

The background features a large, solid blue silhouette of a person's head and shoulders on the left. To the right, there is a dense, intricate scribble of blue lines, resembling a complex web or a dense pattern of overlapping lines. The overall color palette is dominated by blue and white, with some hints of yellow and orange at the edges.

SILVANO FRANCO

Yesterday, Today, Now



PAULO
DARZÉ
GALERIA

Siron Franco — *Yesterday, Today, Now*

— Victor Gorgulho
Curator

There is no single, right path to the development of an artistic practice. While some artists' production feeds of multiple and endless experimentation with the different media, materials, and structures offered up by the world of contemporary art, others embrace a kind of reverse vow of chastity. This latter group remains timelessly faithful to a specific set of conditions and means of production, in such a way that these conditions, over time, become the unmistakable signature of their work. In his five decades of dedication to his work, Siron Franco (Goiás Velho, GO, 1947) has joined together, with singular skill and an impressive capacity for renewal, these two artistic pathways.

Siron Franco - Yesterday, Today, Now presents a selection of the Goiás artist's recent production, bringing together paintings and sculptures made from the early 2000s to the present day. In this 25-year period, we see that Siron has changed along with his work. Change that is both driven by the work itself, and also

consciously undertaken by the artist to drive his work in a new direction. After all, few Brazilian artists could be correctly framed one moment as an exponent of abstract expressionism, and another as an acclaimed surrealist. Depending on the point of view, or the moment of his production, these definitions alternate as fitting attributes. More than showing Siron's poetic versatility, this stylistic range confirms the complex pictorial skill of his work.

A delicate play between chromaticism, figuration, abstraction, and realism, in which each of these elements, while interdependent, do not allow themselves to be overwhelmed by each other - as if each one supposes the fundamental contribution of the other. Siron gives each of these categories of painting their own sense of belonging.

Born in 1947, the youngest of thirteen siblings, Siron Franco comes from a poor family in the interior of the state of Goiás. As a child, he moved to Goiânia, in the Popular District, where he spent his childhood and adolescence.

Self-taught, Siron learned oil painting techniques and began to paint portraits of Goiânia's high society, for which he was paid. Instead of studying medicine, as was his parents' plan, Siron had his mind made up: he wanted to be a painter. In 1967, he held his first solo exhibition, still in Goiânia. The 1970s marked a turning point in his artistic life. He moved to São Paulo, where he began his academic studies. He met key figures in Brazilian contemporary art, such as Alfredo Volpi, with whom he established a friendly relationship. In 1974 and 1975, he won the prize for best Brazilian painter at the São Paulo Biennial. Since then, he has produced ceaselessly, achieving levels of visibility for his work usually reserved for few names on the international contemporary art scene. This does not mean, however, that Siron has followed a path of constant exposure, always working in the spotlight or under the critical gaze of his audience.

His career is even marked by occasional exhibition hiatuses, during which he would bury himself in periods of painstaking research. For example, it was Ferreira Gullar who emphatically stated that the experience of looking at a painting by Franco is close to that of "observing something for the first time". Among the works on display here, the viewer will be able to witness some of Siron Franco's pictorial richness. Canvases such as "The Border", "Easterly Wind", "Day and Night" or "What I saw on the internet" make up, so to speak, a "case" of abstraction among many of his works. They seem to prioritize Cartesian forms, creating a sense of horizontality and verticality.

Thus, they approach abstraction in the same vein as the Brazilian Neo-Concrete tradition: using the chromatic content to intensify the form. But unlike the Neo-Concrete movement, these are paintings that do not hide the irregular brushstrokes or the touch of the artist's hand behind an industrial artifice. And then again, Siron takes painting back to familiar territory. In works such as "The Dance of the Vaccines," "Invasion of Yellow," or "Heads," the predominance of red, blue, and yellow undertones creates a mosaic of colors rich in detail. The connecting thread here seems to be the chromatic sensation over the geometric form. His "Human Series", on the other hand, constitutes a fully figurative foray; but only until the second page. If our eye is initially drawn to the silhouettes of the human form, soon afterwards more unusual elements capture our attention: cave paintings, the painter's handprints, idiomatic experiments.

The series seems to be presenting itself as a work of semiotic anthropology; a code for the original peoples of the Brazilian Cerrado. It is in the heart of the Cerrado, the Brazilian savannah, that Siron works, in a studio-home located near Goiânia. The Cerrado, however, is not the limit of his world, but its geographical center. It is the place from where he learned to see details from far away. In "The Names", the American writer Don DeLillo weaves a beautiful passage about deserts and oceans. The ocean works like the unconscious. An infinite surface that protects a world below, impenetrable by sunlight; a suspension of scattered particles that restrict the vision. Desert landscapes are like constant wakefulness. Dryness sets clear boundaries, and nothing escapes the sun's rays.

All objects are discernible. It is from this second place that Siron Franco's lucidity speaks. His paintings' complexity demands a cautious and patient gaze. The amount of detail proliferates the closer you get. What from afar appears to be an abstract surface, up close reveals the silhouette of a face, a pattern of the Karajá people, an animal figure. As a child, Siron feared getting lost in the thick undergrowth of the Cerrado's characteristic gallery forests, known in Portuguese as veredas. His father taught him how to orientate himself. Not by the stars or the sun, but by pointing out that over there was a kapok tree or over there was a Sibipiruna tree, encouraging him to recognise the small details that marked the path home. Siron's painting is like that. You need to follow its meanderings, investigate its details, before finally taking on the challenge of seeing it in its entirety.

Siron Franco —

About

Siron Franco (1947, Goiás Velho, Brazil) is a painter, sculptor, illustrator, draftsman, printmaker, and art director. In 1950 the artist moved with his family to Goiânia, and in 1959, at the age of 12, he began to attend the free art course at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Goiás, where he remained until 1964. There he studied painting with the artists D. J. Oliveira (1932-2005) and Cleber Gouvêa (1942-2000), and attended the anatomy study studios. In 1968 he was awarded the drawing prize at the Bienal da Bahia, and moved the following year to São Paulo, where he lived until 1971. The artist's best-known series, which triggers a paradigmatic change in his production, is the set of works linked to the Cesium 137 radioactive accident in Goiânia, in September 1987.

His works result from an intense relationship with the material, easily observed in the generous layers of oil paint he uses in his paintings, or in the diversity of raw materials he chooses to compose his sculptures or installations, such as concrete, steel, lead, marble, and resin. This intensity gains dramatic airs in the bodies or fragments of bodies that he frequently portrays, whether the bodies of animals, people, saints, dead or alive. The grim air of the universe he has created over his fifty years of activity incorporates satire and absurdity to address political and social issues, such as the violent and unbalanced relationship that man has with nature and with his own humanity.

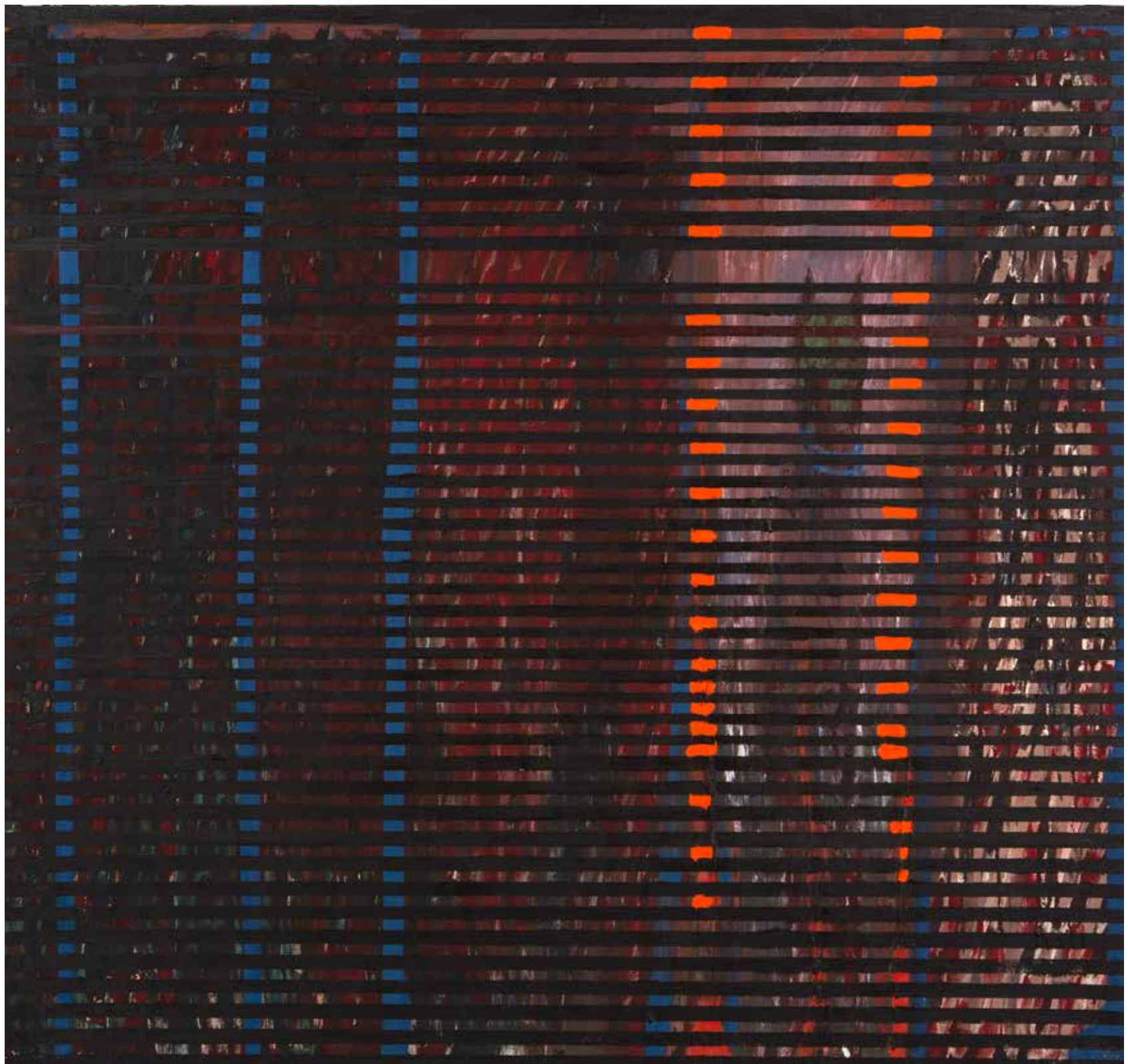
His production has been recognized since the 1970s, and throughout his career he has participated in exhibitions in important national and international museums such Museum of Art of São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro - MAM/RJ, Rio de Janeiro, Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo - MAM/SP, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, The Bronx Museum of the Arts in the United States, and Nagoya City Art Museum in Japan. He has participated in the 2nd Havana Biennial, in several editions of MAM-SP's Panorama of Brazilian Art, and in the International Biennial of São Paulo, winning an award in the 13th edition. His works are part of national and international museum collections, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States; Essex Collection of Art from Latin America, Colchester, Great Britain; Salvador Allende Museum, Santiago de Chile, Chile; Monterey Museum of Contemporary Art - MARCO, Monterrey, Mexico; National Museum of Fine Arts - MNBA, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Museum of Art of São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand - MASP, São Paulo, Brazil; Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro - MAM/RJ, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo - MAM/SP, São Paulo, Brazil; Museum of Modern Art of Bahia - MAM/BA, Salvador, Brazil.



Nightclub interior
2000
oil on canvas
180 x 200 cm



Narcissus
2001
oil on canvas
200 x 150 cm



Border
2002/2007
oil on canvas
180 x 190 cm



Cathedral
2003/2019
oil on canvas
180 x 200 cm



Heads
2003
oil on canvas
100 x 130 cm



What I saw on the internet
2003/2013
oil on canvas
150 x 200 cm



Red curtain
2005
oil on canvas
135,5 x 155 cm



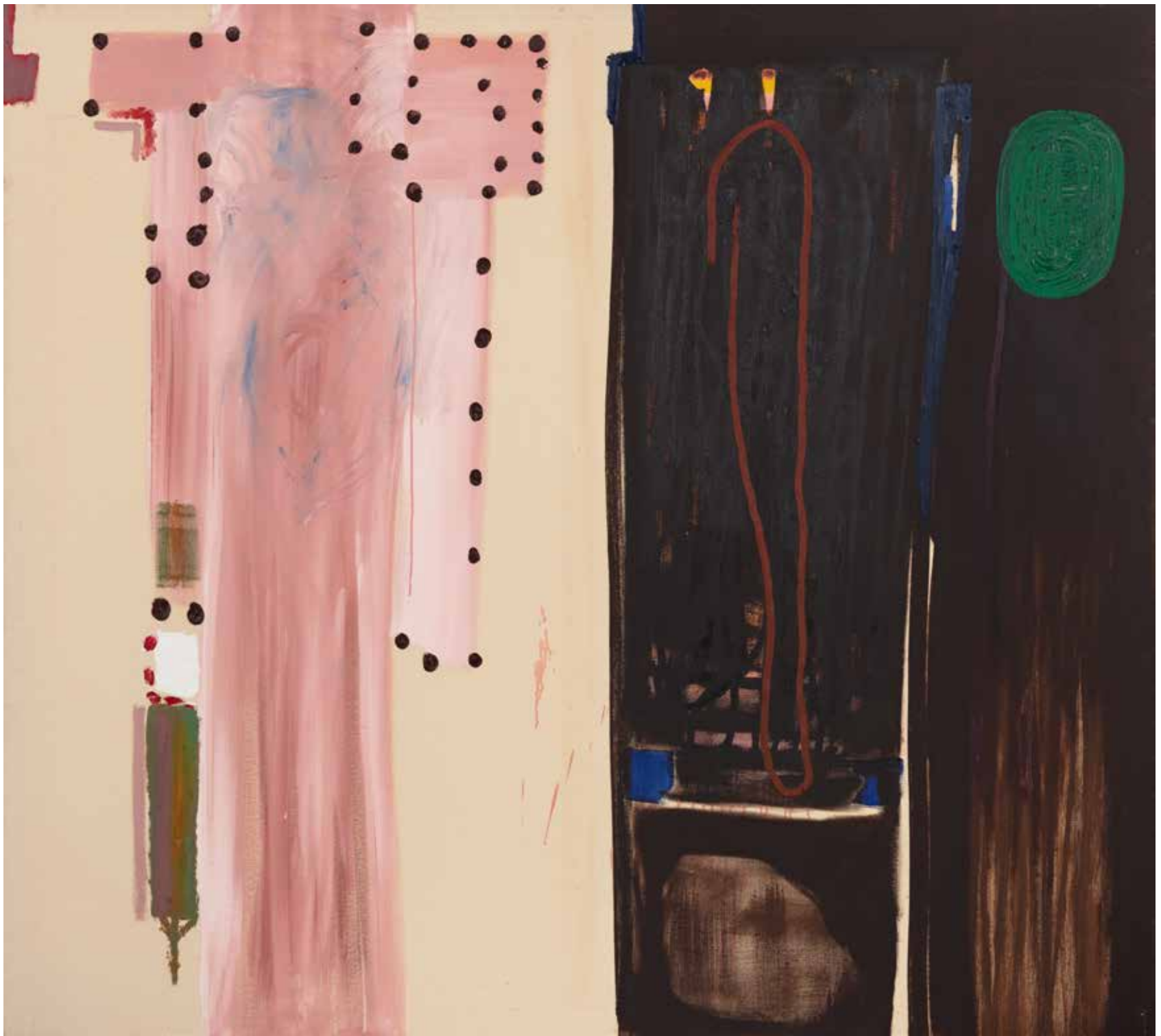
São Paulo
2005
oil on canvas
150,5 x 200 cm



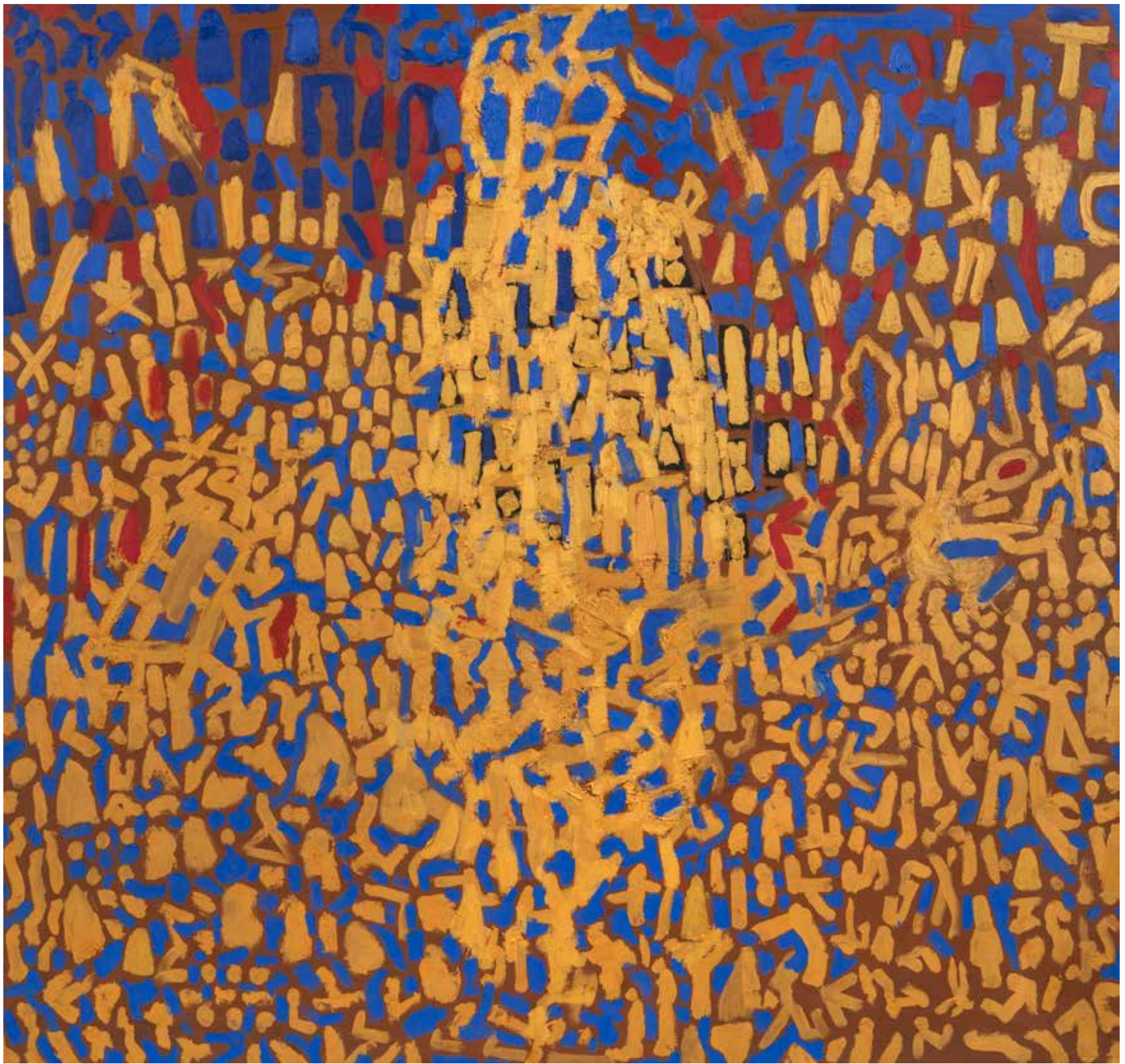
Man's abode
2006
oil on canvas
200 x 150 cm



East wind
2006
oil on canvas
180 x 170 cm



Day and night
2007
oil on canvas
180 x 200 cm



Vaccine dance
2009/2022
oil on canvas
180,3 x 190,2 cm



First loop
2015
oil on canvas
135,5 x 155,5 cm



Guts
2016
oil on canvas
200 x 150 cm



Heritage
2019
oil on canvas
160 x 200 cm



Blue angel
2019
oil on canvas
150,5 x 200,5 cm



Yellow invasion
2019/2021
oil on canvas
150,5 x 200,5 cm



The daylight
2022
oil on canvas
130,5 x 100 cm



Untitled
2021/2022
granite, plastic, wood, spray paint and metal
70 x 144 x 160 cm



Untitled
2021/2022
stone, plastic, wood, metal and resin
90 x 130 x 90 cm

HUMAN series
(2021 — 2022)



Human series
2021
mixed media on canvas
200 x 100 cm



Human series
2021/2022
mixed media on canvas
200 x 100 cm



Human series
2021/2022
mixed media on canvas
200 x 100 cm



Human series
2021/2022
mixed media on canvas
200 x 100 cm



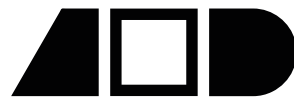
Human series
2021/2022
mixed media on canvas
200 x 100 cm



Human series
2021/2022
mixed media on canvas
200 x 100 cm



Human series
2021/2022
plastic and computer keys
140 x 53 x 20 cm



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Stand D01

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