

ANTHONY ARROBO
WHAT YOU HAD AND WHAT YOU LOST
22 MAR 2013 – 11 MAI 2013

What you had and what you lost is an exhibition by Anthony Arrobo (1988, EC) exhibiting for the first time in Portugal. To date the works are characterized by the material and the presence of the object, questioning the interpretations and preconceived ideas of art making by reinterpreting various materials within the context of art history.

These works do not reveal their intentions immediately, on first gaze we are presented with formal minimalist works, monochromes and a gesture. Presented in various forms and using various materials the links of the pieces are not apparent, as a momentary pause is required for further consideration. As the artist points out that "I like to think that the expressive resources remain in limbo looking for new symbolic meanings."

The material of the works are the focal point as he liberates them from the constraints of their functioning application – paint and graphite are not only the base and structure however the work itself, Pencil leads are used to create "drawings" which in turn embodied themselves, as is the case with the *Untitled* where the paint forms both the foundation and the structure, in their "pure" state. Thus giving autonomy to the work which emerges from its traditional supports and making the materials the "protagonist". Here Arrobo reinterprets the defining characteristics of the medium historically, conceptually within the compositions.

There is a quiet obsessiveness with the application of the materials within intermittent pauses between the works, 100s of pencil leads meticulously aligned, a shadow, litres of dried paint and a gestural arch, subtle in the suggestion of multiple versus singular and the constancy being the simplicity in their compositions.

In addition to the structure of the works their titles act as a segue from the importance of the materiality of the object – In *Fuegos artificiales (fireworks)* we are presented with a reduced version of both the projectory of fireworks and the intensity of the light. In dually *Radio (Radius)* and *Altura (height)* we are reminded of the artists' presence and physicality, retrospectively we are privy to his arm radius literally and physically in this gesture by using a baton of graphite, and to the latter, to the artists physical height. The works are not intentionally self portraits; however again question the traditions of art making, this relates also to the artists interest in perceptual deception, *Horizontal invisible* plays with the concept as a faint line appears on the width of the gallery wall, upon closer inspection it becomes clear it is a shadow caused by a nylon thread painted in white.

This breakaway and fragmentation of tradition in art making is essential to decipher Arrobo's interests, by reassigning the importance of materials and reevaluates their expressive value. While we float between the languages of drawing and sculpture, oscillating between solid and fragile states. *What you had and what you lost* asks us to ponder "the idea of belonging"¹ to think about the notion "of something that is grasped in time and space, and then see how it loses its meaning"²

Arrobo studied Visual Arts at the ITAE, Guayaquil. Solo exhibitions include: *Gravity*, 2012 and *Liliput*, 2011 at NoMinimo, Guayaquil and *Do Not Touch*, 2010 at DPM, Guayaquil. Group exhibitions include Espacio OTR and Matadero 2012, Madrid, and The Center on Contemporary Art (COCA), Seattle, USA, 2011. Arrobo will be participating the upcoming Biennial of Mercosur. Collections include The Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection, the Municipal Museum of Guayaquil and several private collections.

^{1,2}; Anthony Arrobo; excerpt from exhibition statement 13 March 2013

