

MAXWELL ALEXANDRE, *PARDO É PAPEL*

EXHIBITION ⇒ 08.03 > 07.07.2019

OPENING: THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2019

MAXWELL ALEXANDRE



Maxwell Alexandre
 "Pardo é Papel" series, *A lua quer ser preta, se pinta no eclipse* (detail), 2018
 Private Collection, Mallorca
 Courtesy Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel et A Gentil Carioca

The Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon offers Maxwell Alexandre, a young Brazilian artist, his first monographic exhibition outside Brazil. For this, the artist is in residence at the museum for the month of February, and will produce new paintings.

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Maxwell Alexandre takes his inspiration from life in the favela of Rocinha in Rio de Janeiro to create an engaged and complex narrative work in a Brazil fraught with tension. He can also be said to construct a unique universe composed of works that are at once fragile and powerful.

Inspired by mural painting, rap music and his rollerblading practice, which profoundly influenced his perception of the urban space, Maxwell Alexandre captures the energy of the city. His works represent the collective and refer to numerous socio-political and cultural issues.

Using different media like brown paper, doors and iron window frames, he draws situations from daily life in which groups of anonymous individuals with roughly drawn faces (women, children in uniforms, municipal workers, policemen, etc.) survive on the streets and alleyways of Rocinha, the biggest favela in Rio de Janeiro, where he lives and works.

By creating monumental and popular works in his fluid and precise painting style, the artist celebrates the Afro-Brazilian body in an adopted position of power.

In 2019, the Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon offers Maxwell Alexandre, a young Brazilian artist, his first monographic exhibition outside Brazil. For this occasion, the museum welcomes the artist for a month-long residency in Lyon, during which he will produce new paintings.

The exhibition title *Pardo é Papel* comes from the Portuguese language and the word 'Pardo' is a reference to dark coloured skin with connotations to slavery and colonialism. *Pardo* is amplified here by the brown paper 'Papel' which Maxwell Alexandre deliberately uses to embody the affirmation of Afro-Descendant communities.



Maxwell Alexandre
 "Pardo é Papel" series, *Só quando tu tá com as folhas geral gosta de salada* (detail), 2018
 Collection Frances Reynolds
 Courtesy A Gentil Carioca

Maxwell Alexandre, in addition to his art studies in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and military service, enjoyed a professional rollerblading career from the age of fourteen to twenty-four years. Interested in art, he attempted to combine the two disciplines: 'I BEGAN WITH ABSTRACT PAINTING BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS A GOOD TRANSITION BETWEEN ROLLERBLADING AND ART. I WOULD PUT THE PAINTING ON THE GROUND AND THEN ROLL OVER IT WITH MY ROLLERBLADES.' He would then change the position of the canvas several times, resulting in abstract lines, without controlling the drawing or the painting. It was an attempt to copy rollerblading movements in the form of painting. 'I WANTED TO TRY AND LEARN HOW I COULD RECREATE THE SAME SENSATION IN MY PAINTING.'

Instead of a 'white cube', Maxwell Alexandre chose to present his first solo show in his former studio located in a gym in Rocinha. 'My first studio was in this sports complex [...]. It all began two years ago, this was my first experience of a studio [...] and was my most intense period as an artist.' The choice of space was unusual. Amongst the boxing rings, skaters and persistent stench of waste water, Maxwell Alexandre exhibited eleven large paintings, all measuring 4.75 by 3.6 metres. These were striking both in terms of their size and content: they depicted scenes of everyday life in Rocinha. In Maxwell Alexandre's own words: 'THIS SERIES IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT DEPICTS A TRULY CONTEMPORARY ISSUE: THAT OF THE EMANCIPATION OF BLACK PEOPLE'. 'I THINK SOMETIMES WE NEED TO TACKLE RACISM HEAD-ON AND BECAUSE I'M NOT BRAVE ENOUGH TO ATTACK PEOPLE IN THE PHYSICAL SENSE, I DO IT THROUGH MY PAINTING.' 'I PREFER TO PAINT BECAUSE PAINTING IS NOT IMMEDIATE.'



Maxwell Alexandre develops an urban poetics based on the construction of narratives and scenes inspired by his everyday experiences in Rio and Rocinha, the city's largest favela, where he lives and works. Using different media ranging from swimming pool covers to doors and iron window frames, he portrays anonymous figures in typical favela situations. In these large-format paintings, Afro-Brazilian bodies are present in an autonomous fashion, even during confrontations with the police, which hint at the reality of the contemporary black community. Maxwell Alexandre shines a light on minorities, and the difficulties and violence of favela life, as well as issues faced by the Afro-Brazilian community.

« A POLITICAL AND CONCEPTUAL ACT THAT I WAS ARTICULATING IN DOING THIS : PAINTING BLACK BODIES ON BROWN PAPER. SINCE THE COLOR BROWN WAS USED FOR A LONG TIME TO OBSCURE NEGRITUDE. »

The artist is a member of a small collective who have founded a church of a rather unusual kind. Maxwell Alexandre explains things in simple terms: 'It is a church of art. That's all.' Also called the church of the kingdom of art or sometimes *A Noiva* (spouse), it exists as a kind of symbolic offering to the divinity of art.

Every two months, the artists and designers of *A Noiva* organize a public exhibition to showcase their work. They have named this series of exhibitions *Dízimo* (a tenth), because 10% of all profits are reinvested into the church. Each exhibition takes place in a space chosen by the artist and presents a selection of works of his choice. The exhibition *Pardo é Papel* was the second *Dízimo* by Maxwell Alexandre, and lasted for only one day. 'I think that *A NOIVA* IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT ALLOWS US TO IMAGINE THINGS THAT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM, FOR EXAMPLE, IN *A NOIVA*, WE HAVE CREATED A SPACE IN WHICH YOU CAN PRESENT UNFINISHED WORKS.' explains Maxwell Alexandre. Raoni Azevedo, the co-founder of *A Noiva*, agrees with Maxwell Alexandre: 'As the majority of arts events are organized by well-established arts institutions, *A Noiva* attempts to create an alternative scene, one that is more accessible, where everyone can present their work and where everyone is welcome.'

Born in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 1990, where he lives and works today.

Maxwell graduated in Design from Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro in 2016. Prior to this he participated in the Photography Course for works registration of PAC (Growth Acceleration Program) in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro in 2009.

In August 2017, Maxwell Alexandre participated in the group exhibition *Carpintaria para todos* at the Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel gallery. At the Escola Surfe - Complexo Esportivo de Rocinha he organized an exhibition titled *Laje só*. His works entered the collection of the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo and the MASP.

In 2018, the young Maxwell Alexandre rose to prominence in Brazil and on the international scene:

- In September at the Berlin Art Fair as part of the group exhibition *Recortes da Arte Brasileira*.
- At the A Gentil Carioca gallery (Rio de Janeiro) for his first solo gallery exhibition *O Batismo de Maxwell Alexandre (The Baptism of Maxwell Alexandre)*, 21 July – 12 September 2018) and in the group exhibition *Abre Alas 14*.
- At the MASP (São Paulo Museum of Art) for the group exhibition *Histórias Afro-Atlânticas* (29 June – 21 October 2018), hailed one of the best international exhibitions of 2018 by The New York Times.
- In December 2018, one of his works was presented at the stand of the gallery A Gentil Carioca at Art Basel Miami.

From 26 November to 24 December 2018, Maxwell Alexandre did a residency at the Delfina Foundation in London, quickly followed by his residency at the mac^{LYON} in early 2019. This residency will allow him to prepare his exhibition in Lyon which will be held from 8 March to 7 July 2019.



Maxwell Alexandre



Maxwell Alexandre's studio
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2017

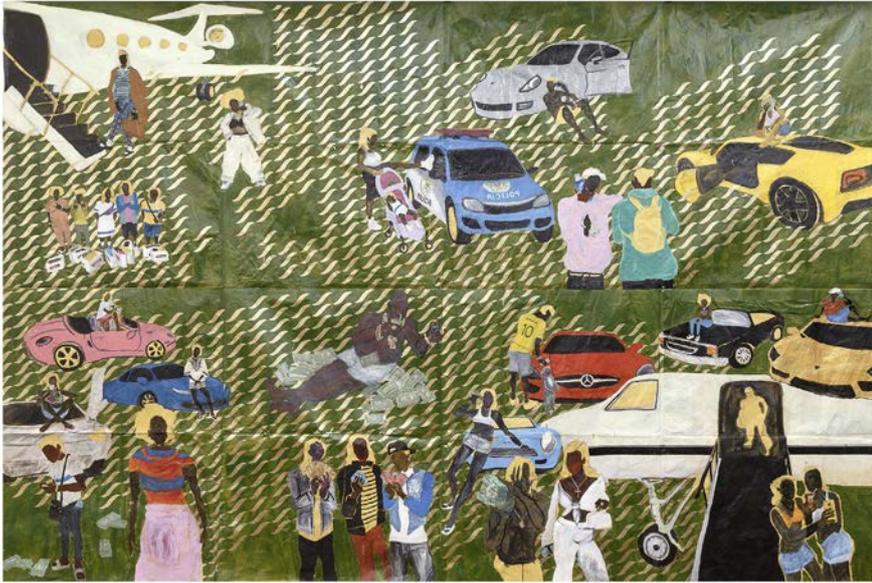


Maxwell Alexandre
"Pardo é Papel" series
A lua quer ser preta, se pinta ne eclipse, 2018
Private Collection, Mallorca
Courtesy Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel et A Gentil Carioca



Maxwell Alexandre
"Pardo é Papel" series
Meus manos, minhas minas, meus irmãos, minhas irmãs e meus cães, 2018
Courtesy Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel





Maxwell Alexandre
"Pardo é Papel" series
Só quando tu tá com as folhas geral gosta de salada, 2018
Collection Frances Reynolds
Courtesy A Gentil Carioca



Maxwell Alexandre, "Pardo é Papel" series, *Megazord só de Power Ranger Preto*, 2018
Courtesy Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel et A Gentil Carioca



In 2019 the MAC's new cultural programme is sure to 'make some noise'!

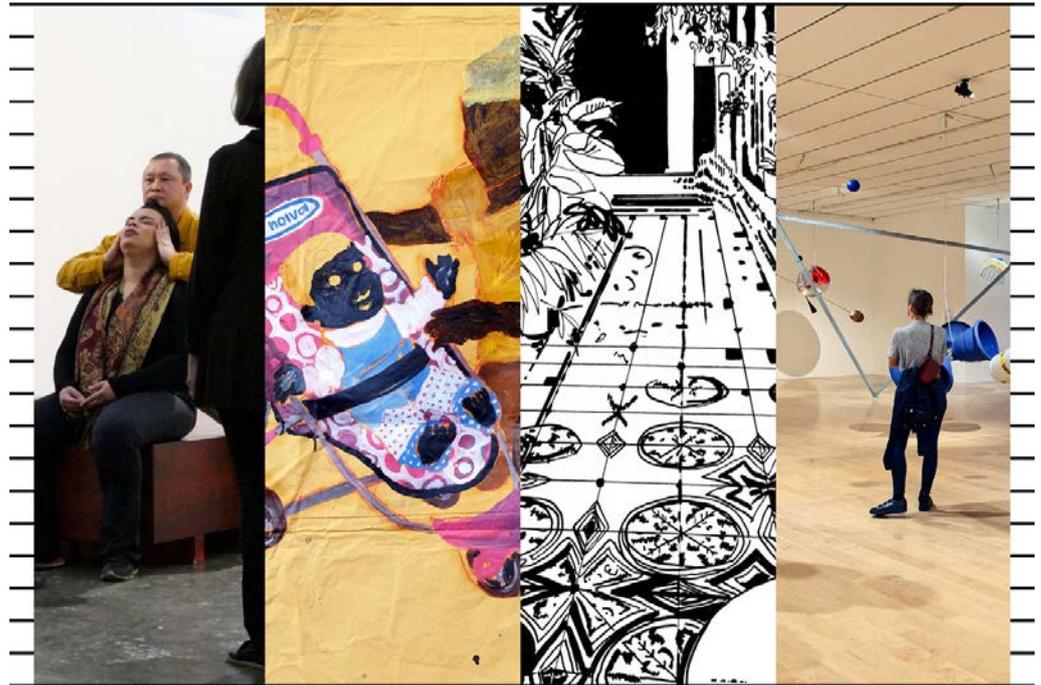
The museum has decided to open its season with the recently acquired sound piece *Rainforest* by David Tudor, in resonance with a selection of works by artists from the collection such as La Monte Young, Terry Riley, etc.

On the 2nd floor of the museum, a new kind of exhibition titled *Storytelling* invites seven young artists to invest the museum in turn, creating their work in the presence of the public, based around sound.

On the 3rd floor of the MAC, Tal Isaac Hadad presents a performative project combining massage and lyrical song.

In parallel the museum has concocted a whole host of events and activities around dance, hip hop, video art, etc.

● Tal Isaac Hadad	● Maxwell Alexandre	● Storytelling	● Sounding new, œuvres sonores de la collection
8.03-28.04.19	8.03-7.07.19	8.03-7.07.19	8.03-7.07.19



Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon
Cité internationale
81 quai Charles de Gaulle
69006 LYON - FRANCE

T +33 (0)4 72 69 17 17
 F +33 (0)4 72 69 17 00
 info@mac-lyon.com
www.mac-lyon.com

#MaxwellAlexandreLyon
 f www.facebook.com/mac.lyon
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OPENING HOURS
 Wednesday to Sunday, from 11am to 6pm

ADMISSION
 → Full: 8€
 → Concessions: 4€
 Free for visitors under 18

ACCESS

→ **By car**
 Along quai Charles de Gaulle, carpark P0 and P2, reduced rate for our visitors

→ **ridesharing**
 www.covoiturage-pour-sortir.fr

→ **By bus, stop Musée d'art contemporain**
 Bus C1, Gare Part-Dieu/Cuire
 Bus C4, Jean Macé/Cité internationale
 Bus C5, Cordeliers/Rillieux-Vancia

→ **By bike**
 Several vélo'v stations around the Museum
 Cycle lane from the Rhône's banks to the museum.



Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon
 Photographer : Blaise Adilon