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For Immediate Release

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CROSSING  THE LINE
2012

French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF)
presents

DIÁRIO (através de um OLHO BAIANO)

Bel Borba with Burt Sun & André Costantini

Friday, September 14 through Sunday, October 14, 2012 • Various Locations

**Co-presented with the Times Square Alliance and the Hemispheric Institute of
Performance & Politics**

and

Sneak Preview! *Bel Borba Aqui*

by Burt Sun and André Costantini

Wednesday, September 19 at 7pm • FIAF; Florence Gould Hall

New York, NY, September 14, 2012—As part of the sixth edition of *Crossing the Line*, FIAF's annual transdisciplinary festival of contemporary arts, the French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF), in partnership with the Times Square Alliance and the Hemispheric Institute of Performance & Politics, presents ***DIÁRIO (através de um OLHO BAIANO)***, a month of ephemeral artwork by Brazilian visual artist Bel Borba, illuminated by filmmakers and photographers Burt Sun and André Costantini. Spanning diverse locations throughout New York City, *DIÁRIO* will run from Friday, September 14 through Monday, October 15, culminating in a large-scale installation in Times Square. On Monday, October 1, the short film *Universal Pulse*, a collaboration between Borba, Sun, and Costantini will have its World Premiere on the Times Square Advertising Coalition screens.

On Wednesday, September 19 at 7pm, FIAF will present a Sneak Preview of ***Bel Borba Aqui*** (released by Abramorama), a documentary portrait of the artist directed by Burt Sun and André Costantini, prior to its New York Premiere theatrical engagement at Film Forum from October 3–16.

Known as “The People’s Picasso,” Bel Borba has captivated his native Salvador, a 500-year-old city in the Brazilian state of Bahia, with stunning outdoor artworks, from small mosaics to large-scale pieces composed of brightly-colored broken tiles, steel, wood, recycled materials, and sand. Bel Borba’s eclectic work beautifully channels the experiences of the communities in which he works, providing a window into the city’s rich and complex history and culture.



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For nearly two decades, filmmakers and photographers Burt Sun and André Costantini have worked with international artists to document and illuminate their creative processes. In this unique collaboration, the three artists work across multiple platforms to create a powerful and multifaceted artwork.

DIÁRIO (*através de um OLHO BAIANO*)

Co-presented with the Times Square Alliance and the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics

Friday, September 14–Sunday, October 14

Various Locations

Free and open to the public

Bel Borba will create a new ephemeral artwork each day in a different location around New York City. Starting at FIAF's Beaux-Arts building on Manhattan's Upper East Side, the project will extend to Roosevelt Island; the multi-ethnic food carts of Jackson Heights; Central Park; Breezy Point/Rockaway; a wood workshop in Bushwick; a park in Ridgewood; Howard Beach, Red Hook waterfront; Film Forum, New York's legendary independent movie theater in downtown Manhattan; and many other sites, culminating in a block-long installation in Times Square.

Drawing inspiration from New York's people and urban landscape, Bel Borba invites New Yorkers to "hitch-hike" along and share in his delirium. The artist will use recycled, found, and discarded materials, including sawdust, cardboard boxes, food, orange street barriers, and fire hydrants, along with charcoal, chalk, tempura paint, and his signature recycled tiles to create unique and beautiful works—most of which will disappear shortly after their creation.

Burt Sun and André Costantini will document the month-long project using photography, drawing, animation, and film. Clips from each day's artwork will be shared daily via the festival's website.

Additionally, the new short film *Universal Pulse*, a collaboration between Borba, Sun, and Costantini inspired by New York City, will be presented in its World Premiere on Monday, October 1, as part of the *Times Square Moment: A Digital Gallery*—the largest coordinated effort by the sign operators in Times Square to display synchronized, cutting-edge creative content at the same time every day. The first work in the program's history to be designed specifically for use on the Times Square screens, *Universal Pulse* will screen every night counting down the three magical minutes to midnight. *The Times Square Moment: A Digital Gallery* is presented by the Times Square Advertising Coalition and Times Square Alliance and features new dynamic contemporary video works each month.

Sneak Preview! Burt Sun and André Costantini, *Bel Borba Aqui*

Wednesday, September 19 at 7pm

FIAF, Florence Gould Hall, 55 East 59th Street (between Park and Madison Avenue)

FIAF Members Free (\$2 tickets in advance), Non-Members \$10

Film in Portuguese and English with English subtitles. Followed by a Q&A with the directors and Bel Borba, moderated by Crossing the Line co-curator Gideon Lester

For the past 35 years, Bel Borba has been transforming his hometown of Salvador, Brazil with an amazing array of public artworks. Using paint, sand, tiles, clay, metal, wood, and just about anything else he comes across, Bel Borba creates art that is a natural extension of his exuberant personality. He remakes an abandoned building by using its steel beams to fashion a façade of faces. An airplane makes a terrific surface on which to paint a plane-sized fish. Coke bottles are fashioned into a huge dog, and unadorned surfaces are canvases crying out for transformation. From tiled mosaics in Salvador's *favelas* to a large-scale mural at the Modern Art Museum of Bahia, to majestic undersea sculptures, filmmakers and photographers Burt Sun and André Costantini follow Borba on a lyrical journey as he breathes new life into a city he loves. *Bel Borba Aqui*



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captures the breathtaking poetry and scale of Borba's work and showcases the forgotten beauty of his country, reveling in its rich culture, diversity, and artistic energy.

Bel Borba Aqui, an Abramorama Release, will open at New York's Film Forum from October 3–16 for its New York Premiere theatrical engagement. Film Forum is located at 209 West Houston Street. For more information, visit www.filmforum.org. Media contact: Julia Pacetti, JMP Verdant, julia@jmpverdant.com, 917 584 7846

"Inspiring and visually engaging"—PBS

"One of the most mesmerizing and must-see documentary films this year"—Voice of America

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About Bel Borba

Born to lawyer parents in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, Borba was expected to pursue a similar career, but realizing that his interest was in visual arts, he instead entered the School of Fine Arts at the University of Bahia, where he had his first public exhibition at the age of eighteen in 1975. After starting out as a painter, he soon began experimenting with different media. He initially became famous for his street mosaics that can be seen in a great many neighborhoods throughout Salvador, but he works in a variety of (often mixed) media including acrylic paint, oil, metals, digital renderings, ceramics, and more. His work often has a humorous surrealistic quality. Bel Borba's art can be seen in museums, on airplanes, buildings, murals, totems, along the beaches of Salvador, in restaurants and hospitals throughout the city, from government commissioned large-scale public art, to little street corners and dark alleys. Some of his large-scale street mosaics have recently been recognized as landmarks of the city of Salvador, part of the historical conservation of Bahian cultural heritage.

Mr. Borba has exhibited in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and several other Brazilian cities, as well as in Switzerland, France, Italy, and the U.S., and was recently appointed ambassador of the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil, along with Gilberto Gil and other Brazilian luminaries.

About Director/Producer Burt Sun

Burt Sun began his career as a multi-media artist, working in advertising, graphic design, theater, and television production design, photography, and film. Sun has worked with major American theatre artists including Robert Woodruff, Anne Bogart, and Philip Glass. He has developed numerous original media projects that combine creative ideas and marketing strategies, attesting to his abilities to cross the borders between commercial and fine art. He currently serves as the creative director in media communication for Opera Boston.

Mr. Sun's photographs have been exhibited throughout the United States, Europe, Central America, and Brazil. In 2009, the Urban Art Institute of MASSART commissioned Mr. Sun to create a book about urban street art in Brazil. He traveled to Salvador, in the Brazilian state of Bahia, where he met local street artist Bel Borba and transformed the book project into a full length documentary entitled *Bel Borba Aqui*.

Mr. Sun is also the curator of Bel Borba's current show *Aqui, em 7 elementos* at the Rodin Museum, Bahia, which opened in early 2012. This exhibit has been hailed by critics as one of the best art exhibitions of the past twenty years.

About Director/Producer André Costantini

A multi-instrumentalist embracing art, music, writing, performance, photography, and film, André Costantini has collaborated with Burt Sun on numerous books and documentary projects since they met in 1996. That same year, Costantini co-founded Goldleaf and Big Daddy, a performance duo for which he wrote, sang, and played



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the accordion. In 1998, Mr. Costantini photographed the restoration of Leonardo Da Vinci's "Last Supper" in Milan with Pulitzer prize-winning photographer and photojournalist, Eddie Adams. Following the restoration project, Costantini was invited to join Adams' workshop, where he continues to work to this day, as a staff member and master teacher. In 2010, he also founded the Catskills Photography Workshops, a training facility for the next generation of image-makers. Since 2008 Costantini has produced short films for the NGO Doc to Dock, part of the Clinton Global Initiative, documenting the NGO's efforts in Africa.



About Crossing the Line 2012

Crossing the Line is the French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF)'s annual fall festival presenting interdisciplinary works and performances created by artists from around the world in New York. The festival provides opportunities for New Yorkers to explore the dialogue between artist and participant, examine how artists help re-imagine the world, and engage in the vital role artists play as critical thinkers and catalysts for social evolution. Curated by Lili Chopra, Artistic Director of FIAF, Simon Dove, Director of the Herberger Institute School of Dance at Arizona State University, and Gideon Lester, Director of Theater Programs at Bard College, *Crossing the Line* is initiated and produced by FIAF in partnership with leading cultural institutions and takes place this year from September 14–October 14, 2012.

Inaugurated in 2007, *Crossing the Line* has enjoyed increasingly strong audience response from diverse segments of the New York City area, as well as critical acclaim. The festival was voted "Best of 2009" and "Best of 2010" by *Time Out New York*, *The New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. *The New York Times* has said, "The French Institute Alliance Française's annual *Crossing the Line* has carved out a particular identity as an invigorating, unpredictable, occasionally provocative mix of genres and disciplines...It's the artistic equivalent of a splash of water on the face." fiaf.org/ctl

About Times Square Arts

Times Square Arts, the public art program of the Times Square Alliance, presents leading contemporary art and performances in multiple forms and media to more than 400,000 daily visitors to New York City's Times Square, making it one of the highest profile public arts programs in the United States. Since its inception, Times Square Arts has featured works by a diverse group of more than four dozen prominent and emerging artists. Times Square Arts is partially funded by Rockefeller Brothers Fund. www.TimesSquareNYC.org/arts

About FIAF

FIAF's mission is to create and offer New Yorkers innovative and unique programs in education and the arts that explore the evolving diversity and richness of French cultures. FIAF seeks to generate new ideas and promote cross cultural dialogue through partnerships and new platforms of expression. www.fiaf.org

About the Times Square Advertising Coalition (TSAC)

TSAC is a trade association comprised of major advertisers, retailers, real estate firms, media companies and other businesses involved in the outdoor sign industry in Times Square, along with organizations representing Broadway and the community. Members of TSAC include: ABC Regional Sports & Entertainment Sales, American Eagle Outfitters, Clear Channel Spectacolor, Daktronics, D3 LED, Digital Domination, Hines Management, Jamestown One Times Square, Lamar Advertising Company, Landmark Sign & Electric, Metro Media Technologies, Newmark Knight Frank, North Shore Neon, P.R.omotion!, Sherwood Outdoor, SL Green, The Times Square Alliance, The WOW Factor and Thomson Reuters. www.timessquareadcoalition.org



Merci!

FIAF would like to thank the following for their generous support of *Crossing the Line* 2012:

Nespresso, Presenting Sponsor of *Crossing the Line* 2012.



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American Airlines, the Official Airline of FIAF; 972, the Cultural Services of the French Embassy; Institut français; Florence Gould Foundation; The French-American Fund for Contemporary Theater, a Program of FACE; FUSED (French-U.S. Exchange in Dance); Fondation d'entreprise Hermès; New York State Council on the Arts; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; The Enoch Foundation; The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation; Interaudi Bank; The Museum for African Art; Société des Auteurs et Compositeurs Dramatiques; Netherlands Cultural Services; The Netherland-America Foundation; APAP Cultural Exchange; and Robert de Rothschild

Special thanks to Arizona State University.

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LISTING SUMMARY

What: *Crossing the Line 2012: DIÁRIO (através de um OLHO BAIANO); Bel Borba with Burt Sun & André Costantini*
When: Saturday, September 14–Sunday, October 14
Where: Various Locations
Admission: Free and open to the public
Information: fiaf.org/ct | 212 355 6100

What: *Crossing the Line 2012: Universal Pulse, directed by Bel Borba, Burt Sun, and André Costantini*
When: Monday, October 1–31st, 11:57pm–12am
Where: Times Square
Admission: Free and open to the public
Information: fiaf.org/ct | 212 355 6100

What: *Crossing the Line 2012: Sneak Preview! Bel Borba, Aqui, directed by Burt Sun and André Costantini*
When: Wednesday, September 19, at 7pm
Where: FIAF - Florence Gould Hall, 55 East 59th Street (between Park and Madison Avenue)
Admission: \$10; Free for FIAF Members (\$2 in advance)
Tickets: fiaf.org/ct | 800 982 2787
Information: fiaf.org/ct | 212 355 6160
Transportation: Subway - 4, 5, 6, N, R and Q to 59th Street & Lexington Avenue; F to 63rd Street & Lexington Avenue; E to 53rd Street & 5th Avenue
Bus - M1, M2, M3, M4, Q31 to 59th Street; M5 to 58th Street

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