

## 100 Answers João Paulo Serafim

1. Name and surname? João Paulo de Sousa Serafim
2. Possible pseudonym? Person in charge of the MIIAC
3. Nationality? Portuguese
4. Profession? Photographer
5. Education / Graduation / School, etc..? Attended the Art History Course at [Universidade] Nova  
Complete photography degree at Ar.Co  
Advanced Visual Arts studies at Ar.Co.  
Photography course at the Programa Gulbenkian Criatividade e Criação Artística
6. Public Awards? Grant from the Centro Nacional de Cultura  
Grant from Gulbenkian Foundation  
3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Purificacion Garcia prize
7. Civil status? Civil union
8. Military order? Dispensed
9. Children (m/f)? [Photo] Camila
10. Height? 176 cm
11. Weight? Excess weight
12. Physical constitution? Average
13. Particular marks? Glasses
14. Eye colour? Blue/grey
15. Hair colour? Brown
16. Father's profession? Entrepreneur
17. Mother's profession? Cook
18. Number of brothers/sisters? One sister
19. Profession/activity of brothers/sisters? Journalist
20. Special comments on your family? I'm originated from a family, which always fought for it's values independently from the consequences and worked hard to achieve it. And that is something inspiring.
21. Hereditary problems? [Photo] Heart
22. Place and manner of your conception? Paris ...
23. Place, date and hour of your birth? Paris, Clinique des Glycines, 11<sup>th</sup> of January 1974, 17h35

24. What did you want to be when you were young? Explorer, fireman, but very soon I decided that I wanted to be photographer.

25. Why did you want to be an artist? It happened, when I started photographing I realized that I had a tendency to conceptualize things and had a necessity to express myself by ideas and images. Something that happens mostly in the field of arts.

26. Your ideal definition of your profession? Photographer and collector of ideas

27. The strongest influence in your youth? My cousin Quim

28. Your favourite toys? Games? Cars, playmobil, lego, bike, books and comics.

29. How was your childhood? I was born and grew up in Paris. What I retain from my childhood is a critical attitude, which is a characteristic of the French society and culture. At school, children are stimulated very soon to think by their own means and they valorise much their culture.

30. What is your relation to children? I love them, considering myself still being one.

31. What is your relation to music? Indispensable

32. What is your relation to religion? I believe in God

33. What is your relation to politics? Cautious, from very soon on, I'm interested in politics but I never was connected to any party. Nowadays I think that's important to have political positions but without being sectarian, contributing with social work and actions in the field of culture to question some of the established ideas. And having an positive attitude towards life and being able to expand it to other domains of society.

34. What kind of jobs have you had? I've already worked in construction, in agriculture, in my dad's garage when he had one, in an office, in a digital lab, in a magazine, as assistant of a fashion photographer and in an arts school.

35. What would you have liked to be (professionally)? Architect or musician.

36. How do you relate to the past? Because of the nature of my work I'd say permanent, memories are something that I'm interested for its fictional possibilities.

37. Who are the people that influenced you the most? Jean Luc Godard, Christina Boltansky, Michelangelo Antonioni, Georges Perec, Walter Benjamin, John Coltrane, Robert Frank, Italo Calvino, Ilya Kabakov, Thomas Demand, Serge Gainsbourg, Alfred Hitchcock, Joan Fontecuberta, Pierre Huygue, Andrei Tarkovsky and my family.

38. How would you describe your actual mental state? I'm aware of my capacities and limitations, I'm working towards feeding my interests and trying to overcome my difficulties.

39. What is your life motto? Do you have one? Work in progress, it applies to everything.

40. What do you know about art? What does this word mean to you? Being capable to contextualise certain art movements, having the biggest artistic and visual culture as possible in order to enjoy art at every level. But without doubt, art has to act primarily on the senses.

41. How would you describe your art? I like the idea of a puzzle with thousands of pieces whose whole picture I ignore, but along time I'm putting together the pieces and forming an image. One day you will understand what it depicts.

42. Question omitted

43. Question omitted

44. Question omitted

45. Question omitted

46. What are your current interests? Trying to understand how we can manage to put in balance all we did wrong, economically and environmentally.

47. Do you see a relation between art and science? More and more art crosses different fields of knowledge. For instance photography was bound to science, until the moment some photograph gained some artistic consideration, like the work of Muybridge.

48. How do you relate to money? I'd rather like it would not exist.

49. What are your favourite means of expression? Photography, video, the use of objects and books.

50. Favourite colour? [photo]

51. Favourite animals?[photo]

52. Favourite plants? Aromatic plants

53. Favourite stone? [photo]

54. Where would you like to live? Be? Between Lisbon and Paris

55. A second option? NY

56. How do marriage and family life relate to an artistic activity? With mutual concessions, but it's mostly a great support and incentive.

57. Why do you think that more and more women reach equivalent results to men in the artistic realm? Because women and men have interesting things to say and obviously mentality evolved towards more equality.

58. What is the meaning of art for society? I think art is fundamental for society, as it is a reflection of the latter.

59. Does art influence the evolution of society? I don't know if art will have influence on the evolution of society, but certainly it helps to think and question certain behaviours, habits and problems of the human being.

60. How do you think art will evolve, in your opinion? As usual art evolves in a dichotomy between market and ideas, one prevailing on the others and vice-versa.

61. Do you think art is for a wide public or does it belong to an elite? I think art is prevalently elitist not only from an economic point of view, but mainly in an intellectual sense. I don't think that it has to be like that, and therefore an universal access to culture is fundamental, as well as stimulating a wider artistic conscience in schools, from the beginning. Another hypothesis making art more accessible is trying to display and make art outside of the traditional channels, doing public interventions in high density spaces. Every time I was confronted with art in a non usual space it turned out to be very effective.

62. Are you comfortable with the actual form of society? No, there should be more social justice.
63. Does art relate to politics? Art is hardly not political. As Georges Didi-Huberman says, every position you assume, also a formal one, it will have a political implication, not in a sectarian way, but in terms of social, cultural, economical... impact.
64. What was the most important artistic movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? I think that the vanguards (Dadaism, Constructivism, Suprematism) have a fundamental importance because they opened the way to many different ways of doing and thinking about art.
65. Are there any eternal values in art? ?
66. Do you visit museums? Why? On a regular basis, not just because of working the last 5 years on the idea of Museum, but also because it is "the" heterotopic space, where many spaces/times can coexist.
67. Favourite painter? Poet? Musician? Among the classical?  
[Photo] Rembrandt  
[Photo] Rimbaud  
[Photo] Coltrane
68. Among the contemporary? Marcel Broodthaers / Fishli & Weiss/ Pierre Huygue  
Herberto Helder/Gastão Cruz  
Steve Reich/Radiohead/EST
69. Favourite character in fiction? [Image] Corto Maltese
70. How does your exhibitionism manifest itself? I don't like exhibitionism, but I can have a narcissistic side, hopefully not too exacerbated.
71. What is your position on private property? It's part of the game in which we are.
72. Is there a philosopher / philosophy that is close to your thinking? Walter Benjamin  
Georges Didi-Huberman  
Georges Perec
73. What is your favourite occupation? Go to second hand booksellers and fairs looking for "treasures".
74. What stimulates you most about your dreams? I was much more interested in the unconscious and a certain onyric side sometimes ago, I used to write down my dreams. Nowadays, just if some dream has a direct relation with something I'm thinking I'll take it into consideration. Dreams are also good to be shared with the closest people.
75. Any sport? [Photos]
76. Any hobby? "A la recherche du temps perdu"
77. What are the elements of your personal mythology? Maybe iconography, memories, small scales and literature.
78. Your relation to states of euphoria? Just light ones and in very rare occasions.
79. Your relation to the hidden, the krypto..the underground? It's where the most interesting things come from.
80. What inspires you the most in your work? Often literature, cinema and memories.

81. From where do you obtain most of your information? Out of books, the internet, conferences, television and friends.
82. Which word best defines your activity of creation? Obsession!
83. Which are your preferred games today? ?
84. How is your health? Under control
85. Your attitude towards destruction? Could you imagine a life without recognition? Perfectly, I think I'm not somebody with the success most people desire.
86. Your attitude towards destruction? I don't like destruction. I'm more for preservation; of memory, of heritage, of species, of the planet...
87. What is, for you, the meaning of language? Of the word? It's something that permits me to think and carry out ideas, Portuguese and as much as French.
88. What would you take with you to a deserted island? An umbrella, water and food.
89. Your three wishes (like in fairytales) ? Find the princess  
Having a lot of children  
Live happy together forever
90. States of ecstasy? Everyday more rarely, but normally in front of nature, some works of art (literature, cinema and visual arts) and with the birth of my daughter.
91. The ideal of earthly joy? To get tanned between the toes.
92. Does freedom exist? How, where, by which means? Freedom exists when we have the right means to express ourselves intellectually and materially, but sadly this is not accessible to everybody. But it also relies on our expectations and how we value what we already have.
93. What is your biggest fault? Stubbornness
94. Which are the most urgent reforms? Apart from Education, Health and Culture? I don't know!
95. What defines friendship? Loyalty and respect.
96. In your opinion, what is the deepest level of misery? Not having the basic goods like food, health and education.
97. How would you like to be reborn? All naked!
98. A "recipe" for young artists – what should they do? There aren't recipes, but if there would be one, it should be: sincerity, creativity, technical skills and the capacity to work. Those are for me the most important things in art.
99. What do you think of yourself? I think I'm a good person.
100. What should happen to your work? No idea. I think it's too early to think about that.