragments, plaster and  
aluminum structure  
42,3 x 30,3 x 3,5 cm  
16.7 x 11.9 x 1.4 in









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Manoela Medeiros  
*Continente*, 2021  
wall fragments, plaster  
and aluminum structure  
42,2 x 30,2 x 3,4 cm  
16.6 x 11.9 x 1.3 in









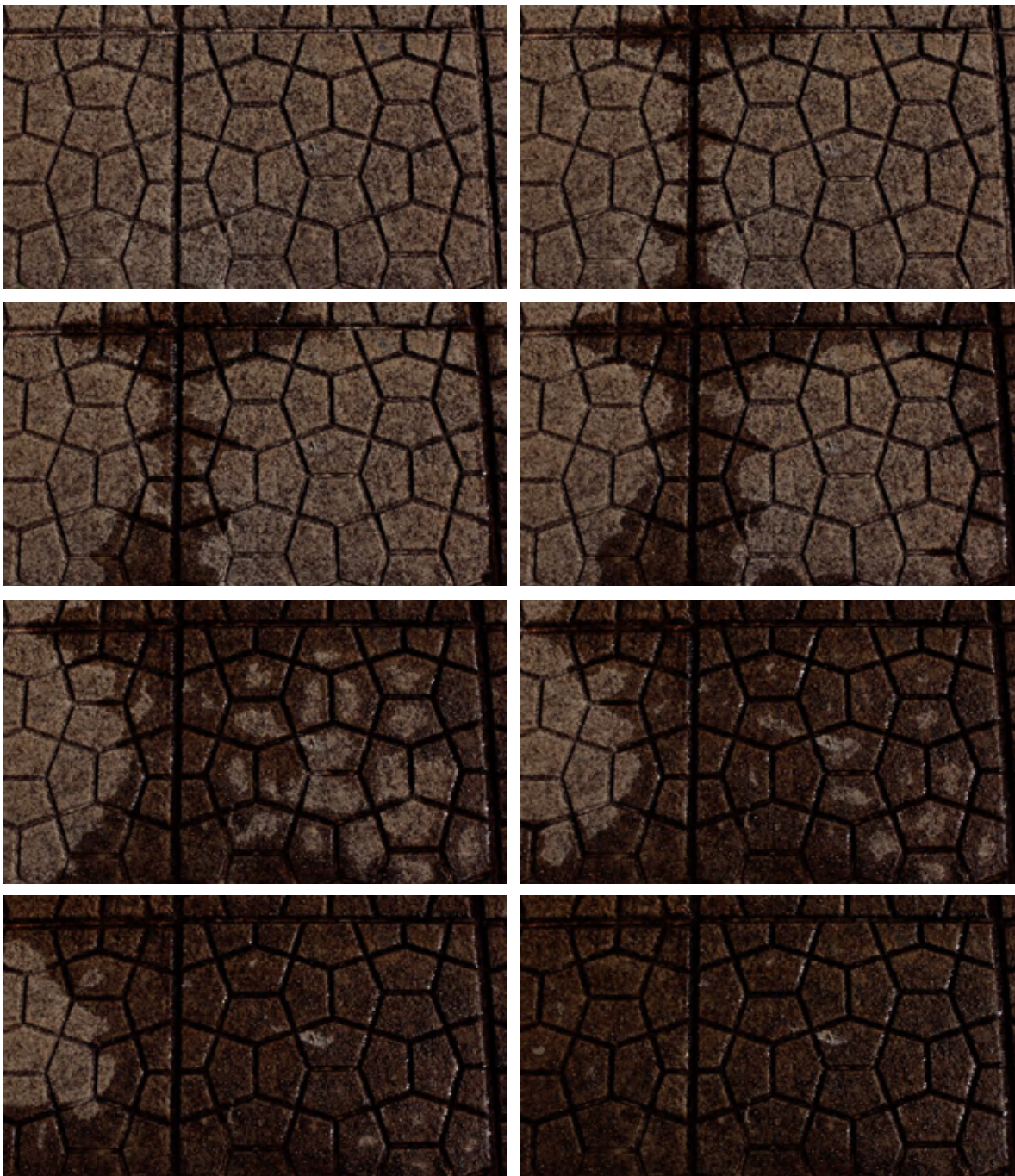
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Manoela Medeiros  
*Continente*, 2021  
wall fragments, plaster and  
aluminum structure  
42,1 x 30,4 x 3,4 cm  
16.6 x 12 x 1.3 in









## drawing

The short-film is filmed in a single shot that captures the furrowed surface of a dry floor. At first the audience sees a still image accompanied by the sound of water, which shortly enters the frame and begins to slither through the floor's gaps, gradually spreading until it wets the entire surface and transforms its appearance. Guimarães addresses everyday occurrences through an aesthetic frame that brings focus to often unnoticed details and reflects on nature's creative capacity.

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Cao Guimarães  
*Drawing*, 2011  
digital video full HD  
edition of 6 + 2 AP  
1'11"







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Manoela Medeiros  
*Wall*, 2021  
wall fragments, plaster  
and aluminum structure  
86,5 x 58,5 x 5 cm  
34.1 x 23 x 2 in







Manoela Medeiros  
*Wall*, 2021  
wall fragments, plaster  
and aluminum structure  
97,5 x 50 x 5 cm  
38.4 x 19.7 x 2 in









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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled*, 2015  
digital photograph  
edition of 5 + 2 AP  
60 x 90 cm  
23.6 x 35.4 in









## vovô

In the words of scholar, Consuelo Lins, “In the images that compose *Vovô's*, dozens of whitened particles, resembling cotton, fly and fall in a grove of immense trees”, while an uncaptured male voice accompanies the scene narrating an affective memory about a grandfather. With this, Guimarães juxtaposes a visual image, shown on the screen, and an acoustic image, which includes the narration and a musical composition by artists O Grivo.

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Cao Guimarães  
*Grampa*, 2016  
 digital HD video  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP  
 4'31"







Manoela Medeiros  
*Horizonte Flutuante*, 2021  
concrete pigmented directly  
in the structure  
51 x 52 x 5 cm  
20.1 x 20.5 x 2 in









Manoela Medeiros  
*Horizonte Flutuante*, 2021  
concrete pigmented directly  
in the structure  
53 x 51 x 5 cm  
20.9 x 20.1 x 2 in







Manoela Medeiros  
*Maré subindo*, 2021  
concrete pigmented directly  
in the structure  
81 x 70 x 5 cm  
31.9 x 27.6 x 2 in







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Manoela Medeiros  
*Paisagem vista de binóculo*, 2021  
concrete pigmented directly  
in the structure  
32 x 24,5 x 5 cm  
13 x 9.9 x 1.4 in







## úmido

The four photographs that make up this series are part of a group of images that the artist made and left aside, only later realizing their visual potential upon reviewing and organizing his archives. As he revisited his inventory, Guimarães created a new juxtaposition of images giving rise to a conceptual discourse that engages with the mechanisms of memory.

Initially, the body of work was to be titled *Ilhas*—or islands—, as each image depicts leaves and flowers resting on the ground, and surrounded by a halo of humidity that delineate a small territory. These images of transitory phenomena, things that often escape our gaze, form the core of Guimarães' practice, which aims to give visibility to what is often invisible.



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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Moist*, 2015  
digital photography  
edition of 5 + 2 AP  
60 x 90 cm  
23.6 x 35.4 in







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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled from Úmido series*, 2015  
digital photography  
edition of 5 + 2 AP  
60 x 90 cm  
23.6 x 35.4 in









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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Moist*, 2015  
digital photography  
edition of 5 + 2 AP  
60 x 90 cm  
23.6 x 35.4 in











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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled from Úmido series*, 2015  
digital photograph  
edition of 5 + 2 AP  
60 x 90 cm  
23.6 x 35.4 in





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Manoela Medeiros  
*A forma da chuva*, 2021  
plaster and pigmented glass  
51 x 38 x 5 cm  
20.1 x 15 x 3 in







Manoela Medeiros  
*Puxadinho*, 2021  
plaster and pigmented glass  
59,5 x 50 x 6 cm  
23.6 x 19.8 x 2 in







Manoela Medeiros  
*Puxadinho*, 2021  
plaster and pigmented glass  
61,5 x 52 cm  
24.7 x 20.9 x 2 in









## **gambiarra**

*Gambiarras* is one of Cao Guimarães' most prolific and long-term photographic series. The artist creates a repertoire of gambiarras, a Brazilian term that refers to the country's popular makeshift culture consisting of creatively adapting the functions of objects as a means of solving problems of everyday life. The gambiarra has come to represent popular creativity, due to its ability to transform objects out of necessity. According to curator Rodrigo Moura: 'We are before a collecting stance that evokes Guimarães' statement that he started working as an artist the very moment he became an active cinephile. These images bring us face to face with an old photography dictum: to produce images is to collect images.'

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Cao Guimarães  
*Gambiarra* # 109, 2012  
digital print on Hahnemühle  
Photo Rag 305  
edition of 3 + 2 AP  
66 x 100 cm  
26 x 39.4 in







## o pintor joga o cinema na lata de lixo

In this spirited short film, Cao Guimarães focuses on the concrete, objective dimension of cinema, or film. Unlike what the title may imply, the painter—painting the wall onto which the film is projected—is not the protagonist of the film; rather it is the very idea of the canvas, of a physical surface that receives and enables the enjoyment of images.

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Cao Guimarães  
*El pintor tira el cine a la basura*  
*[The painter throws the film in the garbage can], 2008*  
 HDV, color, audio 5.1  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP  
 5'42''





## ruínas

Medeiros has been producing the series *Ruínas* [*Ruins*] since 2014, artificially recreating the effects of passing time on surfaces. This body of work arises from the artist's interest in the pictorial quality of walls in abandoned and degraded spaces from which she extracts parts, creating small collections and typologies of these fragments. To create the works in this series, Medeiros paints numerous thick layers of different colors onto the canvas, subsequently scraping off the layers so as to reveal the successive stages of her creative process and allow them to coexist on a single surface.



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Manoela Medeiros  
*Ruína*, 2021  
painting and excavation on canvas  
50 x 40 cm  
19.7 x 15.7 in







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Manoela Medeiros  
*Ruína*, 2021  
painting and excavation on canvas  
2 pieces of 200 x 130 cm  
2 pieces of 78.7 x 51.2 in







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Manoela Medeiros  
*Ruína*, 2021  
painting and excavation on canvas  
50 x 40 cm  
19.7 x 15.7 in







“Each space is filled with history and intention. For this reason, the architecture of the exhibition space, the way it is built, and how light may be made to invade it, ends up gaining a new meaning during my process. I try to mix them up so that the public doesn't know where the work ends and the space begins.”

—**Manoela Medeiros**

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Manoela Medeiros  
*Ruína*, 2021  
painting and excavation on canvas  
2 pieces of 80 x 60 cm  
2 pieces of 31.5 x 23.6 in









## reza

The short movie is centered on the gestures of a benzedeira (a healer in Brazilian tradition). The camera closes in on small ritualistic actions of an old lady, accompanied by her voice as she whispers indiscernible prayers, that leave doubt as to the purpose of the actions and the religion in question. Only in the final moments of the film, through a short sentence, are the viewers allowed to understand the blessing, as the words become seemingly addressed to the audience creating a sense of intense intimacy. The work also makes reference to the religious syncretism that have come to shape Brazilian culture.



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Cao Guimarães  
*Reza*, 2016  
digital HD video  
edition of 5 + 2 AP  
3'55"









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Manoela Medeiros  
*Bananeira*, 2021  
concrete pigmented d  
irectly in the structure  
70 x 47 x 4,5 cm  
27.6 x 18.5 x 1.8 in







Manoela Medeiros  
*Vase amérindien*  
*sur table rouge*, 2021  
concrete pigmented  
directly in the structure  
56 x 48,5 cm  
22 x 19.1 in







Manoela Medeiros  
*Petit sculpture africaine  
sur table rouge*, 2021  
concrete pigmented  
directly in the structure  
49 x 32,5 cm  
19.3 x 12.8 in







Manoela Medeiros  
*Ex-votos*, 2021  
concrete pigmented  
directly in the structure  
57 x 42 cm  
22.4 x 16.5 in







## steps

This series is made up of fifteen black and white photographs, whereby Cao Guimarães captures the traces of past footsteps on a dusty floor. The works do not raise questions about who used the shoes, or where they were headed, but rather about the idea of passage, of transience and memory. According to curator Moacir dos Anjos, 'Here, as in many other works, what is most important is capturing the ordinary, the pointless, the banal, which somehow structure life. The footprints could very well be vestiges of journeys undertaken by those who walk without direction, in search of mere intuition, through the roads of the inner country.'

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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Steps # 04, 2015*  
photograph  
edition of 5 + 2 AP  
75 x 50 cm  
29.5 x 19.7 in








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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Steps # 01, 2015*  
 photograph  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP  
 75 x 50 cm  
 29.5 x 19.7 in




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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Steps # 03, 2015*  
 photograph  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP  
 75 x 50 cm  
 29.5 x 19.7 in



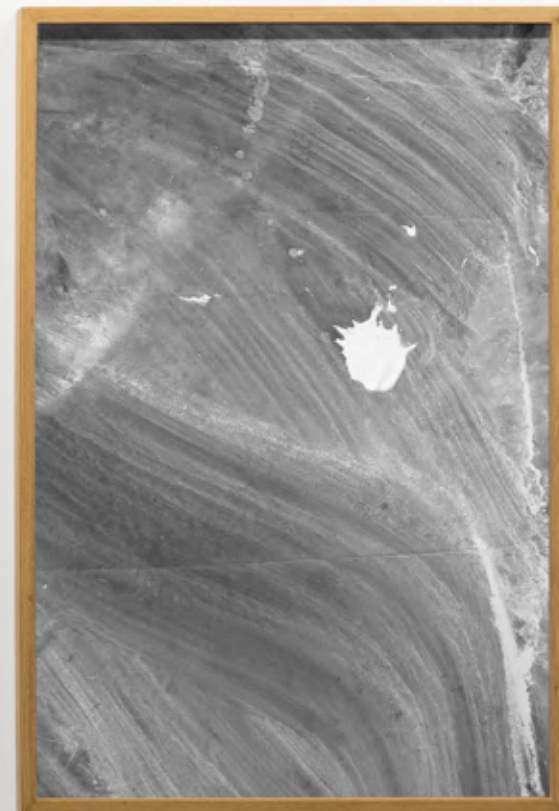

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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Steps # 05, 2015*  
 photograph  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP  
 75 x 50 cm  
 29.5 x 19.7 in




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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Steps # 08, 2015*  
 photograph  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP  
 75 x 50 cm  
 29.5 x 19.7 in




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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Steps # 15, 2015*  
 photograph  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP  
 75 x 50 cm  
 29.5 x 19.7 in





“I’m a man of images, but I was born in a time where humans weren’t born as images. Today we are already images in our mother’s belly. A sound sweep transforms us into uterine images and there we are, unperturbed and comfortable, unaware that we have already become a spectacle for our mother, the doctor and the nurses, projected on a computer screen at the pediatrician’s office. Our first home having been violated, our intimacy invaded, we have already become potential participants of the version of Big Brother that the world has become.”

—Cao Guimarães




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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Steps # 11, 2015*  
 photograph  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP  
 75 x 50 cm  
 29.5 x 19.7 in




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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Steps # 09, 2015*  
 photograph  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP  
 75 x 50 cm  
 29.5 x 19.7 in




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Cao Guimarães  
*Untitled, from the series Steps # 07, 2015*  
 photograph  
 edition of 5 + 2 AP  
 75 x 50 cm  
 29.5 x 19.7 in



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## cao guimarães

b. 1965, Belo Horizonte, Brazil

lives and works in Montevideú, Uruguai

Cao Guimarães' work derives from an expanded approach towards cinema, initiated during an inceptive moment in video art in Brazil. The artist transitions from the super-8 film into video, creating connections with visual arts while using cinematic language. His imagery creates an inventory of distinct and perhaps visually intriguing moments of everyday life, such as ants carrying confetti after Carnival, or soap bubbles floating along the corridors of an empty house. Always seeking to document the ordinary, the artist seeks to find poetry in places where it wouldn't be immediately recognisable.

Cao Guimarães also experiments with photography, notably in his series titled *Gambiarra*s, where his work focuses on the makeshift culture of creatively shifting the function of objects while solving problems of everyday life. Despite the static nature of photography, the seriality in Guimarães' works allows for a sense of sequence and juxtaposition of still images that mirror narrative aspects of a film.

Guimarães' films have been exhibited in several festivals such as the Berlin International Film Festival (2014), the Sundance Film Festival (2007), the Cannes Film Festival (2005) and the Rotterdam International Film Festival (2005, 2007 e 2008), amongst others.

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## selected solo exhibitions

- *Espera*, Instituto Moreira Salles - Paulista (IMS-Paulista), São Paulo, Brazil (2018)
- *Ver é uma fábula*, Centro Dragão do Mar de Arte e Cultura (CDMAC), Fortaleza, Brazil (2018); Instituto Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil (2013); Galerie Anita Beckers, Frankfurt am Main, Germany (2013)
- *Estética da gambiarra*, Sesc Interlagos (2015), São Paulo, Brazil (2015)
- *Cao Guimarães*, Museu de Arte da Pampulha (MAP), Belo Horizonte, Brazil (2008)

## selected group exhibitions

- 7ª Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporânea, Spain (2018)
- *Art and Space*, Guggenheim Bilbao Museum, Bilbao, Spain (2017)
- *Video Art in Latin America*, II Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA (PST: LA/LA), LAXART, Hollywood, USA (2017)
- 34ª Panorama da Arte Brasileira, Brazil (2015)
- *From the Margin to the Edge: Brazilian Art and Design in the 21st Century*, Somerset House, London, United Kingdom (2012)

## selected institutional collections

- Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA
- Tate Modern, Londres, United Kingdom
- Fondation Cartier Pour L'art Contemporain, Paris, France
- Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), São Paulo, Brazil

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## manoela medeiros

b. 1991, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

lives and works between Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and Paris, França

In her practice, Medeiros articulates an approach to painting that transcends the specificities of the medium, making use of sculpture, performance, and installation work. Pursuing a hybrid framework for the pictorial, Medeiros questions artistic media by going beyond their conventional formats, producing paintings and in situ installations that explore the relationships between space, time, and the corporeality of art and of the viewer.

The artist frequently performs direct interventions into exhibition spaces, creating works that emerge from the singularities of the space around her, whether they be material, structural, or in relation to natural and artificial light. With this, her practice attributes a sense of organicity to space, turning architecture into its own body, one that is specific to the experience of art.

Through a seemingly archeological process, Medeiros engages with the notion of ruins as a spatial indication for passing time, undertaking a process that reveals what is often left to underlie. The artist scrapes surfaces—such as the exhibition space's walls—, unveiling the layers of colors and materials employed, covered, and thus, forgotten over time. Medeiros seeks to reinvigorate our temporal experience by exhibiting layers—each of which carries the memory of the time when it was created—, and by allowing them to coexist and intertwine. Thus, the artist operates within a liminal space between construction and destruction, foregrounding how they may complement, rather than detract from each other.

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## selected solo exhibitions

- *Concerto a céu aberto*, Kubik Gallery, Porto, Portugal (2020)
- *L'être dissout dans le monde*, Galerie Chloé Salgado, Paris, France (2019)
- *Poeira varrida*, Galeria Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel, São Paulo, Brazil (2017)
- *Falling Walls*, Double V Gallery, Marselha, France (2017)

## selected group exhibitions

- *Recycler / Surcycler*, Fondation Villa Datris, L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, France (2020)
- *Reservoir, 019*, Ghent, Belgium (2020)
- *Vivemos na melhor cidade da América do Sul*, Fundação Iberê Camargo (FIC), Porto Alegre, Brazil (2018)
- *Hall-statt*, Galeria Fortes D'Aloia e Gabriel, São Paulo, Brazil (2016)
- *In Between*, Galeria Bergamin & Gomide, São Paulo, Brazil (2016)
- *11º Abre Alas*, A Gentil Carioca, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2015)



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