

The shapes of the Ocean

This year, the Africa in Focus program takes a new turn, honing in on the relationships between Africa, the African diaspora, and other regions, specifically South America - Brazil, the main destination for the African diaspora. This focus aims to shed light on the intricate connections and shared histories that bind these regions together and explore how these relationships have shaped and continue to influence their respective art scenes.

Bringing together artists and galleries that connect the notion of Black America to a broader perspective of the Atlantic dimension of the world is one of the agendas that allow us to understand the different ways in which the poetic experience of black people is elaborated. There are, undoubtedly, sophisticated artistic practices that are presented here due to its proximity but also due to its particularities. From oceanic salt, we show here a selection that deepens the discussion on contemporary art.

If, on the one hand, there is a lack of representation of black Brazilian artists, a parallel can be established regarding the presence and circulation of contemporary African art. It is also important to mention the absence of deeper connections between the two spaces – a historical, umbilical, oceanic relationship exists. “The Forms of the Ocean” looks at artistic practices that address this oceanic connection, historically shaped by transit and movement(s), in the contemporary context.

This curation is based on a conversation between two curators. It seeks to address these (dis)connections at the level of visual arts – poetic exchanges between African, Afro-diasporic, and Brazilian artists. Designed to think about Afro-Atlantic relationship an expanded way, not limited only by territory and geography.