

nara roesler



expo chicago
andré griffo
and raul mourão
booth 227
april 13—16
navy pier, chicago, usa



andré griffo





André Griffo
The provider's gallery II, 2023
acrylic and oil on canvas
177 x 245 cm
69.7 x 96.5 in



Information about the history of Brazil is condensed in the city of Rio de Janeiro, with certain institutions that have existed since the colonial period and have preserved information that can shed light on many events forming the history of colonialism in the country. The hospital Santa Casa de Misericórdia do Rio de Janeiro is notably one of the oldest institutions in Brazil, having been established in the 16th century to help those in need. Since the 17th century, it has been managed by a fraternity that renders unpaid voluntary services and elects a leader known as a Provider. Being admitted to the fraternity comes with social and economic recognition and the title of a Provider has been historically held by influential politicians or members of high society. This series of work is anchored in the Gallery of Providers of Santa Casa de Misericórdia do Rio de Janeiro, which displays the portraits of its Providers from the early 19th century to the present time. The space was fully reproduced in the painting with added details that relate to the background of the portrayed Providers; indeed although considered benefactors, some of the Although benefactors, some of the Providers were charged with unjust enrichment, slavery, and accused for being disproportionately large landowners, as well as for receiving political favors, eventually being removed from the institution for having diverted resources. In short, the work critiques a small group that has set up a charitable system with its own rules and policies and which, due to its longevity, has been able to set its own parameters for ethical values and interests for a portion of the Brazilian high society.



André Griffo
*Farm management
instructions 8, 2023*
acrylic and oil on canvas
177 x 222 cm
69.7 x 87.4 in

André Griffo began this series of work in 2020, which is characterized by representations of the interior of old Brazilian plantation farms, which are typically full of architectural details such as Portuguese tiles, high ceilings, and antique furniture. The compositions depict ghostly scenes set in seemingly abandoned interiors. At first glance, it seems that the only visible human presence is in the form of animate portraits and in painted scenes on tiles, however as one takes a closer look, one discovers small miniature figures of Afro-Brazilian farm workers scattered throughout the floor, holding stakes as if in the middle of doing fieldwork. Certain bodies hang by a string, held and controlled either by a sacred statue, or by one of the white individuals in the portraits on the wall.

The inversion in scales, whereby painted portraits are much larger than the human figures in the composition, can be understood as an analogy for a narrative of oppression, as the enslaved are unable to stand up against the archaic and weighty tradition in which they are inserted.





André Griffo
Jesus and his theocratic
project for the 2000s V, 2022
acrylic and oil on canvas
138 x 103,6 cm
54.3 x 40.8 in





In this series of work, the artist represents the interior of old churches and convents, most of which date back to Brazil's colonial period. Though mostly devoid of human presence, the compositions occasionally include miniature figures, notably painted on the space's tile panels or frescoes, illustrating scenes that refer to both past acts of the church, notably during the Inquisition, and to events of contemporary evangelical Christianity, such as cults, unloading sessions and pastors of dubious character. In mixing different temporalities, the artist shows that, even after so many centuries, the old power structures do not disappear, but persist in new ways.

André Griffo
Jesus and his theocratic
project for the 2000s IV, 2022
acrylic and oil on canvas
176 x 133 cm
69.3 x 52.4 in



André Griffo
The Seller of Miniature
Characters 6, 2023
acrylic and oil on canvas
177 x 223 cm
69.7 x 87.8 in





André Griffo has been developing the series *O vendedor de miniaturas* [The Seller of Miniature Characters] since 2020. The body of work represents different metro stations—inspired by that of cities such as New York, Berlin, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro—where informal street sellers display and sell their products. The composition presents miniature figures that evoke both religious images and action figures displayed on tarp sheets on the floor or suspended on hooks hanging from the wall. Upon taking a step closer, one begins to discover that, alongside religious figurines that represent Our Lady Aparecida, the patron saint of Brazil, and Saint Sebastian, the patron saint of Rio de Janeiro, there are also figures depicting an Evangelical priest, a policeman, a member of the militia, a drug dealer, and a politician. The objects thus portray archetypal characters that are fundamental to understanding the territorial disputes of Rio de Janeiro, and other cities, each symbolizing a city's—official and unofficial—institutions.



PRECISANDO DE AFETO?



BRASIL

o LUGAR ONDE
OS INIMIGOS

NUNCA MORREM



andré griffo

b. 1979, barra mansa, brazil

works and lives in rio de janeiro, brazil

André Griffo's practice focuses on painting and its historical relationships with architectural representation. Rather than engaging in grand activist discourses, Griffo invites the viewer to pay attention to the minute details of his images, which depict the many violences that have given shape to the narratives relating to the history of Brazil and its ruins. In this sense, his canvases are complex visual archives in which the most diverse elements coexist, forming relationships that reframe and deepen the criticisms they present. Griffo's work deals with the critique of power structures, particularly the falsehoods they create to maintain control over individuals. Among these, the artist discusses the lingering effects of the economy of slavery on the historical formation of Brazil and the various mechanisms commonly used by religious institutions to subjugate their followers.

Griffo uses his background in architecture to create spaces where references to both historical and contemporary settings coexist. These spaces, usually deserted, are inhabited by traces, symbols, and signs, that highlight the permanence and influence of the past in current sociocultural issues. His production intertwines the factual and the fictional, exploring connections between the History of Art and Architecture and social issues, both Brazilian and international. By overlapping different temporalities and their complex realities, Griffo's work denounces constitutive elements of society, and testifies to the immutability of things.

[learn more about the artist](#)

selected solo exhibitions

- *Voarei com as asas que os urubus me deram*, Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2022)
- *Objetos sobre arquitetura gasta*, Centro Cultural São Paulo (CCSP), São Paulo, Brazil (2017)
- *Intervenções pendentes em estruturas mistas*, Palácio das Artes, Belo Horizonte, Brazil (2015)
- *Predileção pela alegoria*, Galeria Athena, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2015)

selected group exhibitions

- *Exposição de Artes Visuais e Parada/Cortejo*, Centro Cultural Justiça Federal, Cinelândia, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2022)
- *Sobre os ombros de gigantes*, Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2021)
- 21st Bienal de Arte Contemporânea SESC Vídeo Brasil, São Paulo, Brazil (2019)
- *Intervenções*, Museu da República, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2016)
- *Ao amor do público*, Museu de Arte do Rio (MAR), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2015)
- *Aparições*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2015)
- *Instabilidade estável*, Paço das Artes, São Paulo, Brazil (2013)

selected collections

- Denver Art Museum, Denver, USA
- Instituto Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil
- Instituto PIPA, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museu de Arte do Rio (MAR), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

raul mourão



Raul Mourão
Chapa/Chão, 2013
weathering steel
193 x 40 x 166 cm
76 x 15.7 x 65.4 in



Raul Mourão
Swing Barra # 06, 2022
corten steel
unique
90 x 66 x 45 cm
35.4 x 26 x 17.7 in





Raul Mourão
Swing barra # 16, 2021
corten steel
unique
86,5 x 42 x 30,5 cm
34.1 x 16.5 x 12 in



Swing Barra unfolds from Raul Mourão's research on security systems and fences, which he began in the 1990s. At that time, Rio de Janeiro, the artist's hometown, as well as several other Brazilian cities, were experiencing an important increase in violence, which directly impacted the urban landscape, as buildings began to be taken over by secured gates and walls. This led the artist to create several works with these elements, but, as is common in his poetics, removing them from their context and focusing on their essential geometry, something that the critic Paulo Herkenhoff called a "geometry of fear".

As he shifted these metallic structures from their primary function, dissociating them from their utilitarian character, the artist also began to involve the public with his work. Based on his drawings, he began to project bars as kinetic structures. When activated by the spectator, the sculptures produce a certain type of movement, thus betraying their heavy and frightening aspect and gaining humor and lightness.

raul mourão

b. 1967, rio de janeiro, brazil, where he lives and works

Working across various media such as installation, sculpture, photography, video, drawing and performance, Raul Mourão is part of a generation that marked Rio's artistic scene in the 1990s. Commenting on subjects such as everyday life, politics or social constructs, frequently permeated by a critical sense of humour, one of the main concerns in Mourão's work is the urban space. His visual vocabulary proposes displacements and redefinitions of familiar symbols and forms in contemporary society as a means of stimulating thought on the matters of place, urbanism and human interactions.

Mourão began his career in the second half of the 1980s. At the end of that decade he started to investigate the visual symbology of architectonic safety devices in the urban landscape of Rio de Janeiro with structures such as window railings and security fences. This process resulted in a series titled *Grades*, which includes works in photography, video, sculptures, and installations. Since 2010, the artist has expanded his research on security systems while deconstructing visual structures present in these forbidding apparatus, leading him to create his first audience-activated kinetic sculptures. In these large-format pieces, the artist establishes formal strategies that comment on urban violence while also seeking structural balance.

[learn more about the artist](#)

selected solo exhibitions

- *Lugar Geométrico*, Casa França Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2023)
- *CAGE HEAD*, commissioned by Americas Society, Park Avenue, New York, USA (2023)
- *Viva Rebel*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2021)
- *Fora/Dentro*, Museu da República, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2018)
- *Você está aqui*, Museu Brasileiro de Ecologia e Escultura (MuBE), São Paulo, Brazil (2016)
- *Please Touch*, Bronx Museum, New York, USA (2015)
- *Tração animal*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2012)
- *Toque devagar*, Praça Tiradentes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2012)

selected group exhibitions

- *Utopias e distopias*, Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia (MAM-BA), Salvador, Brazil (2022)
- *Coleções no MuBE: Dulce e João Carlos de Figueiredo Ferraz – Construções e geometrias*, Museu de Ecologia e Escultura (MuBE), São Paulo, Brazil (2019)
- *Modos de ver o Brasil: Itaú Cultural 30 anos*, Oca, São Paulo, Brazil (2017)
- *Mana Seven*, Mana Contemporary, Miami, USA (2016)
- *Vancouver Biennial 2014–2016*, Canada (2014)

selected collections

- ASU Art Museum, Tempe, USA
- Instituto Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói (MAC-Niterói), Niterói, Brazil
- Museu de Arte do Rio (MAR), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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