

LOIS LAMBERT GALLERY

at Bergamot Station
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Santa Monica, CA 90404

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Untitled, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 54" x 39"



Untitled, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 84" x 72"

RODRIGO BRANCO "Moldando Pedra Dura"

January 13th, 2018 – March 3rd, 2018
Opening reception Saturday, January 13th, 6-9pm

SANTA MONICA, CA – Lois Lambert Gallery is pleased to present new works by the Brazilian painter and mural artist Rodrigo Branco in his first solo exhibition in the Los Angeles area, titled "Moldando Pedra Dura". Rodrigo Branco has gained a reputation throughout Brazil for the eclectic and colorful compositions of his murals. The paintings in this exhibit will continue that aesthetic. In this series of paintings, Rodrigo explores his own life's narrative through the discovery of a box of family photographs which his father had saved throughout his lifetime. Branco uses the images as inspiration by painting small fragments of them and layering the images with abstractions, patterns and colors. Through this visual retelling of his family's narrative, Branco creates a new vision for the future while still honoring his origins. According to Rodrigo: "they are fragments of the past that speak about the future".

As a child, Branco suffered from vision problems which resulted in an altered perception of the world around him. Rodrigo's condition allowed him to see the world with more contrast, more color, more complex borders and mixed forms. The strong influence of these childhood memories can be seen throughout his works. Branco reconciles the vision of the world he knows now through the lens of his childhood imagination thus creating his own visual language.

Rodrigo's relationship to art started at the age of 13 with the graffiti scene in Brazil and was specifically influenced by Pixação, a form of tagging done in a distinctive, cryptic style found only in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Encouraged by his family Rodrigo continued to grow as an artist and began to move into creating the abstracted portraits that comprise his recognizable aesthetic. Rodrigo's use of this graffiti style, blended with the expressionist tradition of distorting images for emotional effect, creates both disconcerting and compelling images.

Each portrait that he paints represents a whole universe that is dictated by the stories the subject carries with them. Rodrigo re-paints the



Formatura de 94, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 79" x 59"

people, the places, and the moments in time that are connected through him in an attempt to recreate the sensorial experience they provide to his everyday life. In the painting "Graduation", Rodrigo repaints a graduation photograph of himself at the age of 7 or 8. He is dressed in a red and white graduation uniform. This was a standard photograph taken yearly in elementary school in the 90's in Sao Paulo. In this painting Branco mimics the molding process by abstracting the face into a mixture of paint that resembles a mass of rough-hewn clay molded with bare hands. The title of the show is in Portuguese and means "molding a hard rock". Like a hard rock rolling through the ground, Branco feels he has been shaped by life's experiences. As an artist, Rodrigo feels he has been molded by his experiences.

Rodrigo's large murals have been a part of art festivals world wide including the Vision Art Festival in Switzerland. Branco's paintings have been exhibited in galleries in Brazil, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Mexico, Peru and the United States.

"Moldando Pedra Dura" is part of the Participating Gallery Program of Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA, a far-reaching and ambitious exploration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles, taking place from September 2017 through January 2018 at more than 70 cultural institutions across Southern California. Pacific Standard Time is an initiative of the Getty.