

# 3 + 1

*Sottile sfumatura di rumore*

JOÃO FERRO MARTINS

29.09.17 - 11.11.17

OPENING 29.09.17, 19h-22h

Neither pure illusion, nor the whole truth

Poetic verisimilitude, an indeterminate historical hiatus, science fiction allegories are among some of the solutions applied by João Ferro to structure and ponder this exhibition.

The tone is sober, the style concrete, the technique subtle.

The artist has transformed gallery 3+1 into the set of his forthcoming film. The scenography inhabits space, along with the machinery to be used. However, we are not entitled to witness the shooting or the actions to be performed. We cannot see, or foresee, the artist's script. A theatrical wait, or at least an apparent wait, is followed by brief interpretative pauses and tales of space.

We could imagine an elaborate figuration of faces; someone reading a text out loud or hanging a painting on a wall; a character sitting on a bench or climbing a ladder; bodies and the interaction of bodies and works; a few experiences of time travel and a certain mystery. However, there is no elucidation as to the reason behind this cinematographic paraphernalia scattered in the space together with the works, or as to whether the works shown here are the result of a long and fruitful dialogue between technique and aesthetics, or even whether they are mutually indispensable.

The film is there, but in potency.

We are at any rate surrounded by the works. Bizarre sculptures arranged around a beach chair, a TV set with the outline of waves or strange frequencies, a painting with stage marking tape, a ladder with lights, a triptych mapped with perforations, a photographic diptych of an action about silence, the transfiguration of a mouldy ceiling into video support, a sculpture projecting green light, the image of a postcard, all under the tittle *Sottile sfumatura di rumore*.

Thanks to a refined word play, which is not new in the artist's work, the title itself stands in a limbo between the visual and the aural in which there is an abandonment to imagination instead of vision, to hearing instead of seeing.

The works, conceived within the parameters of sculpture in the expanded field, are given an adventitious sense of the present, a contemplative and metaphysical world which João Ferro Martins works on in a platform of formal action. Guided by a rich imagetic universe, the artist seeks connections between the different disciplines and operates by recuperating objects, which he gathers, selects and transforms according to some premise of material and signification proximity.

The surprising aspect in *Sottile sfumatura di rumore* is the amount of possible comparisons with the various semiologic and expressive components of spectacle, especially the relationships between written text and the stage. In this specific instance, the works become text-for-the-stage, compositions of gestures and movements in a scenography, capable of providing the hermeneutic tool required to know and understand the organization of space, image and vision.

The exhibition becomes a script, one of those plots that suffuse and organize the works, and it creates trajectories, echoes with the surprise of becoming spatial syntax or pure disorientation.

Antonia Gaeta, 09.2017

Translation: Rui Cascais Parada

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