Claraboia

Bernardo Liu

Bernardo Liu

(Rio de Janeiro, 1992)

Bernardo Liu's work operates at the intersection of emotional memory and cultural displacement, exploring how Eastern legacies survive, transform, and reorganize themselves within everyday Brazilian life. As a descendant of Chinese immigrants, Liu approaches ancestry not as a return to a fixed origin, but as an unstable layer, marked by gaps, erasures, and reinventions. His work operates in this interstice, where tradition, nostalgia, and globalization intersect without merging.

A central aspect of his practice is the creation of what the artist calls "affective tapestries," visual surfaces that accumulate signs, objects, and references that function as fragments of family and cultural histories. These elements rarely appear in a direct or narrative form; rather, they emerge as traces, echoes, or clues, composing a visuality that speaks more of residual presence than of explicit representation.

For Liu, ancestry is not a static symbol, but a mode of circulation. His works explore how objects—from porcelain to small Eastern talismans, from graphic patterns to household items—carry layers of meaning that span generations, migrations, and symbolic boundaries. He investigates the trajectory of these objects as part of a global economy marked by consumption, exoticization, and displacement, but also by affection, care, and memory.

Globalization, in his poetry, does not appear as an abstract theme, but rather as a phenomenon experienced firsthand: the intersection between Rio de Janeiro and China takes place at the level of the body, the home, and memory. His works explore the hybrid condition of the diasporic subject, who simultaneously inhabits an inherited culture and a lived culture, without either imposing itself absolutely.

Thus, the artist's work constructs a visuality where memory, displacement, and the domestic imaginary form a narrative that is neither linear nor entirely legible, but deeply affective. He reinscribes in the present that which persists at the margins: small objects, everyday gestures, fragments of images that function as anchors of identity. His practice shows that Eastern memory in Brazil is not merely a historical archive, but a living matter in constant negotiation, charged with tension and delicacy.

Foto: Rafael Adorján

“The artist’s maturity, developed over nearly a decade of production, is reflected in a technical refinement that evolves alongside his poetic language. At this point in his trajectory, the figures seem to move more freely across the canvas, as if the artist had gained greater confidence in sustaining the atmospheric suspension that has become characteristic of his work. The perhaps intuitive interest in glitch aesthetics and the overlapping of images through visual noise gives way to a more mature compositional approach, one concerned with how to inhabit these spaces through his symbolic repertoire.

In this sense, replacing the color systems traditionally associated with the world of design, a new palette emerges, earthy in tone, infused with blues and marked by a distinctive green whose intensity evokes dense forest landscapes.

In the larger-scale paintings, the relationship between figure and background reflects a state in which pictorial matter and atmosphere seem to enter into consonance with the matter of memory itself. The dreamlike atmosphere begins to resonate with the very procedures of painting. Different chromatic treatments, and above all, textures, including those created by scraping away excess paint, become central to the construction of this visual language. The background often functions as the sustaining ground for the objects in the foreground, magnetizing the space of the image. Out of fragility emerges a sense of suspension, as the paint becomes capable of absorbing a latent vortex and transforming instability into a way of anchoring memory.”

Daniela Avellar,
Excerpt from *Veredas e lembranças*

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Depois de sonhar no sofá, 2026
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
120 × 150 cm (47 1/4 × 59 in)

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante



Claraboia



Vagalumes, 2026
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 × 47 1/4 in)

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante



“The smaller paintings, in turn, more explicitly reveal the artist’s figurative repertoire. The objects that seem to drift through the larger works appear here more directly, offering traces of how memory reaches us and dreams as a catalyst for a fragmentary, and therefore creative and fabulatory, mode of thought.”

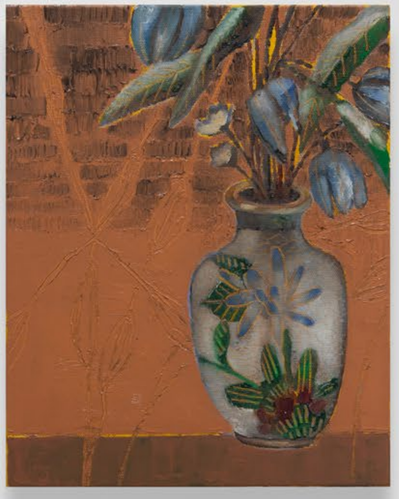
Daniela Avellar,
Excerpt from *Veredas e lembranças*

Claraboia









Mirtilo, 2026
Jabuticaba, 2026
Sapucáia, 2026
Jambo, 2026

Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
30 × 24 cm (11 3/4 × 9 1/2 in) (each)

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante



Claraboia



Altar Ruína, 2026
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 x 47 1/4 in)

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante





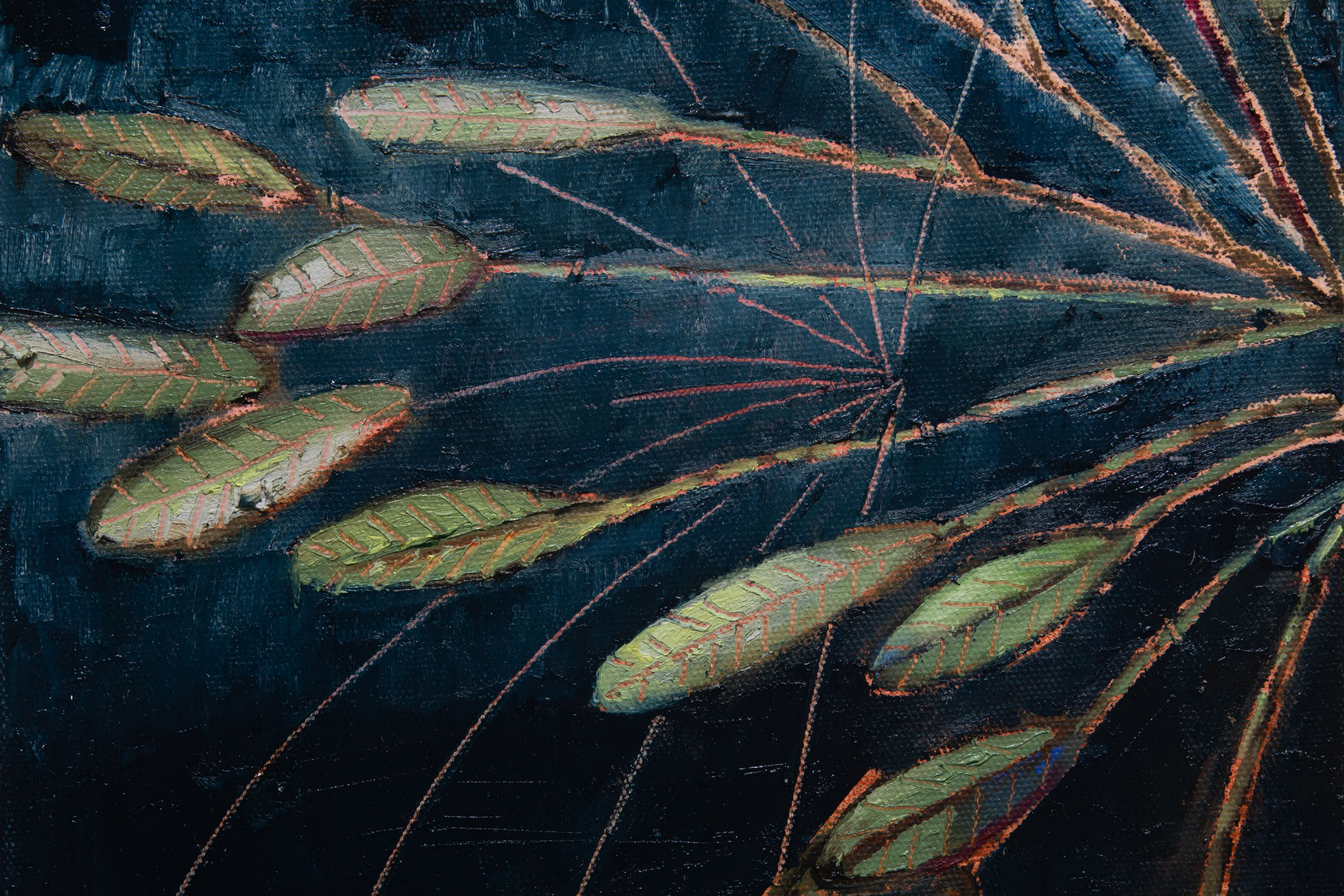




Espelho D'água, 2026
Facheiro-da-praia, 2026
Litchi Chinensis, 2026

Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
30 × 24 cm (11 3/4 × 9 1/2 in) (each)

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante





Claraboia



Pólen Terracota, 2026
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 x 47 1/4 in)

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante



Claraboia



Quente Café, 2026
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 x 47 1/4 in)

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante









Cipó, 2026
Prata Manica, 2026
Veredas e Lembranças, 2026

Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
30 × 24 cm (11 3/4 × 9 1/2 in) (each)

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante



“The objects that traverse his work—porcelain figures, vessels and ceramics, animals, domestic artifacts, and, at certain moments, ephemeral materials such as packaging and paper cuttings—do not operate merely as formal motifs, but as affective archives, capable of reactivating narratives of passage, labor, and belonging. Often encountered in books, antique shops, or urban remnants, these objects carry layered temporalities, oscillating between preservation and forgetting. They evoke the tension between ‘here’ and ‘there’, between memories linked to the earliest Chinese experiences in Brazil—such as the frustrated attempt to establish a tea industry in nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro—and the contemporary urban landscapes that shape the artist’s present.”

Pedro Scudeller,
Excerpt from *Vestígios em trânsito*

Claraboia



Mato Rosa, 2026
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 × 47 1/4 in)

Photo: Julia Thompson

Claraboia



Fruta Ferro, 2026
Oil and oil stick on canvas
180 × 130 cm (70 3/4 × 51 1/4 in)

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante



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Calafate de arame, 2026
Oil and acrylic on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 × 47 1/4 in)

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante

Claraboia



Lembranças, 2025
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
100 × 80 cm (39 1/4 × 31 1/2 in)

Took part in 53º Salão de Arte Contemporânea Luiz Sacilotto

Photo: Sergio Guerini

53º Salão de Arte Contemporânea Luiz Sacilotto
Santo André, São Paulo, Brazil, 2026

Photo: Sergio Guerini



53º Salão de Arte Contemporânea Luiz Sacilotto
Santo André, São Paulo, Brazil, 2026

Photo: Sergio Guerini

Claraboia



Águia não come mosca, 2025
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 × 47 1/4 in)

Took part in 54º Salão de Arte Contemporânea de Piracicaba

Photo: Bernardo Liu

Claraboia



Ba Bao Fan, 2025
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 × 47 1/4 in)

Photo: Bernardo Liu



Claraboia



Descanso, 2025
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 × 47 1/4 in)

Photo: Bernardo Liu

Claraboia



Quase 6 da noite, 2024
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 × 47 1/4 in)

Photo: Bernardo Liu

“In the series *Feito com Amor* (Made with Love), a set of lunchboxes painted by the artist forms a circle. Here, fragments of imagery that somehow define the artist’s identity are set on the table. A cup of guaraná, a ten-real bill, a package of instant noodles, and a can of beer coexist alongside porcelain figurines representative of Eastern culture, composing a kind of bittersweet table where art and food merge and cultural references meet.”

Julie Dumont,
Excerpt from *Ba Bao Fan*



Photo: Estúdio Quadrante



Series *Feito com amor*, 2024
Acrylic paint on paper, aluminum packaging and ceramic
19 × 19 x 6 cm (7 1/2 × 7 1/2 × 2 1/4 in)
Installation view of the solo exhibition Ba Bao Fan, Galeria Refresco, Rio de Janeiro, 2025

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante







Ba Bao Fan
Solo exhibition, curated by Julie Dumont
Galeria Refresco, Rio de Janeiro, 2025

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante

“Red, beyond being the color of pau-brasil wood, can also represent fire, happiness, and prosperity (and not by chance a series of small red-format works opens the exhibition, like so many talismans or good-luck charms). Green, beyond tropical vegetation, evokes health, hope, and harmony, while the blue of sky and sea also alludes to long life, healing, and trust.

In this kaleidoscope of references, affections, and places, Bernardo Liu establishes—under the protection of the snake that accompanies this new cycle—a personal portrait of a plural Brazil, rich in affections and elements brought from distant cultures and inserted into a mestiço everyday life. The artist thus invites the public to an unpretentious celebration, an open table with guaraná and ginseng, instant noodles, sweet rice, and savory beans. A visual homage to the richness of a plural world, where kitsch, symbolism, and the desire to paint blend with the intentionality of a cook who, over low heat, prepares a recipe capable of awakening memories and emotions long buried.”

Julie Dumont,
Excerpt from *Ba Bao Fan*







Ba Bao Fan
Solo exhibition, curated by Julie Dumont
Galeria Refresco, Rio de Janeiro, 2025

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante



Ba Bao Fan
Solo exhibition, curated by Julie Dumont
Galeria Refresco, Rio de Janeiro, 2025

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante











Ba Bao Fan
Solo exhibition, curated by Julie Dumont
Galeria Refresco, Rio de Janeiro, 2025

Photo: Estúdio Quadrante

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Cavalo Pequinês, 2024
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
40 × 50 cm (15 3/4 × 19 3/4 in)

Photo: Bernardo Liu

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Um dia após o outro, 2023
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
150 × 120 cm (59 × 47 1/4 in)

Photo: Bernardo Liu

Claraboia



Igarapé, 2023
Oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas
100 × 80 cm (39 1/4 × 31 1/2 in)

Photo: Bernardo Liu

“As Liu safeguards the memories of his Chinese ancestors, he inevitably incorporates the confluences of a mixed Asian-Brazilian identity, still scarcely acknowledged in the field of visual arts. The Saara, where Largo das Artes is located, is the place in Rio de Janeiro that best condenses such a mixture. (...) The different faces of the ‘East’ meet here to stage not only commercial exchanges, but also symbolic and cultural ones that extend back to pre-colonial Brazil. Liu’s research stitches together this plurality through paintings on canvas and rice paper, installations, and objects—what the artist himself describes as ‘affective tapestries’ capable of leading the viewer on transtemporal journeys.”

Rubens Takamine,
Excerpt from *Ginseng*



Ginseng
Solo exhibition, curated by Rubens Takamine
Largo das Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2024

Photo: Manuel Aguas

Ginseng
Solo exhibition, curated by Rubens Takamine
Largo das Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2024

Photo: Manuel Aguas





Ginseng
Solo exhibition, curated by Rubens Takamine
Largo das Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2024

Photo: Manuel Aguas

Bernardo Liu

(Rio de Janeiro, 1992)

Solo shows

2025
Ba Bao Fan, curated by Julie Dumont, Galeria Refresco, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2024
Ginseng, curated by Rubens Takamine, Largo das Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2023
Catavento23, São Cristóvão, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Group shows

2026
Falácia Natural, curated by Shion, Galeria Refresco, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

53º Salão de Arte Contemporânea Luiz Sacilotto

2025
Moscas Voltantes, curated by Bia Coslovsky, Virtua3000, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Oasis Graal, curated by Virtua3000, Caroço, São Paulo, Brazil

54º Salão de Arte Contemporânea de Piracicaba

2024
O mistério das coisas por baixo das pedras e dos seres, curated by Fabricio Faccio, Museu da Cidade, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2023
TANGRAM, curated by Daniela Avellar, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2022
Antimoda, Martha Pagy Escritório de Arte, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Quermesse, curated by Pollyana Quintella e Cadu, Instituto Inclusartiz, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2021
Os melhores artistas de todos os tempos da última semana, curated by Gustavo Matos e Bob N, Galeria Úmida, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2020
Desvio, Arroba Galeria, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Como nos movemos, como queremos nos mover, Parque Lage, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2019
Patifaria, Titocar Poético, curated by Carla Oliveira, Maricá, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Cofre #1, curated by collective Só na Correria, Espaço Apis, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Bicho, Casa Bicho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2018
9FCCP, curated by Bob N., Galeria Úmida, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Residências

2021
Refresco, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Formação

2022
Imersões Poéticas with Pollyana Quintella and Cadu, Escola sem Sítio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2019
Imersão “NÓS” with Clarissa Diniz, EAV Parque Lage, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Programa Formação e Deformação, EAV Parque Lage, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2018
Design – Comunicação Visual, Pontifícia Universidade Católica (PUC), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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