

**WAYS OF THE HAND, FORM OF A MIND**  
**CURATED BY JOÃO MOURÃO AND LUÍS SILVA**  
**WITH ELISABETH WILD, FRANCISCO TROPA, MARIANA CALÓ & FRANCISCO QUEIMADELA**  
**AND RODRIGO HERNÁNDEZ**

This exhibition is not intended as a sequel. It is not intended as a prequel either.

Despite referencing the title of a show curated for the short-lived Lisbon outpost of Maisterravalbuena, *Ways of the hand, form of a mind* does not assume the linearity of traditional narrative modes of address. It is not, therefore, the following, or previous, part of an ongoing curatorial project. It is, however, a new, expanded, more complex and nuanced materialization of the reflection set in motion by the previous exhibition.

The original premise revolved around the existence of a chain of meaning, affect and visibility connecting the material, the formal and the narrative nature of human made objects. Form, function, material and narrative are all under the control of the hand. But what of the inextricable bond between a hand and the mind? This bond is an unspoken one, it requires no words. It is an unconscious bond as well. It requires no awareness and none to very little self-awareness. And what lies between the two, both physically and psychologically? What connects the material and the immaterial, the making and the thinking, the imagining, the dreaming? Between the hand and the mind lies the body. The tangible and vulnerable domain of flesh and bones, organs and fluids is simultaneously the path and the vehicle enabling the dialogue between thought and action.

Elisabeth Wild's collages are the result of an ongoing meditative practice in which the artist goes through endless lifestyle publications, selecting, cutting and rearranging glossy iconographies of consumption into abstract compositions which are completely detached from the mundane existence of contemporary life and testify nothing else than complex worlds derived of the artists inner experience. These fantastical landscapes present themselves as exploratory surveys of the workings of the mind.

Francisco Tropa's multifarious practice is the result of a complex array of philosophical, literary, historical and popular references and brings forth notions of death and its inextricable ties to the body, randomness, playfulness and chance, time and ritual. While *Quad* presents itself as an allegory for the connection between thought and action, through notions of play and randomness embodied in an abstract game, *Terra platonica* constitutes a scale model of sorts of a non-descriptive and abstract ritualistic space, which is simultaneously the vessel and the content of the thoughts of a wandering mind.

In Mariana Caló and Francisco Queimadela's hypnotic video, a sequence from the longer film *Animism*, a hand is seen reproducing the arrangement of the ornaments of a funerary mask through the use of pebbles. Even though the mask is not present, the ornaments are still able to convey the image of a human face. After having been successful in recreating the face, and through some sort of incomprehensible entanglement, the hand proceeds to reconfigure the pebbles in several abstract compositions with the mask ornaments mysteriously following and mimicking the movements of the pebbles, shedding some doubts over the relationship between thought and action, mind and matter. A series of screenprints, which the artists usually make for each project, further expands on the relationship between the hand and the mind.

Rodrigo Hernández's small triangular paintings from the series "A Reminder" are minute windows into an oneiric landscape. References to surrealism are not to be dismissed and Hernández's work has been quoting or inspired by specific moments of cultural production. These works require closeness and a certain degree of intimacy. One needs to get close to them, to peek in order to have access to this world. In it one finds human figures frozen in action. The apparent contradiction is the stuff dreams are made of. The skies are bright yet heavy, the space is simultaneously bi and three-dimensional, simultaneously indoors and outdoors, nothing is what it seems yet everything is terribly familiar. The body is both subject and object, doing something yet achieving nothing. It is a wondrous frightening world, a world produced by a delirious mind in a state of restless slumber.

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