

apexart

Interview with TRANSÄLIEN

transcribed and translated from Portuguese by Clarissa Aidar

Hey, I am TRANSÄLIEN and I'm here to share a little about the concept behind my work, *TRANSVISION*, which is part of the exhibition *The Day Before the Fall*.

Starting from the image: it represents a portal to me, and that's why it's in the shape of a circle. I've chosen this photo that also illustrates the cover of the first edition of the journal produced by TRANSMORAS atelier, the journal *TRAVESTI VIVA (TRAVESTI ALIVE)*, released in 2019 and titled: "*Brasil: the travestis' world champion.*" I collaborated on a text for this journal, titled the "Manifesto for Life." Its concept proposes a resignification of the social place that we *travestis* occupy in Brazil, which has a lot to do with this work and how I move through life. My first intuition was to incorporate this image which is very symbolic to me.

Regarding the masks, well, those who know me are aware of my life-long research with masks. Since around 2015, I've been using masks almost all the time. It was quite crazy for me, because not even in my wildest utopias I would ever imagine that one day all the world would eventually use masks for protection. So naturally I brought the masks to this project and, in the context of the pandemic, they have become even more pertinent.

About the 3D aspect, I make use of 3D technologies here to signal something that is present in the space, although not fully readable. You unavoidably realise what is evident at a first glance, but, to really understand it, you must approach, come closer, you know? And *travestis* for me represent that: we have always been here, in movement, but until now, in multiple spheres, we're scarcely understood or perceived. In 2019, I used a 3D mask during a performance. Afterwards, thinking about this artwork, I automatically came to the idea.

In this line of resignification, one of my primordial precepts was to only use materials I already had at home.

Talking specifically about the masks: the black and white mask—the one that reveals the Brazilian flag in flames—represents the end of a Brazil that still carries within itself marks of violence, oppression, religious fundamentalism... all retrograde politics which remind me of limitations, of square minds, and consequently of boxes. So I felt that this specific mask had to be in the shape of a box. I'm also very touched by [Brazilian singer and composer] Belchior's compositions, especially the song "Velha roupa colorida," eternized by Elis Regina. Black and white function as a sign of an old TV, reproducing old, outdated news, tirelessly repeated... because, honestly, that is Brazil.

TRANSVISION for me is about all that, it's about seeing the world, or other worlds, through transcendental optics, a *travesti* cosmovision that opens the ways to a new world. We are standing on the day before the fall and will certainly stand on the days after the end, ready for a new beginning. That's it, enjoy an amazing exhibition and let's go. Kisses.