

## Pélagie Gbaguidi

03 April — 17 May, 2025

São Paulo

Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel is proud to present *Manifestação* [Manifestation], Pélagie Gbaguidi's first exhibition with the gallery in São Paulo. The show features works made during Gbaguidi's month-long residency at Pivô Salvador from January through February 2025 as well as pieces that lay the foundation for this body of work's conceptual structure.

The artist's research has long focused on ancestral narratives and contemporary tactics for reframing histories according to a decolonial perspective. In her paintings and drawings, she translates the sedimentary nature of historical time into densely layered compositions, juxtapositions of color and form, pigment and gestural traces. Depicting fragmented and distorted human silhouettes and abstract patterns, Gbaguidi seeks to entangle figures and ground, pictorial approaches and symbolic systems.

With this visual choreography, the artist embodies the repertoire of African knowledge, philosophy and existence. A painting like *Mango Tree* (2025), for example, references an immense tree in front of the Pivô building in Salvador. First attracted to its monumental scale and exuberant foliage, Gbaguidi later learned that the tree marked the site of a cemetery, in which are buried some of those who took part in the *Revolta dos Malês* in 1835, considered the largest slave uprising in Brazilian history. The violent episode marked a common effort undertaken by people forcibly removed from their native territories in Benin, Togo and Nigeria, among others. The meeting between a century-old conflict and the artist's own contemporary experience of that conflict serves as a metaphor for her work as a whole, as well as for her position as a contemporary *griot*, a West African storyteller, and an archive of ancestral oral histories and traditions.

Equipped with this complex set of aesthetic structures and conceptual methodologies, Gbaguidi's practice becomes enmeshed with the Brazilian context, and its Afro-Indigenous constitution.

### Pélagie Gbaguidi, *Manifestação*

**Opening:** 03.04.2025, 10PM to 4PM

**Exhibition:** 22 Apr — 17 May, .2025

**Opening hours:** Tue – Fri: 10AM - 7PM | Sat: 10AM – 6PM

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