

Synopses

Aline Motta

(Other) Foundations, 2017–2019

Following *Bridges over the Abyss* (2017) and *If the Sea Had Balconies* (2017), *(Other) Foundations* concludes a trilogy of films by Aline Motta. The last part deals with the consequences of the journey to Lagos in Nigeria that the artist undertook in search of her roots and questions what it means to belong to a place that might not acknowledge its seemingly evident kinship. Bringing together Lagos, Cachoeira (Bahia), and Rio de Janeiro, cities whose names, given by Portuguese colonizers and of importance for the Black Atlantic, evoke bodies of water. The film connects these territories through bays, rivers and bridges, tracing the currents of a shared ancestral history. A voice-over accompanying her observations, paired with a sonorous, rhythmic montage of footage shot on location accompanies the film. It imagines a form of communication through mirrors that would somehow reflect the same light on both sides of the Atlantic.

Camila Freitas

Apparition, 2024

Employing participatory observation close to anthropological methods, the filmmaker sensitively and respectfully shows her grandmother's candle ritual at home to ask for protection and well-being. The grandmother recounts her first encounter with the apparition of caboclo Indaia and shares other spiritual visions, before the artist reveals her own visions in the presence of her toddler. The Afro-Brazilian cosmology (Umbanda) blends indigenous, African, and Catholic elements. These beliefs empower practitioners to connect with the deceased or with protective and healing spiritual entities. The film highlights both the passing down of spiritual practices and the matrix of vision narratives from one generation to another, as well as its collective importance in daily life beyond visible reality. The work is conceived as a two-channel video installation for exhibitions and immerses audiences in parallel narratives.

Janaina Wagner

Curupira and the Machine of Destiny, 2021

Curupira is the first part of the *Transamazônica Trilogy* by Janaina Wagner, which includes *Quebrante* (2024) and *When the Second Sun Arrives / A Comet in Your Eyes* (2025). We follow the protagonist in the heart of Amazonia, where the Transamazônica BR-230 intersects with the equally legendary Estrada Fantasma BR-319. The docu-fictional road-movie-like film refers to the Cinema Novo classic *Iracema – Uma Transa Amazônica* by Jorge Bodansky and Orlando Senna (1974). The protagonist in Janaina Wagner's work appears as the ghost of the eponymous main character of the film, who embodies a 14-year-old Indigenous prostitute who travels with a truck driver. The film ends with the imaginary and meaningful encounter between Iracema's ghost and Curupira, a well-known mythological figure in Brazil from Indigenous communities, considered a powerful protector of the forests and feared as an avenger. The film becomes an artistic statement against the neo-colonial claim to the Amazon region by external powers, including the state, symbolised by the Transamazônica, which was opened in 1972 during the military dictatorship (1964–1985).

Text: Bruno Z'Graggen, curator VIDEO WINDOW