



# 20 ZONA MACO.

PORTAS VILASECA GALERIA  
ZONAMACO SUR  
BOOTH SUR 7  
ARTHUR PALHANO

Feb 7 — 11, 2024  
Centro Citibanamex  
Mexico City, Mexico

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PORTAS  
VILASECA  
GALERIA

At the 20th edition of **Zonamaco, Portas Vilaseca Galeria** is pleased to present a solo project featuring the latest production from Brazilian artist **Arthur Palhano**.

Palhano unveils a compelling series of new small-format paintings born out of his meticulous exploration of pictorial construction techniques and the symbolic interplay between objects. This artistic endeavor comes to life through the innovative application of layer scraping techniques – an investigative process that permits the images to organically surface from the very core of the artworks, rising from the depths of their own richly textured oil paint and enamel surfaces. This method results in a kind of telluric experience of time – that which comes from the surface, which occurs in the sedimentation of matter and is made through its cracks and crevices.<sup>1</sup>

In the process of creating his paintings for the fair, the artist deliberately immersed himself in the often stereotyped realm deemed "Mexican," a space frequently exoticized by American cinema and literature. The notion of "escaping to Mexico" has consistently been portrayed as an inviting storyline for American anti-heroes, evolving into a cliché emblematic of fresh starts, rebirth, and even the evasion of death within the desert.

The dichotomies of "death and life," a recurring motif in Palhano's body of research, resurface in this latest production. Here, they materialize as a spontaneous convergence with the "*Day of the Dead*," an indigenous celebration observed in Mexico on November 2nd to pay homage to the departed, granting their souls purported permission to revisit their living kin. The works "*La Catrina*" and "*Dois de Novembro*" (November, 2nd) joyously commemorate this festivity, unraveling layers to unveil Mexican skulls – one inspired by the illustrations of José Guadalupe Posada and the other by the diverse puppets and grand effigies that compose the celebratory ritual. "*Suporte fantasma*" (Ghostly support), on the other hand, breaks free from the expected support of the frame to take over the space, adding a layer of dynamic energy. The work becomes a kind of adornment – the canvas transcends its mere existence to become a portal into a realm of festive enchantment.

In exploring another facet of dualism, the painting "*El Alcaran*" intricately weaves a narrative reminiscent of a symbolic lottery card game, portraying a scorpion as its central figure. The scorpion, embodying archetypes of both strength and immortality, interlaces its symbolism with undertones of revenge and perversity. Within this context, Palhano creates a tapestry of contrasts, however, with the aim of seeking a delicate counterbalance – akin to the villain who draws us nearer to the hero, or the devil who, paradoxically, propels us towards the divine.

<sup>1</sup> According to Clarissa Diniz in her critical statement for Arthur Palhano's solo exhibition "*Dogma*", held at Portas Vilaseca Galeria, in 2023.

An integral facet in crafting these paintings involved the meticulous curation of "cold images" – representations within the public domain. These encompassed newspaper clippings featuring wrestling narratives [ "*Os brutos também amam*" (*Brutes love too*) ] and decals portraying tattoos of Our Lady of Guadalupe [ "*Tatuagem*" (*Tattoo*) ], a figure of profound significance in Mexican history, revered as a symbol and frequently chosen for devotion through tattoo artistry. The tattoos found on the bodies of the condemned also inspired the artist to create the figure of "*Maxine*", a woman idealized by musician Donald Fagen in his song of the same name, released in 1982. In the lyrics of this sophisticated pop-jazz song with hints of a suburbanite soap opera, Fagen utters some romantic reveries about the incompleteness of a long-distance relationship with a Mexican woman. Furthermore, "*Guloseimas*" (*Treats*) acts as a visual testimony to the rich tapestry of sound from the 70s. Insignia from classic bands of that period are interwoven next to a skull, like tattoos or patches for jackets. Each symbol, with its bold aesthetic, tells a story of its own, a musical narrative that resonates with a remarkable nostalgia.

The works "*Primário*" (Primary school) and "*Ginásio*" (Secondary school) reproduce the wooden textures of school desks – a revival of the daring and irreverence of the act of drawing on less conventional surfaces, challenging established norms. Each notch and mark applied to the surface creates a curious dialogue between creative chaos and artistic discipline. Here, Palhano evokes stories of clandestine creation, adding a layer of nostalgia that blends with the patina of time.

Finally, "*Malabar*" (Juggler) is in dialogue with the artist's routine in his studio space, located in the city center of São Paulo, where it's very common to find discarded objects on the streets and also circus artists, mainly jugglers, working at traffic lights. There is a curious poetics here that juxtaposes the insecurity of a subsistence reality, so common in big cities, with the contingency of an unexpected encounter with a pair of work gloves.





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*La Catrina*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 30 cm | 15.7 x 11.8 in







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*Dois de Novembro, 2023*

Oil on canvas

40 x 30 cm | 15.7 x 11.8 in









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*Suporte fantasma*, 2019-2024  
Oil on canvas applied on wood cutout  
26 x 50 x 5 cm | 10.2 x 19.6 x 1.9 in





40



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*El Alacran (ou a eterna vingança), 2024*

Oil on canvas

40 x 50 cm | 15.74 x 23.62 in









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*Os brutos também amam, 2023*

Oil on canvas

40 x 50 cm | 11.8 x 15.7 in







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*Tatuagem*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 30 cm | 15.7 x 11.8 in







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*Maxine*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
30 x 40 cm | 11.8 x 15.7 in



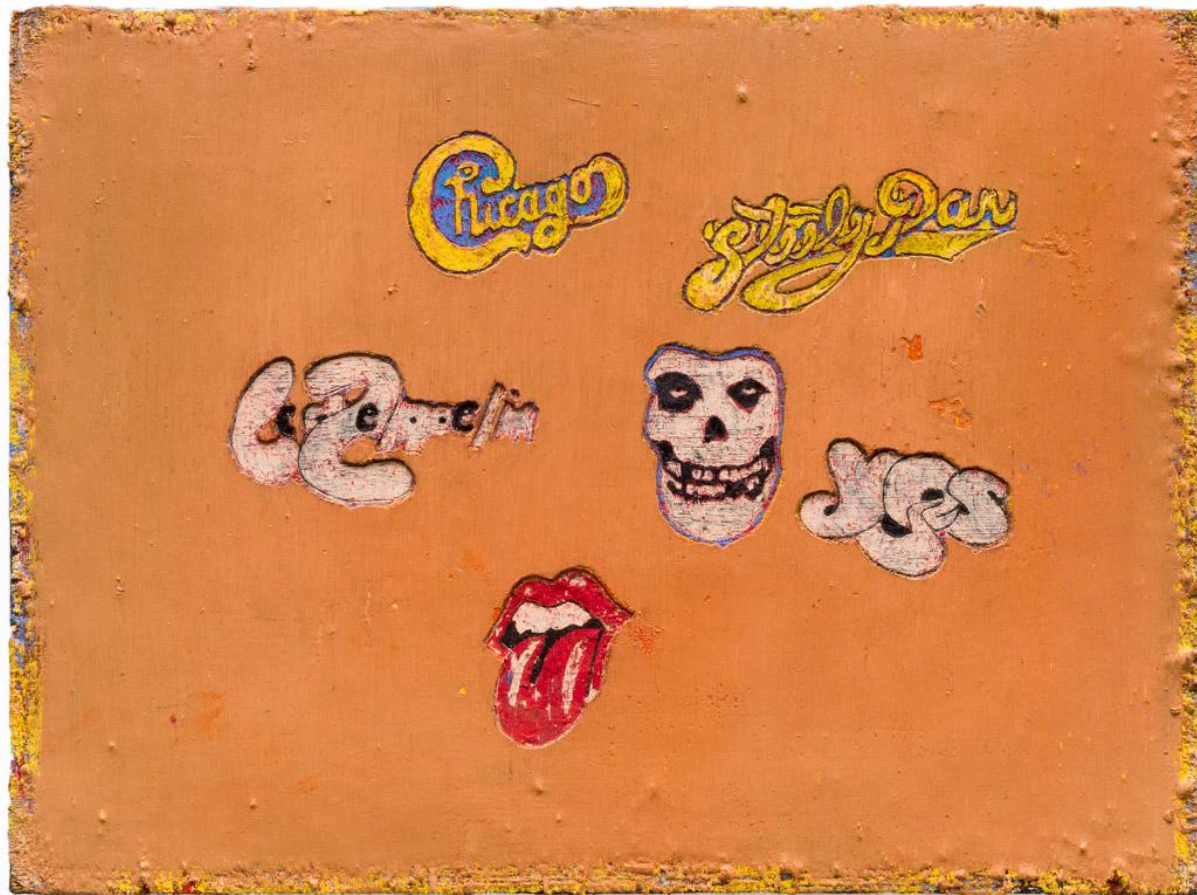


Chicago

Get Only Raw

2/11



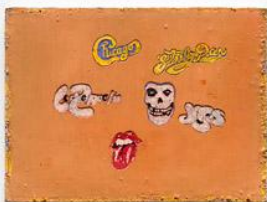


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*Guloseimas, 2023*

Oil on canvas

30 x 40 cm | 11.8 x 15.7 in



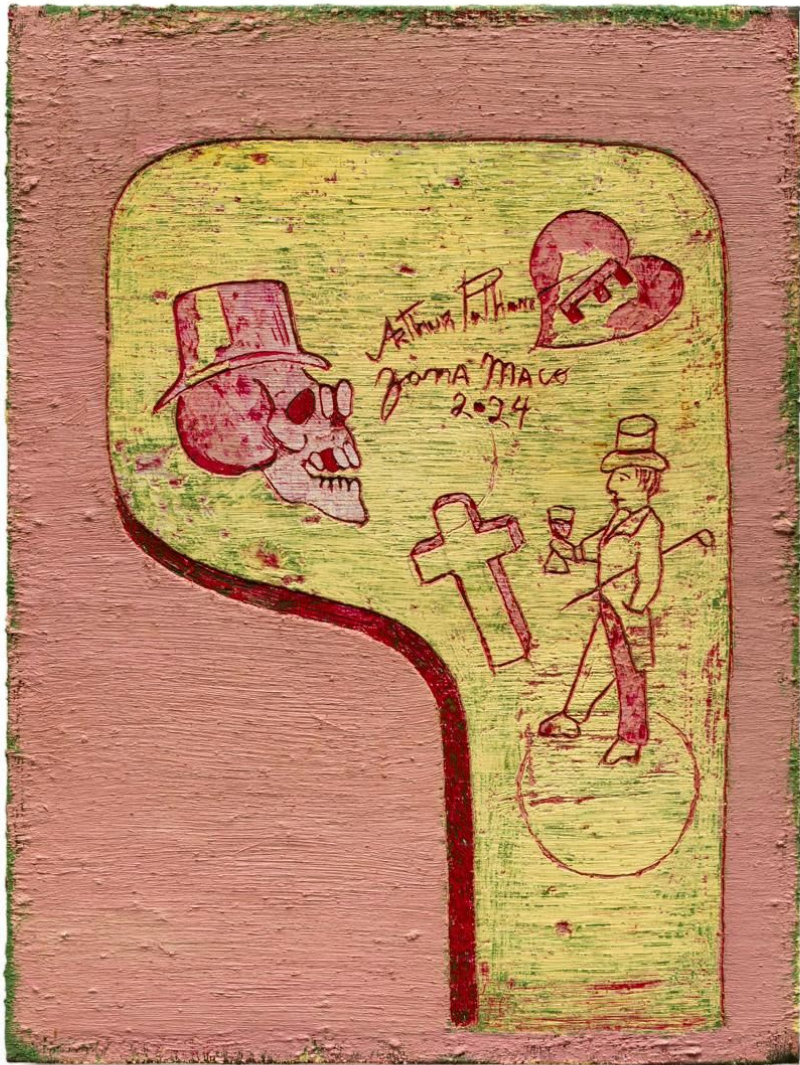


Arthur T. Hancock



Tom Mace  
2.24





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*Primário*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 30 cm | 15.7 x 11.8 in







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*Ginásio*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
30 x 40 cm | 11.8 x 15.7 in









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*Malabar, 2023*

Oil and enamel on canvas  
90 x 80 cm | 35.4 x 31.4 in



Spencer's

Allen

Malcolm

Rushmore

Handwritten signature in red ink

Orville

OTHER WORKS

Harry



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Visto, 2022  
Calligraphy on found paper  
30 x 20 cm | 11.8 x 7.8 in





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*Estojo de maquiagem para um antigo carnaval, 2023*

Collage consisting of cutouts of a  
"Carneval Schminke" box on FAX paper  
41 x 34.5 cm | 16.1 x 13.5 in





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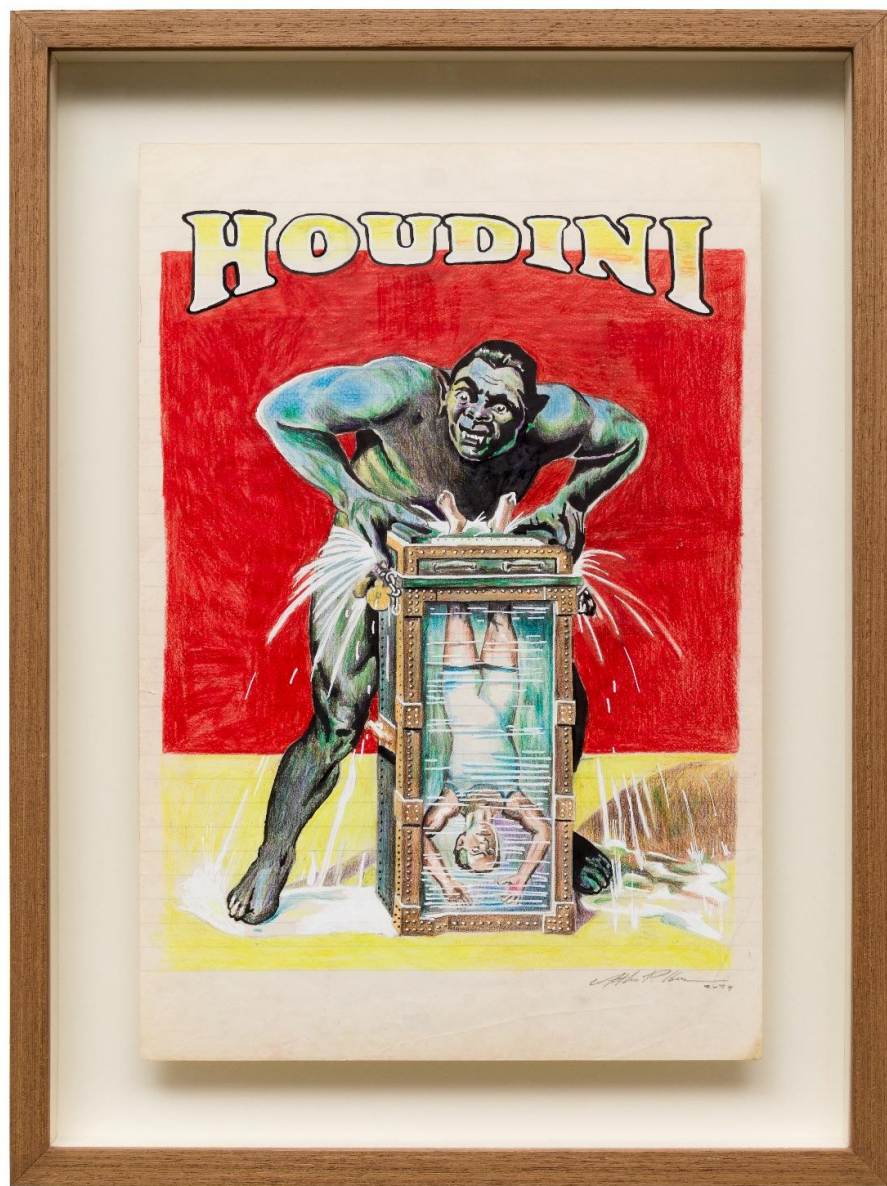
*O Vaso Azul, 2023*

Page cutout from the first edition of the book "Cézanne" (1967) by  
Raymond Cogniat (1896-1977) scraped with a stylus

37 x 34 cm | 14.56 x 13.38 in







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*Harry (Escapologista), 2022*

Colored pencil, pencil, and graphite on found paper

42 x 32 cm | 16.5 x 12.5 in





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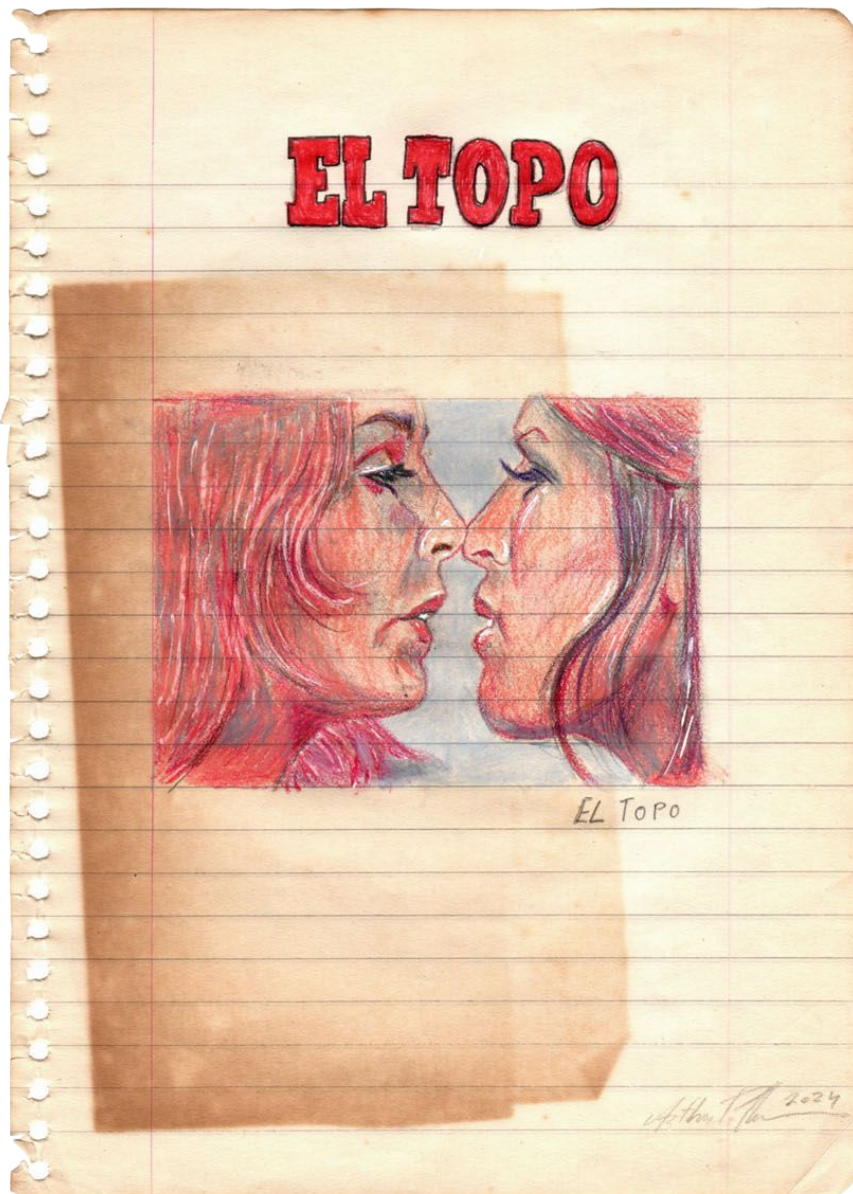
*Réguas (polyptych), 2021*  
Oil on wood  
10 x 25 cm | 3.9 x 9.8 in (each)





EL TOPO

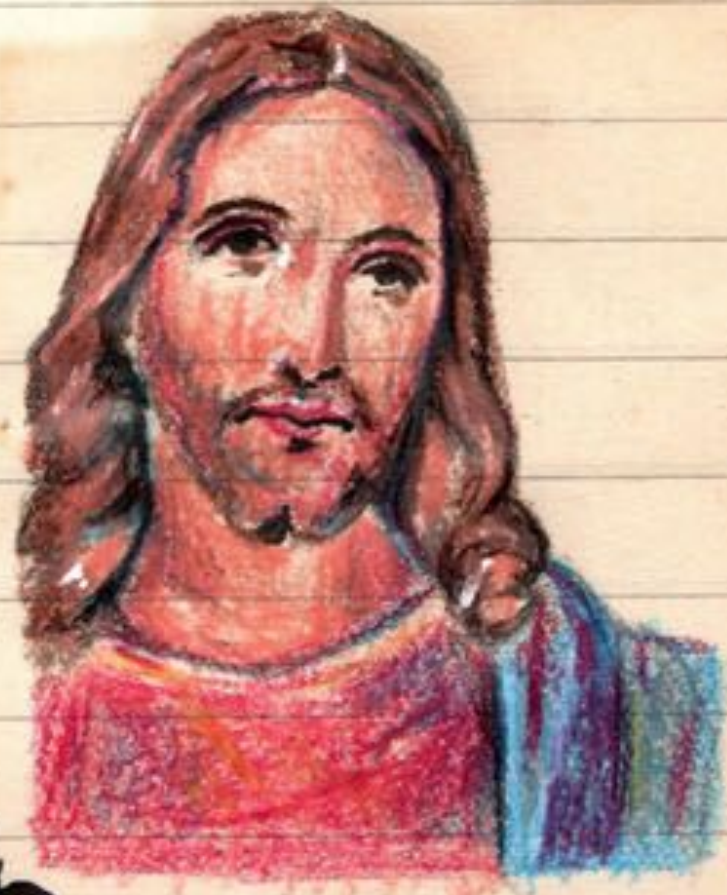


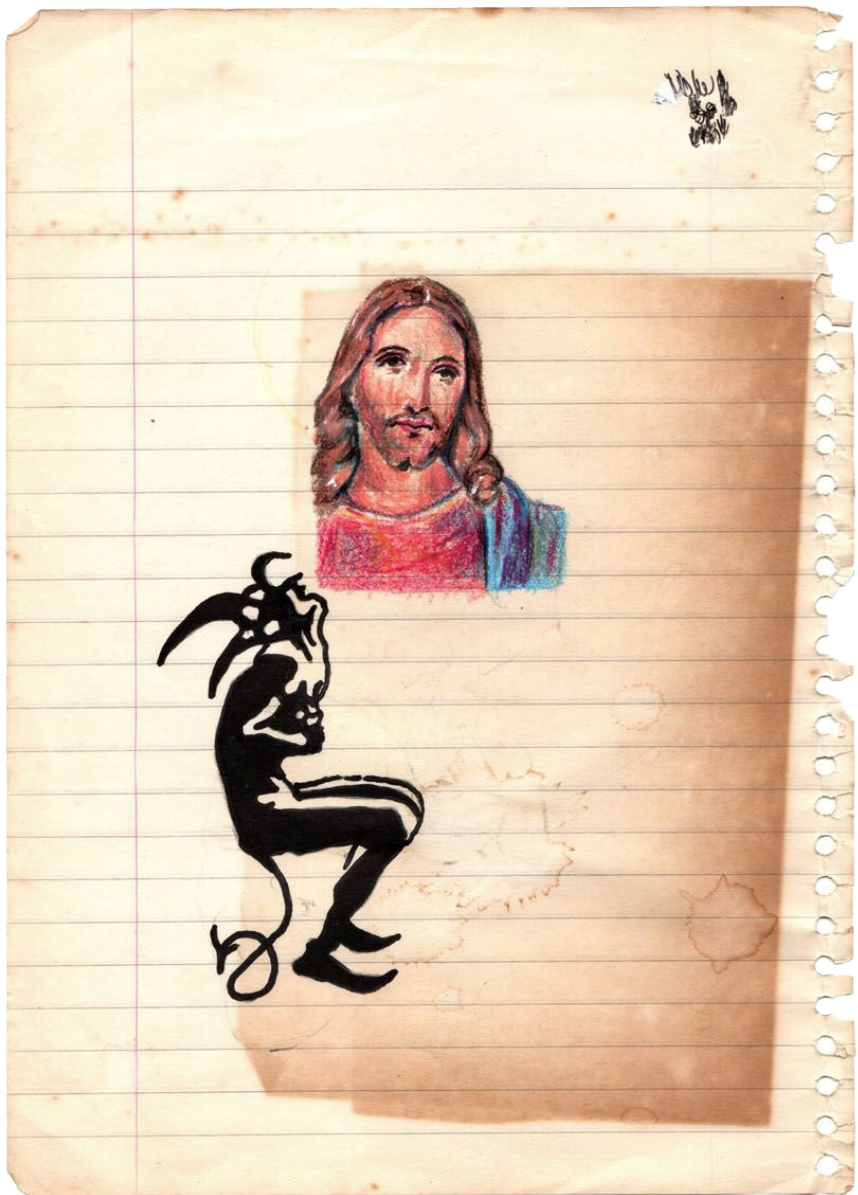


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*El Topo*, 2023

Colored pencils, ballpoint and marker pens on found paper  
22 x 15 cm | 8.6 x 5.9 in

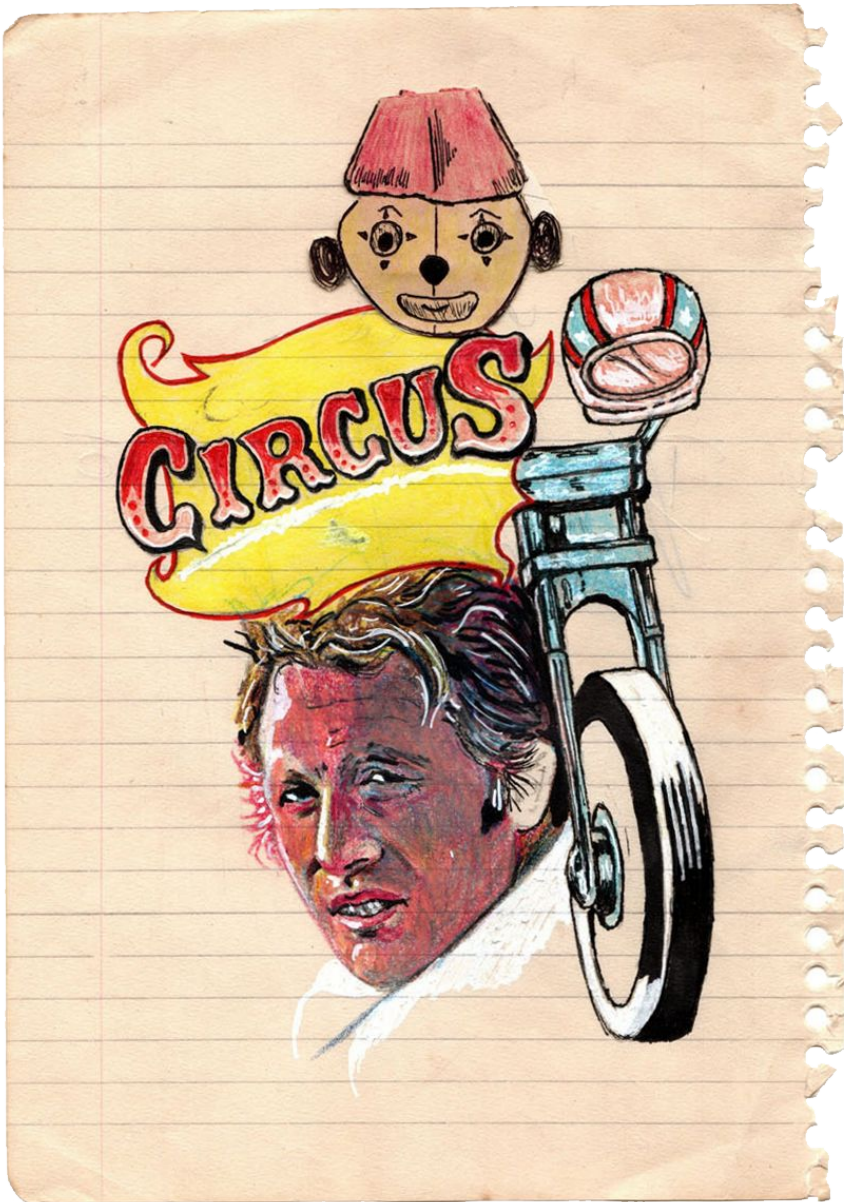




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*Heroi vs Anti-heroi* 2023

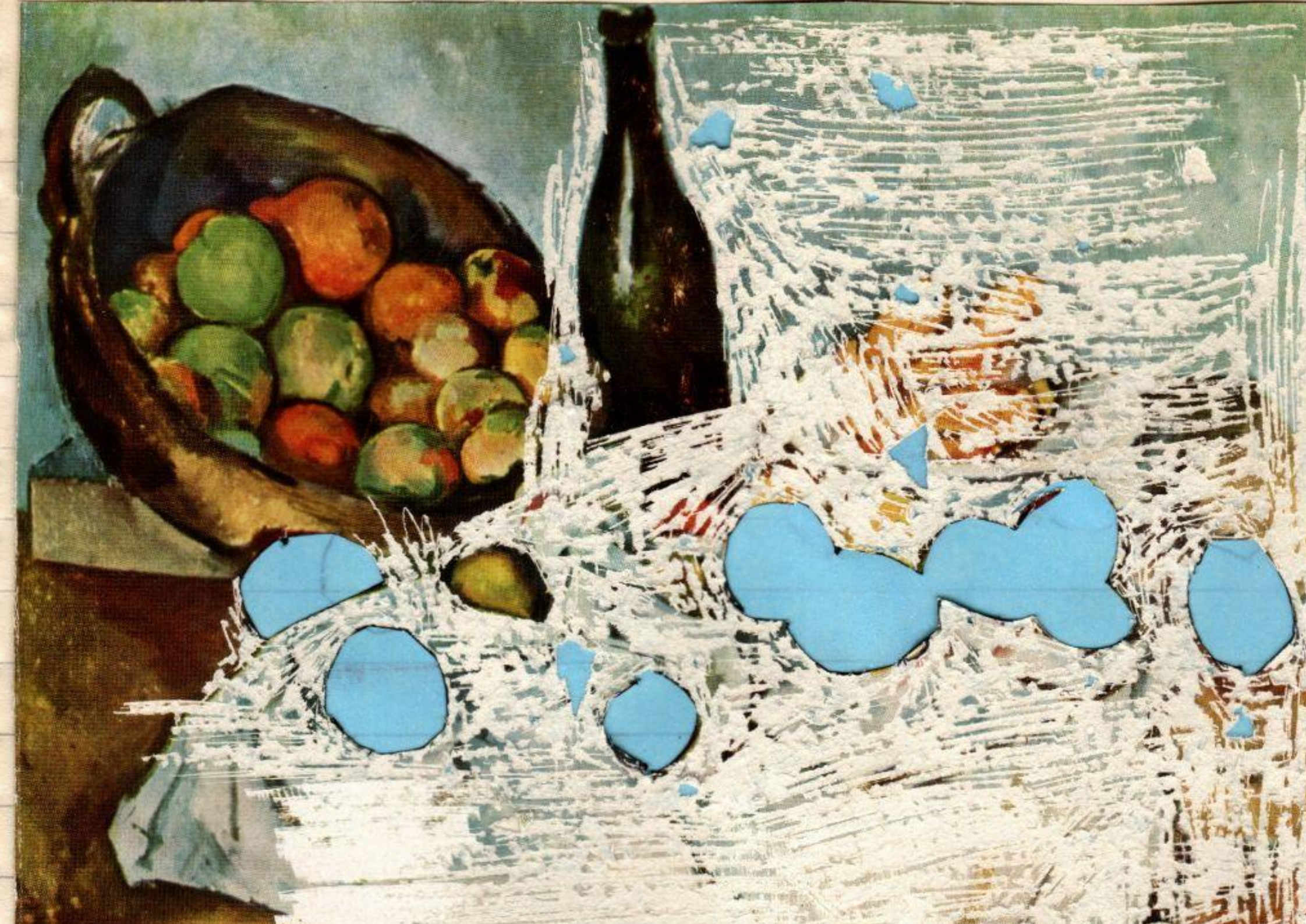
Colored pencils, ballpoint and marker pens on found paper  
22 x 15 cm | 8.6 x 5.9 in



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*Espetáculo, 2023*

Colored pencils, ballpoint and marker pens on found paper  
22 x 15 cm | 8.6 x 5.9 in





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*Figura e fondo*, 2023

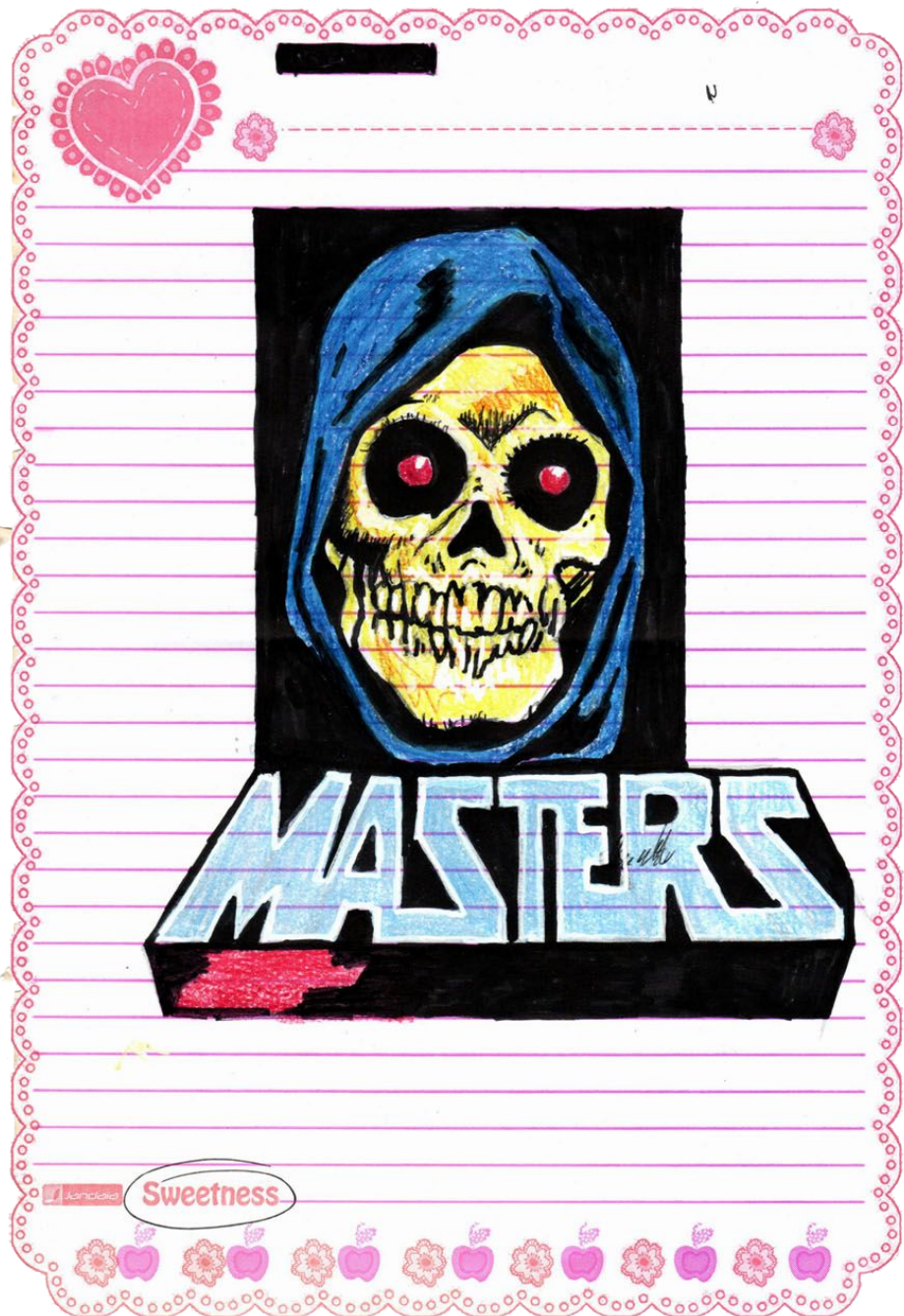
Collage and marker pen on found paper  
22 x 15 cm | 8.6 x 5.9 in



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*Big fan, 2023*

Colored pencils, ballpoint and marker pens on found paper  
22 x 15 cm | 8.6 x 5.9 in



*Masters, 2023*

Colored pencils and marker pens on found paper  
27 x 17.5 cm | 10.6 x 6.8 in



## ARTHUR PALHANO

1996 - Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

Lives and works in São Paulo, SP, Brazil

The works of Arthur Palhano take the form of paintings, objects and sculptures. In his research and practice, he investigates the symbolic dialogue between objects and the pictorial construction based on subtraction exercises.

In 2019, the artist took part in the *Formation and Deformation Program* at the renowned Parque Lage Visual Arts School (EAV), in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

His works are part of important private collections in Brazil. More recently, the artist has been commissioned to develop a work that will be included in the institutional collection of the Museu Paranaense – MUPA, in Curitiba, PR, Brazil.



## MOST RECENT SOLO SHOWS

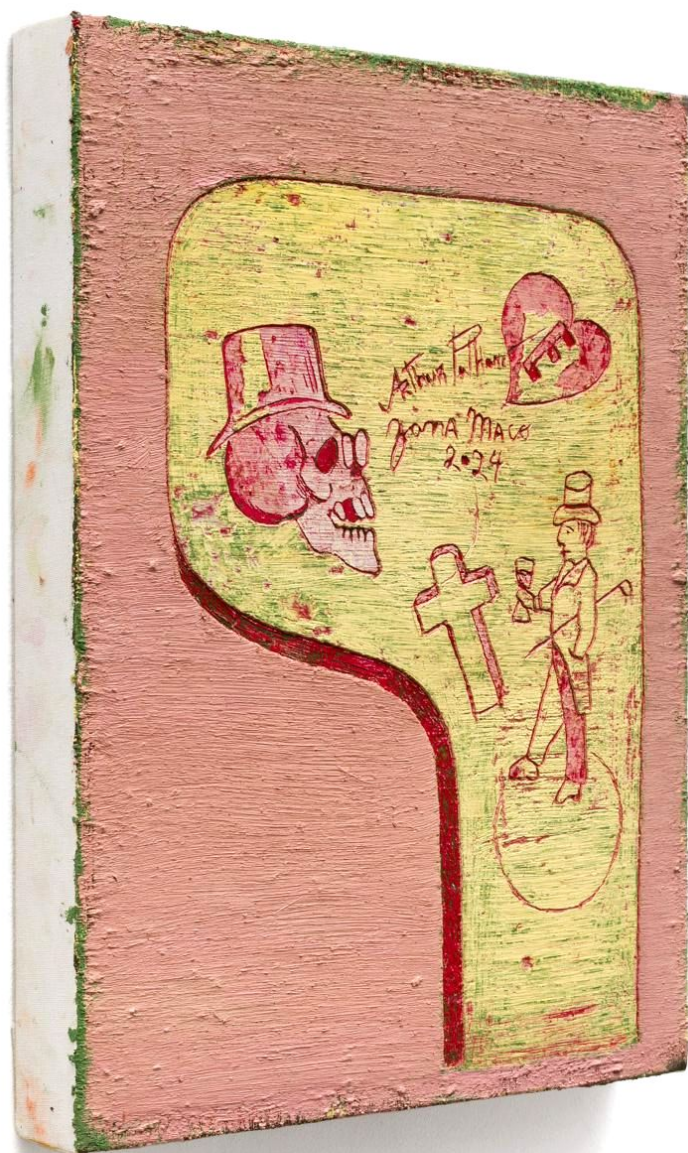
- *Dogma*. Curated by: Clarissa Diniz. Portas Vilaseca Galeria, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil (2023);
- *Doce Bálsamo*. Text: Eduarda Freire. Espaço Oásis, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2022);
- *Terraço Coberto*. Curated by: Lucas Albuquerque. Artist's house in Del Castilho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2021).

## MOST RECENT GROUP SHOWS

- *Do Desenho*. Curated by: Isabel Portela, Nuno Ramalho and Vinicius Duque Estrada. Centro Cultural dos Correios. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil (2023);
- *Melodia*. Curated by: Domenico de Chirico. Espaço Fonte, São Paulo, SP, Brazil (2023);
- *Objeto Sujeito*. Curated by: Pollyana Quintela, Felipe Vilas Boas and Richard Romanini. Museu Paranaense, Curitiba, PR, Brazil (2023);
- *Muamba*. Curated by: Lucas Albuquerque. Ruby Cruel, London, UK (2023);
- *Conversa de Formiga*. Curated by: Guilherme Teixeira. 25M, São Paulo, SP, Brazil (2022);
- *Despertar Inconsciente*. Curated by: Carla Oliveira and Luyza de Luca. Casa Bicho, Rio de Janeiro (2022);
- *Apocalypse Now*. Curated by Ricardo Sardenberg and Rafael Bqueer. Projeto Vênus, São Paulo (2022);
- *Futuração*. Curated by: Lucas Albuquerque. Galeria Aymoré, Rio de Janeiro (2021);
- *Tubarões Sabem da Existência de Camelos*. Curated by: Arthur Palhano and Vicente Lima. Corredor 14, Pelotas, RS (2021);
- *Hypertransfer Protocol // data-as-symbolic-form-exchange*. Los Angeles, Chicago, Florianópolis, Berlim (2020);
- *Estopim e Segredo*. Curated by: Clarissa Diniz, Ulisses Carrilho and Gleyce Heitor. Parque Lage Visual Arts School (EAV), Rio de Janeiro (2019).

## RESIDENCIES

- Casa Fugaz Residency Programme, Peru (2022);
- Oásis Residency Programme, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2022);
- OLHÃO Web Residency Programme (2020).



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**ZONAMACO 2024**

ARTHUR PALHANO

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**Curated by:** Luiza Teixeira de Freitas

**Critical text:** Frederico Pellachin

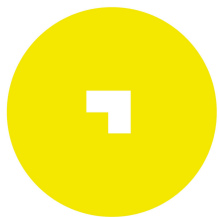
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