

Selected Press and Texts

**Paulo Nazareth**

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Throughout the journey of Paulo Nazareth's [A] LA FLEUR DE LA PEAU it is impossible not to evoke the abyss metaphor suggested by Martiniquais writer Édouard Glissant in Poetics of Relations. The image of the ship operates as a place of exile for Black bodies on the way to the unknown. The first abyss is experienced when entering the ship. The second is the sea crossing. Great Kalunga. The third abyss is the inverted image of glimpses of memory where new roots are laid through networks of learning. Rhizome. The shared knowledge of an experience of meandering exile, where every identity is extended through a relationship with the Other. Paulo Sérgio da Silva. Paulo da Silva. Sérgio da Silva. Ser da Silva. Paulo Nazareth. Nazareth Cassiano de Jesus. The Mother of his Mother. Ana Gonçalves da Silva. The Mother of his Sister. Ana Maria da Silva. The Grandmother, the Mother, The Sister and Motherhood. His Égun or Égúngún, for the Yorùbá people. Or, even, his Marét, for the Boruns, Indigenous people from Vale do Rio Doce. The ancestral spirit. Nazareth also becomes art materiality and immateriality. Transit between worlds. Transit between times. The act of travelling and handing out pamphlets reasserts the place of aesthetical conduct: expanded performance, generational event. Selling homemade soap made with chicken fat, sugar, lime, avocado, urucum. Distributing pamphlets-cards-leaflets for dentists, healthcare plans, Candomblé houses in Belo Horizonte (Minas Gerais). All work activities that the artist has performed in the past.

The journey introduces a self-ethnographic dimension where both autobiography and ethnography force us into a relationship of pertaining symmetry between Same versus the Other, Subjectivity versus Alterity, Individual versus Collective, Subject versus Object.

Consequently, this generational event is mirrored in the act of walking performed by his mother Ana and sister Ana who go on a pilgrimage via emblematic routes as a metaphor for Mother Africa and the Diaspora. The route covers places such as the Musée de l'Homme (France) and the maximum-security prisons La Santé (France) and Saint-Gilles (Belgium). A ritual performance that combines aspects of the sacred and the profane when his mother Ana prays for the afflicted souls of genocide victims. The act condemns the colonial violence imposed by Belgian King Leopold II to secure the appropriation of the Congo. To the same extent, the pamphlets provide a sort of aesthetics of emergency in the artist's own words: to burst open the headstone and cut the king's throat with an arrow soaked in GOLDEN FROG poison. ---- with an arrow from the Pre-Columbian people EMBERA::: kill the king before he arrives in CONGO.

Within this performance context, we have the series Santos de Minha Mãe [My Mother's Saints] made-up of food products inside resin blocks that feature the names of saints that safeguard requests for family protection and amulets to protect the body against danger. Nazareth also reclaims different forms of resistance used by enslaved people, such as Black brotherhoods and sisterhoods. Or even the Christianity of traditional street events such as Folias de Reis, Guarda de Congado and Moçambique in Minas Gerais. It refers both to a history of agricultural technologies linked to a colonial logic of commodities and the commercialisation of faith. His visual discourse presents art collecting as a critical practice. The processes of ordering objects evoke the collections of cabinets of curiosities that later became ethnographic museums, tangentially to values of aesthetics, art and science.

In the field of anthropology, the invention of photography anticipated its scientific use in studies on evolution, anthropometry and material culture. This led to the selection, classification and hierarchy of the cultural Other. Here we can cite the five daguerreotypes of a Borun woman and young man captured by E. Thiesson in Paris (1844), which belong to the Musée de l'Homme. The records of these dehumanised bodies that were exhibited under a mechanical gaze are confronted by his mother's human gaze. This is not only Ana's gaze; it is combined with Nazareth's, re-signifying the place of science, annihilation and slavery in the re-elaboration of the subjectivity of these two people photographed, conjuring up a family history. The meaning of the exhibition becomes polysemic when connected to the voids and confrontations of the everyday experiences of hegemonized bodies.

The place of technology as politics of destruction and restitution of narratives is challenged in another series that uses black and white photography and printing on cotton paper to show images collected on the Internet. This materiality refers to agricultural technologies and social division of labour, as well as to cotton trading routes within a colonial history that entailed the transplantation of science from African people to the colonies during the Diaspora. The souls of anonymous people are captured at the same time these images are diluted by the fading of a collective social memory. It is a sort of shadow projecting an absence. Yet, it is one that paradoxically reveals a presence that is anterior to Ana and Nazareth. The photographic records are disrupted with white circles made of efun (a type of chalk used in Afro-Brazilian rituals). These circles are used in liturgical activities and refer to the re-establishment of balance by reclaiming a new voice for these hegemonized narratives.

In another work, Nazareth examines the political technology of bodies when he approaches the issue of the imprisonment of Black men in penal institutions. They are the drivers of the exercise of violence as a programmed and selective erasure of these selves. These relations appear in placards with the names of maximum-security prisons

contrasting with the relationship between colonial powers and their colonies: La Santé (France), Saint-Gilles (Belgium), Kabare (Congo) and Île du Diable (French Guiana). Most importantly, the African prison is not a native institution, but a colonial remnant of body control. Crime becomes a tradable Black product.

The experience of walking as an aesthetic form also appears in the performance (Mendes Wood DM Brussels, 24 April 2019) where the anonymous bodies of non-white immigrants perforate bags of flour and sweep the white powder into circles. The object of art is intertwined into the everyday life in the brutality of the white circle. Concrete geometric order. The daily ritual manifested in contemporary art. White circles associated to efun as a liturgy that re-organises a history interwoven with colonial violence and trauma.

Nazareth's artistic propositions create a journey where aesthetic acts produce urgent epistemologies to invest against the marks of colonial cartographies. This appears in the duality of the circle that evokes the mathematical thought of Ancient African and 8th century Islamic geometry. The circle of African tradition contrasted to the rationality of Western art's concrete art circle. Modernism. Post-Modernism. The performance and labour gesture of forming the circle. The political context of neoliberal capitalism that perpetuates inequalities.

The tensioning of these cartographies and the re-affirmation of community voices are re-elaborated in the dismantling of colonial traps through the use of technologies to control and intervene on individuals by articulating the planned annihilation of collectivity.



Paulo Nazareth’s work is often described as simple gestures, which bring about larger ramifications, conveying an awareness of often ignored issues of immigration, racism, and colonialism in his native Brazil and beyond to the international art world. While his work may manifest in video, photography, and found objects, his strongest medium may be in cultivating relationships with people he encounters on the road — particularly those who must remain invisible due to their legal status or those who are repressed by governmental authorities. In certain aspects, Nazareth uses the romantic ideal of the wandering artist seeking universal truths to usurp facile assumptions about national identity, cultural history, and human value. In our time of unprecedented exposure, where systematic oppression can be documented and broadcasted by anyone with a smartphone, Nazareth’s mission to represent the unrepresented is more relevant and persuasive than ever before.

Here, he speaks candidly about the singular focus behind his artistic path.

Since you’re known for your constant travel within your work, I have to begin by asking where are you right now and why you are there?

I just arrived in Palmital, but I’m always on the road. Palmital is my homeland. Well, actually, I was born in Santo Antônio das Figueiras — named after Governador Valadares — in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. Later on, I had to move with my mother to Palmital, which was “favelized,” a habitation complex in Santa Luzia in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte City.



Are you also making work there? Or are you always making work and documenting life with your camera?

It was here that I first started thinking about my artwork. Each time I come back here, it's to visit the people and metaphorically recharge my batteries. I come to talk with people, friends, my parents, family — old people and young people. Old people are the masters: guardians of time, of knowledge, and of history.

I cannot ignore my parents and grandparents — if I ignore them, it's me who loses. From them, I have learned to be in the world without the crutches of contemporary life. I have learned to be investigative and to read the signs of the world. I have learned to distrust a lot, and believe in life.

Does everyone there know you?

Well, I don't know how many people know me. But, I know everyone. Sometimes we sit in silence, sometimes I play Capoeira Angola [the mother form of capoeira: a martial art started by African slaves, primarily from Angola and the Congo, as a survival tactic against colonial agents]. We listen to songs and music; dance and play. Capoeira Angola is a philosophy; sometimes, it is like a religion; and it's political. Capoeira Angola is a black movement for freedom — both from yesterday and today — for freedom of the body and the mind.

Is it as relevant today as it was in the past?

Yes. It is very important today. But, today, it's more relevant for mental freedom; it's more important for black consciousness, for thinking about history, and for understanding the black situation in Brazil and in other places today.

A common feeling right now in the United States with the Black Lives Matter Movement, protesting against ongoing police brutality, is that the violence and the oppression are nothing new, but that a larger public is finally paying attention because of all the media attention and the public's accessibility to documented "proof". Is the intention of your work to draw attention to systematic oppression as well?

My intention is to talk about my place, my social place, my racial place; where I am coming from.

Do you feel that is a responsibility for you as an artist?

Yes, and I'm not alone. I am my people. I don't know exactly how to speak about it, but there is the person — the individual — and then there is the collective — the people. Everything is both, together and separated. I can talk about this place, just as other people can talk about other things. So, yes, I share a responsibility with my people: my parents, brothers, community and ancestors. I have a side: I am together black and indigenous. And, everyone else, like me, is my peer. I'm together with my peers. I'm from a city of immigrants, and so I need talk about it. I need to talk about it with my work, my body, and anything else that I can.

As you have achieved more recognition as an artist, how have your strategies for drawing attention to social issues changed? Or, have they at all?

As millions of people in Brazil know, Brazil is not a "Racial Paradise": Brazil has a large

degree of inequality and the lower class is mostly non-white. Class and race are extremely connected in Brazil. So, I can only continue as I do: I move, I move all the time. I move to a different place. I use my work to take the words, the words about my peers. I take the words, the words about black people, about indigenous people, about mestizo people, and I continue doing the work I've always done. The mainstream media is racist; the mainstream newspapers are racist; the mainstream magazines are racist; and until recently, white people regularly told racist jokes about black people, and they still tell racist jokes about indigenous people. Racist people think they have the right to make jokes about black people and about poor people. And yet, racist people from Brazil say racism does not exist or that our Brazilian racism is "friendly."

Everyday someone is killed. Every time someone is killed, it is because they were black. Because they were indigenous. Because they were homosexual. Because they were the "other". The black and indigenous people continue to be invisible in Brazil today. We fight and fight, and sometimes we win. But, the opposition is very strong. Right now, it is even harder for the black and indigenous people. The police are racists and the judges are racists too.

I have struggled along with many others. I'm aligned with black movements and indigenous movements. To be aware of these issues enables greater visibility, and I try to use this in my work to fight against racism, which, together with other prejudices in Brazil, is ignored by Brazilian laws. To bring justice is challenging — after the recent parliamentary coup, things got tougher but more evident, and we continue our fight. The authorities are extremely oppressive. Here, the authorities are racist, but everyone in the elite class will never admit that there is racism in Brazil!

So for you to ignore that in your work, you would also be like the authorities in denying any racism. The policies here use the concept of racism to analyze people. But, they never actually talk about racism, because for them, racism does not exist. Do you understand?

Yes: as long as you keep the oppressed invisible, you don't have to acknowledge racism. Unfortunately, many feel similarly in the US, despite our governmental and cultural divergences.

It's very complex, and we are fighting a very big enemy, because he doesn't have a face. Because it is a system?

Yes, but also because we only see the same faces. The same face in the hospital or at the police station. If you go to a Brazilian hospital, you won't see a black doctor. Though, in the past few years, you will see a black doctor who came from Cuba. Brazilian doctors greeted them at the airport with curses because they are black, and we've never had black doctors. Lawyers are in the same situation. Black artists?

There are a lot, but you don't see them. Only now have we started to appear.

Have you ever had problems with the authorities about your artwork?

Sometimes I have problems on the road, but I also play Capoeira Angola in life. So I dance.

How do you cope with your disparate audience? You have an international audience of the art world and a local audience that you are also representing: both understand the situation distinctively, to say the least.

It's very different: a different audience, a different public. The Brazilian elite don't understand the people. They don't know the real Brazil. They want to be like Europe, or rather they want to visit Europe, but don't want Brazil to be like Europe. But I assume you are interacting with the Brazilian elite — and the European elite as well — regularly as an artist who shows internationally and participates widely in biennials and art fairs.

Well, me as a person, no. Me as an individual, no. I think my artwork interacts with them, but they don't like someone who is poor, black, and indigenous. For example, when you are performing at Art Basel, that is your persona as an artist, but not you as an individual.

Yes. The "artist" is ok, good — or at least, "good". But they don't want to meet me as a person or as an individual. Though, maybe, an individual is like an object in the art world.

But, what's important is I make my artwork. I make my work because I need to talk about the other, and the other places. I need to believe in the change that is possible, that art can change people. And, at the very least, the kids.

That reminds me of the situation you present with the video, *O Ori Boruku*. You met this man on the street that was being ignored by passersby, and then you invited him to participate in your video. Now, people will pay attention to him because you filmed him and put the video in a gallery — a space where people are accustomed to paying attention to overlooked subjects.

This video is very important, and very important for me. This man is a very important man; though, he is a simple man.

Language is significant in that video, for those in São Paulo — where you met him — though he was spouting gibberish. But you chose not to translate it with subtitles. Why did you decide not to?

He is an African immigrant speaking Yoruba — the language of Yoruba people, from mainly Nigeria and Benin, as well as Brazil and other countries. It's a language used in Candomblé and vodou religions, but this man speaks a contemporary Yoruba language. The religions use an old language. What he is speaking is like a meeting between this older language, the people, and the legacy of slavery with the contemporary language, the people, and those who are now immigrants.

With the present refugee crisis in Europe, the concept of borders has been at the forefront of the media and political debate. As an artist who claims to live in no single place but, rather, all over the world, how has your sense of borders changed?

I often think that the most important part of my work is ignored. It remains invisible, which is done to avoid reaching Europe, to ensure that my feet not touch the ground of Europe. I have no desire to reach Europe without feeling all the land of Africa. My boat follows other paths.

It is an act of civil disobedience, and I do not want to surrender. I could accept the graying rules. I could be a compulsive consumer to keep the gears moving, to be a slave and enter the consumer market. But, I do not buy into the false benevolence of nineteenth-century Britain: a time before merchants and slave owners became advocates of abolition and supported industry. For businesses, it was better to turn their enslaved consumers into purchasing employees. They were able to increase their consumer market, while maintaining the cheap manpower.

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tion. Yet, they want the workers of the peripheral countries to remain in their countries ruled by dictators, nanced by multinational corporations, who would only set up in countries where labor is cheap and labor laws don't exist. For them, it's better for Europe and the United States to accept the illegitimate governments in the peripheral countries and to close their borders to exiles. Political instability generates exiles. All immigrants are political exiles, either by issue of war or the economy (seldom is it caused by love —for love, there are no borders). So, if these countries do not want to let in illegal immigrants and refugees, please do not promote political instability and oppressive economic policies in the peripheral countries.

Officially, the borders are only for poor people. For those with power and money, there are no borders; no unfair rules to obey. There are no borders that exist beyond the natural geography. I always come to the United States by land along the Southern border. I need to feel the passage. I do not believe in the current political borders.

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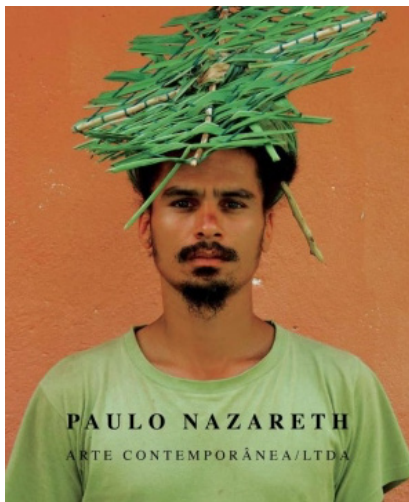
**Paulo Nazareth**  
Press and Selected Texts

**To represent and to serve, 2017**

Paulo Nazareth in conversation with Lumi Tan published on Keen  
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For Candomblé, Yoruba, and Afro-Brazilian religions, time is not linear. Time is like a spiral in which the past meets the present and the future — where past, present and future are together and the same. The man in the video speaks to the past, present and future at once.



My first contact with the work of Paulo Nazareth was in mid 2008 when I was a member of a group of critics at the Centro Cultural de São Paulo. Once a year, we would receive portfolios that had been chosen by the panel of the traditional Exhibition Program. These had to be carefully examined and then we would select some of our favorites to be included in the exhibition the following year and write a critical essay. I vividly remember the feeling I had that year when examining the chaotic contents of one of the envelopes. It contained a dozen leaflets roughly printed on newsprint, with bilingual, even trilingual texts (in fact the translations themselves were somewhat inaccurate, probably the work of Google Translate); invitations to solo and group exhibitions; some postcards, nothing with any further explanation. There were just a few loose sheets that were some kind of attempt at creating a portfolio that would comply with institutional expectations and a series of images of performances and installations whose complexity somehow seemed to surpass the limits of the format.

More than self-contained individual pieces of work, the work he presented was just one of the many manifestations of larger scale projects, whose reach in time and geography is closely linked to the artist's experience. Then came the realization that I was before something very unique — a work that was reclaiming some of the procedures and aesthetic values of conceptual experimentalism from the 1970s in a perceptive and humorous way. At the same time, it provided a historical foundation and biographical approach to the issue of race, a subject that while pressing, is practically inexistent in current debates surrounding Brazilian contemporary art.

From this chance encounter, I began to discover Paulo Nazareth's vast artistic production, which he diligently and obsessively documents in blogs. In his blogs one becomes aware of the scope and ambition of his work. There are the giveaways on newsprint, which play a fundamental role in the design and circulation of many of his projects. In general, they document fleeting or everyday situations and this low cost graphic production which is distributed for free on the streets or at exhibition spaces, or marketed as art, at amazingly affordable prices, allows for the dissemination of the ideas and issues raised by Nazareth to a public that very often has little contact with contemporary art production. In an earlier series (2005-07), the inscription *Aqui é Arte* (Here is Art) appears on the top of the giveaway. One or more pictures document specific situations found in public spaces, which the artist hails as works of art through what he calls "conceptual decrees", all duly dated. Sometimes they even state the validity of the decree and the period in which the situation

in question occurs. The short texts that accompany these publications are written in a way that imitates strictly scientific and objective language, although the content is purely subjective and poetic. In some cases they are relatively simple instructions, reminiscent of Fluxus event scores:

*“At Avenida Dr. Otacílio Negrão de Lima, number 17397, Pampulha, Belo Horizonte MG/ Brazil, there is a wall with hole in it through which you can see the trees growing during the rainy season.*

*Month: January Validity: Undetermined.” Or:*

*“Month: January Validity: Undetermined*

*Between 4 a.m. and 7 a.m., go to the Pampulha dam between Avenidas Presidente Antonio Carlos and D. Pedro I, Belo Horizonte, MG / Brazil. Stand exactly on top of the drain that goes to Córrego da Onça, a bird will pass under your feet.”*

On other occasions, the text is rather more speculative in nature, provoking reflections that point to other aspects that will unfold, allowing one to catch a glimpse of the elegance of his writing, for example when he identifies an elephant through a hole in the wall:

*“Validity: Undetermined*

*Period: Undetermined*

*On Av. Portugal near to Via Brasil, through a hole in the wall you can see an elephant on a chain tied up to nothing. His body sways as he if he were dancing, they say he sleeps standing up; there's also a camel with fallen humps. The camel is from the Middle East and can go for days without drinking water. The elephants are from Asia and Africa, and they have good memory. The Asian elephant is hard working, helps man with his tasks, the African one is bad tempered, no good for work, but its teeth are worth a lot on the market, that's why it ends up toothless (without its teeth).”*

The rhizomatic proliferation of themes and images in distinct works is a striking feature of Nazareth's work. It is therefore no surprise that the figure of the elephant reappears in a series of works and actions under the overall title *Elephant Tooth* (2007). The artist explains that before the unexpected encounter with the elephant behind the wall, he had already felt a desire to lose a tooth, although the fall that resulted in the loss of one of his incisors only occurred after this encounter. At this point, he identifies himself with elephants that lose their valuable ivory tusks to hunters, just like them, he was toothless. He writes a sort of treatise in which he uses the etymological origin of the word “banguela” (toothless) to draw reflections on teeth (or the lack thereof) in human beings and elephants. This allows him to bring together subjects as diverse as the illegal trade in ivory — after the ban on hunting elephants — and the continued existence of slave labor in our society. The text is structured in a series of fragments, which unite various pieces of information, using the alleged objective style that characterizes his other giveaways. Although seemingly random, the way in which the fragments are organized results in the creation of a very precise relationship. One of the extracts from this giveaway really exemplifies the type of rationale characterizing most of his writing, which invariably lacks punctuation or includes grammatical errors that seem to accentuate his plain and forthcoming character:

*“For centuries elephants had their teeth removed, due to the high value of their teeth, which are made from a hard, white and opaque substance (dentine) called ivory. Before the days of plastic, the teeth were used to make refined billiard balls, a type of snooker. It is only when they are young that their teeth contain enamel. Elephants have to be killed to*



obtain their teeth. Their carcasses are left to the birds of prey. The 1855 law that came into force before the abolition of slavery gave freedom to slaves over the age of 60 when they had lost their teeth and were no longer of any use for work. Due to a rapid decline in the elephant population the slaughter of elephants and the trade in their teeth was prohibited. The illegal hunting and trade in their teeth still continues, just like the trade in black slaves continued after abolition.”

By interlinking these scraps of information, Nazareth suggests there is a sort of equivalence between the atrocious way in which elephants and the African people were treated historically as goods by European explorers. However, what is more interesting is that this equivalence manifests itself in the artist himself taking the form of an animal. In a further development of the theme, he goes out into the street with his mouth wide open, unable to talk, flaunting his toothless mouth and distributing giveaways “to anyone who’s there: civil construction workers, bakers and confectioners” as he himself explains. In another iteration of the same theme, he carves a votive timber in the shape of a tooth and takes it to the Catedral de Aparecida do Norte as an offering for an unfulfilled vow. Finally, almost to bring the long cycle to a close, he receives a prosthetic tooth in which the dentist inserts white gold with a porcelain cap. It is impossible to ignore the allegory: the artist now has a tooth made from valuable material just like the elephant’s valuable ivory. He explains this outcome thus: “The idea seemed interesting as it reminded me of a wandering uncle of mine who had one or more gold teeth in his mouth.”

This statement points to the two other pillars of Nazareth’s work: biographical information and his itinerant nature. His ancestors on his mother’s side were Krenak, an indigenous group, and Italian and black on his father’s side, so it is inevitable, therefore, that when he talks about himself and his rich family history, he often touches on the issue of race in Brazil. The delicate way in which he does this is almost as poetic as it is political, as he brings together personal stories, historical facts and shrewd observations on the places occupied by individuals of different races in contemporary societies. In one of these giveaways, he tells how his indigenous grandmother, Nazareth Cassiano de Jesus, was considered crazy, as her behavior was not thought to be socially appropriate. No one heard from her again as she ended up being admitted to a mental hospital. A little later, he comments that many black Americans do not know from which African people they are descended and he tells how his own relatives forget who the first black man was in the family, despite managing to remember their Italian heritage well. He tackles this blotting out of the past in many of his projects, not only in order to reconstruct his own personal history, but to bring a specific aspect of history to light, one that resulted in relationships of exclusion based on racial principles that are still in place in the contemporary world. In addition to this, all of his statements are written in the first person, which makes them even more relevant within the panorama of Brazilian contemporary art, where the voices of indigenous and black communities are virtually inexistent. His mixed heritage allows him to become black, indigenous or simply exotic whenever it suits him.

Although some of his previous projects had involved travel further afield, such as the residencies in Delhi (2006) and Jakarta (2008) — where he first came into contact with the non-Brazilian “other”, in March 2011 — Nazareth threw himself into a project that would last for more than a year. News from the Americas, the subject of the essay by Janaina Melo published in this same book, is a mobile residency project or a type of field research. The project involved the artist crossing the whole of Latin America before reaching the United States. The roaming and wandering that nearly always characterize his work, whether through the streets of Belo Horizonte, Delhi or Jakarta, take on epic proportions and allow for concerns that were previously more localized to take on a much larger scope. This is the case of the project Indigenous Face which is comprised of colored photographs

or giveaways on newsprint, where one can read his brief explanation: "Project: INDIGENOUS FACE --- identify city-dwelling indigenous persons from the extreme south to the extreme north of the Americas. Stand beside a city-dwelling indigenous person and compare one mixed origin face with another..."

The first images from the series appear in a giveaway dated March 2011, produced in Governador Valadares, in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. Here we see a large picture that shows Nazareth posing beside an indigenous man identified as Juan Pablo d. Faria Alves, in front of what seems to be a river. On the right, there are two smaller pictures of the faces of Nazareth and Juan Pablo, in which we see the striking details of Juan Pablo's face. The delicacy and harmony of the lines of his face causes us to mistake it for that of a girl. Although both can, in a certain way, be considered indigenous Brazilian men, the juxtaposition of the two faces makes their profound differences clear. Next to Juan Pablo, with his almond colored eyes and straight hair, Nazareth seems more black and the line establishing his identity becomes blurred, just like the line determining Juan Pablo's gender. In April of the same year, we find evidence of Nazareth alongside indigenous people in Buenos Aires, Argentina; Biguaçu, Santa Catarina, Brazil; Morro Sama, Peru; and in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

In May, there are pictures in Bogota, Colombia; in June in Manágua, Nicaragua; Liberia, Costa Rica; Quito, Ecuador; and so on, travelling northwards obsessively and without stopping, photographing himself alongside individuals that despite their heterogeneity are grouped in the same category: indigenous people.

Through some of his writings and images, it is possible to reconstruct part of the artist's epic experience travelling in the Americas, which lasted nearly a year and was often conducted in harsh conditions. These records, as happens with all of Nazareth's work, are inseparable from his experience and are merely the partial result of an endless search. But what is he searching for in these long, purposeless journeys with no fixed destination? In one of the giveaways published during his trip, entitled *Lo que llevo en mi memoria* (What I Take in My Memory), which begins with a reflection on the dictatorship in Brazil, he writes:

*"...en Guatemala, también percibo que cavando en la tierra, así como en cualquier parte de América Latina, existe la posibilidad de se encontrar huesos por casualidad. Estando yo, en el Sitio de Memoria Campo la Ribera (Ciudad de Córdoba, Argentina), cavo como un perro, intuyendo la posibilidad de encontrar fragmentos de memorias... en Brasil tengo la memoria borrada, El pueblo no parece recordar las heridas del pasado, sea del período de dictadura militar, sea de la esclavitud negra..."*

In this short extract, he explains his search for a memory that was erased, and alludes to the possibility of finding it in another country, which although distinct, is comparable, as in a certain way there are shared memories with the country of his birth. One of the most impressive characteristics of his work is this restless desire to be in certain places, to meet particular people, to experience their daily lives and to create unsuspecting ties in order to reconstruct untold stories or those that have been deliberately erased. He moves through different communities like a chameleon; he tells how in Guatemala he is already accepted as a member of an indigenous family, or in certain places in the United States he is seen as black. His identity is transformed according to the local context, the social relations in place and the subgroups with whom he coexists.

Only very recently did I realize that we have never met in person. Despite the fact that we started corresponding in 2008, months before his exhibition in São Paulo, and that we



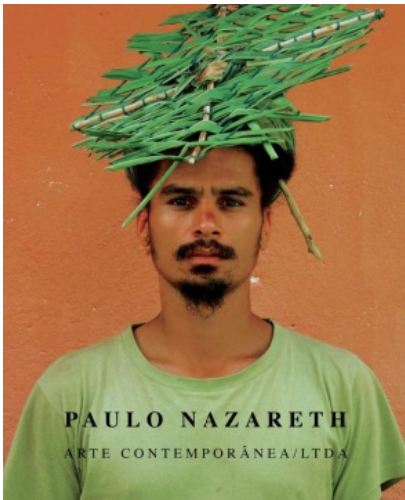
Paulo Nazareth  
Press and Selected Texts

Ivory, Teeth and Bones: A Short Introduction to The Work of  
Paulo Nazareth, 2012  
Text by Kiki Mazzucchelli published by Cobogó on Nazareth's  
first monograph

have remained in contact since, collaborating on other occasions, we have never been in the same city at the same time. When I invited him to participate in a group exhibition in Paris in December 2011, he answered that yes he would love to participate, but that he unfortunately would not be able to come to Paris, as he would only arrive in Europe after having crossed Africa in the same way he had reached the United States after travelling across Latin America.

In one of our recent conversations, when he was still at the final destination of his American trip, he told me:

*“My mixed race is my making  
I’m indigenous and black  
It’s incredible.”*



*Contemporary artists are “scholars” or precursors of a special genre: they gather disparate pieces of the world like children or rag-pickers. [...] They bring together things outside normal classification and glean from these affinities a new kind of knowledge, which opens our eyes to certain unperceived aspects of the world and to the unconscious of our vision.*

– Georges Didi-Huberman

*Wanderer, there is no road,  
the road is made by walking...*

– Antonio Machado

## A Hair

Cruzeiro do Sul — I think it might be the color of my skin, Brazil, 2010 At the main entrance of the UFMG School of Fine Arts near the Students' Union, a young man is sitting on a school chair, eating — or pretending to eat — a plateful of afro-textured hair. Was it his own hair? I don't remember when this was, but over the years it became a regular occurrence to see the same young man staging strong and silent performances in the spaces of the building.

In Brazil, afro-textured hair is thought to be coarse, wooly, fuzzy or bad hair. As it is bad, the majority of women who have this kind of hair straighten it; men keep it cut very short. Paulo Nazareth wears his afro-textured hair like a flag in a disheveled fashion, nodding to the Afro which became synonymous in Brazil with the Black Power Movement in the 1970s. But unlike the members of the movement who were activists seeking to create a political force and to have people listen to their demands for equality, this artist works in silence. With a speech so quiet that it is almost a murmur, Paulo delves into his mixed-race background, displaying it along with all other types of ancestry in order to recover forgotten legacies both for himself and for us. During a long jour-

ney to Porto Alegre — it had been over 12 hours since he left his home in Palmital at six o'clock in the morning — a tuft of his own hair filling his mouth making it impossible for him to speak, have a drink of water or eat. There are four photographs in the Cruzeiro do Sul giveaway of Paulo with his mouth full of hair; hair that covers his face and blends into his beard and moustache. The caption underneath the photographs traces the route of the journey to Porto Alegre:

“get the Palmital bus > Confins Airport > São Paulo (Congonhas) > Porto Alegre (Salgado Filho Airport) > Cruzeiro do Sul on the outskirts of Porto Alegre. May 13, 1888, the signing of the Golden Law, the official date on which slavery was abolished in Brazil after centuries of revolts and revolutions.”

A libertarian ideology runs through the use of hair as a mark of identity and also in the inclusion, in the last line of the giveaway, of the date on which Brazil's Golden Law abolishing slavery was signed. The surly face in the photographs and the mouth silenced by hair seem to suggest, in a wholly unironic manner, the issue of race which remains unresolved along a route which takes the artist from the outskirts of Belo Horizonte to the outskirts of Porto Alegre.

### **A Pound of Flesh**

Meat, Brazil, 2005

In the canteen at the School of Fine Arts, Paulo — whom I know well by now — pays for his meal. A piece of raw meat is tied to his face like a mask. The sight is repulsive, but the students are silent, acting as though a man with meat covering his face is the most natural thing in the world. Without saying anything, we go on as normal while the artist waits in the line.

The performance was also presented as part of Itaú Cultural's Rumos project. In the photograph of the event, the audience appears frightened while the artist strolls around the gallery. I can sense other people's disquiet through the photograph and feel uncomfortable myself: the touch of the raw meat on his face, the unpleasant smell; the disgust and pity upon seeing something from the inside of another body on a human face.

Our thoughts are frozen, paralyzed by the abjection of dead flesh covering living flesh, the radical otherness — the animal, the dead — and by the evocation of ancient rituals which avoid any emphasis on the spectacular.

### **A Tooth**

Elephant Tooth, Brazil, 2007

At Rua Leonídia Leite no. 68, Floresta neighborhood of Belo Horizonte, temporarily occupied by the group Kaza Vazia, the artist carefully removes a front tooth implant from his mouth and inserts a lip separator to display his incomplete dental arch. With his mouth now wide open, he makes his way towards the city center on foot and by bus. He stops at Praça 7 de Setembro where he performs tricks with his tongue and the piece of tooth left in his mouth — a mouth incapable of speech. He continues to the Palácio das Artes, where, in the bathroom, he removes the lip separator and replaces the tooth. The photographs published on his blog show fierce, distorted faces with lips torn apart and tongue, gums and teeth on show.

At the same time, the artist distributed a giveaway entitled Elephant Tooth (2007) dedicated to the toothless. In the giveaway, the artist begins by tracing the origin of the word



banguela [toothless] — from the Bantu word benguela — and goes on to share a vertiginous selection of narratives which link the ability to laugh or smile, shared by men and monkeys, with slavery, gold mining, the difficulty of speaking without teeth, the epic of Tiradentes<sup>2</sup>, the tortures of the military dictatorship and the extraction of elephant teeth for use as a material for art. The last paragraph challenges the reader:

“If it is on the outskirts of large cities in slums and poor areas where you find a large part of the mixed-race and black population of African descent, why is it still strange to see me walking around with my African-descendant Afro hairstyle? What do you see if I show my teeth?”

In *Elephant Tooth*, the shockingly open mouth plays the part of the whole, a detail disproportionately representing the face. The subject shows himself to be all mouth: a wild animal ready to devour anything placed in front of him. He is unable to, however, due to the very device that keeps his mouth open. The word is also denied by this device placed on the very thing, which would permit its existence: he can only shout and abjectly touch his tooth with his tongue. The display of a toothless mouth unable to eat or speak, a face covered with meat and unable to see and the swallowing of his own hair, question, as self-cannibalistic procedures, modernist anthropophagy. The subject turns inward: the humanity of the human threatens the integrity of his own living body.

### **A Water Filter**

Drinking Water for Secular Men, India, 2006

A man walks along the narrow streets of Khirkee, India. Hanging from his chest, is a ceramic filter like those used in Brazil to keep water cool. The man is mixed-race with light skin and his afro-textured hair is tied with a colored scarf. He holds various brass cups in his hands. He wanders through the unknown city, offering water to passersby. As he doesn't speak any of the country's languages and his English is poor, he carries a sign on which someone has written in Hindi “free water”. He slowly passes through the ignored streets and offers water with a smile. Residents accept the gift of fresh water from the hands of a stranger. When the water in the filter runs out, the man leaves it on a corner where people leave water in clay pots for passersby. The artist's wanderings are recorded on video.

### **A Passport**

One Rupee for My Country, New Delhi, 2006

Sitting on the ground in a busy square, Paulo Nazareth offers a rupee to anyone who can correctly guess where he is from. His Brazilian passport hangs upside down from his neck. People swarm around him, gesticulating and shouting in broken English, excited at spotting his passport and the prospect of receiving a rupee. The group of people grows and the police arrive. Someone shouts: Brazil! Paulo gives them a rupee, gathers his things and walks off into the unknown city.

“The passport is man's most noble facet. And it is not as easy to make as a man. A human being may be made anywhere in the most irresponsible way, for no good reason: a passport, never.”<sup>4</sup>In *Refugee Dialogues*, Bertold Brecht writes fragments on his life as an exile and cites the importance of the passport. The writer's cruel humor points not just to his own anguish, but to the anguish of undocumented migrants: obtaining a passport, keeping it, getting the necessary visas and being accepted upon arrival at the destination. During a trip through South America, thieves steal Paulo's passport at the border between Tijuana and San Diego. The artist negotiates with one of the thieves and gets it

back the following day.

“Just like in films, the police always arrive after the thieves... and take me as a suspect... ‘la migra’ were already angry: ‘why are you always going back and forth across the border? What are you doing at the wall all the time?’”

Handing over his passport with its official visa allows him to cross the border safely. The stamp and hologram from the American consulate informs “la migra” that they must accept mixed-race skin, fuzzy hair and almost-bare feet.

### A Headless Man

In Biri-Biri, near Diamantina, the young man got ready by tying his hair back and covering his mouth and nose with a scarf. He made a hole in the sand by the stream and did a handstand, placing his head in the hollow. He had previously asked an artist from the group with which we were making the trip to the minute city<sup>6</sup>, Ariel Ferreira, to register the moment.

Photographs began to proliferate on Paulo Nazareth's blog registering his work Notícias de América [News from the Americas] at the beginning of 2011. In these untitled, unordered photographs, the artist appears to be headless, with his head buried or hidden by a feature of the landscape. Might that distant action in Biri-Biri have given birth to these images?

It surprises me that in most of these images the body appears in horizontal profile, with the arms and feet stretched out and only the head hidden. It subtly recalls Holbein's Dead Christ in its repetition of the pose. The image therefore — the pathosformel — of a man lying down in profile multiplies in a myriad of photographs. On a beach, on so many other deserted, windy, rocky beaches full of vegetation with a lighthouse in the distance; in a landscape with an enormous rock; among the remains of a city; among the ruins of an overturned ship; on a stony stretch; on a storm-ridden plain; beside a pile of wood in a building surrounded by rubbish.

The pathetic formula of Bataille's headless man is superimposed upon that of the recumbent Christ, but neither of them completes the other. The dead Christ is a dead man, but he remains whole. The headless man has no head, but is still standing. The image that Paulo offers us sets off a chain of associations connecting it to the world of dreams or death.

Does this man lying down have a head? we ask.

Is he alive or dead? we ask.  
Where is his head? we ask.

The images avoid the foreground. They seek a distance — the correct distance — neither too close nor too far away. If it is sometimes difficult to discern the body among stones or on the sand, in others it is clearly visible, stark, detached from the surroundings. The recent tragic history of beheadings in Mexico<sup>8</sup> haunts us: this windswept beach might be Veracruz beach in February.

Might it be possible to think that in his own way, the artist is chained, one by one, to the anonymous bodies to have disappeared in the deserts, backlands, mountains, rivers and beaches in our Americas?

Employing a popular resource appropriated by Cildo Meireles, and infinitely used after him by other artists from the continent, Paulo stamps the banknotes which he uses over the course of his travels:

“[PARA DEMOSTRAR GENOCIDIOS PASADOS EN LAS AMERICAS antes del pago APUNTE EL NOMBRE DEL(A) DESAPARECIDO(A), PAIS DE ORIGEM y/o ETNIA y periodo histórico (colonia, imperio, dictadura, democracia)]”

## A Journey

*News from the Americas (Journey on Foot from South America to North America), 2011-12.*

It is not a journey, there were many comings and goings which took him around the world: from Governador Valadares to Belo Horizonte, from Belo Horizonte to India, Mumbai, New Delhi, Khirkee, from Palmital to the Palácio das Artes, via the Pampulha Museum and a failed attempt to walk to Venezuela — interrupted in Brasília. From Governador Valadares to New York, via Porto Alegre, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Azul, Santiago...

Comings and goings while barefoot or almost barefoot. Increasingly worn and dirty flip-flops were covered, as were his feet, with dust accumulated in Latin America. This was the proposal: to walk through the deserts, forests and beaches of Latin America without ever washing his feet, only to later clean them in the Hudson River.

A purifying sacrifice in which Paulo Nazareth offers to the waters the native earth, accrued and preserved on the drifter's feet, and the image of Jude the Apostle — San Judita, the patron saint of impossible causes — who accompanied him from Mexico and who the artist watches slowly drifting away in the current.

Just like many Latin Americans caught up in the dream of a less ordinary life, the artist heads north, but he begins by leaving for the south. Years before, Paulo had a plan to buy a second-hand car and drive it through Latin America and to crash it against the wall in Mexico between Tijuana and San Diego. Time passed and the project took on another shape, but the goal remained the same. In his travels through *Nuestra América*<sup>10</sup>, the artist experiences both differences and similarities. A brother to native peoples and Afro-Americans, but also to everyone born south of the Rio Grande, his texts challenge the impossibility of a fixed identity and the great chaos of colors and ethnicities as seen through other people's eyes:

“Being mixed-race and travelling through the Americas, my skin color changes every day... at home the labels are not so well defined, but on heading further north everything is very orderly, there are different neighborhoods for black people, Arabs, chicanos and the rest of them. There are days when I'm a nigger/colored/black, but I cannot open my mouth because then my skin color changes, there are days when I am an arab, pakistani, indigenous and other adjectives which may change according to other people's gazes and the words to come out of my mouth. At any rate, sometimes in the United States of America, when I go into 'white people's' shops, everyone is afraid, including me.”

This constantly renegotiated identity — in Cuba the police thought he was Cuban — is only unmasked through words. And it is through language that Paulo Nazareth will rebuild his shattered origins, his native Portuguese increasingly contaminated by Spanish, increasingly purer and increasingly contemporary through being increasingly anachronistic. “But I was thinking of the wrong piece of writing, writing which was a something

else, which led the other not to recognize the word which looked like their word” — he says in an interview with Ana Paula Tomimori.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari refer to this *asa* minor literature, literature in which everything is political and everything is collective: “to write like a dog digs its hole, like a rat makes its nest.” A piece of writing, an art, which, from its own location on the periphery, “from its own point of sub-development, its own patois, its own third world, its own desert”, reterritorializes scripts and images and restores to them their legibility and lost visualities.

### A Script

A History of the Americas [I Am Going to Turn Myself into a Pop Artist] [conceptual, (contemporary)], 2005

The earliest narratives — Gilgamesh, the Iliad, the Odyssey, Beowulf — were travel diaries. In such narratives, the protagonist is bereft of specific traits and is simply a being who moves around and ventures into a territory marked by both similarities and differences. What he searches for on his travels is redemption for an identity in which the traveller finally recognizes his face and his landscape, central to a time which is not historic, but mythical.

In travel narratives time is condensed and lengthened, it is literally visible. Space is intensified; it adheres to the movement of time, theme and history. Time is the dimension of the movement, the transformation and the metamorphosis in which the protagonist accepts the interminable transit.

An inveterate walker, Paulo Nazareth has always narrated his travels and recorded them through objects collected along his walks, such as lost images and insignificant relics with which he re-associates vernacular traditions while he writes — on pages printed on newspaper — the precise entries of an encyclopedia for nomads.

In a text describing an apparently autobiographical moment, Paulo traces his history and that of his family beginning with his grandmother, a Krenak-Indian, brought up in the tribe. “The Krenaks were imprisoned during the dictatorship for reclaiming land. They walked for around 90 km to Governador Valadares and caught the train there to their lands. A process of re-conquering their lands then began. The train is technology. When [mining] Vale do Rio Doce Company constructed an iron railway through Krenak land, it promised them technology (free transport). [...] In Governador Valadares the Krenaks had to pay a fare. The Krenaks are obliged to pay for a train, which cuts through their land, so they put trunks of wood over the tracks. It does not stop the train, but slows it down.”

In his wanderings, Paulo meanders — as does the script — between personal recollections and demonstrable historic events, between the life of elephants and that of African slaves, between the uses of the word “Americans” — North Americans in Brazilian Portuguese — and the accusation of indolence that weighs upon South American Indians, and in turn, on Latin Americans in general:

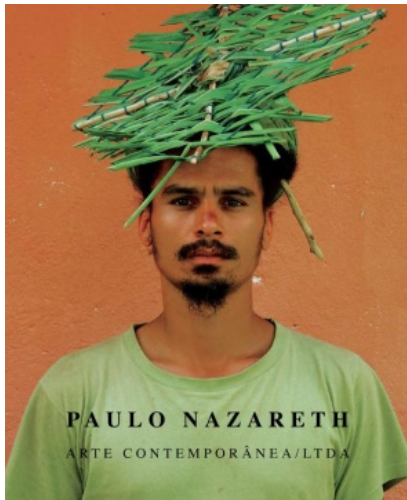
“For Brazilians, Spanish is almost like an accent.”

In the first decade of the 21st century a modernity in ruins seems to subsist, a diachronic modernity in which the artist is transformed into a cultural nomad who crosses time,

space and non-excluding signs: layers of history where multiple temporalities settle. If this is one of the faces of South American peripheral culture: always in displacement, over the ocean, over the rivers — a transit across the moving plain of water — and fundamentally, over the secondary roads of a landscape being destroyed, we will have to appropriate processes of writing scripts and of erasure, through which the specificity of the West might be lost.

Paulo Nazareth walks along these roads, erasing the footprints of his bare feet and writes, in the right and wrong direction, words and stories which have never ceased to be passed along by word of mouth, in these lands so far from God. Drawing on the frontiers, Paulo Nazareth has aligned places of strangeness and exclusion: places for bare feet, dusty roads and informal trade, places where people are able to buy, along with their raspados, chamoyados, diablitos and monjitas, glories. Here is art.





Those close to Paulo end up associating his work with his rucksack, boxes, cases and cans and a luggage trolley. You never know what he has hidden there: something he has collected, a rolled up piece of wire, an old cage, a computer that is always falling off the trolley, perhaps the giveaway we've been waiting for. He gives us the impression he's always on the move, an eternal traveler — he has even been to India! But he doesn't take luggage with him as such, they are supplies for *catira* — a rather peculiar and seemingly illogical trading of products based on trust and not on their actual value. In the countryside of Minas Gerais they would say he “lives off *catira*”. This does not always have a positive connotation, as someone who accumulates property from *catira* is not someone to be trusted.

Paulo is, however, a symbolic *catireiro* trader who has his sights on credible and reliable property. Perhaps this is why his work demands so much from the average contemporary art spectator who is city-dwelling, well-informed and, as the say, “has baggage”. As he unpacks his rucksack, almost with a certain amount of affection or even tenderness, he begins to establish his specific rules of exchange, which are very different from those we are used to at other exhibitions and interventions.

We anticipate a very unique kind of theory, which sends our critical baggage or preconceived notions into disarray and this is why we are tempted to assume what you might call a Western posture. In other words, we mistake the location of what is before our eyes, in the same way foreigners behave towards us, as if Brazil were not a Western culture. We approach his work from various analytically distinct angles: “another view”, “reallocation of meaning”, “displacement”, “institutional critique” etc. His work seems to welcome these categories openly; however in return, it shows us how ignorant we appear talking about his work based on idealized otherness. We then come to the realization that there is no way to assimilate his makeshifts by creating makeshift theories. Either we trust and accept the *catira* he proposes, or we walk away empty-handed.

As soon as Paulo came back from India, I had the opportunity to watch the first cut of the video in which he carries a ceramic water filter through the streets of New Delhi offering water to curious and suspicious onlookers. He walked around for several hours, stopped, offered water, walked again... without saying anything. Language did not seem to be a barrier and even carrying a jug of water, he blended in as a foreigner. Only Paulo could take a ceramic water filter to India. He had been warned not to drink the water

there, just bottled water. Maybe Indians receive the same warning when they come to Brazil. Gradually, the others began to seem more and more like us. And Paulo more and more like me, and me more and more like an Indian.

This identity took me by surprise. To the West, India is seen as an other: in novels, films and soap operas it is such an exotic place that it has the power to change the protagonist. We are all too familiar with the plot: first there's conflict, a bout of dysentery, then some kind of awakening and finally an appropriation of the rules and customs — and from this, the character makes a comeback. We always identify the other, but there is never a change of identity: the other remains the other.

In my preconceived world, I thought Paulo's actions in India would fall neatly within Hal Forster's concept of "the artist as ethnographer". The idea that he should go there, become familiar with the culture, learn the language, carry out his project and return with a record of his activities based on the antithesis of us here and now versus them there and now. However, he looked much more like a native than an ethnographer, even when he made it clear he was a foreigner, offering a coin to anyone that could work out where he was from and one hundred coins to the person that could discover his profession. His Afro was just as much a success there as in Brazil: I realized that he is as different there as he is here. I realized in particular that I had projected Paulo as some kind of other. He says that he was perceived as some kind of antihero there. And is that not the way I've considered him here in Brazil too?!

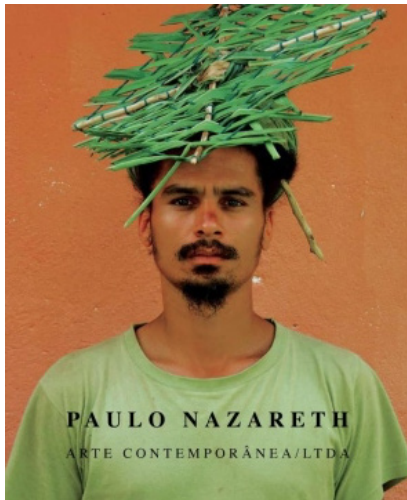
Ever since then, I have followed his work focusing more upon myself: the informed, urban, artist and typical, habitual spectator of contemporary art. I have come to see how uncultured and misinformed my idealization was, how his actions parody any "ideological patronage". I am a supporter of engaged art and this is the greatest mistake a supporter of engaged art can make, placing oneself in a position of authority, alongside the art.

The giveaways P. Nazareth Edições/Ltda. teach us in particular how not to idealize otherness. Most of them are addressed to our little art world, to the patrons of the arts, as if they were outside it. They acclaim an otherness that does not exist: they are in themselves, by themselves objects of art, but they talk about transforming things, bananas, sofas, sceneries into art. They propose endorsements, signatures, they publicize the actions of "a simple man that wanders through the streets"; they propose a consortium art trip etc. Bah! Maybe Paulo really is an ethnographer-come-artist, but not in India, not in Palmital, where he lives. He is an ethnographer on the art circuit, transforming artistic spaces into anthropological sites and us into objects of his design. He then expects some kind of reaction from us that will prove his hypothesis: "things are here in the world and as much as we'd like to, we can't isolate them from this."

So his work encompasses everything — "another view", "reallocating meaning", "displacement", "institutional critique", yet there is more. His art is a critique of institutions, but does not allow for the typical institutional "clever moves" which involve presenting the critique, showing how the institution is more than happy to accept it, without really opening up to the criticism. There is displacement and reallocation of meaning, but it is not just a question of transforming an everyday object into art; rather, his work delves deep into the typical contemporary art practice of transforming everyday objects into art, something done all the time, by almost anyone. It is another way of viewing things, but from someone who believes they can find aspects in common between a man from Palmital and one from Cambodia, or any other place, "not just due to globalization, but due to their life and 'history'".

In an attempt at creating my own theory, I believe that Paulo's work is the assertion of a gradual movement towards art which in order to be engaged needs to agree to down-sizing. This comes to mind in particular when taking into accounts his giveaways, which are related asynchronously to the very beginnings of publication — with the popular engravings of the Middle Ages and Brazilian cordel literature — however at the same time they are examples of current reproduction techniques. The giveaways are created on a computer, but the graphics and printing are done just as in the past on the worst possible paper so they can be distributed by hand. They are works of art, but on newsprint; art that resembles the flyers of a fortuneteller. The texts are written in seemingly innocent language, the Portuguese full of mistakes and the English poorly translated, however their content is complex disconcerting even, with musings on Aimorés, Krenaks, slavery, colonialism, and above all, contemporary art — the market, recognition, posterity, severed heads, social classes, mendicancy, bananas, toothless people, pão de queijo... I believe the giveaways reveal his strategy, the removal of any possible haughtiness from the work of art that might reduce its critical capacity and socially engaged role.

Paulo's *catira* is exactly this: he exchanges the other for ourselves, identification for identity, our "baggage" for worldly things, high art for low art, autonomy for engagement, patronage for parody and soon.



## 1 - Walking: journeying by foot

Paulo Nazareth always invites me on a journey. Even now, after nearly year without seeing him, I'm still walking alongside him.

For Paulo walking is important, because as he undertakes his journey he sees the mixed and uncertain shapes that form the basis of his cosmogony. His world is transitory and the continuous movement from “land to land” creates a non-permanent world. As he travels, he collects objects and things, meets people, and establishes relations and situations inside and outside of the so-called system. Has this system perhaps also become transitory? As his journey unfolds, he employs a certain degree of the absolute. He interweaves fragments of objects, writing and images and uses them as the grounds for narratives and situations. What matters in the process is not necessarily the outcome — the original object or work of art — but the search for the disorganization of things, people, and himself.

Paulo walks in order to disassociate himself from the idea of permanence. As he walks he seeks to understand how situations, be they common or poetic, may be ascribed a new rhythm that is capable of altering the one already given. This allows him to respond in a different way. This is retained, for this reason, just at the very instant when each moment presents itself as a new opportunity for disintegrating anything of any duration.

## 2 - Roaming

Just a line — a passage or period of time. These are characteristic elements of the journeying of a collector. There is almost a certain amount of primitiveness to it, completing his journey of occupation backwards. From the South to the North, the colonized world to the world of the colonizer, taking with him natural, cultural, violent and poetic experiences encountered in the sceneries, places and dust. Lots of dust.

How can this experience affect the things found on the journey, from this North transformed into South? I can't find just the one answer. What I see most clearly is the constant possibility of nomadic living — he has a need to exist, to stop existing, to listen to the space and the relationship that may occur within it. We observe the microclimates created throughout the trip that are “unfitting to easy tourism”<sup>1</sup> and favorable to the walker.

This is why the trip can only be understood by a whole body transformed into a view. Here I must highlight that this is not a pure, immaculate or innocent view. The fantasy of pure relations is not one of Paulo's features. Conversely, opportunities of always being confused, contaminated, opaque and — why not? — difficult, appear in all the situations. This is why on this trip, Paulo isn't searching for the fastest route, he allows himself to be held up on the way and get caught up in the conversations, he returns to old routes, throws himself into the game of complex networks and allows himself always to continue wandering.

This journeying slowly transforms his work and our image of what we believe to be Latin America. For Paulo, the continent takes on other proportions, dissolving our rigid preconceptions which focus on the common idea of a single person: a Latin American. As he collects habits, experiences and ways of life, Paulo implements new rhythms for the Americas, which can't be completely understood as they are stamped on the memory of his body — his strange, exotic and dangerous body. A mutilated and unidentifiable body, which becomes a part of all the lands upon which his feet tread. They generate curiosity as his presence wears away our idealized view of identity — what is more than existence, always wanting to be an "other" but an "other" to everyone, setting itself up as something negative, negativity everywhere. What we see is another option, a return of impossibility. We are unable to understand it fully, as everything is in fragments, and only what has been experienced can be remembered. If there is something in existence, it is the dust that mixes on his feet as a metaphor for all the changes of location. For this reason, don't look for photographs, performances or actions in Paulo. Let them appear and remain, so you travel through a variety of places, not in order to learn what is established as art, but to learn about a whole variety of time periods, procedures, flavors, colors, lights and seasons.

### 3 - Paulo and I

I've known Paulo for quite a while and I want to walk with him. I think I learn a lot from walking. I think that I'll try and reproduce the method Roland Barthes developed for viewing Marcel Proust's work, although in a much more modest form, of course. Barthes does not search for the writer found in *Histoires de la Littérature*. Just as I have sought to demonstrate the relationship I have with Paulo, not as an artist inscribed in a particular set of references of recent production, but I seek to understand "the passionate expression of an absolutely personal subject, that constantly returns to his own life, but not as a curriculum vitae, but as a constellation of circumstances and figures" The movement that Barthes calls *le marcellisme*, in a direct reference to Marcel Proust, will guide my journey with Paulo and is present in the conversations that I now bring before you.

My intention here is to revisit the conversations I had with him during the journey he made from Brazil to the United States, passing through various Latin American countries, and to highlight all the exchanges we had during this period in conversations scattered with information, comments on what he saw, ate and did during this period. Carrying dust from the whole of Latin America on his feet, staying put when he had to, deviating from the planned itinerary, forgetting the things he had established in advance such as trip commitments, losing documents, pictures, records and work either intentionally or unintentionally. He mixes up languages, waits for opportunities that often never materialize: for example, the family that adopted him in Guatemala and the friend that was to go with him to the USA and didn't manage to get the visa, the boat that would take him to Cuba and never came, or the whale that would die beside him, but even though he waited a long time, never came.

In the dialogues below I attempt to use Barthes' method and put myself "in the position of



someone that does something, and not more than someone that talks about something: I don't study a product, endorse production; I eliminate discourse after discourse; the world no long comes to me in the form of an object, but in the form of an act, by that I mean, of a practice: I move towards another type of knowledge (that of the Amateur), and I'm methodical in this."

Here we have scraps of conversations between March and October 2011, all taken from social network sites and Skype. I deliberately interrupt the transcription in October 2011 when Paulo is still in Mexico and is preparing to enter the USA. I consider this a pivotal point in his trip and I think that the journey can be divided, to a certain extent, into two phases: this first is the walk to the United States, and the second begins with his arrival in New York. Here the period before his arrival and participation in the Art Basel Miami Beach in November 2011 will be recorded. They are records of some of the journeys we went on at this point of the trip. They are discontinuous, oscillating, doubtful and moveable, and are characterized by the shared pleasure of each moment.

#### 4 - Travel Dialogues

Here extracts from conversations between Paulo Nazareth and I that occurred during some of the months of his trip, from March to October 2011 are reproduced. I opted to preserve the original writing in the transcription and often it is quick, incorrect and often there is mixture of languages. I maintained the characteristics of Paulo's writing, the ellipsis, which I think show the duration of the conversation. The dates have been removed, leaving just the months in which the conversations took place.

MARCH 2011

PAULO – Where are you now? I'm arriving this evening... if you want, we can have a cup of tea... or something... maybe... I'll invite you to go for an ice cream... what are your weekdays looking like? Have you got any afternoons free?

ME – Darling, the ice cream yesterday was delicious!!! Please send me the names of the books, I'll order them online, much love.

APRIL 2011

PAULO – I'm still near your house... where are you? I was going to Curitiba today, I missed the bus, I'm heading to Itajaí, in Santa Catarina tomorrow...

ME – My darling, I'm travelling like crazy, but talking about you a lot, good to know you're still here in Brazil, visiting villages and travelling across the country.

MAY & JUNE 2011

ME – Where are you?

PAULO – I'm here deciding my route... I'm still in Bolivia, Cochabamba, I'm not sure if I'm going to POTOSI... or if I'm going straight to La Paz... a short while ago I was set on going back and going to Potosi... I'm zigzagging... and I'm not a tourist, most definitely not...

ME – I was sure of this, most definitely not a tourist: a traveller. A traveller is open to coming across new things and the possibility of constructing a trip and... of re(de)constructing during the travel.

PAULO – The most recent magazine I took was INTERPOL's, the police told me if they

catch me selling something, I will go to jail...

ME – What were you selling?

PAULO – I wasn't selling anything... Interpol came down hard on me as they thought I was odd.

ME – I like the way you wrote odd (extranhar). The other's opinion of you is really interesting. You can't just simply be there... your presence is something strikingly different. You're not there "needlessly", and you could potentially be a danger, a threat, an interested party, a seller. This is really interesting.

PAULO - Would you believe that the police in Brazil... São Miguel das Missões... didn't accept my passport as a document... they were after my Brazilian ID card... WHICH I LEFT AT HOME...

ME – This will be useful for thinking about the idea of identity documents, excellent! Why did Potosi grab your attention?

PAULO – There's an old mining engineer... that they say has some stories... but my time is short...

ME – Stories about mining?

PAULO – I have to choose... Potosi... North of Chile... Machu Picchu... ME – I think that Machu Picchu is interesting due to the mail routes we talked about in the Pre-Columbian era.

PAULO – ...The fact is that I want to go through the desert... look for images so I can make up a collection of clouds that cross the desert... I have clouds from the Sahara seen from above... here the clouds would be seen from below... I wanted pictures from the desert in Mexico and also from the Atacama...

ME – There's a lot of life in the desert!

PAULO – In addition to having discovered stories about women that dug in the desert searching for the bodies of the missing from the military dictatorship... in Mexico there are the illegal cemeteries for the immigrants that never arrive... I'm thinking about whether I will leave the desert out this time... and I will come back... some other time...

ME – What is interesting is that all the things you've heard about are a topic of discussion and it is still a visit. To a certain extent it's narrative too. Not going, but assuming that it also exists, is excellent. Because you really won't be able to do everything. In the same way, gathering stories is also constructing a route and therefore making real and fictitious connections. I like this relationship. A new Latin America, not just upside down, but myths, legends and stories that map out the changing identity of the people.

PAULO – Yes... I'm hearing stories... such as El tren de la muerte (The train of death)... that leaves Guatemala in the direction of the USA crossing Mexico... I'm thinking of El Salvador. I don't know... I had already divided Mexico up again with the border with number 13... and the frontier with Colombia with Panama as 8... infinite...

ME – This just makes the idea of possible inversion better. Why is the division between

the Americas not determined by the Cartesian map, it is also a question of physical geography, imposed by nature itself, and cultural, by the limits that I see as the other. Considering this border as infinite and thinking about status of this possible new continent: El Dorado, paradise, hell. But for Colombia to be border number 8 wouldn't you have to go through Chile?

PAULO – I will have to do this more often...

ME – Most definitely yes!

JULY & AUGUST 2011

PAULO – I went to the Cuban embassy... trying something out... but they are a bit bureaucratic...

ME – Trying to get in?

PAULO – Trying to get a lift to cross the Panama canal... In a flying boat... belonging to the post office... that is going to Cuba, I will go through Colombia to get to Panama... without getting my feet wet.

ME – I have to see these feet.

PAULO – They're looking good... not very dirty... around 120 days without water... but it's the dust... I wanted to take bananas from here to Miami... but not now... I need a sanitary license... I feel like filling up a small white van full of them... if you want to see pictures, you are already familiar with the webpage: [www.latinamericanotice.blogspot.com](http://www.latinamericanotice.blogspot.com)

ME – Yes, I have the blog open the whole time, there are so many things there I don't even know where to begin. I really liked the way the bananas are arranged, it's almost like a sculpture, I really like the image, the idea of a sculpture that transforms over time, it rots!

PAULO – I saw a man selling banana seeds.

ME – The banana is present across Latin America.

PAULO – Here in Guatemala it is part of the revolution... when they expropriated the United Fruit Company, it was one of the reasons the USA supported the military coup in the 1960s, which prolonged the violence for years, until there was peace in 1966. It seems it's the place where most people were killed in the Americas... even more than in Pinochet's Chile. The main candidate for the presidential elections this year is a former member of the army, an arms salesman. Here insecurity is a commodity... a political flag.

ME – It is really shocking how we don't know anything about the violence and dictatorships in Central America.

PAULO – Some candidates for government are in favor of the death penalty.

ME – As a government platform?

PAULO – Yes... one of them... yes.

ME – What you are doing is amazing, there are so many routes. PAULO – I see guns

the whole time on the street... soldiers: army and privately armed individuals, shotguns I don't even know the name of... and a gun that is really common is the Soviet AK47.

ME – Another global process: bananas and guns.

PAULO – The AK47's magazine is in the shape of a banana... that's what they say around here... it came with the revolucion sandinista in Nicaragua... American sponsorship... easy to handle... even a niño learns and can handle it easily... in the 1980s there were soldados niños (children soldiers) from CENTRAL AMERICA... GUATE, EL SALVADOR, HONDURAS, NICARAGUA. MANY DIDN'T LIVE BEYOND THE AGE OF 17. NOW I THINK THERE AREN'T JUST CHILDREN FOR NARCO WORK, AND I DON'T KNOW IF STILL EXIST IN THE FAVELAS OF RIO DE JANEIRO.

ME – Here, definitely, Paulo, is an unending subject.

PAULO – I LOOKED FOR THE NIÑOS SOLDADOS IN THE CEMETRIES...

ME – By age or name?

PAULO – Between 12-14 years old, I think they had be my age today.

ME – How many Paulos?

PAULO – Among the disappeared from the Comalapa indigenous group, there were two named Paulo. But they are changing names of an indigenous origin Cumez, changing it to Gomes. I heard that it's fashionable among young people here.

ME – Changing name?

PAULO – Changing the indigenous name for something similar in Spanish. The desire to change identity is visible through the language.

PAULO – Each day I feel more like I belong to Latin America: politicians, years of violence and immigrants; the American clothing shops... Coca-Cola is known as water... just like other soft drinks too.

ME – What to eat, what to wear and think, everything is as an imposition.

PAULO – But the local culture here in Guatemala is also really alive... 26 languages of a Mayan origin are still in existence... even after being prohibited during the years of violence... tortillas are eaten normally every day... even with the advertisements for the food coming from the North, we have breakfast and eat frijoles (beans)...

AUGUST 2011

PAULO – They're still mixing me up with someone from the Middle East... a Moroccan... as they say. The other day I had to eat lunch with a shotgun across propped up on my back, they asked me if I was Moroccan...

ME – Are you suffering from prejudice?

PAULO – A man came down the restaurant corridor and propped his shotgun up against me, he didn't greet me. The cocked gun remained propped up on my back and I could see the man's reflection in the bottle of soy sauce, while I was eating my vegetarian dish at the

Chinese restaurant. I laugh about this sometimes... but I'm more afraid of the fear they might have of me than of the gun. I see AK47s in the street all the time... all the security guards are armed...

ME – This movement for empowerment via the ownership of guns is striking, the idea of power and respect for the potency of death, they keep the names of the guns and change their own names.

PAULO – When I walk around here... they look at me differently... there are people in the street that laugh... and they look like me... Edgar Calel... said that they think they are superior.

ME – But are you foreign to them?

PAULO – They say that around here they only laugh at those that are inferior... no one laughs at the filhos do sol (children of the sun) that come from the North. That is what the Mayans call the white-skinned blondes.

ME – But why do they consider you inferior?

PAULO – I'm not black, nor native Indian, nor white... I'm not Garifuna... as they call black people... I'm a halfway house... white to be black... and black to be white. This is not bad, I have transformed myself... by being the same.

ME – Yours will be the biggest discovery, and what's best is that it's not one which deals with a single identity, anymore, a single Paulo.

PAULO – Sometimes I feel like I die everyday... in a strange way so I can be born another day.

ME – It's like the outskirts of a city that grows without any prior organization, but implements its own dynamics, you don't know what will happen after the curve, the next meeting.

PAULO – It's good to see the dawn... and it's good to see when the day turns into night.

ME – But there are things to be seen at night too; we don't know what, not even if it exists, but we see it.

PAULO – Nighttime is wonderful... I always get confused with the times I should stay awake. Just like I confuse Spanish... with my Portuguese language. I feel as if, at the same time, none of them were here... although they are. I'm at home! The Calel family seems to have adopted me.

ME – You are easy to adopt.

PAULO – Edgar says I can get irritated and calm down just like a boy... one like that always asks odd questions.

ME – You are like an adorable child.

PAULO – He asks me if I think this world is exotic... how much I belong to this world. I believe that both of us find each other odd and we are making discoveries about our-

selves... I think I need to learn to be a rebel from the niños... in disobedient way... asking questions... looKING AT THE WORLD AS IF IT WERE THE DAY ON WHICH ONE WAS BORN. They resemble me and I think they don't know it... I learn every day from this family... they resemble my family too... well, mine has more distinct faces... I find out that my mother looks more native Indian than I do... my sisters-in-law deny they're indigenous... I see their faces the whole time when I'm in the street.

ME – Recognizing your family in the family of another, recognizing familiar faces in a land so far away. I think this is great, but it must be very strange too.

PAULO – There's chocolate waiting for me in New York!

ME – You're going to New York?

PAULO – I have to get there to wash my feet... and then go back to receive a visit from Edgar in Belo Horizonte... he told me he will arrive in October...

PAULO – I want to walk through Africa. NEWS FROM AFRICA. ME – Goodness, now?

PAULO – From South Africa... to London... NEXT YEAR MAYBE... I won't set foot in Europe without going via Africa. I'd like to think about the relationship with Holland. Recife... Holland, this makes me think of ligaciones (connections) with South Africa... Dutch colonies. Cape Verde for example, was a Portuguese colony until 1975, two years before I was born... that's how I tend to make historical references, they use Portuguese for bureaucracy and creole in daily life, they say that before it was some kind of depository, a port, where the slaves that were to be sent to the United States, Brazil and the islands and Caribbean coast, such as Cuba, Vera Cruz in Mexico, the coast of Guatemala arrived, and where they most needed slaves.

ME – It is good this connection between Holland, Recife and New York, don't you think?

PAULO – Exactly... NY, Manhattan... founded by immigrant Jews from Recife.

PAULO – Well, it's getting late... I'd best be going... today I had rice and beans Nicaraguan style... at the central market... really good. With pickled cabbage and tortillas.

ME – Stop it, I'm getting hungry.

SEPTEMBER 2011

ME – Send me news when you can... How are you? Where are you?

PAULO – Cholula... Mexico, on my way to Vera Cruz, on the Gulf of Mexico coast.

ME – Border?

PAULO – I'm looking for a boat to Cuba... I will have to get lucky.

ME – You're going to Cuba? Can you go by sea or is it illegal?

PAULO – They say that ever since 1959 you can't go by sea... but it's possible... I just don't want to get my feet wet... it's the most valuable thing I have at the moment. More than 130 days building up dust.



ME – Lots of dust... lots of history.

PAULO – I lost almost all the images from the 5 months on the road. I left my memory card at an Internet cafe.

ME – You left it there? That's history. Are you creating notebooks with drawings?

PAULO – I draw the news... but sometimes I get distracted looking at the scenery, I always end up leaving it...

ME – Maybe it's because you have to leave it.

PAULO – I think that now I'm going to salvage them from my memory.

ME – There are things that you just can't share.

PAULO – Drawings like “votive offerings.”

ME – You are wonderful! “Votive offerings,” exactly that.

PAULO – Also writing... a way...

ME – It's your power, the records existed for the period of time they had to exist for and will be retrieved where and when necessary, in your words, in your style. I like this!

PAULO – I'll have to come back on other occasions... conversations.

ME – I love the use of the plural! Trips. And what do the Mexicans think of the detours in your itinerary?

PAULO – I always think about going on this journey, it's not so long, but you need time.

ME – And you're making this time. Also detours from imaginary things too, the possibility of having or not a boat to take you to Cuba. The desire to go to the US transformed into a desire to go to Cuba. I think this is really interesting and I imagine that for the Mexicans this must be odd.

PAULO – It had to be less difficult if I didn't have to keep my feet dry... but do you mean odd for the Cubans or Mexicans?

ME – For the Mexicans, because normally the relationship with the border, in the case of Mexico is with the US. I keep wondering how the news that you are in Mexico, trying to find a way to get to Cuba must be received. This may be odd for Mexicans... I don't know, this just came to my mind right now. I want to see the pictures of your feet.

PAULO – There's a picture of my feet on the USA flag. The Mexicans have good stories to tell... I believe I'll spend more time here than I imagine...

ME – You'll spend the time you need to, or more aptly, you'll establish your own time... you shouldn't make any commitment to anything other than to the dust on your feet.

PAULO – I've made friends on the way, maybe I'll become a cook or a washer of dishes.

ME – You're a good cook, I know that!

PAULO – I've made pão de queijo twice while I've been here.

ME – With what?

PAULO – Columbian flour, manioc flour - hecho en colombia... and manioc flour made in Thailand.

ME – That's Paulo Nazareth!

PAULO – The Mexicans, Serbs, Argentines, Salvadorans, Austrians liked them.

ME – How are the negotiations going for getting to Cuba?

PAULO – It looks like things are going well... in fact, they say that Mexico never cut of relaciones with Cuba. They say that it was one of the greatest collaborators in the revolution... They say that there is cruise ship that belongs to the government that connects the two countries once a week, on Fridays... but I don't know if it belongs to the Cuban or Mexican government, the boat leaves from Merida. The boat leaves me closer to land. They say it's possible to go by another means of transport... motor-boat... non-official, but it goes the same way... the closer I get, the more the rumors increase... about the possibilities of getting there.

ME – You're keeping these possibilities to yourself!

PAULO – In my head...

ME – Because to me it seems like a dream in reverse. And thinking about the dual border relationship and all the possibilities of getting there, what are you taking with you?

PAULO – I'm taking the clothes I picked up on the road... I should draw everything I was given to carry with me on the trip... I was given a lot of clothes without even asking for them...

ME – People know what you need, end of story: food, shelter and clothes.

PAULO – The first item I was given was by my mother, a white crochet jumper so I wouldn't get cold... a yellow raincoat from my father to protect me from the rain, it's got MANUEL written on it... his name...

ME – Two items of protection! Protecting your body from the cold and the rain.

PAULO – I was also given a top by an indigenous man camping in Buenos Aires... from the brand Adidas...

ME – Wonderful!

PAULO – I think I'll keep the jumper from my mother and the coat from my father... the others, maybe I'll leave them in Cuba. I'll draw these moments...

ME – The trip is one of friendship, memory and politics.

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2011

PAULO – I want to go back to Mexico... go through the desert... go through Matamoros... I've heard that it is a bit of a ghost city, there's so much still to see in MEXICO. IT IS A MULTIPLE FACETED COUNTRY. I'm creating relaciones in these lands... possibilities of returning...

ME – In Mexico plurality breathes in the streets, it's incredible!

PAULO – Yes, the Americas are diverse... Mexico and Latin America that penetrate the USA... I've created possibilities so I can always return... lots of people empathized with my dirty feet... lots of people are sickened by them... but they are beautiful...

ME – Great, Paulo, I saw the sock that you used in the photo. Your feet must be black! I keep talking about you in class, my students can't stand it any longer!

PAULO – Well, use my new pictures... and then let them rest... use my dirty feet...

ME – I'm using the work where you take pictures next to a city-dwelling indigenous man, rather pertinent for what we're discussing now, I saw the pictures of your feet, they are lovely...

PAULO – What are you discussing now?

ME – The composition of the basis of thinking in Brazilian culture, slavery via Machado de Assis.

PAULO – Feet are patas rachadas, that's what they say on the border between Guatemala and Mexico.

ME – Your feet must be all weathered from the work and walking, isn't that correct?

PAULO – I met a woman called Maria, she works in Mexico DF, she's indigenous in origin, her parents are CHIAPAS, from the South of Mexico, on the border with Guatemala...PATAS RACHADAS is what her parents were called... and all her ancestors... by the people in the town. Broken and weathered by the dust, as they didn't wear shoes...

ME – Shoeless meaning without property or possessions.

PAULO – Work, walking, life, etc. At the moment there's a fight in Chiapas... armed militias... landowners that seized indigenous land... I'm writing using my mind... remembering... sometimes it seems that the stories are repeating themselves... I'VE JUST sent you two emails with pictures of my feet...

ME – I'll have a look.

PAULO – In the second one, there are pictures of my feet on a USA / MADE IN CHINA flag, in the background, Mexican products...

ME – Paulo, it doesn't look like dirt, it looks like your skin is falling apart, buddy!

PAULO – ...My nails break on the journey without me even having to cut them... even as they break they are ideas for preserving dust from lots of places... I think that when I get to New York I'll just go and wash my feet in the Hudson, the river that separates Brook-

lyn from Manhattan...

ME – Do you keep the nails?

PAULO – When I can I keep them... but often I don't see them falling off... they break with the movement... the dust protects from the cold... I think I'll get to New York in October...

ME – I don't know if you will, there's Cuba and the desert, unless you go straight to New York.

PAULO – I think I'll get there... I'm coming and going... I'm heading North and I'll take a few steps south, just like now...

ME – But it's got to be like that! Immersion in the trip! Or even better a vacillating journey!

PAULO – I think I'll do this so I can then wander towards the south...

ME – It's not a trip, it's an experience. There'll be another time. Keep an eye out for incidents on the journey.

PAULO – I think there's a whole load of things to be discovered also in the North... and the scenery is in the eyes of the beholder... I think...

ME – And what things these eyes will see in the scenery! Stamped as they must be by all the experiences, just like the dust on your feet. Eyes that see the whole of the Americas, eyes that have been to the United States taking with them a huge weight of experiences and memories, it'll be awesome! Which Paulo will return?

PAULO – My arrogance or my ignorance must not shut my eyes...

ME – Most definitely your experience in the Americas has shown you everything that must be moved, hasn't it?

PAULO – I think I'm a tame animal... maybe I'll return tame just the same as always...

ME – I don't doubt it, but this tameness will bring with it an experience of identity.

PAULO – Everyday I suffer a knock back, there are days that it's much stronger... it was good losing my memory card... that way I see that things are... I have to learn to use this...

ME – This will be a transformation, and the best thing is that sharing will not just be putting on an exhibition. I think they'll be so many opportunities to share and all of them will be just scraps, micro, possibilities.

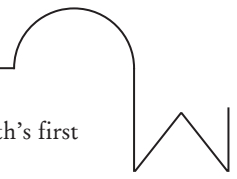
PAULO – Have I already told you that each day I feel more integrated in all of this? More than Brazilian, something like Latin American. Brazil is diverse in itself, I "fit in" as a Brazilian, it's fine, but I'd rather "fit in" to the term Latin American... and quizá American, just... without political borders...

ME – I'm considering the difference between borders and limits, a border allows for something to be shared, it is wide and contaminated, it generates a between, neither here



Paulo Nazareth  
Press and Selected Texts

Journeys and Travel Dialogues, 2012  
Text by Janaina Melo published by Cobogó on Nazareth's first  
monograph



or there, a state of suspension. A limit establishes difference.

PAULO – Mauricio, a young Salvadoran artist, told me that I'm doing something called "arte de Conducta". He said that it isn't performance or acion! but behaviour...

PAULO – Well I think I should go... and let you rest...

ME – But you're not letting me rest, here I am thinking, thinking, thinking...