



## **The body as political territory: a solo show by Luiz Roque at Pivô**

*“República” will present a film specially commissioned for the project*

“República”, by Luiz Roque, presents part of the artist's production, carried out in the last 10 years. Curated by Fernanda Brenner, the exhibition will show six works on video, two of them never seen in Brazil: *Zero* (2019) and the specially commissioned *República* (2020).

Roque is interested in science fiction as a means of reflecting on geopolitical, social and historical issues and to speculate on possible futures. Desire is an important vector of the artist's production. His works have the duration and the rhythm of trailers or video clips and can be presented both at the art gallery or the movie theatre. Particularly interested in the legacy of modernism, Roque relates it to the body in movement and transformation and to pop culture's imagery, using the cinematographic language to build narratives and visual essays in a suspended time. His characters inhabit post-apocalyptic and dystopian scenarios to where the artist brings elements from the history of art and architecture.

The work that lends its title to the exhibition was commissioned for the project in partnership with the Passerelle Center d'Art Contemporain, in Brest, France. *República* closes the *Pharmacopeia* trilogy, constituted by *Ano Branco* (2013), present in the show, and *Heaven* (2016). In this series, Roque explores the human body as a territory of disputes and political transformations. *República* is a kind of documentary captured on video and Super-8, narrated by the performer Marcinha do Corinho, diva of the transvestite shows, active since the 1980s. The film is also a tribute to the central neighbourhood of São Paulo, where it is located the Copan building, in which Roque has lived for twelve years, and its emblematic square, a historic spot for many sex workers. The issue of sexual migration is at the core of the narrative and the circular visualization of the film. Roque addresses characteristic aspects of the “pharmacopornographic” society, according to the term coined by Paul B. Preciado. The transgender feminist philosopher is one of the characters in the film that begins his trilogy: *Ano Branco* (White Year) starts from a lecture by Preciado to build a fictional plot set in the year 2031. The film raises the discussion about bioethics and the State's interference on bodies as a form of political and social control.

The artist will also present the film *Zero* (2019), made during an artistic residency in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates. In *Zero*, a lonely dog flies over the desert in a private jet. The horizon is interrupted only by an oasis-like skyline of futuristic high rises. The contrast between the dust of the desert, the shining and spotless glass of

the apparently uninhabited buildings, and the animal adrift – perhaps the last living creature on earth – is a disturbing warning of the consequences of political and economic decisions made over the past century. The lack of human presence in the film seems to insinuate that our species has set a course towards a new 'zero', that can either be a total revaluation or even extinction.

"Republica" was suspended a few days before the opening, but the film *Zero* is now being played continuously in Pivô's storefront, every day, from 2 pm to 4 am. It is a prologue to the exhibition, while the institution remains closed to the public.

The production of "República" is a partnership with the Passerelle Center d'Art Contemporain - the French institution opened a previous version of the exhibition on February 7. Pivô appreciates the generous support of Virginia and Daniel Weinberg in making this project possible.

### **About the artist**

Luiz Roque (Cachoeira do Sul, 1979) lives and works in São Paulo. His production focuses on the moving image and also extends to photography and sculpture. Recent individual exhibitions include República (CAC Passerelle, Brest, 2020), Screen Series (New Museum, New York, 2020), Televisão (MAC, Niterói, 2018), HEAVEN (Tramway, Glasgow, 2017), The Modern Years (MendesWoodDM, Bruxelas, 2017) and Ancestral (CCSP, São Paulo (2016). His works have been included in numerous group exhibitions such as 1st Riga (Letônia, 2018), Avenida Paulista (MASP, São Paulo, 2017), 32 São Paulo Biennial (2016), Mark Leckey: Containers and Their Drivers (MoMA PS1, Nova York, 2016), The Violet Crab (DRAF, Londres, 2015), The Brancusi Effect, (Kunsthalle, Viena, 2014) e Medos Modernos (Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, 2014).

### **About the curator**

Fernanda Brenner is a curator and writer based in São Paulo, Brazil. She is the founding director of Pivô, a non-profit art space in São Paulo operating since 2012. Recent projects include group show A Burrice dos Homens (2019) Bergamin Gomide Gallery, São Paulo, Residents Section Art Dubai, UAE (2019), group shows Neither (2017), Mendes Wood DM, Brussels and co-curation of Nightfall (2018) at Mendes Wood DM, Brussels and Black Box (2018) at Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre. She is a contributing editor for Frieze Magazine and her writings featured in a number of publications and catalogues, such as Artreview, Mousse, Cahiers d'Art, Terremoto, and The Exhibitionist, where she is part of the editorial board. Brenner also works as an art adviser for Kadist.

### **About Pivô**

Founded in 2012, Pivô is an autonomous art space that offers a platform for artistic experimentation and critical thinking by artists, curators, researchers and the general public. At Pivô, artists and curators are encouraged to respond to the specifics of the institution's architecture - a previously abandoned space of 3,500m<sup>2</sup> within one of the most emblematic buildings in São Paulo, Copan, designed by Oscar Niemeyer - and

its challenging context. The program consists of exhibitions, residencies, public lectures and publications by local and international artists. The institution has already carried out more than 150 residences in the last few years and recent commissions include artists Katinka Bock, Eduardo Navarro, Erika Verzutti, Mário Garcia Torres, Letícia Ramos, Rodrigo Hernandez and the “imannam” group show by Ana Maria Maiolino, Ana Linneman and Laura Lima.

