

o papel da mão

JR

nara roesler são paulo

opening march 25

exhibition march 25 – may 20, 2023



JR, *Empreinte, Hand # 5, Chauvet*, 2022, color print mounted ondibond and matte plexiglass unique 153 x 103 x 6,5 cm | 60.2 x 40.6 x 2.6 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Nara Roesler.

Nara Roesler is pleased to present *O Papel da Mão*, the first solo exhibition by the French artist JR in São Paulo. Accompanied by an essay written by curator Marcello Dantas, the show is organized into two sections: in the first, the artist presents all new works, developed especially for the exhibition, in addition to an intervention on the gallery's facade also created specifically for the occasion, whilst the second section contains emblematic works of his career that provide an overview of his multidisciplinary practice. *O Papel da Mão* opens to the public on March 25th and remains on display until May 20th, 2023.

Throughout his career, JR has worked consistently to establish new ways of deepening his interest in others, involving local populations in his works and acting as a witness to a community in which its inhabitants are not mere spectators but active subjects. According to Marcello Dantas, "with his works, the artist highlights the small actors of everyday life

within great contemporary contexts. JR speaks of others more than of himself: his raw materials are the human stories that, when amplified, translate the spirit of a time and our human condition.”

JR's large-scale interventions in public spaces highlight the tensions and conflicts present in urban space, whilst also drawing the attention of the public, beyond typical museum visitors, by spreading his work on buildings on the outskirts of Paris, on walls in the Middle East, on broken bridges in Africa or in the favelas of Brazil. JR has made films, installations, interventions and works in different languages, collaborating with the New York City Ballet, OSGEMEOS, Agnès Varda, Robert De Niro, among many other artists.

In his first solo show in São Paulo, continuing with the theme of the individual seen throughout his work, JR presents a never-before-seen series of photographic collages in which the hand appears as a protagonist. The model for the work is his own hand, which was photographed open and flattened, in a gesture that may refer to the marks left by our ancestors in caves around the world.

The artist's hand thus becomes a kind of self-portrait and a mark of his individuality. Through this work, JR seeks to appreciate our most basic and primary tool, in images that reflect on the creative power of our species and on its profound ability to leave a mark on humanity.

The very assembly of the works evokes a certain corporeality: the artist prints the photographs in black and white on wooden surfaces of the same size, arranging them directly on the gallery walls and superimposing them in framed compositions, creating an effect of three-dimensionality. The absence of color, one of the hallmarks of his work, in turn, enhances the documentary character of the photography while making reference to works from the beginning of his career.

On the upper floor of the gallery, iconic works from his career are displayed, in particular, the photos that document his gigantic interventions in public spaces around the world, such as the *Inside Out* project, carried out in Highline Park, in New York, in 2011; the intervention carried out at the Palais de Tokyo, in Paris, in 2020, the intervention Les Falaises, in front of the Eiffel Tower, at Trocadéro, in Paris, in 2021 and the intervention on the Louvre Pyramid, also in Paris, in 2019, among others.

During the exhibition, the documentary *Paper and Glue* will be shown for the first time in Brazil, presenting the artist's trajectory from his first graffiti videos captured on the roofs of Paris, to his large-scale interventions on the US-Mexico border and in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, to his most recent project in a maximum security prison in California.

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