

CENTRE
RÉGIONAL DE LA PHOTOGRAPHIE
HAUTS-DE-FRANCE

CRP/

PRESS RELEASE

BIJARI La Machine du Monde

SEPTEMBER 14

...
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**CRP/ Centre régional
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Hauts-de-France**

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La Machine du Monde

september 14. . . november 24 2019

Press visit

friday september 13 2019 / 2pm
in the presence of the artists and the
curator of the exhibition.

Opening

saturday september 14 2019 /
12.30pm
in the presence of the artists and the
curator of the exhibition.

Free admission

tuesday . . . friday
1pm . . . 5pm
saturday / sunday / public holidays
2pm . . . 6pm

Conversation

tuesday september 10 2019 / 7pm
with the collectives Bijari and
Saprophytes
Auberge de Jeunesse HI Lille
235 boulevard Paul Painlevé
59000 Lille

The CRP/ is inviting the Brazilian artist collective Bijari, based in São Paulo, to lead a participatory, collaborative project with inhabitants of Douchy-les-Mines, exploring the dynamics, synergies or conflicts that pervade and configure a public space.

In the context of their residency in the spring of 2019, Bijari spent one week in front of the art centre on Place des Nations offering ordinary activities open to everyone (reading, games, cooking, discussions). The exhibition at the CRP/ presents works produced by the collective, some of which were created with local inhabitants during their work residency. The pieces making up the exhibition recall this experience and draw upon the research they conducted into ideas of (im)permanence, (dis)placement and memory.

Based in São Paulo and active since 1997, Bijari is made up of members trained in a variety of disciplines. The group conducts research into broad, complementary fields of activity like architecture, design and visual arts. This diversity is found in the wide range of works they produce, which sculpture, installations, maps and audiovisual productions, and which focus on the notion of “common interest”: the observation of the use of public space with the goal of reflecting on the poetic and collective imagination manifested there.

In this context, Bijari understands public space as a place that symbolizes relations that go beyond a territorial and architectonic conceptualization that is limited to defined or preestablished urban uses. Guided by reflection on practice and theory, the collective endeavors to create situations that make it possible to rethink the political, social and cultural content of the concepts of nationhood and belonging, the meaning of which is always influenced by the historical context. The central idea of the exhibition presented at the CRP/ is to reflect upon the paradoxes underpinning the inevitably conflictual relationship between the Brazilian collective memory being constructed by the members of Bijari and a foreign memory, linked to the hegemonic representations that exist in the collective colonial unconscious.

The title of the exhibition, **La Machine du Monde** [The Machine of the World], is borrowed from the eponymous poem¹ by the Brazilian modernist writer Carlos Drummond de Andrade. In this 1949 poem, the “disillusioned self” finds himself in front of an immense machine emerging from a hole in the earth, and understands that it holds precious secrets. Here the poet is asserting his skepticism towards industrial development based on mining, which is eroding the landscape of his small village.

*The sternest dark had already settled
on the stony road of Minas Gerais,
and the Machine of the World, rejected,*

*put itself carefully back together,
while I went on my way, hands
at my sides, weighing what I had lost.*

1. Carlos Drummond de Andrade, *Multitudinous Heart: Selected Poems* (trans. by Richard Zenith), Ferrar, Straus & Giroux, New York, 2015, p. 249.

Some of the works presented in this exhibition were developed while Bijari were doing a residency in Douchy in the spring of 2019. What makes this group distinctive is that it creates projects that are directly related to space, the environment and its specificity. This makes sense because immersion in a foreign territory spawns questions relating to the social order and to memories, thus bringing out the kinships and alterities between Brazil and France.

With the work *Résistance*, Bijari reconsiders a characteristic that recurs in a number of the works presented in this exhibition, namely the simplicity of the material chosen for the creation of the actual piece (usually found in the space itself). With *Résistance*, this practice results from a “simple” displacement (in the use, function and vocabulary) of the items used. The “weed”, seen as a grass that “causes damage” because of its undesirable effects on agriculture or even architecture, is reconsidered based on an interpretation that questions the state of nature, its regulation, and the possibility of an esthetic conflict between the free growth of nature and its regulation.

The weeds in question were collected from buildings and sidewalks in Douchy, and were replanted in French army boots that symbolize strength and power.

La ligne qui nous divise [The Line That Divides Us] is a work made with glass fragments found on Place des Nations adjacent to the CRP/. Since some of these fragments are the result of the vandalism inflicted on the plaza and occasionally on the CRP/, the group sees them as a reflection of conflicts generated by the cultural and social separation of worlds that are foreign to one another. Here Bijari uses the map of South America as a base for representing the imaginary line separating Brazil from French Guyana, the French colony located in South America. This boundary is reproduced with collected glass fragments, in order to symbolize the notion of areas of contact—and conflict—not only between cultures (Brazilian and French), but also between the art center and the street.

Puxadinho creates a public “living together” area, linking the inside and outside of the CRP/ by opening a door and installing a canopy above that door, which leads out of the gallery and faces the public plaza. The intervention is intended to create an zone of permeability—or transition—between the indoor and outdoor spaces. In Brazilian terminology, *Puxadinho* refers to improvised construction based on an unplanned architectonic addition. *Puxadinho* connects with another installation entitled *Collectif*, consisting of a series of chairs attached to one another, which can be transported from inside to outside the gallery. Since access to the chairs does not presuppose any reception formalities, their use is free and open to all passers-by and all users of the space.

Still exploring the notion of the boundary, with *Racines du Ciel* [The Roots of the Sky], Bijari questions political maps drawn up according to European culture. To this end, they summon myths of the Yanomami indigenous people, who consider the soil to be a part of the sky that fell one day. A broader interpretation understands the sky as a metaphor for the environment, mainly the Amazon that gives Brazil the obligation to lead the fight against global warming. True to that interpretation, the work *Racines du Ciel* uses

demolition debris on world maps to redraw territories, materializing Brazil's global responsibility on issues linked to climate change.

For *Drapeau* [Flag], the Brazilian flag has been installed in one of São Paulo's longest urban tunnels and is staying there for months, exposed to the dirty particles emitted by cars. The work questions today's nationalist extremism in Brazil, which is based on curbing social rights and granting major concessions to mining, to lumbering, and to industrial farming and fishing.

Once it has been removed from the tunnel, the flag will be transported to the gallery, where it will be exhibited alongside photographic recordings documenting that process.

Dark Data uses the Google search engine to examine the most frequent associations linked with instances relating to Brazil. The search is done based on terms connected with Brazil, like "environment", "work", "pride" and "social minorities". This tool's automatic suggestions follow the repeated search tendencies on a specific computer, and at the same time they reveal today's recurrent discussions and local cultural stereotypes. The images resulting from this series are screenshots printed on metallic plates.

Finally, the audiovisual installation **La Machine du Monde** immerses the viewer in a universe of images that appear in a quick succession at the rhythm of percussions. The images transport us to the forests, figures and icons of armed conflicts, illustrating indigenous people's resistance to genocide and to the appropriation of their land, which with they live in full symbiosis.

As Viveiros de Castro² says, maybe the time has come to take seriously the voices of Brazilian aborigines and their shamans, "who continue to resist [their] total dissolution by the West's modernizing blender".

Marcela Vieira

2. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, from his preface to *A Queda do Céu – Palavras de um Xamã Yanomami* (in Portuguese), by Davi Kopenawa and Bruce Albert (Ed. Companhia das Letras, 2015).

GRUPO BIJARI

The Bijari collective, made up of architects, designers and artists, develops projects at the cross section of art, design and urban planning, using a wide variety of mediums such as sculpture, video, cartography and urban intervention.

Based in São Paulo, the group observes how the narratives of the those in power confront sociocultural movements in the establishment of urban spaces and imagery, in order to configure new political and poetic territories.

www.bijari.com.br

Works presented at the CRP/ :

Résistance, 2019

Militar boots, “weeds”, dripping irrigation system, metallic shelves
2,10 x 2,10 m

La Ligne qui Nous Divise, 2019

Broken glass pieces attached to the wall
2,77 x 2,00 cm

Racines du Ciel, 2019

Debris on world map
168 x 119 cm

Drapeau, 2019

Grimed Brazilian flag and photo print from the intervention process
Variable dimensions

Dark Data, 2019

12 metal printed plates (approximately 22 x 9 cm each)
Variable dimensions

Collectif, 2019

installation
6 foldable seats, wire, mosquetons

“Puxadinho”, 2019

Façade intervention with lambrequin and led panel
Variable dimensions

La Machine du Monde, 2019

3 channel video and audio installation, loop
5 minutes



First page /

Bijari
Resistance, 2012
 © Bijari



Bijari,
Racines du Ciel, détail, 2019,
 production CRP/
 © Bijari



Bijari,
Occupation de la Place des Nations #4,
 Douchy-les-Mines, 2019
 © Bijari





Bijari,
Collectif, 2019, production CRP/
© Bijari



Bijari,
Drapeau, 2019
photo print from the intervention process
© Bijari



Le CRP/

The CRP/ Centre régional de la photographie based in Douchy-les-Mines develops art centre missions in the field of photography and contemporary images.

Founded in 1982, the CRP/ grew out of a collective of photographers who came from the photo club of the Usinor Denain Work Council. As a mobile association at the time, the CRP spent four years developing exhibitions and organising photography competitions. In 1983, in connection with its photographic commissions and its production of works, the Ministry of Culture recognised the CRP/'s art library, which became the first of its kind in France in the field of photography. In 1986, the CRP/ moved in to a former post office made available by the town of Douchy-les-Mines, and in 1991 the Ministry of Culture recognised it as a national art centre.

As a centre that supports creativity, at the outset it developed a project to commission works linked with its territory: the Mission Photographique Transmanche (1988 to 2006), which lay the foundations of its collection. This has since been supplemented through the art centre's programme and productions. The CRP/ is one of the few art centres endowed with a collection directly linked to its own production activity. The CRP/ collection currently contains 9,000 works, with an art library offering the public over 300 works that may be borrowed. Linked to its significant publication activity, it also has a document collection of over 8000 books.

The CRP/'s activities include creative support, research, production, distribution and mediation, all of which is developed in a region that is marked by its industrial past, an area that showed a very early commitment to culture. Today the CRP/ is a place of experience transmission, awareness-raising, mediation and training in the field of images, with a trans-regional and national reputation.

The CRP/'s artistic and cultural vision, championed by its current director Muriel Enjalran, endeavours to be forward-looking, encouraging young artists through its research and support mission, keeping in mind the regional history of images to which its collection testifies. It is regionally rooted while also giving attention to other art scenes abroad, through invitations to artists who come and shift or renew visitors' perceptions of their history and region, and provide access to other cultural and societal issues in the world.

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This exhibition is supported by:



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L'ENGAGEMENT SEPT. 2019 > FÉV. 2020

Points de vue du Réseau Diagonal
sur l'engagement en photographie
Une manifestation nationale
en partenariat avec le Cnap



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