

MARITZA CANECA

Maritza Caneca is a Miami-based Brazilian born visual artist whose work spans photography, film, and multimedia installations. After spending three decades as a cinematographer, her work continues to capture detailed narratives found in the angles of simple symmetries and geometries.

Since 2012 Caneca's focus has shifted towards the swimming pool. Returning to her grandparent's farm in Brazil after many decades away, she saw the pool from a different perspective. What was once the epicenter of crowded family lunches, the pool was now empty. She then realized, however, that this void was not actually empty, but filled with life through memories. It was this realization that led Caneca to see the swimming pool as a work of art—this object ceased being a pool and suddenly served as a vessel to tell the history of a place and the stories of the people who inhabited it.

Travel is an important component to her storytelling, and visiting different pool sites allows her to capture the spirit and history of a city. This is where Caneca begins to peel back the layers. In Havana, at an empty pool that had been converted into a soccer field, she learned that Fidel Castro once ordered all pools to be emptied, a sign of luxury and richness stripped. It was also on this trip to Cuba that Caneca recognized similarities in the characteristics between pools in Havana and Miami: thin strips of tile lining the edges of concrete steps. In Rio, she found that a thin layer of water would be left in emptied pools, a practice intended to avoid damaging the tiles; tiles which were sometimes already mismatched due to previous reparations. In Budapest, the City of Waters, she observed temperature changes affecting the color of water, or how the smell of each pool is different—these are elements that occur on the other side of the lens. The details found in Caneca's work often touch on complex relationships and complicated histories. Connections made through design are interwoven throughout her photographs. These delicate discoveries also incite her to make aesthetic observations when framing the work. An Olympic lap pool quickly becomes an American flag through the division created by lane ropes, and Jasper Johns comes to mind; the sharpness of the sunlight hitting concrete surfaces is reminiscent of the light in Edward Hopper's paintings; and of course, there are David Hockney's pools that serve as a constant source of inspiration.

Caneca's images evoke the silence of being underwater, and although humans are never seen in her work, there is the occasional sense of human presence visible through the water's movement. By characterizing this movement, Caneca hints to the fact that images are in constant flux when seen in a reflection—infinite configurations exist and forms never repeat. It is no surprise that pools have their own enigmatic light. Through her photographs and installations, Caneca explores that light and invites the viewer to dive in.

BIO

MARITZA CANECA

(b. 1964, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

Maritza Caneca is a Miami-based visual artist whose work spans photography, film, and multimedia installations. After spending three decades as a cinematographer, her work continues to capture detailed narratives found in the angles of simple symmetries and geometries.

She graduated from the Faculdade da Cidade, Rio de Janeiro in 1982, and soon began working in cinematography with films such as *Cinema Falado* by Caetano Veloso (1986). In 2006, Caneca received the Best Photography Award from the Brazilian Association of Cinematographic Photography, and went on to participate in award winning films in 2007, 2014, and 2016. Since 2012, Caneca has worked with photography and installations and has developed a body of work focused primarily on an exploration of swimming pools. She exhibited at the Paço Imperial during the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, and in 2017 was invited to make an artistic intervention at the iconic pool of the Copacabana Palace Hotel. In 2020 Caneca completed a photographic mural in Miami, FL created in collaboration with the Bakehouse Art Complex, her largest public art project to date, and was invited to exhibit her work at the Miami International Airport by the Division of Fine Arts & Cultural Affairs of the Miami-Dade Aviation Department.

Caneca has been featured in group exhibitions in Miami, New York, Detroit, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Budapest, and Basel and has been the subject of solo exhibitions in Miami, Rio de Janeiro, and Budapest. She is currently an artist in residence at the Bakehouse Art Complex in Miami, FL.