



avaf (assume vivid astro focus) originated in 1994 as a professional tag for its founder, the New York- and São Paulo-based artist Eli Sudbrack, who was born in Rio in 1968. Sudbrack received his BA in Communications in 1992 from PUC (Pontificia Universidade Católica) in Rio, completing his studies at New York's International Center for Photography seven years later. Having once collaborated with multimedia artist Christophe Hamaide-Pierson in 2001, the avaf collective burst onto the international scene, becoming known for its playful, carnivalesque installations and performance art.

Fusing drawing, sculpture, video and performance, avaf's dynamic installations touch on issues of gender, politics and culture generally. It has become known for its

resistance to the élitism of arts institutions, often emphasising engagement with, and the participation of, its viewers. avaf regularly invites other artists, musicians and fashion designers to collaborate on specific projects.

Following avaf's first solo exhibition at Deitch Projects in New York in 2003, the collective drew significant attention for its flamboyant style. In 2004, in the course of an installation at the De la Cruz Collection in Miami, Sudbrack wore an elaborate kaleidoscopic mask in order to remain anonymous; motivated by avaf's collective ideology and approach, he resisted becoming its sole 'face'. His mask, serving as a tribute to the collective's influential aesthetic and style, resulted in the now standard wearing of masks by attendees at avaf events, motivated

by their intention to become part of a 'collective unconscious'. In fact, masks have played a significant part in avaf's performances ever since, as in the 2005 exhibition *homocrap#1* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

When contextualising avaf within the history of Brazilian art, critics often note the influence of Hélio Oiticica, citing his '*penetráveis*' and '*parangolés*', the mobile sculptures and costumes he produced in the 1960s and '70s. Another significant influence is Oswald de Andrade's 1928 '*Manifesto Antropófago*'. avaf itself evokes eclectic sources from Hiro Yamagata, Captain Horlock and Richard Bernstein to coloured plastics and alchemy.

above  
**assume vivid astro focus VII**, 2003  
 Mixed-media installation  
 [Garden V [wallpaper and floor and ceiling  
 decals]; Walking on Thin Ice [video]]  
 Photo: Tom Powel Imaging  
 © avaf  
 Courtesy of the artists and  
 Casa Triângulo, São Paulo



above  
**Cyclops Trannie #75**  
**(Que'shayda Bon'Quisha)**, 2011  
 Coloured pigment on paper  
 40.5 x 33 cm (framed)  
 Photo: Jurate Veceraite  
 © avaf  
 Courtesy of the artists; The Suzanne Geiss  
 Company, New York; and Casa Triângulo,  
 São Paulo



top right  
**aqui vivimos atisbando fantasmas**, 2010  
 Installation at Centro de Arte Contemporâneo  
 La Conservera, Ceuti, 2011  
 Mixed-media installation (various wallpaper  
 panels forming a pyramid-shaped structure  
 and Skydancers inflatables)  
 Photo: Chesco – La Industrial  
 © avaf  
 Courtesy of the artists  
 and Casa Triângulo, São Paulo



above  
**homocrap #1, part of Ecstasy:**  
**In and About Altered States**, 2006  
 Installation at MOCA, Los Angeles  
 (curated by Paul Schimmel)  
 Mixed-media installation  
 Giant Lady, Neon Dick and Couch, 2005 [Giant  
 Lady: vacuum-formed sculpted foam sculpture,  
 LED lights, confetti machine, synthetic hair,  
 plexiglass, metal and supports; Neon Dick:  
 animated neon sculpture; Couch: plywood,  
 naugahyde, egg strobes]; Disko Ceiling, 2005 [6  
 GAM color gels, 2 120-volt flood lights, plexiglass  
 sheets, DMX system]; Tom Cruising 1, 2005  
 (wallpaper); The Ecstasy of Pope Benedict, 2005  
 (mixed-media sculpture; coloured chain curtain,

walls, metal roll-up door, neon, wheat-pasted  
 homocrap poster/zines, Mylar, cluster of disco  
 balls, fragmented disco balls, adhesive); Klaus  
 Nomi Window, 2005 [two-sided wall structure  
 with animated neon, venetian blind, glove,  
 rhinestones, roll-up door]; Paradise Garage,  
 2005 [3 rotating beacon light fixtures: red/green,  
 blue/yellow]; Giles Round's Quantum Structure  
 #05, 2005 (wood, automotive paint, animated  
 neons); mirrored plexiglass floor, mirrored tiles,  
 Line Dancer disco lights  
 Photo: Josh White  
 © avaf  
 Courtesy of the artists; MOCA, Los Angeles;  
 Peres Projects, Berlin; and Casa Triângulo,  
 São Paulo



top  
**axé vatapá alegria feijão**, 2008  
 Installation view of *In Living Contact*  
 at 28th São Paulo Biennial, 2008  
 Mixed-media installation and performance in  
 collaboration with Cibelle Cavalli, Rick Castro,  
 Rafa de Jota, Fábio Gurjão, Dudu Bertholini  
 and Rita Comparato (Neon), Kleber Matheus,  
 Sílvia Moraes, Melissa Stabile de Mello,  
 Rodrigo Garcia Dutra, Carolina Gold, and  
 Black Meteoric Star (aka Gavin Russom)  
 Carnival float, neon, fabric, balloons, video  
 projections, paint, cardboard, plastic sheets,  
 party decorations, lasers, smoke machine,  
 strobe light, coloured paper, acrylic sheets,  
 reflective materials  
 Photo: Edouard Fraipont  
 © avaf  
 Courtesy the artists; Fundação Bienal,  
 São Paulo; and Casa Triângulo, São Paulo

right  
**Tropicália**, 2012  
 Print  
 © avaf  
 Courtesy of the artists; Artspace and  
 The Suzanne Geiss Company, New York;  
 and Casa Triângulo, São Paulo





above  
**anfibios voladores alargadamente fabulosos**, 2011  
Installation in *The Space Between Now and Then*  
at OMR, Mexico City (curated by Natalie Kovacs  
and Cristobal Riestra)  
Wallpaper, neon  
© avaf  
Courtesy of the artists and  
Casa Triángulo, São Paulo