

O Pato (The Duck)
Beatriz Milhazes



Date : 1996-1998
Screenprint
39 3/4 x 60 in.
Edition of 20
Pencil signed, dated, and numbered

Artist bio

Beatriz Milhazes is a Brazilian-born collage artist and painter known for her large scale works and installations. She is also very active in the LGTBQ+ community. She has been called “Brazil’s most successful contemporary painter.” She has worked in the Jardim Botânico neighborhood of Rio de Janeiro since attending the Parque Lage art school at the edge of the Tijuca forest. Between art school and her current studio Milhazes rented a studio space with nine other artists from her class in an attempt to start a career.

The daughter of a lawyer and an art historian, Milhazes was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1960. She studied [social communication](#) at [Faculdades Integradas Hélio Alonso](#) (FACHA), Rio de Janeiro from 1978 to 1981 and studied at the [School of Visual Arts \(Escola de Artes Visuais - EAV\) of Parque Lage](#), Rio de Janeiro from 1980 to 1982.

Milhazes has had solo and group exhibitions in a number of museums, including the [Museum of Modern Art](#) and the [Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris](#). From 4-21 July 2009, the [Fondation Cartier pour l’art contemporain](#) in [Paris](#) presented a major exhibition of her work.

Milhazes’ paintings are in the permanent collections of the [Museum of Modern Art](#), the [Guggenheim](#), the [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#), the [Banco Itaú](#), and the [Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia](#).

Her 2000 painting “Meu Limão” “sold [in 2012] for \$2.1 million dollars at [Sotheby’s](#) in California, making her the highest-priced living Brazilian artist at auction.”

In terms of technique, Milhazes is predominantly concerned with the principle of collage, drawing from her combined knowledge of both Latin American and European traditions. The cultural mixing of her native Brazil is something Milhazes is aware of and to some degree communicates in her paintings as well as being in ties with the Brazilian modernist movement. Milhazes many other influences come from her own fascination with the decorative arts, fashion, and geometry. Milhazes has described her own work in saying “I think of my work as geometric, yet I can’t put everything into a square or a circle.” Her self developed process of art making came about during her extensive researching of printing processes in the 1980s.

A slow but steady process, time is key to everything for Milhazes. Many of her works start with the painting of plastic sheets, which are then glued to a canvas. These plastic sheets are then peeled off of the canvas like a decal leaving behind paint. Some of these plastic sheets have been reused by Milhazes for as long as ten years. Often if a particular motif or drawing is well liked by the artist it will be kept, repainted, and added to multiple compositions. She describes these pieces of plastic affectionately, stating that they are imprinted with a memory, a memory that can cause irregularities. These irregularities are happily accepted by Milhazes as something that just comes with her process. In her works, Beatriz focuses on achieving a smooth surface as opposed to visible brush strokes with thickness being an intriguing topic but far from integral to her work and its importance. In this way she can play with the various sheen and levels of contrast that her materials provide in an attempt to further transform her canvas. In her own words Milhazes likens her process to the working-class, saying “I tell my friends that I’m like a bank worker...I come to the studio five days a week and do my job. I pay attention to detail, and try not to make mistakes.”