



A linguagem dos anjos
Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro
May 30 — Aug 10, 2024

Mendes Wood DM is pleased to present *A linguagem dos anjos [The Language of Angels]*, the first solo exhibition by multidisciplinary artist Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro in Brussels.

This exhibition is a culmination of recent explorations and revelations the artist experienced during a long excursion in the Moroccan desert. Bringing together installations, sculptures, ceramics, paintings, and videos, the show explores non-linear relationships Vitorino Brasileiro maintains with language and non-canonical philosophies.

While expressing political, aesthetic, and relational ideas through acts of speaking, listening, and writing, Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro's work also widely stems from the need to exist outside human logics based on expectations. *A linguagem dos anjos* gestures toward nonlinear communication that breaks with human logic concerning time and space, focusing on spiritual, encrypted, and universal forms of communication. Further, understanding the body as a transient terrain of intelligence and experiences, the works of the exhibition unfold a sort of unknown, elemental, often embodied, alphabet that plays with the spatiotemporality and universality of communications.

Relying on themes of encryption and universality, the title *A linguagem dos anjos* alludes to Enochian, a language with similarities to English and Semitic languages like Hebrew and Arabic, purportedly revealed through experiments by late 16th-century linguists and astrologers in the Elizabethan court. For Vitorino Brasileiro, the cryptic language raises questions about alterity and the contours of universality in the forms of communication she explores across multiple levels and mediums.

Drawing attention to hieroglyphics, the second major linguistic focal point of the exhibition, in the series *Escritos nas estrelas... [Written in the Stars...]*, the artist sculpts drawings in soapstone, unveiling pictorial characters. Concerned with ancient belief systems and the original meaning of "hieroglyph" – originating from Greek, meaning "sacred symbol" or "sacred writing" – Vitorino Brasileiro cosmograms reveal bodies adorned with stars, animals, maps, and new vegetation, as though the past has been inscribed in a distant future, challenging established human methods of documenting reality. In works like *Escritos nas estrelas...*, greenish stones discovered by the artist are broken, and their surfaces are drawn and carved, revealing mulberry-like shapes, new and hypothetical types of life. Here, the artist reflects on unimaginable planets, speeds, ways of life, as well as mysteries already unveiled.

However, the exhibition's works are as much about cosmic reflections as they are about the inner workings of the mind, mysteries of the soul that animate and give movement to corporeal forms. In the video *Maybe the calm is more important than freedom. E talvez eu não esqueça daquela chuva [Maybe the calm is more important than freedom. And maybe I won't forget about that rain]*, Vitorino Brasileiro's immersive performance captures fleeting moments of liberation and fluidity as the artist's body, mind, and the surrounding landscape converge in a

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harmonious and transformative dance. Each frame becomes a new geography of freedom, a testament to the artist's profound journeys toward emancipation and transcendence. In the ceramic and glass installation *onde os anjos guardam seus sonhos e os humanos perdem suas lágrimas* [where angels keep their dreams and humans shed their tears], the artist has introduced objects for spiritual healing. Almost like therapeutic interventions based on the direct touch of these objects, hands glide and fit into these amorphous vessels and supports. The abstraction of these objects does not aim to represent the outside world but expresses inner feelings that manifest in the human mind and its reactions to the senses.

The exhibition's group of about 70 paintings comprises its own alphabet of arcane languages through a complexity of indecipherable compositions and writings. Through each component of this symphonic orchestration, the artist could be recounting chronicles and historical facts, raising philosophical questions, or abstracting notions of linear intelligence, transforming everything into color, form, and rhythm.

A linguagem dos anjos, whose stories oscillate between solitary reflections and broader gestures of renewal, is akin to a heroic journey that destroys and builds possibilities in the world. Through this conceptual cycle, Vitorino Brasileiro unveils natural sensations as geographical and bodily spaces, countering human regionalisms and Cartesian understandings of experiences on Earth.

Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro (b. 1996, Vitória, Brazil) lives and works in Paris

Recent solo exhibitions include *Remember when we talked about meeting again*, **Mendes Wood DM**, New York (2022) and *O trauma é brasileiro*, **Galeria Homero Massena**, Vitória (2019). Recent group exhibitions include *Coreografias do Impossível*, **35th São Paulo Biennial**, São Paulo (2023); *Third World: The Bottom Dimension*, **Serpentine Gallery**, London (2023); *Social Fabric: Art and Activism in Contemporary Brazil*, **Visual Arts Center at the University of Texas**, Austin (2022); *4+3=1*, **SAVVY Contemporary**, Berlin (2022); *Atos Modernos*, **Pinacoteca de São Paulo** (2022); *Eclipse*, **Hessel Museum of Art**, New York (2021); *Crônicas Cariocas*, **Museu de Arte do Rio**, Rio de Janeiro (2021); *LA PISADA DEL ÑANDÚ (O CÓMO TRANSFORMAMOS LOS SILENCIOS)*, **La Virreina Centre de la Imatge**, Barcelona (2021); *Enciclopédia Negra*, **Pinacoteca de São Paulo** (2021) and **11th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art**, Berlin (2020).

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