



SELFIE RAFAEL BARON

TEXTO | TEXT
THIAGO DE PAULA SOUZA

ABERTURA | OPENING
20.11.2021 14H — 18H

VISITAÇÃO | VISITS
23.11.2021 — 08.01.2022

TER-SEX | TUES - FRI 11-19H
SAB | SAT 11-17H

RUA DONA MARIANA 137 CASA 2
BOTAFOGO - RIO DE JANEIRO
PORTASVILASECA.COM.BR
+55 21 2274 5965



PORTAS
VILASECA
GALERIA



PORTAS
VILASECA
G A L E R I A



SELFIE
RAFAEL BARON
20 NOV 2021 - 08 JAN 2022

SELFIE
RAFAEL BARON
20 NOV 2021 - 08 JAN 2022

SELFIE
RAFAEL BARON
20 NOV 2021 — 08 JAN 2022

SELFIE
RAFAEL BARON
20 NOV 2021 — 08 JAN 2022



TRAVA NA POSE [STRIKE A POSE]

by Thiago de Paula Souza

“Trava na pose, oi oi [Strike a pose, oi oi]

Chama no zoom dá um close [Zoom in and take a close up]

Trava na pose, éh [Strike a pose, éh]

Ela chama no zoom dá um close.” [She zooms in and take a close up]

DJ Patrick Muniz, MC Topre, DJ OLLIVER

Twenty years ago, perhaps, it would have been unimaginable to think about the role that social networks and cell phones would play in our daily lives and in our socialization practices. From a luxury communication object, in a few years, with recent technological advances, it not only acquired a popular status, but also became responsible for a good deal of our daily tasks, becoming a mediator par excellence. This popularization took place in parallel to a particular moment in the history of Brazil, as it was also over the last few years that we accompanied millions of Brazilians accessing paths that seemed to point towards a more prosperous life, subverting secular conditions of degradation. These paths had been imagined years and years before we reached this moment, by all those people who fought for the future or our present to be less marked by the violence that had terrified their lives.

The implementation of affirmative policies in the main universities in the country, made access to them a little more democratic, resulting in a radical change in the profile of students, especially a significant increase in the presence of black and indigenous people. The presence of these people in these institutions, added to the progress of social networks, have been fundamental for the way in which knowledge has been produced and shared - any one of them can present - with a cell phone, or through Twitter, Facebook and Instagram - other perspectives on being in this world and questioning the perversity of the monopoly of truth, until then safeguarded by a white (intellectual) elite.

Social networks have been important agents in this process, operating as springboards for the dissemination of content, and also allowed unlikely connection, by promoting the visibility of new artistic practices. Black, indigenous and peripheral youths, experimenting with other forms of sociability, opened paths and, in more accessible ways, began to guide a whole series of discussions, which were previously more restricted to academic circles.

This shift in narratives also reverberated in the production and circulation of images. The humor of internet memes established themselves as elements of social and political criticism, artists benefited from the visibility of digital platforms, and selfies produced new and instantaneous forms of self-representation, becoming an ubiquitous part of contemporary visual culture. They also enabled historically marginalized groups to produce their representations of themselves, spreading critical discussions about aesthetic standards.

In his first solo exhibition at Portas Vilaseca Galeria, entitled *Selfie*, Rafael Baron reflects on the role that digital self-portraits have acquired in our lives, and paints his characters - apparently most of them are black - in different situations and in different formats, but all of them are in large dimensions. The color of the paintings' compositions resemble pixels or glitches - we see his characters represented with the lines that have become the artist's signature - human figures with thick red lips and striking dark eyes, almost closed. Sometimes alone, like in "*Fernanda*" and "*Aline*", sometimes in intimate moments with possible lovers, like in "*Rodrigo and Helena*" or with friends like in "*Iguaçuanas*" - all scenes created by Baron, with his characters posing for selfies.

In some of them, the cell phone becomes another visible element of the composition, as in "*Carla*", a work in which the stretcher bar takes the shape of the character's body, or in "*Sophia*", portrayed on a circular screen with a blue background, in which we see the iconic Apple logo on the mobile phone's protective cover, reminding us that if at some point the internet became a utopian experimental field for the diffusion of ideas, nowadays it is just another colonized space, this time, by the big tech corporations. By adding the cell phone to the plan, Baron produces a new reading data for those images, perhaps those characters are not only photographing themselves, but also directing the focus of their cameras to the viewer, refusing the possibility of being just contemplated.

Rafael Baron is part of a new generation of young Brazilian artists who have been benefiting from technological advances and from this whole new chain of digital sociability that now organizes part of our relationships. As a child, he participated in drawing workshops, and in his late teens he began to experiment with painting. His first references were the traditional figures that comprise the official narrative of art history, and by appropriating the language of figurative painting, as well as many other artists of his generation, Rafael re-articulates issues about representation and visibility, building, in his own way, a future imagery collection.



RAFAEL BARON

Julia e Pedro, 2021

Acrylic on mirror

120 x 100 cm | 47.2 x 39.3 in

Edition: unique









RAFAEL BARON

Sophia, 2021

Acrylic and collage on canvas

120 x 120 cm | 47.2 x 47.2 in

Edition: unique



RAFAEL BARON

Sábado à noite, 2021

Acrylic and collage on canvas

180 x 160 cm | 70.8 x 62.9 in

Edition: unique









RAFAEL BARON

Carla, 2021

Acrylic on canvas

124 x 60 cm | 48 x 23 in

Edition: unique









RAFAEL BARON

Penélope e Matisse, 2021

Oil on canvas

150 x 150 cm | 59 x 59 in

Edition: unique







RAFAEL BARON

Rafaela e Tatiana, 2021

Acrylic on canvas

180 x 200 cm | 70.8 x 78.7 in

Edition: unique





RAFAEL BARON

Daiana e João, 2021

Acrylic on canvas

150 x 150 cm | 59 x 59 in

Edition: unique





RAFAEL BARON

Rodrigo e Helena, 2021

Acrylic on synthetic leather

120 x 100 cm | 47.2 x 39.3 in

Edition: unique





RAFAEL BARON

Fernanda, 2021

Acrylic and collage on synthetic leather

120 x 110 cm | 47.2 x 43.3. in

Edition: unique







RAFAEL BARON

Aline, 2021

Acrylic on car upholstery fabric

200 x 180 cm | 78.7 x 70.8 in

Edition: unique



RAFAEL BARON

Souvenirs, 2021

Acrylic on jeans

80 x 100 cm | 31.4 x 39.3 in

Edition: unique











RAFAEL BARON

Friends, 2021

Acrylic on canvas

150 x 150 cm | 59 X 59 in

Edition: unique





RAFAEL BARON

Iguaçuas 2, 2021

Acrylic on dressing room mirror

180 x 180 cm | 70.8 x 70.8 in

Edition: unique





RAFAEL BARON

Diego, 2021

Acrylic on dressing room mirror

180 x 180 cm | 70.8 x 70.8 in

Edition: unique

RAFAEL BARON (1986 - Nova Iguaçu, RJ, Brazil. Lives and works between Nova Iguaçu and Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil) is graduated in Theology from FAECAD and in Photography and Studio Photography from SENAC - RJ. Studied Drawing (with Sérgio Dias), Painting (with Celso Mathias) and Art History (with Thiago Martins). He also attended several courses at Parque Lage School of Visual Arts - EAV, in Rio de Janeiro. In his artistic practice, Rafael Baron develops studies and researches on figurative painting, with an eye to contemporary poetics. His work starts from the examination of the human figure, through which he discloses the subjectivities of the personality of each individual, looking for unique attributes in the process of creating his characters. In his research, he addresses issues related to social prejudice, racism, LGBT phobia, misogyny, among others. He sees art as a powerful communication tool that can contribute to a harmonious social experience. By proposing an open dialogue on tolerance and diversity, the artist invites the viewer to become a co-author of his creations.

Rafael was awarded in the “*Garimpo*” contest (2019/2020), promoted by Dasartes magazine, an accolade aimed at Brazilian emerging artists who have never had an individual exhibition at an art institution. In 2021, the artist presented his works for the first time outside Brazil. In Los Angeles (USA), he presented the solo show “*Entitled*”, at the art space The Cabin; and also participated in the group shows “*Roll with It*”, at the gallery Scott Miller Projects, in Birmingham (Alabama) and “*Fragmented Bodies III*”, at the albertz benda gallery, in New York City, where a solo exhibition is also scheduled for 2022

In 2021, the artist was commissioned to participate in the group exhibition “*Crônicas Cariocas*”, at MAR - Museu de Arte do Rio, where he presents a panel with forty paintings in small format, in addition to two medium format paintings. His works are part of private collections in Brazil and abroad, as well as the institutional collection of the Museu de Arte do Rio.

THIAGO DE PAULA SOUZA (1985 - Taboão da Serra, SP. Lives and works in São Paulo, SP) is a curator and educator with a degree in Social Sciences from Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP). He is currently a doctoral candidate in the Artistic Practice Program at the Academy of Arts and Design at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. He participated in the program *Propositions for Non-Fascist-Living*, organized by bak (basevooractuelekunst) in Utrecht, Netherlands, where he also curated *Tony Cokes - Living as equals*. With curator Gabi Ngcobo, he created the platform *I've Seen Your Face Before*, part of Goethe-Institut São Paulo project Ecos do Atlântico Sul. In 2018, also with Gabi Ngcobo, he joined the curatorial team for the 10th Berlin Biennale, entitled *We Don't Need Another Hero*. He is the co-curator with Diane Lima and Beatriz Lemos of the exhibition "O rio é uma serpente", 3rd SESC-Sorocaba Arts Triennial - currently on display - and also an advisor for the 58th Carnegie International.





© 2021 Portas Vilaseca Galeria

Jaime Portas Vilaseca

Founder and Director

jaime@portasvilaseca.com.br

Frederico Pellachin

Communications and Institutional Relations Director

fredericopellachin@portasvilaseca.com.br

Manuela Parrino

Fairs and International Projects Director

manuela@portasvilaseca.com.br

Clara Reis

Sales Director

clarareis@portasvilaseca.com.br

Ana Bia Silva

Production Assistant

SELFIE

Critical Text

Thiago de Paula Souza

Photos

Rafael Salim

Exhibition set up

Los Montadores

Lighting project

Antonio Mendel

Design (printed catalogue and digital eFlyers)

Bia Machado

Texts (printed catalogue)

Raphael Fonseca (presentation)

Adriana Varejão (interview)



PORTAS
VILASECA
G A L E R I A

Website: www.portasvilaseca.com.br

Facebook: www.facebook.com/portasvilaseca

Instagram: [@portasvilaseca](https://www.instagram.com/portasvilaseca)

Twitter: [@portasvilaseca](https://twitter.com/portasvilaseca)

Artsy: www.artsy.net/portas-vilaseca-galeria

Tel. +55 21 2274 5965

Email: galeria@portasvilaseca.com.br

Rua Dona Mariana, 137 casa 2

Botafogo 22280-020

Rio de Janeiro RJ Brazil

