



**Cyriaco Lopes**

*S&M (saints & martyrs)*

March 17 – April 16, 2022.

Opening Reception:

Thursday, March 17, 5–8 PM

Satchel Projects is pleased to present *S&M (saints & martyrs)*, an exhibition of recent photographs by Cyriaco Lopes, on view from March 17 – April 16, 2022.

The gallery will host an opening reception with the artist on Thursday, March 17 from 5 – 8PM.

*S&M (saints & martyrs)* is a transdisciplinary exploration of queer desire and a remix of art history, in the form of an ongoing series of photographs. The sculptures and paintings that are the subject of these photos exist only for the lens (they are destroyed after the photo shoot). In this process, the presentness of sculpture is absorbed into the past tense of photography, its necromancy. The work is genre fluid, queer both in content and form.

There is a historical practice in which photographs of sculptures are, themselves, considered artworks. This field of study was pioneered by scholars such as Geraldine A. Johnson, and addressed in exhibitions such as 'The original Copy' at MoMA (2010). Lopes is interested in the acceptance of the mediation of photography — the opposite of the Greenbergian 'specificity of the medium.' These sculptures and paintings slow the eye, which is free to wander the image with no need for decisive moments.

In *S&M (saints and martyrs)*, Lopes take into consideration that all art history survey books are books of photographs — photographs engaged as transparent windows and also as placeholders for the "real experience" of seeing the work. These photos exist as anonymous artworks, invisible in their profusion, blamed for the degradation of the aura of the

"originals." And yet, it is often through them that people fall in love with works of art in painting and sculpture. They fall in love with photographs that pretend to be paintings.

These images investigate the psychology of the erotic surrender. The work is informed by Brazilian bodies of trance — saints from Candomblé who mount, penetrate the body, and possess the lover. Saints in Christian churches, which readily give their bodies to the unseen male just outside the frame (Him), with *lustmord*.

"In Rio, I used to live in front of a large statue of Saint Sebastian, patron saint of the city. In fact, Rio is officially called Saint Sebastian of the River of January. On his day, also the day of the city, the archbishop conducts a large open-air mass which attracts thousands. They come for him and for the city. But they also come to a sort of Gay Pride, as he is (very unofficially) the patron saint of LBGTQIA+ people. He is also identified with, and worshiped as, Oxóssi by the African-Brazilian religions (Umbanda, Camdomblé.) That blend of people, shoulder to shoulder, worshiping, cruising, celebrating, singing, is an amorphous territory of possibilities, a kind of hybridity that I translate into the intermedia of my work."

Brazilian-American artist Cyriaco Lopes has exhibited at the Museum of Art of São Paulo (MASP), El Museo del Barrio in NYC, the Centre Wallonie Bruxelles in Paris, and Casa Degli Artisti in Milan. He is the winner of the NYC World Studio Foundation Award, the Contemporary Art Museum Saint Louis Project Award, the São Paulo Phillips Prize of trip to Europe. He has attended residencies such as Skowhegan, MassMoca, and the MacDowell Colony (where Lopes was a 2019 Marian O. Naumburg Photography fellow).

Lopes's performances with poet Terri Witek have been seen at the Centro Nacional de Cultura in Lisbon, Portugal, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, the Salford Museum, in Manchester, England, the Atlantic Center for the Arts, FL, the Centre del Carme Cultura Contemporanea, in Valencia, Spain, and Oi Futuro Center for Art & Technology in Rio, Brazil. The duo's collaboration is represented by The Liminal Gallery in Valencia, Spain.

Lopes lives and works in Washington Heights, NYC.