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## JOÃO FERRO MARTINS

*La cosa che vuoi dirmi è bella o brutta?*

**28 MAR – 10 MAI 2014**

3+1 ARTE CONTEMPORÂNEA presents the inaugural exhibition of João Ferro Martins (Santarém, 1979), *La cosa che vuoi dirmi è bella o brutta?* (The thing you want to tell me, is it good or bad?)

An insight into varying fictitious domestic scenarios sets the platform for the exhibition, as 6 narratives will pervade the gallery space amongst painting, sculpture, collage, installation and a sound work. While navigating through the exhibition, the works comprised of and from common objects, offer a familiarity and credibility to the narratives being told. In turn, allowing the viewer to create additional stories as they draw upon their own associations with the objects and sound.

Ferro Martins has gleaned, gathered and selected from various domiciliary scenes for the works, building upon his exploration with sound-works, the exhibition has theatrical references specifically from that of literature. This is evident in the title of the exhibition: the use of this anecdotal mode of questioning, sets the scene not only for storytelling but momentarily acts as a pause for various paths of interpretation to be opened and to be engaged.

As the sound of the six narratives fills the space, a scene is established, as though we are privy to the artist's private world. Here, an additional layer pervades over the works, placing the viewer in a place, reinforcing the references to domestic situations or places of residence. This radio-like discourse places the onlooker, and depending on the context of the narrative, creates various associations at the times upon viewing the physical pieces in the exhibition.

The construction of the works although at first glance appears random and left to chance, it is an allusion which requires further investigation. Ferro Martins's materials have been exposed to the passages of time and have been selected for these reasons, as though observing objects in an antiquarian or curiosities shop. It is the imaginary of histories and stories untold which commands our attention, allowing us to draw upon our own associations and references to construct our own interpretations and stories.

In *90 Mulheres* a composition of a cocktail glass and found hairpins, yields various references as a stylized vessel containing items to create atypically hairstyles, appears to be representative of a collection. The ambiguity could allude to various personages or simply one whom changes their appearance daily, as one takes on different personalities or personas. This allusion and contrast of materials is quietly eloquent as Ferro Martins has considered these juxtapositions in a playful manner.

A re-occurring theme within his works is a pseudo-Delaunay semi circle, a device which offers a contrast, a point of comparison between form and material as well as a void-like space to immerse oneself. This half circle acts as a control factor as though it is a part of a perfect form on an incomplete one, whether it be a collage, vinyl record or found piece of wood, although at the same time it creates a familiar shape which acts a bearing point for interpretation.

Ferro Martins creates a language with seemingly banal materials into compositions with his compendium. Each element is carefully considered for its various state, colour, association, history and reference and a normally unheld eloquence is rediscovered in these works. This astute manipulation and juxtapositioning of materials and objects by the artist plays with notions of semiotics and idiosyncrasies of language under the veil of the everyday. Within the compositions new discourses are created and a type of poetry and whimsy ensues.

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