



matheus  
rocha pitta





Helio Oiticica's Ready Constructible, 1978

**CIRCULAR** is a sculpture made for the exhibition *Travessias*, the inaugural group show in Bela Maré, a former warehouse that has become Complexo da Maré's – one of Rio de Janeiro's largest slums – first cultural center. The sculpture is a rented bus in which the seats have been occupied by stacks of materials used in building (bricks, cement, tiles, etc), all bought in local stores. These stacks are a reference to Helio Oiticica's maquettes with no scale (the *READY CONSTRUCTIBLE* sculpture), i.e, maquettes that hold no analogic reference to any specific building. The bus has become a container and a display of construction sites or buildings and has had its functionality – to distribute workforce around the city – reversed: a "city" is now being distributed by it. The city is reduced to commodities – and the citizen, to pure workforce.













**Circular**, rented bus, construction materials, variable dimensions, 2011



**Figure of Conversion # 1 (sergio/sainsbury's)**  
3 framed photographs, carpet, clothes, supermarket products  
120 x 80 cm (carpet) 60 x 90 cm (big photo)  
20 x 30 cm (small photos)  
2011





**Figure of Conversion # 2 (joana/dia)**

3 framed photographs, carpet, dress, supermarket products  
120 x 80 cm (carpet) 60 x 90 cm (big photo)  
20 x 30 cm (small photos)  
2011



**Figure of Conversion # 3 (celau/casino)**

3 framed photographs, carpet, clothes, supermarket products  
120 x 80 cm (carpet) 60 x 90 cm (big photo)  
20 x 30 cm (small photos)  
2011





**Figure of Conversion # 4 (bob/monoprix)**

3 framed photographs, carpet, dress, supermarket products  
120 x 80 cm (carpet) 60 x 90 cm (big photo)  
20 x 30 cm (small photos)  
2011



installation view at Rendez-Vous 11, Institut D'Art Contemporain, Lyon, France. On the foreground rack with B.O. stacks



## “The Big Change” provisional sketch

(please note that this is a diagrammatical sketch, measures can change, but the relation of the elements (catalog display, sales counter and storage) must remain the same. The location of it should be close to the viewers facilities (like cloakroom, lounge, cafe, etc).

### Troco Grande ( Big Change)

installation project for an art fair  
wood, shelves, coins, sales counter, catalogue  
variable dimensions  
2011

The Big Change interrogates the value of art and money, by attempting to establish an absolute equivalence between them. The project consists of the reproduction in small scale of an Argos Store, with its 3 main elements: a catalogue, sales desks and storage facility. However the product to be sold is

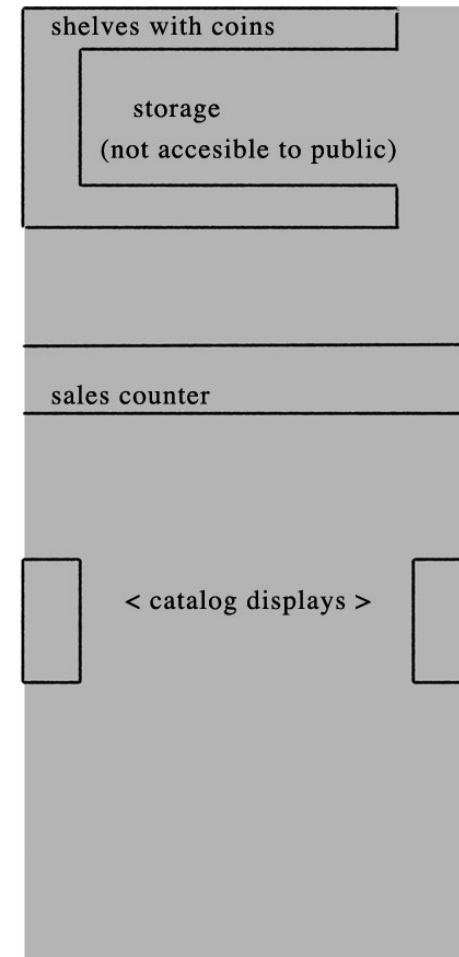
money itself: residual coins bought from people whom usually neglect small change because of its low value.

Viewers will be able to choose the quantity of change they want to acquire from the catalogue. The price is the exact face value of the coins: money changed for money.

the catalog:

it presents photographs of the coins “collected” or bought during the artist residency.

each lot is numbered and viewers can choose them to buy, or better, to change. It is the only material remaining of the piece after the art fair closes.



the storage:

coins will be packed in simple, transparent plastic bags. They will be stored and only the sales man (or woman) have acces to it. A limited number of “lots” will be available daily, so the piece can function during all days of the art fair. The money that viewers uses to buy change is the same that the artist used to buy it from their former owners, therefore no profits or deficit.



two hipotetical spreads of the catalogue piece for Big Change



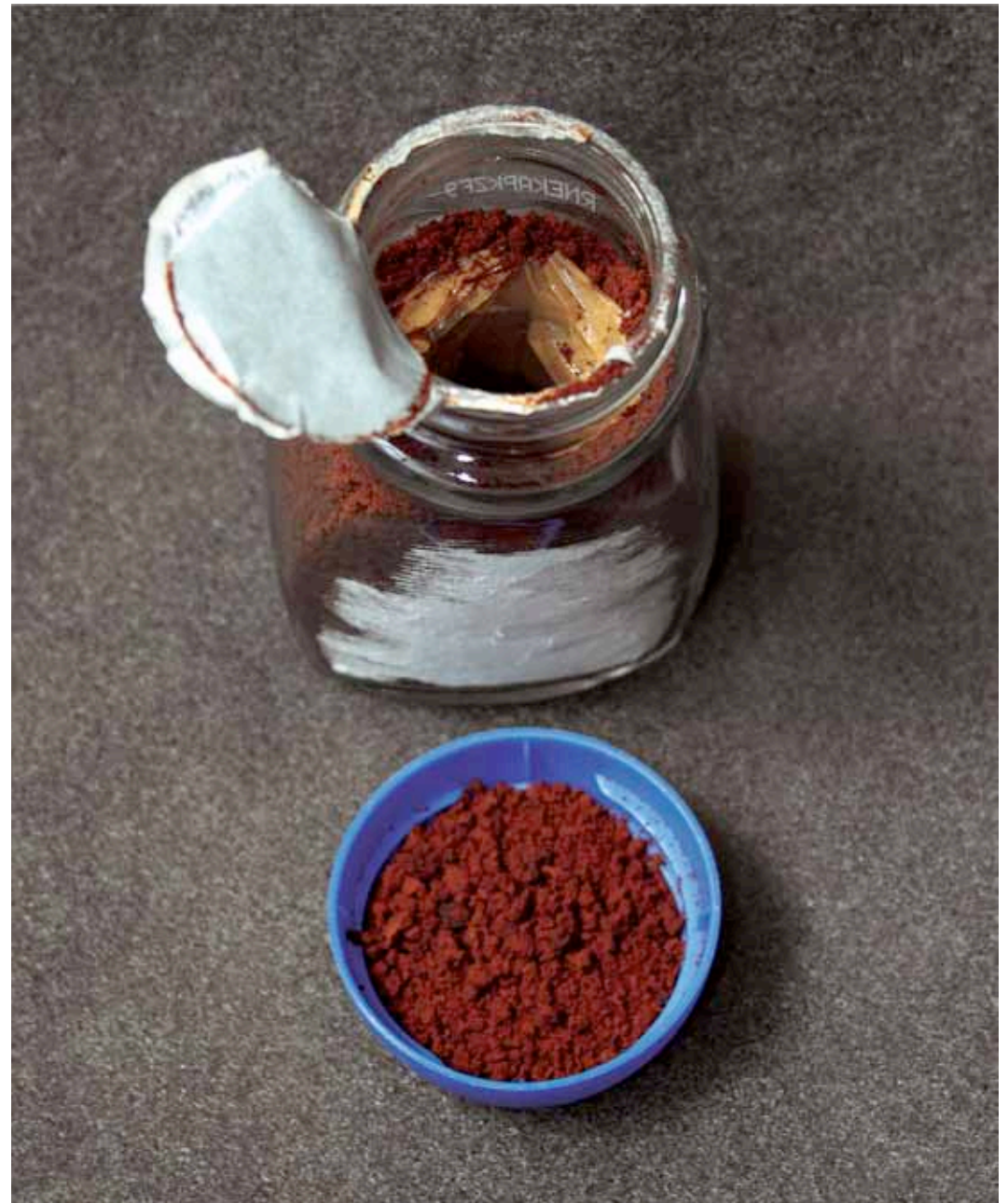
**B.O.**  
(offers bulletin)  
folder  
28 pages, 24 x 30 cm  
7000 copies, free distribution  
2010

B.O. is the abbreviation of Boletim de Ocorrência, the document that Brazilian police office provides as a proof or register of crimes or accidents.

This reference here is crossed with supermarket advertising, the most simple form of product photography.

The 28 page folder shows 27 quotidian products with false bottoms inside of them. This “sculptural” procedure is commonly used to traffic illegal goods without public awareness. However, in B.O. these illegal products are absent, only a void – that potentially could contain them – is seen.

This piece was the recipient of the *XI Funarte Marc Ferrez Photography Award, Rio de Janeiro, 2010.*





spreads of B.O.





spreads of B.O.

### **Gallery of Values**

This exhibition was held in Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, the former headquarter of Brazil's oldest bank, which became a cultural center in 1980. The only permanent exhibition there is a collection of money, called Gallery of Values.

An homonymous exhibition was made, gathering works where the relation of image and value is never stable.

**Titles**  
empty film canisters, adhesive tape  
variable dimensions  
2007







Exhibition views with **Jazida (divisória)**, [steel shelves, film canisters, neoprene, 210 x 480 x 84 cm, 2007]



**Oratory**

television cabinet, cement, newspaper clips, lamp  
40 x 40 x 60 cm, 2010

A collection of newspaper clips showing pictures from the police of seized money is pasted into the walls of a maquette of a cave, built inside a tv cabinet.





Exhibition views with **Jazida** (divisória), **Oratory** and **Fish Eye**



**Fish Eye**

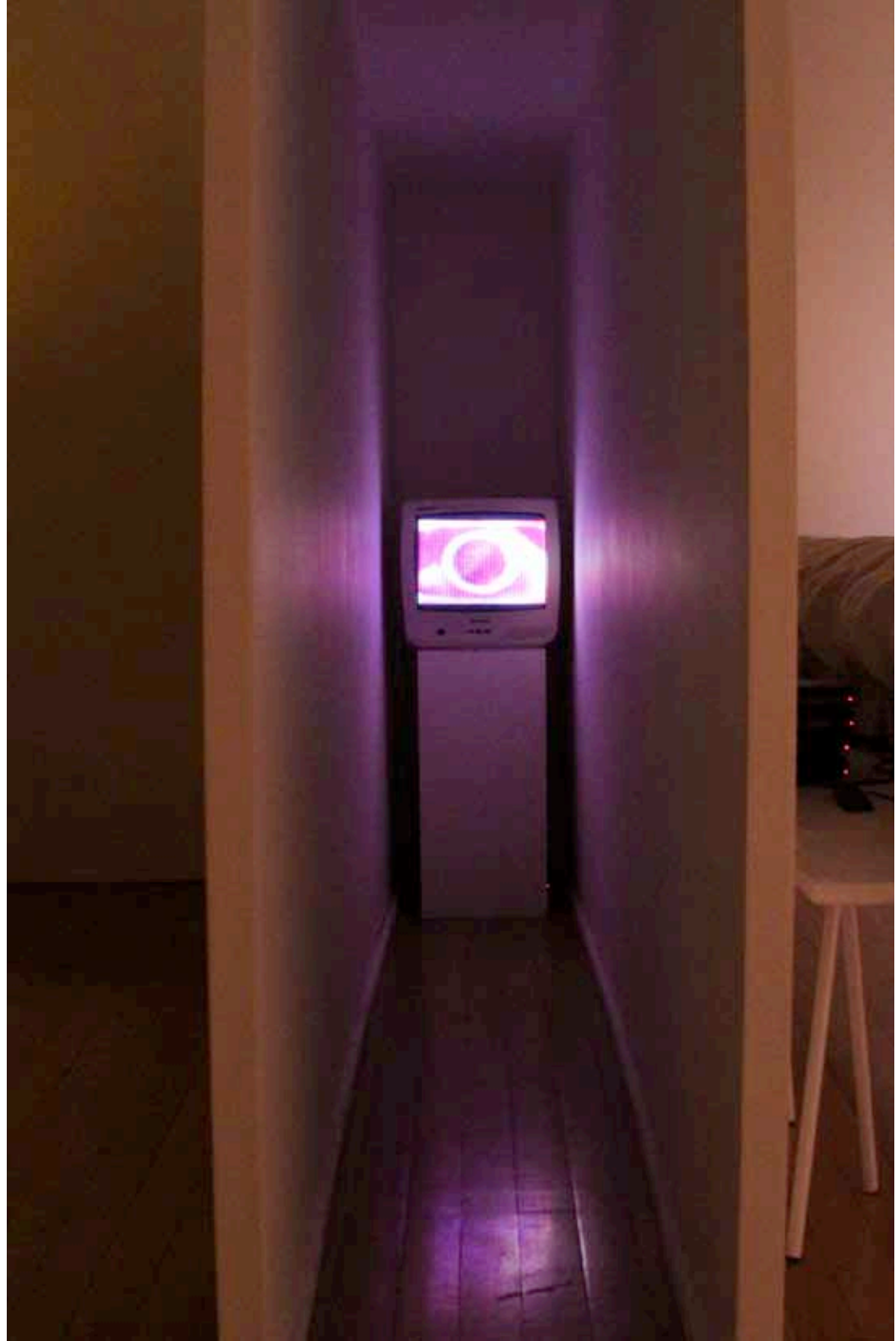
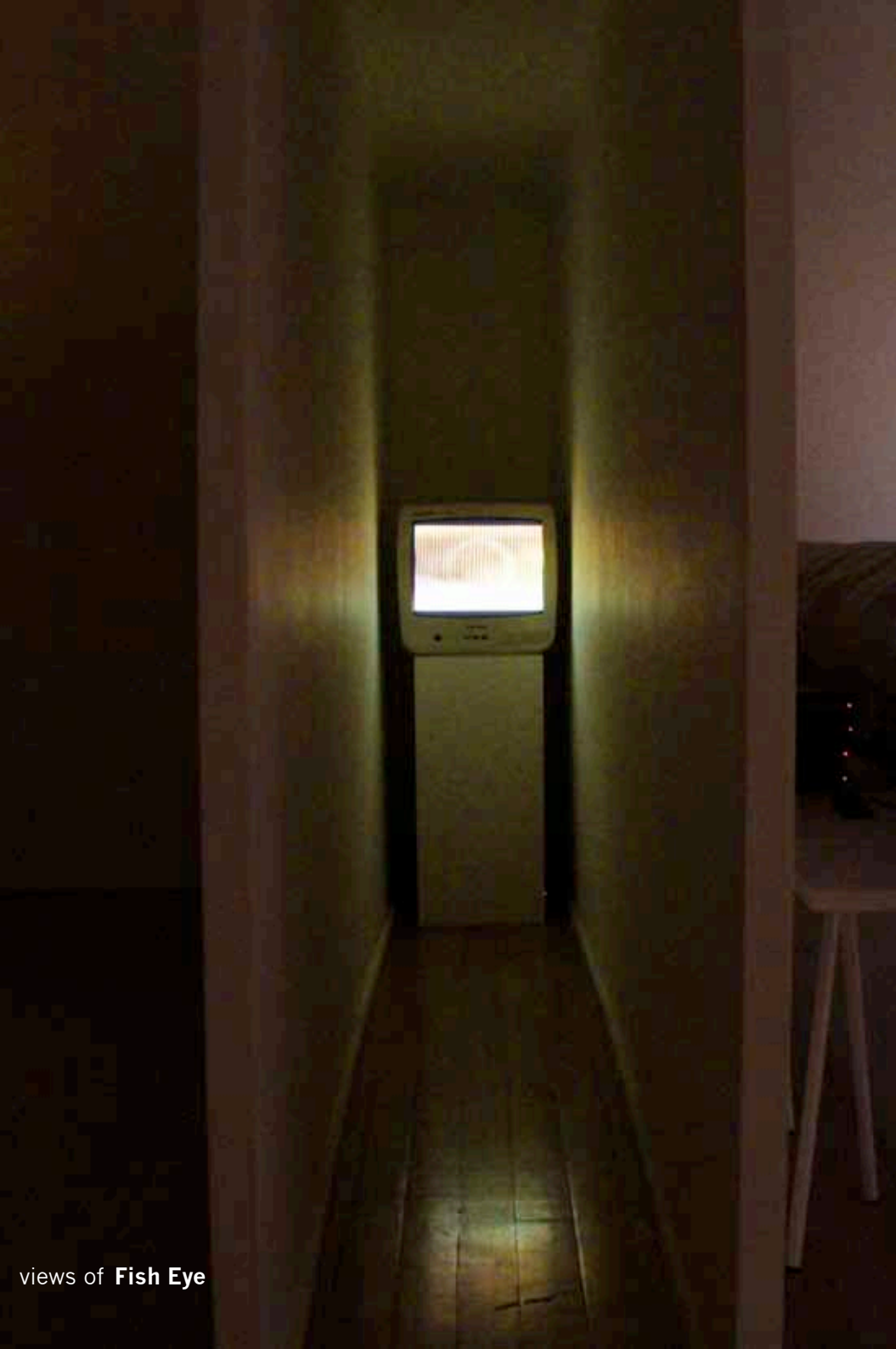
253 digital photographs animated in flash  
(34 min), wood, monitor, dvd player

400 x 210 x 70 cm

2009

*Rede Globo's (main brazilian tv channel) watermark  
is shooted and animated. A highly seductive image is  
formed, but also disturbing once that after a few min-  
utes watching it, viewers perceive this logo is marked  
in his or hers own retinae.*

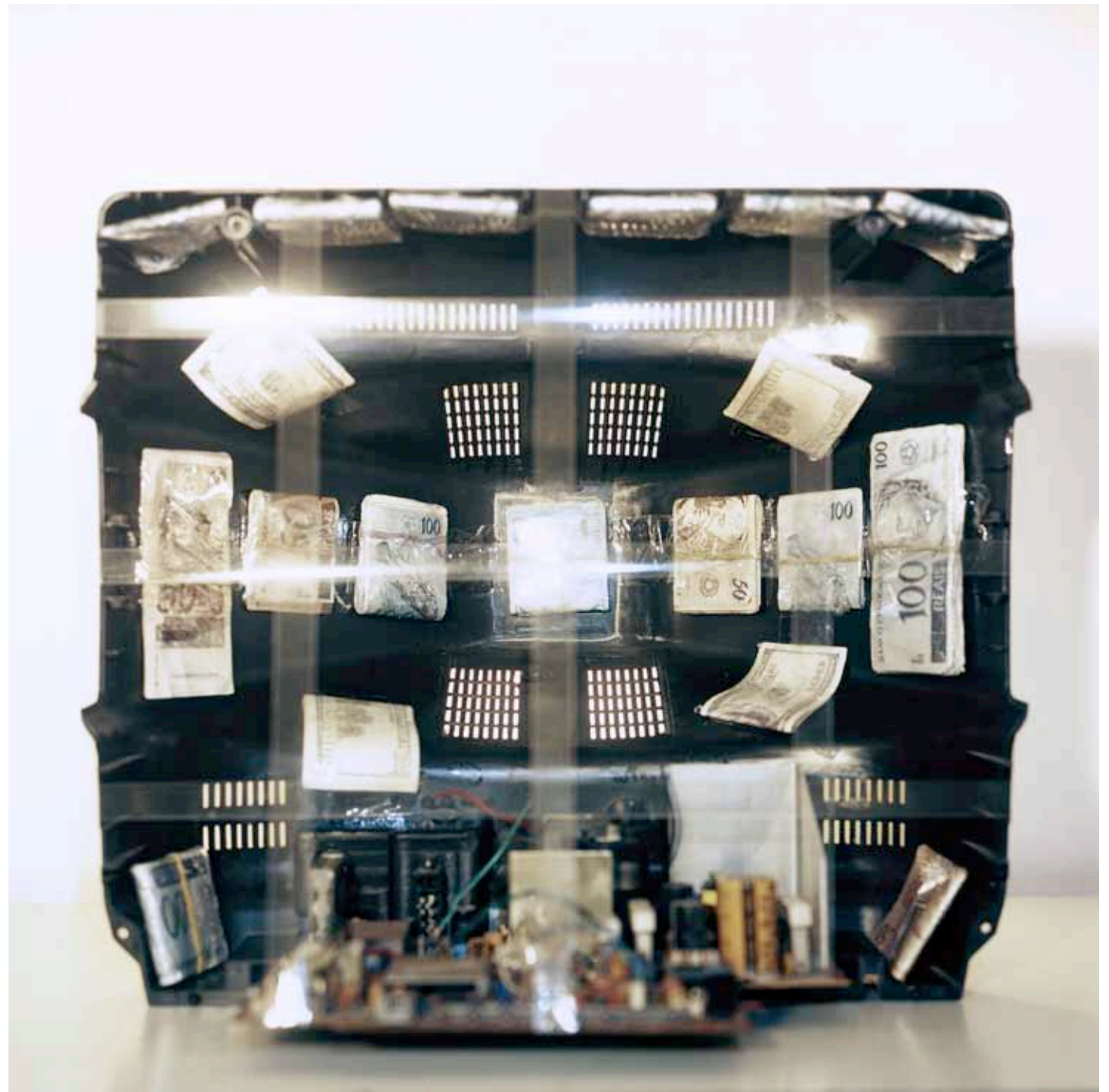




views of **Fish Eye**

**Channel # 1**  
photography 90 x 90 cm  
2010

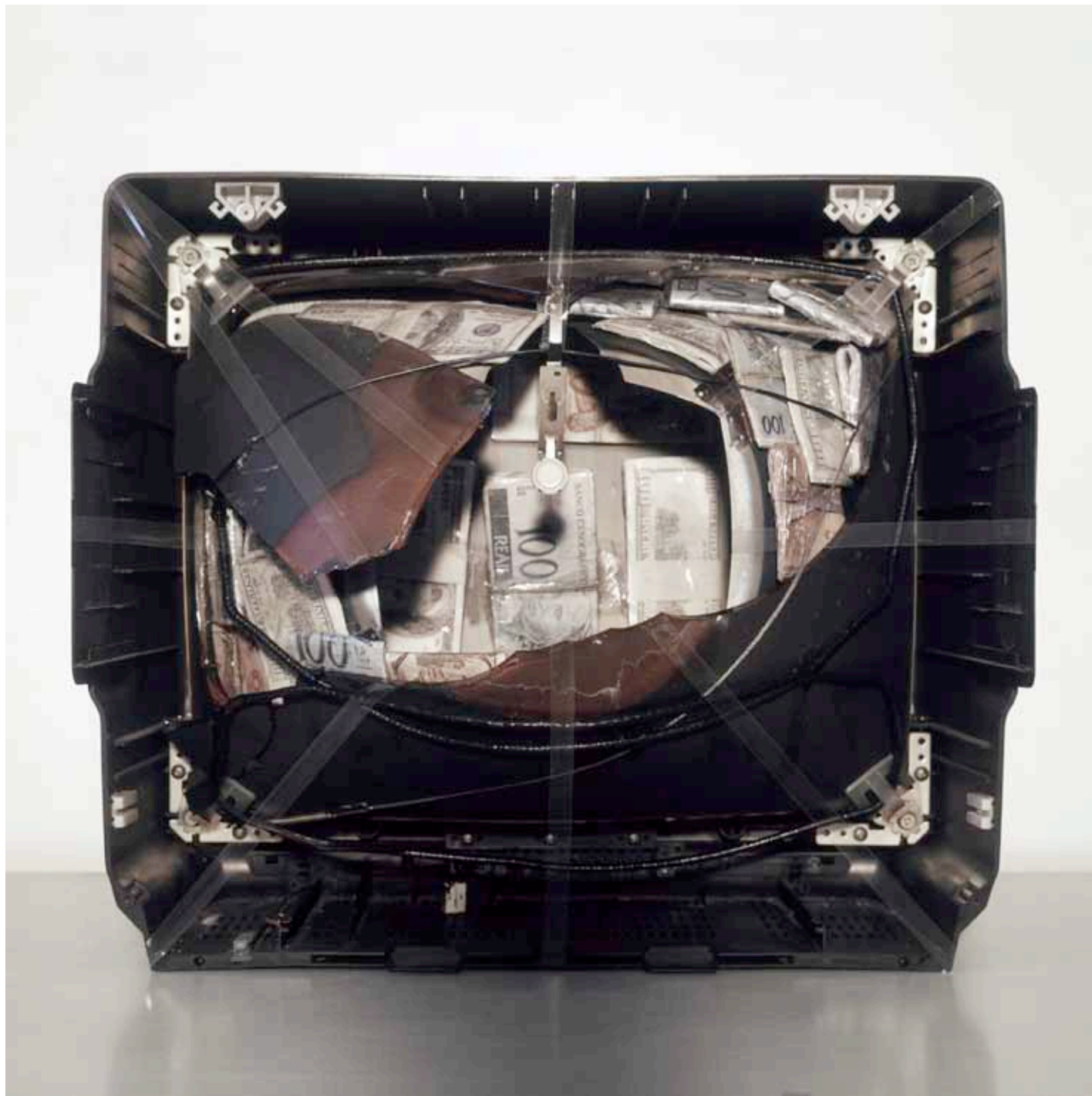
Six fake bottoms are sculpted in a tv monitor. Each photograph is a "slice" or a fake bottom of this television filled with hidden money.





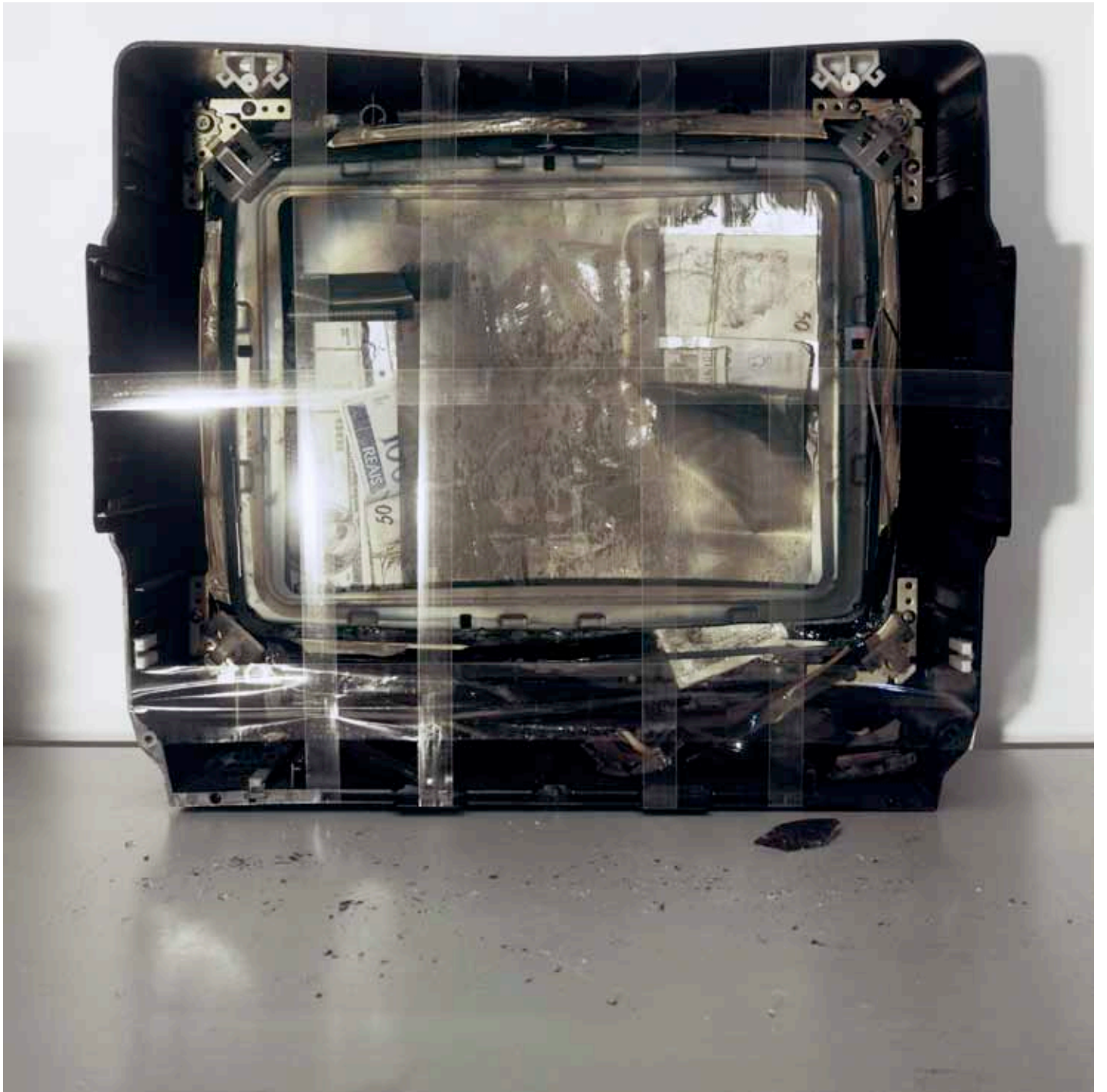


**Channel # 2**  
photography 90 x 90 cm 2010



**Channel # 3**  
photography 90 x 90 cm 2010





**Channel # 4**  
photography 90 x 90 cm 2010



**Channel # 5**  
photography 90 x 90 cm 2010





**Channel # 6**  
photography 90 x 90 cm 2010



Exhibition views with **Real Funds** and the series of photographs **Channels**





**Real Funds**

7 security monitors, 7 dvd players, 7 ntsc videos, 6 minutes each, wood table 380 x 80 x 70 cm / 2008-2009

*Each one of the seven Real bills has its details filmed (the very ones whose sum confers value to the bill) and showed in a security monitor.*



exhibition view with **Real Funds, False Bottom # 1 (fountain)** and **Channel # 1**



detail with stairs of **False Bottom # 1 (fountain)**



**Fake Bottom # 1 (Fountain)**

Digital Prints, styrofoam, adhesive tape, wood, cement, bricks, water  
520 x 700 x 80 cm / 2010

*A gallery wall is duplicated, forming a fake bottom where piles of false money serves as stairs to a wishing well.*





exhibition map





still of **Provisional Heritage**, Full HD video, 7'47", 2010

**Provisional Heritage** is the result of the artist's incursion into a warehouse in London, UK, a couple of weeks before its demolition. With the materials there available, Matheus has made sculptural actions, registered in photos and in a video. However, this documental register is betrayed by a certain advertising aesthetics, applied to old objects and products out of circulation. The project's title refers to a certain value that might be used but only provisionally, once it can't be exchanged. Such values or products (tomato soup and coffee in cans, tires..) are "consumed" before the site demolition finally erases them from our memory. Nevertheless, the meaning of Heritage can also be understood as a set of artistic procedures sampled from other artists (Robert Rauschenberg, Hélio Oiticica, Gordon Matta-Clark, Andy Warhol, Allan Kaprow, Artur Barrio, etc), that by an urgent situation are actualized. This work was commissioned by the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo.





untitled (london map), photography, 60 x 90 cm, 2010





installation view



untitled, photography, 50 x 70 cm, 2010





detail of **Overtured Tires**, 13 photographs displayed in a line, 20 x 30 cm each, 2010



installation view at 29th Sao Paulo Biennial, 2010





hot shots, 4 photographs, 100 x 140 cm, 2010













detail of **Fountains**, 24 photographs displayed in a line, 18 x 24 cm each, 2010



installation views

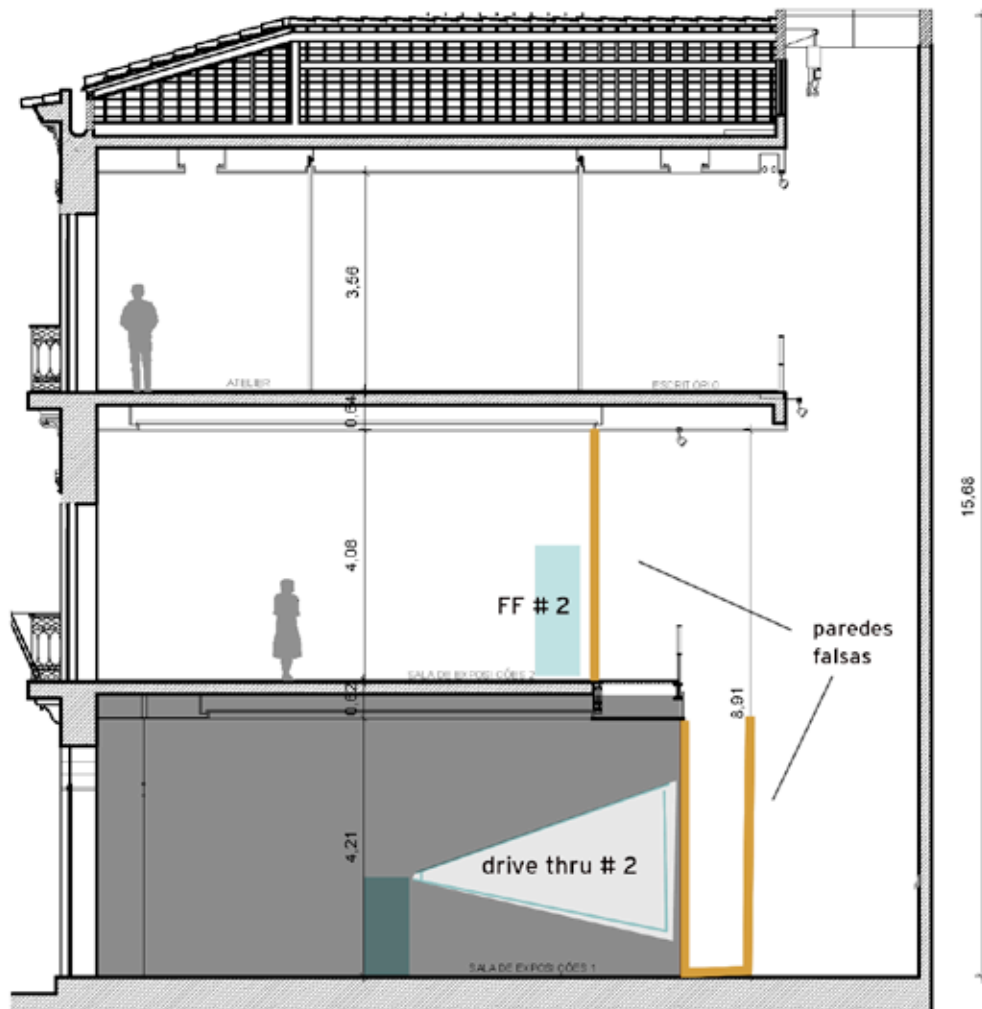


**False Bottom # 2**

excavated fridge, wood, white paint  
variable dimensions  
2010

The exhibition FF#2 aimed to create a false bottom in the rio de janeiro gallery Progetti (please see plant in following pages). The stores of the building were designed as mezzanines, leaving the bottom a 15 meters empty height from ground to ceiling. Two wood walls were built to isolate this opening, creating a partition in the gallery. In ground floor, a wall function as a screen for the video Drive Thru # 2. Viewers only realize the intervention in the second floor, where they have to cross a secret passage (that happens to be a fridge) to finally arrive at the white gallery space.





exhibition plan



**Untitled**  
 fridge, cement, newspaper clips, lamps  
 150 x 70 x 60 cm, 2010



entrance to 1st floor

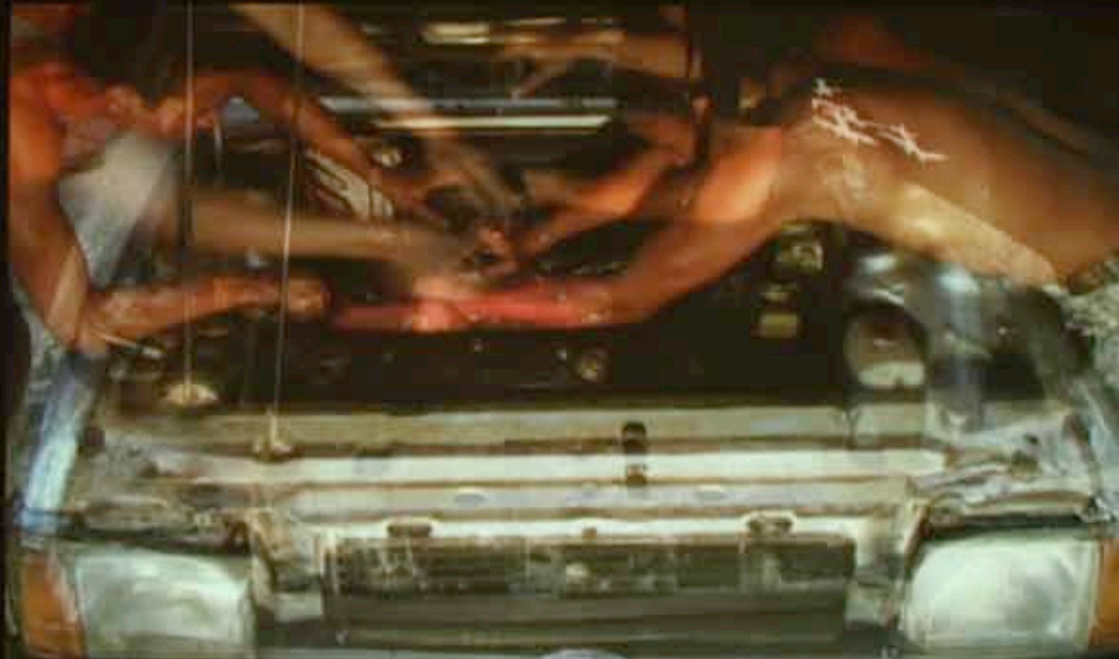


passage to gallery

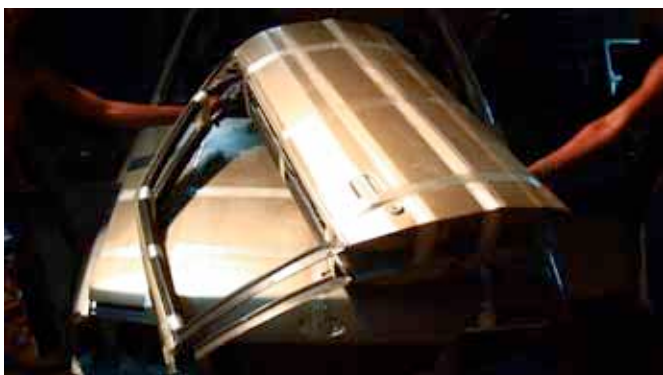
pieces of the disassembled cars (please see drive thru # 2, following pages), stored in false wall, seen from the first floor







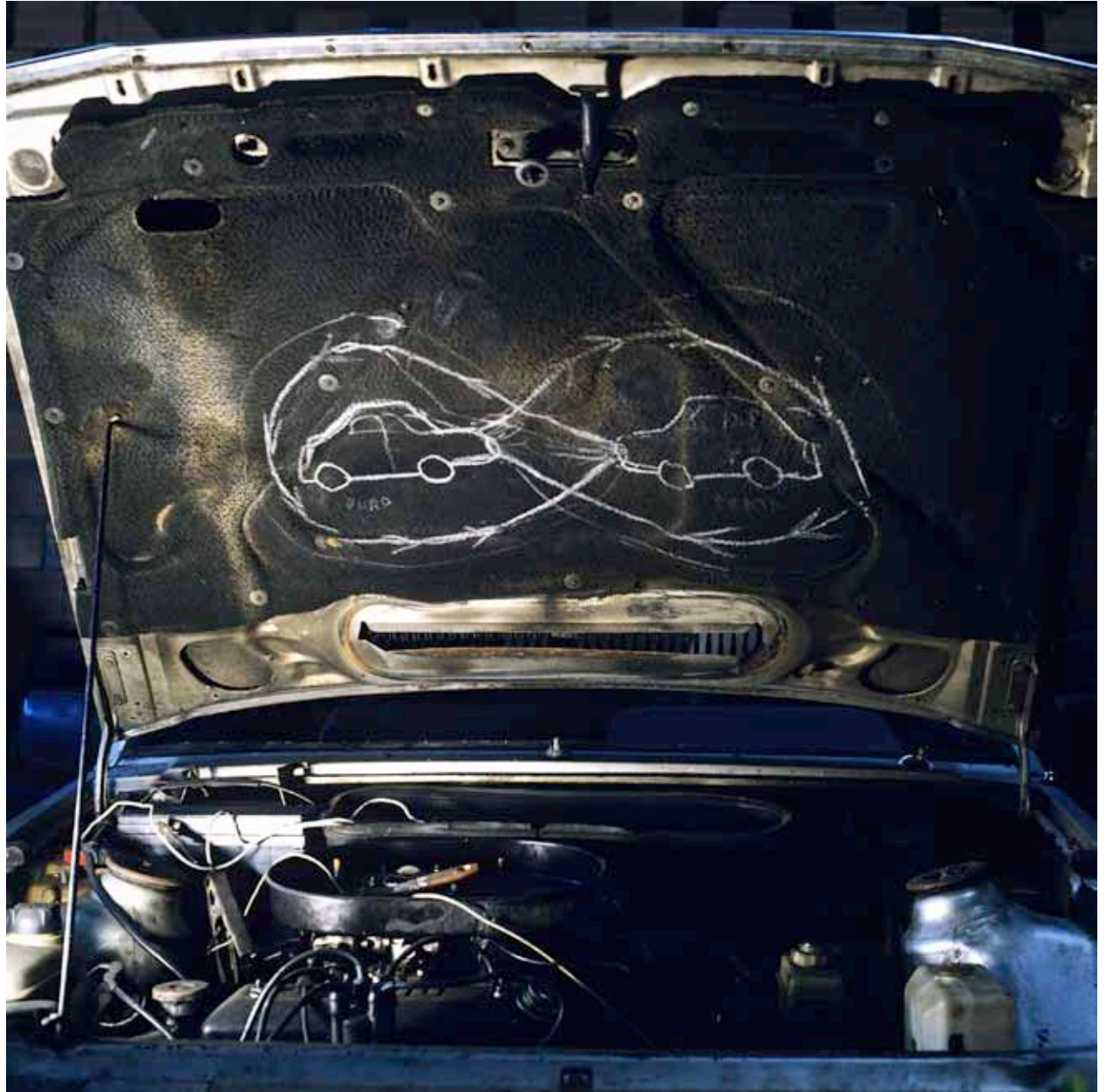
Drive Thru # 2  
video hdv, 17'17"  
2009



Drive Thru # 2 uses the disassembling of cars (most of the cars are stolen in Brazil to sell its parts) as a sculptural procedure. Two Scorts (one golden 87 and one silver 86) have their pieces taken, paired to each other with scotch tape, to mount one car that is completely doubled (see "untitled" above). In the video, the descriptions of the disassembling of both cars are superimposed in one image, diverting its documentary purpose and also creating an erotic relation with man and machine.

stills of **Drive Thru # 2**  
video HDV 17'17"  
2009





**First disarrange diagram**  
photograph, 80 x 80 cm  
2009



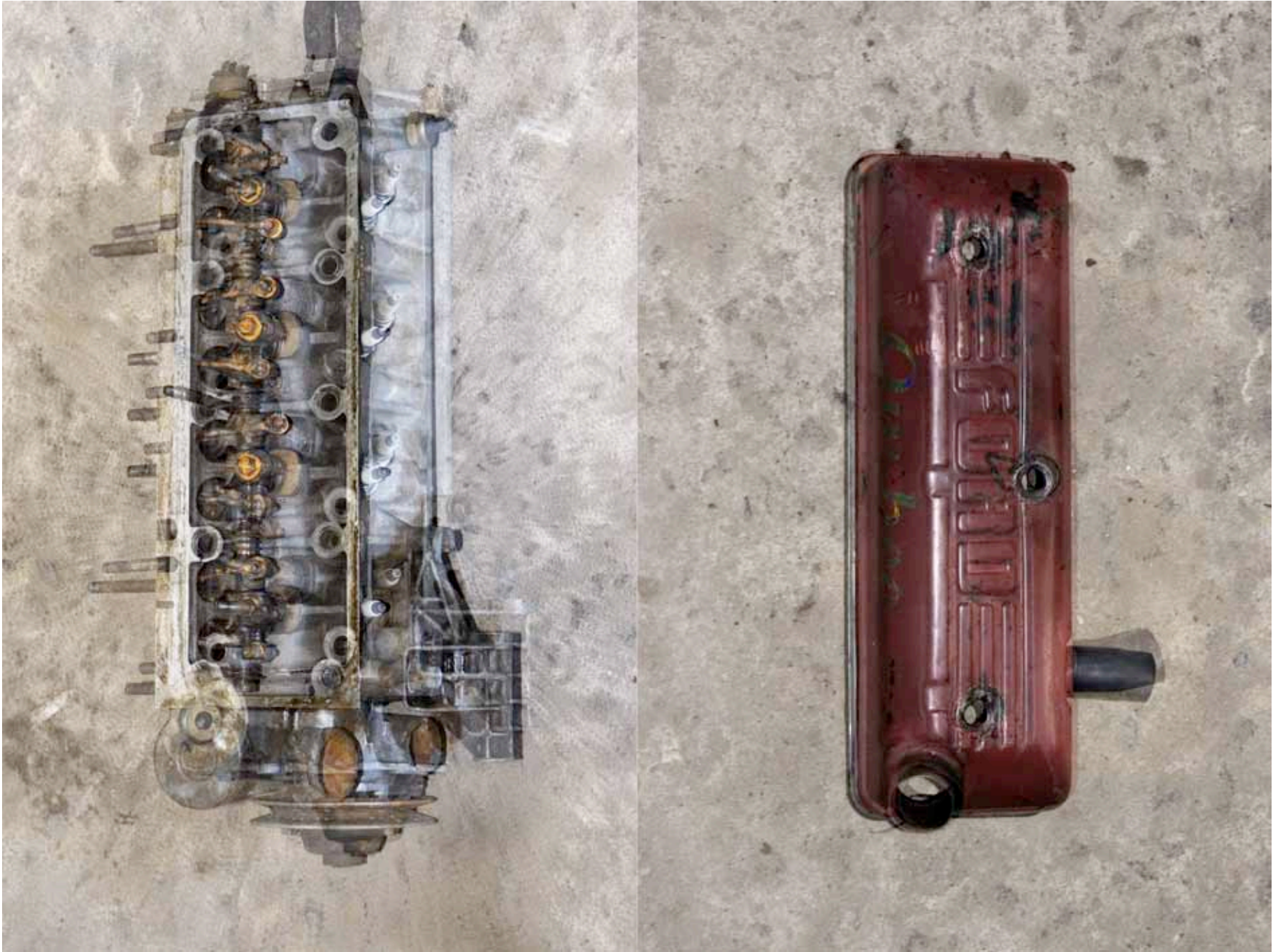
Second disarrange diagram  
photograph, 80 x 80 cm  
2009





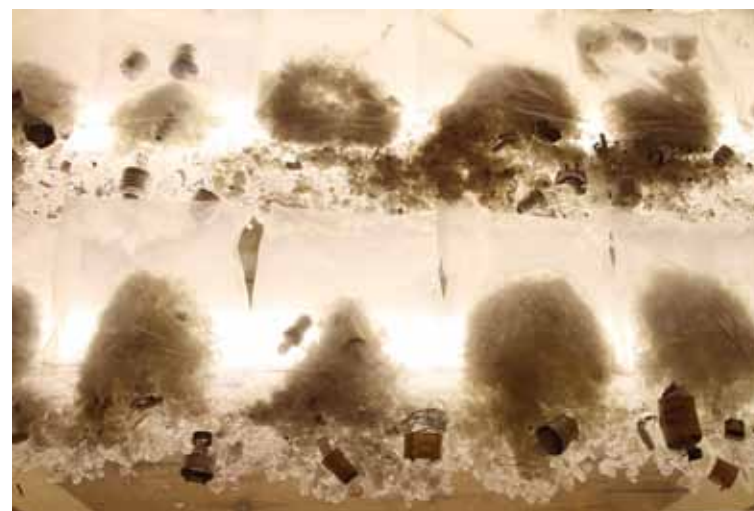
StereoDemo is a sort of catalog of the pieces of the scorts used in Drive Thru # 2. Each pair of pieces is shooted in the same conditions (light & position), than their images are superimposed in one. Stereo stands for double and also for stereoscopy, but here is the same viewpoint for two similar, but different objects.

**StereoDemo**  
book  
62 laminated photographs, 30 x 45 x 6 cm  
2009









**Apprehension Table # 5 (crystal lines)**  
plastic bags, bulbs, glass, wood  
110 x 70 x 100 cm  
2008





Untitled Demo  
video NTSC 2'2"  
2008



**Delivery**  
fiber, cement, bricks, acrylic ink  
92 x 42 x 42 cm  
2008





stills of **Delivery**  
video NTSC 20 min  
2008

### DRIVE THRU # 1

This video is based on a Brazilian police procedure, where the policemen use their cars' wagons or hoods as a "support" for confiscated goods photographs, that are taken by the local press. I was in a 2 month residency in Austin, Texas, and I decided to confiscate land. A first problem was posed: land can be a commodity but never an object. The solution found was to "objectify" land by packing it, in the same way drugs are packed. The video describes this packs of dirt going through the car, that confiscates all the landscape, including a fence. Everything drives thru the car, that crosses a border without moving, remaining still.

This work was possible thanks to the support of Fundação Iberê Camargo 2007 grant and the Blanton Art Museum.



Untitled still of drive thru # 1 (rear view)  
photograph  
30 x 40 cm  
2007





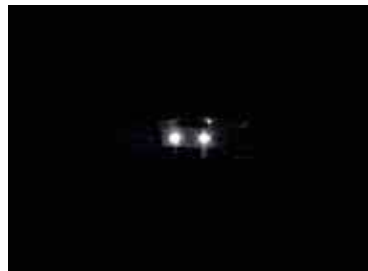
Untitled still of drive thru # 1 (front view)  
photograph  
90 x 120 cm  
2007





Untitled still of drive thru # 1 (side view)  
photograph  
90 x 120 cm  
2007





stills of **Drive Thru #1**  
video, NTSC, 9 min 50 s  
2007



photos 5A and 5B of **Constructive Demo**  
18 photographs  
25 x 17 cm each  
2008

Constructive Demo is the demonstration of the most simple sculptural procedure of Drive Thru #1: dirt packs that are unwrapped and whose content is passed thru a fence. The 18 photographs shows this action in aritmetical progression, from 1 to 9 (see following pages).





view of **Constructive Demo** installed at Sprovieri Progetti, London 2008



**Apprehension Table # 3 (Fortress, english version)** earth, adhesive tape, glass, wood  
180 x 100 x 110 cm  
2008  
view at exhibition Drive Thru #1 , in Sprovieri Progetti, London





**Apprehension Table # 1 (Wall, english version)** earth, adhesive  
tape, glass, wood  
180 x 100 x 110 cm  
2008  
view at exhibition Drive Thru #1 , in Sprovieri Progetti, London





**Apprehension Table # 2 (pyramid, english version)** earth, adhesive  
tape, glass, wood  
180 x 100 x 110 cm  
2008  
view at exhibition Drive Thru #1 , in Sprovieri Progetti, London





Drive Thru #1 exhibition view at,  
Sprovieiri Progetti, London, UK  
2008

## JAZIDA

In portuguese, Jazida means both grave and mine.

This work was made in collaboration with Rio de Janeiro's Modern Art Museum, the film library of which went through renovation. Due to conservation purposes, all the film canisters were replaced by plastic containers. These old canisters were kindly given to me. The museum also lent me a musty room in the basement, which I used as a studio for two months.

Given the resemblance of the film canisters with coins, I took my makeshift studio for a mine. My work consisted of digging, collecting, storing and distributing this worthless treasure.



**bank # 1**  
photograph, 85 x 85 cm  
2007



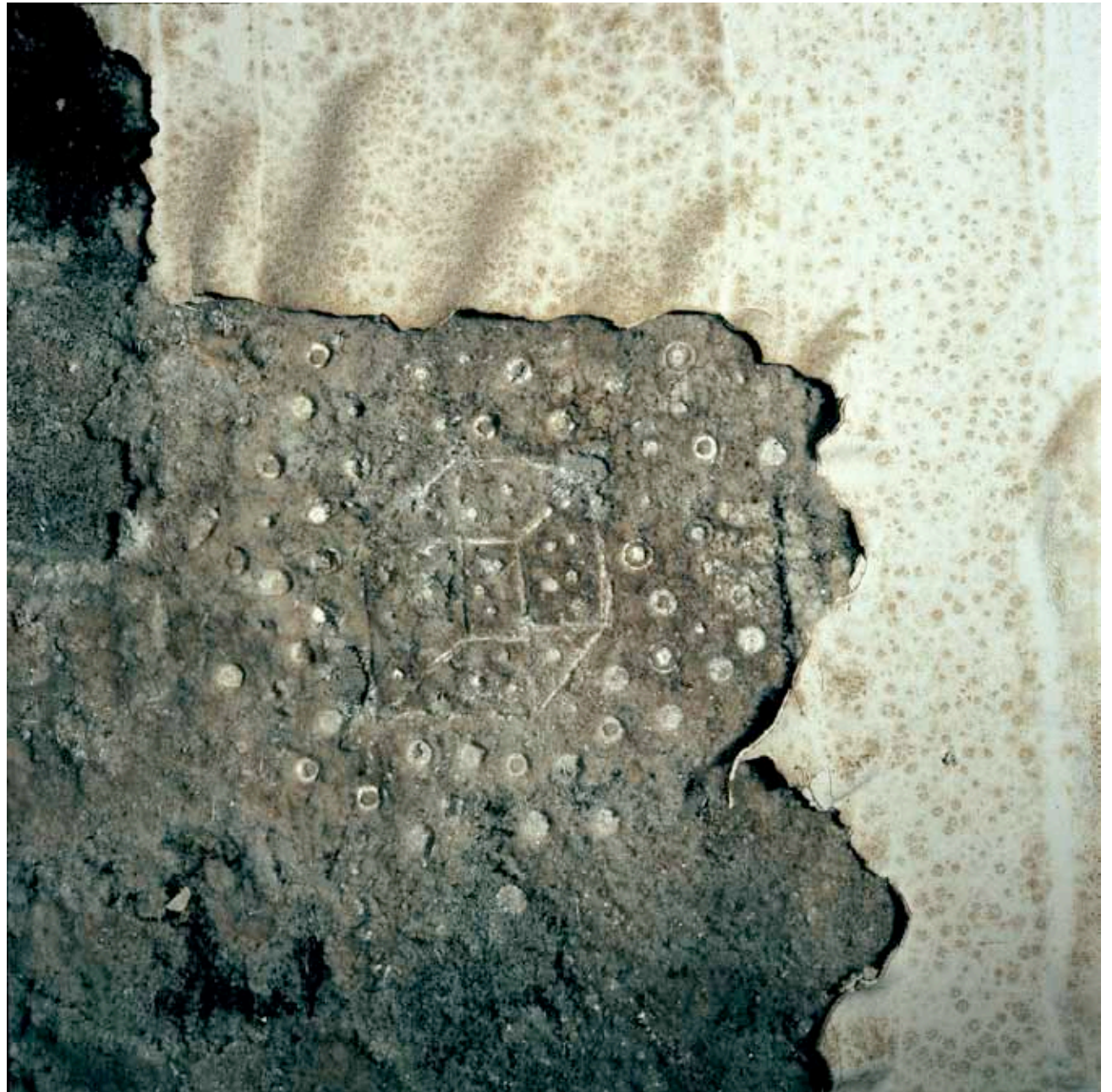


**1st Prospect Diagram : Twin Crystals**  
photograph, 100 x 100 cm  
2007



**2nd Prospect Diagram : Cube Within Cube**  
photograph, 100 x 100 cm  
2007





3rd Prospect Diagram : Compensation Chamber  
photograph, 100 x 100 cm  
2007



**Jazida**  
iron, neoprene, film canisters  
5.40 x 7.20 x 2.40 m  
2007





**Jazida**  
installation views



**Jazida**  
detail with aperture



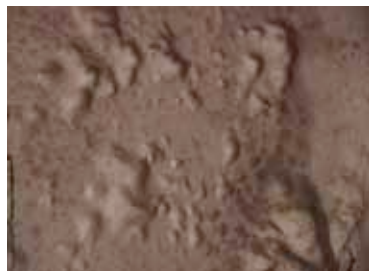
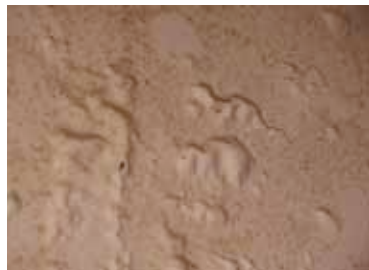
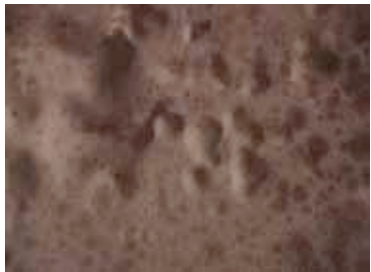
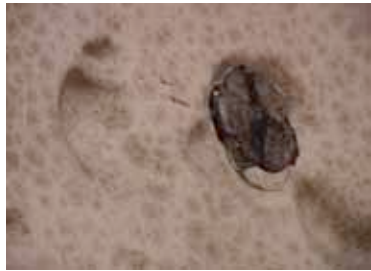


**Jazida**  
installation view



Jazida  
installation view with  
the video **Open-end Funds**





stills of **Open-end Funds**  
video, NTSC, 13 min  
2007



stills of **Common Stocks**  
video, NTSC, 15 min  
2007





**bank # 2**  
photograph, 85 x 85 cm  
2007



**bank # 3**  
photograph, 85 x 85 cm  
2007



**bank # 4**  
photograph, 85 x 85 cm  
2007



**bank # 5**  
photograph, 85 x 85 cm  
2007



**bank # 6**  
photograph, 85 x 85 cm  
2007



**bank # 7**  
photograph, 85 x 85 cm  
2007



**bank # 8**  
photograph, 85 x 85 cm  
2007



**bank # 9**  
photograph, 85 x 85 cm  
2007



**deposit # 1**  
photograph, 80 x 90 cm  
2007



**deposit # 2**  
photograph, 80 x 90 cm  
2007



**deposit # 3**  
photograph, 80 x 90 cm  
2007



**deposit # 4**  
photograph, 80 x 90 cm  
2007



**deposit # 5**  
photograph, 80 x 90 cm  
2007



**deposit # 6**  
photograph, 80 x 90 cm  
2007



**deposit # 7**  
photograph, 80 x 90 cm  
2007

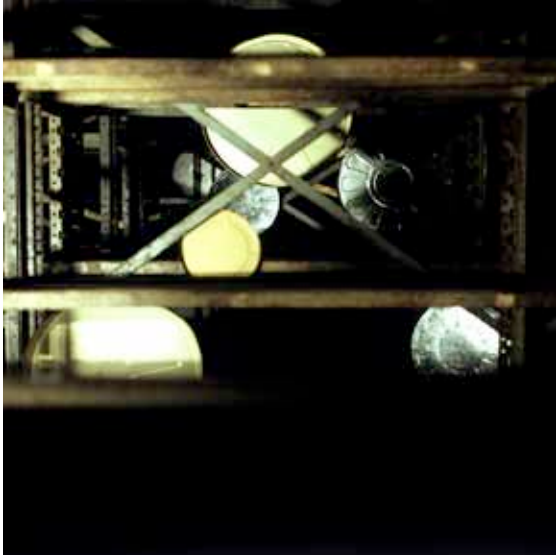


**deposit # 9**  
photograph, 80 x 90 cm  
2007





**deposit # 8**  
photograph, 80 x 90 cm  
2007



**compensation chamber # 1**  
photograph, 90 x 90 cm  
2007



**compensation chamber # 2**  
photograph, 90 x 90 cm  
2007



**compensation chamber # 3**  
photograph, 90 x 90 cm  
2007



**compensation chamber # 4**  
photograph, 90 x 90 cm  
2007



**compensation chamber # 5**  
photograph, 90 x 90 cm  
2007





**Escape Plan (diagram for Good Night)**  
photograph, 75 x 75 cm  
2006

### **Good Night**

Good Night is a video that simulates a closed circuit security camera. One monitor, split between nine screens, transmits scenes made at Centro Cultural São Paulo, where the work was exhibited. On each screen, the artist and a friend blind the camera with flashlights. All nine screens are blinded and, for a minute, an image similar to a constellation is formed. The flashlights are retired and everything returns to normal.

During the recordings I found a drawing of a grid, whose extended lines generate a layered 8, the traditional symbol of infinity.



still of **Good Night**  
video, NTSC, 13 min  
2006





still of **Good Night**  
video, NTSC, 13 min  
2006



stills of **Good Night**, in chronological order



## Drive-In

Installation in which a system of interiors is short-circuited. Divided between two environments, the Gallery Novembro Arte Contemporânea and the subterranean parking of the shopping mall where the gallery is located, Drive-in establishes an inversion between those two places. First, inside a Ford Belina 79, a cave is built, on whose walls a collection of newspaper clippings (mostly showing horses in urban environments) is pasted. The rearview mirrors were exchanged with headlights, thereby lightning the interior. An aperture on the back wall indicates the existence of a small, darkened chamber.

The car seats were relocated to the gallery, where a movie is projected. Horses are seen from the interior of a car, as if “parked” in the subterranean garage. The equation between car, horse and cave develops in variations of extended, monotonous scenes, never reaching final resolution.

Finally, three photographs attempt clarification. They document studies for the installation, drawn with chalk on the walls of the parking lot and erased after being photographed.



**Drive-In**  
Ford Belina 79, bricks, cement, black velvet, newspaper clippings, headlights,  
variable dimensions  
2005



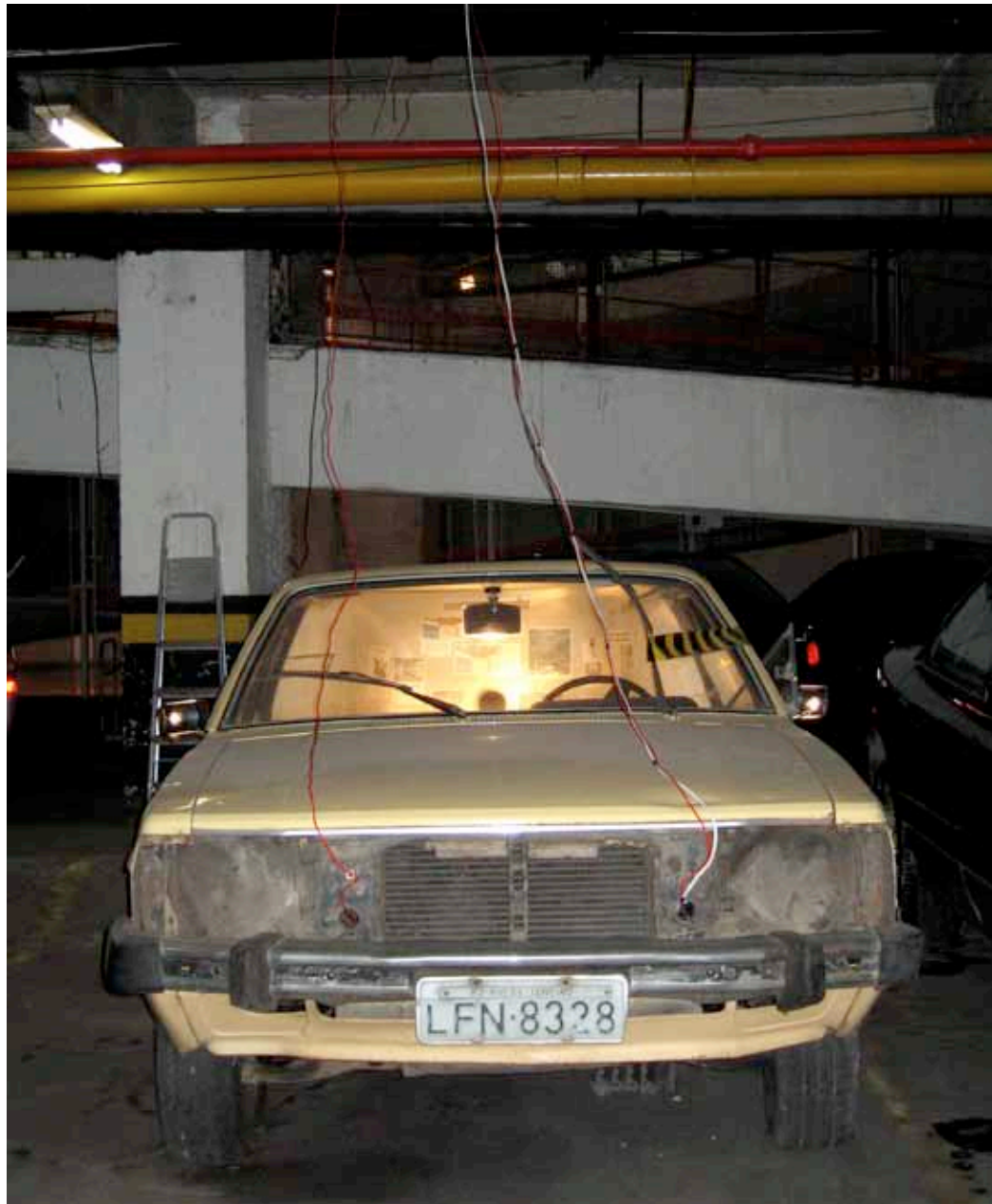


**Drive-In**  
access door to the car/cave







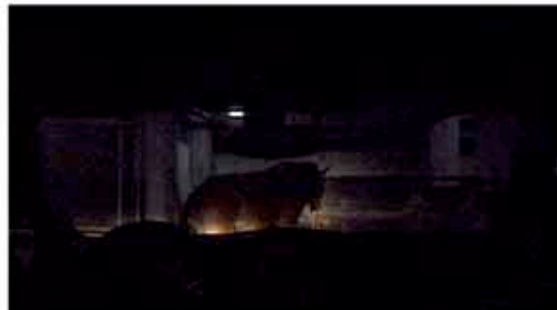


**Drive-In**  
frontal view, parked in the underground of  
Cidade Copacabana Mall





**Drive-In**  
video installation  
seen at Novembro Arte Contemporânea gallery



**Drive-In**  
stills  
video NTSC 32 min  
2005





**cave < car < horse**  
from the series **diagrams for drive-in**  
photograph  
60 x 60 cm  
2005



**cave ≠ car**  
from the series **diagrams for drive-in**  
photograph  
60 x 60 cm  
2005





car C cave C horse  
from the series **diagrams for drive-in**  
photograph  
60 x 60 cm  
2005

## Pastoral

Series composed of videos, sculptures and photographs in which horses, an equestrian monument, and posts narrates the formation of a peculiar food chain.

Pastoral # 1 (video 22 min) witnesses a night meal of two horses grazing in a trash can. The same night, another horse licks the stone floor, its repetitive action seeming to find nothing but its own shadow (Pastoral # 2, video, loop).

In Rio de Janeiro, an equestrian monument begins to be restored. There, I made Fountain (horse turns lamp on, 21.04.2005), in which the lights of the monument's lampposts are relocated to the horse's cooper belly .

Another Fountain (to Lorenzato) is mounted: the light of a lamppost is deposited on the ground, turning it upside down. Trash is deposited around the lamp. Pastoral # 3 (video 18 min) observes a horse that "drinks" in this fountain.



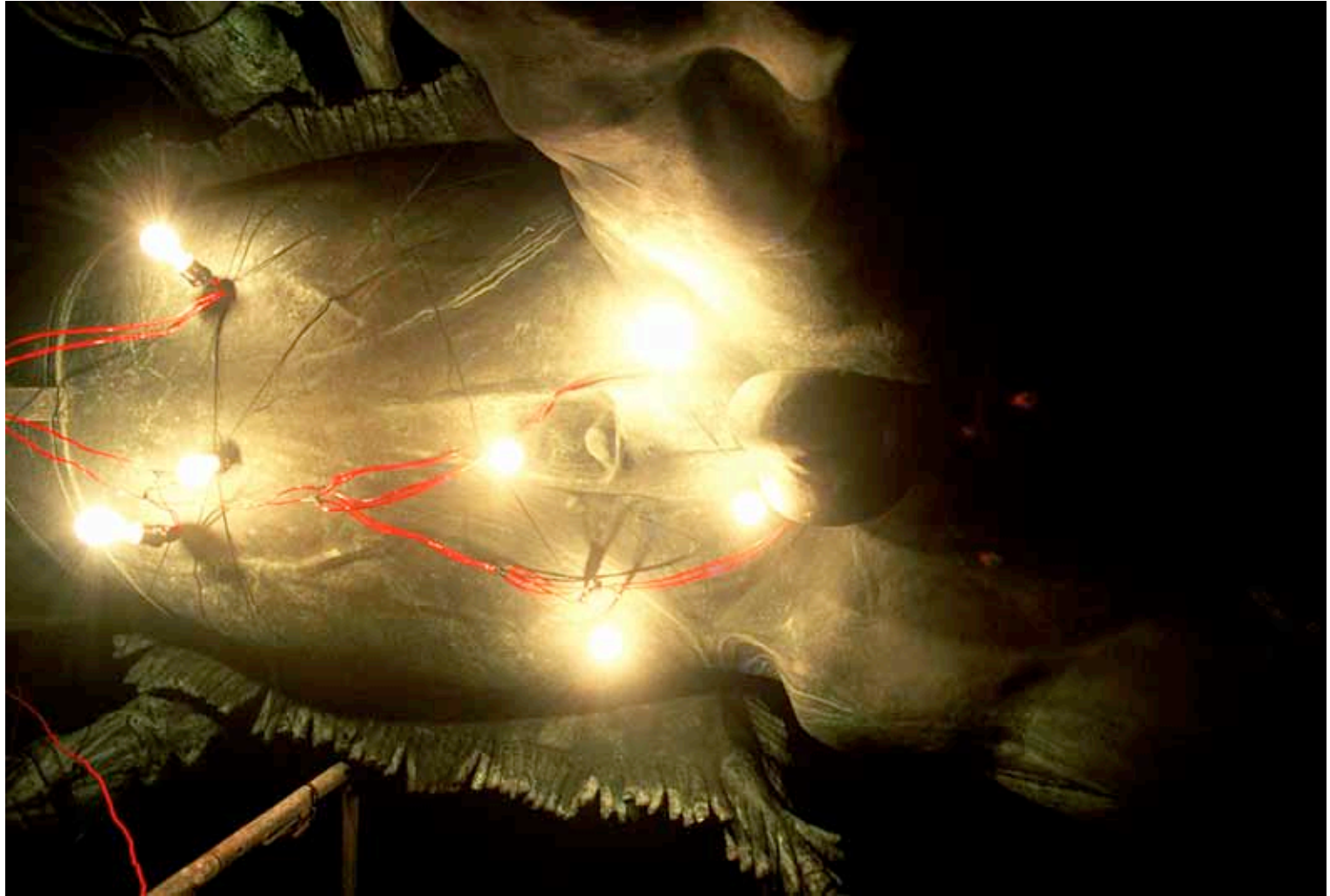


**croquis of Fountain**  
Praça Tiradentes, Rio de Janeiro  
thanks to **Fundação Parques e Jardins**



fountain (Pça Tiradentes, 21.04.05)  
photograph  
40 x 60 cm  
2005





**fountain (horse turns lamp on)**  
photograph  
50 x 70 cm  
2005



stills of **Pastoral # 1**  
video NTSC  
22 min  
2005



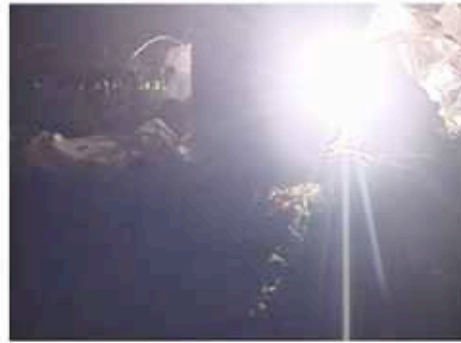
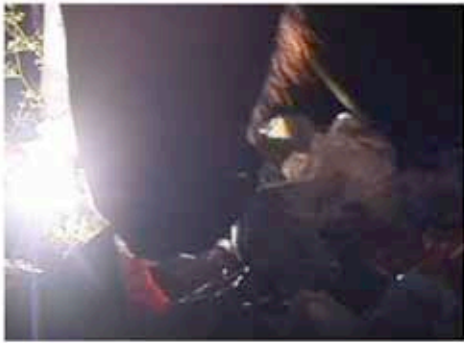
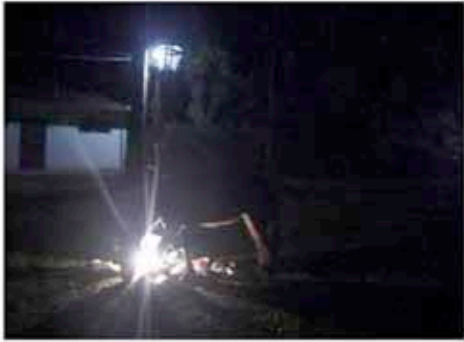


stills of **Pastoral # 2**  
video NTSC  
loop ∞  
2005

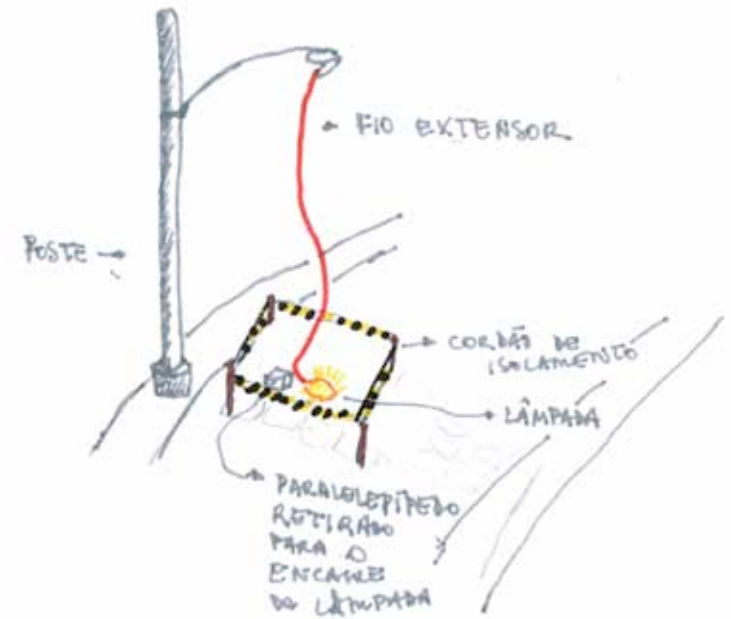


**fountain (to Lorenzato)**  
photograph  
55 x 80 cm  
2005





stills of Pastoral # 3  
video NTSC  
22 min  
2005



croquis to second fountain to lorenzato  
2006



untitled painting of Lorenzato (1900 - 1995)  
acquired at the flea market  
collection of the artist





**second fountain to lorenzato**  
photograph  
60 x 80 cm  
2006

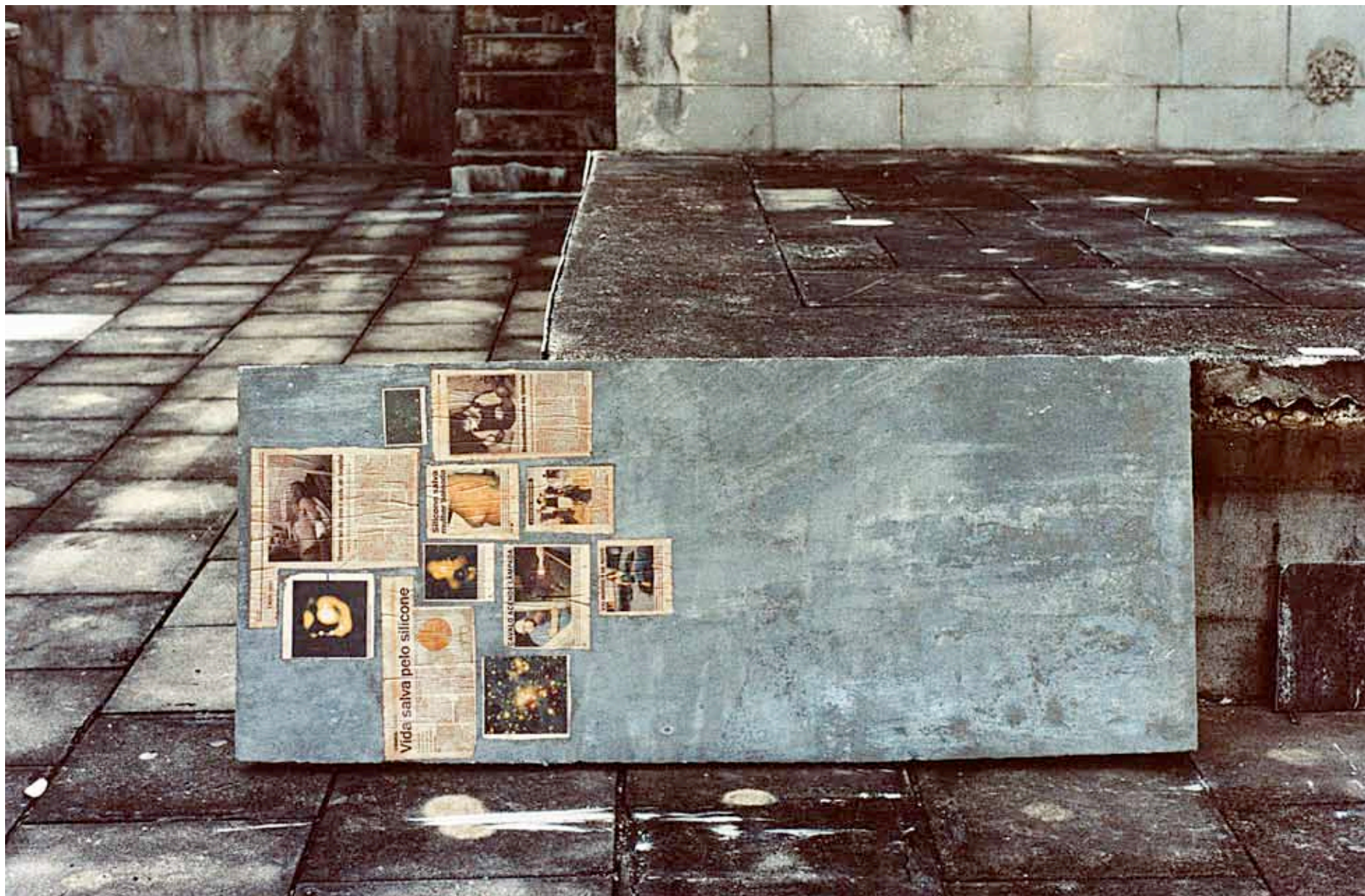


**Epitaph,**  
followed by **Decisive Moments**

For three years I collected a singular item of news: situations in which, by chance, a person did not die. I desired these images, this magic moment in which death is postponed by chance.

I decided to make my own photographs. The newspaper clippings were pasted on a cement slab, forming an epitaph for a non-existing grave, a monument for life, Because in the end, it's always the others who dies.





**epitaph**

cement, newspaper clippings

170 x 70 x 7 cm

2004

view at the exhibition Posição 2004, Parque Lage, Rio de Janeiro



# CAVALO ACENDE LÂMPADA



ALEXANDRE BRUN

**VÍTIMA** de uma descarga elétrica ao pisar num bueiro, depois da chuva de ontem, o animal do Regimento de Polícia Montada da PM demorou a ser removido porque continuava a dar choques. Técnicos da Light encostaram um fio no cavalo e a lâmpada acendeu. **PÁGINA 4**

ell 1689





horse turns lamp on  
from the series **decisive moments**  
photograph  
20 x 30 cm  
2003



# LÂMPADA



...chuva de ontem, o animal  
...to porque continuava a dar  
...lâmpada acendeu. PÁGINA 4

# R DE NOVO



TASSO MARCELO / AFE

gir de assalto num acesso a Linha Amarela. ... PÁGINA 20



FOLHA DA MANHÃ

## A VOLTA DO 'MORTO-VIVO'



■ Quem é vivo sempre aparece. Que o diga Pedro da Silva, que voltou ao cemitério de Campos, acompanhado da polícia, para reconstituir "sua morte". Há uma semana, ele foi espancado, baleado, fingiu-se de morto e acabou enterrado vivo. Conseguiu salvar-se e acusou 11 traficantes pela tentativa de homicídio. "Me ajudem. Não quero morrer de novo", pediu à polícia. (PÁGINA 8)

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Pedro voltou ao cemitério onde

## Reconhec

'Morto-vivo' de Cam

■ CAMPOS - Ainda com uma bala alojada na cabeça, Pedro da Silva Corrêa, de 43 anos, que na semana passada levou pânico ao Cemitério do Caju, nesta cidade, ao se levantar de um túmulo, voltou ontem ao local para mostrar à polícia o jazigo em que fora sepultado na véspera. Ele foi dado como morto por um grupo de agressores após levar dois tiros na cabeça. O ajudante de caminhoneiro foi enterrado no túmulo da família Miranda, onde estão os corpos do casal Alzira e Manuel Miranda.

O delegado Daniel Gannassin, que investiga o caso, disse não ter dúvidas de que





**the return of the dead alive**  
from the series **decisive moments**  
photograph  
24 x 32 cm  
2003



...seguida, ele foi examinado pelos médicos e ficou constatado que levava dois tiros: um no queixo, que atravessou o nariz, e outro na parte esquerda do crânio.

...município, que disse não saber o motivo da violência. Para a polícia, Pedro pode ter sido vítima de uma briga entre quadrilhas de traficantes. Ele morava num bairro, o Par...

...no Cemitério do Caju, tentou-se localizar a cova onde ele diz ter passado 13 horas enterrado. A parte dos fundos tem várias covas rasas. Um funcionário que não quis se identificar disse que havia sangue misturado com terra numa cova.



Imagem mostra galáxias mais antigas já



**OS DE ESTRELAS** Imagem do telescópio de... mostra buracos negros e estrelas de nêutrons na... região teve colisão galáctica há bilhões de anos

# Silicone salva mulher baleada

LUIZ HAROLD PEREIRA / DIVULGAÇÃO



Prótese no seio amorteceu os dois tiros disparados contra o peito da empresária Jane Selma Soares, 35 anos, baleada ao fugir de assalto num acesso à Linha Amarela. **CIÊNCIA E SAÚDE, PÁGINA 20**



Quarta-feira,



Pedro voltou ao cemitério onde foi enterrado

# Reconhecim

Campos most

# E LÂMPADA

POUMA DA MANHA





**silicon saves shot woman**  
from the series **decisive moments**  
photograph  
30 x 40 cm  
2003



**VÍTIMA** de uma descarga elétrica ao pisar num bueiro, depois da chuva de ontem, o animal do Regimento de Polícia Montada da PM demorou a ser removido porque continuava a dar choques. Técnicos da Light encostaram um fio no cavalo e a lâmpada acendeu. **PÁGINA 4**

■ Quem é vivo sempre aparece. Que o diga Pedro Silva, que voltou ao cemitério de Campos, acomodado pela polícia, para reconstituir "sua morte". Há uma semana, ele foi espancado, baleado, fingiu-se de morto e acabou enterrado vivo. Conseguiu salvar-se e acabou traficando pela tentativa de homicídio. "Me ajudem a morrer de novo", pediu à polícia. **(PÁGINA 4)**

## VAI MORRER DE NOVO

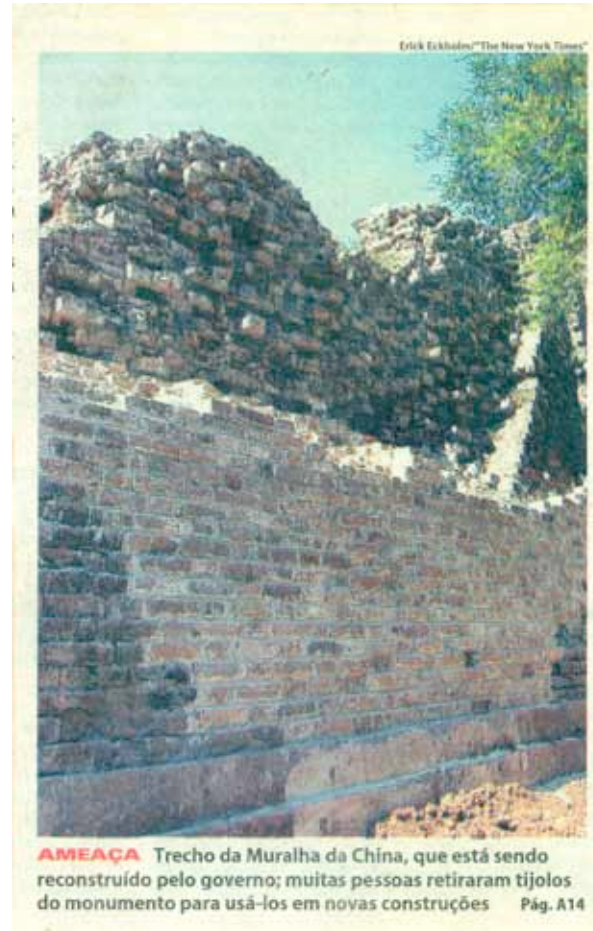


**FOTÓGRAFO** dispara o flash no meio da gravação da cena em que Fernanda (Vanessa Gerbelli) e Téo (Tony Ramos) são baleados. Morte da personagem terá que ser filmada de novo. **CAPA**





**gonna die again**  
from the series **decisive moments**  
photograph  
15 x 20 cm  
2003



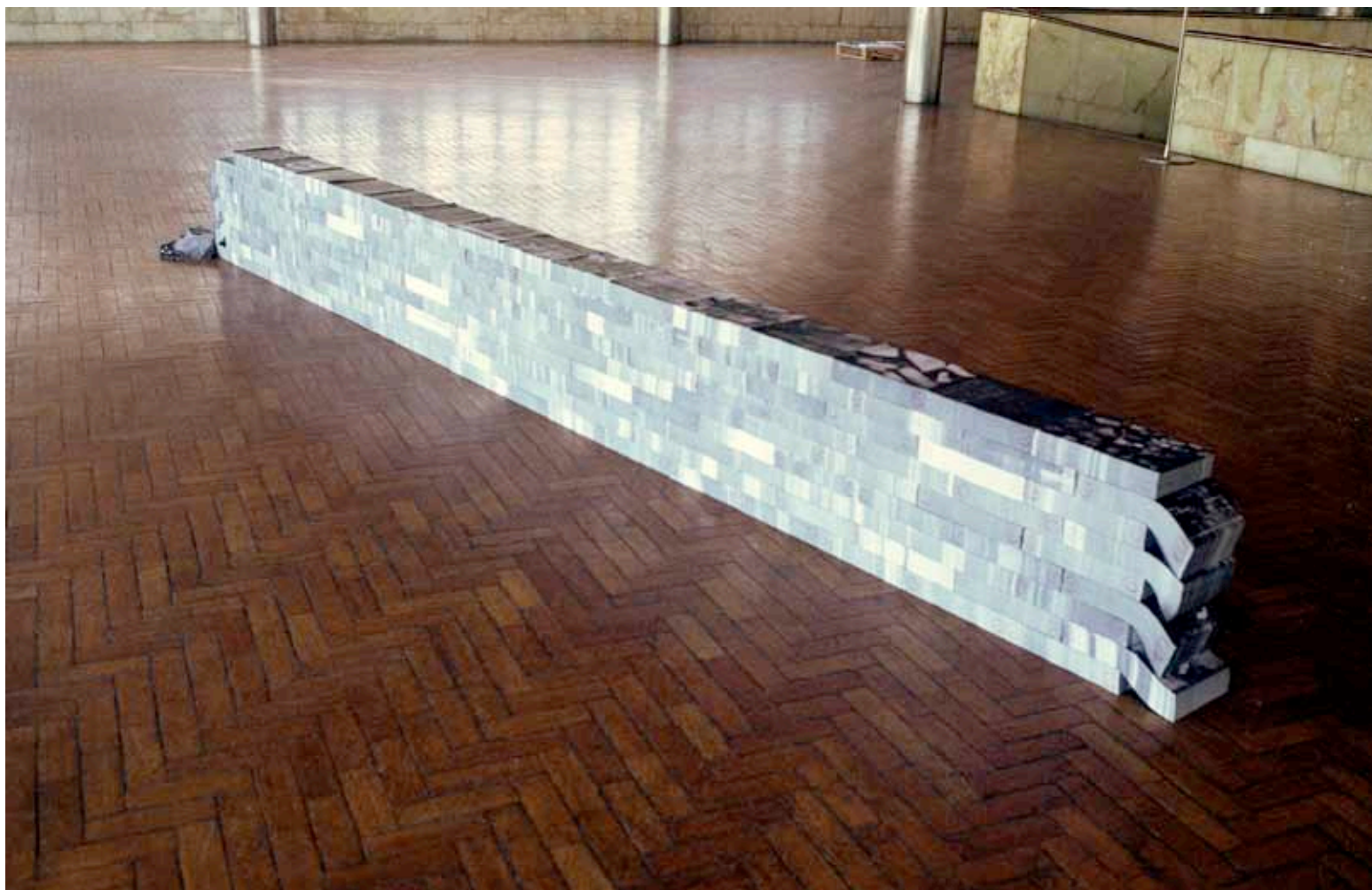
### On the construction of the great wall of china

I decided to continue the construction of the world's greater monument. Conscious of my failure, I opted for the following method:

The constructor goes to the streets and collects stones, bricks or any construction remains. This material is taken to a photocopy machine, where 500 copies are made, reproducing the ruins in a paper brick. On the back of this brick is stamped the date, street and city where it was made. This action is repeated until the amount of bricks is sufficient to start the construction of a small wall.

Once ready, the sheets that compose the monument can be taken, spreading its parts for possible constructions.





**on the construction of the great wall of china**

off-set print from an original photocopy,

144 stacks of paper A4, 500 sheets each

80 x 19 x 480 cm

2003/2004

view of the exhibition at Museu de Arte da Pampulha



on the construction of the great wall of china  
detail with the stamps





on the construction of the great wall of china  
exhibition's opening night  
at Museu de Arte da Pampulha  
2004



**on the construction of the great wall of china**  
last day of the exhibition at Museu de Arte da Pampulha



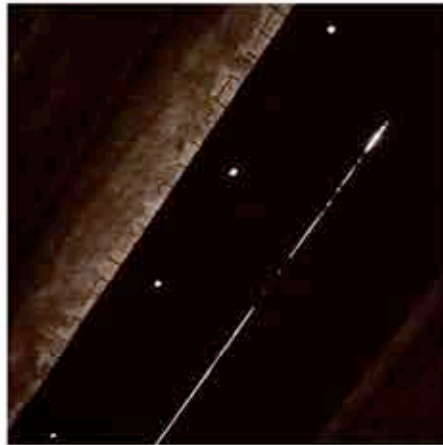


## **(dice)<sup>x</sup>**

The drawing was found in a building whose construction was aborted. To me, this anonymous graffiti appeared as a sort of map or diagram of the state of that construction. How could one know the result of a throw of a dice in which all sides are transparent?

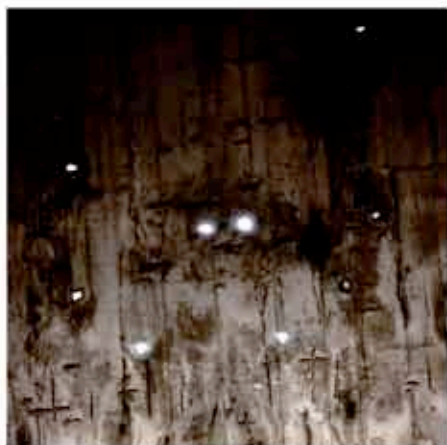
Without any answers, I began experimental tests. I decided to throw the dice according to what I believed was that building's transformation. Follow the results.

**(dice)<sup>x</sup>**  
photograph  
80 x 80 cm  
2002



**dice throw n° 2**  
photograph  
45 x 45 cm each (total 186 x 139 cm)  
2002/2003



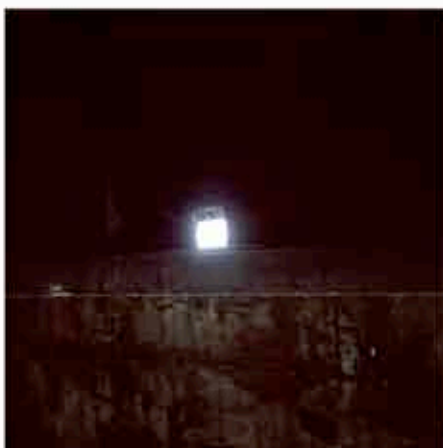


**dice throw n° 3**  
photograph  
45 x 45 cm each (total 186 x 139 cm)  
2002/2003

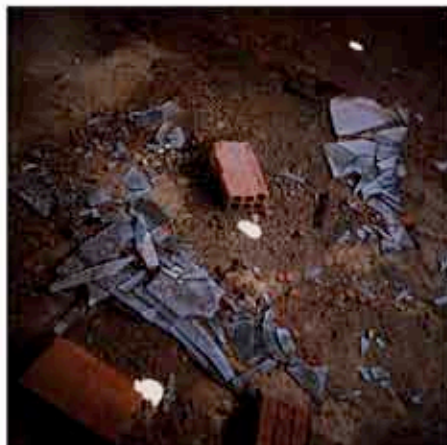


**Idice throw n° 6**  
photograph  
45 x 45 cm each (total 186 x 139 cm)  
2002/2003





**dice throw n° 14**  
photograph  
45 x 45 cm each (total 186 x 139 cm)  
2002/2003

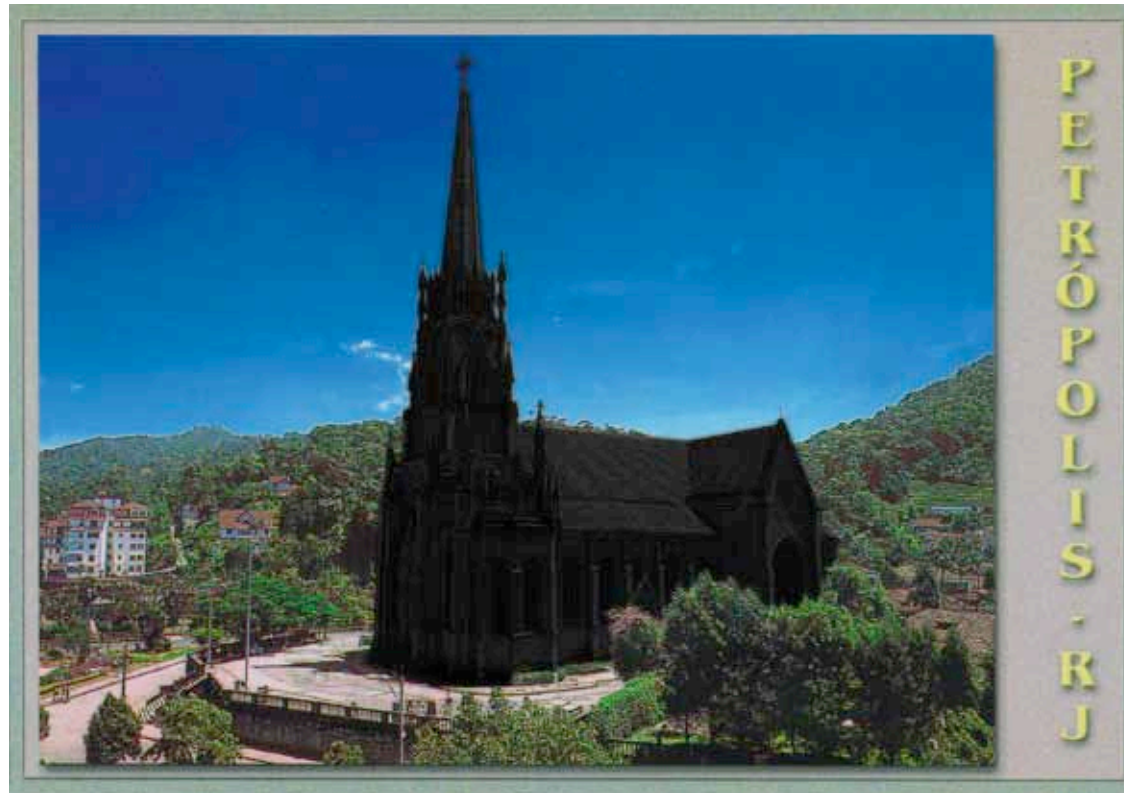


**dice throw n° 17**  
photograph  
45 x 45 cm each (total 186 x 139 cm)  
2002/2003





**dice throw n° 18**  
photograph  
45 x 45 cm each (total 186 x 139 cm)  
2002/2003



### **Project for a new illumination**

São Pedro de Alcântara's Cathedral, in Petrópolis (the same cathedral that shelters Dom Pedro's II grave) received a new illumination. In order to better exploit their power, floodlights were installed at ground level inside cement boxes. In this position, impurities such as insects attracted by the strong light began to accumulate on the surface of the floodlights. This tiny interruption within the environment that surrounds the cathedral largely destroyed floodlights' illumination. Shaded areas began to appear upon the cathedral's façade.

Astonished, I photographed the floodlights for a year. My work was interrupted by the threat of a blackout in the country's energy system. To spare energy, all national monuments went unlit. During this time, I decided to extend the work: I printed photographs of the floodlights in real scale and installed them inside boxes around Paço Imperial, as if they were illuminating the building. A new illumination that projected shadows instead of light.





**Project for a new illumination**  
aerial view of Paço Imperial during the exhibition  
right, detail

23 photographs mounted in wood and cement boxes  
75 x 105 x 25 cm  
2001



**Project for a new illumination**  
23 photographs mounted in wood and cement boxes  
75 x 105 x 25 cm  
2001





**Project for a new illumination**  
23 photographs mounted in wood and cement boxes  
75 x 105 x 25 cm  
2001



**Project for a new illumination**  
23 photographs mounted in wood and cement boxes  
75 x 105 x 25 cm  
2001

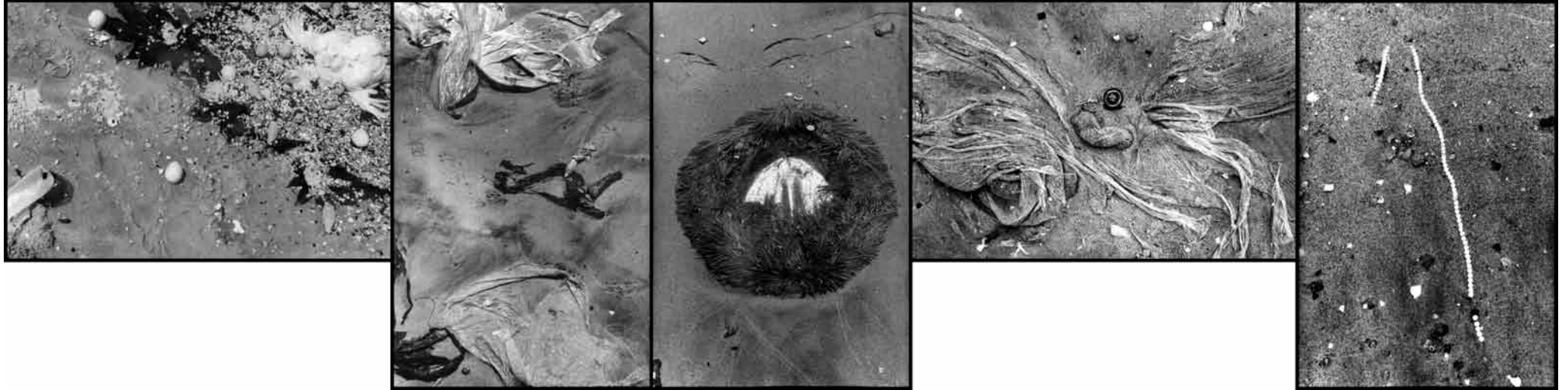




**Across**  
photograph, 40 x 60 cm  
2000

### **um branco som de espuma**

A man tried to forget everything that afflicted him by throwing into the sea all the things that carried the marks of his despair. His effort, however, was useless : the waves, a few days later, returned to the man and to his eyes all of his things. Running, the man threw himself at the sea, succumbed in his failure in trying to forget. Among the storytellers of this fable, some say that even the man's body wasn't accepted by the sea, but was spit back on the same sand where his last steps were recorded.



**untitled**  
photograph  
60 x 240 cm  
1999/2000





**untitled**  
photograph  
40 x 180 cm  
1999



**untitled**  
photograph  
120 x 60 cm  
1999/2000





**untitled**  
photograph  
120 x 40 cm  
1999/2000



**untitled**  
photograph  
60 x 90 cm  
1999





**untitled**  
photograph  
60 x 90 cm  
1999

**selected bibliography**



• Rendez—  
vous 11

• Catalogue  
of the  
• exhibition

#### Notes for a new political economy

Over a short period of time and through a number of different projects, Matheus Rocha Pitta established interests and strategies which allows us to identify – in a work that grows in density with each new creation -, the critical enunciation on the exchange mechanisms that rule ordinary life. The artist is driven, in particular, by the wish to explore and exhibit the *commodity* – anything produced by human labour and towards which there is an unswerving desire to possess – as an indication of the paradoxes that such interchanges contain or engender. Without recurring to the discursive enunciations of disciplines that consider merchandise as a frequent object of investigation (economy, philosophy, politics), he articulates objects and images invented by him to generate knowledge which does not fit in those fields of study. The two works presented in the exhibition *Rendez-vous* are based on this agenda in construction.

In *B.O. (Boletim de Ofertas [Bulletin of Offers])*, product of daily consumption are stripped of its everyday use value by means of incisions from where he removes matter, opening in it free spaces which are prepared to potentially receive and hide anything that is worthwhile transporting without being noticed (the reference to methods of drugs smuggling into territories or places where they are forbidden is here very clearly put). The exchange value of the material illegally carried, greater than the merchandise which may now transport it, suggests that the annulment of the usefulness of something can produce, as its counterpart, the creation of wealth which is not, however, socially acknowledged.

By photographing these objects and inserting their images into the art field, Matheus Rocha Pitta creates the means to grant them – at least regarding their existence as an image and despite the social interdiction evoked by their new usage -, a greater exchange value than when they were ordinary commodities. However, when distributing these images for free (assembled in printed folders as discount goods offered in supermarkets), once again he annuls the worth of the modified products. Rocha Pitta demonstrates – through operations

which are presented and explained by images -, the arbitrary nature of traded values in society, dependent of shared conventions and, simultaneously, of the power that some have to change them.

In the second work presented in the exhibition – part of the series *Figuras de Conversão (Conversion Figures)* –, the artist shifts the focus from the commodity itself to the fact that it is constantly moving from physical and symbolical places. In the series, groups of photographs on the wall and objects set over the floor associate themselves to organize narratives of exchange of positions and meanings, subverting the order in which one expects that things in the world be visually presented. In each gathering of three images, one describes a person carrying plastic bags full of products which are bought and consumed in everyday life (food, hygiene items, among other products necessary to the reproduction of life) and another, of identical size, captures the moment in which the bags are placed on the floor, situation when the consumer detaches him/herself from that which they will yet consume. In the third and largest photograph of each of the groups, the bags which were previously full of things are now empty, connected to each other by an adhesive tape and forming, in this way, a huge vessel. In its interior, the person who carried the bags is now upside down and naked.

The position of the first two images in each grouping already suggests a distance from the vastly adopted norm of the visual representation of an event; the way in which they are displayed fissures the chronological order of the unimportant and absurd action they form with the third photograph. The course of the disappearance of the clothes which dressed the persons and the merchandise that were in the bags they held is not, furthermore, subject of any reference, constituting a gap in the narrative which is not at any time explained. As is not given the clarification on how persons can occupy the place of the commodities they were once transporting.

The relation of the images on the wall with the objects over the floor in front of them only enhances the artist's intention to extract, from the examination of a circuit by him invented, knowledge on the nature of exchanges which have as purpose the generation and distribution of wealth. Placed on the floor, each piece of clothes that were used by the persons in the photographs is filled, where before were the bodies, by commodities that were - in the first images of each grouping - inside the bags they carried. When extending the photographed narratives to the objects that were their models, Matheus Rocha Pitta converts the image into a thing and makes people from products, *exhibiting*, without in any moment willing to explain it, the idea of indifferentiation among different things, central to the establishment of a general exchange value between different commodities – making notes for a new political economy.

Moacir dos Anjos  
Researcher of the Fundação Joaquim Nabuco (Recife, Brasil)  
and curator-chief of the 29th Biennial of São Paulo (2010).

published in *Rendez Vous11*, exhibition catalogue, Lyon, 2011

## OPENINGS: MATHEUS ROCHA PITTA

By Irene V. Small

(artforum, summer 2011)

**FOR ALL THE MYSTERY** of the commodity—its “phantasmagoria,” as Walter Benjamin put it, or its “magic and necromancy,” per Karl Marx<sup>1</sup>—its convertibility is surely its most spectacular sleight of hand. Commodities are at once solid things and ineffable potentialities, static objects and relational forces spinning within dizzyingly complex circuits of trade. Commodities convert from brute matter to dematerialized value with unsettling ease. But they are also *sites* of conversion in which wildly incommensurate entities (the yield of the laboring body, the symbolic weight of culture, and the texture of social relations) become equivalent and congeal into units of monetary exchange. In the art fair, the supermarket, and the stock exchange alike, the law of the market converts everything to price.

Rio de Janeiro-based artist Matheus Rocha Pitta’s most recent work—*B.O.*, or *Boletim de Ofertas* (Offers Bulletin), 2010—takes shape within this delirium of convertibility. A fourteen-page flyer officially launched this May at SP-Arte, Brazil’s largest art fair, *B.O.* is modeled on the coupon circulars one finds stacked near supermarket entrances and stuffed in the postbox with the mail. With their florid colors, cheap newsprint, and jostling, last-minute appeals, such circulars stage the built-in obsolescence of the commodity in a familiar parade of glistening produce and crisply geometric packages whose contents are subject to the volatility of inflation, expiration, and decay. In the pages of the coupon circular, products merrily proclaim their use-value at the same time that they broadcast their commodity status with the shriek of ninety-nine-cent deals.

Stripped of the busy chattering of advertising copy and photographed individually against a dense felt ground, the foodstuffs, sanitary products, and household items pictured in Rocha Pitta’s *B.O.* are left to act out this drama of solicitation on their own. Like those in the coupon circular, the identity of the commodities pictured in *B.O.* is conveyed primarily by the formal conventions of packaging: stackable tins of sardines with their thin metal lids, columnar tubes of cream-filled cookies, round

discs of cheese. Yet in Rocha Pitta’s images, the enticing containment of the packaged product—all surface, buoyancy, and the promise of future reward—gives way to a pathos of bodily affect (a ham sweats with condensation, a wedge of cheese droops under the weight of its own rind). In addition, the external surfaces are breached and reconfigured to create a series of *fundos falsos* (false bottoms)—concealed receptacles for drugs (or other contraband goods) that have themselves disappeared. Thus, a six-pack of yogurt containers holds smaller, similarly shaped foil voids invaginated within; a roll of toilet paper is splayed open to reveal a hidden cavity; a sausage is sliced in half and hollowed out, its interior lined with protective plastic wrap. These are vessels that appear to have exhausted their role within the circuits of consumption. Ruptured and repurposed, their use-value migrating from the advertised content of the packaged foodstuffs to that content’s ability to package and conceal yet another value—that of the absent drugs—*B.O.*’s emptied commodities are consummate images of depleted value. And it was precisely *as* images that the products were introduced into yet another circuit of consumption, that of the art fair. Here, in a market designed to convert images from symbolic to financial value, *B.O.* enacted one final displacement, since the circular itself was distributed for free.

**IN THE 1970S**, seminal works of Conceptual art such as Cildo Meireles’s “Insertions into Ideological Circuits,” 1970, harnessed the circulatory flows of existing economic and political systems in order to interfere with their reproduction of power. By printing political messages on Coke bottles or banknotes and reinserting them into circulation, Meireles recast the work of art as a parasitic attachment upon the network itself. As such, the material evidence displayed in the gallery or museum, as Meireles has observed, was intended to be merely “a relic, a reference, a sample” of the work’s embeddedness within the circuit at large.<sup>2</sup> While such networks seemed at the time primarily closed in character (the efficacy of Meireles’s work, after all, depended on a stable and identifiable target, be it the capitalist corporation or the authoritarian state), the power interests at work within today’s global economy operate within an increasingly diffuse informational landscape dominated by Internet-based transactions and complex electronic relays. Not only do commodities exist as images within networks of images, but value is often produced through circulation in and of itself. In response to the mutation and sprawl of this new virtual field, the imperative for many contemporary artists hinges on identifying blind spots in the mechanisms that link various networks of communication and exchange to structures of power. If, in other words, Meireles enacted a shift from object to system, artists such as Rocha



Pitta concretize nodal points normally invisible within a system's multiplying frames. One tactic of this strategy, as seen in *B.O.*'s advertisements of loss, is to hollow out dead zones from within a given market's circulatory desires. Another, meanwhile, involves hijacking images from symbolic and economic networks and spatializing them in installations, photographs, or performative actions—in short, art—not in order to suspend their operations, but rather to unleash alternate potentialities of experience and cognition otherwise foreclosed.

Indeed, Rocha Pitta has described his process as one of “apprehension,” with its double valence of “to take hold or confiscate” and “to understand or perceive.” For example, in creating his 2008 exhibition “Drive Thru #1,” part of an ongoing investigation that involves sculptural interventions on or within cars, Rocha Pitta proceeded from an image genre common in Brazil—photographs of confiscated drugs displayed in a police car. Reproduced ad infinitum on television screens and tabloid pages, such photographs are trophies of a system of power in which authority and governance are intimately tied both to virtual regimes of visibility and to the actual physical boundaries of territories of control. In these press images, illegal commodities withdrawn from material circulation are reintroduced for consumption in the media, where they function as dematerialized emblems of the law. The police image, then, stands as a figure of conversion between matter and image, and of the circuits of meaning each engenders through its use.

In Rocha Pitta's show, such images were not replicated but rather were reimagined as a video sequence in which the suppressed narratives of this process of conversion are made manifest. In the video *Drive Thru #1, 2007*, a stalled car (the ostensible stage for the police image) becomes a border crossing in reverse: Rather than the car crossing the border, the border moves through the car in the form of literal dirt shoveled from front to back. Having rendered the symbolic as base material, this dirt was then packaged in units mimicking those used for drug transport and arranged on three “Apprehension Tables,” 2008, which framed the video within the gallery. The demarcation of territory as a limit of the law was thus translated and apprehended in a move that, in the terms with which Jacques Rancière described the practice of “dissensus” in these pages, “both crosses the boundaries and stops traffic.”<sup>3</sup>

**ACROSS THESE PROJECTS**, Rocha Pitta works in two registers: a phenomenological mode in which knowledge and narrative are made spatial and visceral, often by way of site-specific interventions; and a non-site mode in which images and ob-

jects are referential fragments displaced from a larger world. Though conceptually distinct, these two modes often operate in tandem within a single project. The strategy originated in Rocha Pitta's first solo gallery exhibition, “Drive-In,” held at Novembro Arte Contemporânea in Rio de Janeiro in 2006. Here, the viewer's experience was split between the venue's commercial space, located in a former antique store in one of Rio's oldest shopping malls, and an underground parking garage, accessible by a pedestrian ramp in the shape of an ovoid spiral carved out of the building's center. In the gallery, three displaced car seats and a video projection of three horses standing in the mall's cavernous parking lot made up a makeshift cinema. The video had been shot through the windshield of a parked car and mimicked the view implied by the actual seating arrangement. The familiarity of these coordinates, however, was emptied out by the video's static frame and lack of action—which together evoked the mechanized surveillance of closed-circuit television.

Two stories below, meanwhile, the viewer found a parked car, lights on and doors open, but little else: the scene of the video, in other words, but none of its contents. Rather than satisfying the viewer's desire to encounter the “parked” horses that constitute the video's purported subject, Rocha Pitta offered up its frame—the physical car from which the video had been shot—and revealed this structure as yet another representational device. Upon entering the car, the viewer found that the entire back of the vehicle was bricked in to form a kind of vault. Lined with newspaper clippings with images of horses, the chamber obliquely evoked both the gallery above (with its own series of enigmatic images) and the darkened cavern of the parking lot itself. Any attempt to secure such analogies through empirical observation, however, was systematically frustrated. As the viewer retraced her path back to the gallery upstairs, along the winding loops of the ramp, the experience of the underground cavern retreated in memory. By the time the viewer reached the video installation, it once again appeared to refer to a primary scene in the parking lot below—a scene whose presence, of course, was never delivered but was continually deferred.

In constructing the exhibition as a circuit rather than a site, Rocha Pitta's “Drive-In” solicited an itinerant viewer, one whose perambulations, pauses, expectations, and recollections formed, if not quite a narrative thread, an experiential thickness that linked its various parts. Indeed, if the *mise-en-scènes* of the gallery and the parking lot continually redirected the viewer to another time, another space, it was during the transit between the two that the viewer perceived these relays and diversions as content to be experienced in the absence of the work itself. Walking along the mall's ramp, surrounded by a profusion of antique stores with goods whose value is derived





## Provisional Circuits

In the last scene of the 1932 German film *Kuhle Wampe or Who Owns the World?*, written by Bertolt Brecht, a group of working- and middle-class passengers in a train engage in a heated discussion after learning that the Brazilian government had burned 11 million kilos of coffee in order to keep market prices up. The flagrant irrationality of the post-1929 world economy thus becomes symptomatic of an ideological divide, since all passengers deplore the waste but most of them nevertheless fail to recognize it as an integral part of the capitalist mode of production. However, it is precisely as one passenger turns to a nationalist rhetoric that the political bankruptcy of the nation-state vis-à-vis capitalist forces becomes dialectically evident, bringing the events across the Atlantic to shed a light on the passengers' oppressed existence within the political coordinates of their own country. In short, Brecht could still mobilize waste as a scandalous political catalyst against the complicity between national governments and capital. But what to say of the current situation, when international flows of capital are so dispersed within the everyday fabric of liberal democracies and overproduction itself is assimilated in the guise of enforced obsolescence?

The problem is not really that overproduction and waste are invisible. As a matter of fact they are actually ubiquitous, but to render them in meaningful ways is now a seemingly Herculean task. Even when they are presented as traumatic – as in apocalyptic warnings – they tend to be cynically or ideologically disavowed. As Benjamin Buchloh has argued 'any spatial relations one might still experience outside of these registers of the overproduction of objects and of electronic digitalization now appear as mere abandoned zones, as remnant objects and leftover spaces, rather than as elementary givens from which new object relations could be configured in sculptural terms in the present.'<sup>1</sup> By defining his *Provisional Heritage* project, which took place in an abandoned factory in East London, as a series of 'sculptural actions', Matheus Rocha Pitta thus mobilizes a broad repertoire of media and procedures in order to address this particular deadlock. This is

1 Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, 'Detritus and Decrepitude: the Sculpture of Thomas Hirschhorn', *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 24, no. 2, 2001, p. 43.

no mere sign of eclecticism, but the recognition of the need to engage with multiple articulations of the sensible.

Paradoxically enough, nothing in this wasteland scenario is truly *wasted*, just like no sculptural material arrives to the scene *ex nihilo* (like so many everyday commodities that are shipped worldwide). There are photographic registers not only of the pile of tires covering an abandoned car, but also of the empty spots these tires leave behind, signalled by indexical imprints. Sculptural action thus involves material displacements that, in this case, become visual events in themselves. The video is set in motion by the spilling of canned tomato soup and coffee drink, in a fortuitous nod to *Kuhle Wampe*. Like the tires, the car and a plethora of random objects, the cans were stocked in the factory, as if temporally frozen between uselessness and obliteration – the site lies right next to the 2012 Olympic Stadium and will give way to a housing redevelopment project by Ikea, that quintessential supplier of serial domesticity. The gesture of spilling the liquids is as repetitive as Andy Warhol's claimed habit of eating Campbell's soup for lunch on a daily basis. However, in contrast to Warhol's mechanic cultivation of boredom, there is something rather obscene about this stash of mass-produced obsolescence. These cans are shiny and new – just like Warhol's – and yet, their content is expired and toxic. This is brand-new waste, a token of failed circulation.

The video crucially reverses those terms so as to make failure itself circulate. In this sense, dumping those expired goods is tantamount to critically reclaiming them. The sink drains, into which they are poured, do not fulfil their usual function of taking refuse out of sight. Instead, they allow the liquids into an alternative circuit, dictated by their very material thickness (and colourful baseness). As in Robert Smithson's flow pieces, what is crucial is what happens *after* the material is poured. Only that in *Provisional Heritage*, instead of a material enactment of entropy (which is already in play everywhere one looks), this aftermath leads to a commentary on the relay between materiality and image, and between experience and representation. The slow advance of the soup, for instance, brings small-scale debris and portions of dirty ground into attention. And all the reclaimed objects in *Fountains* are smeared by either soup or coffee, as if this marked their own entry into that provisional circuit. In one sequence, cans that are piled inside

a TV monitor spill their contents over the panel in a striking metaphor of those relays. The registers of ‘overproduction of objects’ and ‘electronic digitalization’ are literally short-circuited in a conflict of tactile textures that uncannily evoke a bodily affect.

The sculptural in Rocha Pitta’s works is often mediated by photography and film, but takes and shots are always planned and/or staged. In this way, the artist makes an ironic reference to the aesthetics of advertising, in contrast to the point-and-shoot approach to image making he had adopted very early on in his career. This rejection of a documental *modus operandi* thus questions the regime of image *and* object production implicit in the practice of photography. The abandoned site is apprehended (in the cognitive sense) not as a single represented space, but by proxy, as an inventory of apprehended goods (in the legal sense – Rocha Pitta is fascinated by how the Brazilian police often displays the guns and drugs it confiscates so that they circulate as institutional propaganda in newspaper photographs). Following the clear allusion to Warhol’s serigraphs in *Hot Shots*, some of the objects in *Fountains* resemble ruined versions of Rocha Pitta’s references, such as Hélio Oiticica’s *Bólides* or works by Donald Judd, and invite further associations by the viewers. Importantly, then, photography takes part in constituting a space not because it is able to render it realistically, but because it short-circuits memory and representation. The experience of space Rocha Pitta proposes lies precisely in this gap between the double valence of ‘apprehension’ and is reminiscent of Smithson’s suggestion that ‘to reconstruct what the eyes see in words, in an “ideal language” is a vain exploit. Why not reconstruct one’s inability to see?’<sup>2</sup>

The whole project actually struck Rocha Pitta as a kind of reverse artistic residency, since, as he puts it, he went to London in order ‘to deal with problems usually associated with us [Brazil]’, such as economic stagnation and urban decline. His transnational foray thus blurs the symbolic borders between so-called developed and developing/underdeveloped nations and breaks with the deceptive teleology implicit in those verbal tenses, which place the former as the evolutionary destiny of the latter. In his experience, London and Rio de Janeiro unexpectedly face each other like two mirrors (it is no coincidence that

2 Robert Smithson, ‘Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan’, in *Robert Smithson: the Collected Writings*. Berkeley : UC Press, 1996, p. 130.

both cities are facing rapid urban changes, partly motivated by the Olympic Games). The *mise en abyme* effect that this metaphor evokes is a fit reminder of how some of the best Brazilian art in the last decades has intervened in modernist and late-modernist aesthetics precisely by rejecting fixed, essential identities. A sign that cultural flows across the Atlantic – as in so many stories of wasted coffee – are a key platform for the critical reconfiguration of pressing issues in current artistic production.

Sérgio Bruno Martins  
text written for the exhibition *Provisional Heritage*, at Sprovieri,  
London march 2011



## Allegorical Portrait of an Epoch in Transit

Luiz Camillo Osório

The denomination site-specific has emerged in contemporary art to describe monumental sculptures installed in urban spaces or nature that assume this insertion as the poetic destination of the work of art. Art, in this case, ceases to be an autonomous object and installs itself in a place, inhabiting it. Matheus Rocha Pitta's recent exhibition at Gallery Novembro, situated in the shopping mall on Rua Siqueira Campos, refers transversally to this bond with the specificity of a site. The title Drive-in suggests a transit to the interior of a place created by the artist which is at the same time real and fictional.

The work begins inside a subterranean parking lot. It is not a common parking lot. It is a kind of concrete swamp, a cave full of marks, vestiges of a decaying city. Inside, one encounters a Ford 79 transformed into a miniature gallery, its seats stripped and rear-window substituted with brick walls. Inside the car, the artist displays newspaper clippings of horses lost in the city. Everything is precarious. Estrangement is absolute.

It is curious to note that the interest of the parking lot lies more in its temporal experience than its spatial context. Time as weight and texture is displaced to the gallery above. It is as if the artist had invited us to enter inside the time that passes through the parking lot. On the way to the gallery space, we feel the tension between the marked time of the parking lot and the suspended time of the mall. The trajectory of this circuit is also interesting.

Inside the gallery, barely lit and transformed into a miniature cave, we encounter a concrete slab, brute and gray, upon which two newspaper clippings with images of wrecked cars in a city in ruins are pasted. A red string emerges from this slab and traverses the wall. On the opposite side are three photographs of the parking lot, or better, of its detonated walls, almost archaeological and marked with abbreviated drawings and graffiti made by the artist. These photographs return to the subjacent theme of the symbiosis between horse and car, parking lot and swamp.

The environment created in the video installation is a poetic summation of the elements exhibited in Drive-In. Extended scenes of the parking lot are shot from the inside of the car as horses walk slowly and surrealistically through the surrounds. Nothing more happens in this metaphysical theater, where dream and reality are mixed and time seems suspended and decelerated. Matheus

Rocha Pitta's site specificity assumes the parking lot as the stage of the imaginary crossing between the non-site of the Ford and the non-time of the horses, that is, where ruin and nature confound each other. It is the allegorical portrait of an epoch in transit.

review published in O Globo, February 12th 2006

Drive-in: Na exposição de Matheus Rocha Pitta, ruína e natureza se confundem

### Retrato alegórico de uma época em trânsito

Luiz Camillo Osório

**ARTES**  
**CRÍTICA**  
A denominação *site-specific* surgiu na arte contemporânea para descrever as esculturas monumentais que se instalam no espaço urbano ou na natureza, e assumem esta inserção como destino poético da obra. A arte, neste caso, deixa de ser um objeto autônomo e se instala em um lugar, habitando-o. A exposição de Matheus Rocha Pitta na galeria Novembro, situada no shopping da Rua Siqueira Campos, remete transversalmente para este vínculo com um sítio específico. O título "Drive-in" sugere um dirigirse para dentro deste lugar, ao mesmo tempo real e ficcional, criado pelo artista.

O trabalho começa dentro do estacionamento no subsolo. Não se

trata de um estacionamento qualquer. É uma espécie de pântano de concreto, uma caverna cheia de marcas, vestígios de uma cidade em decadência. Ali dentro encontra-se uma Belina 79 transformada pelo artista em minigaleria, depois de retirados os bancos e substituído o vidro traseiro por uma parede de tijolo. Dentro do carro ele mostra recortes de jornal com notícias de cavalos perdidos na cidade. Tudo é precário. O estranhamento é total. O curioso é que o estacionamento interessa mais como vivência temporal do que como contexto espacial. O tempo com peso e textura é deslocado para a galeria. É como se o artista nos convidasse a entrar dentro deste tempo que permeia o estacionamento. No caminho da exposição vivemos a tensão entre o

tempo marcado do estacionamento e o tempo suspenso do shopping. Esta passagem do percurso também é interessante. Dentro da galeria, quase sem luz, transformada em minicaverna, somos recebidos por uma placa de concreto, bruta e cinza, onde há duas colagens de jornal com imagens de carros naufragados sob uma cidade em ruínas. Uma linha vermelha sai da placa e percorre a parede. Do lado oposto, três fotos do estacionamento, ou melhor, de suas paredes detonadas, quase arqueológicas, marcadas com breves desenhos/grafites a gir do artista que remetem no tema subjacente da simbiose do carro e do cavalo, do estacionamento e do pântano. O clima se potencializa na videoinstalação que resume poética-



A BELINA 79 foi transformada pelo artista em minigaleria: estranhamento total

mente o conjunto exposto em "Drive-in". Longas cenas do estacionamento são lidas de dentro de um carro tendo alguns cavalos transitando, surrealista e lentamente, pelo ambiente. Nada acontece para além deste teatro metafísico, onde sonho e realidade se misturam, e o tempo

jornal O Globo, 12 de fevereiro de 2006





Viewers walking into Matheus Rocha Pitta's exhibition at Galeria Millan face a large white neoprene box (7.2 m x 4.5 m x 2.4 m) that mimics the white cube shape of the surrounding gallery. This installation's title, *Jazida* (2007), meaning both tomb and mine in Portuguese, directly points to the entire exhibition's contrasting of the destruction of the obsolete - the tomb - with the potential of anachronistic material for new use and meaning - the mine.

Rocha Pitta's white box contains metal shelves with 700 gold-coloured film canisters resembling giant coins that the Rio de Janeiro Museum of Modern Art was about to discard because the film inside them had decomposed to the point of toxicity. The room the canisters were stored in was also facing extreme consequences of neglect: thick mould covered the walls because of water leaking from the building's air conditioning system. *Common Stocks* (2007), an aurally and visually meditative video, centres on the poetics of such decay: the air conditioning's dripping water landing on the brightly lit canisters forming shimmering, golden pools.

*Common Stocks'* and other piece's monetary and banking titles strengthen the canisters' other role as symbols of currency, symbolism forging direct comparisons between gallery storage and a bank, a bank whose contents in this case are ironically falling apart rather than appreciating. Like *Common Stocks*, *Prospection Diagrams* (2007), a series of three colour photographs, and the video, *Open-End Funds* (2007), find beauty in neglect. Through extreme close-ups, the mould growing on the walls forms bubbling, off-white, almost painterly organic abstractions.

Certainly, such aesthetics of aging and found abstraction are excessively used Modernist photographic tropes. However, Rocha Pitta's installation bears a conceptual intricacy transcending such clichés. Consider how he adds crayon drawings to the fungus-covered walls he photographs, tiny cube configurations certainly indicating, in the same way the neoprene box does, the white cube, but also enclosures of all kinds – from graves to bank safes.

Such references critique not so much what the conventional gallery space encloses but the operating systems behind these cubes. Matheus Rocha Pitta reveals how as a result of institutional mechanisms and realities - technological obsolescence, funding shortages and exhibition choices – museums can act as tombs or banks holding forgotten works of art. However, this initial institutional critique is buoyed by Rocha Pitta optimistically demonstrating that what lies dormant in the vaults of crumbling institutions is ripe for re-presentation.

- Earl Miller  
(unpublished review)

## **Matheus Rocha Pitta**

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### **Formation**

History – UFF (1998/2000) Philosophy – UERJ (2002/2004)

### **selected group shows**

What Now? Bendana-Pinel Art Contemporain, Paris, 2012  
Travessias, Centro de Cultura Bela da Maré, Rio de Janeiro, 2011  
Caos e Efeito, Itaú Cultural, São Paulo, 2011  
RendezVous 11, Institut D'Art Contemporaine, Lyon, 2011  
Um Outro Lugar, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, 2011  
29ª Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2010  
Convivências, Fundação Iberê Camargo, 2010  
Primeira e Última, Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo, 2010  
Neues Museum, Basso Studio, Berlin, Germany, 2009  
After Utopia, Centro per l'arte contemporaneo Luigi Pecci, Prato, Italia, 2009  
Nova Arte Nova, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, 2008  
Passagens Secretas, Centro Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo, 2008  
É claro que você sabe do que estou falando, Galeria Vermelho, São Paulo, 2008  
Seja Marginal Seja Herói, Galerie GP Vallois, Paris, 2008  
14º Salao da Bahia, Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Salvador, 2008 (acquisition prize)  
Panorama de Arte Brasileira, MAM Sao Paulo, 2007 and Alcalá 31, Madrid, 2008  
Jogos Visuais, Centro Cultural da Caixa, Rio de Janeiro, 2007  
Paradoxos Brasil, Itaú Cultural, São Paulo; Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro; Centro Cultural Dragão do Mar, Fortaleza, 2006  
Um século de arte brasileira - Coleção Gilberto Chateaubriand, Pinacoteca do Estado, São Paulo; MAMRJ, Rio de Janeiro, 2006  
Além da Imagem, Centro Cultural Telemar, Rio de Janeiro, 2005  
Posição 2004, Parque Lage, Rio de Janeiro, 2004  
ArteFoto, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, 2002  
Uma Geração em Trânsito, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, 2001

### **solo shows**

Dois Reais, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, 2012  
Provisional Heritage, Sprovieri, London, UK, 2011  
FF#2, Progetti, Rio de Janeiro, 2010  
Galeria de Valores, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, 2010  
FF, Galeria Vermelho, São Paulo 2010  
Drive Thru # 2, Galeria Vermelho, São Paulo 2009  
Project Room, Arco, Madrid 2009  
Drive Thru # 1, Sprovieri, London, 2008  
Jazida, Galeria Millan, São Paulo, 2007  
Drive-in, Novembro Arte Contemporânea, Rio de Janeiro, 2006

Bolsa Pampulha, Museu de Arte da Pampulha, Belo Horizonte MG, 2004  
Três páginas da topografia facial, Castelinho do Flamengo, Rio de Janeiro, 2002  
Projeto para uma nova iluminação do Paço Imperial, Pça XV e Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, 2001

### **grants and awards**

First place for photography on 1st Itamaraty Prize for Contemporary Art, Brasilia, Brazil, 2011  
Premio Mostras de Artistas no Exterior, PBAC, Fundação Bienal, São Paulo, 2010  
XI Funarte Marc Ferrez Photography Award, Rio de Janeiro, 2010  
47º Salão de Pernambuco, a 10 months grant to develop the project Drive Thru # 2, Recife, 2008  
Illy Sustain Art Prize, ARCO8, Madrid, Spain 2008  
Acquisition prize of 14º Salao da Bahia, Salvador, with the video Common Stocks, 2008  
Iberê Camargo Grant, two-months residency at the Blanton Art Museum, Austin, USA  
27o Salão de Arte Nacional de Belo Horizonte, Bolsa Pampulha, A one-year residency in, that culminates with a solo show at Museu de Arte da Pampulha, Belo Horizonte – MG, 2003

### **Bibliography**

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MARTINS, Sérgio Bruno. “Provisional Circuits”, volante da exposição, Sprovieri, Londres UK, 2011  
INTERLENGHI, Luiza. “Fundo Falso # 2”, in Exhibition Folder, Progetti, Rio de Janeiro, 2010  
MOURA, Rodrigo. “Drive-In”, in Art Nexus # 61, jul/ago 2006  
OSÓRIO, Luiz Camillo. “Retrato alegórico de uma época em trânsito”, in O Globo, 12 de fevereiro de 2006  
DUARTE, Luisa. “Drive In”, folder da exposição, Novembro Arte Contemporânea, janeiro de 2006  
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MOURA, Rodrigo. “Matheus Pépetuo”, in Bolsa Pampulha 2003-2004, Museu de Arte da Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, 2004  
PRADILLA, Ileana. “Uma Geração em Trânsito”, catálogo da exposição, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, 2001



