

MORRO

PAINTING AN ENTIRE FAVELA



FIRMEZA FOUNDATION

The Firmeza Foundation presents

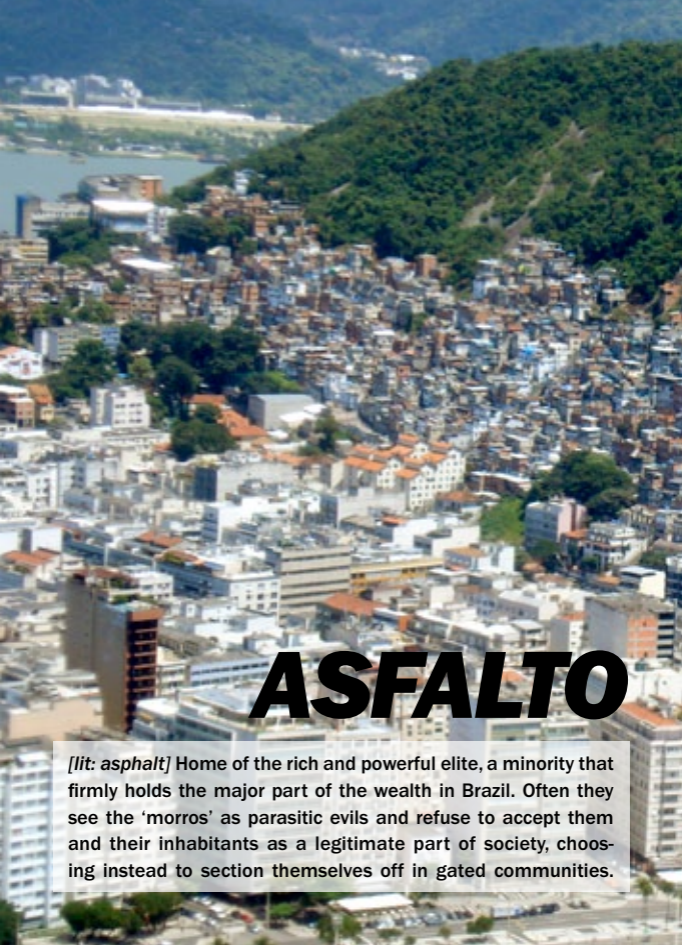


a Favela Painting Project by Haas&Hahn

***JOIN THE
GREATEST
COMMUNITY-
DRIVEN ARTWORK
OF OUR TIME!***

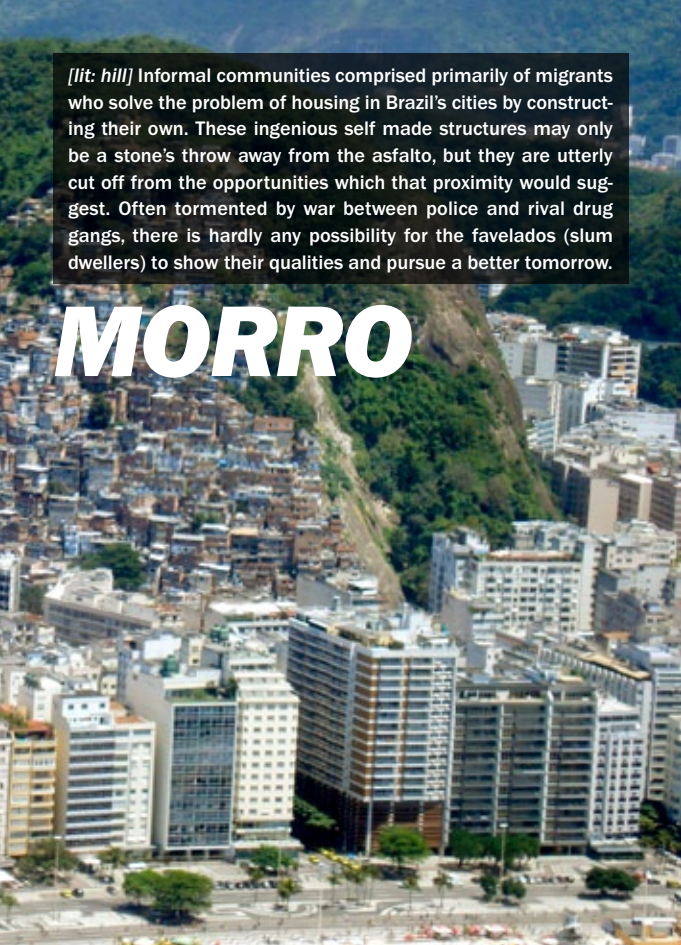


Study '**O Morro**', acrylic on wood, 2009



ASFALTO

[lit: asphalt] Home of the rich and powerful elite, a minority that firmly holds the major part of the wealth in Brazil. Often they see the 'morros' as parasitic evils and refuse to accept them and their inhabitants as a legitimate part of society, choosing instead to section themselves off in gated communities.

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Rio de Janeiro, showing a dense favela built on a steep, green hillside. In the foreground, there are modern, multi-story apartment buildings and a road with some traffic. The background shows more of the city and distant hills under a clear sky.

[lit: hill] Informal communities comprised primarily of migrants who solve the problem of housing in Brazil's cities by constructing their own. These ingenious self made structures may only be a stone's throw away from the asfalto, but they are utterly cut off from the opportunities which that proximity would suggest. Often tormented by war between police and rival drug gangs, there is hardly any possibility for the favelados (slum dwellers) to show their qualities and pursue a better tomorrow.

MORRO

THE FIRMEZA FOUNDATION

The Firmeza Foundation supports the creation of striking artworks in unexpected places. It collaborates with local people to use art as a tool to inspire, create beauty, combat prejudice, and attract attention.



Vitor and Mauri, local painters working on 'Boy with Kite', 2007

FAVELA PAINTING

In 2006, the acclaimed Dutch artist duo Haas&Hahn started developing the idea of creating community-driven art interventions in Brazil. Their efforts yielded two murals which were painted in Vila Cruzeiro, Rio's most notorious slum, in collaboration with local youth. The artworks received worldwide coverage and have become points of pride in the community and throughout Rio.





Robinho and Bruno, local painters working on '**Rio Cruzeiro**', 2008



'Boy with Kite', the first mural of the Favela Painting project



Vila Cruzeiro - Rio de Janeiro - 2007



'Rio Cruzeiro', a 2000m² painting completed in Vila Cruzeiro



Rio de Janeiro - 2008



Detail of 'Rio Cruzeiro', based on a design by tattoo artist Rob Admiraal



Rio de Janeiro - 2008

IMPACT

The Favela Painting project has already attracted intense media interest in Brazil and abroad. The most recent painting, 'Rio Cruzeiro' was covered by news agencies around the world, including CNN, Fox News, and Al Jazeera. In Brazil, the painting attracted reporters from every major newspaper and TV station.



Art Review:



Het PAROOL



Arte para lutar contra a corrente

Um paralelo do concreto de 12 mil metros quadrados levou a obra da Vila Cruzeiro, na Penha, à uma tela colorida pelas intervenções de arte. Realizada a 20m elevada para lutar com tipos diferentes de arte. Pintado com a ajuda de adolescentes da favela, o projeto Rio Cruzeiro que realiza projetos sociais em...



Passagem difícil para quem busca a paz



em homenagem ao Congresso do Aécio

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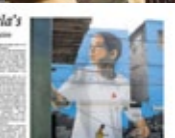
Notorious slum becomes open-air gallery

The favela's residents have turned their homes into a gallery of art. The project is a collaboration between the favela's residents and the city's government. The project is a collaboration between the favela's residents and the city's government. The project is a collaboration between the favela's residents and the city's government.



Optimisme bieder in favela's

Residents are optimistic about the future of their favela. They believe that the government's investment in the favela will lead to a better future for everyone. They believe that the government's investment in the favela will lead to a better future for everyone.



WHAT'S

NEXT?

***IMAGINE
AN ENTIRE
FAVELA
TURNED
INTO A
WORK
OF ART***

The background is a painterly illustration of a favela building. The style is expressive and somewhat abstract, with visible brushstrokes and a limited color palette. The building is rendered in shades of grey, white, and blue, with a prominent stack of orange boxes on the roof. The overall mood is one of urban art and transformation.



Study 'O Morro', acrylic on canvas, 2009

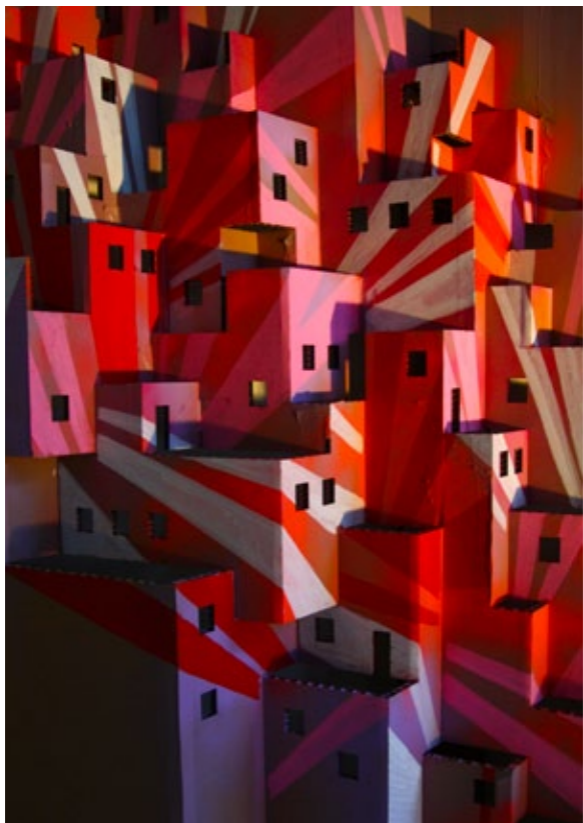
‘O MORRO’ PAINTING AN ENTIRE FAVELA

The third stage of the Favela Painting project involves employing the inhabitants of a favela to paint their own houses according to a pre-arranged pattern. It will turn their community into an artwork of epic scale and will produce an explosion of color, joyfully radiating into the world.

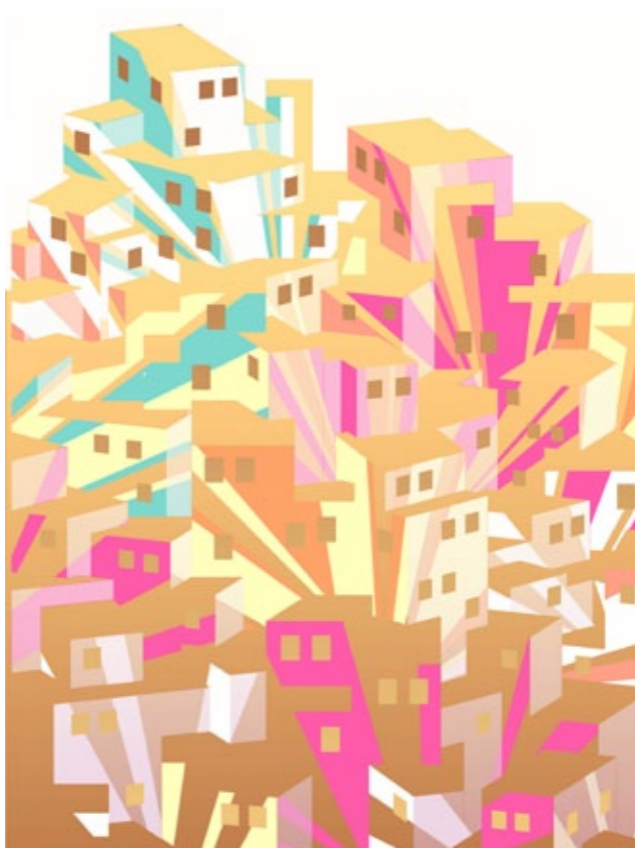
Visible from the center of Rio, ‘O Morro’ will draw attention to the city’s deplorable social situation, while instilling pride and joy in the at the bottom of the social hierarchy. The project will transform the community into a landmark, a tourist attraction, and, most of all, an inspirational monument that as-

sumes a place as an essential part of Rio’s image, alongside the Sugarloaf and the statue of Christ the Redeemer.

By focusing on extensive and painstaking preparations and working with a local workforce, Haas&Hahn hope to complete a significant part of the painting in a single ‘day of visual impact’ that will kick start this art intervention on a massive scale, create a joyful shock felt around the world, and write a new page in the city’s history.



Detail, '**O Morro**' study model, 2009





Study '**O Morro**', 2009

FINANCING PLAN

In order to realize our vision, the Firmeza Foundation has chosen to initiate a funding mechanism that compliments the large scale, community-oriented nature of this project. Rather than seeking a lump sum from established art institutions or wealthy patrons, the 'O Morro' project will be sponsored by a community of supporters, each of whom donates €1000 in order to provide the infrastructure, materials, and workforce needed to complete the work.

***WE ASK YOU TO JOIN
THIS COMMUNITY
AND BECOME AN
ACTIVE PARTICIPANT
IN A DREAM!***



Fundraiser for 'Rio Cruzeiro' - IJtoren Amsterdam - 2007 (photo by J.Ruijgrok)

YO

GIVE

By donating a fixed amount of €1000 to the Firmeza Foundation you become one of the co-founders of the 'O Morro' project.

DU

GET!

You will be credited as one of the co-founders of the project on the artwork as well as in an upcoming book and documentary. You will receive a signed certificate, an exclusive artwork by Haas&Hahn and regular updates on the proj-

ect's progress. You will also be the first to receive information on its opening events, as well as travel info and visitation possibilities.

Most of all, you will be a part of an unprecedented creative burst that will improve the conditions in a neglected neighborhood while producing the greatest community-driven artwork of our time!

WHAT HAPPENS WITH YOUR MONEY?

Donations are tax-deductable and will be used to fund preparations, travel, communications but most of all wages and material. The project will be transparent and all books are open to the contributors.

You can also join 'O Morro' together with your family, club, office, or school by organizing your own fund-raising activities, material for which can be provided by the Firmeza Foundation.

Beside the €1000, contributions of any size are always welcome. (Please check www.favelapainting.com for more information.)

JOIN NOW!

*Simply go to **www.favelapainting.com** for easy online payment or check the back of this booklet for more payment options.*

THE MORE PEOPLE, THE BIGGER THE PAINTING!

FAVELA PAINTING ITSELF OUT OF A CORNER

Interview by **Brendan McGetrick**
for *Art Review Magazine*

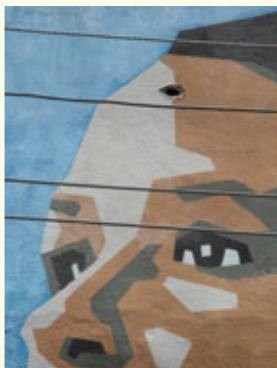
A couple of weeks ago a minor miracle took place in Rio. In Vila Cruzeiro, a favela in the Penha section, hundreds of

people gathered to celebrate the completion of a painting. Along a winding concrete staircase that extends from the favela's main street Rua Santa Helena, a duo of Dutch artists known as Haas&Hahn

Detail of painting in Terra Encantada, Rio 2008



created a 2000 square-metre mural. With the help of three friends from the neighbourhood, Haas&Hahn had spent nine months meticulously painting a carp-filled river in the style of a Japanese tattoo, and as the unveiling party started some parts of the painting were still wet. In many ways, the scene was no different from your average block party: adults strung up balloons and children gyrated inside hula hoops and bounced on a trampoline; the sound of music and the smell of food filled the air; beer was poured and hands shook and hugs exchanged. The atmosphere was one of openness and above all peace, but it was exactly this mood of tranquillity that made the occasion special. Weeks earlier Vila Cruzeiro had been the site of open warfare between local police and Comando Vermelho, the drug gang that controls the neighbourhood. Walls on the route to the painting are marked with bullet holes and spray-painted warnings: 'Atten-



Hole from stray bullet, 2008

tion neighbours. In days of war, avoid leaving the house. Thank you, Comando Vermelho.'

News crews swarmed the steps as the party began. For GLOBO TV, the visit to the giant mural, called Rio Cruzeiro, was the first time it had sent a crew to Vila Cruzeiro since one of its reporters was murdered there while investigating drug dealing in the favela. For the artists, this positive coverage meant a chance to bridge the gap between the neighbour-



Detail *'Rio Cruzeiro'*, Rio 2008

hood's perception and its reality. "People here are very proud of where they live," Jeroen Koolhaas, one half of Haas&Hahn, told me. "But the outside world looks on it as a shame that these neighbourhoods exist and [thinks that] the people who live there should be ashamed of themselves." His partner Dre Urhahn continued the thought: "In public opinion, [favelas] are considered very far away; they're in the middle of the city, but they are an inaccessible other world."

Rio's is a culture fixated on beauty. It is hard to imagine a

more idyllic location for living, and the city has been crafted with such generosity and care that it elevates urban planning to an act of love. At times Rio feels like a macrocosm of one of its most celebrated resources, female beauty. Its architects and planners assume the role of stylists: they apply soft, vibrant colors to highlight the landscape's natural tones, they erect rows of residential towers that emphasise her curves. Over the years they've proposed radical treatments to maximise Rio's God-given potential, even, in the case of the city's partly man-made beaches, a kind of plastic surgery.

To Rio's beauticians, the city's favelas are disfigurements, unsightly patches of brown that stain the landscape. They disturb the city's image, not only because of how they look, but because of what they represent. They are the embodiment of Rio's failure, the consequence of a city's

inability to accommodate all of its citizens, physically and culturally. Over time, favelas like Vila Cruzeiro have gained reputations as immoral, terror-filled places. The impression isn't completely inaccurate, but it exacts a terrible price on favela residents, most of whom are not involved in the drug-related violence that fills the nightly news.

Creating imagery to counter the steady stream of negative

coverage is one of the ambitions of Haas&Hahn's Favela Painting project, which they launched in 2006 with some funding from the Dutch Ministry of Culture. Rio Cruzeiro follows the project's first act, The boy with the kite, a mural in the centre of Vila Cruzeiro on the side of a building that became the neighbourhood's first art gallery. The inspiration for the project came in 2005 when Haas&Hahn (their name is derived from the last syllables

Inauguration of 'Rio Cruzeiro', 2008



CERCA DE 300 AGENTES SE ESPALHARAM PELA FAVELA PARA ACHAR CATIVEIRO ONDE GRINGOS FICARAM.

Polícia Civil vai com tudo pra Vila Cruzeiro

A Polícia Civil fez uma operação na Vila Cruzeiro nesta manhã. Cerca de 300 agentes, um helicóptero e dois carros blindados se espalharam pela favela. Os policiais entraram atrás de criminosos e de informações relacionadas ao fim de semana de festas musicais. Os agentes também aproximaram a operação para obter informações sobre a instalação de drogas. Antes do ataque está o estrangeiro Scotty, que também encontraram a casa de Francisco Filipe e Afonso da Silva - a 158 - com o nome de Rua



Police invasion in Vila Cruzeiro, 2008

of Koolhaas & Urhahn) first came to Rio to make *Firmeza Total*, a short documentary commissioned by MTV on the role of hip hop in the lives of favela youth. Struck by the disconnect between these neighbourhoods and the city that surrounds them, Haas&Hahn started imagining ways to encourage the citizens of Rio to take a second look at one of their city's defining features.

"If you want to build a bridge between these two sides of the city that live side by side

but have an enormous gap between them," Urhahn tells me later, "the easiest way is to do it through some sort of art intervention." Koolhaas adds: "We tried to find a way for the [residents'] sense of pride to be painted on the walls of the favela so that the outside world could see how good they feel about themselves and could understand that there are families here that can take care of themselves."

Given their ambition, it might seem strange that they chose

for a subject a fish-filled river, an image with little obvious connection to favela life. But both artists stress that the neutrality of the image is essential to the project. “I think it is a political statement to make something unpolitical,” Urhahn says. “There is a social and political statement in saying, ‘In this slum where there are so many difficulties and so much bad press, let’s make something that is totally detached from that, something

that’s just beautiful.’”

Over their months of work there, Haas&Hahn have built up trusting relationships with people in a community that has grown weary of outsiders. “A lot of times people come [to neighbourhoods like Vila Cruzeiro] and they take,” Urhahn says. (I’m reminded of a line I heard in *City of Men*, the acclaimed Brazilian TV show: ‘People come to the favela for two reasons,’ one of charac-

‘Cheiro de Gaz’, video installation, Rotterdam 2009



ters says, 'either to buy drugs or make documentaries' – the latter of which Haas&Hahn first did.) Urhahn continues, "But making this painting is exactly the opposite. And unintentionally you create the best medium to communicate with the people, because when we walk here there's no question whatsoever about why we're here. It's become a fact of life."

Urhahn shares an apartment in the favela, and he and Koolhaas were introduced into the community with the help of their assistants on the painting Giovanni Da Conceição Silva, Vitor Luis Da Silva, and Robson Teles Carneiro. "It's an interesting situation when you're an employer, but you have to ask your employees how to walk the streets," Urhahn says. "Everything that doesn't have to do with paint, they know better. And for that they're really invaluable to the project. And for our safety." Now, Urhahn and Koolhaas are clearly loved in the neighbour-

hood – as we talk, a constant stream of people greets them with affectionate back pats, thumbs up and cheek kisses.

As the sun is going down, the staircase becomes more active. 'MSN', a baile funk rhythm comprised of a Bobby McFaren-style beat box overlaid with sounds from MSN messenger, floats out of somebody's window. The scent of barbecue wafts by. Someone suggests we get some beers. Having completed their project and attracted unprecedented coverage (in addition to almost every local paper and TV station, CNN, Al Jazeera and even Fox News covered the painting) Hans & Hahn are reluctant to charge their work with any excess significance. "Really," Jeroen says towards the end of our talk, "it's just like a shirt. A new shirt for the favela."

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AUTHORIZATION FORM

Sorry, dutch bank accounts only. For other countries, check the rear side.

I hereby authorize the Firmeza Foundation to deduct an amount of €1000 from my account on behalf of the 'O Morro' project / Hierbij machtig ik de Stichting Firmeza om eenmalig een bedrag van €1000 van mijn rekening af te schrijven tbv van het project 'O Morro'

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You will be contacted with more info about the project soon!*

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