

## ANTONIO MALTA CAMPOS

Once upon a time, jazz introduced the unstable wonder of improvisation, or jamming, to the structures that formerly guided music making. According to the dictionary, the expression has various meanings aside signaling the participation in a jam session, such as: To drive or wedge forcibly into a tight position.

Brazilian artist Antonio Malta Campos seems to apply jamming principles to the elaboration of his unpredictable but close-fitting paintings. In a video made of sequences that show a visual account of his creative process, we see him beginning a painting with a single pattern that grows over time into a complex interweaving of visual strata. We witness how the colour layers start defining organic forms, how transparencies suggest spectral shapes and cubist formations of light and shadow shine out.

The appreciation of the overall composition subsequently gives way to the perception of existing narratives: the soundless intensity of a couple's conversation and solitary characters in a minimal landscape, looking straight into the void or staring at us as lost heroes. Occasional grids of single elements, such as skulls serially repeated on the painting, also produce a jamming effect of abstract and figurative elements.

In his stunning gouaches from the series called *Misturinhas*, painted motifs are mixed with collaged photographs. Echoes of avant-garde experiments in photo-montage – such as in the memorable works of Raoul Hausmann and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy are brought to mind. Malta Campos, employment of sampling, jamming and layering seem to indicate that if his works had sound, theirs would be the sound of jazz.

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