
THE BOX

February 1–28, 2014

Cao Guimarães and Rivane Neuenschwander *Quarta-feira de cinzas/Epilogue* (2006)



Image courtesy of the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo

Instead of letting go, just remember that ant.

High Hopes written by Sammy Cahn
(made famous by Frank Sinatra)

Within Catholic traditions, Ash Wednesday (*quarta-feira de cinzas* in Portuguese) is a moveable fast that kicks off the Lenten period leading up to Easter Sunday. This period of self-denial is, of course, preceded by the celebration of carnival. Few countries are more renowned for their carnival rituals and festivities than Brazil.

Artists Cao Guimarães and Rivane Neuenschwander shift the focus of Ash Wednesday from the heavenly and human realms to a decidedly more ground-level perspective. The moveable fast becomes a moveable feast, if you know where to look. *Quarta-feira de cinzas/Epilogue* prowls the distinctive red clay soil of the state of Minas Gerais to observe ants as they encounter colorful confetti left over from the human revelries the night before. The use, meaning, and ownership of these objects shifts to the ants and new, mysterious pageantries form. Colorful parades take shape. Squabbles, turf wars, and old rivalries are enflamed. The ants are dwarfed by these vivid orbs but carry them up hillsides with the greatest of ease. It's as if Sisyphus was part of a samba school. The video concludes with the ants taking their hauls down into the depths of their nest, as if they were cleaning up the aftermath of Carnival and continuing the party in their

realms. Guimarães and Neuenschwander enabled this microscopic spectacle by soaking the confetti in sugar, a surefire way to kick-start any ant party.

O Grivo, a pair of experimental musicians and sound artists, frequently score Cao Guimarães's films and for *Quarta-feira de cinzas/Epilogue* they made one of their most delightful creations. The tiny scuttling soundtrack provides an insectile *musique concrète*, slowly drifting into syncopated rhythms that resemble ants scratching sambas on the covers of matchbooks.

Cao Guimarães and Rivane Neuenschwander have collaborated on several projects and each is a central figure in Belo Horizonte's vibrant art scene. Guimarães is one of Brazil's most adventurous and respected filmmakers and artists, and his work is featured prominently in both the *Cruzamentos: Contemporary Art in Brazil* exhibition and *Cruzamentos: Contemporary Brazilian Documentary* series.* *Gambiarra* photo mosaic and two elegantly minimal videos can be currently found in our galleries. Guimarães will visit the Wexner Center on March 27 to take part in the symposium on Brazilian art and film accompanying our *Cruzamentos* programs. On March 28, he will introduce a screening of his playful documentary *Two-Way Street* and a program of his acclaimed short films.

Cao Guimarães ranks among the most successful figures at the crossroads of film and the visual arts in Brazil. His intense output from the late 1990s onwards has been featured in festivals dedicated to film, such as Locarno (Switzerland); Sundance (US); and Cannes (France), among others, and in art shows such as the Bienal de São Paulo, in which he participated in 2002 and 2006.

Rivane Neuenschwander is among the most internationally recognized Brazilian artists working today. She was nominated for the Guggenheim Museum's Hugo Boss Prize in 2004. Her 2010 solo exhibition *A Day Like Any Other* at the New Museum in New York (which travelled to four other cities) remains one of the most notable US museum exhibitions of a solo Brazilian artist in recent years.

Chris Stults
Associate Curator, Film/Video

**Cruzamentos: Contemporary Brazilian Documentary* continues through April 3. For film listings please visit wexarts.org/film-video.

Cao Guimarães and Rivane Neuenschwander
Quarta-feira de cinzas/Epilogue (2006)
6 mins., video

Via Brasil is organized by the **Wexner Center for the Arts** and made possible by **The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**. Lead support is provided by **Morgan Stanley**.

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