

José Bezerra

Biography

José Bezerra

1952, Buíque | PE – Brazil

José Bezerra was born in 1952 in the city of Buíque, in the interior of Pernambuco, where the rural country abuts the wilderness. José had improvised careers as a farmer, a jockey, a manual laborer and many other career paths and activities as the result of his disadvantaged situation. He killed animals to eat. Felled trees to make firewood. Today these things make him unhappy and he tries to atone for them in his art. About ten years ago José had a dream in which he was called to carry out the artistic work he is engaged in today. From that point forward he started to look at the woods that surrounded him and to interact with it. José does not sculpt in a traditional way by acting on a block of wood in order to achieve a defined shape. He seeks to see a figure that has already imbedded itself in the wood. With the rude intervention of a machete, rasp, chisel and handsaw, the trunk, branches and roots of the umburana tree José uncovers a figure while simultaneously maintaining its bond with the raw wood from which it started—all with the tools and gestures that he used to act on it. This approach gives his sculptures an unusual intensity. José works mainly with twisted logs, typical of the local vegetation, like the umburana. This unorthodox approach, together with the few gashes that are indicative of it, produces a remarkable result. The oscillating definition of the

figures joins the tortuosity of the wood. This relationship makes the viewer perceive forms that seem to struggle to emerge amidst the clash between vegetal matter and rude and parsimonious sculptural intervention. Hence, the singular expressiveness of his works. The animals, bodies and faces do not have the sweetness like much of the so-called popular art made by a preference and familiarity with the materials.

When talking about his art, the emphasis is on the role of imagination in what he does. Thus, the importance he attaches to the act of seeing images in the trunks and branches he finds through his site and imagination is an element that distances his pieces beyond simple realism. From there he transposes the daydreams that go through the clouds to the sky. For José Bezerra, seeing means opening natural material like wood to possibilities that keep it away from a lazy identity with itself as well as from only utilitarian use.

The nature that emerges from his works has an intense life, an inexhaustible and tormented energy. It recalls Euclides da Cunha's descriptions of the Canudos region, in the first part of *Os sertões*, "The dirt": "(...) leafless trees, with twisted and dry branches, revolted, crisscrossed, pointing hard in space or stretching flexibly across the ground, reminiscent of an immense bruise, of torture, of agonizing flora" But the angular expressiveness of his work stems from the understanding that the very medium that contributed decisively to the emergence of his work - the region of Vale do Catimbau and the rural activities that develop there - is about to be put down by the accelerated changes in the country's economic relations. In addition, I am convinced that the sculptor senses the extent of the tragedy that surrounds the entire planet, the threats that nature faces on a global scale like few others. Like any great artist, José Bezerra sees far and near.

Rodrigo Naves



Individual Exhibitions:

2015 José Bezerra | Sculptures, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2013 José Bezerra | Sculptures, Culture Center Matarazzo, SP, Brazil

2010 José Bezerra | Sculpture, Galeria Celma Albuquerque, Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil

2009 José Bezerra | Sculptures, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2010 José Bezerra | Sculptures, SESC - São Carlos, SP, Brazil

2010 José Bezerra | Sculptures, SESC- Bauru, SP, Brazil

2010 José Bezerra | Sculptures, Paulo Setubal Museum Tatuí, SP, Brazil

Collective Exhibitions:

2023 "Reverses and Transverses": Artists Outside the Mainstream (and Friends) at the Biennials, galeria Estação, Sao Paulo – SP | Brazil

2022 A Century of Now, Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2022 Brazilian stories, MASP, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2021 They Were Already Here, Galeria Base, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2021 Raw State, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

2021 Bailão de Dois: dialogue between two artists, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2020 Art in the Field, Estádio Municipal Paulo Machado de Carvalho, Pacaembu, São Paulo, Brazil

2020 Two Josés: Bernnô e Bezerra, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2020 Acauã and the ghost, Auroras, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2016 Between looks: poetics of the Brazilian soul, Museu Afro Brasil, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2016 Collective, Chão Galeria, Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil

2014 Almost a figure - almost a shape, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2014 Vivid Memories, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, France

2012-2013 Janete Costa "A Look", Janete Costa Museum, Niterói, RJ, Brazil

2012 Mix Max Brazil, Tropenmuseum Junior, Amsterdam – The Netherlands

2012 Stories of Seeing, Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France

2012 Stubbornness of Imagination: Ten Brazilian Artists, Imperial Palace, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

2012 Stubbornness of Imagination: Ten Brazilian Artists, Tomie Ohtake Institute, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2011 Sacred Popular Art, Galeria Pontes, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2010 Brazilian Art beyond the System, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2010 Exhibition Pure Blends, Pavilhão de Culturas Brasileiras, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2008 18º Exhibition of Artefact, Artefacto espaço Mario Santos, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2008 Imaginary Exhibiton of Brazilian People, Restaurante Antiquarius, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2007 The size of Brazil, SESC Paulista, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

Public Collections:

Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France

José and Paulina Nemirovsky Foundation, São Paulo, Brazil

Museu de Arte Moderna MAM – Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

Museu de Arte do Rio MAR - Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

Museu Afro Brasil, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

Pavilhão das Culturas Brasileiras, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

SESC São Carlos, SP, Brazil;

SESC - Belenzinho, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

Tropenmuseum Junior, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Selected Publications:

2021 Raw State, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

2015 José Bezerra | Sculptures, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

2013 José Bezerra | Sculptures – a catalogue of an exhibition at the Culture Center Matarazzo, Brazil

2012 Janete Costa, A Look, Janete Costa Museum, Niterói, RJ, Brazil

2012 Histoires de Voir, Fondation Cartier Pour l'art contemporain, Own Press, France

2012 Stubbornness of Imagination – Ten Brazilian Artists, Martins Fontes Press, Brazil

2010 José Bezerra | Sculptures – a catalogue of an exhibition at the Galeria Estação, Brazil

2010 José Bezerra | Sculptures – catalogue of an exhibition at the Galeria Celma Albuquerque, Brazil

2010 Brazilian Art beyond the system – catalogue of an exhibition at the Galeria Estação, Brazil

2010 Pavillion of Brazilian Cultures: Pure Mixtures, Terceiro Nome Press, Brazil

2006 Pernambuco made by hand, Sebrae Pernambuco Press, Brazil

Exhibitions



2015 José Bezerra | Sculptures, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil







2021 Raw State, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil



2021 Bailão de Dois: Dialogue between two artists, Galeria Estação, São Paulo, SP, Brazil



Artworks



Untitled, 2013
Wooden sculpture
81 x 64 x 123 cm | 31.88 x 25.19 x 48.42 in







Untitled,
Wooden sculpture
50 x 27 x 30 cm | 19.68 x 10.62 x 11.81 in







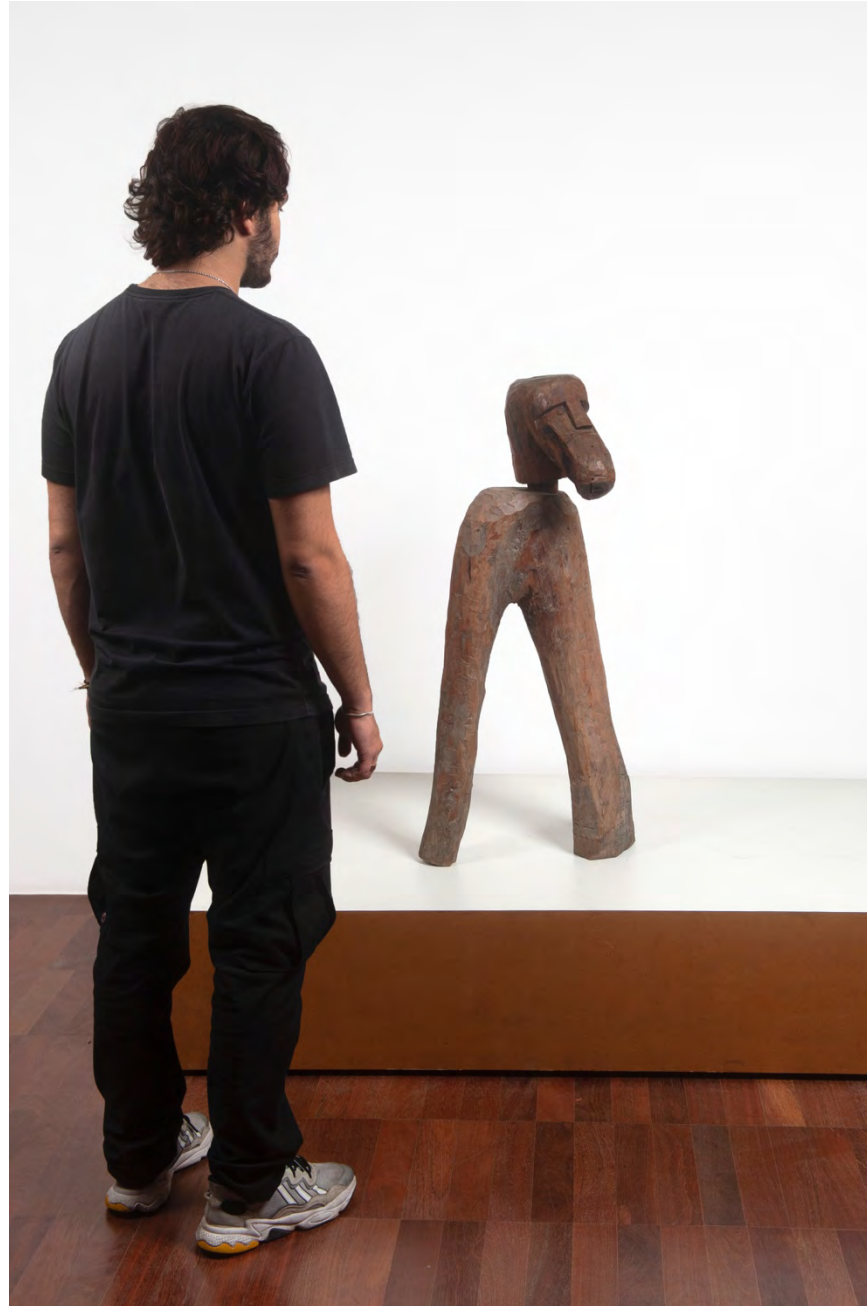
Untitled, 2011
Wooden sculpture
120 x 30 x 26 cm | 47.24 x 11.81 x 10.23 in





Untitled, 2008
Wooden sculpture
100 x 63 x 40 cm | 39.37 x 24.8 x 15.75 in







Untitled, 2013
Wooden sculpture
100 x 65 x 35 cm | 40.94 x 25.59 x 13.77 in





With a collection among the most important of the country, Galeria Estação, inaugurated at the end of 2004, devoted itself to revealing and promoting the production of Brazilian non-scholar art. The gallery was responsible for including this language in the contemporary art scene, while editing publications and holding individual and collective exhibitions inside and outside the country.

Galeria Estação works with well-known self-taught artists from various regions of Brazil, such as Agostinho Batista de Freitas, Alcides dos Santos, Amadeo Luciano Lorenzato, Artur Pereira, Aurelino dos Santos, Chico Tabibuia, Cícero Alves dos Santos-Véio, GTO, Gilvan Samico, Itamar Julião, João Cosmo Felix-Nino, José Antônio da Silva, José Bezerra, Manuel Graciano, Maria Auxiliadora, Mirian Inês da Silva, Neves Torres, among others.

Currently the gallery has been incorporating to its cast artists belonging to the contemporary artistic circuit whose works interact with non-scholar creation, such as André Ricardo, José Bernnô, Julio Villani, Germana Monte-Mór, Moisés Patrício e Santídio Pereira.

Starting from this rare competence, the space is able to offer a historical and current panorama of a production that went beyond the limits of self-thought art, at the same time as it investigates names that, independently of the formation, work with elements from the same source.

Galeria Estação

Rua Ferreira de Araújo, 625 – Pinheiros, São Paulo, SP, Brazil – phone: (+5511) 3813-7253

From Monday to Friday, from 11am to 7pm, Saturday from 11am to 3pm

www.galeriaestacao.com.br

contato@galeriaestacao.com.br