



This fall, 2023, marks the beginning of the 10th anniversary of the NYC-based non-profit International Brazilian Opera Company (IBOC), led by artistic director and co-founder João MacDowell. The company's mission is "to develop new repertoire while combining the work of Brazilian and international artists while providing a platform for new artists to emerge." Opera is typically viewed as an opus or "grand work," an art form that unites all art forms and is experienced within a narrow time and space –on stage as a final combination of visuals, acting, music, written story, and theatrics.

However, this exhibition begins to contextualize the organization by highlighting some of the company's works and contributing artists while investigating the underlying motives imbued in the creation processes of the collective.

Reflective of the immediate relevance and impermanence of performance, all pieces in *A RODA*, like the participants in a 'roda de samba' (samba circle), are representations of a community with projects that are evolving and revolving. The works' themes and motivations include the intersection of storytelling and music with interculturalism, transculturalism, immigration, inclusivity, technology, ritual, spirituality, nature, science, and architecture, and build upon Brazil's rich heritage of magical realism, tropicalism, and anthropofagia, delivering what MacDowell has come to call "Opera of the Oppressed."

In addition to artist portraits and films, *A RODA* showcases works categorized as *Beyond Opera* and *For the Opera House* through photographic art, graphic poster art, and artifacts with QR code listening portals.

*Beyond Opera* works are small and medium-scale performances that utilize experimental, alternative, and pop techniques. Scores may be synthetic or graphic representations of the work. Works like *Transeunitis Mundi*, *Plasma Resonance*, and *Misupuntus* explore new technologies and question the classification of performers/audience.

*For the Opera House* works, like *Tamandua* and *The Seventh Seal*, are medium and large-scale productions designed to use the traditional artistic bodies of the opera house. Scores fulfill the expectations of the traditional operatic medium.

The International Brazilian Opera Company was founded out of a direct need for an opera development company in NYC to emphasize transculturalism and overlooked cultural expressions. Today, the company's work has increasing relevance in the diversity, equity, and inclusion movement.

*Curated by Athena Azevedo, IBOC executive director, co-founder, and photographer*