

# Paulo Nimer Pjota

b. 1988, São José do Rio Preto, Brazil  
lives and works in São Paulo



The starting point of Paulo Nimer Pjota's works is the nature of collectively originated phenomena. His research and practice focus on an in-depth study of a kind of popular iconography which can only develop through complex processes operated by numerous individuals. We can therefore think of his production as the representation of a plural and agitated dialogue, with ever-changing interpretations, running through multiple streams of consciousness.

**Paulo Nimer Pjota** (b. 1988, São José do Rio Preto, Brazil) lives and works in São Paulo.

Some of the artist's solo exhibitions include: **Mendes Wood DM**, São Paulo (2024); **Mendes Wood DM**, São Paulo (2023); **Maureen Paley**, London (2022); **The Power Station**, Dallas (2021); **Caixa de Pandora**, São Paulo (2019); **Mendes Wood DM**, São Paulo (2018); **T293**, Rome (2017).

Additionally, his work was included in group shows such as: **Art in Common**, Los Angeles (2023); **Mendes Wood DM**, São Paulo (2023); **Simon Lee Gallery**, Hong Kong (2022); **CCBB**, Rio de Janeiro (2021); **MAR**, Rio de Janeiro (2021); **D'Ouwe Kerke**, Retranchement (2021).



2024  
Mendes Wood DM, New York  
*Na Boca do Sol*

Pjota's main questions revolve around the inefficiency of hierarchical knowledges that segregate elite and popular cultural expressions throughout history. The artist adopts an oblique gaze that connects different temporalities, equating artistic manifestations of counterculture movements – such as stickers, tattoos, and kindergarten drawings – with pre-Columbian and Greek vases, highly respected by academia and untouchable by museum standards. His work recalls that many of the songs perceived today as historical chants originated in informal gatherings (as in Jardim de faunos, 2023); and that the division between contemplation, function, and devotion did not exist in the production of objects considered today as archaeological; and that the discriminatory devices imposed by colonialism remain active in a vicious cycle separating these cultural radiating nuclei into an aseptic artificiality. To remix history is to rebel against the hegemonic and violent cultural system, defending an inevitable contamination of time, history, and image by the confrontation between symbols, spiritualities, and cultural expressions.



*Na Boca do Sol*, Mendes Wood DM, New York, 2024



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*Na Boca do Sol*, Mendes Wood DM, New York, 2024



2023

Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo

*Do cômico e do trágico*

In “Do cômico e do trágico” Paulo Nimer Pjota addresses key aspects in his practice: rearranging symbolic projections from cosmologies of geographically and temporally distant societies; salvaging of centuries of iconographic production; breaking with the hegemonic notion of human history as a linear trajectory and; studying repetition and permanence of mythological narratives shared by different cultures, such as the myth of the double.





*Do cômico ao trágico, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, 2023*



*Do cômico ao trágico*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, 2023



*Do cômico ao trágico*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, 2023



*Do cômico ao trágico, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, 2023*



*Do cômico ao trágico*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, 2023

2022  
The Power Station, Dallas  
*Every empire breaks like a vase*

The title of his exhibition, *Every Empire Breaks Like a Vase*, refers to the precarity of colonialist and imperialist practices that inform today's globalized world. With Pjota's work, he synthesizes ancient history and mythology with the aesthetics of contemporary and urban street culture. He layers material references from Ancient Egypt, Flemish still-life and Greek mythology on painterly, monochromatic supports to foreground how these and the symbols taken from the streets of Brazil interrelate and disjoin. From this context, cast sculptures of antiquities and exotic fruits offer a vocabulary to Pjota's highly orchestrated compositions both iconographic and allegorical. They observe a realism forged in political and economic conflict, where the struggle to maintain power offers a backdrop and material for the works' productive antagonism.





*Every empire breaks like a vase*, The Power Station, Dallas, 2022



*Every empire breaks like a vase, The Power Station, Dallas, 2022*





*Every empire breaks like a vase, The Power Station, Dallas, 2022*



*Every empire breaks like a vase*, The Power Station, Dallas, 2022



*Every empire breaks like a vase*, The Power Station, Dallas, 2022

2022

François Ghebaly, Los Angeles

*Every empire breaks like a vase*

Every Empire Breaks Like a Vase features layered, mixed media paintings with bronze and resin sculptural elements and ashtrays crafted in resin, bronze and porcelain. Distinctly architectural, the paintings on view in Pjota's latest exhibition mimic the complex, textural surfaces of building facades in Ipiranga, the São Paulo neighborhood where he works. Pjota achieves this effect by employing a hand mixed tempera paint composed of the same pigments and binder that coat the buildings of the city. Heightening this architectural quality even further, Pjota often works on a large scale and divides his paintings in vertical panels through color or bronze objects in ways that suggest doors, barriers, or the distinctions between two adjoined buildings. On top of Pjota's hazy, matte, tempera ground, crisply rendered ancient monsters, plants, classical vases, logos, cartoonish characters, and other iconographic images appear in the paintings with equal weight. Pjota implements acrylic and oil to paint on these figures from art history, pop culture, and daily life, engaging in a kind of sampling reminiscent of remix culture. Having grown up in São José do Rio Preto, a predominantly conservative town in the Brazilian countryside where hip hop music was an integral part of the counterculture, sampling and remixing are essential tools for the artist. Hip hop greatly influenced Pjota's artistic development and continues to inform his art making approach.





*Every empire breaks like a vase*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, 2022



*Every empire breaks like a vase*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, 2022



*Every empire breaks like a vase*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, 2022



2019

Kura Arte, São Paulo

*Cenas de Casa*

Cenas de Casa (House Scenes) was the title of the book section on still life that Paulo Nimer Pjota was reading. The page was marked, the references followed the editing sequence: compositions with fruits, porcelains, musical instruments, pipes, wildlife, kitchen utensils, which were presented along with the trim and texture of the fabrics, the depiction of light and shadow, the crossed planes of tables and surfaces that work as the basis and background for the scenes. Being still nature a classic genre of painting, it is not surprising that the artist focused on its basics to work on the series now exhibited as part of the Caixa de Pandora project, in which contemporary artists develop exhibitions related to the Ivani and Jorge Yunes collection.











2018  
Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo  
*Medley*

Continuing his research into the iconographic structures that comprise the collective imagination of art history and inhabit the universe of mass culture, the artist uses metal plates and raw canvas as a support for the constellations of images that surround him, an exercise of appropriation and co-relations.



*Medley, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo , 2018*



2016

Maureen Paley, London

*Synthesis between contradictory ideas and the plurality of the object as image - Part 2*

Large un-stretched canvas' and sheets of found metal along with cast objects are used to create works that incorporate detailed renderings of plants, vases, isolated words, cartoon and historical characters. The imagery and storytelling in his works in part derives from his earlier life experience as a graffiti artist on the streets of São Paulo and his interest in music, history, philosophy and symbology. His work encompasses a varied and at times poetic exploration of his relationship with the city where he works and lives.



*Synthesis between contradictory ideas and the plurality of the object as image - Part 2, Maureen Paley, London, 2016*



*Synthesis between contradictory ideas and the plurality of the object as image - Part 2, Maureen Paley, London, 2016*





*Synthesis between contradictory ideas and the plurality of the object as image - Part 2, Maureen Paley, London, 2016*



SELECTED  
WORKS



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Estúdio azul*

2023

acrylic and oil on canvas

203 x 156.5 x 5.5 cm

79 7/8 x 61 5/8 x 2 1/8 in

MW.PNP.314





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Paisagem com objetos da coleção*

2023

acrylic, oil and tempera on canvas and iron support

235 x 165 cm

92 1/2 x 65 in

MW.PNP.310





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*pesadelo*

2022

acrylic, oil, tempera on canvas and metal

plus bronze object

260 x 210 cm

102 3/8 x 82 5/8 in

MW.PNP.248



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*jardin mítico*

2022

acrylic, oil and tempera on  
canvas and metal plus resgin and  
bronze

250 x 200 cm

98 3/8 x 78 3/4 in

MW.PNP.245







**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Ballet triádico amarelo*

2021

acrylic, oil and tempera on canvas and  
metal, bronze objects

245 x 208 cm

96 1/2 x 81 7/8 in

MW.PNP.206



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Torre preta*

2023

acrylic, oil and tempera on canvas

170 x 155 cm

66 7/8 x 61 in

MW.PNP.306





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Ex voto*

2023

bronze

85 x 11 x 30.5 cm

33 1/2 x 4 3/8 x 12 in

MW.PNP.315



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Vaso animalesco*

2023

acrílica sobre tela e chapa de alumínio

47 x 25 cm

18 1/2 x 9 7/8 in

MW.PNP.312





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Colbeita de flores mágicas*

2023

acrylic, oil and tempera on canvas, synthetic enamel on iron plate and bronze object

245 x 208 cm

96 1/2 x 81 7/8 in

MW.PNP.307







**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Cenas de casa (vaso abóbora)*

2023

acrylic, oil and tempera on canvas

205 x155 cm

80 3/4 x 61 in

MW.PNP.302





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Boneco de neve I*

*Boneco de neve II*

2023

acrylic on canvas

208 x 84 cm

81 7/8 x 33 1/8 in (each)

MW.PNP.300 / MW.PNP.301







**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Cerimônia com papoula*

2023

acrylic, oil and tempera on canvas plus bronze object

202 x 154 cm

79 1/2 x 60 5/8 in

MW.PNP.299







**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Estúdio Vermelho*

2020-2023

acrylic, oil and tempera on canvas

212.3 x 160 cm

83 5/8 x 63 in

MW.PNP.298





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Mércurio com cabeça de elmo romano, citipati, e cerâmica pré-colombiana*

2023

acrylic, oil and tempera on canvas

210.4 x 158 cm

82 7/8 x 62 1/4 in

MW.PNP.296





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Fogos*

2022

acrylic, oil and tempera on canvas plus aluminum frame

170 x 155 cm

66 7/8 x 61 in

MW.PNP.251



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*abobodal*

2022

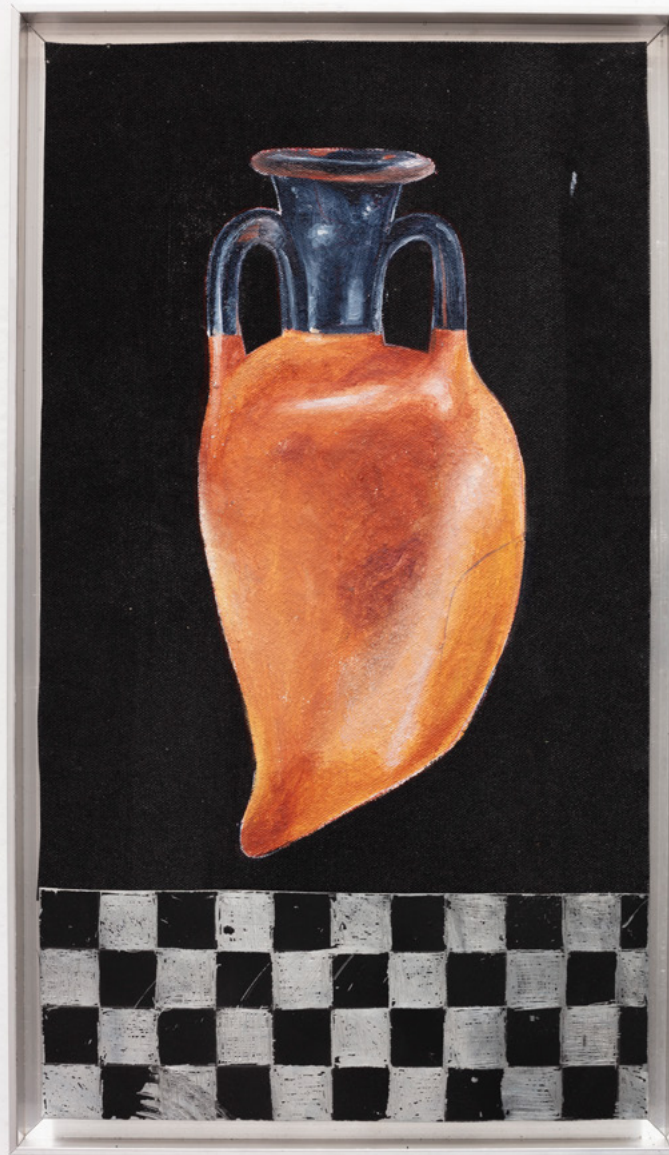
acrylic, oil and zarcão on canvas, metal and bronze

240 x 200 cm

94 1/2 x 78 3/4 in

MW.PNP.246





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**  
*xícara/coração*  
2022  
acrylic on canvas, iron  
33 x 23 cm (cup)  
13 x 9 in  
40 x 23 cm (heart)  
15 3/4 x 9 in  
MW.PNP.244





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*mascara com chifres*

2022

acrylic on canvas and metal plus aluminum frame

80 x 50 cm

31 1/2 x 19 3/4 in

MW.PNP.239



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*4 expressões*

2022

acrylic, oil and tempera on canvas plus bronze object

210 x 155 cm

82 5/8 x 61 in

MW.PNP.236



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Vaso abóbora com geometria*

2022

acrylic on canvas and iron plate and aluminum frame

76.5 x 55.5 x 3 cm

30 1/8 x 21 7/8 x 1 1/8 in

MW.PNP.230



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Tapestry for the death*

2018

Signed

acrylic, oil on canvas and iron plate

90 x 73 cm

35 3/8 x 28 3/4 in

MW.PNP.113





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Savage and Sweety*

2017

acrylic, pencil, pen, synthetic enamel on  
canvas and iron plate

215 x 255 cm

84 41/64 x 100 25/64 in

MW.PNP.P.093



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Ying Yang*

2017

acrylic, pencil, pen, synthetic enamel on canvas  
and iron plate

210 x 240 cm

82 43/64 x 94 31/64 in

MW.PNP.P.091



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Ballet triadico 2*

2021

oil, tempera and acrylic on canvas, iron support and bronze sculpture

260 x 210 cm

102 3/8 x 82 5/8 in

MW.PNP.204





**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Under the sun of genesis and the  
Heliopolis egg*

2020

acrylic and oil on canvas, iron plate  
and resin objects

210 x 248 cm (painting)

82 5/8 x 97 5/8 in

MW.PNP.169



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Sou leão, Sou Demais Pro Seu Quintal*

2018

oil, tempera and acrylic on canvas plus bronze objects

210 x 155 cm

247 x 157 x 33 cm (total)

82 5/8 x 61 1/8 in

97 1/4 x 61 13/16 x 12 63/64

MW.PNP.124



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Jardim do Éden*

2018

oil, acrylic and pen on canvas and bronze objects

210 x 155 cm

82 5/8 x 61 1/8 in

MW.PNP.121



CORRUPTAS  
THAT ACT  
ARTISTS MAKE MONEY

Los  
MAIAS

Roses

F X B

Trouble  
taken

BUY ME PLEASE  
THAT A  
3RD WORLD  
ART

I'm a  
Genius

fear is  
used  
to control  
you?

Look



**Paulo Nimer Pjota**

*Black Painting part. 1*

2017

acrylic on canvas and resin

210 x 217 cm

30 x 15 cm (objects)

82 43/64 x 85 7/16 in

11 13/16 x 5 29/32 in

MW.PNP.P.082





Inside the studio, 2018, [click to watch the video.](#)



*Edouard Glissant, who distinguishes the globalization of finance from globality, i.e. a form of archipelagic thought without hierarchy, in which cultures mix and become creolised, wrote, simply and naturally: "I can change through exchanging with the Other without losing or distorting myself." It is this globality in pictures that Pjota creates. The signs floating in their fields of colour, free of any colonialist imprint, their kinaesthetic incarnation on the ground, the sheet of metal or the canvas, by some curious means, produce something resembling an "image freeze". Like a frozen moment of eternity in the rush of flows that beset us. It is what Pjota does so skilfully. It happens between zero and infinity, between the here-and-now and 10-43 seconds before the big-bang, the Planck time that will stop us learning any truth about our origins for a long time yet. But it's happening today.*

- Thierry Raspail



## Education

2012

Art Criticism, Francisco Alambert e Polyana Canhete, Sesc Pompéia

2010

Bachelor of Visual Arts at Centro Universitário Belas Artes de São Paulo, Brazil

Misguided Painting, by Dora Longo Bahia, Sesc Pompéia

## Solo Exhibitions

2024

*Na Boca do Sol*, Mendes Wood DM, New York, USA

2023

*Do cômico e do trágico*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, Brazil

2022

*Every Empire Breaks Like a Vase*, François Ghebally, Los Angeles, USA

*Paulo Nimer Pjota*, Maureen Paley, London, UK

2021

*Every Empire Breaks Like a Vase*, The Power Station, Dallas, USA

*Fragmented images, fragmented stories*, DEO projects, Chios, Greece

2019

*Cenas de Casa, Caixa de Pandora*, Ivani e Jorge Yunes Collection, São Paulo, Brazil

2018

*Medley*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, Brazil

2017

*The history in repeat mode — Drama*, T293, Rome, Italy

*The history in repeat mode — image*, Mendes Wood DM, Brussels, Belgium

*The history in repeat mode — symbol*, Maureen Paley / Morena di Luna, Hove, UK

2016

*Synthesis between contradictory ideas and the plurality of the object as image II*, Maureen Paley, London, UK

*Synthesis between contradictory ideas and the plurality of the object as image I*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, Brazil

2013

*Sistema Relacional, Temporada de projetos*, Paço das Artes, São Paulo, Brazil

2012

*Paulo Nimer Pjota*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, Brazil

*1ª Mostra do programa de exposições CCSP*, São Paulo, Brazil

## Group Exhibitions

2024

*38º Panorama de Arte Brasileira*, MAM, São Paulo Brazil

2023

*Boil, Toil & Trouble*, Art in Common, Los Angeles, California, USA

*Esfíngico Frontal*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, Brazil

*True + True*, Centro Cultural Vera, São Paulo, Brazil

*X Pink 101*, X Museum, Beijing, China

2022

*Machines of Desire*, Simon Lee Gallery, Hong Kong

2021

*1981/2021: arte contemporânea brasileira*, CCBB, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

*Imagens que não se comportam*, MAR – Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2020

*Yellow Opening, Retranchement*, The Netherlands

*What fruits it bears*, Peres Projects, Berlin, Germany

2019

*Private Passion - New Acquisitions in the Astrup Fearnley Collection*, Astrup Fearnley, Oslo, Norway

*Entre ruína e construção*, Vila Aymoré, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

*Conversas em Gondwana*, Centro Cultural São Paulo, Brazil

*Trouble in Paradise*, Kunsthal Rotterdam, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

*Brasil! Focus sull'arte brasiliana contemporanea*, Museo Ettore Fico, Turin, Italy

*Inner Space/Outer Space*, The Bunker, Miami, USA

2018

*Nightfall*, Mendes Wood DM, Brussels, Belgium

*Sea of Desire*, Fondation Carmignac, Porquerolles, France

*Going it is own way*, KRC Collection, Voorschoten, The Netherlands

*The Marvellous Cacophony*, Biennial of Contemporary Art Belgrade, Serbia

*O Triângulo Atlântico*, 11ª Bienal de Artes Visuais do Mercosul, Porto Alegre, Brazil

*Hybrid Topographies*, Deutsche Bank, New York, USA

*Depois do fim*, antes do começo, Instituto PIPA, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

*Que barra!*, Ateliê 397, São Paulo, Brazil

2017

*Forever Never Comes – Metabolismo Del Tempo*, Museo Archeologico e d'Arte della Maremma, Grosseto, Italy

*O Triângulo do Atlântico*, Saracura, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

*Painting |or| Not*, The KaviarFactory, Lofoten, Norway

*Pintura [Diálogo de artistas]*, Caixa Cultural Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

*O céu ainda é azul, você sabe...*, Instituto Tomie Ohtake São Paulo, Brazil

*A luz que cela o corpo é a mesma que revela a tela*, Caixa Cultural, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2016

*New Shamans/Novos Xamãs: Brazilian Artists*, Rubell Family Collection, Miami, USA

*Beyond the Cartoon*, ARTUNER, New York, USA

*A not really really*, Frédéric de Goldschmidt Collection, Brussels, Belgium

*Soft Power*. Arte Brasil, Kunsthal KAdE, Amersfoort, The Netherlands

2015

*The World is Made of Stories*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo, Norway

*Cidade Inquieta*, Sesc Rio Preto, São José do Rio Preto, São Paulo, Brazil

*Imagine Brazil*, DHC/Art Foundation for Contemporary, Montreal, Canada

*Ce Fabuleux Monde Moderne*, MAC-Lyon, Lyon, France

*Imagine Brazil*, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil

*19º Festival de Arte Contemporânea Sesc\_Videobrasil - Panoramas do Sul*, Sesc Pompéia, São Paulo, Brazil

*Alimentário*, OCA, São Paulo, Brazil

*Alimentário*, Expo Milão, Milão, Italy

*Ponto de Ebulição*, P.S.M gallery, Berlin, Germany

*Here There (Huna Hunak)*, QM Gallery Al Riwaq, Doha, Qatar

2014

*The First And Last Freedom*, MOTinternational gallery, London, UK

*Made by... Feito por Brasileiros*, Cidade Matarazzo, São Paulo, Brazil

*Imagine Brazil*, Mac-Lyon, Lyon, France

*10 Anos do Prêmio Aquisição*, Centro Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

*Alimentário*, MAM, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2013

*Chambers à Part*, Edition VIII, La Réserve Paris, Paris, France

*Imagine Brazil*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo, Norway

*Entre-temps... Brusquement, et ensuite*, 12e Biennale de Lyon, Lyon, France

2012

*Itinerância SESC\_Videobrasil*, Sesc, São José do Rio Preto, Campinas e Santos, Brazil

*Invenção de Paisagem*, Sim Galeria, Curitiba, Brazil

2011

*Panoramas do Sul, 17 ° Festival Internacional de Arte Contemporânea SESC\_Videobrasil*, Sesc Belenzinho, São Paulo, Brazil

*Sem Limites*, Sim Galeria, Curitiba, Brazil

*Sem Título #1, Experiências do Pós-Morte*, Galeria Oscar Cruz, São Paulo, Brazil

2010

*Causas Naturais*, Mini Gallery, Belo Horizonte, Brazil

*Transfer*, Museu Pavilhão das Culturas Brasileiras, São Paulo, Brazil

2009

*A.P.E alternative press expo*, San Francisco, USA

*Paperview*, John Jones Limited\_Project Space, London, UK

2008

*Fresh Produce*, Anno Domini Gallery, San José, USA

*Volúvel*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea do Parana, Curitiba, Brazil

*Ilegítimo*, Paço das Artes, São Paulo, Brazil

2007

1º Salão de Artes de São José do Rio Preto – São José do Rio Preto, Brazil

39º Salão de Artes de Piracicaba, Piracicaba, Brazil

2006

*O Novo Muralismo Latino Americano*, Galeria Marta Traba, São Paulo, Brazil

Memorial da América Latina, São Paulo, Brazil

#### Public Collections

Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art

Centro Cultural São Paulo

Domus Collection

Fondation Carmignac

KRC Collection

Lodoveans Collection

MAC Lyon

Pinacoteca de São José do Rio Preto

Pinacoteca de Piracicaba

Pinault Foundation

Rubell Family Collection

Sesc\_Videobrasil

The Kaviar Factory

#### Awards

2014

PIPA prize, Online prize by jury

2011

1st Prize Atelie Videobrasil Open

2010

Featured Places Magazine, Camargo Ibero Foundation

2007

1st Arts Hall of São José do Rio Preto – 1st place in the category Art contemporary, São José do Rio Preto, Brazil

2007

39 ° Arts Hall of Piracicaba – prize acquisition of the three works submitted, Piracicaba, Brazil

Mendes  
Wood  
DM

São Paulo  
Brussels  
Paris  
New York

[www.mendeswooddm.com](http://www.mendeswooddm.com)  
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