

Press kit

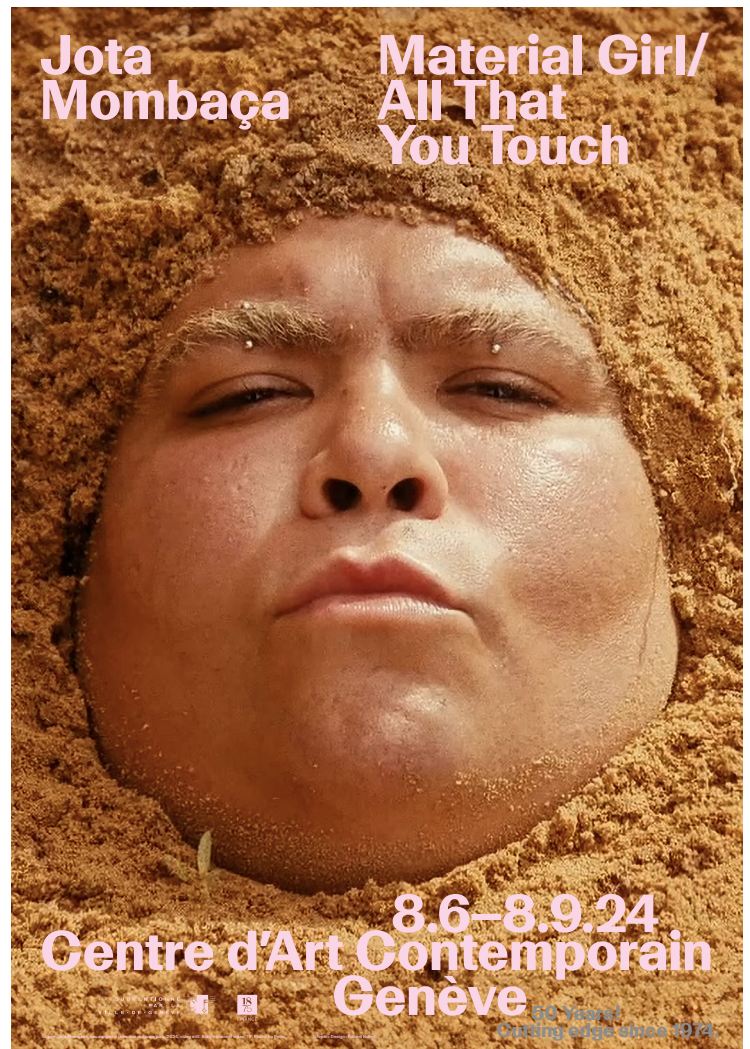
Jota Mombaça

**MATERIAL GIRL/ ALL
THAT YOU TOUCH**

**June 8 – September 8,
2024**

**Opening:
Friday June 7, 2024,
6 pm**

**Curated by
Andrea Bellini**



**Centre
d'Art
Contemporain
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Press release

The Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève is pleased to announce *MATERIAL GIRL/ALL THAT YOU TOUCH*, a solo exhibition devoted to Brazilian artist Jota Mombaça. It is the first survey of the artist's work.

The artistic practice of Jota Mombaça is grounded in writing and performance and fueled by critical theory. Gender and postcolonial studies are particularly reflected in the engaged approach, anticolonial activism and gender disobedience that have characterized the artist's career since it began in 2013.

MATERIAL GIRL/ALL THAT YOU TOUCH traces a nonlinear path through Mombaça's multidisciplinary practice. It highlights the conceptual/formal nexus in the artist's early works—centered on the body, gesture, and the spoken and written word—and the evolution of that nexus in more recent output.

Some of Mombaça's early performances revolve around evocative gestures—actions whose traces remain impressed in objects, which can then become sculptures and installations. *Corpo-colônia* (Body-Colony, 2014–17) is an early performance work now turned into an archival video installation in which the artist's body is buried in a collective ritual, while the outcome of the performance *a gente combinamos de não morrer* (we agreed not to die, 2016–20) consists of a large white flag on which are sewn improvised knives assembled from shards of glass, wood, and red shoelaces.

These and other works weaving together actions, signs, gestures, speeches, and readings form the foundation for more recent developments in Mombaça's practice that relate to the entanglement of human and elemental bodies. It is the further unfolding of a thought that extrapolates the boundaries of ethnicity, gender, and sexuality and proposes a new way of inhabiting embodied positionalities. In addition to being the subject of some of the pieces, this idea of entanglement is also a working method and exhibition principle; the show presents distilled gestures and texts from the early works in a remixed form, with new images embedded with current works—for example, in the immersive composition of wall writings that wraps around existing textual works. It is a way to make the notion of archive—another keyword in this exhibition—dynamic.

The thought of philosopher Denise Ferreira da Silva, particularly her notion of re/de/composition, guides Mombaça's reimagining of their own work. Moving within the framework of neo-materialism, Da Silva opposes the ordered assumptions of colonial rule (separability, determinacy, and sequentiality resulting in identity, nation, ethnicity, and gender) with a vision of a world animated by the positional, fractal, and “poethic” thinking of Black futurity. The result is a contingent, indeterminate, and complex composition of intertwined singularities.

This perspective also inspired the exhibition's title, *MATERIAL GIRL/ALL THAT YOU TOUCH*. According to the artist, it “points to a more-than-subjective, properly

contextual, and climatic trajectory of thought and gesture, in which different expressions of materiality and transformation present not only a personal point of view but its very conditions of emergence.”

The exhibition, Mombaça’s first survey, also comprises textile sculptures from the series *Ghost* (2022–23) and works on paper, including drawings from the series *para stella* (2020). These pay tribute to Stella do Patrocínio (1941–1992), a Brazilian poet who was interned for more than thirty years in a psychiatric hospital in Rio de Janeiro and only became known after her death. Remnants of words, signs, patterns, and biomorphic forms surface on the paper sheets—all recordings of performative gestures, sedimented voices of resistance.

Additional programming

During the run of *MATERIAL GIRL/ALL THAT YOU TOUCH*, the Centre will host a program of films in the Cinema Dynamo featuring additional video works by Jota Mombaça. The selected films delve into the themes of resistance and freedom within queer experiences.

Two performances will also be presented by the artist during the opening night, on Friday June 7, 2024:

4 Letters to the Planet’s Foreigner, 6.30pm

4 Letters to the Planet’s Foreigner is an invocation of a trans-temporal, elemental entity. The Planet’s Foreigner is a being deeply rooted in the planet, and yet deemed as a stranger. Their role is the one of the witnesses and their voice manifest’s both in the sounds and silences of the performance.

Thus we disappear (*Así Desaparecemos*), 8.30pm

*Thus we disappear (*Así Desaparecemos*)* is a performative reading originally conceived and presented in Bogotá, 2019, during the 45^o Salon Nacional de Artistas de Colombia. The work confronts the dense relationship between memory and fire in the lived experience of the marginalized communities of the Global Majority.

About the artist

Jota Mombaça (b. 1991 in Natal, Rio Grande Do Norte, Brazil) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work unfolds in a variety of mediums. The sonic and visual matter of words plays an important role in their practice, which often involves anti-colonial critique and gender disobedience. Their work has been presented in several institutional frameworks, including the 32nd and 34th São Paulo Biennales (2016 and 2020–21), the 22nd Sydney Biennale (2020), the 10th Berlin Biennale (2018), and the 46th Salon Nacional de Artistas in Colombia (2019). They are currently researching elemental forms of sensing, anti-colonial imagination, and the relation between opacity and self-preservation in the experience of racialized trans artists in the global art world.

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