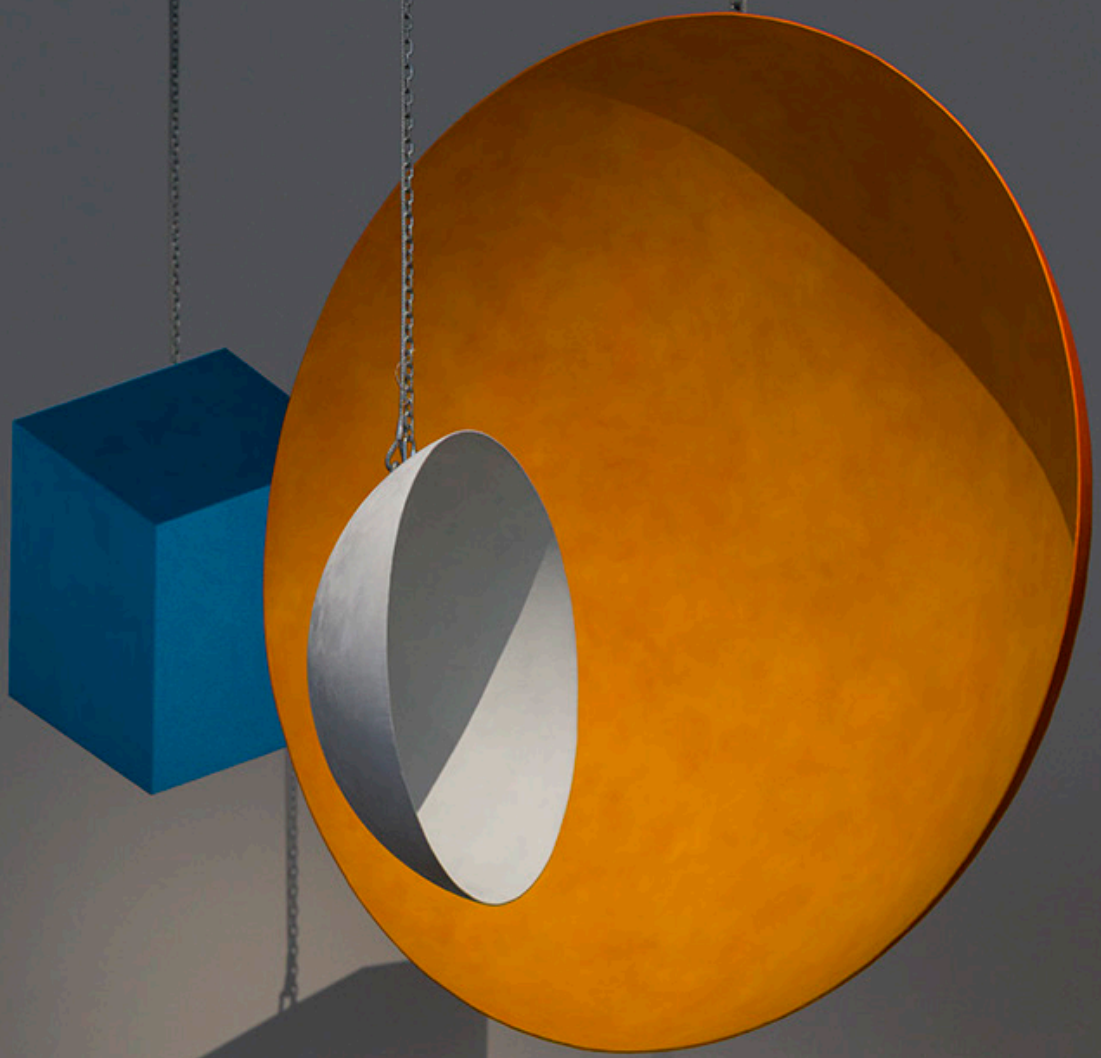
FRANCISCO TROPA



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BIOGRAPHY

Francisco Tropa was born in 1968, and works and lives in Lisbon.

Time, tales and formal aesthetics are the main elements of his work. The artist links stories together, retelling mythologies, technologies, science and societies. Tropa uses several media – sculpture, drawing, performance, engraving, installation, photography and film — to convey a series of reflections catalysed by the different traditions of sculpture and science. His installations abound in precise and precious objects, geometric and elaborate forms, delicate prototypes and complex machines. His pieces are most clearly underpinned by the notion of time. Time is also decisive in the studio work by the artist, who sometimes develops his projects over several years.

Besides representing Portugal in the Venice Biennale (2011), he also took part in the Rennes Biennial (2012), the Istanbul Biennial (2011), Manifesta (2000), the Melbourne Biennial (1999) and the São Paulo Biennial (1998). Some of his recent solo exhibitions include: *The Lung and the Heart*, Musée d'art moderne de Paris, France (2022); *Che Vuoi?*, *Le Creux de l'Enfer*, Thiers, France (2022); *Behind us*, MUCEM, Marseille, France (2020); *The Pyrgus from Chaves*, Fundaçào Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal (2019); *Performance Scripta*, Centre National de la Danse, Paris, France (2018); *Performance Gigante*, Festival MOVE, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2018); *TSAE - Trésors Submergés de l'Ancienne Égypte*, Musée Régional d'Art Contemporain Languedoc-Roussillon, Sérignan, France (2015); *TSAE - Tesouros Submersos do Antigo Egipto*, Museu de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal (2014-2015); *STAE - Submerged Treasures of Ancient Egypt*, La Verrière, Fondation d'Entreprise Hermès, Brussels, Belgium (2013).

FRANCISCO TROPA

GRISAILLE VERTIGO

May 14 - July 01, 2023
Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France
Group show

Curator: François-René Martin

The “Grisaille Vertigo” exhibition, an adventurous exploration spanning the period between the 16th to 21st centuries, brings together some forty works made in this distinct chromatic mode, which filters reality through nuanced shades of grey. Originally practiced as a “chromatic fast” during Lent, then widely developed on the exterior panels of altarpieces, the term ‘grisaille’ was first used to refer to a “monochrome painting in shades of grey, giving the illusion of sculpted relief.” But over the centuries, this most adroit trompe l’oeil went on to serve a multitude of secular applications, linked to the engraved reproduction of images, then to their photographic and cinematographic existence. “Grisaille Vertigo” both celebrates these mutations and explores how a work of grisaille may also transform into a genuine meta-grisaille.

Without claiming to be exhaustive, the exhibition offers a selection of significant works, those most symptomatic of the paradoxes and questions raised by the theme, including an altarpiece attributed to the entourage of Jan van Scorel (1495-1562), the fake antique reliefs painted by Piat-Joseph Sauvage (1744-1818), and striking trompe l’oeil paintings by Louis-Léopold Boilly (1761-1845) simulating engraving or drawing. It is also an opportunity to foster exchanges between historical creation and contemporary art, and to establish new relationships. The sculptor Francisco Tropa, the painter Marc Desgrandchamps and the graphic designer Achim Reichert were invited to produce new works.

With a selection of works by The Bentvueghels, Louis-Léopold Boilly, Moretto da Brescia (after), Colette Brunschwig, Miriam Cahn, Cavaliere d’Arpino (circle), Marc Desgrandchamps, Anna Hulačová, Jacques I Laudin, Pietro Morone (circle), Achim Reichert, Thomas Ruff, Piat Joseph Sauvage, Bernard van Orley (circle), Palma il Giovane (attr.), Jean II Penicaud (attr.), Hélie Poncet, Pieter Gerritsz van Roestraten (attr.), Jan van Scorel (circle), Francisco Tropa, Aby Warburg, Clemens von Wedemeyer & anonymous artists from the 16th to 19th century.

Source: Press release

Francisco Tropa, *Grisaille “Vincent”*, 2023, courtesy of the artist and Galerie Jocelyn Wolff

FRANCISCO TROPA

FRANCISCO TROPA & JOÃO QUEIROZ

January 15 - March 04, 2023
Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France
Duo show

The sculptor Francisco Tropa and the painter João Queiroz, long-time accomplices from Lisbon who have been collaborating episodically since the late 1990s, have jointly produced this second version of *Pietà* (2022). Combining painting, sculpture and optics, *Pietà* is a complex apparatus whose profoundly hybrid nature reveals the two artists' refinement. Both are great experts in their respective techniques – here, bronze and encaustic – as well as being well-versed in art history (for the first), and passionate about philosophy (for the second).

In 2019, Francisco Tropa produced the first version of *Pietà* alone: schematically, it is a bronze sculpture placed on a steel base, beneath which a tilted mirror enables us to see the hollow of the central object from below. This object is the imprint of a marble mould of Michelangelo's *Pietà* (1497-1500), a masterpiece in the history of Western art, abundantly reproduced on the copies market with varying materials, scales and qualities. Tropa likes to draw from this category of works which are so famous as to have become archetypes, always identifiable even when they are only suggested.

Here, the resemblance to the original is more latent than striking. One guesses rather than recognises the silhouette of Christ abandoned in the arms of the seated Virgin, since these are precisely the moulds that Tropa decided to reproduce in bronze: four smooth, sutured fragments, whose hidden concave faces contain the negative impression. Fascinated by the extreme technicality of bronze casting (here produced using the lost wax method, elsewhere with sand), the artist confers durability on the transitory elements which guarantee the resemblance to the model. The central hollow of the bronze sculpture, which is not usually visible, is unveiled here thanks to the pierced base and the tilted mirror, which acts as a periscope. As a double-barrelled object, the work is first approached from the front, then from the side, in order to perceive the antrum of the sculpture from a good distance.

Guided towards this inner vision – bawdy or speleological, depending on your perspective – the visitor is thereby taken around the work, which acts as an apparatus with "the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviours, opinions or discourses of living beings," to quote the definition given by Giorgio Agamben. Tropa's work may be said to contain reminiscences of liturgical machines such as altarpieces or processions, developed by the Church to disseminate images, adjust calendars and propagate stories. More certainly, it bears the influence of the fetishes, icons and trickeries of modern art.

This second *Pietà*, entirely made of bronze, is presented in front of a large panel painted with encaustic by João Queiroz, who also painted the underside of the base and the interior of the sculpture. This deployed configuration took shape in Tropa's mind based an iconic image: the photograph of Marcel Duchamp's ready-made *Fountain* taken by Alfred Stieglitz to illustrate the magazine *The Blind Man*, after the urinal was rejected by the Society of Independent Artists in New York in 1917. Apprehended as an indecent sexual and scatological joke, the object was also turned down for status reasons: the jury did not consider it to be a work of art. The articles in *The Blind Man*, on the other hand, were full of praise for it, magnifying its surprising lines and reading vaguely figurative overtones into it. *The Fountain* was given the nickname the Madonna or the Buddha of the bathroom. *Pietà*, in a way, is its descendant.

Source: Text by Hélène Meisel (exhibition text)

Exhibition views: *Francisco Tropa & João Queiroz*, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris-Romainville, 2023









FRANCISCO TROPA

LE POUMON ET LE CŒUR

15 October, 2022 - 29 January, 2023
Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris, France
Solo exhibition

Curator: Jessica Castex

A major artist on the Portuguese scene, Francisco Tropa (1968, Lisbon), has been invited to the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris to present an exhibition as part of the France Portugal 2022 Season organised by the French Institute. Francisco Tropa's practice is essentially oriented towards sculpture, often in association with the photographic or cinematic image. References to antiquity, science and technology, and art history are interwoven, resulting in a multifaceted investigation aimed at dissecting the act of creation. *The Lung and the Heart* exhibition seeks to give form to the creative principles that define life and the workings of the world and of living beings.

A certain strangeness emerges from the work of Francisco Tropa and his constant search for a balance between conceptual thinking and traditional skills. Opening with Scipio's Dream and an ancient vision of the Cosmos, the exhibition closes with another dream: that of the narrator of Gradiva (1903), Wilhelm Jensen's famous short story set in the city of Pompeii during the tragic eruption of Mount Vesuvius. The setting is a metaphysical, dreamlike landscape calling on us to travel through different worlds and identify their motive forces. The muted, crepuscular light and the rhythm of interacting mechanisms conjure up a sensory experience. Set at the centre of the exhibition, the installation *the Lung and the Heart* is based on a principle of repetition and a consideration of the extraordinary functionality of the human body. Located on the same floor as the permanent collection, the exhibition conducts an ongoing dialogue with the great masters of modernity, who made their fascination with the machine one of the founding principles of their practice.

Devised as a condensed monograph, *the Lung and the Heart* is structured around movement and time frames – recurrent concerns in the artist's work – and puts into perspective the notion of cycles, the mechanics of terrestrial and celestial bodies, and the idea of the whole. The exhibition is accompanied by an artist's book designed as an integral part of the project and including a guide for visitors.

Source: Press release

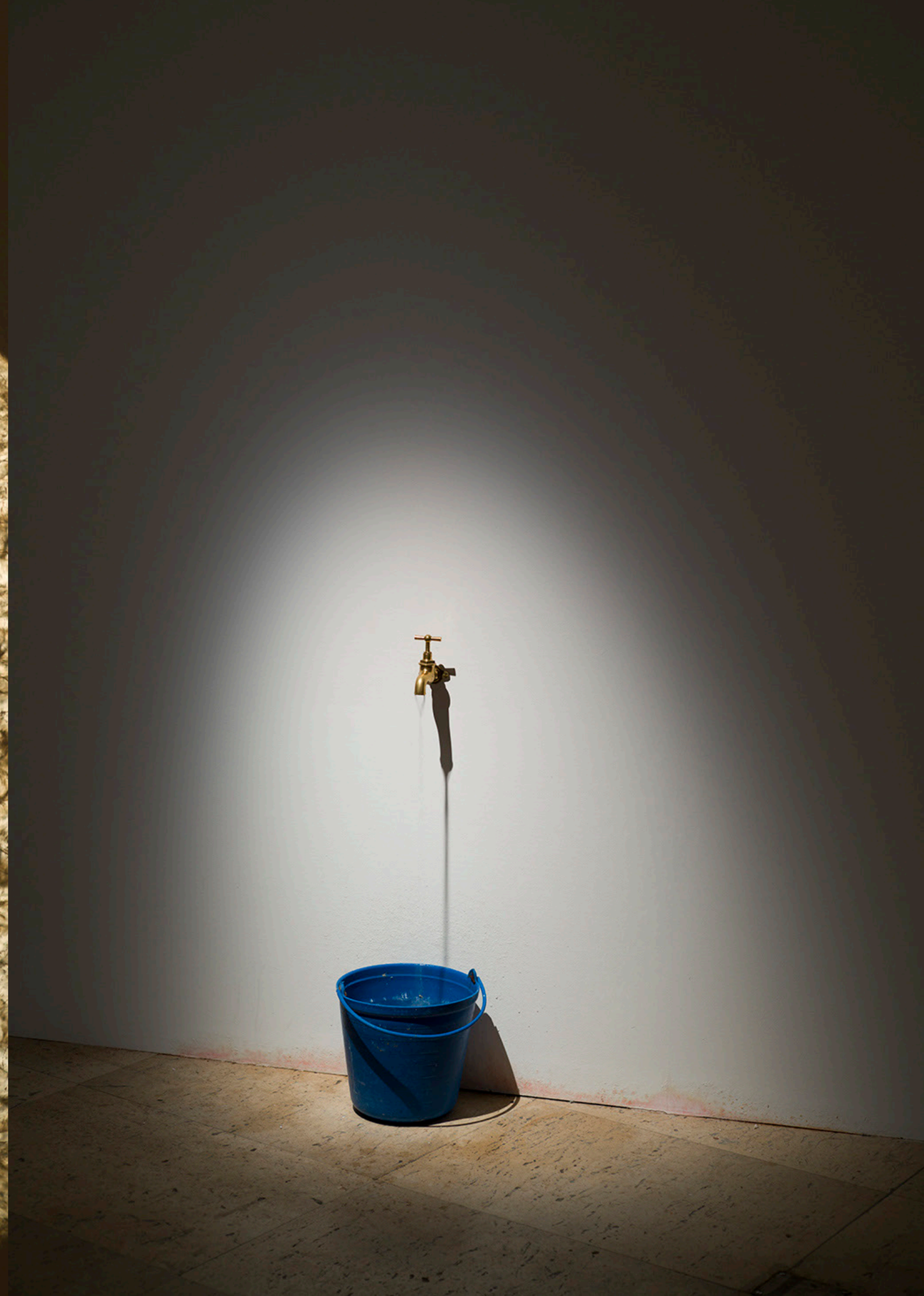
Exhibition views: *Le Poumon et le cœur*, 2022, Musée d'art moderne de Paris. Ph: François Doury


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PHILIPS









FRANCISCO TROPA

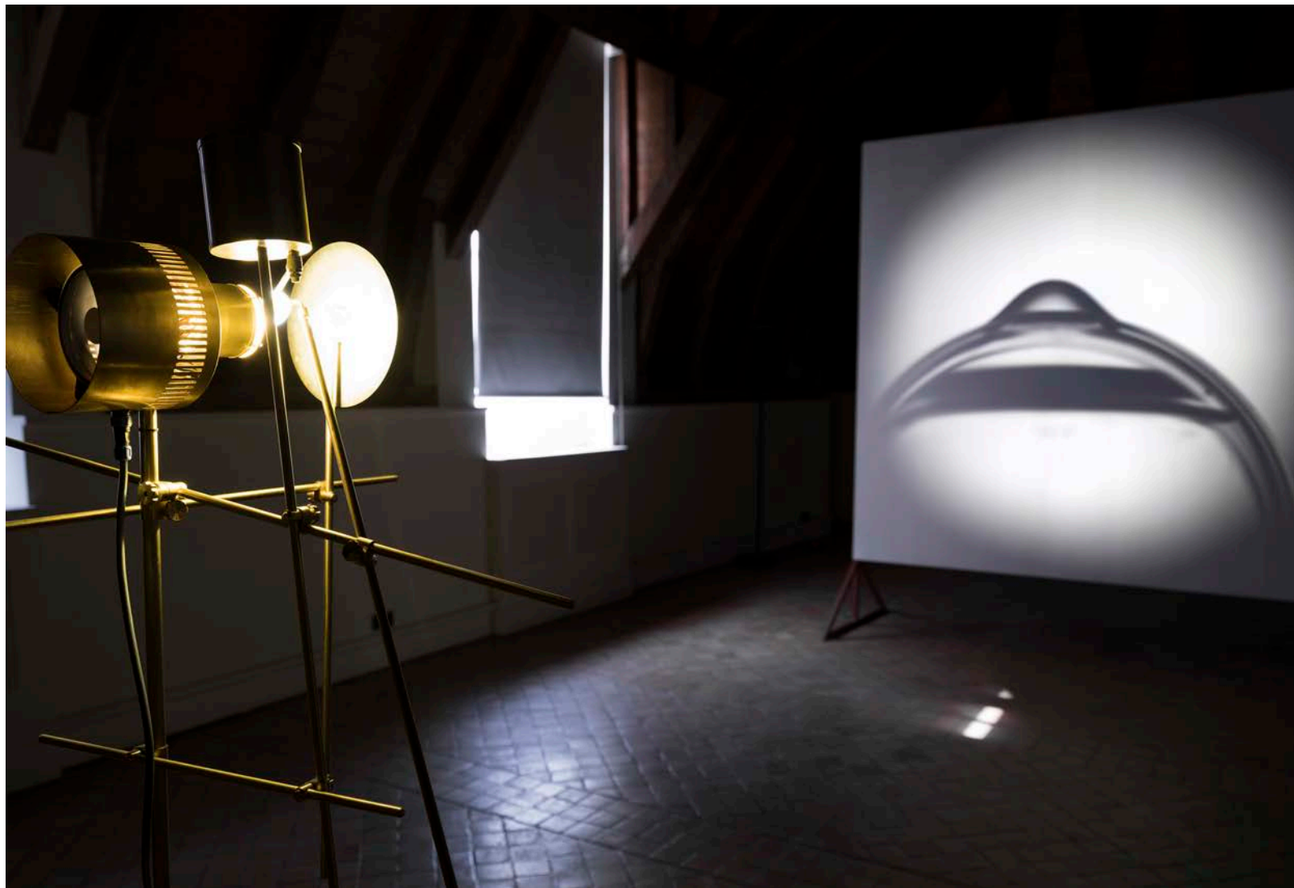
BOILLY X TROPA
CLEPSYDRE, LANTERNE AVEC GOUTTE D´EAU

01 - 23 October, 2022
Musée Cognacq-Jay, Paris, France
In situ installation

In the secret attic of the Cognacq-Jay museum, former mansion of the late sixteenth century, Francisco Tropa installs a lantern echoing the last exhibition of the museum named “Boilly. Parisian chronicles of the museum.” Used in antiquity, clepsydra is one of the first instruments for time measurement designed to define a short duration. Unlike the sundial, the water clock also allows to identify the noctur time. The sculpture by Francisco Tropa is part of a series of lanterns, a generic and poetic term used by the artist to named a series of works started in the early 2010’s. Borrowing from shadow theatre, the optical device brings back to the Platonic cave and the experiences of an archaic cinema.

Source: Press release





Installation views: *Clepsydre*, 2022, Musée Cognacq-Jay, Paris, courtesy of the artist and Galerie Jocelyn Wolff. Ph: François Doury

FRANCISCO TROPA

CHE VUOI?

18 June - 25 September, 2022
Le Creux de l'enfer, Centre d'art contemporain CPACC - La Croix de Fer, Theirs, France
Solo exhibition

"What do you want?" Beelzebub asks Alvaro, the hero of Jacques Cazotte's fiction, when Alvaro summons him out of a thirst for knowledge. The devil, taking the guise of a camel, a spaniel and then a woman called Biondetta, uses all the ruses he can think of to trick Alvaro and dominate him. This fable, in the guise of a libertine tale, reveals that underlying the devil's innocent question is the hero's desire for pleasure. The expression used here by Francisco Tropa for the title of his exhibition, presented by Le Creux de l'Enfer on the premises of the Croix de Fer factory, suggests a mischievous approach to his new installation. Through the image of the devil – which echoes the many tales associated with Le Creux de l'Enfer's history – the artist is referring to one of the major figures in psychoanalysis: Jacques Lacan, who in the 1960s saw the diabolical figure in Jacques Cazotte's novel as an embodiment of the "dialectic of desire". Indeed, Lacan links man's desire to the desire of the other, affirming that "it is qua Other that man desires". If he does it in the right way, the psychoanalyst can address this question. This will be put to the analysand as "what does he want from me?" Amusing himself with a new change of role, the artist seems this time to question the visitor himself, in a double relationship with the work: "what do you see?" and "what do you want, standing in front of this work?"

After crossing the Durolle river's torrents and entering the grounds of the Croix de Fer factory, still deafened by the continuous noise of the surging water, we make our way through the darkness towards two strange technical objects, slender and luminous. These are two projection systems from which emerges a fascinating phenomenon of revelation: one is transporting us inside a crack in an agate geode's cavity, and the other above a drop of water seen through a thin glass plate. The drop gradually swells until it forms a magnifying glass of water in the light beam. At the precise moment when the drop becomes too heavy to resist gravity, we are captivated and suspended in this moment of timelessness. When it breaks away and disappears, it releases us from its grip. This phenomenon, projected onto the dimensions of space, is moving in its simplicity.
The new lanterns designed by Francisco Tropa are part of a family of objects that he has been making and perfecting in his workshop for ten years. Composed of mechanical and luminous devices, these lanterns allow us to witness the birth of an image. Hybrid objects, between sculptures and optical instruments, these lanterns are above all mechanical systems of such precision and technical beauty that they seem to come from another era, echoing the first photographic and cinematographic experiments of the 19th century. They consist of an optical device and a lamp, between which the artist places an object that he describes as "elements that jumped straight from nature to the inside of the sculptures. (...) For example, a drop of water, a cobweb... These elements have not been modified and project a larger version of themselves without any intervention." The object, often gravitational, is then transformed into a magnified, inverted image superimposed on its own shadow "as though inside a camera obscura into which the viewer is plunged." Indeed, one of the key features of Tropa's lanterns is the change of scale they bring about, through projection, from the micro to the macrocosm. Projected into this dimension, the drop of water, whose oscillating surface we perceive, becomes a visual event as powerful as the waterfall of Hell.

Source: Press release (excerpt)

Exhibition views: Francisco Tropa, *Che Vuoi*, 2022 at Le Creux de l'enfer, Thiers. Ph. Vincent Blesbois





FRANCISCO TROPA

O PIRGO DE CHAVES

22 February - June 3, 2019
Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal
Solo exhibition

This exhibition brings together a group of objects recently excavated in the northern Portuguese town of Chaves, with a group of work made over the last decade by the sculptor Francisco Tropa (Lisbon, 1968). It is a ‘conversation’ (part of the exhibition series conversations) between a precise historical moment, definitively situated in place and time, and an artist who is interested in the very timelessness of his sculpture.

In the exhibition there is a strong presence of time, of moments of becoming, and of the before and the after. Above all, however, there is a sense of time frozen, the game stilled, the die being cast. A throw of the die (or of the dice) for a moment freezes time, and with it, chance.

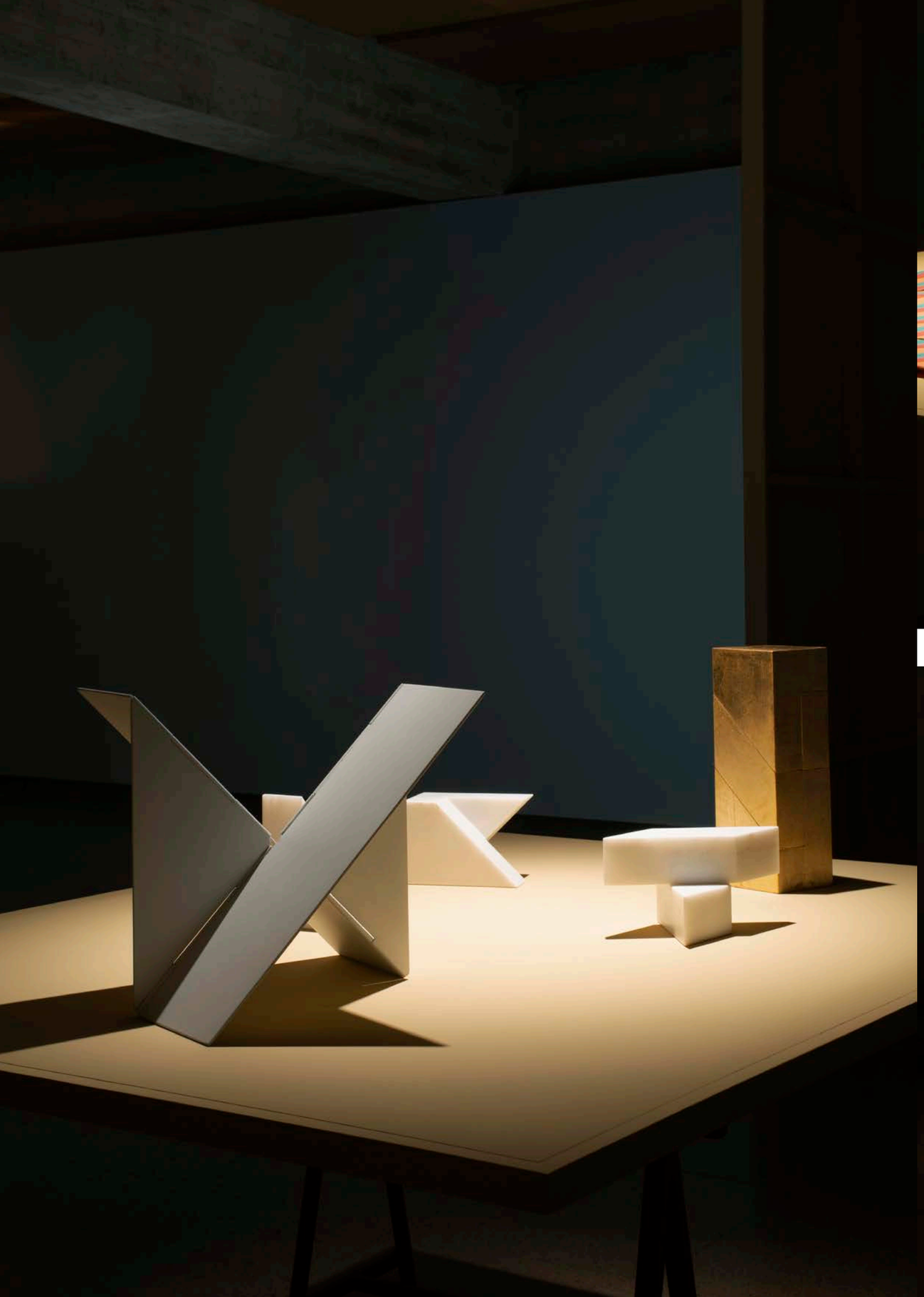
The excavation in the Roman Baths at Chaves suggests a scenario which is too appealing to resist; we know that an earthquake destroyed the building, and we know that an earthquake destroyed the building, and we know that various objects, among them games, writing instruments and rings, were found on site. To what extent they were associated with the two skeletons also found there we cannot know, but it is tempting to think to think of the couple playing a game of dice together in the instants before their sudden death, at the end, on the edge, of the Late Roman Empire.

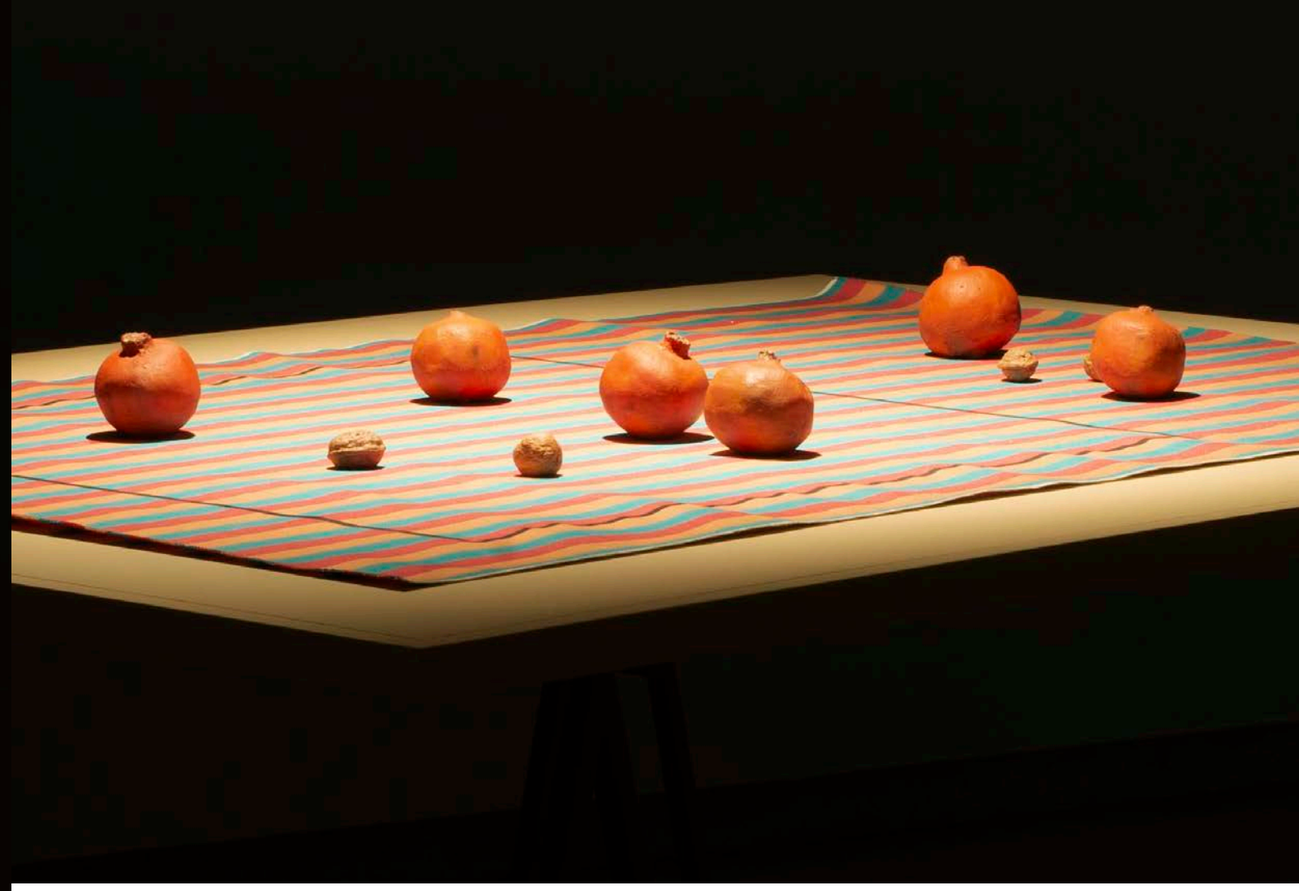
The series of sculptures, which Tropa has made for this exhibition all derive from the context of the game, and many were made in the knowledge of the discoveries at Chaves. In a sense this is a very particular project, born of the circumstantial friendship and ongoing conversation between an artist and an archaeologist. But in another sense the project refers to Tropa’s wider oeuvre, and thus to a broader understanding of sculpture.

Francisco Tropa is very interested in the states of sculpture, and in expressing their stages. Just as he seeks apparently to catch a sculpture unawares – like a hunter – so he likes to demonstrate its moment of becoming. Sculpture is (nearly) always in search of support, and Tropa is not the first sculptor to use the gameboard as his plinth. Giacoletti is the best-known exponent of gameboard sculpture, and with it, he, like his contemporaries, introduced a sense of mobility and chance into his works. Tropa has made his gameboards at once more basic and more sophisticated. By using cloth (which he folds and unfolds), he introduces mobility not just into the position of the counters, but into the gameboard itself. The moment of becoming is thus extended, or suspended, until the sculpture/game is packed up. Moreover, with the cloth, Tropa also manages to make a more explicit reference to the meal, to the table and the tablecloth, and thus to a range of paintings from the sacred to the secular.

Source: Text by Penelope Curtis (excerpt)

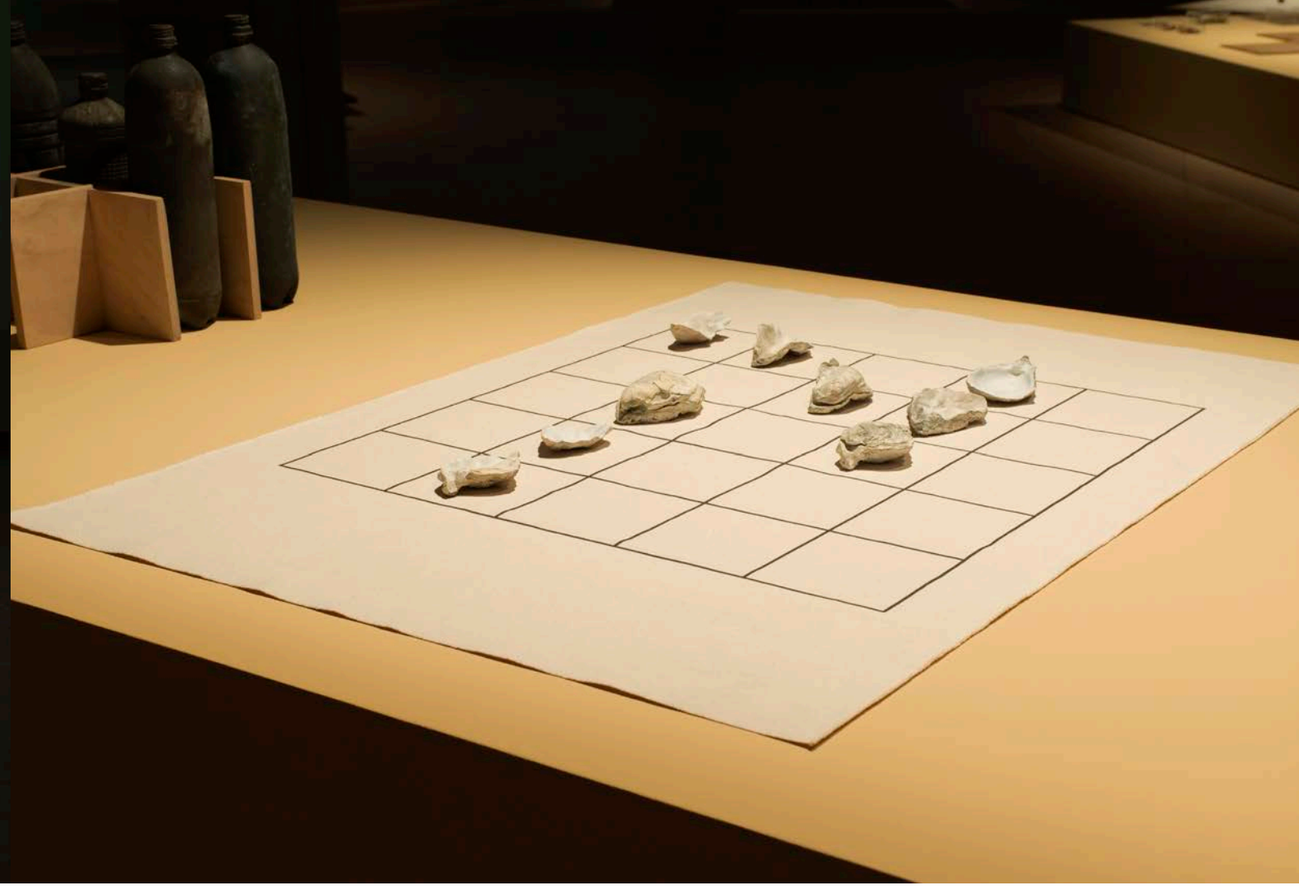
Exhibition views: *O Pirgo de Chaves*, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal, 2019. Ph. Teresa Santos



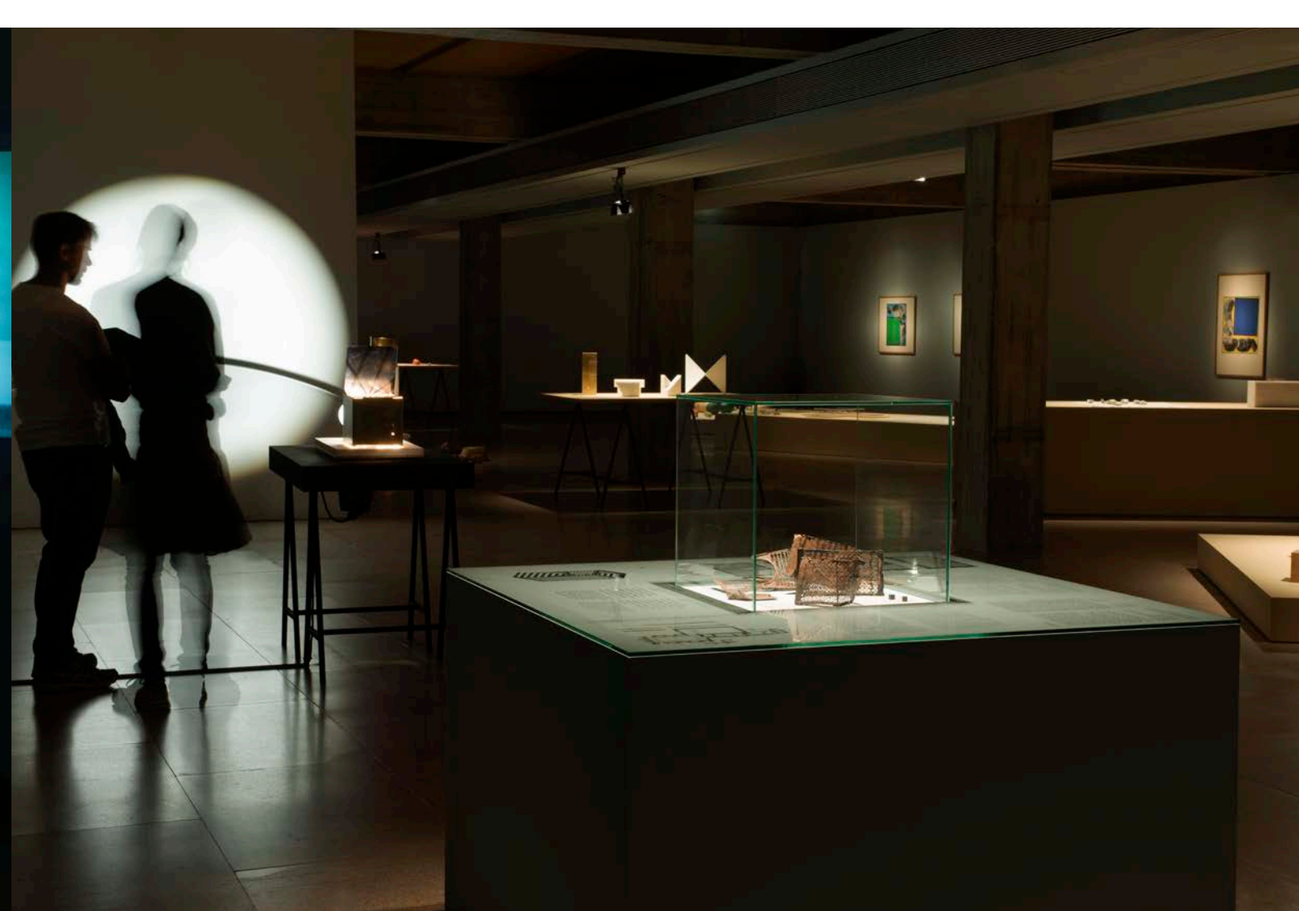












FRANCISCO TROPA

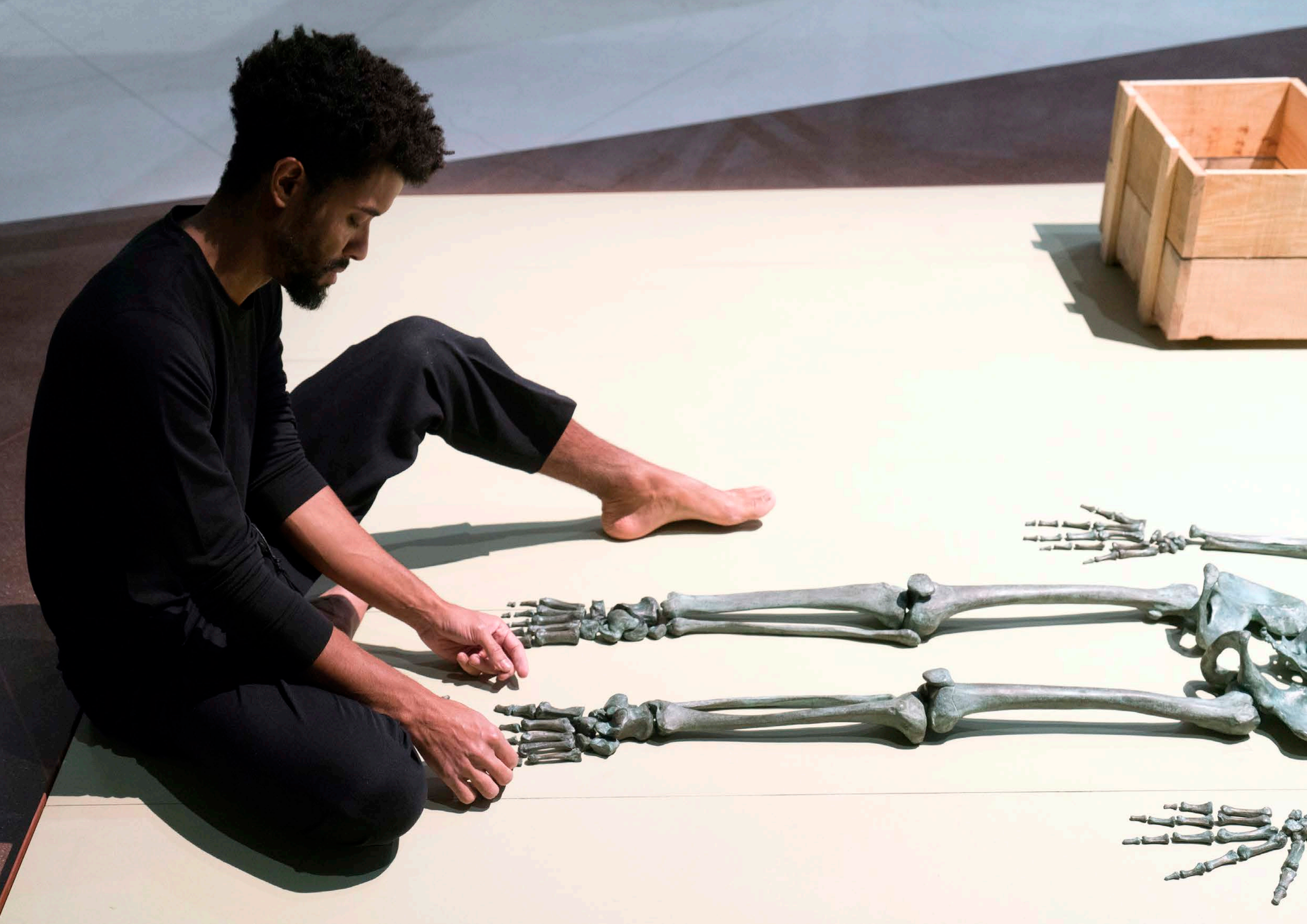
L´INVITATION AUX MUSÉES

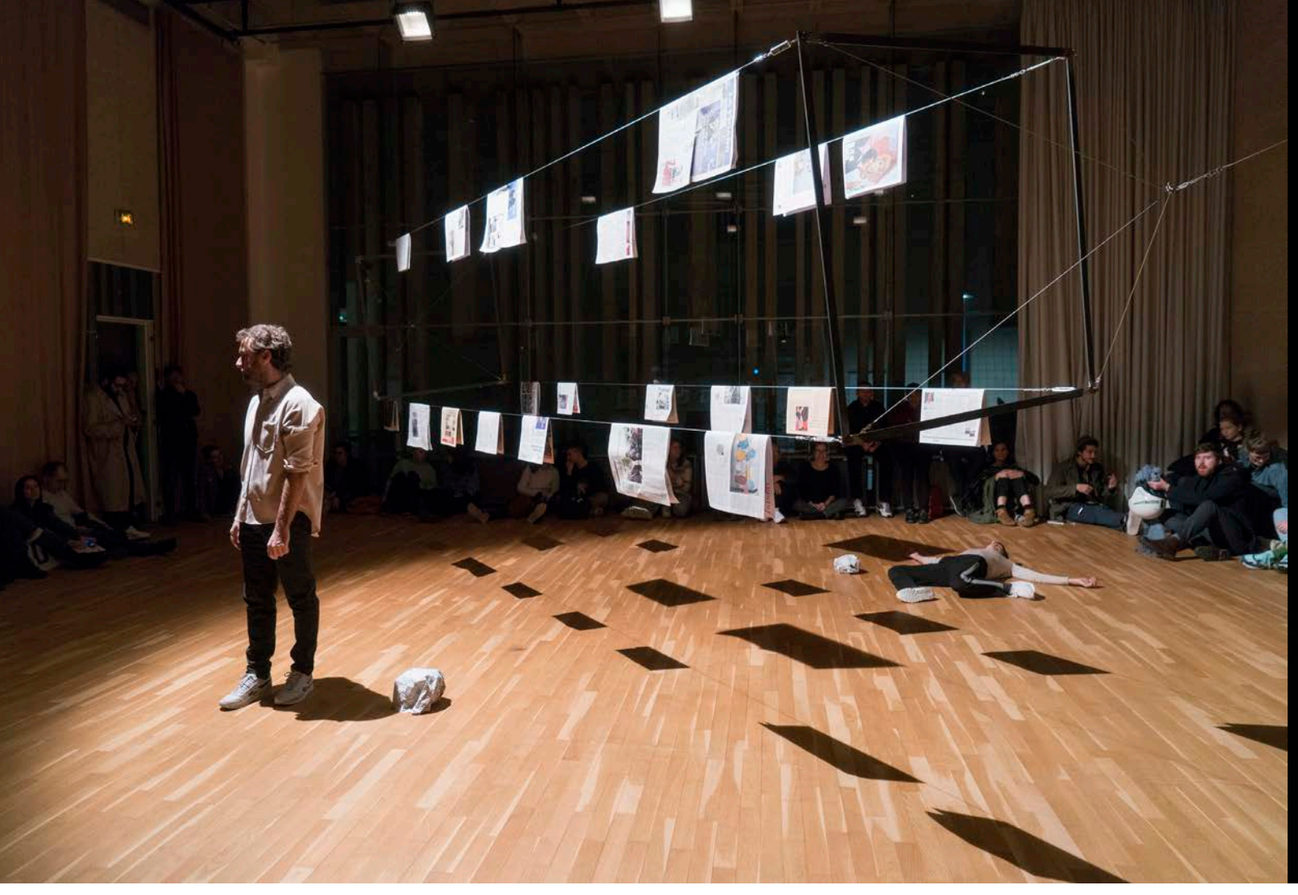
Novembre 10 - Décembre 9, 2018
Works activation: November 24 - 25, 2018
Centre National de la Danse, Pantin, Paris, France
Francisco Tropa represents Fundação Serralves (Porto / Portugal)

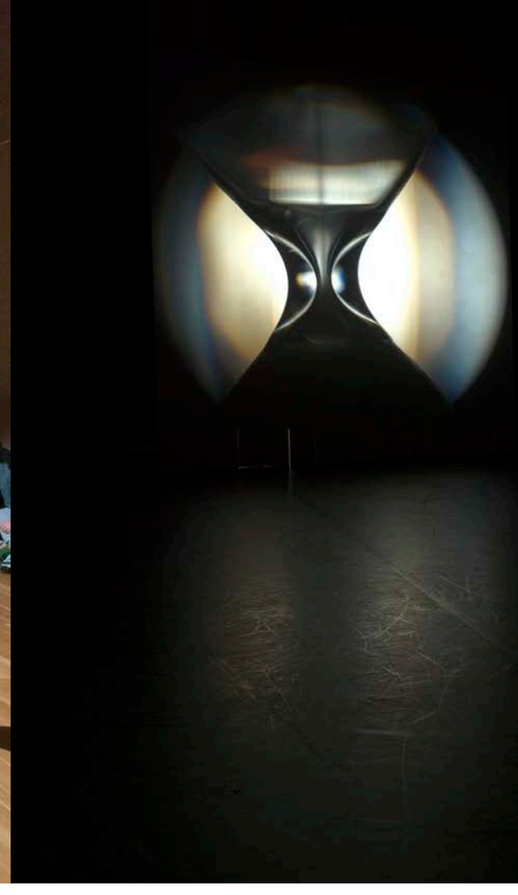
Curator: Cristina Grande



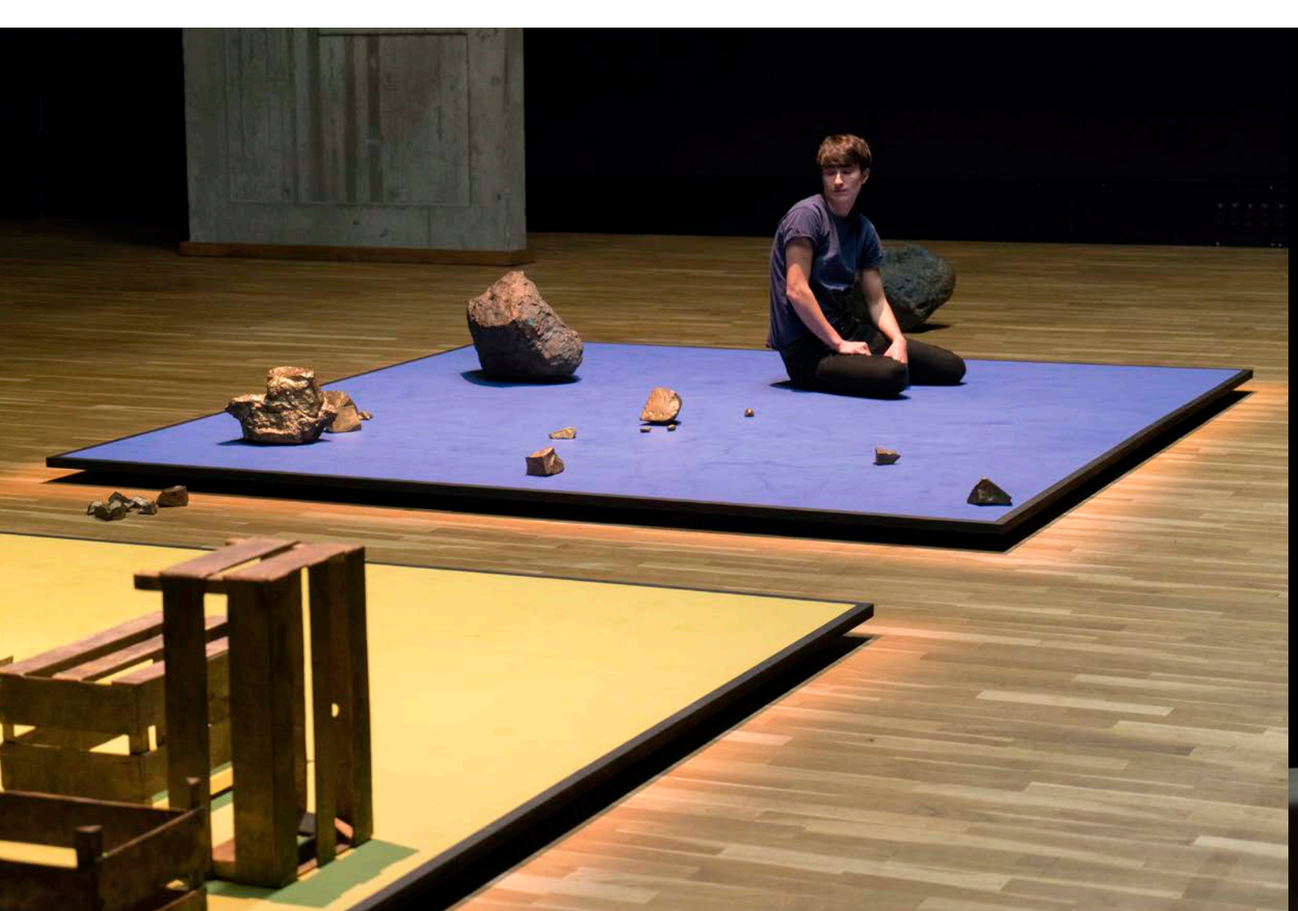
Exhibition views: *L'invitation aux musées*, Centre National de la Danse, Pantin, France 2018. Ph: ©Centre Nationale de la Danse













FRANCISCO TROPA

FESTIVAL MOVE
DANSE, PERFORMANCE, IMAGE EN MOUVEMENT

07 - 24 june, 2018
Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
Work activation: Saturday June 9th

GÉANT (2017)
Since 2005, Francisco Tropa has been developing a series entitled *Géant* consisting of a sculpture (a bronze of all the bones of the human body) as well as an perform ance which it defines as an intention and which is presented as a sculpture in an exhibition space or as a device for films or performances. The performance is bone-by-bone reconstruction of this skeleton, like an act of classification of the living by the artist, thus accentuating the existential scope of a gesture of singular beauty, both simple and complex.

Source: Galerie Jocelyn Wolff





Activation views: *Festival MOVE*, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France 2018. Ph. François Doury

FRANCISCO TROPA

LA MOUSTACHE CACHÉE DANS LA BARBE

June - September, 2018
Le grand Café, Saint-Nazaire, France
Solo exhibition





Exhibition views: *Le Grand Café, la Moustache cachée dans la barbe*, Le Grand Café, Saint-Nazaire, France, 2018
Ph. Marc Domage


COLLECTION LISA
SUR LES PRIX
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★ BEST OF 2017 ★
SUPER

FRANCISCO TROPA

LA MOUSTACHE CACHÉE DANS LA BARBE

September 2 - October 14, 2017
Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France
Solo exhibition





Exhibition views: *La Moustache cachée dans la barbe*, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2017. Ph. François Doury





FRANCISCO TROPA

COLLECTION. REMONTER LE TEMPS

May 13 - August 27, 2017
FRAC Bretagne, Rennes, France
Group show

The exhibition « Collection. Remonter le temps » offers a route where biographies and autobiographies intertwine in various systems of representation belonging mostly to museums. Once largely based on the biography of artists since Giorgio Vasari's "The Lives of the Best Painters, Sculptors and Architects" (1550), the history of art has, during the twentieth century, gradually incorporated other fields, such as philosophy, psychoanalysis, sociology…

With works by: Bernd et Hilla Becher, Christian Boltanski, Guy de Cointet, Gérard Collin-Thiébaut, Hannah Collins, David Diao, ângela Ferreira, Daan van Golden, Georg Herold, Jacob Holdt, Ilya Kabakov, Louise Lawler, Jean Le Gac, Gilles Mahé, Erwan Mahéo, Museum In Progress, Natacha Nisic, Martha Rosler, Malick Sidibé, Haim Steinbach, Francisco Tropa, Christophe Viart, Andy Warhol

Source: Press release





Exhibitions views: Francisco Tropa, *TSAE*, 2011, *Collection. Remonter le temps*, Frac Bretagne, 2017. Ph. Marc Domage

FRANCISCO TROPA

LA MOUSTACHE CACHÉE DANS LA BARBE. COLLECTION

April 8 - May 27, 2017
Fundaçao Carmona e Costa, Lisbon, Portugal
Solo exhibition

Curator: Filipa Oliveira

This exhibition by Francisco Tropa is marked by the unveiling of a new group of works. Over time, Tropa has created complex constellations of thoughts and abjects like *L'Orage* [The Storm], *A Assembleia de Euclides* [Euclides' Assembly] or *Tesouros Submersos do Antigo Egipto* [Sub merged Treasures from Ancient Egypt]. *O Bigode Escondido na Barba* [The Moustache Hidden in the Beard] is the new step in the construction of this personal mythography. Its main concern is how we, in the present time, relate to images in general, and to works of art in particular, and also how the rate at which images are produced and consumed interferes with our perception of reality.

I have always been fascinated by those pictures in which two figures are mixed into one and viewers are supposed to discover them both. I am fascinated by the fact that once I recognise one figure, that figure is henceforth always the first I see. I am fascinated by the fact that my gaze is involuntarily vitiated. I always see the young woman looking back instead of an old lady's visage; I always see the two black faces instead of the white vase; and I always see the rabbit before the duck. These perceptual games were used in Gestalt Psychology studies, which related a shape with its perception. Researchers belonging to this theoretical current stated that each individual will react differently to visual stimuli, according to their personality, life experiences and expectations. In other words, our personal context influences and determines our visual choices, our perception and awareness of the world.

It is inside that beard, that visual system that forms around language (but which is not a lan guage), that we decide what we see or not, while being flooded by a ceaseless multitude of images where art lies concealed.

This exhibition began with a collection of small leaflets for used-car businesses. These leaflets are usually placed on cars' wind-shields, and most of the lime go unnoticed, invisible and easily discarded. Francisco Tropa collected them, finding the random, anonymous nature of these images interesting. Then, he selected a group of 25 different leaflets, which he turned into large silk-screened pictures that take possession of the Carmona e Costa Foundation's walls. Among them hide other pieces by Tropa: these are more delicate, more discreet, worthy of a different sort of attention. They force viewers to pay special attention, demand from them a different duration, call for their discernment and for a different awareness and alertness.

Source: Press release (excerpt)

Exhibitions views: *Bread and Moustache*, Fundacao Carmona e Costa, Lisbon, Portugal, 2017

FRANCISCO TROPA

SOMBRAS, MASCARAS E TITERES DA COLECCÃO DO MUSEU DA MARIONETA
SHADOWS, MASKS AND PUPPETS FROM THE MUSEU DA MARIONETA COLLECTION

May 25 - October 20, 2016
Museu da Marioneta, Lisbon, Portugal
Solo exhibition

Museu da Marioneta celebrates its 15th anniversary. Over these years it has substantiated its goal of portraying the long history and different geographies of puppets shows.

The exhibition “Shadows, Masks and Puppets”, produced by Museu da Marioneta and by Galerias Municipais, celebrates this 15th anniversary offering different view points on the Museum’s collection. The four invited artists – António Viana, Francisco Tropa, Jorge Queiroz and Susanne Themlitz – were challenged to work with pieces from the Museum they felt a connection to, within the four main collection groups – shadows, masks, puppets and Portuguese puppets in particular. Away from the stage where they usually come to life, here puppets have a new meaning, and they interact with other works with various connections to the world of theatre.

The core of this exhibition is therefore the way a museum may turn into a live archive that cherishes the past and projects it into the future through new ways of reading the universe of puppets.

Source: Press release





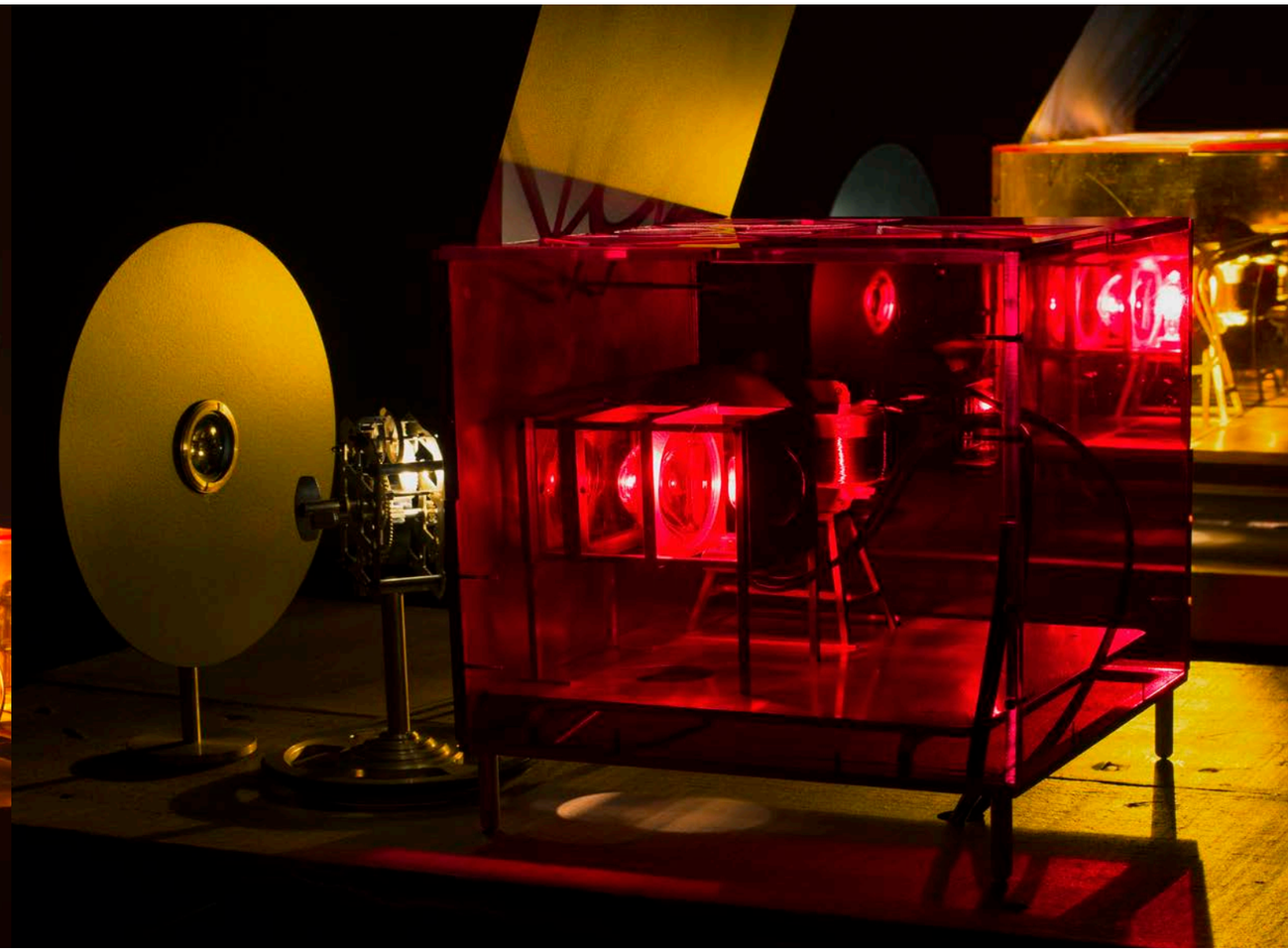
Exhibition views: *Sombras, Mascaras e Titeres da Colecção do Museu da Marioneta / Shadows, Masks and Puppets from the Museu da Marioneta Collection*, Museu da Marioneta, Lisbon, Portugal, 2016. Ph. Pedro Tropa

FRANCISCO TROPA

CINÉMA

May 19 - June 16, 2016
Appleton Square, Lisbon, Portugal
Solo exhibition





Exhibition views: *Cinema*, Appleton Square, Lisbon, Portugal, 2016. Ph. Teresa de Santos

FRANCISCO TROPA

TSAE
(TRÉSORS SUBMERGÉS DE L´ANCIENNE ÉGYPTE)

June, 28 - August 30, 2015
Musée régional d'art contemporain Languedoc-Roussillon, Sérignan, France
Solo exhibition

Curator: Sandra Patron

Archaic instruments of time measurement, medieval representations of the cosmos, bronze giants, still life: we have the feeling about the work of Francisco Tropa to witness the creation of an autonomous world, the elaboration of an original and personal mythology that evokes multiple representations of the world, ranging from the Ancient Greece with modernist ideals. Tropa's interest in these classic models is as much philosophical as aesthetic. Philosophical because these systems pose the question of the interweaving of truth and fiction in our representations, and how, since the dawn of time, man has been twisting scientific truths in favour of a collective narrative. Aesthetic because these often abstract representations of the world are a inexhaustible soil for the artist, which allows him all the formal daring, in a jubilant relationship to the matter and to the different states of its transformation. *TSAE (Submerged Treasures of Ancient Egypt)* presents itself as an expedition The title of this fictional archaeological exhibition spontaneously evokes an move crowds in search of sarcophagi and other mummies. The title projects as well the viewer's imagination towards an exoticism whose codes he seems to master, for then dismount him in the face of productions with undeniable formal magic but which resist our understanding.

Source: Press release



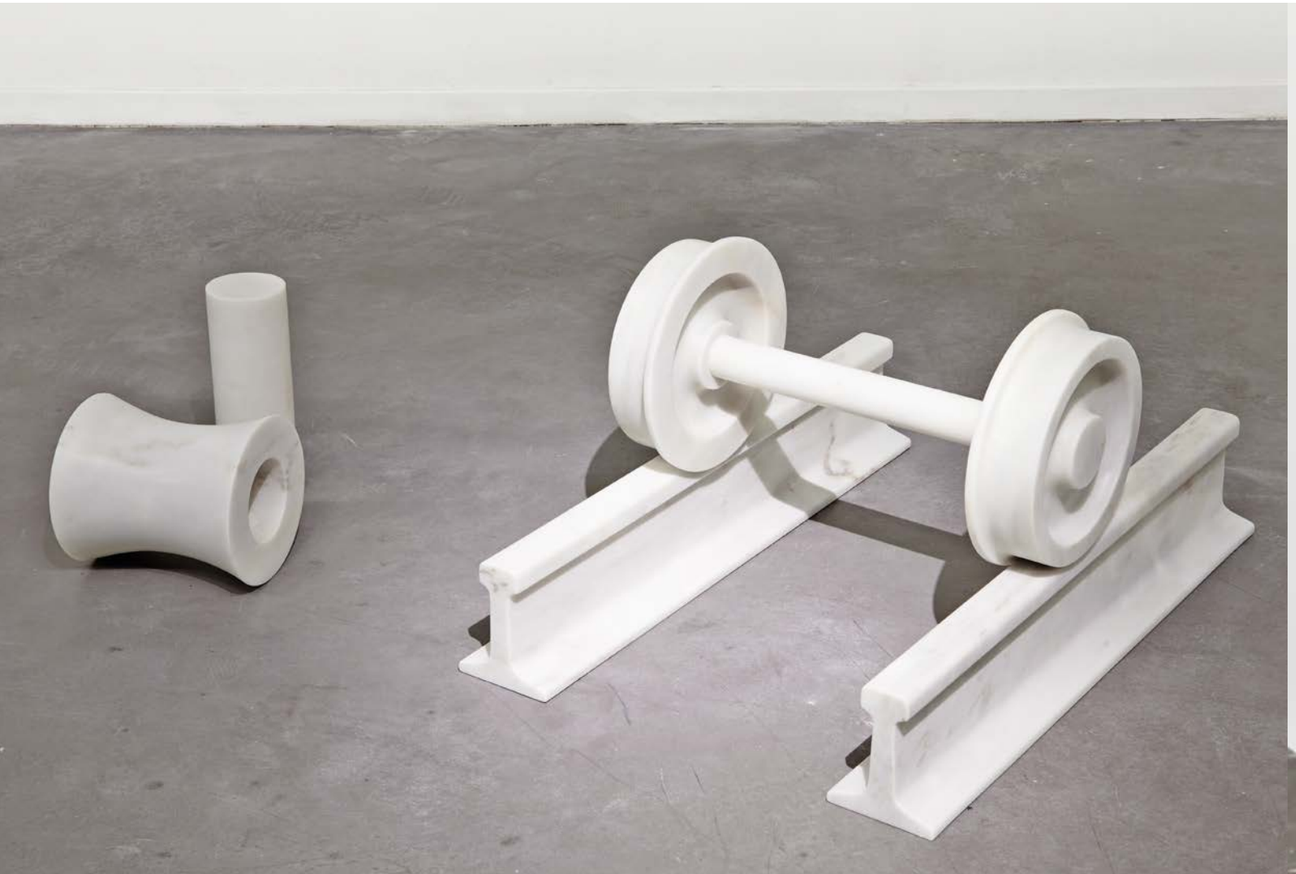


Exhibition views: *TSAE*, Musée régional d'art contemporain Languedoc-Roussillon, Sérignan, France, 2015. Ph. Jean-Christophe Lett











FRANCISCO TROPA

ANCHE LE SCULTURE MUOIONO
SCULPTURES ALSO DIE

April 17 - July, 26, 2015
Palazzo Strozzi, Centro di Cultura Contemporanea Strozzina, Florence, Italy
Group show

Curator: Lorenzo Benedetti

This exhibition aims at highlighting, through sculpture, the power of the contemporary. The artists exhibited analyze this subject through different techniques, themes and practices, focusing on the concepts of time, fragility and value. The title, a paraphrase of the 1953 documentary *Les statues meurent aussi* by Chris Marker and Alain Resnais, suggests that the dialogue between man and art always has its pivot in the present, when everything is possible, contrary to the past, which can only be documented and interpreted, and the future, the subject of speculation and overlay of other symbologies. The definition of the concept of contemporary is always based on the quest for an articulated dimension. On the one hand, this historical epoch is identified with the term “Anthropocene,” a geological era constantly transformed by the presence of man, thus establishing a permanent “geological monument”. On the other hand, our age seems to consist of a digital overlap that threatens to leave to posterity only an infinitesimal portion of the data we produce, which are doomed to disappear into obsolescent oblivion. The contemporary is also dominated by news reporting criminal actions that delete millenary memories through the crazy combination of ideology and violence. These elements are the basis of the relationship between the contemporary and sculpture, centered on the idea of permanence in time. In this scenario, sculpture presents itself as a form of art that aspires to endure over time and leave a testimony. A form that can survive and tell future generations of a long gone dimension of the contemporary. The same condition is being described in the exhibition held in parallel on the main floor of Palazzo Strozzi entitled *Power and Pathos*. *Bronze Sculpture of the Hellenistic World*, where a series of Hellenistic sculptures testifies to the immense Greek culture, of which, differently from statues, very few paintings have remained. Sculptures die when also the context that produced them disappears.

A dialogue with time, with the past but also the future, a flight that departs from the contemporary in a quest for different temporal dimensions. (…) The artistic imagination of Francisco Tropa combines sculpture with obsolete items from technology andhuman life. His works always feature an attentive relationship with the concept of history. The artist creates a sort of archeological portrait of the contemporary, halfway between the fossil and the artifact, in which stillness and movement, suspension and balance, merge. Through reproduction, expansion and reconstruction, Tropa yields an historical and prehistorical imaginary. In *Gigante* as well as in *Terra Platónica* we are faced with the problem of the translation of time into a relic format (…)

Source: Lorenzo Benedetti (catalogue introduction)





Exhibition views: *Anche le sculture muoiono*, Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, Italy, 2015.
Ph. Martino Margheri - by permission of Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi



FRANCISCO TROPA

TESOUROS SUBMERSOS DO ANTIGO EGIPTO

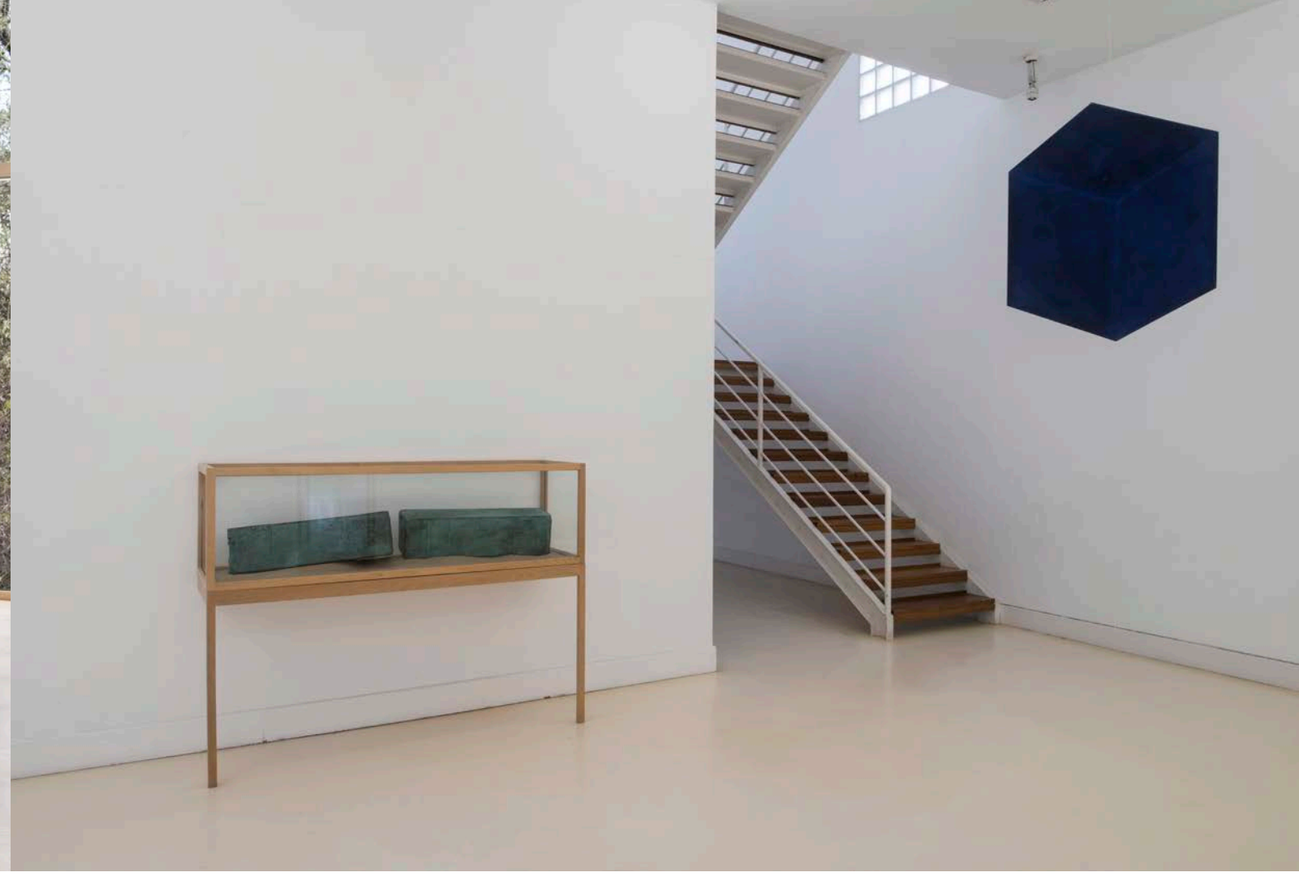
December 6, 2014 - February 22, 2015
Pavilhao Branco, Museum de Lisboa, Lisbon Portugal
Solo exhibition

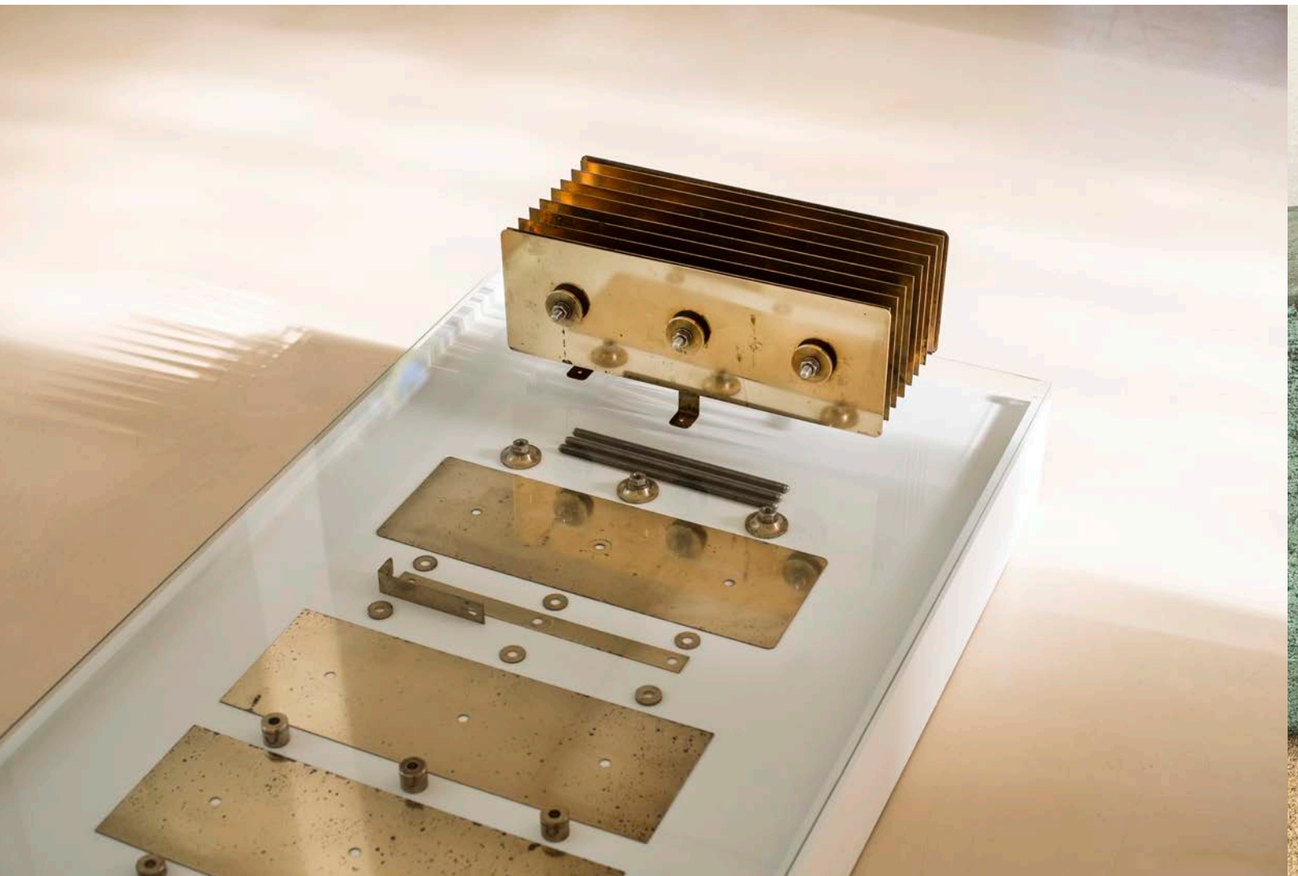




Exhibition views: *Tesouros submersos do antigo Egipto*, Pavilhao Branco, Museum de Lisboa, Lisbon Portugal, 2014-2015.
Ph: Pedro Tropa









FRANCISCO TROPA

TSAE
TRESORS SUBMERGES DE L´ANCIENNE EGYPTE
SUNKEN TREASURES OF ANCIENT EGYPT

September 9 - October 19, 2013
La verrière, Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, Bruxelles, Belgium
Solo exhibition

Curator: Guillaume Désanges

Portuguese artist Francisco Tropa (his country's representative at the 2011 Venice Biennale) is the author of a complex body of work, freely combining a broad range of techniques, from the most basic skills to virtuoso tours de force. Mixing art and technical ingenuity, Tropa's creative vision embraces prototypes and machines, but also paintings, screen prints, photography and performance. The result is a 'world' very much his own, nourished by diverse sources including a rigorously antihierarchical array of references, figures from the ancient and modern worlds, science and magic. For me, Francisco Tropa was a natural choice for the first solo exhibition in the series.

Des gestes de la pensée ('Gesture, and thought'): his relationship to the world of knowledge is both central and indefinable, wide-ranging and precise. His forms' relationship to their cultural substrate is ambivalent, rooted in a continuous, two-way traffic of influences. Gesture and thought flex and develop their respective muscles, with neither taking the lead. Rooted in matter, Tropa's practice is, then, as intuitive as it is erudite. A kind of 'emotional erudition,' undisciplined and unschooled. Often, his works direct us a posteriori to his source texts and theoretical researches. In short, everything in Tropa's work is interconnected: his network of references irrigates the work upstream and downstream of the creative artefact.

His narrative clues – fictive irruptions, breaking the formal surface of his objects – contribute a sense of coherence, while never defining or constraining. Much is left to a sheer delight in form, the senses and chance. And so Tropa's artistic investigations, often pursued over several years, coalesce from time to time in complex, fascinating installations. This is very much the case with *TSAE - Trésors Submergés de l'Ancienne Égypte* ('The sunken treasures of Ancient Egypt'), a new project created especially for La Verrière. Disordered and wide-ranging, this vast, cosmogonic installation takes the form of a rambling archaeological exhibition. Conceptually, the exhibition is structured around three spaces, representing three successive 'chapters': the 'underwater section', the 'looted chamber' and 'Terra Platonica.' These three spaces intellectual rather than phsyical – are exploded within the space of La Verrière. Drawing on several different bodies of work, they evoke differing representations of the world, from the medieval Christian Topography of Cosmas Indicopleastes, to the modernist utopias of Paul Scheerbart.

But rest assured, nothing is truly transparent or legible here. The ensemble forms a a kind of incomplete sculptural fiction which the visitor is invited to recompose in their mind – like a work of futurist fantasy fiction, recounting the history of forms and representation, expressed in enigmatic works which stand as silent clues.

Source: Press release

Exhibition views: *TSAE*, La Verrière, Bruxelles, Belgium, 2013. Ph. Fabien de Cugnac







FRANCISCO TROPA

NOUVELLES IMPRESSIONS DE RAYMOND ROUSSEL

February 27 - May 20, 2013
Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France
Group show

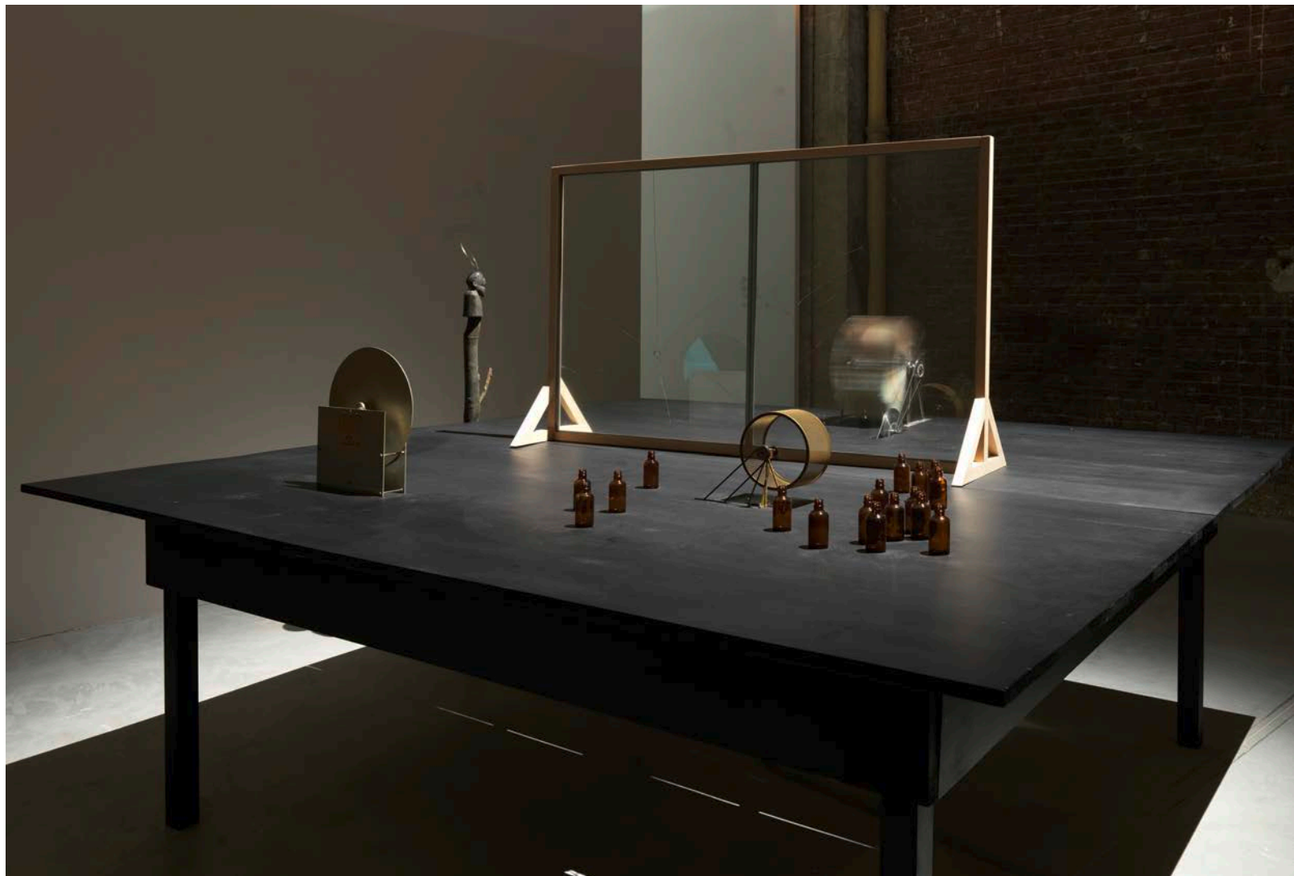
« Mon âme est une étrange usine » Raymond Roussel

Raymond Roussel est enfin célébré à Paris. C'est justice bien tardive pour cet écrivain qui tient depuis un siècle dans l'imaginaire des artistes — de quelques-uns seulement, mais non des moindres — une place centrale, incarnant la figure de l'artiste entièrement dédié, jusqu'aux frontières de la raison, à son oeuvre, celle de l'artiste créateur d'un « monde complet », « ne suivant que la pente de son imagination » (André Breton). Les « *Nouvelles impressions de Raymond Roussel* » sont une suite et un complément à l'exposition « *Impressions de Raymond Roussel* », qui a eu lieu au Museo Reina Sofia (Madrid) en 2011 et au Museu Serralves (Porto) en 2012. S'y traçait une histoire diagonale de l'art du XX^{e} siècle, reliant les points entre les artistes et créateurs qui ont dit l'influence de cet auteur, de ses écrits, sur leur oeuvre. Pour commencer Marcel Duchamp, puis les surréalistes, mais aussi Michel Foucault ou Georges Perec. Ces « *Nouvelles impressions de Raymond Roussel* » proposent cette fois de laisser une plus large place à l'aujourd'hui et réunit des artistes rencontrés au cours de ces dernières années de recherche autour de Roussel. Il n'a pas paru nécessaire que leur relation à cet écrivain prenne la forme d'un hommage, ni même s'y réfère explicitement. Ce serait sousestimer la nature de ces influences, aussi profondes que souterraines, que de les réduire à des jeux de citation. Ces oeuvres ne sont pas réductibles à un thème et leur réunion ici est un exercice de dépliage des motifs – toujours différents – que les artistes ont puisé chez Roussel, consciemment ou non, selon une lecture dont il faut bien assumer la partialité. C'est bien le « plus grand magnétiseur des temps modernes », selon André Breton, que cette exposition vient rappeler aux mémoires ; celui qui, pour Michel Leiris, a réalisé « l'évasion du domaine de la Réalité dans celui de la Conception ». C'est dire le pouvoir de la poésie, sa capacité à faire passer dans un « monde à l'envers » ; ce vaste théâtre, enfantin et parfois cruel, qu'est l'univers de Raymond Roussel.

Avec : Mathieu K. Abonnenc, Jean-Michel Alberola, Jean-Christophe Averty, Zbynek Baladrán, Thomas Bayrle, Jacques Carelman, Guy de Cointet, CollègedePataphysique, Joseph Cornell, Salvador Dalí, Gabriele Di Matteo, Thea Djordjadze, Marcel Duchamp, Giuseppe Gabellone, Rodney Graham, João Maria Gusmão & Pedro Paiva, Mike Kelley, Revue Locus Solus, Pierre Loti, Sabine Macher, Man Ray, Mark Manders, André Maranha, Pedro Morais, Jorge Queiroz et Francisco Tropa, Jean-Michel Othoniel, Victorien Sardou, Joe Scanlan, Jean Tinguely, Jules Verne.

Réalisé en 2012 à l'occasion de l'exposition « Impressions de Raymond Roussel » à la Fondation Serralves de Porto par quatre artistes portugais, *Tres Moscas* [Trois Mouches] est à l'origine un dispositif de performance, ici transformé en pièce d'exposition. L'œuvre est un hommage à Roussel mais aussi au *Grand Verre* de Duchamp dont il reprend plusieurs parties, à l'hermétisme et à l'esprit de jeu qui lient ces œuvres.





Exhibition views: *Nouvelles impressions de Raymond Roussel*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France, 2013. Ph. André Morin

FRANCISCO TROPA

LES PRAIRIES - BIENNALE D´ART CONTEMPORAIN

September 15 - December 09, 2012
Newway Mabilais & Frac Bretagne, Rennes, France

La practique de Francisco Tropa, artiste portugais vivant à Lisbonne, est un exemple actuel parfait de ce que Harald Szeeman qualifiait de « mythologie individuelle ». L'artiste ne crée pas seulement des objets, il élabore aussi des constellations de références spécifiaues dans lesquelles ceux-ci peuvent être idéalement lus. Malgré le caractère potentiellement ésotérique de ses œuvres, il n'est pas un mystique. Ses œuvres - scultptures, performances, photographies, dessins et impressions - puissent leur source dans l'histoire des médiums qu'il utilise, dans l'art antique, la philosophie et la littérature, ainsi que dans les thèmes classiques que sont le momento mori, le rituel, le jeu et le temps. Saissante et énigmatique, *Terra Platonica* (2012), associe plusieurs des centres d'intérêts de Francisco Tropa : une technique de fabrication de l'art classique - le moulage en bronze - et les questions de rituel et de temps. La pièce s'inspire d'une étrange photographie d'Edwards S. Curtis, issue de sa célèbre série sur les Indiens d'Amérique du Nord; qui répresent un funéraire d'une teneur obscure. L'artiste crée donc un moulage à partir de la prétendue momie, repliée en position fœtale et présentée ici suspendue par des câbles. Les titre se réfère à la croyance pré-copernicienne en une Terre plate au centre de l'univers. L'incompréhension dont témoine Curtis dans la représentation de ce mystérieux rite pourrait être du même ordre, comme s'il s'agissait d'une analogie microcosmique avec le modèle pré-copernicier.

Source: Press release





Exhibitions views: *Les Prairies*, Les Ateliers - Biennale d'art contemporain, Frac Bretagne, Rennes, France, 2012

FRANCISCO TROPA

LOCUS SOLUS.
IMPRESSIONS OF RAYMOND ROUSSEL

October 26, 2011 - 27 February 2012
Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain
Group show

Locus Solus is the first exhibition to be held in Spain on the figure and influence of Raymond Roussel (Paris, 1877 - Palermo, 1933), the author of poetic, novelistic and theatrical works without precedent in the history of literature. Roussel is known for both the singularity and exuberance of his narrative and visual universe and also for the complex methodology he developed and then perfected over time.

This methodology was based on the exploration of the inventive potential of homonymy and word play, all from the conviction that an artistic/literary work does not need to contain anything real, that it can be exclusively a combination of imaginary objects. In a text published posthumously, How I wrote certain of my books, Roussel explains the process he used. The author, who always kept his distance from the avant-garde and from the literary movements of his times (because, in the words of André Breton, he was “fully determined to follow no inclination other than that of his spirit”) reveals in the aforementioned text that he started out by inventing two phrases that were phonetically almost identical but had very different meanings, to later try to write a story that could start with one of them and end with the other.

Using variations of this process he created his two most emblematic works, *Locus Solus* and *Impressions of Africa*, which give this exhibition its name. The show analyses the influence that Raymond Roussel has had on modern and contemporary art, by looking at a broad array of works in a variety of formats (paintings, photos, sculptures, ready-mades, installations, videos…) by about thirty different artists. His enormous influence was recognised early on by surrealists and other creators linked to the historical avantgarde – including Marcel Duchamp, who went so far as to describe him as «he who points the way» – and since then it has done nothing but grow, with an authentic myth being generated around this artist who, nonetheless, remains quite unknown.

The exhibition shows how Raymond Roussel’s aesthetic-literary undertakings, so complex and ambitious and with their strange blend of conceptual rigor and linguistic delirium, have been a primary source of inspiration to numerous visual artists (Salvador Dalí, Francis Picabia, Allen Ruppersberg, Rodney Graham…) and also to authors from other fields and disciplines, ranging from philosophy (Michel Foucault) to literature (John Ashbery, Michel Butor, Julio Cortázar…), including music and even ethnographic research. The work of Roussel can thus be used as a point of departure for an oblique and transversal reading of 20th century art.

Source: Press release





Exhibition views: *Locus Solus. Impressions of Raymond Roussel*, Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain, 2012

FRANCISCO TROPA

SCENARIO, 54TH VENICE BIENNALE

June 4 - November 27, 2011
Official Portuguese Representation, 54th Venice Biennale, Italy

Curator: Sergio Mah

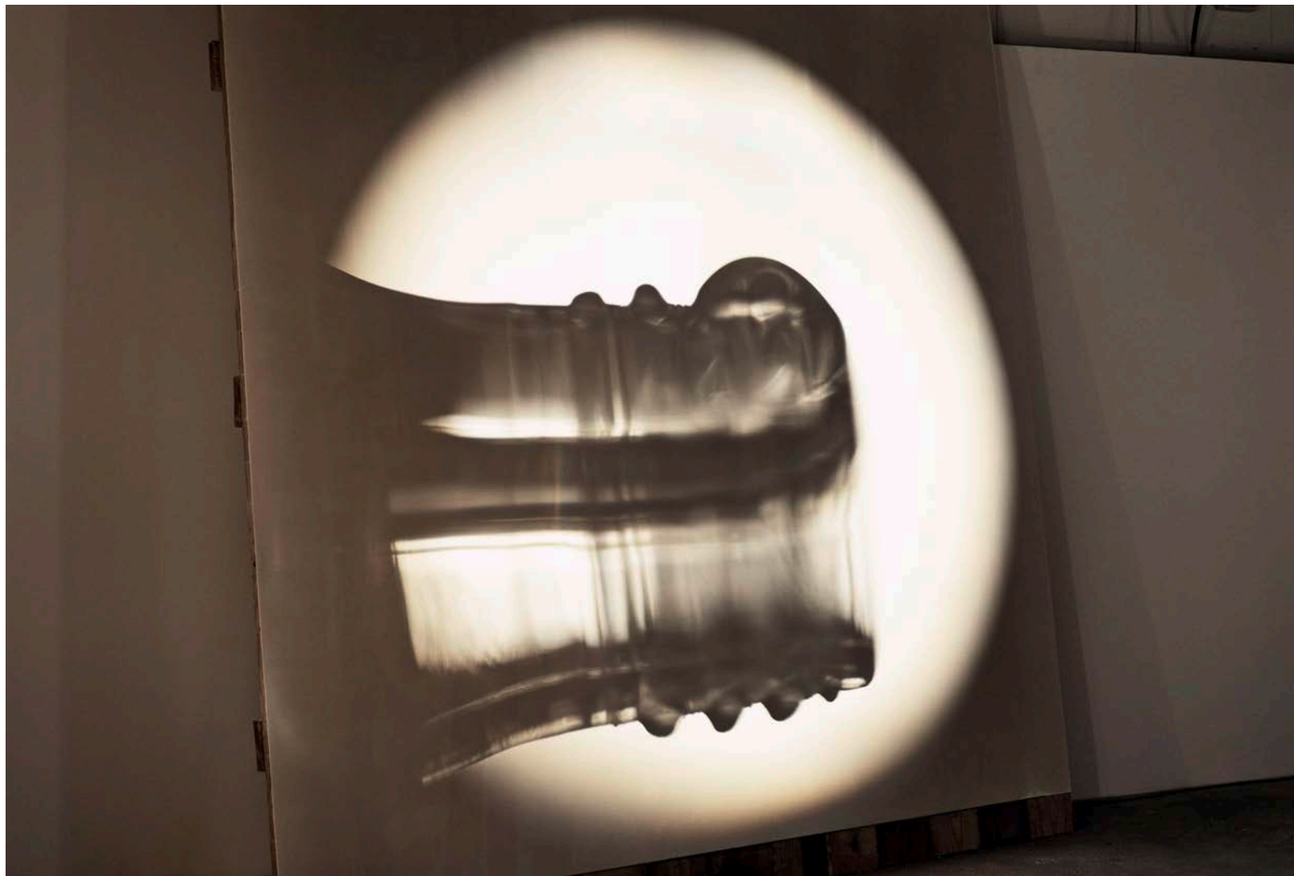
Scenario is an exhibition which articulates sculpture, image devices and fragments of nature. The general ambience is timeless and enigmatic, in which objects and images have a heuristic quality, seeking a sensitive and subjective understanding of the nature of things and consequently of the experience of creation and the origins of art.

Since the early 1990s Francisco Tropa's work has favoured the practice of sculpture, frequently in liaison with the performing arts, drawing and technical imagery. Also significant in his work is the attention paid to assembly and occupation of the exhibition space, to the placement of things, their nature and relationships, so they can be seen and experienced. Such inclinations are present once again in the show titled *Scenario*, specifically contrived by the artist for the Fondaco Marcello. Inside this old warehouse next to the Grand Canal are items of various kinds: projection devices conceived as small sculptures that follow the operational principles of magic lanterns, projecting images onto plaster screens over wooden walls. The images have their origin in objects seen at the base of each projector: an hourglass, a light bulb's incandescent filament, a dead fly, a dry leaf, and various situations in which drops of water fall via a thread, a small glass plate, a tube or a tiny bottle.

These strange yet enchanting images rework and shift perception to a plane of wavering between figuration and abstraction, between fixed and moving, between copy and original. Various objects are placed next to some of the wall-screens: wooden boards and boxes, easels and tree trunks. As components of a 'sculptural scene', these objects integrate the space that forms from the projectors to the walls, asserting their physical and symbolic presence, as well as their shadow over the projected image plane. The overall ambience is mysterious and enigmatic, a timeless place in which objects and images have a heuristic quality beyond their specific value, the search for another understanding of the nature of things, i.e., for a (non)knowledge that favours the sensitive and subjective. In this regard, the title Scenario recalls the construction of a space, the indication of a suspended space, which suggests a huge possibility: to hold our attention, to summon up the experience of creation, to empower the urgency of imagination as a way to reach the truth of nature and consequently the origins of art.

Source: Text by Sergio Mah





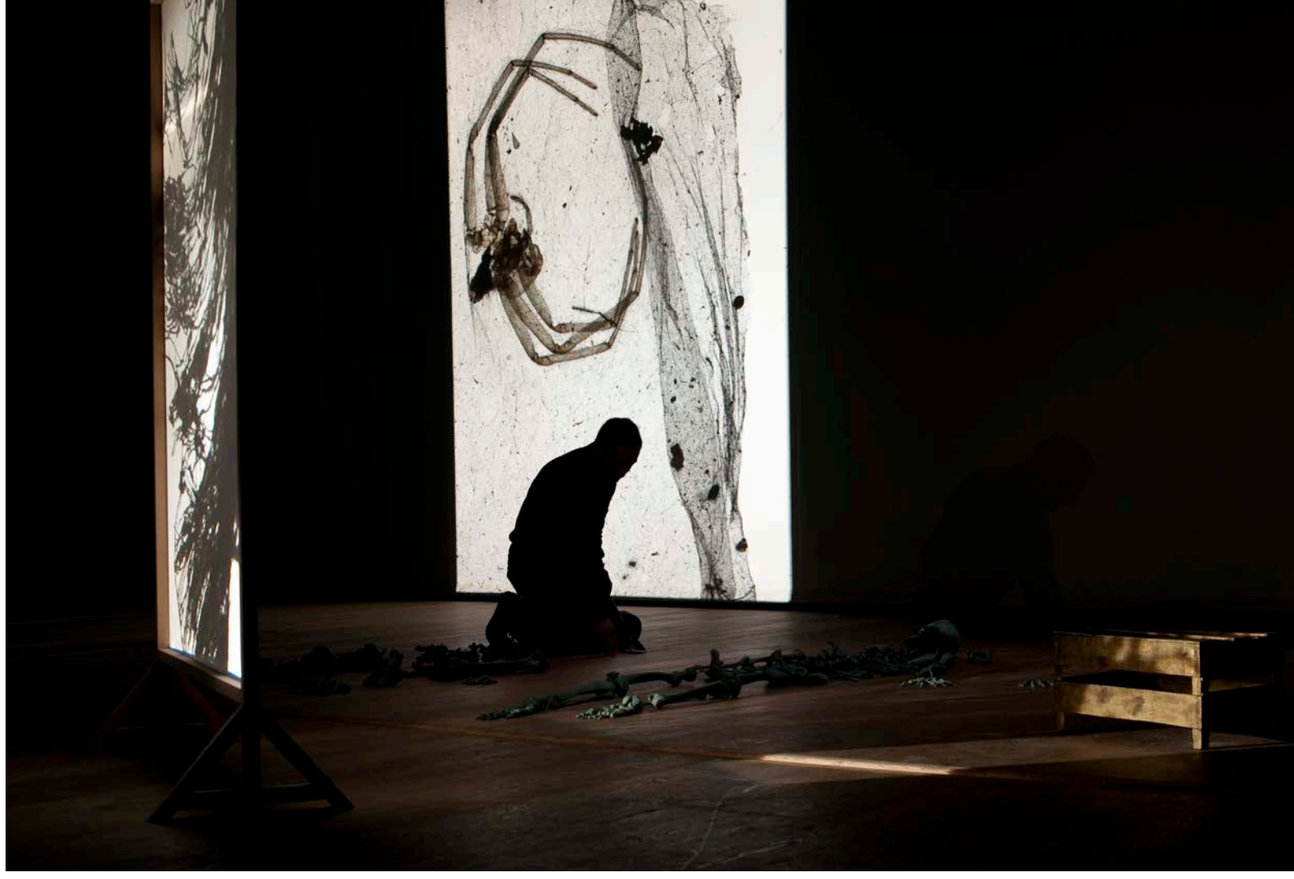
Exhibition views: *Scenario*, Official Portuguese Representation, 54th Venice Biennale, Italy, 2011

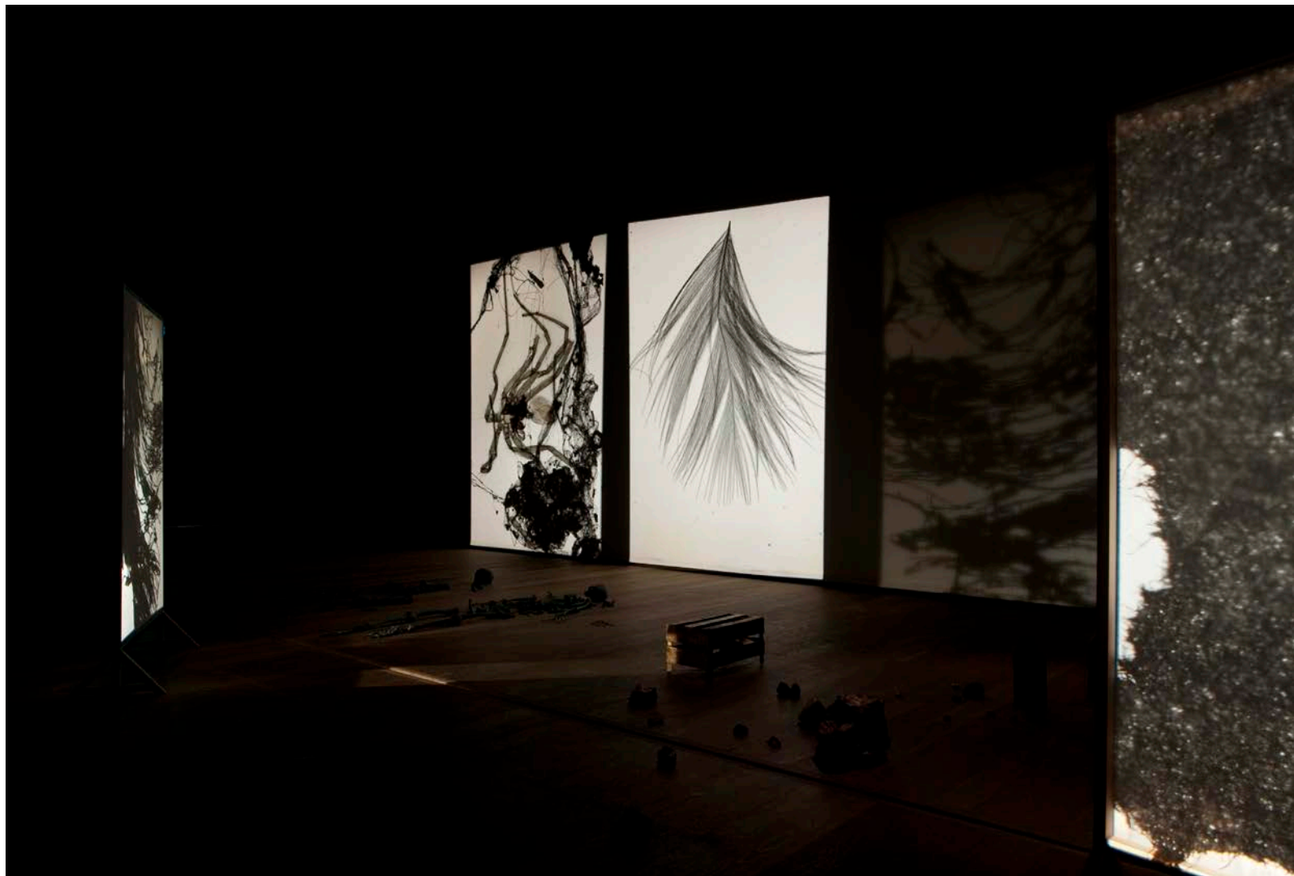


FRANCISCO TROPA

GIGANTE
GIANT

2010
Auditorio do Museu de Arte Contopanea de Serralves, Porto, Portugal
Solo exhibition





Exhibition views: *Gigante* / *Giant*, Auditorio do Museu de Arte Contopanea de Serralves, Porto, Portugal, 2010

FRANCISCO TROPA

A MARCA DO SEIO
THE ASSEMBLY OF EUCLIDES

June 20 – September 6, 2009
Culturgest, Porto, Portugal
Solo exhibition

Curator: Miguel Wandschneider

Francisco Tropa (Lisbon, 1968) began to exhibit his work individually in 1991. From the outset, his work aroused the interest and active support of different agents from the artistic context, having been selected for a number of national prizes and international group exhibitions during the second half on the 1990s. However, his work largely remained known only to a small circle of friends, acquaintances and devotees. During this period, Francisco Tropa earned the reputation of having only a limited production, a belief that was certainly encouraged by the highly performative nature of several of his projects. It is therefore quite surprising to note his recent intense activity and the high level of public exposure enjoyed by his work over the last few years.

Francisco Tropa first began to be represented in the collection of *Caixa Geral de Depósitos* in 2005, when three remarkable pieces were acquired: *Une table qui aiguisera votre appétit – le poids poli*, from 2003, *The Assembly of Euclides (Body)* and *The Assembly of Euclides (Head)*, both from 2004. This small group of works was increased at the end of 2006, after *The Mark of the Breast* exhibition at Culturgest, Porto, when the artist offered a copy of the films *Snail and Giant*, originally presented as part of that same project. This exhibition invites you to discover (or revisit) the work of one of the most fascinating artists of the present day.

Source: Press release





Exhibition views: *A Marca do Seio, (The Assembly of Euclides)*, Culturgest, Porto, Portugal, 2009

FRANCISCO TROPA

ASSEMBLIA DE EUCLIDES
THE ASSEMBLY OF EUCLIDES

2009
Cordoaria, Lisboa, Portugal
Solo exhibition





Exhibition views: *Assemblia de Euclides, (The Assembly of Euclides)*, Cordoaria, Lisboa, 2009



FRANCISCO TROPA

ASSEMBLEIA DE EUCLIDES: O TRANSE DOS CICLISTAS
THE ASSEMBLY OF EUCLIDES

2006
Galeria Quadrado Azul, Porto, Portugal
Solo exhibition

Exhibition views: *Assembleia de Euclides: O transe dos Ciclistas (The Assembly of Euclides: the cyclist's Trance)*, Galeria Quadrado Azul, Porto, Portugal, 2006





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