

Press kit

Guerreiro do Divino Amor

*Superfictional  
Sanctuaries*

May 25– August 7,  
2022

Opening:  
Tuesday May 24, 2022,  
6 pm

Curated by Andrea Bellini



Guerreiro do Divino Amor, *The Miracle of Helvetia: Scopula (In Process)*.  
Digital Collage for Backlight panel with LED moving light system  
70 x 100 cm , Courtesy of the artist

Centre  
d'Art  
Contemporain  
Genève

centre.ch  
5e.centre.ch

# Guerreiro do Divino Amor

## *Superfictional Sanctuaries*

25/5–7/8/2022

The Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève is pleased to present *Superfictional Sanctuaries*, the first retrospective of Swiss-Brazilian artist, Guerreiro do Divino Amor.

The exhibition premieres *The Miracle of Helvetia*, a work commissioned by the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève with the support of the Embassy of Foreign Artists and DAAD. As the sixth and latest chapter of the artist's ongoing research project, *Superfictions*, *The Miracle of Helvetia* explores what makes up the Swiss collective imagination and national identity.

The *Superfictions* saga began in Brussels in 2005 aiming to create a "Superfictional World Atlas". The research process typically starts in the territory which will become the artist's subject. Guerreiro do Divino Amor combines his own experience with digital archaeology, excavating and reappropriating institutional corporative iconographies and narratives. His *Superfictions* therefore materialize into films, publications, backlit animated panels, installations and performative conferences. The science fiction aesthetics is a way to shed light on reality and its inner workings.

Six chapters have already been produced by the artist, from Brussels to Rio de Janeiro, all of them being inter-related. At the same time obsessive, grandiose and ironic, these fictional portraits include different perspectives that grasp the historical, social, media-related political and religious identity of a territory. By calling upon collective imagination, the artist reveals the impact that fictions of various kinds have on the development of civilization and how a collective understanding of nations and cities is created.

At the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Guerreiro do Divino Amor presents for the first time all existing *Superfictions*, turning the institution into a *superfictional sanctuary*. Moving image works are presented within installations including large-scale backlit panels and sculptures. *The Miracle of Helvetia* is the central work of the exhibition, taking up three rooms in an immersive temple-like construction.

*Superfictional Sanctuaries* is curated by Andrea Bellini and benefits from the support of the Loterie Romande, Embassy of Foreign Artists and DAAD. A publication has been produced for the occasion with the support of DAAD Artists in Berlin program with funds from the German Federal Foreign Office.

Images are available on the following link:

<https://bit.ly/Guerreiro2022>

For further information, please contact our press office:

presse@centre.ch

+41 22 329 18 42

#### Annual partners



prohelvetia



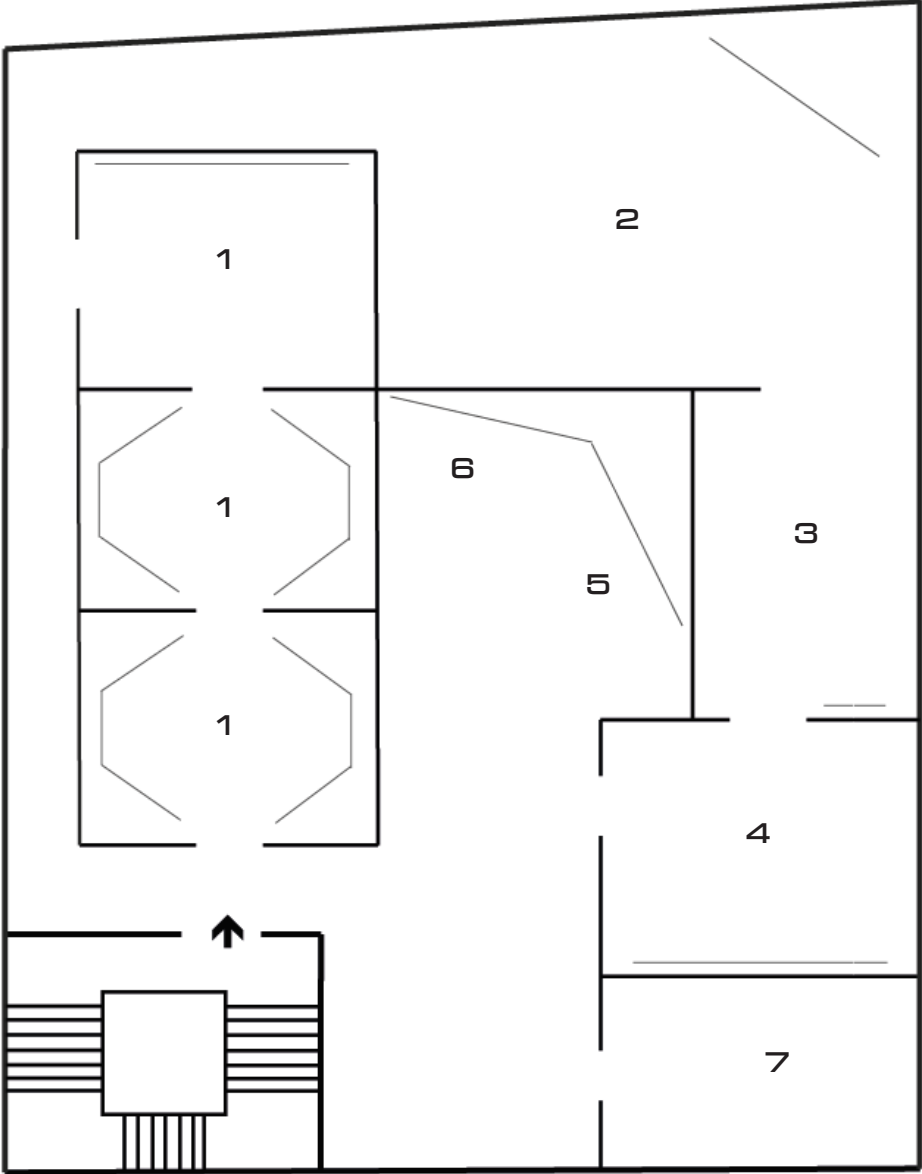
#### Exhibition partners



BERLINER  
KÜNSTLER\*  
PROGRAMM

DA  
AD

# Map of the exhibition



- 1. Le Miracle d'Helvetia
- 2. SuperRio Superfictions
- 3. Superempire vs. Supergalaxies
- 4. Expanded Metropolitan Supercomplex
- 5. The Crystallization of Brasilia
- 6. The Mineral World
- 7. Sphinx

# The Miracle of Helvetia

*The Miracle of Helvetia* explores the historical, religious, political, symbolic, mediatic, and legal dimensions that form Switzerland. These elements contribute to the superfictional narrative of an ideal of wealth and perfection: a Helvetic Olympus, at the center of which lies the two-faced, round fountain of Helvetia. As both mother and personification of the country, she oversees all aspects of her superfictional Olympus (infrastructure, food, finance, culture, cohesion, moral stature, and spiritual defense) to guarantee her superiority over the rest of the world. She is surrounded by her daughters, a pantheon of thirteen goddesses who ensure that the system works properly. They represent the different contemporary values of the collective Swiss unconscious that arise from its multiple geographical zones and geopolitical influences.

A sociological field study, along with an interpretation and analysis of symbols in the public space and the media led to the compilation of an iconographic and historical inventory at the federal, cantonal, and municipal levels. This study also looked at the image of Switzerland in the rest of the world, its circulation in the media, and the rumors to which it gives rise.

The result is a film and an immersive set design that takes the shape of a temple dedicated to this Helvetic cosmogony and which is inspired by the dioramas of alpine landscapes found in natural history museums. The temple contains oratories and backlit panels that narrate the life and powers of each goddess.

# SuperRio Superfictions

Starting with the second chapter of his *Superfictional World Atlas*, Guerreiro do Divino Amor elaborates his notion of *Superfiction* with the creation of *SuperRio*, a double of Rio de Janeiro. Envisioned as an ecosystem of the various *Superfictions* that make up the city and its image, *SuperRio* lies on top of *InfraRio*, the substrate of superslavery that governs society and human relations at the unconscious level.

This chapter was developed between 2005 and 2016, the years of a superfictional apotheosis and a frantic real estate speculation around the 2014 Soccer World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games. It highlights the massive influence of mediatic fictions on Rio de Janeiro's collective imagination, especially in the form of televised soap operas and crime shows. The *supermedia* plays a fundamental role in the workings of *SuperRio*; it allows for the projection, configuration, and multiplication of the *Superfictions*, like so many layers that ultimately blur our perception of reality.

In *SuperRio*, Guerreiro do Divino Amor appropriates images from tourism films with which the city promotes and projects itself, as well as from his own kaleidoscopic collection of memories that blend various facets of Rio, from the decadent bourgeoisie of Copacabana to the Neo-Pentecostal pastors who preach in the city's outlying areas.

# Superempire vs. Supergalaxies

The first chapter and prototype of the *Superfictional World Atlas* was completed in 2005, when Guerreiro do Divino Amor was a student in Brussels.

*The Battle of Brussels* emulates the aesthetic of tabloids to recount the war between two opposite civilizations, the Empire and the Galaxy, struggling for control over the city of Brussels. Each civilization has its own moral and aesthetic values, weapons, strategies, and means of communication, which the artist depicts both analytically and satirically.

The rational and mathematical Empire is a society governed impassively by trade, whereas the Galaxies represent all other models of civilization, past, present, and future. The city of Brussels thus becomes the theater of war in which the very notion of civilization is called into question. The work reveals the schemes and the discursive power of a bellicose marketing that helps conquer the city and subdue the minds of its inhabitants.

This war of civilizations runs through all chapters of the Atlas, thus spreading across the globe in a number of configurations. In *SuperRio*, the battle rages during the organization of the Olympic Games, because such *superevents* are opportunities for the Superempire to acquire new territory. In São Paulo (*Supercomplex*), this takes the form of a rainstorm of *superspeculative* diamonds. In the *Superfictional War (Guerre Superfictionnelle)*, we can see the beginnings of a conflict between Switzerland and Amazonia, respective bastions of the Superempire and of the Supergalaxies.

# Expanded Metropolitan Supercomplex

In the third chapter, *Expanded Metropolitan Supercomplex*, the megalopolis of São Paulo, the self-proclaimed “locomotive of Brazil,” is depicted as a voracious machine operating at full capacity. The landscape is dotted with enormous conduits and supervortices that connect various superfictional magnetic poles to one another.

In the heart of the machine sit two totemic figures who represent the notions of hereditary power and supermeritocracy: media magnate Silvio Santos, archetype of the self-made man, and João Doria, wealthy heir, founder of the magazine *Caviar Lifestyle*, and governor of the state of São Paulo. The theology of prosperity of the Neo-Pentecostal churches and the superproductivist media controlled by the superfamilies grease the gears of this concrete machine-jungle. Power dynamics thus obey a meritocratic, careerist system in which money is the ultimate yardstick of one’s success.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the *supercomplex* machine of São Paulo experienced rapid growth, a narrative that is recounted here in the form of a superfictional allegorical saga of *supereuropean superimmigrants*, coffee *superbarons*, and *superchristianized* indigenous populations. The *superslavery* workforce, source of the prosperity of this symbolic and physical simulacrum of a *superpale* Europe, is totally eclipsed by this egregore.

# The Mineral World

Presented alongside the *Crystallization of Brasília* in the mineral mausoleum, *The Mineral World* is an allegorical portrait of the state of Minas Gerais, situated between those of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Bahia. It was the extractivist epicenter of gold mining during the colonial period, and is now that of iron mining, a predatory industry that lies at the root of enormous environmental crimes. Minas Gerais is also home to the apogee of Baroque Art in Brazil. In the collective imagination, fed by countless soap operas, it embodies an innocent, romantic rural way of life, an art of living that revolves around good food and pure candor, all of which form the basis for a flourishing tourism industry.

The film explores this saccharin view of Brazil's colonial, proslavery past, in which the various ethnicities, *superdevelopment*, and *supertradition* all live together in perfect harmony in the state of Minas Gerais. In this "mineral world," history has been whitewashed and the *superslavery* past has been transformed into a fairy tale. A mineral balm and superromantic rays transform the landscape into valleys of supercrystallized sugar, through which flow rivers brimming with mineral milk. As a laboratory of Brazil's own modernity, the "mineral world" was also the site of the urban experiments conducted by the architect Oscar Niemeyer and then-President Juscelino Kubitschek, which crystallized into the construction of Brasília.



# The Crystallization of Brasília

Chapter four of the *Superfictional World Atlas* uses the construction of Brasília to explore the *superfiction* of the perpetual conquest of territory as a “civilizing” mission. The film consists of three acts punctuated by the syrupy voices of bossa nova icons Vinícius de Moraes and Tom Jobim from their *Symphony of the Dawn*, a piece commissioned by then-President Kubitchek to commemorate the construction of the new capital city.

Brasília’s creation in the 1960s was inspired by an ideal of progress and an unbridled development which, under the guise of modernism, crystallize social and spatial structures inherited from the country’s colonial, proslavery past. The city proclaims itself as the symbol of a new era in the tradition of Ancient Rome, or as a Hollywood version of an ancient and *superpale* Egypt, whose resonant symbols are scattered throughout the urban space. The primordial *superfiction* of this *supernation* is the *supervoid* (the erasure of any life existing outside the positivist colonial narrative), which stands in opposition to the collage aesthetic that structures the film’s narration. This background for the harsh criticisms is embodied by the presenter, Sallisa Rosa, whose Goianian accent, indigenous origins, and hot pink dress stick out like a sore thumb in the hallways of the Brazilian parliament building.

The capital is frequently rocked by the eruptions of a bleach volcano, metaphor of the uniformization of people’s identities. As an endless repetition of the gesture of conquest, the forces of mystical rationalism set the city’s ideas and structures in stone, thus bequeathing a future to the capital that resembles a petrified past: a mausoleum inspired by the ideals of *superdevelopment* and extractivism. The last act was filmed as President Jair Bolsonaro rose to power (2018-2019). It describes how his election exalts a transfigured *supercolonialism* that takes the form of a messianic zeal for reconquest, in which neoliberalism and religious fundamentalism have fused together to an unprecedented, extreme degree.

# Sphynx

A sphinx rests languidly and indifferently against a green-apple background. This creature from Ancient Egyptian and Greek myths fills the 8 minutes of this video sculpture with its almost immobile presence, alternately staring at the audience and then pretending to ignore it, thus embodying the enigma that runs throughout the work of Guerreiro do Divino Amor and his superfictional Brazilian narratives.

## Biography of the artist

Guerreiro do Divino Amor (b. 1983, Geneva) lives and works in Rio de Janeiro and holds a master's degree in architecture. He has participated in the Sorocaba Frestas Trienal and in exhibitions at Iberê Camargo Foundation, Pinacoteca of São Paulo, Casa França-Brasil, MAR, CAC of Vilnius (Lithuania) and Arte Pará 2018. Also in 2018, he held the individual exhibition "Superficcões" at Paço das Artes/MIS-SP. He is currently a fellow of the DAAD Artists in Berlin program.