

**MICHAEL
JANSSEN**

YONAMINE

 [michaeljanssen.gallery](https://www.instagram.com/michaeljanssen.gallery)





THROUGH HIS WIDE RANGE OF WORKS - COLLAGE, INSTALLATION, PAINTING, PHOTOGRAPHY, FILM, AND PERFORMANCE - ANGOLA-BORN ARTIST YONAMINE EXPLORES THE POSTCOLONIAL HISTORY OF HIS AFRICAN ORIGINS AND PLACES THEM IN A COMMON RESONANT SPACE WITH CONTEMPORARY WESTERN-INFLUENCED CULTURAL PHENOMENA.

YONAMINE

Born in 1975, in Luanda, Angola
Lives and works in Athens and Angola

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 ETC. - Extraction | Trade | Cashtration, Christina Guerra, PT
- 2023 Long-distance friendships, 14th Kaunas Biennial, Kaviar & Kuduro, P.A.R.A.K.A.S, Vidzeme Market
- 2022 PARLA_MUTE, Michael Janssen Berlin, Berlin, DE
Amnésia & Dislexia, Centro Internacional das Artes José de Guimarães, Guimarães, PT
- 2019 Union Jacking. Voice of the Voiceless, Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, Lisbon, PT
- 2018 N'gola Cine, Jahmek Contemporary Art, Luanda, AO
- 2017 15th Istanbul Bienal, 'a good neighbour', curated by Elmgreen & Dragset, Istanbul, TR
4th Ural Industrial Biennial of Contemporary Art, 'New Literacy', curated by João Ribas, Ekaterinburg, RU
- 2016 Não Sou Santo, Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, Lisboa, PT
- 2013 Yonamine - No Por No - Galeria Nuno Centeno (former Reflexus Arte Contemporânea), Porto, PT
- 2012 No Pain, Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg, AT
Só China, Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, Lisbon, PT
- 2011 Trash Anthology – Anthology Trash, Iwalewa-Haus, Bayreuth, DE
- 2010 SOSO Arte Contemporânea Africana, São Paulo, BR
ZonaMaco, project room, Mexico City, MX
- 2009 Control Z, Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, Lisbon, PT
- 2008 Tuga Sauve, 3+1 Arte Contemporânea, Lisbon, PT
Necessitat de veure, Display Lab, Tarragona, ES
- 2007 Cabeça sem gente, Intervention in 5 embargoed houses in Serra da Azóia, Azóia, PT

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 Long-distance Friendships, 14th Kaunas Biennial, Kaunas, LT
- 2021 Territórios: da liberdade e da diversidade, Brazil Embassy, curator: João Silvério, DE
- 2020 Homo Kosmos (cough, cough), Galeria Avenida da Índia, curator: Tobi Maier, Lisbon, PT
China Africa - Crossing the world color line, Centre Pompidou, curator: Alicia Knock, Paris, France

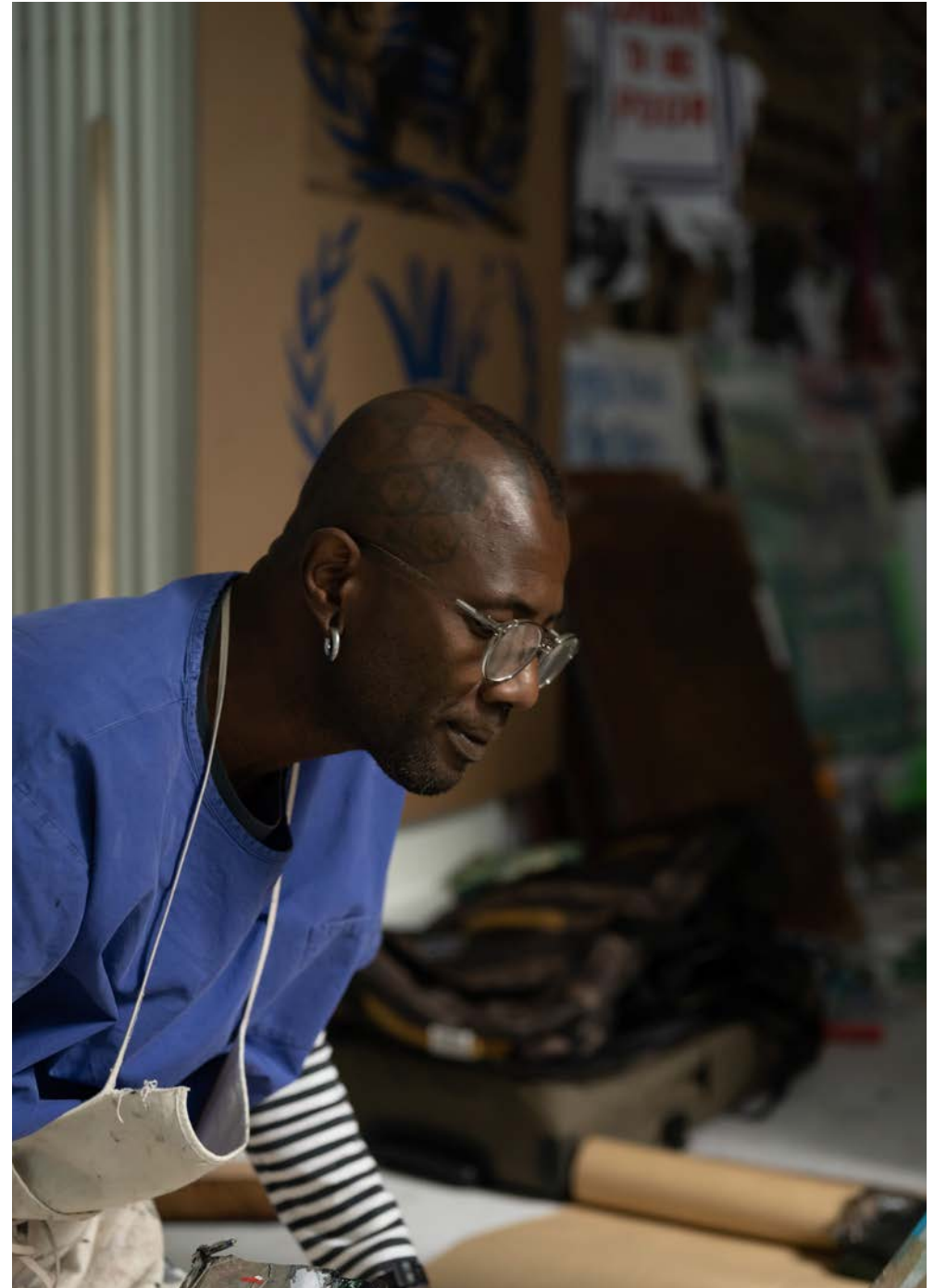
- 2019 No Fly Zone - Unlimited Mileage, Museu Coleção Berardo, CCB, Lisbon, PT
Good Vibrations, Galeria Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, Lisbon, PT
- 2018 After the End: Timing Socialism in Contemporary African Art, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, curator: Álvaro Luís Lima, New York, NY, US
1000 imagens; uma palavra vale mais que mil imagens, Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, Lisbon, PT
La idea en un signo - La colección Sánchez-Ubiría, Sala kubo-kutxa, San Sebastián, ES
Pois EU é um outro, Centro Artes Águeda (CAA), curator: Miguel Amado, Águeda, PT
Serralves Collection: New Lines, Images, Objects, Museu Serralves, Porto, PT
- 2017 New Literacy, 4th Ural Industrial Biennial of Contemporary Art, curator: João Ribas, Ekaterinburg, RU
A good neighbour, 5th Istanbul Biennale, curators: Elmgreen & Dragset, Istanbul, TR
THEM OR US!, Porto Municipal Gallery, curator: Paulo Mendes, Porto, PT
Daqui pra frente – Arte contemporânea em Angola, CAIXA Cultural Rio, Rio de Janeiro, BR
- 2016 P. - Uma homenagem a Paulo Cunha e Silva, por extenso, Porto Municipal Gallery, curator: Miguel von Hafe Pérez, Porto, PT
Commuting: Os das Bandas, Espaço Espelho d'Água, Lisbon, PT
Portugal Portugueses - Arte Contemporânea, Curator: Emanuel Araujo, Museu Afro Brasil, São Paulo, BR
- 2015 4th edition of Encounters Beyond History: Luta ca caba inda—An archive in relation, José de Guimarães International Arts Centre, Guimarães, PT
All Rights Reserved: Coisas Do Mundo Na Coleção Norlinda e José Lima, Oliva Creative Factory, São João da Madeira, PT
You Love Me, You Love Me Not - Arte contemporânea na Coleção Sindika Dokolo, Municipal Gallery
No Fly Zone. Unlimited Mileage, Berardo Museum, Collection of Modern and Contemporary Art, Lisbon, PT
Almeida Garrett, Oporto (curated by Suzana Sousa and Bruno Leitão)
- 2014 RE - MOVE, Fundação Arpad Szenes, Vieira da Silva, Lisbon, PT
Afro-ufu (together with Tiago Borges), 31 São Paulo Biennale, São Paulo, BR
- 2013 Trienal no Alentejo, Trienal no Alentejo, Lisbon, PT
- 2012 100 Artworks, 10 Years: A Selection from the PLMJ Foundation Collection, Fundação Arpad Szenes, Vieira da Silva, Lisbon, PT
O Castelo em 3 Actos: Assalto, Destruição, Reconstrução / The Castle in 3 Acts: Assault, Destruction, Reconstruction' curator: Paulo Cunha e Silva, Ducal Palace, Guimarães Castle, Guimarães Capital Europeia da Cultura, Guimarães, PT
- 2011 Dipoló, AIRspace, Culpeper and Upper Main galleries | New York, NY, US
performance, IMERGENCIA – Encontro de Performance, Lisboa, PT
The Mews Project Space, London, GB
Orgasme, open studio, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, FR
4 Cidades, Centro de Artes Plásticas de Coimbra - CAV, Coimbra, PT
Terceira Metade, Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, BR
Idioma Comum, Coleção PLMJ, Lisboa, PT
- 2010 29ª Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, BR
A República Revisitada, Galeria Diário de Notícias, Lisboa, PT
A Filosofia do Dinheiro, Pavilhão Branco do Museu da Cidade, Lisbon, PT
O Povo, Museu da Electricidade, Lisbon, PT
Luanda Smooth and Rave, Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Bahia, BR
A Museum is to Art what a great Translator is to a Writer, Galeria Baginski, Lisbon, PT
Luanda Smooth and Rave, Museu de História Natural, Luanda, AN
- 2009 Luanda Smooth and Rave, Galeria Solar Ferrão, Salvador da Bahia, BR
Luanda Smooth and Rave, Grand Theatre Bordeaux, Bordeaux, FR
Festival Bandits-Mages, Bourges, FR
X Havana Biennale, Habana, CU
Katchokwe Style, IX Sharjah Biennale, Sharjah, UEA. Curator: Isabel Carlos
- 2008 Mostra SOSO, SOSO Contemporary Art, São Paulo, BR
Necessitat de veure, Display Lab, Tarragona, ES
INPUT _ Coleção Sindika Dokolo, Museu de História Natural, Luanda, AN
Travessia, Centro Atlántico Arte Moderno, Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, ES
Listen Darling... The World is Yours, Ellipse Foundation Art Centre, Cascais, PT
Curated: Lisa Phillips
Travessia, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderna, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, ES
Partilhar territórios, 5ª Bienal de São Tomé, São Tomé e Príncipe
Sara & André, 3+1 Arte Contemporânea, Lisbon, Portugal
Programa Distância e proximidade, Toldos de artistas, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, PT
Guasch Coranty Painting Prize, Exposição artistas seleccionados, Barcelona, ES
Obras dos dias conseguidos, Quase Galeria, Oporto, PT

COLLECTIONS

BIC - Banco Internacional de Crédito (Lisbon, PT) / Centre National des Arts Plastiques
- Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris, FR) / BPA's Collection - Banco Privado de Angola
(AN) / Norlinda e José Lima's Collection (São João da Madeira, PT) / Fundação Ellipse
Contemporary Art Collection (Alcoitão, PT) / PLMJ Foundation (Lisbon, PT) / D Collection
- Sindika Dokolo African Collection of Contemporary Art (Luanda, AN) / The Frank - Suss
Collection (London, GB) / Peter Nobel, Zurich, CH

RESIDENCES AND PROJECTS

- 2018 Artistic residency, Delfina Foundation, London, GB
- 2012 'Reichsparteitagsgelände', Bayrouth, DE
Bundanon Trust, Cambewarra, AU
- 2010 Artistic residency, Cali, Juanchaco, CO (Tatoo You)
- 2008 Take a look, PARQ magazine intervention, Lisbon, PT
Artist residency Muyehlekete, MuzArt – Museu Nacional de Arte, Maputo, MZ
- 2007 Artist residency, ZDB, Lisbon, PT





Kaviar & Kuduro, 2023, collaborative installation with Ihosvanny (sound), Kaunas Biennale



Untitled, 2023, 180 x 180cm, mixed media on canvas



Untitled, 2023, 180 x 180cm, mixed media on canvas



Blue Scientifically Treated People (STP I), 2023, Mixed media on fabric, 180 x 180 cm



Blue Scientifically Treated People (STP II), 2023, Mixed media on fabric, 180 x 180 cm



Yonamine, Untitled (STP II), 2023, Mixed media on fabric, 180 x 180 cm

ITS
EXPENSIVE
TO BE
POOR

ITS
EXPENSIVE
TO BE
POOR

ITS
EXPENSIVE
TO BE
POOR

ITS
EXPENSIVE
TO BE
POOR

10.09.2022
CASSIOPEIA
3 FLOORS & SUMMER GARDEN

REVALER STRASSE 99 & BHF WARSCHAUER STRASSE

KITKAT
COME AS YOU ARE
MINIMAL • DEEPCOOL • TECHNO • GAY
EVERY MONDAY



Untitled (STP II), 2023, Mixed media on fabric, 180 x 180 cm

YONAMINE PARLA_MUTE

by Karina Abdusamalova

Filled with the street, the gallery space turns into a territory for radical graphic statements. Here, the pictorial and the verbal are mixed with a daring charisma. Here, work in progress is the only permanent state of things. Here, the totality of the installation envelops the spectator in the mythos of the street protest as the wall becomes a platform for expressing ideas that have been violently muted.

For PARLA_MUTE, Angolan artist Yonamine “took over” the gallery space, transforming it into his studio where he worked for several weeks. A spatial diary, the show merges the personal with the political: posters, silkscreens and large scale collages reflect a fragmented reality, observed as if through pieces of a broken mirror. In Yonamine’s works, the figurative emerges from the abstract, expressionism fits within a poster and conceptual conceits live side by side with graphic art, providing the viewer with snippets of a process in constant flux, in which layers are constantly added or shed. Inspired by street dialogue, with a focus on post-colonial African art, his multimedia installations transmit the urgency of political nonconformity, which refuses to accept social inequality as a universal norm. The wordplay in the title refers to the oppressive practice in authoritarian countries of silencing opinions opposed to the official regime. In the artist’s own words, PARLA_MUTE is a parliament without a voice, a “cultural asphyxia in search of intellectual oxygen, filled with chaos and hope.”

Yonamine uses the poster, one of the most favored paste-up formats, to confront political and societal ideas about identity, beauty standards and moral choices both on the European and African continents. Juxtaposing the World Food Program stencil with the “Organise or STARVE” print, the Angolan artist subvertises the ambiguous neoliberal agenda of the Western world. The Eurovision song contest logo appears as a symbol of eurocentrism that encourages cultural diversity only within the frame of European values. Was ist schön? — what is beautiful? The question is open for debate as The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born. The title of the 1968 novel by Ghanaian writer Ayi Kwei Armah ironically interplays with the headline of Zimbabwe tabloid NewsDay, “CHIWENGA WIFE MOCKS GRACE”. While the book tells a story about the

moral struggles of a nameless protagonist, who refuses to a bribe at work, the newspaper refersto Marry Chiwenga, the ex-wife of the Vice President of Zimbabwe, who was charged with fraud and money laundering. Another crucial literary reference, a protagonist quote of the show — It’s expensive to be poor — belongs to James Baldwin. The piece that now forms a part of PARLA_MUTE was hand-painted by a craftsman in one of African markets at the request of Yonamine, who put up posters with this ambiguous message in the busiest and wealthiest parts of Berlin, articulating an idea that was true sixty years ago and remains just as relevant today.

Highbrow and lowbrow, political gossips and references from serious literature —clashing identities and cultures in an unexpected way, Yonamine creates a “ghetto style” installation that looks deliberately raw, unfinished and constantly fluctuating. The strong temporal dimension of Yonamine’s works invites the viewer to move through the exhibition, morphing with it, in order to grasp the fleeting sense of things. In a gallery transformed into a studio, where the floor is covered with silkscreens and rolled posters are stored in the corner, what the artist shares with the visitor is not the product but the process. The untamed creative flow encourages a confident conversation, turning the blank silent wall into a parliament for those who have never before had a chance to be heard.



PARLA_MUTE, 2022, Installation view at Michael Janssen Berlin



PARLA_MUTE, 2022, Installation view at Michael Janssen Berlin



PARLA_MUTE, 2022, Installation view at Michael Janssen Berlin



Eurovision, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 190 x 190 cm



No fakes, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 190 x 190 cm



Beautiful People, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 190 x 190 cm



Who fuck the planet, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 190 x 190 cm



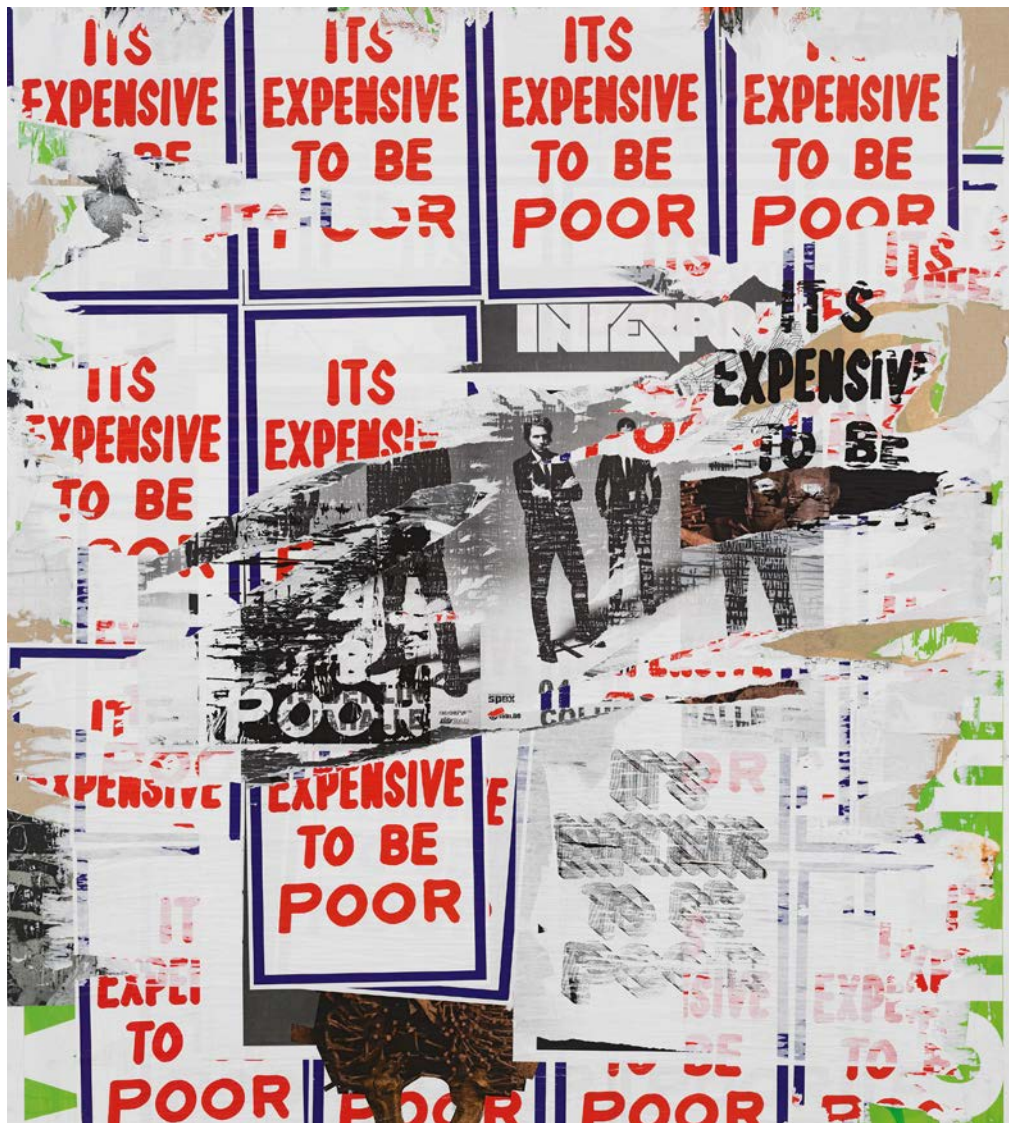
Organise or starve, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 120 x 120 cm



Parla_Mute, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 190 x 230 cm



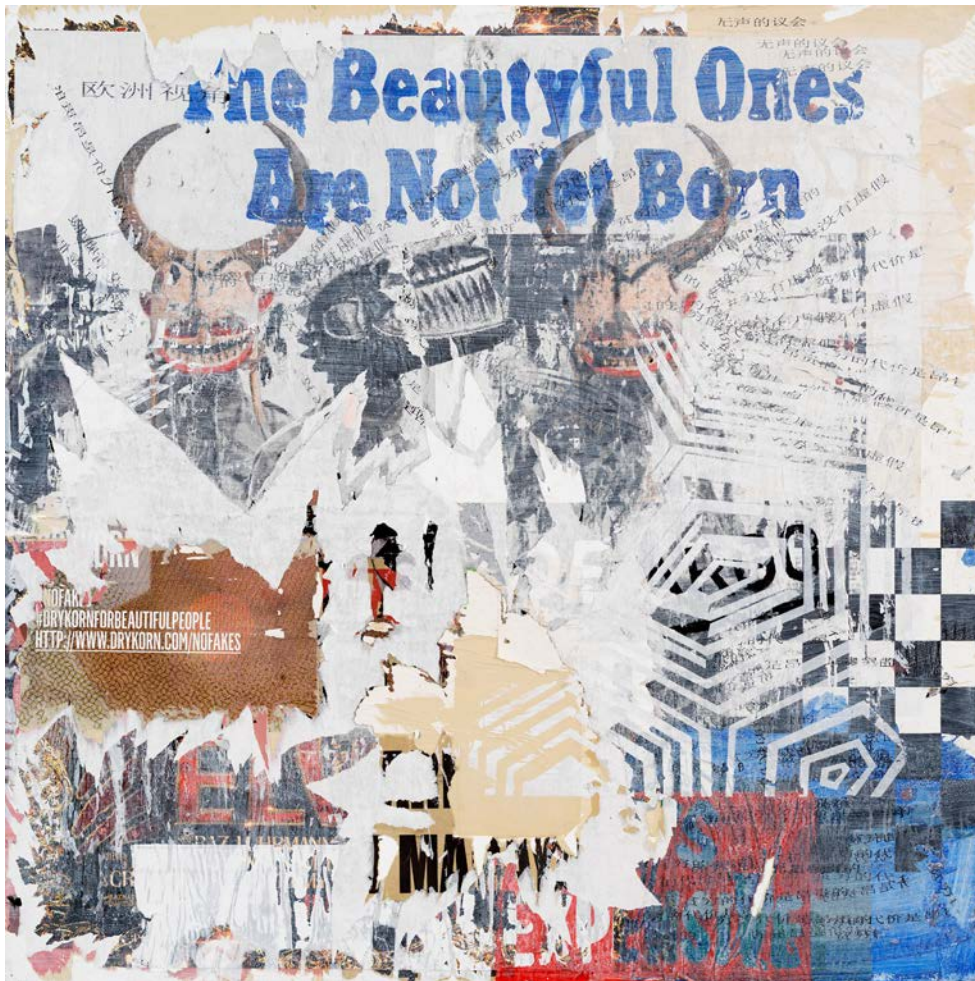
Was ist schön, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 190 x 230 cm



It's expensive to be poor, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 200 x 180 cm



UN Gangsters, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 230 x 190 cm



TBO_ANY_B1 (The beautiful ones are not yet born 1), 2022,
Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 120 x 120 cm



How to get glass skin, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 190 x 190 cm



Azul Indígena VII, 2019, Mixed media, 173 x 173 cm



Black Akman, 2015, Mixed media on canvas, 180 x 180 cm





PARLA_MUTE, 2022, Work in progress at Michael Janssen Berlin

YONAMINE RIFFS OR HOW THINGS WILL HAPPEN, ANYWAY

by José L. Falconi

Things hardly end. Better yet: if one looks closer things are so effervescent, so filled with instability that they hardly remain in one particular state, shape or form, but continue fluctuating, adding or shedding layers permanently. Intimately, anything is a vortex; secretly, everything contains multitudes. In such perennial, continuous flux, where everything is impossible to be pinned down precisely, it might be wiser to let things float, fluctuate—to relinquish the anxiety for control and to let things happen because, guess what, things will end up (as the title of Chinua Achebe's novel suggest) "falling apart," you want it or not.

Thus, it might not be wise to wrestle down to the ground a reality that is not willing to ever settle down; we will end up getting hurt (as we usually do). Instead, it might be wiser to loosen ourselves, take it a bit easier, and attempt to surf the wave of events if we can, whenever we can, as much as we can. That might be best we can do.

In such a state of affairs, always prone to disarray, it might be also a good idea to learn from one of the best surfers around—one whose disposition toward life is not necessarily to organize what is around them, but to ride the tide with elegance and even glamour. And Yonamine is one the best surfers around. He not only thrives on such constant disarray but, most crucially, makes riding any set of events deeply captivating.

Yes, he is all over the place—medium wise, theme wise—but it couldn't be otherwise because everything is, actually, everything. It just depends on when and how it's framed. For this reason, it is not surprising that his works acquire their unique strength in their indeterminacy: there where the figurative emerges from the abstract, there where expressionism fits into a poster, and conceptual conceits lives side by side graphic art, is precisely where his work flourishes, providing us with glances, with snippets, of the never-ending morphing process in which we are immersed. Take for example pieces such as "Tuga Suave" (2008) or "The Best of the Best" (2007) or any of his "lettrist-spoofs" as "Call Me" (2009-10): in all of those pieces the disarray of the world is palpable, vividly alive in each of the ready-made's which the pieces are built from, which not only show the grittiness of the incessant fluctuation of things but, most importantly for our appreciation of Yonamine as a reluctant follower of Isidore Isou. Just as the Lettrists in

Paris in the 1940s did, Yonamine knows it is only a matter of finding, amidst all the contingencies, the correct coordinates under which to frame things.

It is an activity akin to surfing, as it requires precise timing: when to get on the wave and when to leave it with little fuss, so as to start riding the next one. Consider if not his immersive installation "Os mestres as novas criaturas (remix style)" at the 29th Bienal of Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 2010. It is space packed with graphic material made with variations on a handful of the same themes—all obtained through the mixing and re-mixing of the very same materials. It is an altar or a quilt on the power and the strength of variation: it not only shows the multitudes of versions latent in any form, but also projects a sensation of endlessness. Yes, things for Yonamine contain multitudes. He is not looking to stop the decay of things, or the incessant proliferation of stimuli because he knows better. Rather, he accepts the sublime nature of contemporary existence and simply tries to find a way of riding such unstoppable flow of things, making them legible for a fleeting moment. Ultimately, the whole project rests on forging an instant—on opening an instance in time—in which things, all the things, acquire a fleeting sense. In other words, the works by Yonamine might look abundantly material—they are sometimes even physically imponent shows—but they are usually activated in their temporal axis. In all their physicality, despite all their physicality, we should not be fooled: they are (very) timely devices.

Probably for that reason—because of its strong temporal dimension—it is almost impossible to simply contemplate Yonamine's works because one moves through them, morphing with them, transforming with them. Their temporality infuses them with velocity, with speed, in time as the works demarcate a particular temporal process, such as in the case of "The Pao Nosso de Cada Dia"—an installation of 2016—consisting of only toasted bread collected over one year presumably, to compose a perfectly geometric pattern on a huge wall that resembles a flag. Toast by toast, bite by withheld bite, the piece acquires its effectiveness in the almost mechanical (re) collection of the almost mechanical action of producing toast for breakfast (and not eating it) during a particular period. It is a unique, nutritious quilt; one which shows the allure of the slight variation—of how no iteration is ever the same.

For PARLA_MUTE his latest show at Michael Janssen Gallery in Berlin, Yonamine presents a series of posters and silkscreens made from a number of phrases and graphic material picked up, once more, from the streets and transformed incessantly through the remix.

We should prepare ourselves, once more, for a poignant show filled with seemingly contradictory messages—"It's expensive to be poor" resonates strongly, or think about the title if one reads it on a bilingual horizon—in which the incessant variations of a handful of themes take centerstage, as they unfold and unfold infinitely. In other words: prepare yourself to contemplate (and enjoy) the critical difference that separates iteration from repetition because Yonamine will stage a show on such a gap. When you get to the show don't mind the gap: he inhabits it, it is his favorite place, his most fertile locus; he knows it as any experienced surfer knows the waves of her favorite beach. It is there, amidst the incessant proliferation of posters, signs and messages that we will be able to realize that some of his incursions into the beaches of the contemporary sublime are so riveting admirable, so provocative tempting, that one just has no option but to follow him, surfboard in hand, wherever he goes.

Boston, August 2022



Criot Galaxy, 2022, Mixed media and silkscreen on canvas, 190 x 230 cm



15th Istanbul Biennial, „A Good neighbour“, Installation view, 2017



Pão Nosso de Cada Dia (Our Daily Bread), 2016, Installation (toasts, stencils), Museu Afro Brasil, São Paulo, Brazil



Pão Nosso de Cada Dia (Our Daily Bread), 2016, Installation (toasts, stencils), Museu Afro Brasil, São Paulo, Brazil



Amnésia & Dislexia, Centro Internacional das Artes José de Guimarães, Guimarães, Portugal, 2022



Amnésia & Dislexia, Centro Internacional das Artes José de Guimarães, Guimarães, Portugal, 2022