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FABIANO MIXO WINS BLACK PUBLIC MEDIA-MIT FELLOWSHIP

**MIT and Black Public Media select artist & filmmaker as the 2nd recipient
of their fellowship for Black creative technologists working on new forms of documentary**

NEW YORK (March 11, 2021) — Black Public Media (BPM) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have chosen artist and filmmaker Fabiano Mixo as the second recipient of their MIT & Black Public Media Fellowship, hosted by MIT Open Documentary Lab and sponsored by MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST). Filmmaker Carla LynDale Bishop was the inaugural recipient of the fellowship last October. Although all three organizations had assumed they would only be able to support one fellowship this academic year, they were able to not only extend Carla's fellowship into Spring Semester, but also offer a second fellowship to Mixo. Each fellow joins MIT OpenDocLab, receives \$7,500 from MIT CAST, and receives production support from BPM to help them create a pitch package for their project.

The new fellowship is part of [BPMplus](#), a BPM initiative to increase Black participation in extended reality and other forms of emerging-tech storytelling. BPMplus launched in 2018, when Black Public Media started hosting virtual reality (VR) mixers at its Harlem office in New York City, began hosting pop-up VR theaters around the country, and created an *Intro to VR Cameras* class. By the time the pandemic began, BPM had screened AR and VR for more than 650 people in New York, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, and New Orleans.

Mixo will use the MIT & BPM Fellowship to develop *Meshmemories*, an augmented reality (AR) portrait of Beatriz Moreira Costa, known as Mãe Beata de Iemanjá, who was a Brazilian writer, activist, and religious leader. Mixo, who grew up on the outskirts of Rio in the same city where Mother Beata was based, was drawn to her significant social justice record, which focused on HIV/AIDS education, anti-racism, the environment, religious tolerance, and women's rights.

"I applied because I wanted to share Brazilian culture with an international audience," said Mixo. "And I was sure this fellowship would give me the chance to learn from an experienced XR community, like MIT OpenDocLab, something that is not yet possible in Brazil. I also hoped that becoming a member of BPM's network would help create bridges with other Black artists."

Mixo's work has screened at international film festivals, including Melbourne, Torino, New Orleans, Aesthetica, IndieLisboa, Slamdance, and São Paulo International. His work has been part of art and tech events, such as [SIGGRAPH](#), [EVA](#), [EMAF](#), Transmission Athens-Karlsruhe, Cairo Video Festival, and [Videofomes](#). His Cubist video piece, *Woman without Mandolin*, won a

Lumen Prize in 2015. His 360 VR short documentary, *Children Do Not Play War*, debuted at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival.

Because of COVID-19, MIT OpenDocLab and BPM designed the fellowship to be entirely remote, which was not the standard for most tech and film fellowships and labs, pre-pandemic. "We received applications from six countries. And it is worth noting that neither Fabiano nor Carla would have applied to this fellowship if it were not remote and if it did not provide an unrestricted grant," said Lisa Osborne, BPM's director of emerging media. "It doesn't matter how prestigious a program is. If it's expensive to participate, even overqualified Black candidates will opt out. 'Expensive' could mean a \$2,000-dollar flight for one filmmaker or eight weeks of lodging for another. It really varies from person to person."

BPM, which was created 41 years ago and is funded primarily by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, is the only organization within the U.S. public media ecosystem that has created programs to support Black creative technologists, specifically. Its BPMplus initiative is funded by the MacArthur Foundation. The MIT fellowship is the sixth BPMplus program that the nonprofit has launched for Black storytellers who work in emerging tech. And a seventh, the BPMplus Showcase, will debut on Friday, April 9th, featuring Black filmmakers and artists (including Mixo and Bishop) pitching their AR, VR, and mocap projects.

"We are delighted to continue our partnership with BPM and MIT CAST to host fellows in our lab," says Sarah Wolozin, director of [MIT OpenDocLab](#). "The program helps us find great talent, creatives who bring important perspectives into the lab."

"MIT CAST's support of cross-disciplinary work is a central part of our mission. We are pleased to support the research and development of inspiring projects by Fabiano Mixo and Carla LynDale Bishop, in partnership with Black Public Media and the MIT Open Documentary Lab," said [Leila Kinney](#), executive director of arts initiatives and MIT CAST.

To learn more about the fellowship and other BPM programs, visit www.blackpublicmedia.org or follow #bpmpplus on social media. Black Public Media is @blackpublicmedia on Instagram and @BLKPublicMedia on Twitter.

About Black Public Media:

Black Public Media is committed to enriching our democracy by educating, enlightening, empowering and engaging the American public. The nonprofit supports diverse voices by developing, producing, and distributing innovative media about the Black experience and by investing in visionary content makers. BPM provides quality content for public media outlets, including, among others, PBS, PBS.org, and BlackPublicMedia.org, as well as other platforms, while training and mentoring the next generation of Black filmmakers. The mission of [BPMplus](#) is to increase Black participation in extended reality and other forms of emerging-tech storytelling.

About MIT Open Documentary Lab:

Drawing on MIT's legacy of media innovation and its deep commitment to open and accessible information, the MIT Open Documentary Lab brings storytellers, technologists, and scholars together to explore new documentary forms with a particular focus on collaborative, interactive, and immersive storytelling. OpenDocLab is based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

About MIT's Center for Art, Science & Technology:

A major cross-school initiative, the MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST) creates new opportunities for art, science and technology to thrive as interrelated, mutually informing modes of exploration, knowledge and discovery. MIT CAST's multidisciplinary platform presents performing and visual arts programs, supports research projects for artists working with science and engineering labs, and sponsors symposia, classes, workshops, design studios, lectures and publications. The visiting artists program is a cornerstone of CAST's activities, which encourages cross-fertilization among disciplines and intensive interaction with MIT's faculty, students, and researchers. MIT CAST is based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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