

## Fundação Bienal de São Paulo announces unique digital program for the next 12 months

*Although the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo collective exhibition has been postponed to September 2021, the 34<sup>th</sup> version continues online.*

*A series of activities planned for the first half of 2021 marks the celebration of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bienal.*

**September 17 2020** – The Fundação Bienal de São Paulo announces an unprecedented free digital program, mostly bilingual, conceived after the decision to postpone the group show of the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo – *Faz escuro mas eu canto* [Though it is dark, still I sing] to 2021. Aimed at diverse audiences, activities range from *live streams* with curators and guests to mini courses and interviews with the artists at their studios, as well as actions focused on an education-related audience, in line with the institution's strong educational tradition.

This program, which runs from September 2020 to August 2021, will be complemented by a series of institutional projects in the first half of 2021, when the Fundação celebrates the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bienal de São Paulo.

"Since 1996, even before the scale of internet access we see today, the Fundação Bienal began to produce sites and digital content because it recognizes the important role this medium could play in the diffusion of contemporary art to a wider, more diverse audience than that able to attend the Bienal Pavilion – a vision of the internet and its potentialities that has proven right throughout its more than two decades of digital presence. During the past few months, when faced with restrictions on people circulating, these digital initiatives became even more important as sources for substitute aesthetic experiences or, when it comes to countries where a more flexible quarantine has already been adopted, it complements the experience one can have in exhibition halls," states José Olympio da Veiga Pereira, president of the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo.

### **The 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo in the digital environment**

The 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal – which started in February 2020 with an innovative proposal to expand itself in time and space – has already been using digital platforms as an important means to make direct contact with the audience by means of the "curatorial correspondences", sent by e-mail monthly since February; the launching of the site dedicated to the exhibition, in May, and the release of the online educational content in June. However, with the pandemic and the consequent postponing of the show to September 2021, the internet has become a privileged space where the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal could continue to advance, deepening aspects of its project and expanding debates. That is the

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reason a special program for the digital channels of the Fundação Bienal has been planned. This program will be mostly bilingual, according to the institution's international vocation. Beginning in September 2020, it will consist of:

**6 live meetings on the statements:** every 45 days, the curators of the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal will get together with guests to debate one of the show statements – history-filled objects, around which the works will be distributed in the event, suggesting multidimensional poetic readings. Each meeting, always bilingual, will feature the curators' and a special guest's live entries, and pre-recorded interviews with artists participating in the show. At the end, the curator and the guest speaker will answer questions from the audience.

The first meeting, to be held on **October 15**, will address the Bienal title, "**Faz escuro mas eu canto**" (*Though it is dark, still I sing*), a verse by poet Thiago de Mello. On the occasion, in addition to the live entries, the audience will be able to watch recorded interviews with three artists participating in the Bienal: **Carmela Gross** (1946, São Paulo) and two other names that are now announced – **Edurne Rubio** (1974, Burgos, Spain) and **Zina Saro-Wiwa** (1976, Porto Harcourt, Nigeria). Until June 2021, other five meetings will be held, including the topics **Artaud and Glissant**, **Objects from the Museu Nacional**, **Portraits of Frederick Douglass**, and the **Ouro Preto Bell**.

**12 Studio visits:** once a month, from September 2020 to August 2021, artists from the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal will open their studios and speak about their trajectories, the works they are producing for the Bienal and their current research, beginning with questions and provocations set forward by the curatorial team. The bilingual videos will be shown on the Bienal's Instagram page (@bienalsaopaulo) and will be available on the 34th Bienal website at <http://34.bienal.org.br/>.

The first **Studio visit**, featuring **Frida Orupabo**, was posted on **September 16** and can be viewed [here](#); on **October 21** it will be **Juraci Dórea's** turn to talk about his work.

**Reporting and coverage of the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal:** as soon as cultural spaces open their doors again and the exhibitions of the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal partners are reinstated, the Fundação Bienal will cover each opening in video, as well as interview curators, artists, and other important characters for each show. The content will be shown live on our Instagram and, later, transformed into bilingual video reports to be available on the [34.bienal.org.br](http://34.bienal.org.br) and the **Arte que Acontece** websites, the latter a project partner. There will be around 25 videos, the last of which will show the opening of the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal group show at the Bienal Pavilion, in September 2021.

This program will also include the continuation of the "curatorial correspondences", which will now include texts by artists' and other invited guests written for other publications on the exhibition. Curators' virtual talks, organized along with international institutions and aimed at their local

audiences, will also be transmitted. The first is produced by the **CCA, Lagos** (Nigeria) and will be held in September.

Also, two other initiatives directed to the education-related audience of the Fundação Bienal are already in progress. The first, started in August, is the **Contemporary Art in the Classroom** course, which includes the **Secretaria Municipal de Educação** certified education of up to 350 teachers from the municipal education network. The second refers to **online study groups** intended for those interested in developing the contents of this edition's Educational Publication relying on the mediation of Fundação Bienal professionals. Starting in October, these initiatives will be complemented by **6 distance mini-courses on the statements**. Offered only in Portuguese, these activities consolidate the Fundação Bienal's commitment to its educational mission – after all, since the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bienal de São Paulo (1953), the editions have been complemented with educational activities.

**All activities are free of charge.**

## **The Bienal in the Digital World**

The institution inaugurated its presence on the internet in 1996, with the website of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bienal. Since then, its performance in this field has continually expanded and today it possesses a rich digital asset that includes the websites of the numerous Bienais de São Paulo, digitized versions of all the publications produced throughout its history, virtual visits to the exhibitions, hundreds of videos, audios and even apps, in addition to the online database of the Wanda Svevo Historical Archive that contains over 250,000 documents on the history of the Bienais. All of it is reunited in the Bienal Portal, launched in 2002, and shared through its social media and newsletters.

For the next 12 months, in addition to the program of the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal, the Foundation will continue two successful campaigns, addressed to the Brazilian public. On social media, especially on Instagram and Facebook, since the beginning of the year the institution has adopted a fixed editorial grid with daily posts ranging beyond contents directly related to the Bienal, and presents to its followers the world of contemporary art in a casual and accessible manner. In the first half of 2020, its Instagram reached 4 million views and 400,000 likes. Today, the institution has over 330.000 followers on its main social networks (Instagram and Facebook).

The second initiative is the #BienalEmCasa [#BienalAtHome] email campaign that presents the rich digital collection of the Fundação Bienal by means of small articles that remind us of works, shows, brochures, posters or personalities that have shaped the history of the institution. The texts, written in accessible language and created from thorough research, bring to the interested audience links leading to the most diverse websites, channels and databases of the Fundação, where more in-depth content can be accessed.

Additionally, in the first half of 2021, during the celebration of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bienal de São Paulo, a series of digital activities will mark the occasion, ranging from the most traditional products, such as short videos from documents found in the Historical Archive, to more innovative actions that will rely on the participation of artists and personalities from the cultural field. The complete program will be announced at the beginning of next year.

### **On the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo**

Founded in 1962, the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo is a nonprofit private institution with no political or religious affiliations, whose actions aim to achieve democratic access to culture, besides stimulating interest in artistic creations. Every two years, the Fundação launches the Bienal de São Paulo, the Southern Hemisphere's largest art show, and its itinerant exhibitions are shown in several cities in Brazil and abroad. The institution is also a guardian of two Latin American cultural and artistic assets: a historical archive on modern and contemporary art, which is a reference for all Latin America, and the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion, the headquarters of the Fundação, designed by architect Oscar Niemeyer and listed as a monument by the federal heritage office. Since 1995, the Fundação has also taken the responsibility to conceive and produce the Brazilian art and architecture representations at the Venice Biennales, a privilege granted by the federal government in recognition of the excellence of its contributions to Brazilian culture.

### **On the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo**

Marked by the encounter and mutual potentiation between curatorial project and institutional performance, the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo emphasizes the multiple possible readings of a work of art or a show. To get there, it adopted an innovative working structure which included the shows and actions presented in the Bienal Pavilion since February 2020, and coordination with a network of São Paulo institutions. Hence, between February and March 2020, the show of Peruvian artist Ximena Garrido-Lecca was opened; it was simultaneous with an unprecedented performance of South African, Neo Muyanga. The dynamics of individual shows was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the collective show was postponed to September 2021.

With Jacopo Crivelli Visconti as its chief curator, the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal curatorial team is composed of Paulo Miyada (adjunct curator), Carla Zaccagnini, Francesco Stocchi and Ruth Estévez (guest curators). To conceive the publications, Elvira Dyangani Ose acts as invited editor, in collaboration with The Showroom, London. Understood as a statement rather than a theme, the title of the 34<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo, *Faz escuro mas eu canto*, is a verse by poet Thiago de Mello (1926, Barreirinha, AM).

## **Program yourself**

### **Studio visit with Frida Orupabo**

Wednesday, September 16

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

### **Meeting on the statement *Faz escuro mas eu canto* [Though it's dark, still I sing]**

Thursday, October 15

Meeting with curators and guests on the title of the Bienal, *Though it's dark, still I sing*

Registration start on October 1st, via the website [34.bienal.org.br](http://34.bienal.org.br)

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Free of charge

**Studio visit with Juraci Dórea**

Wednesday, October 21

IGTV Instagram @bienalsaopaulo

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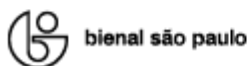
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