



ART

HS PROJECTS – WHAT SEPARATES US AT THE EMBASSY OF BRAZIL IN LONDON

THE EXHIBITION EXAMINES IDEAS OF VALUE SYSTEMS AND EXCHANGE MECHANISMS FROM CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES.



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IS ART A COMMODITY, CAPABLE OF BEING MARKETABLE, SELLABLE AND COLLECTIBLE?

HS PROJECTS INVESTIGATES THE REAL VALUE OF ART AND THE SYSTEM IN WHICH IT IS MADE AND VALIDATED THROUGH *WHAT SEPARATES US*, A COLLECTIVE SHOW TO BE INAUGURATED TOMORROW, MAY 26TH, AT THE EMBASSY OF BRAZIL IN LONDON. THE EXHIBITION FEATURES THE WORK OF FOUR BRAZILIAN ARTISTS, **TONICO LEMOS AUAD**, **ADRIANO COSTA**, **RODRIGO MATHEUS** AND **MATHEUS ROCHA PITTA** THAT FOCUSED ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE, TRAVEL AND MOBILITY TO QUESTION GLOBAL VALUE SYSTEMS, RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMODITIES, PRODUCTS AND EXCHANGE.

"OUR INSPIRATION BEGAN WITH THE INSCRIPTION 'QUIS SEPARABIT' ON THE OUTSIDE OF 14 COCKS'UR STREET, FORMERLY THE WHITE STAR LINE, NOW THE EMBASSY OF BRAZIL. WHAT SEPARATES US WORKS AS A POINT OF DEPARTURE, A BEGINNING OF AN ARTISTIC JOURNEY AND EXPLORATION." SAY CURATORS **TINA SOTIRIADI & ALISTAIR HOWICK** OF **HS PROJECTS**. REFERRING TO THE CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE OF THE ARTIST AS A GLOBAL MESSENGER THEY ADD: *"THERE IS A DELIBERATE AMBIGUITY, THE DISCUSSION IS NOT ABOUT SEPARATION OR TOGETHERNESS BUT RATHER A DEBATE THAT CIRCULATES THROUGH MANY DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS AND DIRECTIONS. SO JUST AS ART IS NOT ABOUT SEPARATION OR TOGETHERNESS, IN A WORLD OF GLOBALISATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT, WHAT SEPARATES US EXAMINES IDEAS OF VALUE SYSTEMS AND EXCHANGE MECHANISMS VIA THE ARTISTS' INTERVENTION IN THE GRANDIOSE EXHIBITION SPACE THAT IS SALA BRASIL."*

WE SAT DOWN WITH ARTISTS **TONICO LEMOS AUAD** AND **MATHEUS ROCHA PITTA** TO TALK ABOUT HOW THEY APPROACHED THE THEME OF THE EXHIBITION AND EXAMINATES THE ROLE OF THE ARTIST IN CONTEMPORARY BRAZILIAN SOCIETY.

REFERRING TO THE TITLE OF THE EXHIBITION, WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT SEPARATES US? CAN ART BRIDGE THIS GAP?

TONICO LEMOS AUAD – I THINK THE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION CAN POSSIBLY BE BETTER ARTICULATED BY THE CURATORS OF THE EXHIBITION. I COULD WRITE A WHOLE ESSAY ON THAT SUBJECT. ART CAN RAISE AWARENESS OF THOSE DIFFERENCES, NEGOTIATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS VIA A MORE CRITICAL SOMETIMES POETICAL POINT OF VIEW.

MATHEUS ROCHA PITTA – WHAT SEPARATE US ALSO UNITES. A BRIDGE IS BOTH A SEPARATION AND A CONNECTION BETWEEN TWO SIDES. I DON'T THINK ART CAN DO THINGS, LIKE BRIDGES DO, FOR ME IS MORE A MATTER OF UNDO, OF DEACTIVATING NOTIONS. INSTEAD OF MARGINS AND BRIDGES, I PREFER THE SWAMP, WHERE YOU NEVER SURE WHAT IS THE RIVER AND WHAT IS THE LAND.

INTERNET AND GLOBALIZATION DETACHED YOUNG GENERATIONS FROM THEIR NATIONAL CULTURAL VALUES. HOW DID IT AFFECT THE GENERAL ART PRODUCTION AND YOU IN PARTICULAR AS AN ARTIST?

TONICO LEMOS AUAD – I DON'T REALLY AGREE WITH THIS CONSIDERATION. IT VIEWS ONLY ONE ASPECT OF THE WHOLE CHANGE. I STILL PERCEIVE YOUNGER GENERATIONS VERY MUCH IN TOUCH WITH THEIR NATIONAL AND CULTURAL VALUES. THE INTERNET AND GLOBALISATION HAVE SPEEDED UP ACCESS TO DATA, KNOWLEDGE AND COMMUNICATION. THE OVERWHELMING FLOWING OF POWER AND UNCERTAINTY HAVE AND WILL HAVE NEW CONSEQUENCES. I THINK GRADUALLY PEOPLE ARE LEARNING TO DEAL WITH IT AND BALANCE OUT THE HARMFUL ASPECT OF IT. I PERSONALLY AS AN ARTIST CAN'T ONLY SEE IT AT IT AS A RIGHT HERE RIGHT NOW OPTION ONLY.

MATHEUS ROCHA PITTA – WHAT ARE NATIONAL CULTURAL VALUES? I DON'T BELIEVE IN NATIONS, FOR ME IT IS AN EXCLUSIVE NOTION, BECAUSE IT IS BASED ONLY ON WHERE YOU WERE BORN, IT IS A NOTION BASED ON A KIND OF POLITICS OF EXCLUSION THAT PROVED (AND IT'S STILL PROVING) TO BE A DISASTER.

THE EXHIBITION IS LOCATED IN SALA BRASIL, A VENUE OF HIGH HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADES AND EXCHANGES. WAS IT SOMEHOW INSPIRING? WHAT KIND OF DIALOGUE YOUR WORKS ESTABLISH WITH THE SURROUNDING SETTING?

TONICO LEMOS AUAD – THE BUILDING IS VERY DAUNTING AND INDEED INSPIRING. IT IS LAYERED WITH HISTORICAL /ARCHITECTURAL REFERENCE. THE FACT THAT IS THE BRAZILIAN EMBASSY GIVES A POLITICAL EDGE TO IT IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE.

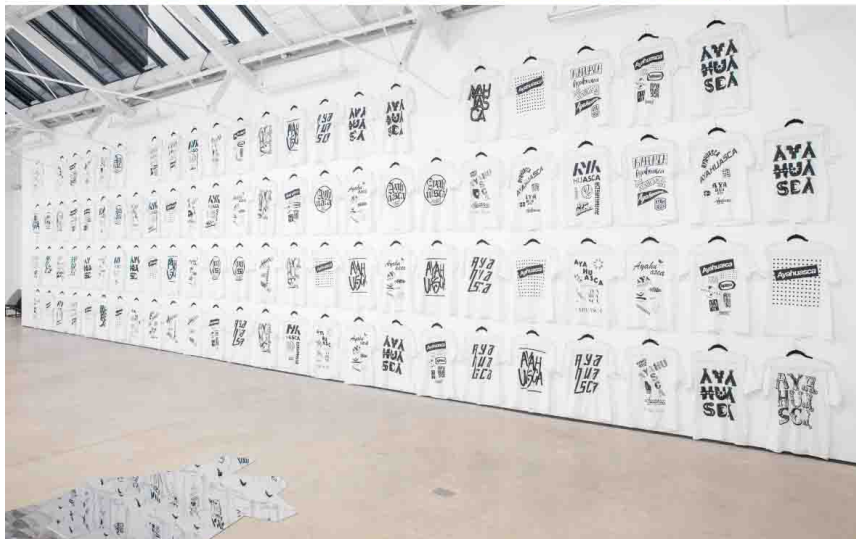
MATHEUS ROCHA PITTA – THE VENUE IS HIGHLY INSPIRING, BUT INSTEAD OF MAKING A DIALOGUE I OPTED FOR AN INTERVENTION: MY WORK, CALLED BRASIL, PERFORMS A COUNTERNARRATIVE ON WHAT PEOPLE, AND ESPECIALLY PEOPLE THAT ONLY KNOW THE COUNTRY THRU NATIONAL CLICHES.

THE BRAZILIAN ECONOMY HAD A REMARKABLE GROWTH RECORD FROM 1920 TO 1980, HOW IS BRAZIL TODAY AND WHAT'S THE ROLE OF THE ARTIST WITHIN THE BRAZILIAN SOCIETY?

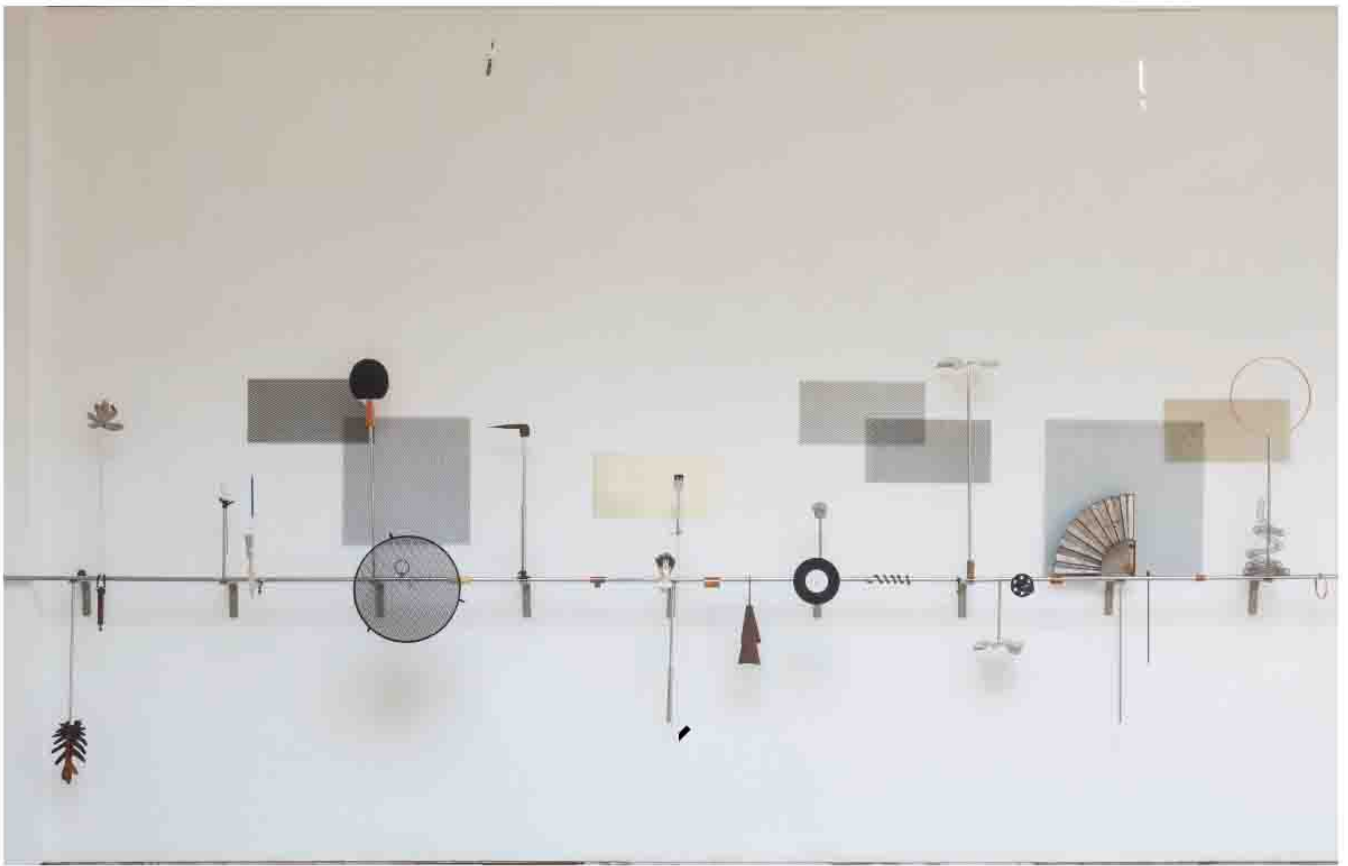
TONICO LEMOS AUAD – BRAZIL IS EXPERIENCING AT THE MOMENT THE EXPOSURE OF A SERIOUS CHRONIC POLITICAL CRISIS IN RELATION TO ITS CREDIBILITY. THE CONTINUOUS DISCOVERY OF CORRUPTION HAS PLACED MANY IMPORTANT BRAZILIAN LEADERS IN A VERY WEAK DOUBTFUL POSITION. THE POPULATION LOST THEIR RESPECT AND MOST OF THEIR FAITH IN PEOPLE THEY PREVIOUSLY SUPPORTED TO BE REPRESENTED BY. THIS INSTABILITY AFFECTS DIRECTLY IT'S ECONOMY AND WILL CONTRIBUTE TO AN EXTREMELY WEALTHY RESOURCEFUL COUNTRY LIKE BRAZIL TO BE UNHEALTHY FOR A PERIOD OF TIME.

I THINK ARTISTS HAVE A SIMILAR ROLE TO ANY OTHER BRAZILIAN CITIZENS IN TRYING TO KEEP THEIR AWARENESS AND CRITICAL THOUGHTS OVER THE COUNTRY'S SITUATION AVOIDING CONFORMITY. THE DIVERSITY OF BACKGROUNDS, OPINIONS AND INTERESTS ARE IMMENSE SO IT WON'T BE EASY TO FIX THIS, BUT WE ALL KNOW HOW RESILIENT, RESOURCEFUL AND TIRELESS BRAZIL AND ITS POPULATION ARE, SO WE LIVE IN HOPE, A CRITICAL ONE...

MATHEUS ROCHA PITTA – THE ROLE OF THE ARTIST WITHIN SOCIETY IS A NON-ROLE. TO BE AN ARTIST IT IS NOT HAVING A ROLE. (AND SURELY HISTORICAL ECONOMICAL ANALYSIS ARE NOT ARTIST'S ROLE).







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SPECIAL THANKS
SUTTON PR.

