

MAX ESTRELLA



**ANGÉLICA DASS**

***HUMANÆ - WORK IN PROGRESS***

*Humanæ* is a “work in progress” by the Brazilian Angélica Dass, who intends to deploy a chromatic range of the different human skin colors. Those who pose are volunteers who have known the project and decide to participate. There is no previous selection of participants and there are no classifications relating to nationality, gender, age, race, social class or religion. Nor is there an explicit intention to finish it on a specific date. It is open in all senses and it will include all those who want to be part of this colossal global mosaic. The only limit would be reached by completing all of the world’s population.

A photographic taxonomy of these proportions has been rarely undertaken; those who preceded Angélica Dass were characters of the 19th century that, for various reasons - legal, medical, administrative, or anthropological - used photographs to establish different types of social control of the power. The best-known is that of the portraits of identity, initiated by Alphonse Bertillon and now used universally. However, this taxonomy close to Borges’ world, adopts the format of the PANTONE ® guides, which gives the collection a degree of hierarchical horizontality that dilutes the false preeminence of some races over others based on skin color or social condition.

These guidelines have become one of the main systems of color classification, which are represented by means of an alphanumeric code, allowing to recreate them accurately in any medium: is a technical-industrial standard. The process followed in *Humanæ* also is rigorous and systematic: the background for each portrait is tinted with a color tone identical to a sample of 11 x 11 pixels taken from the face of the photographed. Aligned as in the famous samples, its horizontality is not only formal also is ethical.

Thus, without fuss, with the extraordinary simplicity of this semantic metaphor, the artist makes an “innocent” displacement of the socio-political context of the racial problem to a safe medium, the guides, where the primary colors have exactly the same importance that the mixed ones. It even dilutes the figure of power that usually the photographer holds. The use of codes and visual materials belonging to the imagery that we all share, leaves in the background the self-referentiality of the artist, insistent and often tiresome.

The will that the project evolves in other directions beyond their control (debates, educational applications, replicas and a host of alternatives that have already triggered by sharing *Humanæ* on social networks) contributes also to the dilution of the hierarchy of the author.

Many of the ingredients that characterize the [best] spirit of this time appear to be part of this project: shared authorship, active solidarity and local proposals likely to operate globally, networking, communication expanded to alternative spaces of debate, awareness without political ideology, social horizontality...

The spectator is invited to press the ***share*** button in his brain.

Alejandro Castellote

**Work in progress:**

Angélica Dass will display a set of 350 photographs in one of the spaces of the gallery. A Photography Studio similar to which the artist has used in previous sessions will be located in another room. During the first weeks of the exhibition, there will be an open call, offering the possibility to take part in the project. A third space will display these new images generated in situ, and so the show will grow daily.

[humanae.tumblr.com](http://humanae.tumblr.com)

**Angélica Dass** (Rio de Janeiro, 1979) graduated as a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). She completed a Master in Photography (Concept and Creation) at EFTI School of Photograph, in Madrid. Her portrait sessions have been held in spaces so renowned as Museo del Traje - CIPE, in Madrid; the Festival of Contemporary Culture ROJO/NOVA, in Barcelona; Cercle des Délégués - UNESCO and Projection Logbook in Pictoretank, Paris; and at Max Estrella Gallery booth in ExpoChicago, USA. Her work was shown in international art fairs as ArtBo, in Colombia, ExpoChicago, in USA and ARCO in Spain. Her project *Humanæ* has participated recently in the Alwan 338 outdoor art Festival, in the Al - Riwaq Art space, Adliya, Bahrain. Her new project, *Cabello, cabellera, cabelluda, descabellada* was a finalist for the 19 ° FotoPres grant - LaCaixa. Her work forms part of the Collection Fundación María Cristina Masaveu Peterson.

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**GALERÍA MAX ESTRELLA.** Santo Tomé, 6 (patio). Madrid. Spain.

From June 4<sup>th</sup> until July 17<sup>th</sup> 2013.

Monday to Friday: 10 am to 2 pm / 4:30 pm to 8:30 pm.

Saturdays: 11 am to 2 pm.

Opening: Tuesday, June 4<sup>th</sup> at 8pm.

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