

Pavilion of Switzerland at the 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

Super Superior Civilizations

Artist:	Guerreiro do Divino Amor
Curator:	Andrea Bellini
Commissioner:	Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia Sandi Paucic, Project Leader Rachele Giudici Legittimo, Project Manager
Exhibition:	20 April to 24 November 2024
Pre-Opening:	17 to 19 April 2024
Media moment:	Wednesday, 17 April 2024 at 3 pm
Opening:	Thursday, 18 April 2024 at 2:30 pm
Location:	Pavilion of Switzerland, Giardini della Biennale di Venezia

The Swiss Pavilion at the 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, commissioned by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia, presents the exhibition "Super Superior Civilizations" by Swiss-Brazilian artist Guerreiro do Divino Amor, curated by Andrea Bellini.

The Swiss Pavilion exhibition presents the sixth and seventh chapters of Guerreiro do Divino Amors monumental "Super-fictional World Atlas" saga: *The Miracle of Helvetia* and *Roma Talismano*. The "Superfictional World Atlas" is a worldwide cartographic project, allegorical in nature and potentially infinite in scope, which the artist has been dedicated to for nearly two decades. Through his studies and research in experimental architecture, Guerreiro do Divino Amor's artistic practice questions the relationship between urban space and collective imagination, between architecture and ideology, and between political propaganda and national identity.

In the Swiss Pavilion, Guerreiro aims at creating the most complex and ambitious installation of his career so far: a total, immersive work of art, littered with classical architectural elements – artificial symbols of an assumed Western racial superiority. Columns, fountains, and capitals, along with large surfaces of fake marble textures, suggest an imagery of power and supremacy and serve as the backdrop for the Pavilion's two main installations.

The Miracle of Helvetia, a video that stages a grand allegory of Switzerland, represented as a miraculous and "super-fictional" paradise on earth, in which nature and technology, capitalism and democracy, rusticity and sophistication are in perfect and surreal balance. A long corridor connects *The Miracle of Helvetia* with the installation *Roma Talismano*, an allegorical entity and phantasmagorical twin of Roman civilization, as well as a symbol – through the centuries – of a supposed moral, political and cultural superiority. Brazilian artist and singer Ventura Profana embodies the Capitoline wolf, a

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symbolic and phantasmagorical animal, that sings a song narrating the exploits of three allegorical animals: the she-wolf, the ewe lamb and the eagle. By being mythical figures in the constitution of white identity and its imagined superiority, the wolf is the universal mother from whom the superior people descend; the eagle is the symbol of Roman war supremacy; and the lamb embodies, in Christian Rome, the very idea of purity and innocence.

"The Swiss Pavilion, as envisioned by the artist, plays with the national logic of celebratory self-representation through culture, which is at the very origin of the National Pavilions at the Giardini over a century ago," says Andrea Bellini. "A curious documentarist with a baroque imagination and an extraordinary worlds builder, Guerreiro do Divino Amor invites us to laugh in a benevolent spirit at our chauvinism and at those clichés with which we represent the world and ourselves. The latter attitude seems to us of fundamental importance in a period of increasing polarisation of politics and radical oppositions such as the one we are currently experiencing."

Project team

For the Swiss Pavilion project, "Super Superior Civilizations", artist Guerreiro do Divino Amor and curator Andrea Bellini worked together with executive producer Larisa Oancea, director assistant Diego Paulino, musical director Beà Ayoolà, scenography producer Giovanna Bellini, technical director Pedro Zaz, mechatronics director Klau's Kellermann, sculptress Lyz Parayzo and costume designer Andy Roba, among many others. The cast includes Ventura Profana (the she-wolf), Adriana Carvalho (the eagle) and Amanda Seraphico (the ewe lamb).

The exhibition "Super Superior Civilizations" will be accompanied by a newspaper-format publication including a conversation between Guerreiro do Divino Amor and Andrea Bellini.

Supporters

The exhibition "Super Superior Civilizations" is made possible thanks to the generous support of Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève (co-producers), Archivorum, Fluxum Foundation, Amis du Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Spada Partners, Burger Collection Hong Kong, Fondation Jan Michalski, the Republic and Canton of Geneva, the City of Geneva, Stiftung Temperatio, Dr. Georg and Josi Guggenheim-Stiftung and Allianz. A special thanks goes to the co-producers Arsenic - Centre d'art scénique contemporain Lausanne and Embassy of Foreign Artists, to the Istituto Svizzero and to the media partner Il Giornale dell'Arte.

Swiss contributions at the International Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia

The International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia takes place every two years and alternates annually with the International Architecture Exhibition. Switzerland has been participating in Biennale Arte since 1920 and in Biennale Architettura since 1991. Switzerland maintains its own pavilion in Giardini della Biennale and Pro Helvetia has been responsible for the Swiss Pavilion since 2012. Two juries, appointed by Pro Helvetia, recommend a nomination for the Swiss Pavilion both in Biennale Arte and Architettura. The Swiss Pavilion in Venice was designed by Swiss architect Bruno Giacometti and built in 1951/52. It is owned by the Swiss Confederation.

Additional information and press images available on: <https://prohelvetia.ch/en/swiss-pavilion-at-the-venice-biennale/>

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Biographies

Swiss-Brazilian artist **Guerreiro do Divino Amor** (b. Geneva, 1983, lives and works in Rio de Janeiro) holds a master's degree in architecture from the School of Architecture of Grenoble and La Cambre Architecture (Brussels). His research explores the Superfictions, the historical, political, religious, and mediatic narratives that interfere in the construction of territory and of the collective imaginary. He creates a universe of science-fiction and fantasy from fragments of reality through films, publications, and large-scale installations.

He was a fellow of the DAAD Artist-in-Berlin Award Grant, was awarded the PIPA Prize 2019. He was a finalist of the "Generations" prize of Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement in 2016 and twice a finalist of the Swiss Art Awards. In addition, he received the Bolsa Pampulha grant in 2019. In 2022 Divino Amor presented the solo retrospective show "Superficcional Sanctuaries" at the Centre d'Art Contemporain in Geneva. His work has been presented at the Frestas Trienal in Sorocaba (Brazil), the Visual Arts Center at the University of Texas at Austin, Arte Pará 2018, Second Bienal Tropical in Porto Rico, the Center for Contemporary Art in Vilnius (Lithuania), Pinacoteca de São Paulo, the Iberê Camargo Foundation in Porto Alegre (BR), among other institutions. He was artist-in-residence at Pivô-Pesquisa and FAAP-Lutetia (São Paulo, Brazil), UnB Casa da America Latina (Brasília, Brazil), and Embassy of Foreign Artists (Geneva). His work is part of the collections of MAR (Art Museum of Rio), MAB FAAP São Paulo (Museum of Brazilian Art), and the Museum of Art of Pampulha (Belo Horizonte). His award-winning films have been screened at various national and international venues and festivals.

Curator **Andrea Bellini** is the Director of the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève and Artistic Director of the Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement in Geneva. Previous positions include serving as co-director of Castello di Rivoli, director of the art fair Artissima, curatorial advisor to MoMA PS1, and editor-in-chief of Flash Art International. He holds a degree in philosophy (1996) and a postgraduate diploma in archaeology and art history from the University of Siena (2002).

Bellini has curated numerous group shows and solo exhibitions, including those of Marina Abramović, Hannah Black, Lissetta Carmi, Roberto Cuoghi, Chiara Fumai, Ernie Gehr, Giorgio Griffa, Sonia Kacem, John McCracken, Nicole Miller, Philippe Parreno, Thomas Schütte and Hannah Weinberger. He has directed various publications to which he contributed with essays or interviews and regularly speaks at academic or art institutions across the world. He transformed the Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement into a platform for production, which has since 2014 allowed to commission new works by artists such as Sophia Al Maria, Korakrit Arunanondchai, Ed Atkins, Alexandra Bachzetsis, Will Benedict, Hannah Black & Juliana Huxtable, Meriem Bennani, DIS, Simon Fujiwara, Kahlil Joseph, Emilie Juvet, Pauline Boudry & Renate Lorenz, James Richards, Wu Tsang and Emily Wardill among others. He just published a novel about the art world, "Storie dell'arte contemporanea" (Timeo editions, Rome).