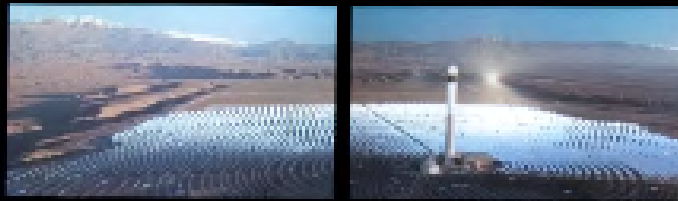


MÓNICA DE MIRANDA

PHOTOGRAPHY | VIDEO | INSTALLATION



Mónica de Miranda is a Portuguese/Angolan visual artist, filmmaker and researcher whose interdisciplinary and research-based practice critically looks at the convergence of politics, gender, memory, space and history. Her work encompasses drawing, installation, photography, film and sound, on the boundaries between documentary and fiction. Mónica investigates strategies of resistance, geographies of affection, storytelling and ecologies of care.

She is the founder of Hangar (2014), an art and research center in Lisbon. Hangar's programmes provide spaces where artists, curators and researchers mainly from the global south can co-create and build social and creative networks to benefit their communities.

As artist and co-curator of the project Greenhouse, Monica represents the Portugal Pavilion at La Biennale di Venezia 2024.

Her work has been presented at major international events such as: 6th Lubumbashi Biennale; 12th Berlin Biennale; 12th Dakar Biennale; 5th Biennale Internationale de l'Art Contemporain de Casablanca; Bamako Encounters - 13th African Biennale of Photography; 14th Venice Architecture Biennale; BIENALSUR 2021; Houston FotoFest 2022; 18th Fotografia Europea, Reggio Emilia.

Solo and group exhibitions have taken place at: CAIXA Cultural, Rio de Janeiro; Bildmuseet, Umeå; Kadist Art Foundation, Paris; Gulbenkian, Lisbon; MUCEM, Marseilles; AfricaMuseum, Tervuren; MAAT, Lisbon; MUAC, Mexico City; Barbican, London; Autograph, London; Frac pays de la Loire, Nantes; Uppsala Museum, Sweden; MNAC, Lisbon; Camões Cultural Institute, Luanda, among others. Monica's work features in public and private collections worldwide.

www.monicademiranda.org

GREENHOUSE

2024



GREENHOUSE

| 2024

by Mónica De Miranda

GREENHOUSE is both a theoretical and practice based research project, which blurs the boundaries between different areas of artistic knowledge through practices of interdisciplinarity, transversality, and radical solidarity, proposing collective actions that use pedagogy, sculpture, video, sound, performance, and assembly spaces to reflect on the relationship between nature, ecology, and politics.

Greenhouse reflects on the work of Amílcar Cabral (1924–1973), the Bissau-Guinean and Cabo Verdean anticolonial leader, agronomist, intellectual, and poet, whose thought and praxis were crucial to the country's self-proclaimed independence in 1973; and which these movements in Africa were essential in the creating the Carnation Revolution that deposed Portugal's dictatorship on April 25th, 1974. Emphasizing the composite histories and identities that emerged from colonialism and the liberation struggles, Greenhouse proposes actions that enact radical and decolonial solidarities and that challenge monocultural norms of nation, knowledge, and agriculture. Looking at the land as a vector of decolonial thinking and practice, as inspired by Amílcar Cabral, Greenhouse brings together historical narratives of liberation with contemporary decolonial practices, and imaginings of possible futures in the context of the Anthropocene and continued struggles against structural racism, historical reparations, ecological regenerations and new possibilities and future potentialities.

The project transformed the exhibition space within Palazzo Franchetti - into a Creole garden, where the Colonial legacy was transformed into a place of resistance, freedom, and imagination, into a space for action and dialogue. In this space, a garden develop between pedagogy, choreography, performance, sound and sculpture. This garden space recalled the "Creole Garden," of Édouard Glissant's concept inspired by the private plots that enslaved people planted as acts of resistance and survival. Those gardens were, and are, the antithesis of the monocultural plantation. Densely planted and richly biodiverse, the "Creole Garden" fosters a material and discursive space of liberation, possibility, and multiplicity, and liberation. Connecting ideas of ecology, decolonisation, diaspora, and migration, this garden was constructed with plants native to African countries, which had grown in the palace's main hall throughout the exhibition period. Here, soil is understood as a vector of decolonial and ecological engagement, capable of sustaining new growth even as it archives traces of historical violence. The garden connects past, present, and future, and it highlights the politics of the land, history, body, and identity.

The garden proposes the creation of a "living archive." Plants are a living archive of ancient memories, stories, and cosmologies. The creation of a living, collective, and sensory archive is proposed. It proposes to combine historical and archival research with fictional narratives to fill the gap of official historical narratives. Counterposing the static experience of observation by proposing a discursive space and active participation emancipated. The garden will be activated across the exhibition period, so it becomes a place of collective action and care, of multiple creative possibilities, and of pedagogy. The Garden will be a stage proposing an action program, creating a school for the present and the future, based on the revolutionary schools of liberation movements in Africa. Greenhouse uses transdisciplinary practices of experimentation, encounters, and collective possibilities. Situated at the intersection between practice, theory and pedagogy.



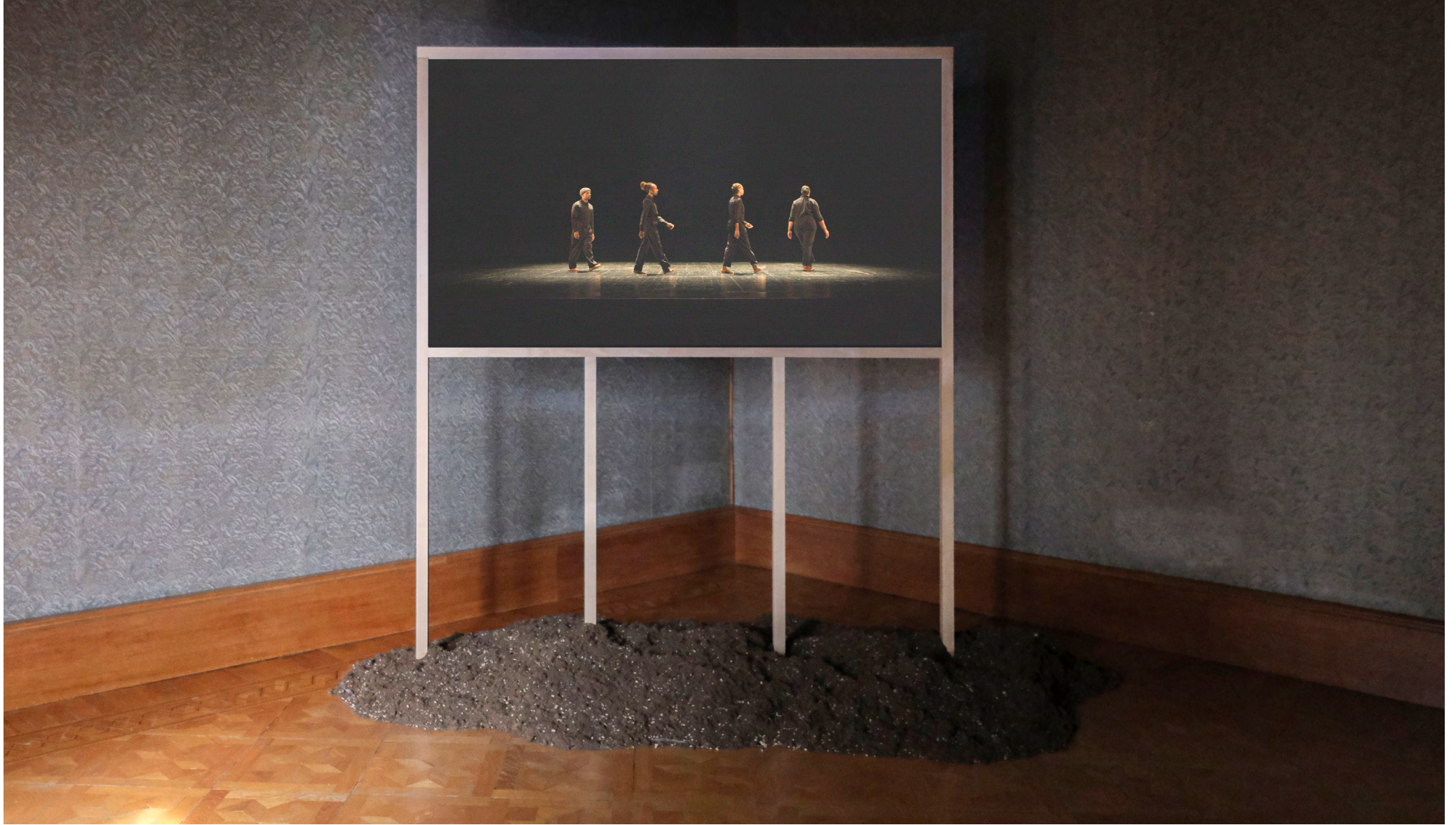
Transplanting, 2024
Wood, Soil, HD Video and Sound
13'20"



Leap, 2024
Wood, Iron, Plants, Soil
200 x 150 x 150cm



Cross Talk, 2024
Instalation, Sound, 30m Word, Iron, Speakers
Variable dimentions



Weaving Stories While Walking, 2024
Wood, Soil, HD Video and Sound
30'50"



School of Revolution, 2024
Wood, Iron, Plants, Soil
Variable dimensions



Contraction, 2024
Wood, Iron, Plants, Soil
150 x 255 x 75 cm



Mirror Mirror on The Wall, 2024
Wood, iron, plant, soil, mirror
150 x 262 x 75 cm

AS IF THE WORLD HAD NO WEST

2024



AS IF THE WORLD HAD NO WEST

| 2024

by Mónica De Miranda

As If the World Had No West tells of the journey of a young woman who travels through the desert and who, through her relationship with the Mirabilis, ancient plants, listens to the cosmos. She listens to her elders, the earth, fire and air. The drought calls the rain, the ashes show the way, the plants tell her the stories of colonization, of the beginning of the world when the desert was still scrubland and there were trees and flowers. She tries to find out where the water is and searches for this universe by going through colonial ruins now buried by time and sands and lost in the middle of the sea.

As If the World Had No West proposes the creation of new landscapes by investigating hidden, yet metaphysically present ecologies in Angola, deconstructing western understandings of memory, history, and land. The project enquires in the work of anthropologist Augusto Zita's investigations in the Namibe desert, in which he devised a nature-oriented space/time system having light as a third dimension. This work will bring forward this research, while deconstructing

the hegemonic understanding of land and territory, looking at the land as a place of mutual care, liberation history and memory. As If the World Had No West reveals non-western configurations of landscape, and the histories and memories it holds, through film and photography.



As if the World Had No West, 2024
HD video - 3 screen installation
36'48"



Above the Line, 2024
Inkjet print on cotton paper
70 x 130 cm



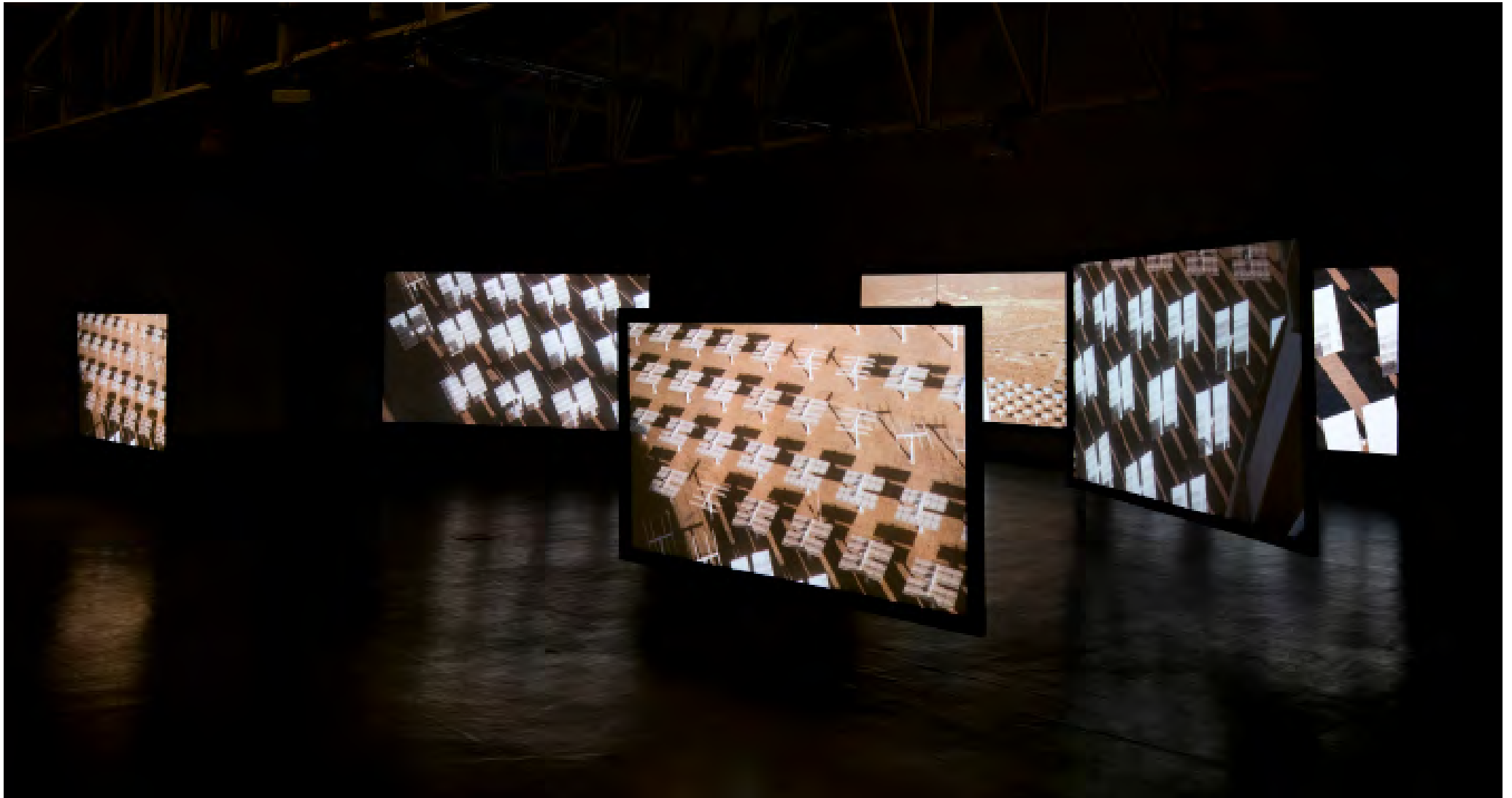
Blackfill, 2024
Inkjet print on cotton paper
50 x 75 cm



Rain Bull, 2024
Inkjet print on cotton paper
110 x 220 cm (6 parts of 73 x 55)

THE SUN DOES NOT RISE IN THE NORTH

2023



THE SUN DOES NOT RISE IN THE NORTH

| 2023

by Cindy Sisskho

Do you think freedom exists?

What are the (Black) geographies of freedom that are still to be imagined?

What are the infrastructures of hope?

The advancement and proliferation of technologies of surveillance and the control of movements is a growing violation of individual and collective freedom – for many, borders are a geopolitical construct of physical and mental entrapments.

In the series *The Sun Does Not Rise in the North* (2023), de Miranda proposes one-person tales navigating between fictional and non-fictional narratives in the affective space of the border. The series investigates the landscapes that witness hope, from the journeys of migration between Africa and Europe, set within a duality of existence and citizenship: one contemplating Europe and the other a return to Africa.

We are immersed within the contested border of Ceuta in Spain and Melilla in Morocco in these spaces of transition where the artist spent time with the territory and gathered testimonies. De Miranda gives a nuanced gaze into the familiar scenario of the 'migration crisis' and its relationships with the fortress of Europe, in underpinning the ongoing colonial politics of violent rejection of people that attempt to reach its soil every day.

The Sun Does Not Rise in the North examines the complex diversity of personal and collective histories interconnected between the migrant and the diasporic experience in Europe. It is a continuous relational praxis that de Miranda depicts and deconstructs through counter-narratives of belonging, as well as on the (re)elaboration of memory in post-colonial discourses.

The African liberation struggles, and revolutionary movements fuel the artist's imaginaries. The building of an archive of transnational political efforts – one that reminds us to look onto the past for our current reflections, as a continuous entity in our horizons, and where liberation sits within the ongoing narratives of strength, resilience, and vulnerability. In the film *o sol não nasce a norte* (*The Sun Does Not Rise in the North*) and photographic works, the visual narratives give (back) dignity and grace to the characters through the poetics of (body) languages.

Here, and generally within de Miranda's cinematographic geographies of affection, the main characters are in deep connections with the ecosystems and the landscapes: the sea, the forest, the mountains, the desert, the sand, and palm trees are mothering the fugitive and disposable bodies, waves are caressing the ears amongst ethereal soundscapes, symbolic spiritual colours of the sun, blood, water and trees. Clad in white clothing, they are calling for the sun. The bodies are aligned with its cyclical movement. The landscapes alternate between crisp blue skies, natural fog and blurry haze depicting the start and end of the day – and of journeys leading to freedom, alienation, loss or slow spiritual death.

In the film, the man says that the body has no end, but life does. In Bakongo philosophy, at sunset and sunrise, "the living and the dead exchange day and night. The setting of the sun signifies man's death and its rising, his rebirth, or the continuity of his life. Bakongo believe and hold it true that man's life has no end, that it constitutes a cycle, and death is merely a transition in the process of change." The movements and itinerant passages of those that have arrived, but only to leave, are captured in the memory of the soil, of the land that is archiving each of their steps. In the film, the archaeological digging of the land, what was once there and now buried, interrogates what else is left of our bodies without the earth?

Now you're this, what is left. Your body turns into pieces that the wind carries away.

Whether it is in the film or exhibition space, the solar panels become sculptures of dominance and empowerment bouncing the light on the bodies to rise anew within new temporality and potential forms of being and living, until a final rupture. The visitors become active participants, navigating amongst the screens, also facing the immensity of the sculptures. They roam around amongst shadows and reflections – their own stories mirroring or in tandem with the main characters. The sun is represented in the metaphor of the mirror as what controls and sustains us all. The reflective light and sun are giving the rhythm of navigation, of landmarks and human footprints. The source of light is saturated and blinding, the eyes remain shut or resist a direct gaze – a regenerative moment surfaces where the knowledge of our double co-existence is virulent and unforgivable at the core of the character's questions and provocations in which our acts of extraction to the land is laid bare for the viewers.

But how much sun must we store and sell? How many greenhouses must we produce in order to live in a land that sees no sunlight?

The Sun Does Not Rise in the North gives way to the monumentality of the landscape of hope and freedom, the infrastructure that are markers of state violence, and the architecture of surveillance such as the metallic gated border, fences that are to rip the skin, the overwhelming visions of capitalist accumulation through extractive mechanisms as a violation of the soil, sun, water are in parallel with the ever so present technologies of renewable energies to counterbalance the damages of the land that the same politics of rejection are encompassing every day. The mirrors are an ongoing metaphor of this reflection and our contemporary interrogation on the psychological and physical damages of a systemic nature.

The Sun Does Not Rise in the North is a moment for us all to belong within their existence and continuation to resist against the distant feeling of their alienation, confusion and estrangement, and a part of the journey that liberates us from the borders of our mental and spiritual prisons in understanding the ongoing relationship that the land and our bodies are just one.



The Sun Does Not Rise in the North, 2023
Installation view



Sun rise, 2023
Inkjet prints on cotton paper
100 x 270 cm



Trees have no tongues, 2023
Inkjet prints on cotton paper, diptic
70 x 155 cm



White sea, 2023

Inkjet prints on cotton paper, 6 parts
150 x 300 cm



The Sun Does Not Rise in the North, 2023
HD video and sound, 30'
6 screen installation
Film stills

PATH TO THE STARS

2022



PATH TO THE STARS

| 2022

By the agile curve of the gazelle's neck
Agostinho Neto, The Way to the Stars, 1953

by Ana Nolasco

Path to the Stars (2022), takes form as a multimedia installation centered around three axis that constitute a whole. The first axis, center around the Kwanza River which works in first place as a metaphor for the strength of the struggle for liberation and the hope undergoing a continuous metamorphosis. In second place unfolding in to reflect on the boundaries between history and fiction, through the point of view of voices silenced by canonical narratives. Then finally thirdly, it reflects on the Anthropocene and on Man's desire to conquer and how this leading to their destruction, due to the lack of inner spiritual freedom and balance with the Universe.

The first axis centers around, a video taken along the Kwanza River that references the struggle for liberation of Angola, through the use of poetic language, across several narratives such as that of the Kwanza River, and the cradle of the Ndongo kingdom. Through this the strength of Mother Nature is represented, creating an analogy between the woman's body and the territory. The territory being the first body to be penetrated by the colonizers in search of material wealth, thus forth creating a link between the land to the sea, the past, the present and the future. In the video we are confronted with a warrior woman and her shadow whose stories

are unraveled throughout the narrative; a boat that symbolizes the passage of ideas, people and memories, as well as soldiers who, through the lines of a map of Angola, try to read their future and a child who decides to travel to space. This video is accompanied by a series of photographs surrounding the same theme of landscape representation, through a performative act. Through these acts the traditional concept of landscape is subverted presupposing a disincarnated spectator - reducing it to a mere look -, fixed in space and time. This concept, which is rooted in the Renaissance and the primacy of the European male gaze that cuts nature apart, fragmenting it, through its modernity, creating a rift between man and nature, in which man is left to constitute a whole.

Another aspect of the project is the series Path to the Stars, which consist of a set of images depicting the struggle for liberation of the PAIGC taken from the archive of Amílcar Cabral. In these images, the representation of the man is seen purely from the male point of view, celebrating heroism defined by warlike acts used to prove ones virility. This one sided point of view leaves another story in the shadows, that of the women who participated in the armed struggle, of whom are depicted on the reverse side of the image. Through the gesture of embroidering, an interlacing of the inside and the outside of the image creates a suture, thus forth bringing the inside and outside of the image together. As much as the past is constantly being reconstructed by the present, the archive of memory constitutes the humus from which the renewal of history can drink, ending the possibilities for imagining different futures. These lines of embroidery do not divide, but undo borders through the gesture of care - usually associated with the female universe, the domestic space - re-inscribing in history the presence of the gestures of these warrior women of the past. Through the placement of embroidered images in the space of a gallery, the public / private dichotomy, instituted by the hegemonic western male gaze in which the public space is reserved for men can be put into question.

Another core idea of the exhibition consists of the series *Path to the Stars*, which through a strategy of appropriation and irony, plays with the semantic ambiguity of the relationship between titles and image. It does so by transposing this concept into a fictional space, inspired by the space race between the United States and Russia, and their struggles for emancipation throughout history.

Just as the animals symbolize the struggle against the ambitions of Man such as those at risk of extinction due to the immense ambition of Man - like the tiger of the Tamils that are in themselves a well-known guerrilla for the revolution, or the wolf of Clarisse Pinkola's book, *Women who run with wolves* (1989), Much like the struggle of these animals the struggle for female emancipation, is also hostage to that ambition. With these ambitions comes the inauguration of the Anthropocene era - in which human action determines the evolution of the earth, directly impacting the chemical composition of soils, seas and the atmosphere - marking the probable beginning of their end.

In this work femininity is not understood here as a biological essence, but as a form of sensitivity that escapes the phallogocentric view of the world, which is based on the supremacy of instrumentalist reason, and formed through a vertical hierarchy in which "more" is always better, even if it means more misery, destruction and inequality. Ecofeminism, in the sense of "ecois" - home - encompasses the entire ecosystem and its spiritual forces - embodied here on the Kwanza River, which can be viewed as an ascension platform from the female body and the Earth, capable of redesigning the past and reinvent a future that links the material to the spiritual.



Path to the Stars and
I walk with an absent gaze (...), 2022
Installation view



Three sisters, 2022
Vinyl print
198 x 450 cm



Astronaut, 2022
Inkjet print
250 x 150 cm



Ruins, 2022
Inkjet print on cotton paper
65 x 90 cm



Water shadows, 2022
Inkjet print on cotton paper
75 x 130 cm



Path to the Stars, 2022
HD video and sound, 30'
6 screen installation
Film stills

THE ISLAND

2022



THE ISLAND

| 2022

The Fighter in the Looking Glass

by Taous R. Dahmani

'I will be free because I fight'

As in other memorable tales, Mónica de Miranda's visual storytelling in *The Island (A Ilha)* (2022), revolves around a central motif: the mirror or looking glass. Concrete (via the made object) or natural (by way of reflection in water), mirrors appear again and again in *The Island*. Revealing invisible truths and deepest desires, the looking glass in de Miranda's work becomes an intricate polyphonic knot: it both folds and unfolds a multilayered narrative. Through a film and a series of photographs, de Miranda uses the mirror as a structuring device allowing her to probe, in all their complexity and multiplicity, ideas of identity (self and otherness) and history (past, present and potential future). While the mirror, as a motif, is a well-established trope in art history, with this project de Miranda undertakes a reappropriation of the looking glass as a powerful contemporary metaphorical form. Indeed, de Miranda 'reclaims the mirror' and updates its symbolic values in light of her decolonial, feminist and ecological stances.

Throughout history, literature and visual culture have often used the mirror as an allegorical tool. When Lewis Carroll gave Alice a mirror in 1871, it was to offer her the possibility of entering a world of fantasy.

Then, more than 60 years later, in Virginia Woolf's *The Lady in the Looking Glass* (1929), a woman is described facing a mirror: 'She stood naked in that pitiless light. And there was nothing. Isabella was perfectly empty.' If Carroll used the mirror as a device for his main character's transition into womanhood, and if Woolf deployed it as a means to reflect on ideas of loneliness and emptiness, a century later I would suggest that de Miranda positions her model in front of a mirror not to invite her to escape her condition, but to imagine all that is possible, to visualise a different past and a distinct future: 'I breathe, I sigh, I exhale the warmth of a future, the forgetfulness of the part, I inhale the present, the place from where I never left and I forgot that here I review myself in you, in wait of the emptiness that transcends and casts my reflection [...] the reflection where I see and mirror myself' (34'10"-34'59").

In *The Island*, de Miranda reinvents the parabolic charge of the mirror as an object of empowerment: questions are both asked by and answered by the same purposeful main character, a forceful black woman. In many ways inspired by French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, for the artist, the mirror is not only used to externalise parts of a woman's psyche but also to envision women's wishes and their tenacity. As such, the externalisation takes very concrete shapes. In the four photographs entitled *Mirror Me*, a woman faces a mirror wearing - in succession - a captain's cap, a cowboy hat and a horse-riding helmet. Through the duality created by the looking glass, de Miranda evokes gendered ideas of power, function and influence, and adopts the mirror as an apparatus for potentiality: conceptualising alternatives and turning desires for equality into actual images. The mirror as a 'manifesting device' can also be found in the feminist poetry of Sylvia Plath, Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde, as it can in the work of African American artist Carrie Mae Weems, who regularly uses a mirror as a compositional instrument to shape her photographs and self-portraits in particular, such as in the series *Mirror, Mirror* (1987-8) or *Not Manet's Type* (1997). In Weems's work the mirror suggests the figure's fully-owned agency and invites the viewer into a considerate contemplation. In line with this thinking, de

Miranda's work endorses the mirroring device as an externalisation of black women's manifold views and visions. Although the evident, yet strange, precept of mirrors is the revelation of one's reflected image, in *Mirror Me* the optics are imaginary.

For de Miranda, the looking glass is a means by which to formulate desirable futures, but it is also used as a mechanism for revisiting history. In the film, which expands on the narrative of the photographic still images, the mirror as an artefact occurs at least twice (6'16" and 34'): firstly, when the main protagonist, lying on her bed, is seen through a wall mirror - perhaps insinuating a form of reverie about times to come - and secondly when she is seated opposite the mirror, musing about the past - conjuring intricate historical narratives. In these two scenes, as in others, de Miranda weaves together individual destinies with the impact of traumatic episodes in our shared history.

In *The Island*, the 'mirroring effect' is also introduced by the surface of the water. Streams, rivers or the sea, and the images that form on them by way of reflection, are used to summon history and awaken its forbidden chapters. In *Whistle for the Wind* de Miranda's main character is seen overlooking a vast expanse of water as if searching for answers about a troubled past. Indeed, de Miranda's fable takes place on an island known for its link with Portuguese colonial history. This very real island, a few kilometres away from Lisbon, is also known for its seventeenth- and eighteenth-century folk tales, in which the enclave was disparagingly named 'a Ilha dos Pretos' (the Island of Black People). As such, the island becomes a direct geographical reference to Portugal's violent colonial past, where mirrors - crafted objects or natural phenomena - channel the uncovering and acknowledgment of generations of enslaved people, as well as recreate and reaffirm their legacy. In another context, but appropriate here, the late scholar bell hooks explained how 'the politics of slavery, of racialised power relations, were such that the slaves were denied the right to gaze', linking here the island's history to acts of vision, the performance of looking and

the centrality of reflection, while turning the mirror into a powerful political tool.

De Miranda not only 'reclaims the mirror' as an apparatus but also subverts its meaning by placing a black woman in front of it. Refusing to look the other way, spurning history as told by dominant forces, the mirror becomes an epitome of agency. 'There is power in looking', as bell hooks stated - indeed, for Mónica de Miranda the look in the rebellious mirror is a strategy, crafted for a fighter to gaze at possibilities for imagining different futures. These lines of embroidery do not divide, but undo borders through the gesture of care - usually associated with the female universe, the domestic space - re-inscribing in history the presence of the gestures of these warrior women of the past. Through the placement of embroidered images in the space of a gallery, the public / private dichotomy, instituted by the hegemonic western male gaze in which the public space is reserved for men can be put into question.

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Shot from the exhibition *The Island*
Autograph, London, 2022



Shot from the exhibition Galeria Avenida da India, Lisbon, 2022



Mirror and mirages, 2022
Wood, wheels, mirrors, vinyl print
Variable dimensions



Step up, 2022
Wood, metal, wheels, soil and natural vegetation
105 x 72 x 200 cm



Mirages, 2022
Wood, wheels, mirror, mosquito net, soil and natural vegetation
75 x 75 x 200 cm



No person is an island, 2022
Wood, wheels, mirror, metal, soil and natural vegetation
Variable dimensions

Our bodies are older than the images or the words

Our bodies are older than the images or the words, 2022
Steel laser cut word installation
Variable dimensions



Deep Green, 2022 and **Tide**, 2022
Vinyl and inkjet print on cotton paper



The luch at the beach (after Manet), 2022
Inkjet print on cotton paper
350 x 230 cm



Salt island, 2022
Inkjet prints on cotton paper and cotton thread embroidery
420 x 80 cm



Groundwork, 2022
Inkjet print on cotton paper, diptic
250 x 85 cm



The bath, 2022
Inkjet print on cotton paper, diptic
250 x 95 cm



In defense of the land, 2022
Inkjet print on cotton paper
20 x 20 cm (each)



The Island, 2022
HD video, 37'30"
Film stills

SHADOWS FALL BEHIND

2022



SHADOWS FALL BEHIND

| 2022

The red thread of destiny

by Andrea Pacheco González

The red thread of destiny is an ancient oriental legend found in both Chinese and Japanese mythology and is related to the idea that a thin, invisible red thread affectively connects people's lives. Regardless of the place, the context or the circumstances in which each of them lives, they will end up meeting at some point because they are united by an unbreakable bond. Although this belief has been captured by the fantasies of romantic love, the myth actually alludes to the force of destiny that connects the lives of one and the other, regardless of the nature of the union. More deeply it relates to trust, to faith that something sustains us beyond our actions, and invokes a red thread tied to the little finger as a symbol of a constellation of infinite connections, of a loving web capable of containing the lonely existence of the individual. It is, no doubt, a beautiful belief. If only all people, regardless of their origin, could trust in destiny in this way.

Many artists, mostly non-European women, have used the power of a strand or a reddish stroke as a lure, as a political and emotional gesture that addresses the other side of this oriental myth, its

counter-narrative. Sometimes it has been a path, a seam, a stain, a red waterfall that falls to the ground. Sometimes it has been the blood of a body that draws on a surface. This is the case of Teresa Margolles' shrouds, Ana Mendieta's bloody face or her silhouettes in the sand. But they are also Cecilia Vicuña's quipus, Catalina Parra's seams of dismembered bodies, Mona Hatoum's subterranean currents or the photographs embroidered with red thread from the series *A fine line* (2022) that Mónica de Miranda presents in this series. They are works, practices and artists' imaginaries that from very distant times and spaces are connected in an almost spectral way as part of a network of irrevocable connections. The ghostly matters, says Avery F. Gordon, and the apparitions of forces from the past come to the present in multiple and complex ways. It is also the red thread of destiny, in this case, underlining universal lovelessness.

Mónica de Miranda has developed a forceful body of work around the African diaspora in Europe, specifically in the Portuguese context. Using photography and video as her main media, her work has explored the memory of the land and the landscape after the colonisation processes initiated by the inhabitants of the European continent from the 16th century onwards. In collaborative formats, where her practice always enters into dialogue with other creators, the artist investigates the colonial wound of subalternised territories, but does so from a visual composition that is antagonistic to misfortune. "Her images are lyrical, performative and contemplative: quiet moments that offer themselves as a kind of consolation", writes curator Mark Sealy in relation to Monica's photographic practice. There is indeed a duality, a contrast in the exercises of representation that her work suggests, the tension of history to which they allude operates as a cryptography whose deciphering always offers room for repair.

For the project *Shadows fall behind*, de Miranda carried out an in-depth investigation of the land border between Spain and Morocco, on the North African coast. She travelled through the cities of Ceuta and Melilla trying to understand that other kind of warp that intertwines - always tragically - a border fence with migrant dreams

of the promised land. The photographs show us the landscape to which these dreams look. "Is there someone over there, on the other side, with a red ribbon tied to my little finger? "Is the thread that kept us safe broken?" This could be the question of someone who is no longer there to hear the answer. Like a subtle decor, the artist superimposes embroideries of traditional Islamic patterns on the horizon of the Spanish coast. And there it is! Again the ghostly, the spectre of a cultural hybridisation a hundred times denied. The red thread here points to an imaginary cartography, which transgresses the geopolitical drawing of this border and gives it the warmth of a texture, of something that can offer a certain kind of shelter.

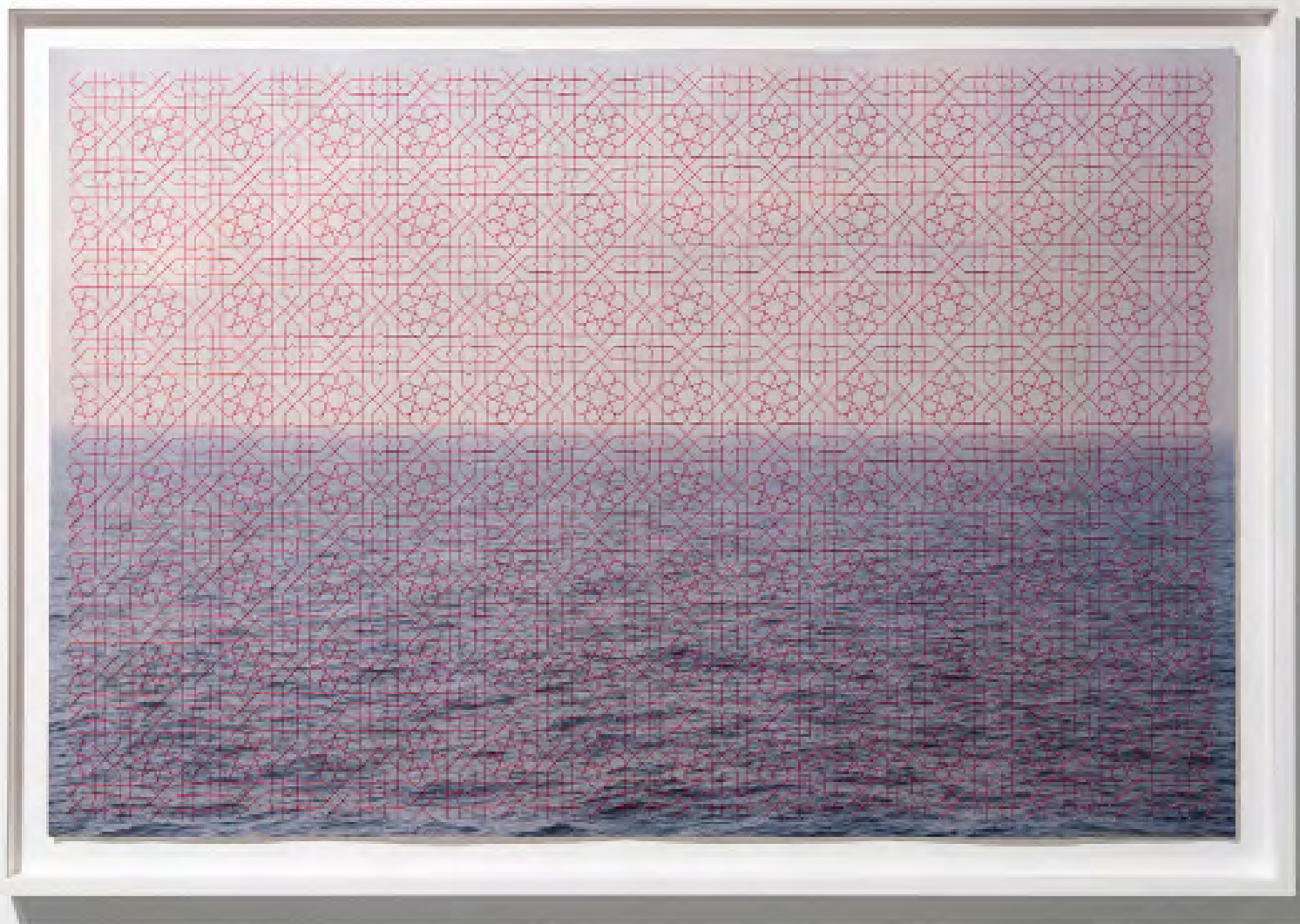
Together with the photographs, the artist presents the audiovisual piece *Border song* (2022), made in collaboration with the Afro-Portuguese musician Xullaji. The video travels along the fence of Ceuta and Melilla, an outline of no more than twenty kilometres, from a moving car. Its images summon us to a painful procession where voices, sounds and chants from both sides of this steel line intermingle. The blood there has lost its colour. In this weft there are only cut threads, unravelled, broken, dismembered, divided.

In her fieldwork, the artist has listened to dozens of people who remain anchored on this border between "who can live and who must die" (Mbembe, 2006). The project is based on layers and layers of stories of those who are forcibly far from the place where they were born, of lives on the edge of humanity, when the landscape of dreams has been transformed into a nightmare. Through the fiction proposed by these weavings and these intertwined voices, the artist ventures a gesture of protection, offering a symbolic refuge from the catastrophe of remaining in these lands without a destination.

The Chicana border author Gloria Anzaldúa imagines a deaf world capable of welcoming all dissidence, all otherness for which, precisely, all borders have been created. Her words intersect with the images that Mónica de Miranda presents in this exhibition as they offer the possibility, at least, of imagining a destination.



A Fine Line series, 2022
Inkjet print and red cotton thread
60 x 40 cm (each)



Storyline, 2022
Inkjet print and red cotton thread
100 x 66,5 cm



Greenhouse flowers 3, 2022
Inkjet print and red cotton thread
60 x 40 cm



Borderline, 2022
Inkjet print and red cotton thread
60 x 40 cm

ALL THAT BURNS MELTS INTO AIR

2020



ALL THAT BURNS MELTS INTO AIR

| 2020

by Luísa Santos

All That Burns Melts Into Air is a reference to “All that is solid melts into air”, the beginning of a sentence in the first chapter, entitled “the bourgeois and the proletarians”, from the Communist Party Manifesto, written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848. The full sentence - “All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind” (Marx and Engels, [1848] 1985) - reflects the revolutionary character of modern capitalism that transformed Europe and Africa in the middle of the 18th century, evoking an image of the industrial era with its effects on human beings. On the other hand, it also refers to the language of chemistry to suggest that solid traditions evaporate into the air. A modern world supposedly linked to social reform in its implications with collective thinking and action seems, in this metaphor, to have given way to a world of disconnected atoms (individuals). *All That Burns Melts Into Air*, by Mónica de Miranda as “All that is solid melts into air”, by Marx and Engels brings us to an imaginary of the present time marked by the reality and urgency of global warming. Marx was hardly thinking about climate change in the 1840s. However, he was beginning to reflect on what he would come to describe as a

metabolic cleft, a rupture in material exchanges between humanity and nature. Agriculture typical of Marx's time, of the industrial revolution, was characterized by intensive methods of large-scale cultivation that appeared as a solution to maximize production and that resulted in monocultures. Like agricultural monocultures, social monocultures can - as colonialism demonstrates - be destructive. All That Burns Melts Into Air (instead of “All that is solid melts into air”) suggests precisely the layers of meaning printed on the manifest. From the metaphor that everything that burns (often in attempts to erase memories) melts and merges with air in a transformative process, it refers to social and political changes in Africa. During the rise of liberation movements in Africa, Socialism explored the experience of modernity, in its utopia and in its fall from a safe institution to something decadent very different from its initial project. It is important to remember that Modernism was also the force that organized Africa into colonies and, thus, also the engine behind fascism. In the text of Marx and Engels, there is a feeling of both beauty and strangeness (in the Kantian sense of *unheimlich*) in their paradoxical understanding of the sublime as something both terrifying and fascinating. The manifesto is about the simultaneously destructive and productive forces, about the sublime terror of a new world order, an order that is unstable in its constant process of destruction and renewal. These paradoxical effects of modernism appear visually translated in Mónica de Miranda's work. A partly fictionalized and partly documentary portrait, the series shows places between ruin and the forest, between the utopian visions of the modernist avant-garde and the post-fall images of Socialism and its ideologies. While relics appear as an entrance to places in the political history of the past as a way of dealing (or reconciling) with these memories in the present, the ruins, taken by nature, appear here as a metaphor for memories that have been erased (or burned) to make room for other buildings. In their conflictual temporalities, the ruins refer to both the past and the future. In other words, the past reappears transformed into the present, in a transcendent process of rebirth that, in its ethereal quality, has the potential to travel again from today to tomorrow.



All that burns melts into air, 2020
HD video, pine wood, velvet curtains, plants
280x 290 x 240 cm



Imperial Cinema, 2020
Inkjet print on cotton paper
150 x 294 cm + 2 x 50 x 75 cm



Balcony, 2020
Inkjet printing on cotton paper
66,5 x 200 cm



Mirror Me, 2020
Inkjet printing on cotton paper
70 x 105 cm + 2 x 50 x 75 cm



Under Water, 2020

Pine wood, glass aquarium, wheels, mirror, plants,
inkjet prints
155 x 54 x 20 cm



Whales Whispers, 2020
Inkjet printing on cotton paper
50 x 75 cm



All that burns melts into air, 2020
HD video, 7'37"
Film stills

TALES OF LISBON

2020



TALES OF LISBON

| 2020

The Archive as a Productive Space of Empathy

by Bruno Leitão (Curator)

To understand the series Tales of Lisbon (2020), it is important to consider that the archive that appears in a form close to its entirety started more than 10 years ago. The Luso-Angolan artist recreates a photographic archive of the city of Lisbon. An artist perpetuating, expanding, and recreating the visual imagery of a city is not in itself a surprising event. However, the archive is deserving of creating an image of Lisbon that could be so unexpectedly fictional: irregular constructed houses, self-construction, and roads without concrete, that do not represent the visual imagery that propagates from the city of Ulysses. This is a city that appears fictional yet is entirely real. The residences that Mónica de Miranda portrayed no longer exist in many cases. This reality is invisible to many Lisboans and almost all foreigners.

The fictional elements that are introduced by the artist in collaboration with writers, actors and sound designers emerge later, where experiences are guessed and attempts are made to reconstitute lives, family events and destinations far beyond cement and bricks. The work *Arquitecturas* (2014), creates a posteriori architectural plan for houses that were founded on dreams instead of sketches. The luxury of urban planning and architectural design doesn't provide happiness in the same way that its absence does not

invalidate it. We can consider architecture as a privilege or a right, but we can't comprehend that sometimes dreams don't wait for the right conditions, on the contrary dreams and necessity are the only conditions to build a house.

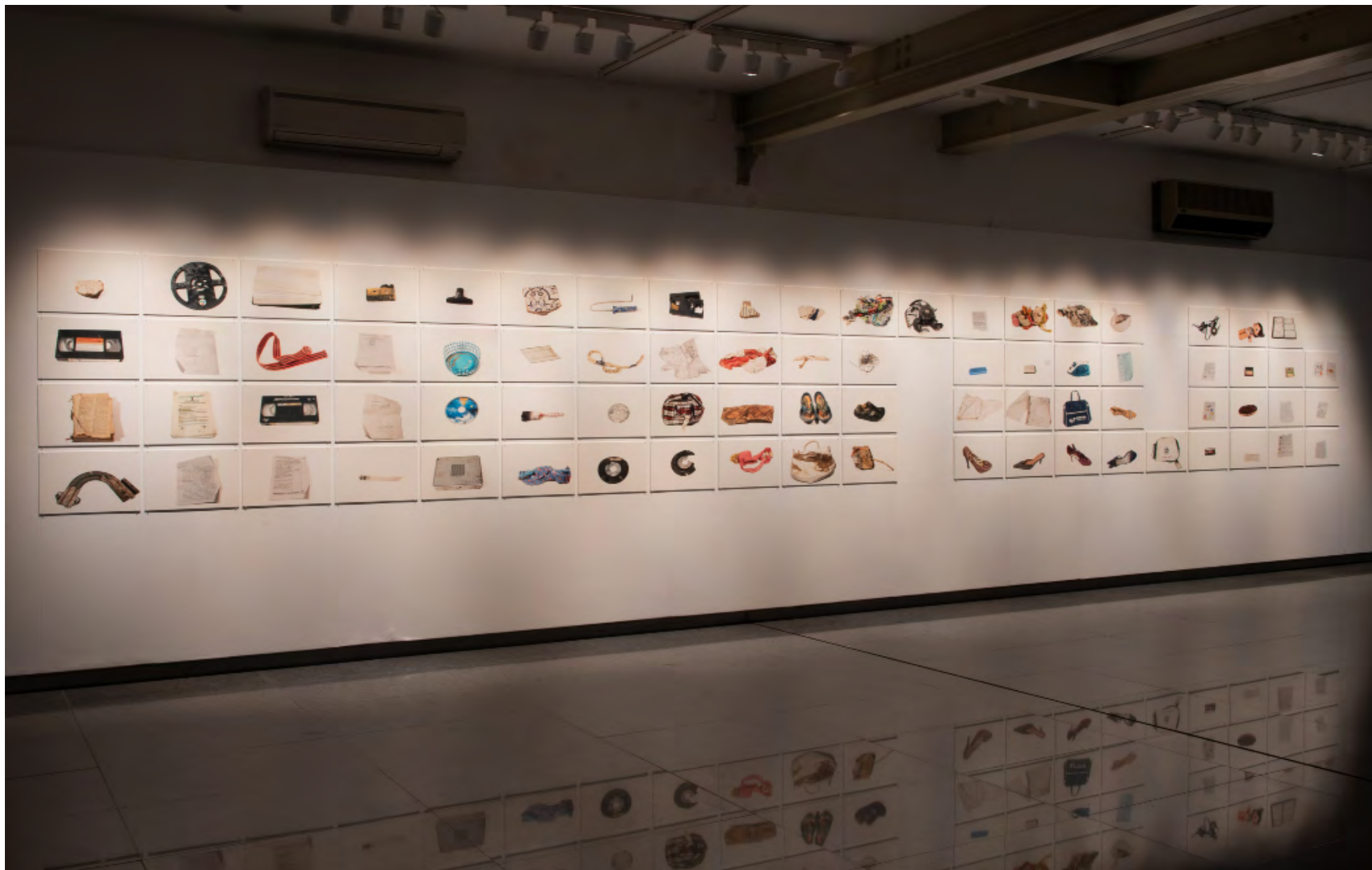
This archive doesn't describe the object as much as it describes its conditions and circumstances. For this reason, in the eyes of the law, everything can be an archive according to its provenance, temporal condition and origin. The relationship that Michel Foucault weaves between the archive, archaeology, the institution and censorship form a system in which the elements influence each other. Mónica de Miranda's work does not propose a story about winners over losers, but rather a story that compels empathy and allows us to inscribe invisible experiences in a city that needs to make them visible and needs to make them its own. Empathy is an essential phenomenon for social and territorial cohesion.

Photography has always had a privileged relationship with the notion of archives, its unique character has always proved to be an undisputed proof that what it portrays does exist. This unquestioned existence provokes a narrative indebted to western epistemologies in which mechanical reproduction perfectly fits as evidence. It is a raw technique for the need of reason.

Monica de Miranda's archive reveals an invisible Lisbon. Her artistic investigation is not only claimed in the gradual demonstration that there is an existing version of this city that does not appear in the tourist brochures. In addition, not only does the artist demonstrate this evidence, but she also delves deeply into an inquisitive and humanising process of these lives. Starting with photographic evidence and moving on to dissatisfied literary fiction we are left with photographic simplicity.

Her artefacts are loaded with symbolic weight that end up subverting the expectation of a truth corroborated by technical representation. As stated by James Baldwin, "hate is always self-hate, and there is

always something suicidal about that." Baldwin talks about empathy, the indispensable ability to understand the entire dimension of a city in its unique plurality. Monica de Miranda's work is nothing more than the possibility of getting closer, immersing ourselves in the real and fictional stories of fellow citizens.



Tales of Lisbon, 2020
Sound and photography installation
2310 x 3465 cm
Exhibition View, Arquivo Municipal de Lisboa



Casa Portuguesa, 2016
Inkjet print on cotton paper and wood lasercut
Variable dimensions
Exhibition View, Arquivo Municipal de Lisboa

SOUTH CIRCULAR

2019



SOUTH CIRCULAR

| 2019

History Revisited

by João Silvério (curator)

South circular (2019), consists of a double video projection, a spatial structure where the viewer is assigned their seat, three photographic panels and a pyrography. With an approximate running time of twenty minutes, the video first shows us two women – twin sisters, whom the artist has used before/a recurring theme for the artist – in the shadow of nondescript ruins over the Tagus. There's no sound. Three disparate elements, then – a female pair, a structure in ruins and a river surrounding Lisbon and winding throughout the city's outskirts – lay the foundation for a historical inventory of a military defence line that came to assume different roles and meanings through time. This anachronous defence wall sets a paradox before our eyes – it began as a military defence complex to keep the French from the capital during the invasions at the beginning of the nineteenth century; and now, more than a century later, it's a territory where a by-and-large African population coming from the Portuguese ex-colonies, along with people from rural areas, and others, established their communities when they found themselves with no means to live in the prosperous, much-desired capital city.

In 1899, this fortified line was called the Lisbon Trench Camp; only much later, at the end of the 1990s, was it deactivated. The wall perimeter (observable in the pyrography, the piece called Military

road) consists of a circular line going around the north side of the capital and along a large portion of the south bank. That was Miranda's itinerary for her research. The artist visited crumbled-down forts, and others that still stand – São Julião da Barra being one of them – with an aim of offering an existence in the present tense to a few of these war structures. Along her itinerary, Miranda encountered the inhabitants – communities, mostly African, who through the decades cemented their presence in an act of defiance, also self-determination, creating roots along the fort line, and preserving their cultural heritage while also sharing it with other communities. South circular is a multi-voiced choir singing of a tension between memory, nostalgia and the urgency that tints our modern view of the city and its inhabitants – there are the "legitimate" dwellers, and then the outsiders. Using sound mixing and visual editing with a keen sense of rhythm, Miranda reveals a narrative web of places and moments of historical significance, turning them into a series of heterotopias in flux. This is embodied in the characters in the video, all of them facing the same enemy. There's Zia, a female fighter in fatigues, a warrior setting up a new defence barrier – a wall, maybe as she keeps building a home for herself, while listening to news of the Angolan revolution on the radio, others dating back to the Revolution of April 1974. Or there is the urban knight going along the old military road, passing old defence posts now housing the homeless, travelling the hills from residential areas in Mira Loures and Olaias to Alto de São João Cemetery. The road circumnavigates the capital, but never enters it.

In this redeemed geography, duality is the constant – two men talk; twins face each other or go in opposite directions; pairs of landscapes at first glance seem to be one and the same, but then you look again and they're not. All of these are metaphors for time and space opposed, for past and present constantly intersecting. Where you once had epic ruins, and then abandoned ruins, a new urban landscape was born and cemented. It now exists separately from its surroundings and has an identity of its own, alien to any notion of belonging to the city – and in turn the city resists including

it, obeying an inherited logic of Europe as a territory where all that is different or in any way will be segregated. In the video, in a dialogue between two men on a stage in Mira Loures, that felling of loss, of common ground not found, is given voice.

“Is Europe like this?”

“I don’t think so. But I don’t know Europe. Never been there. I only know what she says.”

“What does she say?”

“Don’t let them in. Keep them out. Look down over there, to the left of the city. That’s where the wail comes from. Look. Listen.”

What we see is not a film set, but a concrete stage built especially for the community, for their cultural activities and events. Finally, never used for its intended purpose, it became yet another ruin – except unlike those other ruins, the ancient forts defending the capital, this stage, a contemporary ruin, has never served the community.

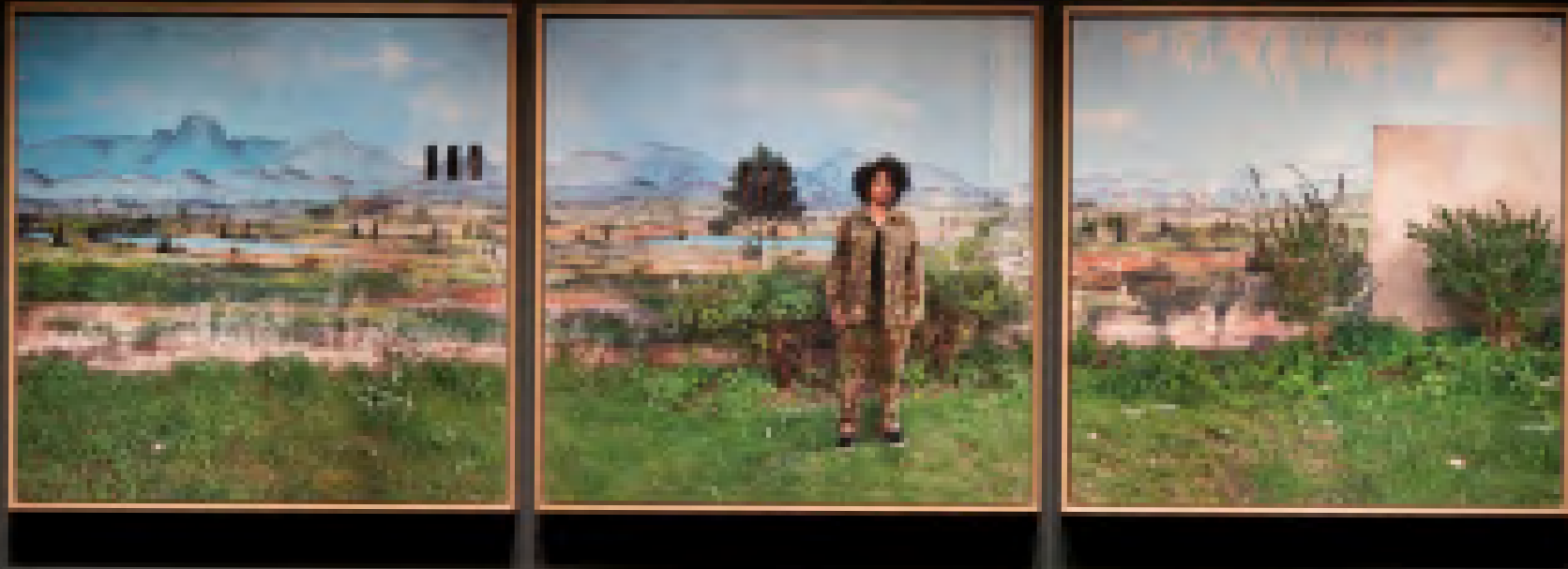
With this piece, Mónica Miranda set out to register a memory of an interrupted, fragmented, paradoxical geographical line, a memory that lives on in the Kimbundu dialect, in its words and chants such as the “Humbi Humbi”, a hymn to freedom that is sung while looking the city from afar. It contrasts with the idea of memory as a historical construct, as a political act. It’s not the narrative of a Portuguese Overseas as told in books on the Portuguese Colonial Empire, which the twin sisters diligently go over page after page, revisiting history – an act of freedom performed at the border of Lisbon, the city they won’t enter.



South Circular, 2019
Exhibition view
MAAT, Lisbon, Portugal



Military Road, 2019
Laser cut on wood, pins
(Top portion) 90 x 120 cm (bottom portion) 20 x 90 cm



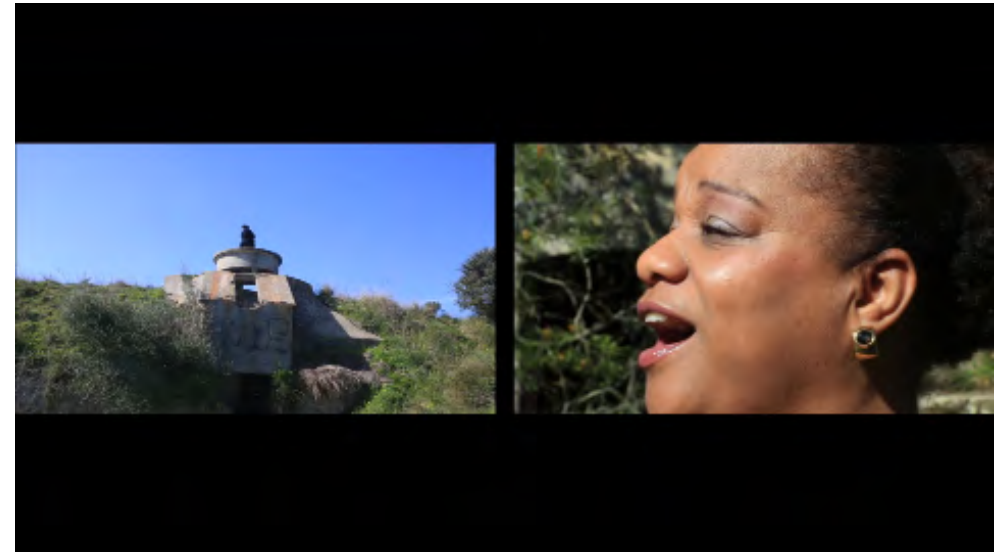
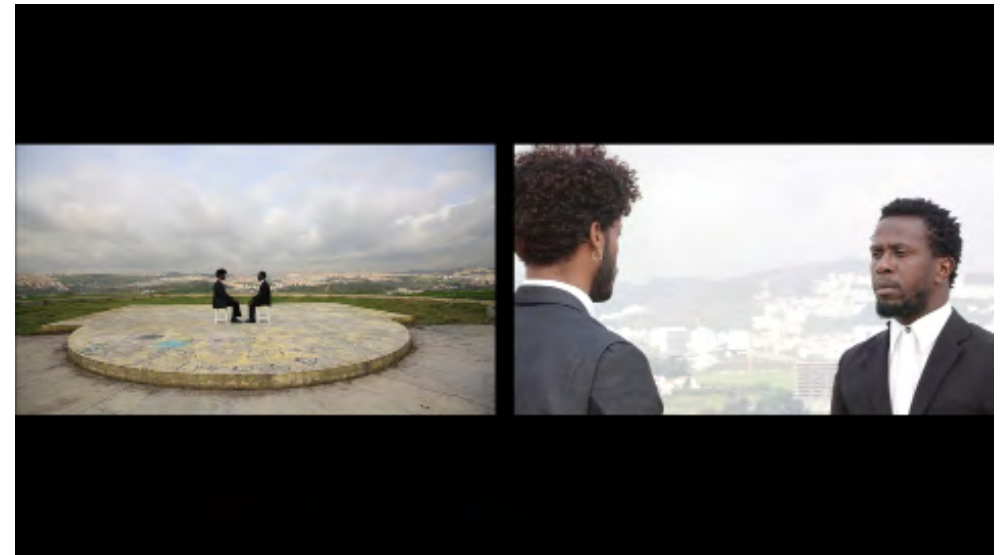
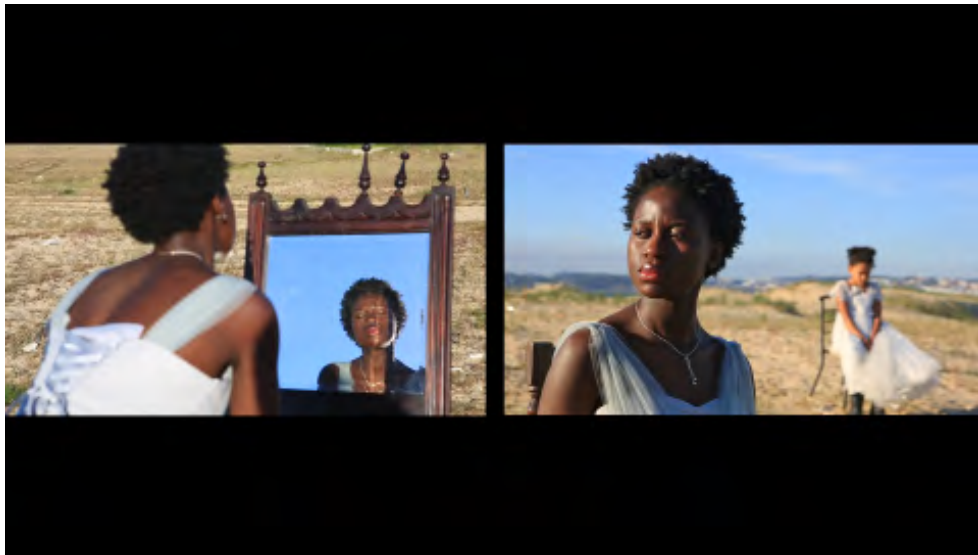
6 de Maio, 2019
Inkjet print on cotton paper
80 x 240cm



Black Knight, 2019
Inkjet print on cotton paper
80 x 240cm



Reading Circles, 2019
Inkjet print on cotton paper, triptic
80 x 240 cm



South Circular, 2019
Hd video and sound, 22'57"
Doublesplit screen
Film stills
MAAT | New artist edp Prize

TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY

2018



TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY

| 2017

by Cristiana Tejo (curator)

Tomorrow is another day (2018), is an expression that points from a present place to the future with an expectant eye on the memories and heritages of the past. It highlights the flaws and absences of history and politics and reimagines a more grounded and hopeful tomorrow. The title of the exhibition also refers to the desire to make architecture that breaks down hierarchical structures in the post-independence moment on the African continent. In which architecture acquired the capacity to awaken utopias and represented a commitment to democracy, social freedom and producing new spaces of existence. It is therefore, an attempt to reflect on the reconciliation between what already exists and what has never been. It reflects on new realities, between the old and the new, between memory, history, dystopia and ideological utopia.

The series is made up of photo and video series developed by artist Mónica de Miranda. In a first photographic installation, Babel Tower (2018), the stage for artistic intervention is the Tour de l'Échangeur, a tower in Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which was once one of the tallest in Africa at the time of its construction (1970-1974). It was designed by Franco-Tunisian architect Olivier-Clément Cacoub at the request of dictator Mobutu as a tribute to Patrice Emery Lumumba, the leading leader in the struggle against Belgian colonial domination. The

shape is a mixture of architectural linear structures that are reminiscent of a skyscraper, or pyramid, which seems to express a desire for power. Cacoub was also responsible for Gbadolite, considered by many to be the Versailles of the Congo, as well as many other projects in French-speaking Africa before, during and after the independence wars. The tower was not completed for several decades, until recently when it reached completion by Chinese architects.

Monuments are erected to fix symbols, to enhance the memory of events and for characters that made history from the perspective of power. They are made in a solid way to convey the immutability of glory and to make these narratives last for generations. Buildings are also monuments erected to embody worldviews and to organize our way of being and apprehending time and space. This new series of works by Mónica de Miranda suggests another category: the body-monument. Developed in Kinshasa and Maputo, the works build on heritage built before and after the wars of independence to signal the appropriation and resignification of power dogmas and canons of beauty and Hellenistic aesthetics through the presence and protagonism of the black woman. Absent from the history books and official narratives, their constant presence in the works presented here becomes a monument body. The twins also reflect the representation of duality and otherness in a game of similarities and differences in natural and architectural environments, where ruin and resilience project us into a terrain of social reinvention.

Dramaturgy and representation have been used in many theories of the humanities as an instrument of analysis and social transformation, such as Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed (1971). This is due to how they powerfully spell out the elements that make up the dynamics of society. I borrow this theater-based observation lens to read the work Beauty (2018), the centerpiece of this series, which has the collaboration of artist Chullage in the construction of sound. Firstly, the installation brings in its composition elements that leads us to the dramatic art: the curtains, the structure, the backstage. Secondly, because as we enter this installation and look into the mirror contained therein, we are thrown

into the video as participating agents. We could think of this as a kind of decolonial theater with its own dramaturgy, characters, social actors and narratives, in which the dynamics that animated the relationships that are perpetuated in contemporary times with references to the past and the construction of the present. When the philosophy of aesthetics are explained in relation to the city, we must collectively question who we are in this structure.

The Still Life (2018) photographic series presents sculpture learning spaces at Kinshasa Fine Arts School, one of the oldest in Africa. Classical models are present in replicas of Greco-Roman statues as well as detailed anatomical drawings and annotations on the board. At the same time, we observe the translation and transgression of these codes and techniques for sculptures with African features.

The work ends with the photograph You can cut all the flowers but you can't keep spring from coming (2018), its title taken from Pablo Neruda's famous phrase that has inspired decades of resistance movements against dictatorships and fascism, newly awakened in the Americas and in Europe. These words were sung in the march of the women.



Beauty, 2018
Installation view
Carlos Carvalho | Arte contemporanea



Twist, (2018)
Inkjet print
53 x 80 cm



Born Together (from the series Twins), 2018

Inkjet print
80 x 200 cm



**You can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep
spring from coming**, 2018
Inkjet print with embroidery
62,5 x 50 cm



Babel tower, 2018
Inkjet print
190 x 150 cm



Beauty, 2018
Hd vídeo, Sound, 6''
Film stills

ATLANTIC

2017



ATLANTIC

| 2017

Of Becoming (and of Death)

by João Silvério (curator)

The work of Mónica de Miranda can be understood as an agent that continually reconnects artistic processes with the transitory condition of the spectator. Regardless of the themes that she investigates, or of socio-political reflections that strap in her identity a real and emotional sense with the place and history of those who inhabit it, her works contain part of her self-referential experience but not always autobiographical, because it is not a testimony of the journey but of someone who recognizes herself in the transition and in the territorial change.

This change, or this logic of circulation, lies not only in the fact that she has lived in several countries and known different cultures, but essentially in the way she interprets the temporal relations and the memory of these experiences, that contribute to the construction of meta-narratives which are articulated under a line/time; as an information flow that integrates seemingly diverse places and temporalities. This abstract line locates places that intersect at different moments of time, and in the specific case of her work they are not reduced to a linear determination of the past, but rather to recognize the temporal correlation that allows an active relationship of the subject over the present.

In this series, "Atlantic - Journey to the center of the earth" is an

exemplary example of her workprocess for two main reasons. The first is present in the title in which we can infer two apparently contradictory planes, the first being the word that determines an immense and mutant geographic mass that is the Atlantic Ocean; and the second is the Journey to the Center of the Earth, a reference to Julius Verne's utopian work that is close to her. However, the placement of the hyphen amplifies this transitory possibility which, although present in her work, is an aggregating element that expresses the multiplicity of senses in the reception of the same by the viewer, having as a structuring line the reference to two substances: water and earth which are opposed in their constitution.

The second reason that leads me to this brief reflection is the duality between the ocean and the earth, a physical but simultaneously immaterial differentiation, an imaginary that goes back to the beginnings of humanity, and for this same reason metaphysic: between fluidity and solidity. It is riven by the need to know what is hidden beneath the earth which naturally supports the ocean and breathes in the volcanic mouths of the Atlantic islands of the Macaronézia, such as the Azores or, in this case in particular, the Cape Verde archipelago, specifically in Ilha do Fogo (Island of Fire).



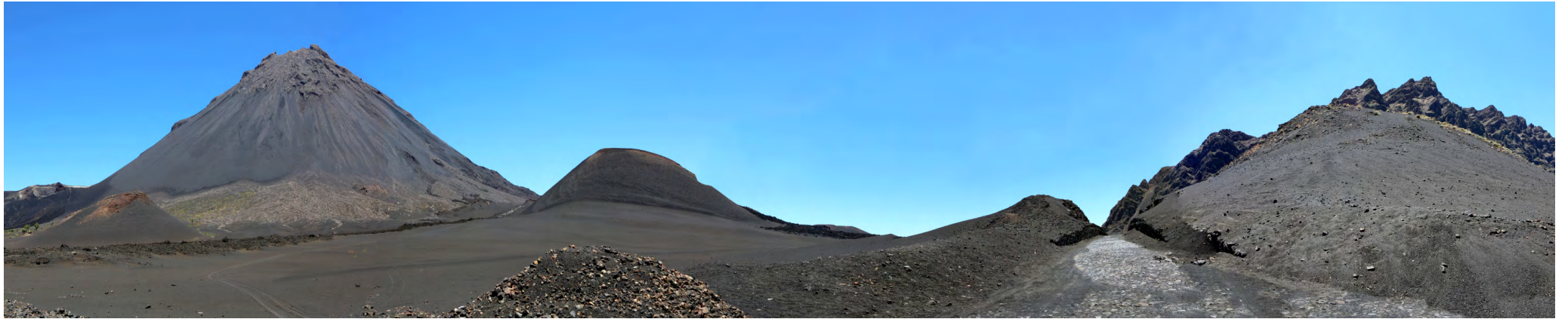
Untitled (city scapes series), 2017
Inkjet print on cotton paper
70 x 105 cm



Horizon, 2017
Photographic installation, diptic
90 x 201 cm



Formation, 2017
Photographic installation, diptic
88,3 x 204 cm



Vulcano, 2017
Inkjet print on cotton paper, 4 parts
280 x 420 cm



Fogo (Fieldtrip series), 2017
Inkjet print, wood, vulcanic sand
30 photos, 20 x 28 cm (each)

PANORAMA

2017



PANORAMA

| 2017

Panorama: dormant ghosts

by Paula Nascimento

No conversation or reflection on the history of architecture and urbanism in Angola can avoid considering the Portuguese colonial project and its impact on the formation of Angola's cities.

Whilst any city is the result of an articulation of time - past, present and future - and is, as such, an object consisting of many identities and experiences, this interaction does not always occur pacifically.

The history of Angola's cities is, as Isabel Castro Henriques notes, "the expression of a process of colonial domination, materialized in the urban space and its buildings, as well as in its social hierarchies, subject to the rhythms of history, economics, and politics". Urbanization was one of the principal political activities of the Portuguese Estado-Novo regime, allowing for and legitimising architectural and urban production and resulting, in Angola, in constructions that expressed a particular tropical language, rooted in the architectural principles of modernism and adapted to the location, geography and local climate.

This Tropical-Modernist architectural legacy is in no way representative of the principles of Estado-Novo colonialism, and in fact served as the basis for a rupture from which a new narrative emerged, of an egalitarian and democratic society - one that never really existed on the ground. In Angola, not only did the urban plan lead to the erasure of existing places and the imposition of new social ideals,

but the modernist utopia of freedom was also largely a failure.

2

The post-independence period saw the emergence of different styles of building that reflected new Marxist political ideologies, as well as apartment buildings constructed by Russians and Cubans, among others.

After the end of the civil war, Angola experienced an economic boom, the result of rising oil prices, and the emergence of a capitalist economic model. These changes led to a flurry of new building under the banner of national reconstruction, including vast housing and infrastructure projects, as well as the appearance of large-scale, private real-estate ventures.

The speed and scale of new real-estate and infrastructure projects in Angolan cities is proportional to the state of abandon of the historical architectural legacy. Efforts to preserve and restore old buildings have been largely ineffective, not only due to their technical complexities but also to the perceived lack of political and economic incentives, as well as the impossibility of disassociating this built heritage from its historical context.

Restoration, here, means not only recovering the built forms, but also looking critically at history in order to establish a dialectic between past and future, drawing links between the built forms and their new occupants so as to create new memories.

Although built heritage is often discussed, these concepts have been side-lined by commercial interests and because of their conflicted relationship with history - if this architectural legacy represents a past from which we want to distance ourselves ever-more, then the skyscrapers and urban projects emerging now are the simulation of a "New Angola", brimming with a subtle desire to erase history and memory.

3

The remnants of different political, economic and social actors that become visible and material in the morphology of cities is what makes them unique; furthermore, it is in these spaces that (new,) ever-more distinct and singular identities are formed, as the memories of different social groups come into play.

It is this geography of tension between a past that is present and a present that is uncertain, full of the spatial-temporal contradictions typical of trans-historical (post-colonial) locations, that serves as the starting point for Panorama, Mónica de Miranda's post-archival research project, which explores the links (past and present) between colonial and post-colonial memory. Working in, and on various different media - photography, video and installation - the artist, whose academic and artistic trajectory has navigated themes such as urban archaeology and personal geography, traces a critical process of historical deconstruction and (re)construction of the Angolan collective memory.

Panorama is both the title of the project and the name of an iconic hotel constructed in the 1970s on the Ilha de Luanda peninsula, with panoramic views over the city bay and the sea. Once one of the most emblematic and charming hotels in Luanda, it has been long since closed down and abandoned. Hotels bear the symbology of the journey and of diasporic transit, and are one of the reoccurring architectural elements in the artist's work. In Hotel Globo (2015) the building almost seems to constitute a resistance to the rapid changes occurring around it; whilst the Panorama is the materialization of decadence, a shipwreck resigned to its fate.

The duality between past and present (and future), permeates the project entirely, as is evident in other works such as Fall (Queda) or Angolan Home (Casa Angolana). The first is a direct allusion to the fall of empire and to the environment to which we are transported; the Kalandula waterfalls. Here, an old, colonial-era guesthouse is engulfed by nature. The landscape remains intact and absorbs the "foreign" architecture.

The second refers to the phrase "Portuguese Home", echoing both the search for an original, Portuguese identity, and the debate about political, cultural and artistic identity. Here, we are confronted with an idea of an Angolan home, completely preserved, yet which does not conform entirely to type: this Angolan Home is a modern house, a reflection on the debate about the origin and authenticity of this architecture. The wax effect applied to the images lends them a sense of the eternal, a reference to the importance of preserving

physical objects and, as such, collective memory.

The inclusion of figures such as the twins who appear in Karl Marx and When words escape, flowers speak, amplifies the significance of identity: the double-identity of twins can be confusing and overlap - but they are, nonetheless, distinct and individual. The fictionalization of history with micro-narratives adds temporal dimensions which refer not only to the colonial past, but also to Angola's more recent history; and to its future.

Panorama is not urban archaeology, nor is it simply a meditation on the presence of the colonial past in a post-colonial context; or on individual, versus collective memory. The images are not only a record, but exist on a frontier which allows for a wider reflection on individual and collective strategies of identity formation which, as advanced by Homi K. Bhabha: "initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation in the act of defining the idea of society itself".

By underlining the way in which the empire acquired a material form in the everyday urban context, permeating and conditioning the collective imaginary, Panorama reveals dormant ghosts, conjured up by the acceleration of time and space. It reminds us of the need for different interpretations of the reality surrounding us, of the importance of considering and, as such, not forgetting that which is produced in the articulation of cultural differences - moments of confrontation that play a crucial role in the construction of the cultural identity of the country.



Hotel Panorama, 2017
Inkjet print in fine art paper
81 x 324 cm, 20 x 28 cm



Ticket Office (Cinema Karl Marx series), 2017
Inkjet print
60 x 90 cm



Tombé (Ballerina Series), 2018
Inkjet print on cotton paper
40 x 60 cm



Twins (Cinema Karl Marx series), 2017
Inkjet print
60 x 90 cm, 33 x 50 cm



When words escape, flowers speak, (Twins series), 2017

Inkjet print
170 x 234 cm



Angolan House, 2017
Inkjet print on fine art paper
33 x 50 cm



Video Stills, 2018
Dó
HD video, 9'
Doublesplit screen installation
Film stills

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