



PROJETO SOLO | SOLO PROJECT
GUSTAVO NAZARENO

SP-ARTE / 2021
STAND | BOOTH A11

PREVIEW
20 OCTOBER

VISITAÇÃO | VISITS
21 — 24 OCTOBER

ARCA
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Gustavo Nazareno

1994, Três Pontas, MG, Brazil

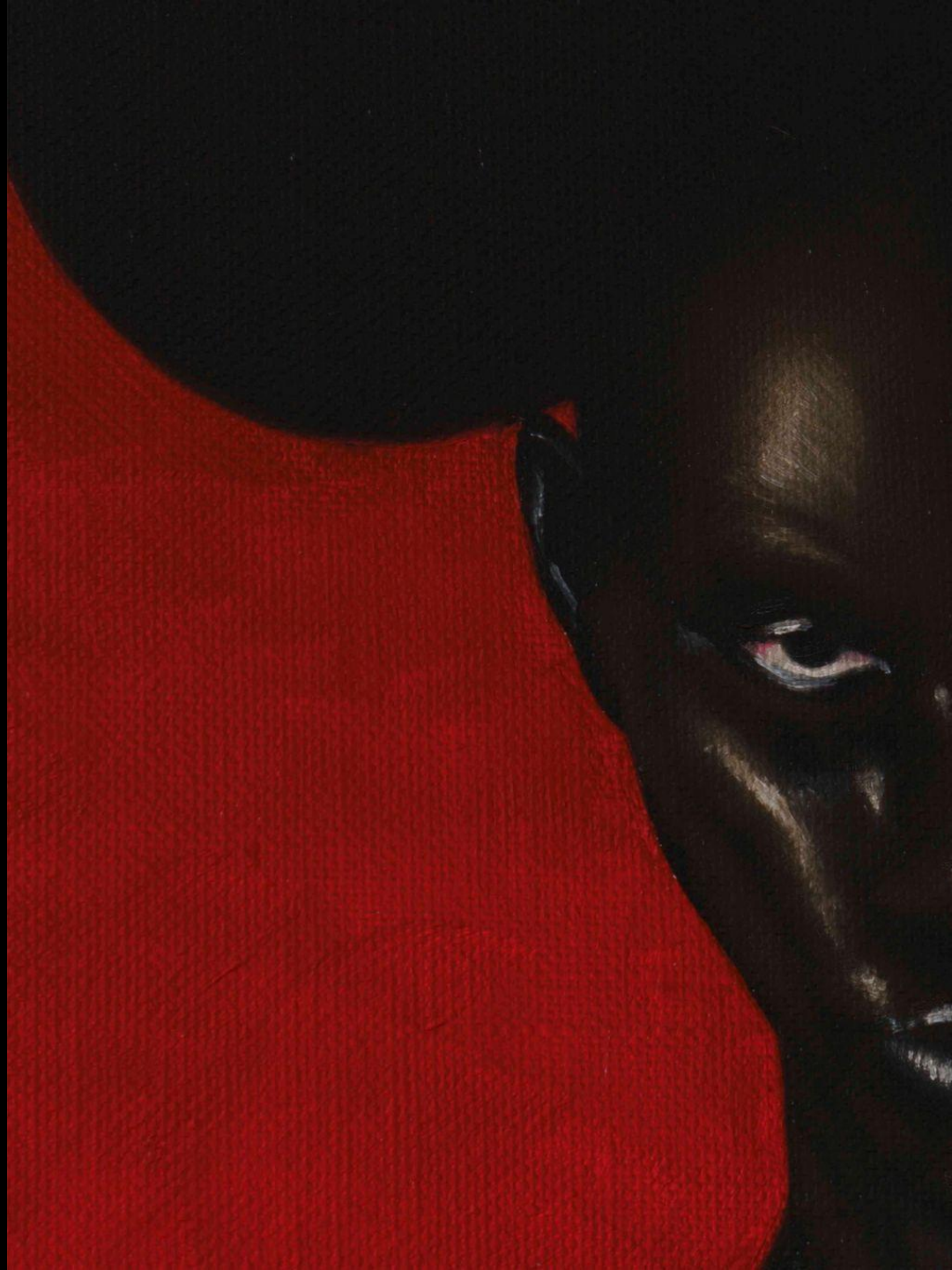
Lives and works in São Paulo, SP, Brazil

A self-taught artist whose practice is guided in particular by oil painting and charcoal drawing, with references ranging from the Renaissance and Baroque iconography to the history of fashion and its contemporary developments. His works emerge from a meticulous study of the human anatomy and from investigations on the poetics and politics of the body. They also carry a very personal spirituality, in which prevails the influence of the Afro-Brazilian Yoruba pantheon, revealed with all its mythic power in the pictorial field.

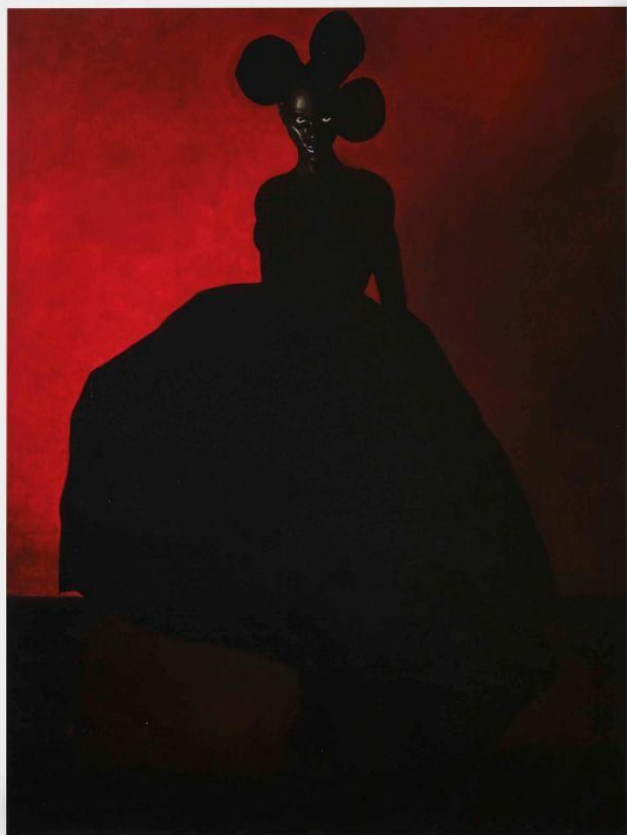
Among his most recent solo and group exhibitions, the highlights are: *"Fables on Exu"*, a solo show presented in 2021 at Gallery 157, in London (UK); *"Other essays for time"*, a collective show with artists Kika Carvalho and Mulambö that took place at Nara Roesler São Paulo in partnership with Portas Vilaseca Galeria during the event Gallery Week 2021; and *"Collective Reflections: Contemporary African & Diasporic Expressions of a New Vanguard"*, a collective exhibition held in 2020 at Gallery 1957, I, II and III Accra, in Ghana (Africa).

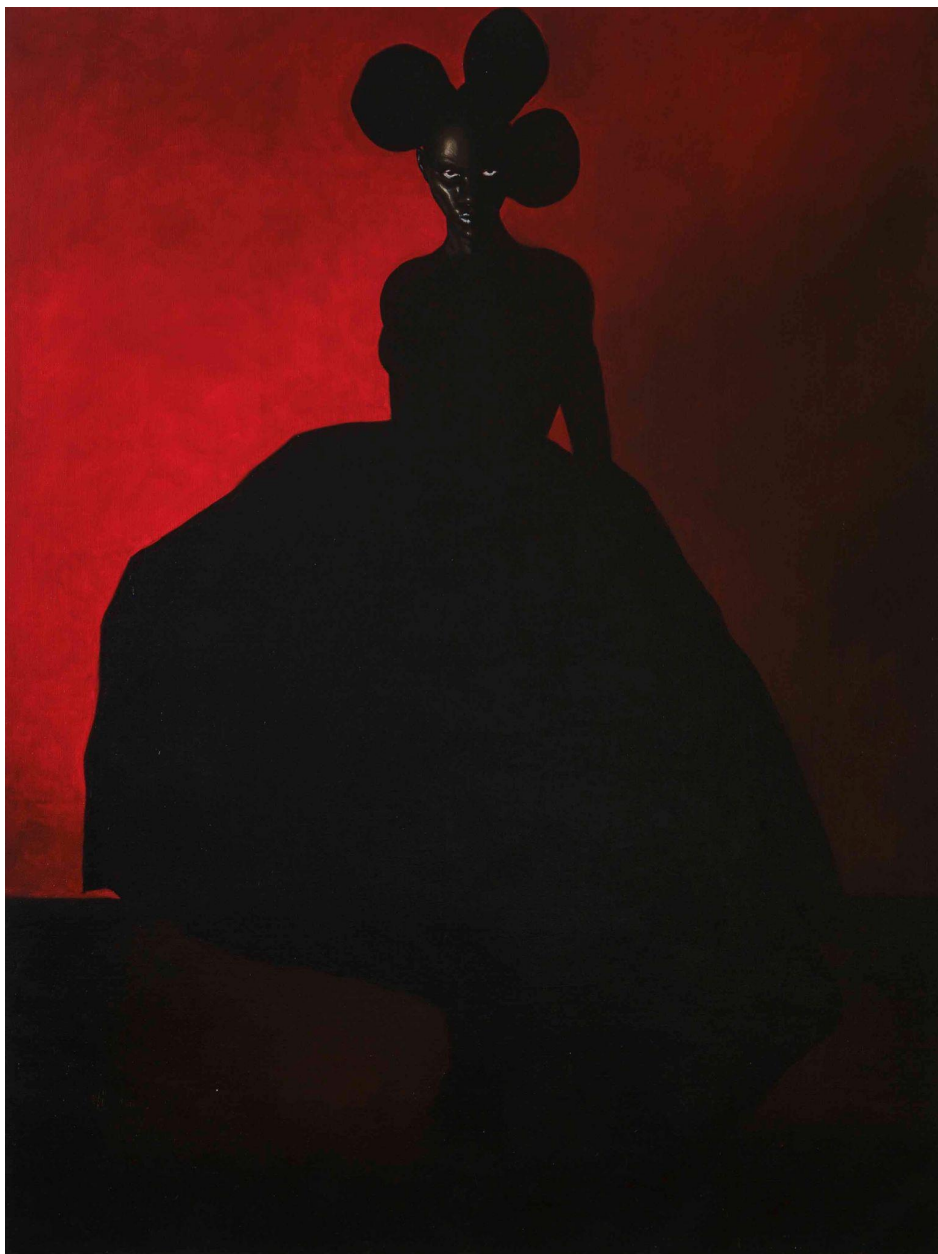
In 2022, the artist expects to launch the catalog *"Bará"*, containing all 363 charcoal drawings produced in the last three years for his homonymous series. In the same year, Nazareno will present a solo show at Cassina Projects Gallery, in Milan (Italy). He will also participate in the Armory art fair, in New York (USA). Also in the US, the artist will present a research project on the orixá Exu at the Cornell University Biennial.

PAINTINGS









GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Maria Mulambo, 2021

Oil on linen

150 x 118 cm

[59 x 46.4 in]







GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Órgão, 2021

Oil on linen

143 x 162 cm

[56.2 x 63.7 in]







GUSTAVO NAZARENO

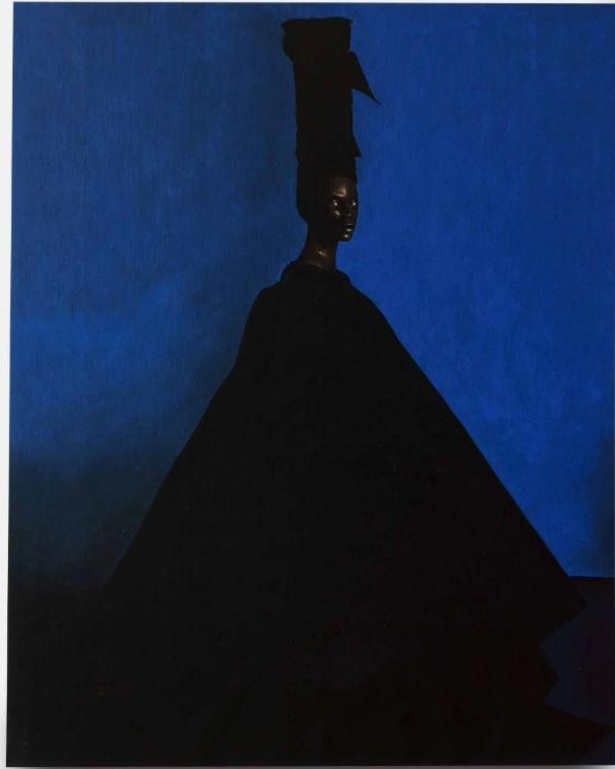
Antúrio, 2021

Oil on linen

80 x 70 cm

[31.5 x 27.5 in]







GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Dama da noite, 2021

Oil on linen

150 x 118 cm

[59 x 46.4 in]







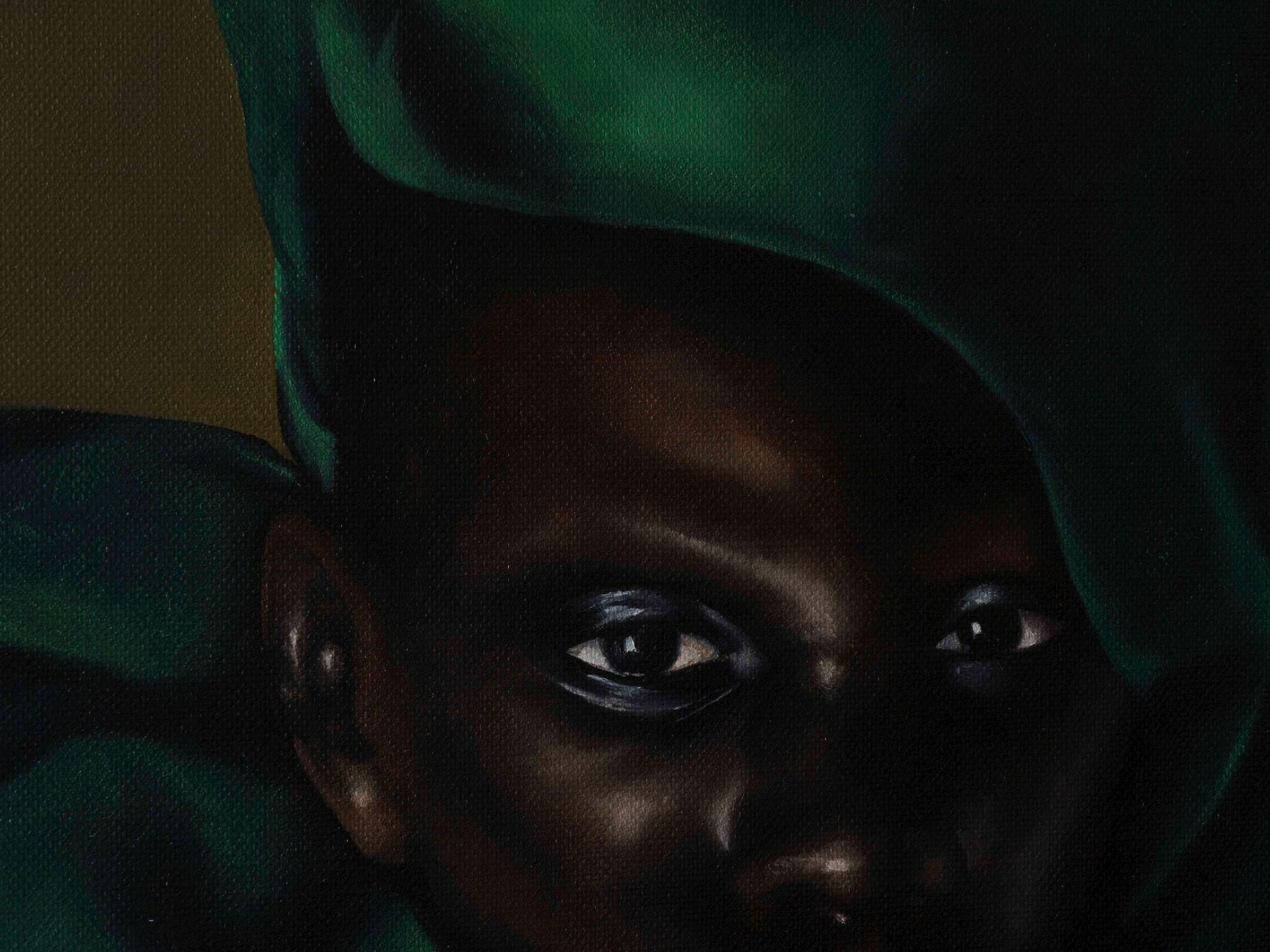
GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Baltazar, 2021

Oil on linen

122 x 90 cm

[48 x 35.4 in]







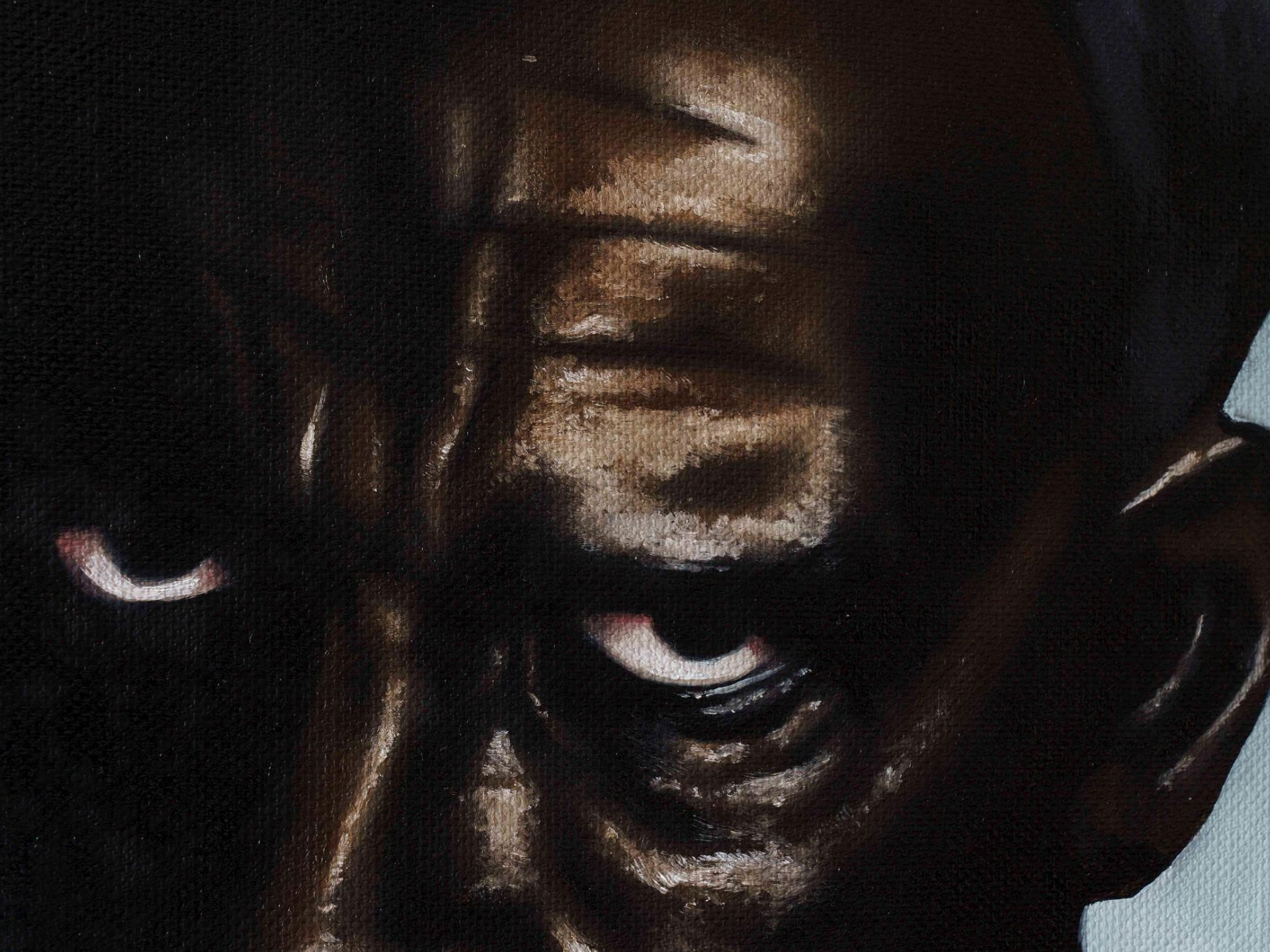
GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Odé, 2021

Oil on linen

88 x 70 cm

[34.6 x 27.5 in]







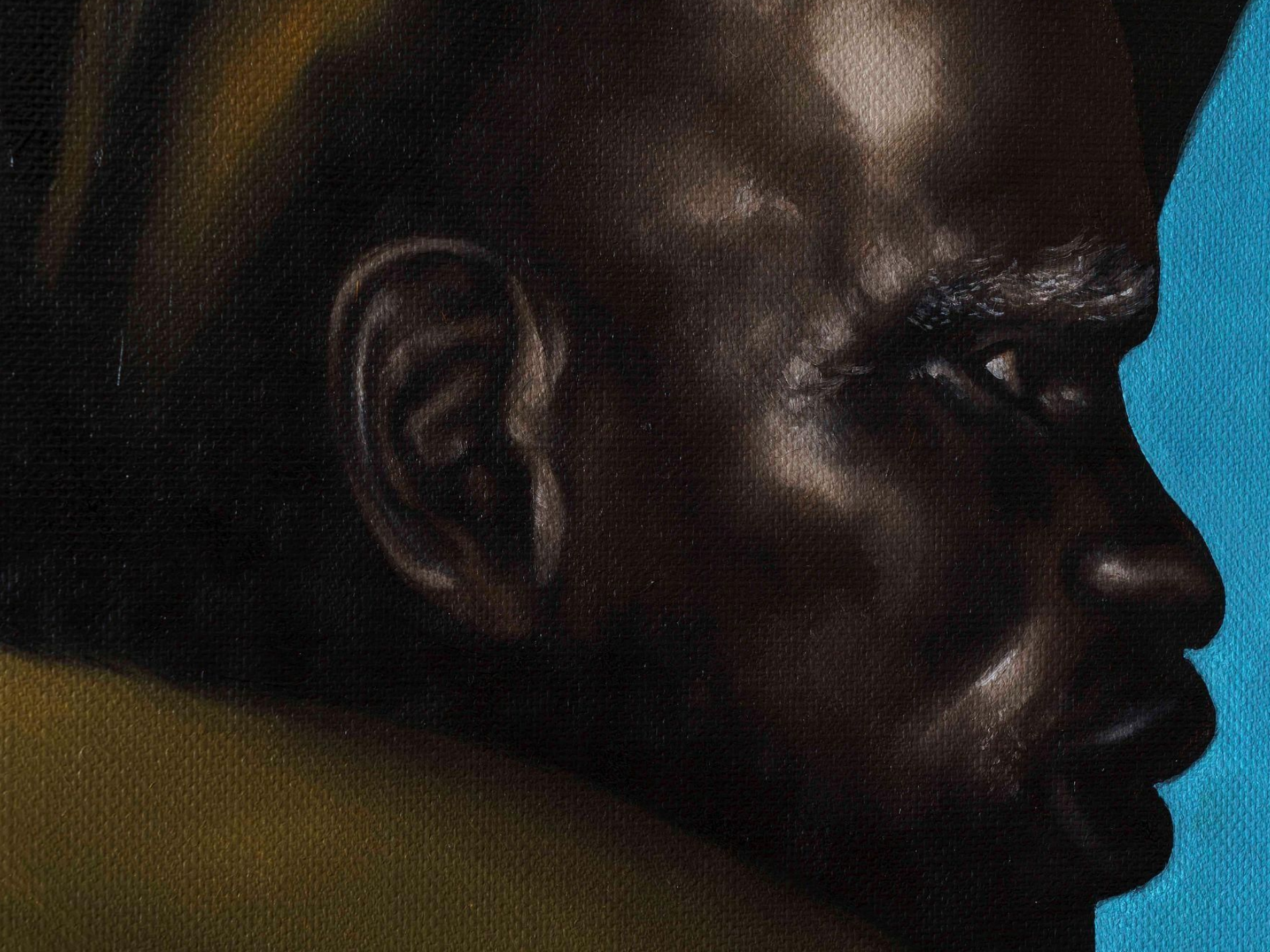
GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Xangô e a Coroa de Pedra, 2021

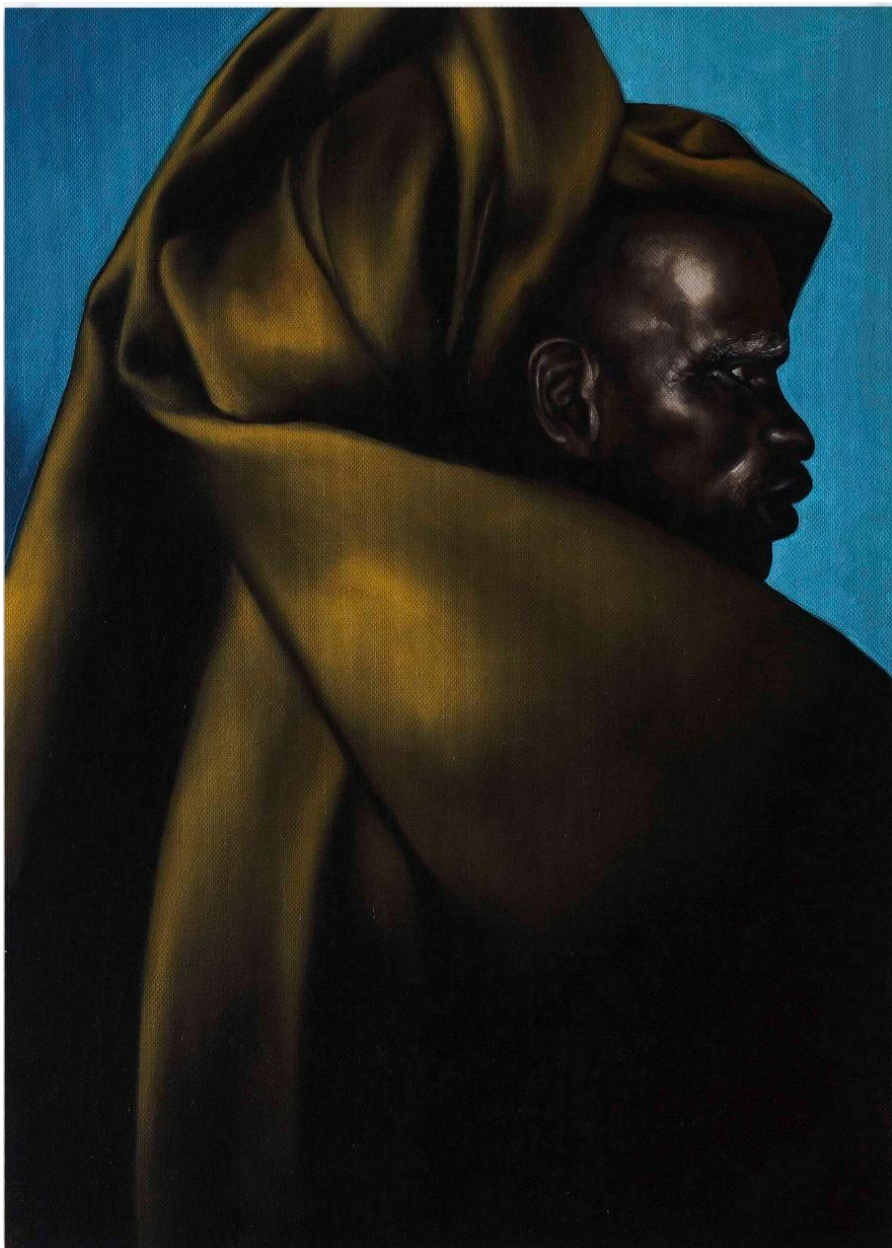
Oil on linen

64 x 47 cm

[25.2 x 18.5 in]







GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Padre Victor, 2021

Oil on linen

70 x 60 cm

[27.5 x 23.6 in]







GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Guiné, 2021

Oil on linen

174 x 132 cm

[68.5 x 52 in]







GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Preto Victor de Bará, 2021

Oil on linen

64 x 47 cm

[25.1 x 18.5 in]

DRAWINGS

Series "Bará"





GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 56 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 67 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in

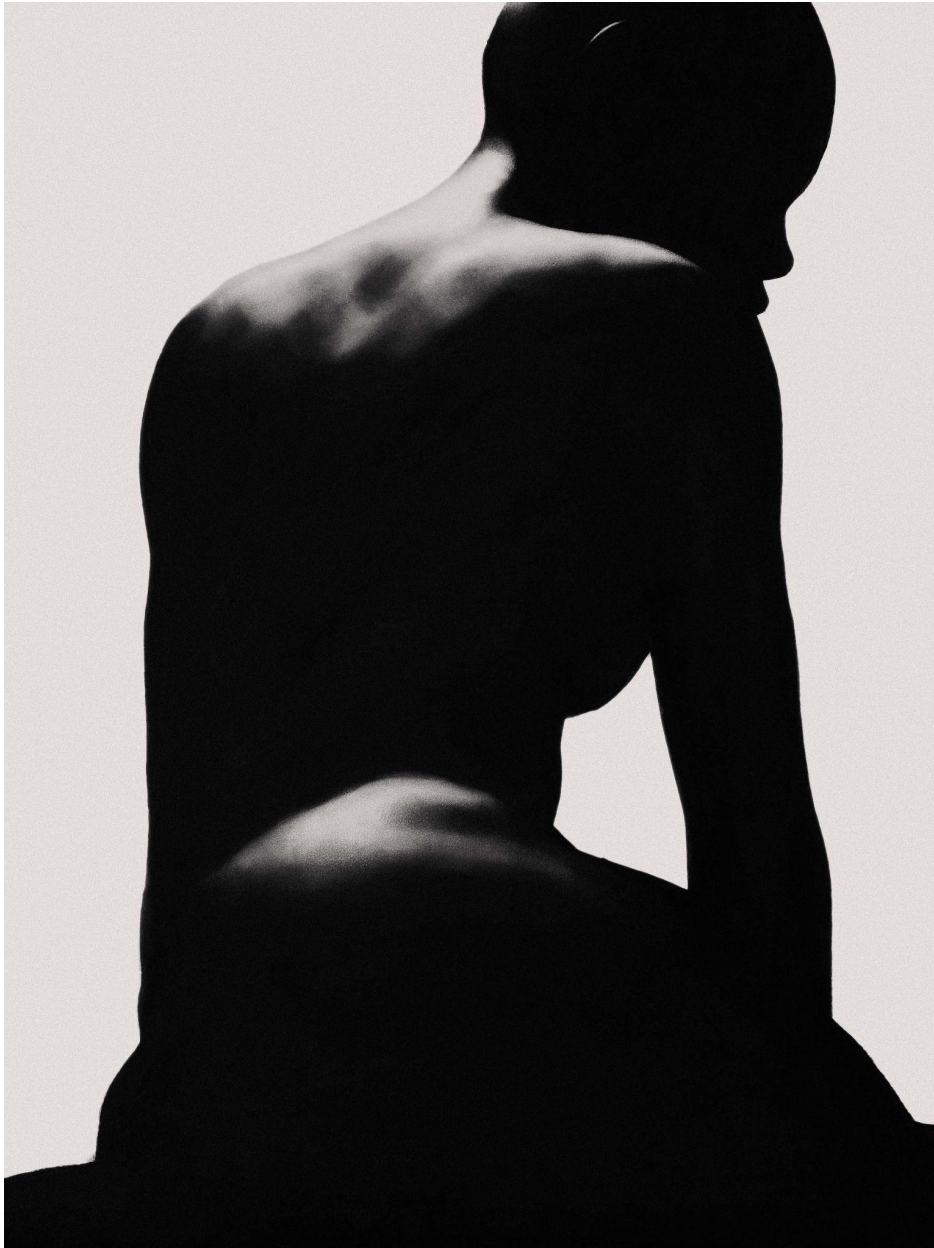


GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 297 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 132 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in

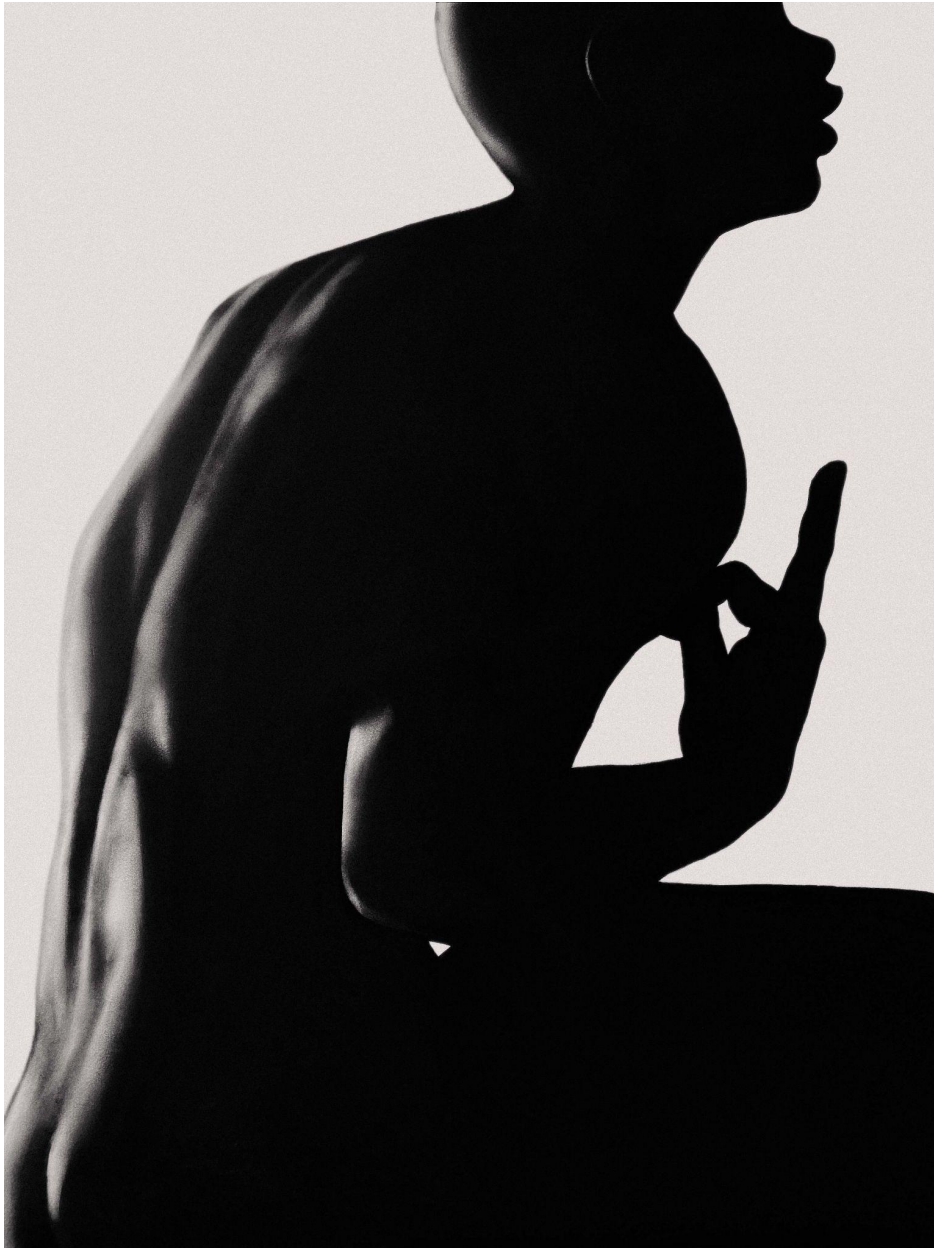


GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 135 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 196 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 206 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 232 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 250 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 256 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 302 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 187 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in

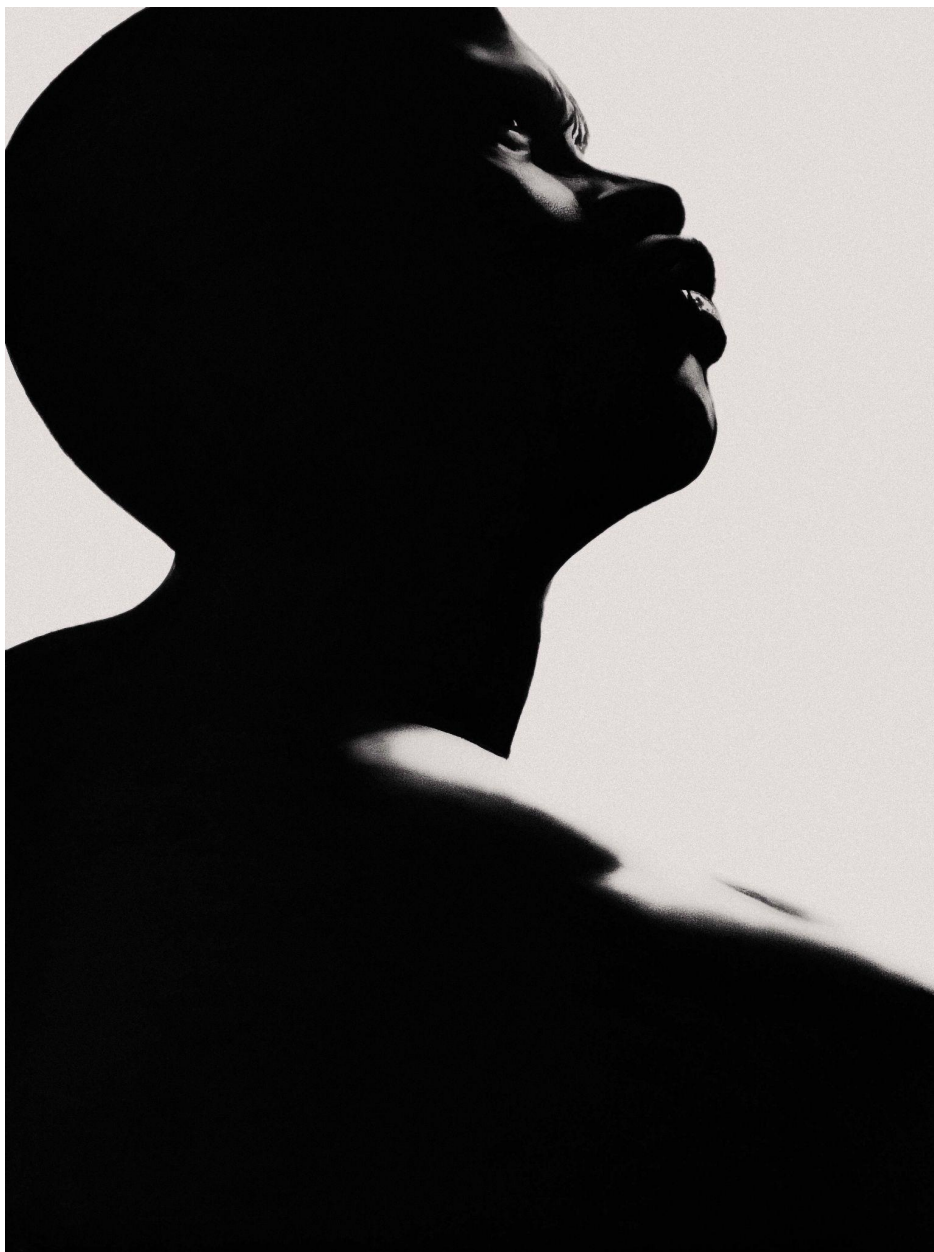


GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 188 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 219 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in

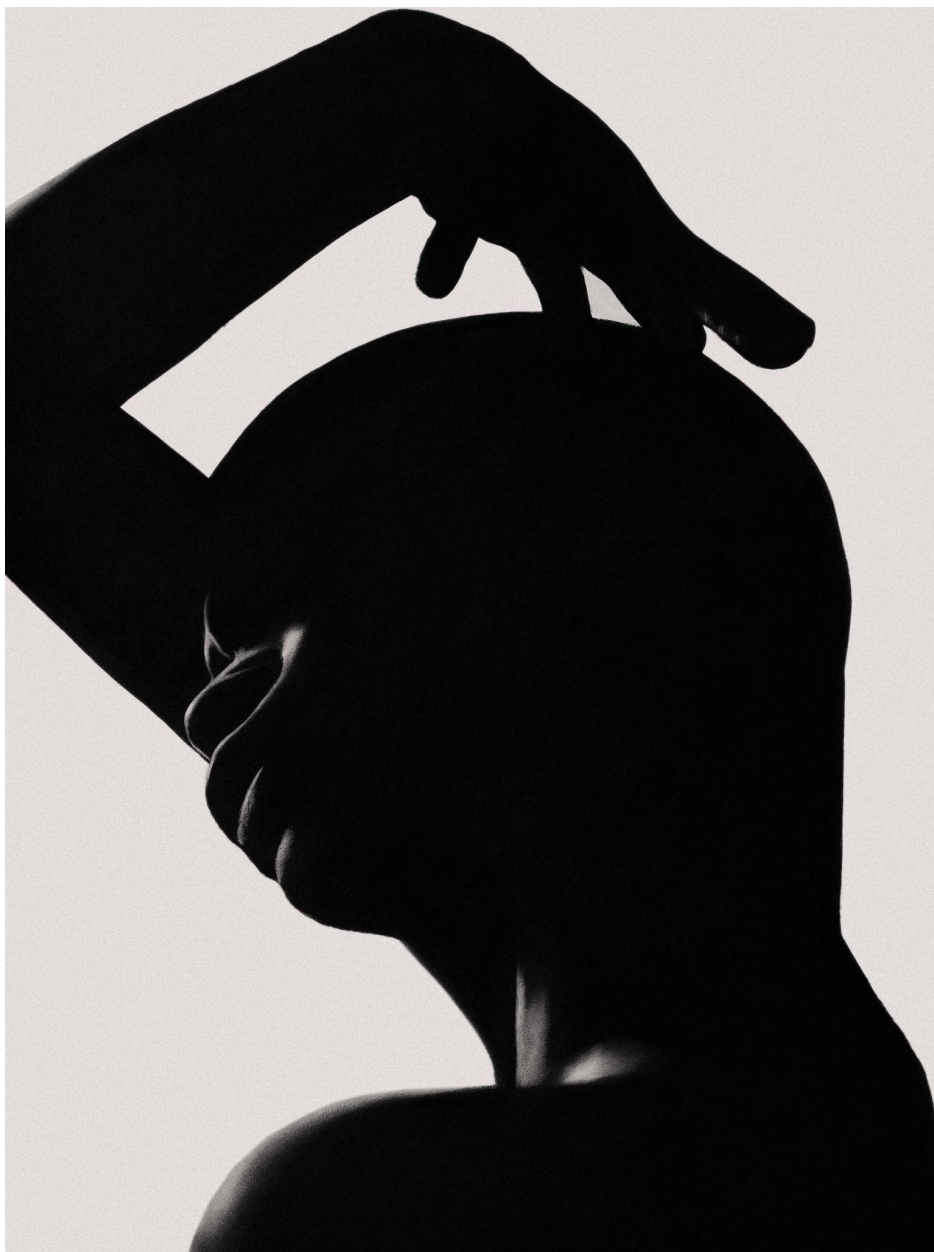


GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 237 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 241 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in

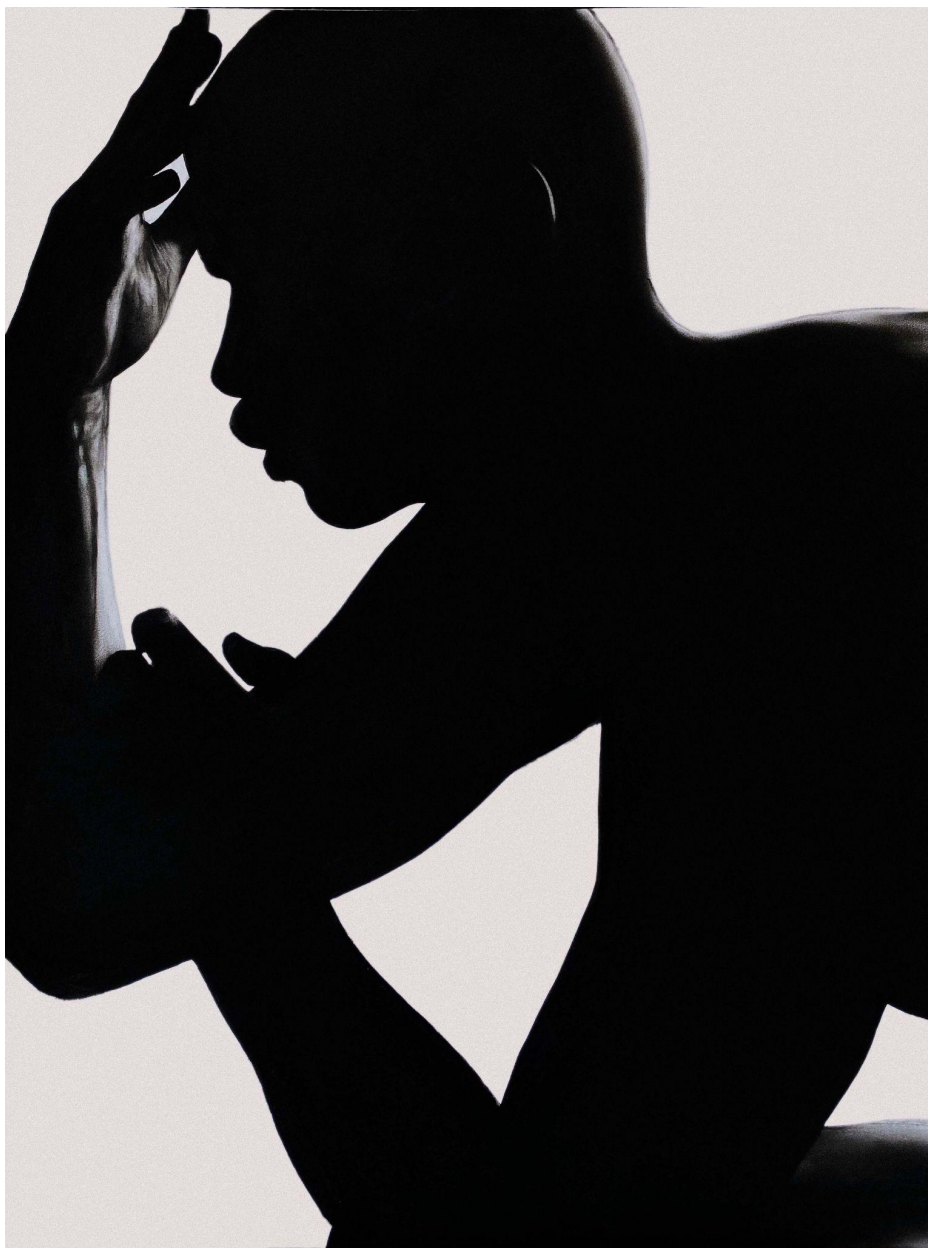


GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 243 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 273 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in



GUSTAVO NAZARENO

Bará 311 (Series "Bará"), 2021

Charcoal on paper (framed)

66 x 50 cm | 25.9 x 19.6 in

GUINEA

Little is known about the word Guinea. Its nature is still “uncertain”, but it is likely to be of African origin, female and with a spelling that has changed over the centuries. Among some of its designations are a country and a society established on the banks of the Upper Niger – the third longest river on the African continent, which crosses five countries, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Benin and Nigeria. As for this word in the Portuguese language, it would be the name of a powerful plant, with the power of protection, but if given in excess can be toxic and lead to death. It is also a species of guinea fowl, a bird of African origin, by the way.

These assumptions are of great importance for this writing because it leads us to the concepts that will be worked on about this word. Since GUINEA is also part of what we mentioned above, as they are the owners of this “gira” (the ritual itself), the “pombo giras”. The mysterious ladies dressed in red and black¹, who hold an inquisitive gaze and will be called in by Minas Gerais-born artist Gustavo Nazareno, alongside brothers Esú and Oxóssi, and Preto Velho (The Old Black Man), to take part in this exhibition.

Gustavo Nazareno is an artist who makes use of an accurate study of anatomy and classical art to employ in his pictorial investigation on the *òrisás* and *itãs*², deities from the religions of African origins. The movement of his brushes, using oil paint or charcoal, is like the strength of the palm oil when it penetrates the skin of the gods and their foods, as it exhales and explores every detail of eyes, hands and clothing that belong to the kingdom of the Yoruba pantheon.

A composition that takes us to an oneiric space, of power, mystery, sumptuousness and beauty. Gustavo - himself a son of Esú - portrays each god in a very unique and respectful way, advancing as far as it is allowed, while there is no authentic portrayal. In this way, Nazareno is opposed to the binary structures of mimesis³, due to a process that emerges from a plurality, by the eyes and hands that operate intersecting paths and concepts. Considering that, he is open to experimentation and knowledge to deeply explore luminosity, chiaroscuro, contour and volume, for being this process, perhaps, as stated by Giulio Carlo Argan⁴, a means of knowledge of the real, or it would be a way of getting to feel the beings in their essence.

Does the eye see the world, as Merleau-Ponty would say, or is it just one of the ways to apprehend it? We are talking here about an organ that goes beyond just looking, but is also learning. It is the eye of Esú, the lord of the paths, who apprehended Oxalá's purpose only in looking, being chosen by him as his assistant, who determines that nothing would reach him, without first passing through the hands of Esú!

These are the vision and hands of the oracular game, in which the cowrie-shell points out the best way to move forward and the possibilities, and that is why, perhaps, Esú takes the sphere of the world in one hand. It is the same view of cunning and caution as that of his brother, Odé⁵. A beautiful and vain man, but not like the one in the myth of Narcissus, because vanity is related here as the expression of life. And maybe that's why Ossain⁶ kidnaps him, taking him to live with him in the immensity of the mysterious green of the woods, understanding it through all his senses and sharpening not only a tactical eye for hunting, but also for the zeal.

They are the eyes of time, of wisdom, that of Mr. Griot (The wise man) or Preto Velho (The Old Black Man). The eyes of understanding the struggle through another process - through words, knowledge and resilience, something that only happens through time in the white of the orixá Funfun⁷. These are the looks of Marias and Guiné, the owners of the “gira” and those who possess a vision that perceives the soul, and asks us as beings, at the same time that it encourages us, it is the hand that judges. It is the strength of the Upper Niger River that penetrates these women and mothers, as they are the owls' hooting⁸.

In this way, Gustavo Nazareno *practices a magical theory of vision*⁹, exercised through oil painting and charcoal drawing, as a way to outline and expand the understanding of the work. And that is why his studies in anatomy and classical art, as stated earlier, are not an application of a concept, in order to obtain a positive or negative result. But they are a vision on Da Vinci, understanding the multiplicity that this artist operated in drawing, painting and science, through lines, through the use of sfumato and harmony. As on Rafael Sanzio, it is looking at the development of beauty and the smoothness of the brushstroke movements. However, it is in the romantic school that Nazareno's works can be performed. But they are not related to the sublime of Caspar David Friedrich's German school, or to the “Liberty, Equality and Fraternity” of Eugène Delacroix's French school. His works belong to a “griot” baroque lineage - linked to Minas Gerais-born Master Aleijadinho (Antônio Francisco Lisboa, 1730 - 1814) - not only for approaching the same theme of sacred art, but also in the treatment, as Aleijadinho would sculpt a dramatic piece through a sinuous and slender design, playing with lights and penumbra. Nazareno is pleased to use these code operations, although, by some means, he transfigures them, creating something of his own, close to a Yoruba's philosophy.

This is how GUINEA develops and invites you to enter this circle, filled with a lot of palm oil! A great “gira”!

Laroyê, Pombogira and Esú
Ana Paula Lopes

1 It refers to the *Red and Black Ponto de Umbanda*. *Pontos de Umbanda* are the sacred chants of this kind of Afro-Brazilian religion (Umbanda) that have different functions, such as honoring an entity or inviting it to socialize in the rituals.

2 *Itã* is a word in Yorubá used to refer to each mythical account about one of the orixás.

3 ARGAN, Giulio Carlo. *Modern Art*. Editora Companhia das Letras, São Paulo. pg, 11.

4 *Ibidem.*; pg, 11.

5 *Odé* in Yorubá means hunter and is one of the ways to call *Oxossi*.

6 *Ossain* refers to one of the Yorubá gods. One of *Naná's* sons, and brothers of *Yewa*, *Oxumaré* and *Obaluaiê*. Also known as the *People of Straw*. Beings that are in the cycle of life and death. *Ossain* is considered the doctor due to his power and knowledge of plants and herbs.

7 *Funfun* refers to *Oxalá* (the father of all orixás) - in Yorubá, the word means the colour white.

8 The owl refers to the *ÿàmì*, who are the great ancestral mothers, who precede the orixás. Ladies with power and, out of respect, their true name is never pronounced, with the owl being one of their symbols.

9 MERLEAU-PONTY, Maurice. *Eye and Mind*. São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2013. pg, 24.

ANA PAULA LOPES (b.1983, São Paulo, SP, Brazil) is a curator and researcher graduated in *Art: History, Criticism and Curatorship* from PUC-SP. Currently, she is an Art History Master's student at Unifesp and works as an assistant curator at Instituto Tomie Ohtake, in São Paulo. Previously, she has worked at White Cube, Mendes Wood DM and Jaqueline Martins galleries. Her texts have been published in *Revista Terremoto*, *Experiências Negras* (digital publication by Instituto Tomie Ohtake), and *Revista Desvio* (digital publication developed by Fine Arts students at UFRJ). She has produced artist Sandra Mazzini's solo show *Paisagens Expandidas* at Museu Nacional da República - DF, Brazil (2019). She has also coordinated the educational activities of the exhibitions *Mãe Preta and Bestiário Nordestino* at Funarte-SP (2018), and has supervised the educational team *PretAtitude*, at Sesc Santos, SP (2019/2020). As a curator, she has participated in the projects *Travessias Nômades – Eixo Espiritualidade* (2020), *Regresso* (2020) e *Capítulo I: Presente Limítrofe e Capítulo II: Reparação do desejo* (2020), in partnership with curator Cadu Gonçalves, all developed in digital platforms; and also in Alexandra Carlier's solo show *O Desejo do Desenho* (2019).

Photos of works
FLÁVIO FREIRE



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