

Baronian Xippas

Press release

**The Skateroom
x Vik Muniz**
33 rue de la Concorde

14.11 - 21.12.2019

Opening
Wednesday 13.11.2019
from 6-9pm

The Skateroom x Vik Muniz

Baronian Xippas is pleased to announce *The Skateroom x Vik Muniz* in its 33 rue de la Concorde space, coinciding with *Surfaces*, Vik Muniz' solo exhibition at the gallery.

The Skateroom x Vik Muniz showcases a new series of very limited art editions on skateboards released by The Skateroom, featuring Vik Muniz's work.

As a child, Vik Muniz grew up in a low-income family from São Paulo. When he established himself as an artist, he devoted a large body of his work to give back to those who needed help the most: the poor and disenfranchised. Through the *Pictures of Garbage* series, Vik Muniz put the spotlight on those most forgotten by Rio de Janeiro's society.

Vik Muniz's art and social engagement resonate with The Skateroom's socially driven business model.

Through the sales of these editions of 75, The Skateroom commits 5% of the sales proceeds to support Coletivo Skate Maré, a volunteer-led grassroots movement that uses skateboarding as a tool to empower at-risk youth in the Rio favela of Maré. An additional 15% will support Escola Vidigal, Vik Muniz's art and technology school for low-income children from Favela Vidigal in Rio.

--

Vik Muniz

Vik Muniz (born 1961, in São Paulo, Brazil) is a Brazilian artist and photographer. Initially a sculptor, Muniz grew interested with the photographic representations of his work, eventually focusing completely on photography. Primarily working with unconventional materials such as tomato sauce, diamonds, magazine clippings, chocolate syrup, dust, dirt, etc., Muniz creates works of art and then photographs them. His work has been met with both commercial success and critical acclaim, and has been exhibited worldwide.

In 2010, Muniz was featured in the documentary film *Waste Land*. Directed by Lucy Walker, the film highlights Muniz's work on one of the world's largest garbage dumps, Jardim Gramacho, on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. The film was nominated to the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature at the 83rd Academy Awards.

The Skateroom

As a young certified B Corporation, The Skateroom project unites art buyers, artists, galleries, museums, foundations, retailers, and non-profits around the world in a new economic model — « Art for Social Impact ».

Our “5:25” business model is simple: we unleash human creativity and the fruits of artistic labor to donate 5% of the turnover or 25% of the profit from every sale— whichever number is greater. Through our community’s support, we have so far raised over \$565,000 to fund 29 social skate projects dedicated to empowering at-risk youth around the world.

By placing works of art on responsibly made skateboards, The Skateroom connects people to the reality that Art for Social Impact is something achievable right now. The Skateroom exists to bring art into your life while bringing brighter possibilities to the lives of all.

Coletivo Skate Maré

Coletivo Skate Maré is a volunteer-led grassroots movement that empowers the youth within its community through skateboarding. The collective provides skate classes to help kids develop their skills and confidence. Since 2015, the group has fought to bring stability in a community afflicted by an ongoing drug war. In August 2019, The Skateroom helped fund the construction of a permanent skatepark within the favela through our collaboration with French artist, JR. We now continue our support to Coletivo Skate Maré through our collaboration with Vik Muniz to enable them to maintain activities on a weekly basis at the skatepark for the local community to benefit the 250 kids that use the skatepark weekly.

Escola Vidigal

Escola Vidigal is a School of Art and Technology for children ages 4 to 10 located at Favela Vidigal, in Rio de Janeiro. The school has been founded by Vik Muniz and has as its core the concept of “Visual Literacy”. This unique space - more a playground and art studio than usual classrooms - gives low-income children (from 4 to 8 years old) from the favela a chance to get in touch with art and technology early on. The main idea is to give access to the development of abstract thinking, including body and emotional expression and to create a new model for teaching - integrating art, play, performance and technology.

“It’s inspiring to watch as an artist,” says Vik Muniz, who left Brazil as a young adult to explore the New York art world of the 1980s. He now shuttles between his studios in Brooklyn and Rio. Escola Vidigal grew out of Muniz’s work over the years teaching art to children from Rio’s favelas. They reminded him of growing up in similar neighborhoods in São Paulo. “I was no different than these kids,” he says. “You teach children art and it’s not just about acquiring craft, it’s about opening up their eyes, helping them see beyond the everyday world they know,” says Muniz. “When you do that, a bubble pops and their world is immediately changed.”

For the children, Escola Vidigal provides a safe space to experiment art - away from the violence of the favela. Muniz sees the school as a pilot program and would like it to be the first of many schools to teach a curriculum that ranges from sculpture to dance to video. “There is nothing like this in the favela,” says Muniz, who hopes to give these children the tools and skills necessary to one day pursue opportunities in the field of their choice.