

ALEXANDRA DO CARMO

Alexandra do Carmo nasceu em Portugal em 1966, vive e trabalha actualmente em Nova Iorque, estudou no ARCO em Lisboa, no Pratt Institute em Brooklyn e frequentou o Whitney Museum Independent Study Program em Nova Iorque, recentemente esteve em residência no Irish Museum of Modern Art em Dublin. Tem realizado exposições em Portugal e no estrangeiro; nos Estados Unidos da América, Alemanha, Espanha e Irlanda. O seu trabalho faz parte de colecções privadas e públicas como por exemplo o Irish Museum of Modern Art em Dublin e a Fundação Ilídio Pinho no Porto. Em Nova Iorque é representada pela galeria Art Projects International e em Lisboa pela Galeria Carlos Carvalho. A artista tem como principal objecto de estudo o atelier, utiliza desenho, instalação, vídeo, fotografia, e performance numa investigação sobre a dinâmica da autoria. Quando analisado sob uma perspectiva geral, o seu trabalho em desenho, performance, vídeo e/ou áudio e instalação, tem vindo a ser desenvolvido em estreita relação com o papel do artista como agente cultural numa complexa relação com o público. Com base no espaço de atelier (o espaço de trabalho do artista; em termos conceptuais e práticos é utilizado como recurso e espaço de apresentação) procura levantar questões relacionadas com a autoria. Cada projecto debruça-se sobre uma área diferente desta relação como campo de estudo, sendo que o projecto mais recente, Office/Commercial (2007), explora a transformação de espaços de negócios (manufatura) em ateliers de artista na cidade de Nova Iorque.

Alexandra do Carmo (b.1966) is a practicing Portuguese artist based in New York. She studied at AR.CO in Lisbon, Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in New York, recently she was in residence at The Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin. She has exhibited widely in Portugal and internationally in the USA, Germany, Spain and Ireland. Her work is part of private and public collections such as the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin and Ilídio Pinho Foundation in Porto. She is affiliated with Art Projects International in New York and Carlos Carvalho Contemporary Art in Lisbon. Alexandra do Carmo's practice is focused on the studio as a conceptual field of study, she employs drawing, installation, video, photography and performance in an investigation of the dynamics of authorship.



OFFICE / COMMERCIAL

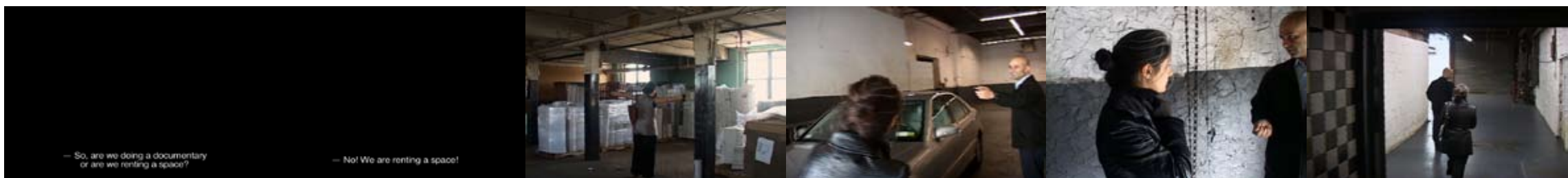
2007

Vídeo, NTSC, cor, estéreo, 30'45"

Video, NTSC, colour, stereo, 30'45"

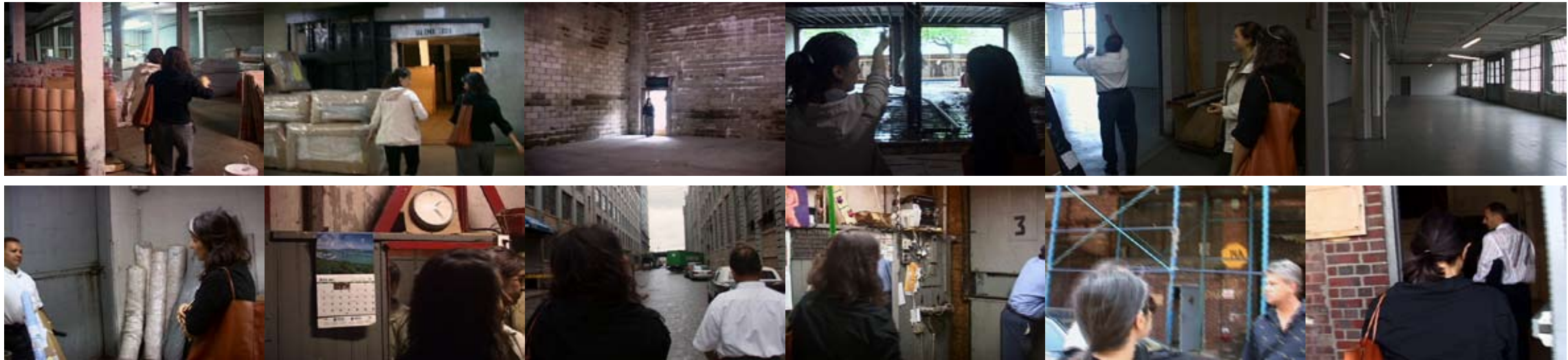




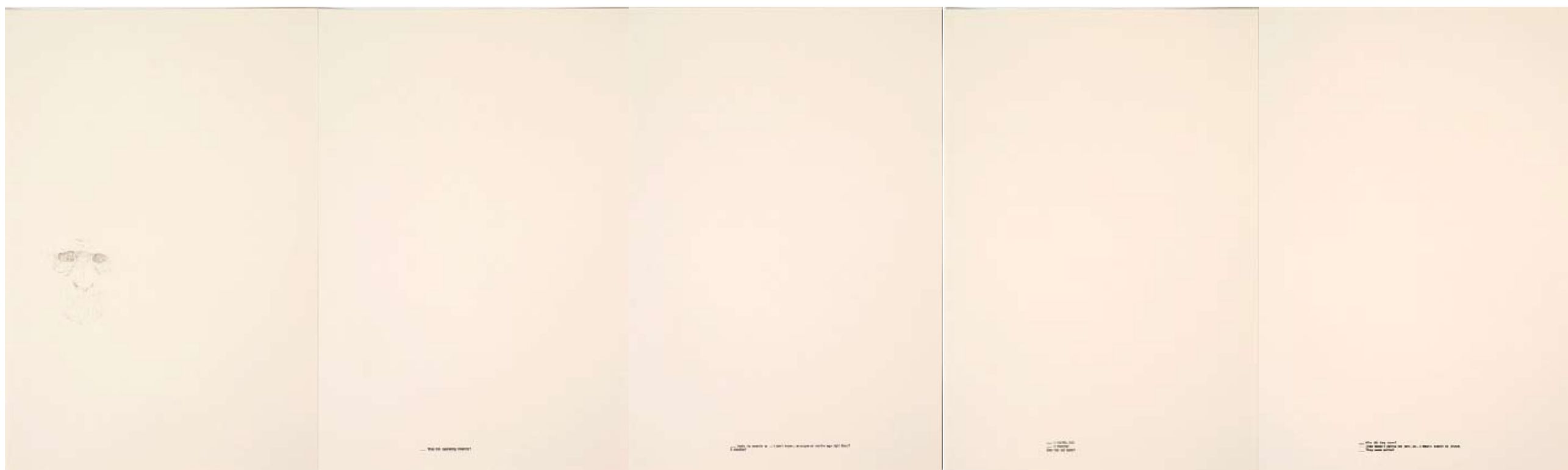


— So, are we doing a documentary
or are we renting a space?

— No! We are renting a space!



Série de Desenhos de 2008 (da série Office / Commercial)
Lápis, lápis de cor e texto impresso s/ papel,
Pencil, colour pencil and printed text on paper,
49,1 x 33 cm



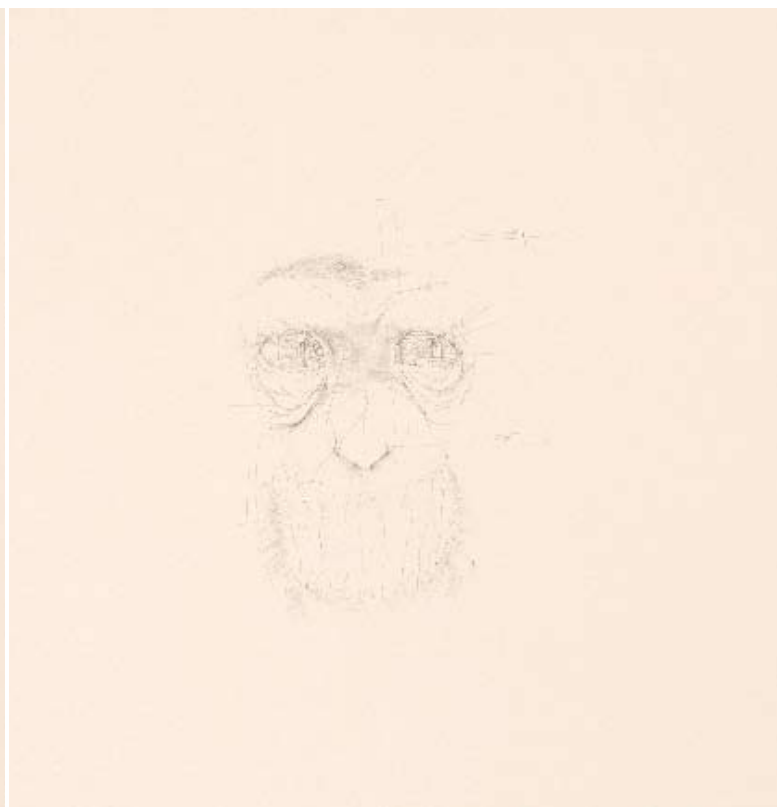
... the way of the machine that makes the world of tomorrow
... the way of the machine that makes the world of tomorrow

... the way of the machine that makes the world of tomorrow

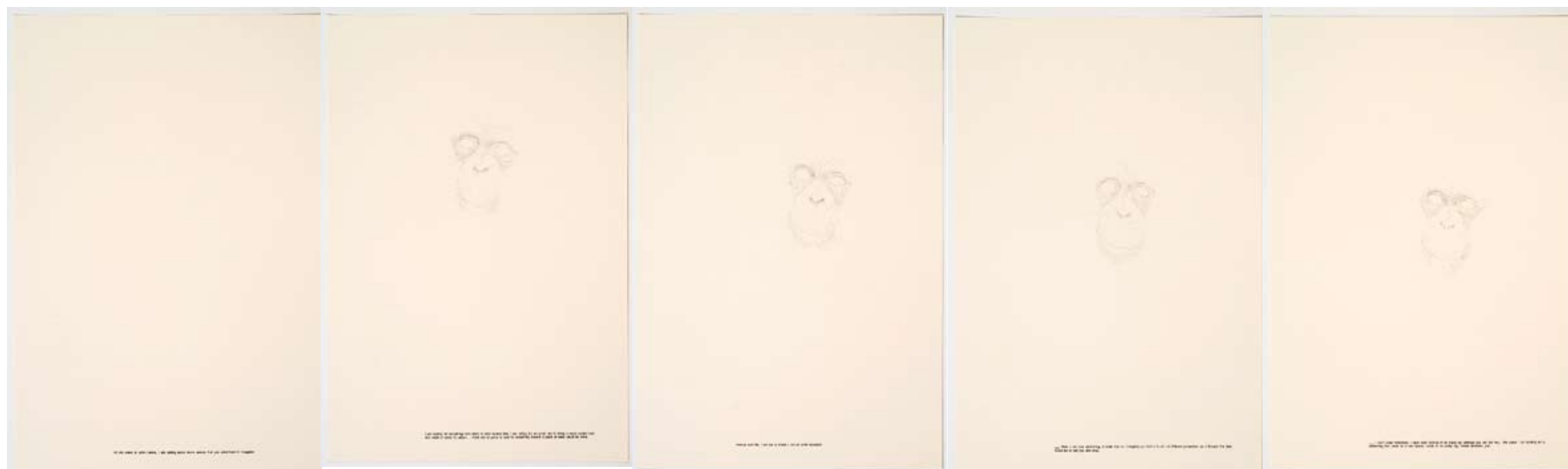














The Steam Shop (or the painter's studio), 2007

Video, NTSC, cor, estéreo, 66'46"

Video, NTSC, colour, stereo, 66'46"







Imagens da exposição na galeria Carlos Carvalho Arte Contemporânea, Lisboa, Portugal, 2008



Views of the exhibition Office /Commercial at Carlos Carvalho Arte Contemporânea, Lisbon, Portugal, 2008



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**ALEXANDRA DO CARMO'S
PERCEPTIVE FISSURES**

David Barro

There is a group of artists who carry out a subtle narrative, with minimal devices, with moments that are born out of patient waiting and with a tense, reflective gaze. The case of Alexandra do Carmo is one of them. Her drawings emerge like a journal capable of reflecting and reflecting on what being an artist today means, what their place is and what their difficulties are. As if it were a game, and without losing her sense of humour, Alexandra do Carmo works on communication, sounding out its possibilities until concluding its impossibility. Like in palaeontology, each step forward comes from other tiny discoveries which apparently do not mean anything and lead nowhere, but which end up making sense. In her latest works each drawing grants meaning and form to an idea. In this manner Alexandra do Carmo reveals and decodes the real world in order to multiply its possibilities. She does so using metaphorical figures such as the dinosaur and the chimpanzee, which function as writing, and take us into a sort of materialised dream, a reality that involves the first reality and reminds us of the fictional element that is hidden in both of them.

When looking at her drawings, we become locked within a story almost without noticing it: the story of the artist's diary. Immersed in a sort of circular, Borgesian ruin. As pointed out by the French philosopher Clément Rosset, in his work *Le réel et son double: essai sur l'illusion*, "all duplication supposes the existence of an original and a copy, and one needs to question which of the two, the real event or the "other event", is not really the double of the "other event". So at the end it turns out that the real event is the "other": the other is this real that occurs, that is, the double of another reality that might be the real itself but which always flees and about which we will never be able to say or know anything". After all, our artist and her writing in the shape of drawing also ends up moving in a sort of Moebius strip that does not allow one to distinguish between the inside and the outside, in a seamless and endless curve, a course that insinuates but cannot totally deduce the realities, accepting them in a natural manner, as if in an incongruous

events in a sort of independent and concomitant existence. In her recent works she thinks that animal gaze – that of the chimpanzee – as light, as possibility and memory, as the passing of time that allows one to draw different phases and moments, both interior and exterior ones, clear and blurred shapes. So the marks and lines that form the fiction of the workshop in the eyes of the chimpanzee and those that form the animal figure are mixed together in a sort of Piranesian, almost magical tightrope-walking, drawing up presences and stories as it goes on building up. Like the very process of "making", thoughts overlap and are absorbed in a sort of palimpsest. There is a past and a present, a cinematographic rhythm in the action of looking until coming to an illusion of order that comes from repetition. In the meantime, the succession of images has already formed a story, a reading.

In her last work, which is the reason for this book, the drawings represent the narrative of the video in emphasising the fiction. The film itself is a performance, in this case a documentary on the artist who intends to rent an apartment in Brooklyn. The questions follow on, and everything is being filmed. In the video we are shown the whole relationship with the real estate agent, and as a backdrop we see the

change taking place in that area of New York City, which had previously been the home for other types of workshops, just like the development of art and the development of the space. The title – Office/Commercial – underlines that sense of spaces for rent. As always, Alexandra do Carmo uses ideas as her material. The simple, narrative will result from her reduction into a drawing, avoiding unnecessary noises, often seeking colour as a pictorial hue, being timid yet inevitably more instinctive, like a syncopated note that seeks out the delicate emphasis. If at first it was the dinosaurs, now it will be the chimpanzees who take us on a journey into the past without leaving the metaphorical present. Everything is more important than it seems. It is a matter of not losing one's calm. Like in a music score . Let us think of the figure of the chimpanzee, dumb, upstanding, challenging the spectator like in the best performances. The spectator has to face up to that divided gaze (...). Meanwhile, the dinosaur heads from previous works insist and are repeated until they make up a landscape. Repetition, more than ever an action on memory, is associated to difference, like in the artist's stubborn making, like that above-mentioned palimpsest of emotions

that make a time denser and do so sketching the horizon line. But let us not forget. Drawing is physical and imaginative, something that gives off a feeling of being incomplete; the simplest and most personal form of making a picture. We could think about how many artists have erased everything to try to go back to draw the story. A good therapy for correcting errors. Because the drawing has taken on a meaning as a (literary, subjective) refuge in order to narrate some current themes without overdoing it, to the point of occupying a privileged place in relation to such a spectacle. For Alexandra do Carmo, the drawing is present and, as we have stated, its set is an accumulation that acts like a daily register. We should insist on it in the same way that she insists on that performing sense of drawing. Each drawing is a past and a present, each image is the construction of a memory. Alexandra do Carmo repeats and represents sequentially in order to resemble an order that is never really that, but which only manages to be a mark, possibilities for a story told in simultaneous translation. So the notes printed on paper correspond to the presents in her videos. Past, present and future as a trajectory lead us to a story capable of functioning as a hypertext in which everything is united and



Views of the exhibition Office /Commercial at Carlos Carvalho Arte Contemporânea, Lisbon, Portugal, 2008



Views of the exhibition Office /Commercial at Carlos Carvalho Arte Contemporânea, Lisbon, Portugal, 2008



deconstructed, is disorganised and represented, but above all is repeated.

Let us think of the theories of Michel Serres, for whom the history of science undergoes turbulence; that is, it is subjected to random connections of all kinds among several different areas. Serres points out how science moves forward through the unpredictable and the unexpected. "Both the world and objects, both bodies and my own soul are, at the moment of their birth, drifting. Drifting close to descent down the slope. And this means, as is usual, that they irreversibly become undone and die (...) The drift is the whole of time: the dawn of appearing, life limited by finiteness and disintegration, a random explosion of multiple temporalities in the infinite space". In Alexandra do Carmo that discontinuity and indefiniteness, that turbulence, is the product of that continuing test, of that drawing as experience. The chimpanzee's eyes would be a sort of interconnected link allowing an uninterrupted but broken reading, one interconnected but cut. Like an endless 'text in movement', it cannot be read in its physical impossibility. The spectator-reader sees before him a story told by an author-actor which is no more than a text which is only made up of alternative beginnings of texts, of fictions drawn about that camouflaged performance of gathering information. Deep down it all fits in with what Roland Barthes defined as the 'ideal text', thinking of an interwoven text that might constitute a type of galaxy of meanings, a reversible text. We are talking about a text that is experience and fiction, a non-linear search, often following a sort of serendipity. The reader defines and decides his path of reading, altering the centre, the start, the axis of its organization. Thus we establish a decentralised, open path, with no hierarchies. An alternative for the spectator.

Moulthrop termed this "textual promiscuity". All of the courses generated introduce different possibilities of interpretation that lead us, in the final analysis, to think of poetry. The original meanings and messages are fractured, making the reading richer through that which is called "poetic licence" semiotics. The hypertext drawn out in Office/Commercial would thus come close to a puzzle with the perceptive appearance of a zapping process, in which what is suggested is much more efficient than what is suggested by a thing, if we follow Borges.

The figure of the chimpanzee, which in this case

takes on a tormented appearance, with blurred edges in which the imperceptible stands out, stands as evasion and disorientation in its distorted gesture, but also as a process; as a process of the construction of a language. I am thinking of how Samuel Beckett, in an article on Proust, points out our inclination towards the vulnerable and sensitive when we are taken out of the safe context of our daily surroundings. Alexandra do Carmo seems to wish something to emphasise something like this in many of her projects, aware of the cryptic sense of contemporary art for a non-specialised spectator, overwhelmed by doubt and attracted by that

impossibility that emanates from the Indiscernible and alien that it may produce, but above all obliged to make an effort, like the chimpanzee, to reach an interpretation that he ends up being unable to reach. To see, or to understand? To look at, or to read? To observe, or to interpret? How many questions might we ask ourselves about the possible reading or non-reading that the figure of the chimpanzee might take from the images? And if we, the public, are the chimpanzee, and the project is what we call art, what do we understand about that art that virtually flow from those images projected by the chimpanzee?

The question posed by Alexandra do Carmo is merely that of how to communicate from the position of the artist and whether that communication is truly possible. The masked used for this search – that of the chimpanzee – may be insignificant, although in this case it is not. The chimpanzee, which is very close to the human being in its genetic make-up, is a key towards emphasising the fiction that the very act of drawing already contains within itself. Also to reveal the artist's gaze, and, of course, a sense of humour contained in each one of these portraits-self-portraits. The fictionalised reality functions as a mirror in the eyes of that chimpanzee that ends up granting expression to a drawing that is apparently similar but which always bears the tones and marks of previous attempts and mistakes. In Alexandra do Carmo's drawings one may read notes capable of remaining there, in the same drawing, from much before the result we see. While the spectator reads these notes he is, unwillingly, caught in the image-reflection of the chimpanzee's eyes, as if he were involved in that same space, as the main character of the tale by Salvador Elizondo, *La historia según Pao Cheng*, felt: On a summer's day the philosopher Pao Cheng sat down on the bank of a stream to foretell his destiny in

a shell of a turtle. Before the eyes of his imagination, great nations fell and small ones were born which later became great and powerful before falling in their turn. The force of his imagination was such that he felt himself walking through its streets. Through one of the windows, he could make out a man writing. Pao Cheng then looked at the sheets of paper lying on an edge of the table and as he went on deciphering the meaning of what was written in them his face clouded over. "This man is writing a story", he said to himself. "The story is called *La historia según Pao Cheng* and it is about a philosopher from the olden times who one day sat on the bank of a stream and thought about... Then if I am a memory of that man and if that man forgets me, will I die?" We, or rather our illusion, is what operates in this redoubled world; this is done so up to the point that, like Pao Cheng, we can no longer distinguish between realities and appearances. If we think of Alexandra do Carmo's work in a retrospective manner, some keys to it are revealed. If in *Office/Commercial* (2007/2008) she explores the transformation of spaces, in *A willow (or without Godot)* (2006) it is the spectator's behaviour that is seen, taking Beckett's well-known play as a starting

point. In previous works the creative process (untitled drawings, 2006); the literal and symbolic creation of a workshop by the artist and other workers using the specific language of art to question virtual proximities (*Argon Corporation*, 2004/2005); the immodest gaze of a spectator at the inside of the workshop through a microscope (50 Richards, 2004); the relationship between the artists activity and that of a palaeontologist (Wild m5, 2004); or the spectator as author at the time of producing (*Micron 005*, 2002/2004); tell us of a concrete search: to bring the spectator close to the work, both physically and conceptually. The first approximation is obvious: whether this is looking through a microscope or forcing him to physically come close to the drawing in order to understand what is taking place inside the eyes of the chimpanzee or the motif of some dinosaur heads makes the reception physical. Meanwhile, conceptual approximation takes place almost in the opposite way: in seeking a direct confrontation a break in the discourse or the event is produced. Here the mistake, like in the act of drawing, takes place "where stating is impossible",



Views of the exhibition *Office / Commercial* at Carlos Carvalho Arte Contemporânea, Lisbon, Portugal, 2008

in the incomplete and impossible aspect of all communication, in the now metaphorical difficulty that flows from the choice of the animal itself. In Office/Commercial it is not the first time she has approached the complexity of the idea of the artist's workshop. Before, for example, the deconstruction of the essence of the workshop took its starting point in Courbet's painting (The Painter's Studio) in order to reformulate the notions of the public and the private and the new models of post-production and representation. With her shiftings, Alexandra do Carmo makes her attitude political, seeking to intervene on the social sphere in a critical manner, showing and granting greater presence to the process. And always from anthropological performances and collective field work capable of uniting the non-artistic social aspect with the specifically artistic one. Deep down this underlines a deconstructive style that we may compare to some words by Italo Calvino: "Kublai Khan had stated that Marco Polo's cities were alike, as if moving from one to another did not involve a journey but a change of elements. Now, from each city that Marco described to him, the Great Khan's mind went off of its own accord, and dismantled the city bit by bit, rebuilt it in a different way, replacing ingredients, displacing them and inverting them. Marco went on referring to his journey, but the emperor was no longer listening to him and interrupted him". And there is a great deal of interruption in Alexandra do Carmo's drawings, although it is in order to move forward. They are drawings that appear to be suspended, in a sort of almost thrilling product of going through the mirror as a form of experience, as we will see further on. Limits, balances and tensions, everything inviting one to penetrate it with the aim of coming across the true depth of an image that is always the same but always different. Deep down, Alexandra do Carmo is interested in taking detours and disseminating meanings. There is a search for effort in interpretation,

an active participation capable of restating the idea of an art capable of functioning as a science of knowledge. This is the reason for her ambivalences, her games of differences in what is apparently the same, her search for singularity in the similar. All of Alexandra do Carmo's drawings remain open, and thus accept and inherit the universe of mistaken marks from her previous attempts, seeking the essence of that hand that draws in feeling out possibilities. In Alexandra do Carmo it will always be difficult to have access to the image because the present always emerges as a presence in the suspended gaze. In a certain manner Alexandra do Carmo rushes into a challenge of rigid conventional order and proposes the disorder of poetry, or, which is the same, the random and exception. But it seems to me that this poetic disorder comes from a mental order, from an image that starts to experience variations and crossing in a manner similar to that of fantasies or dreams. The mental image is distinguished here from the mental scheme in which she keeps the visual traces necessary to recognise a thing or a place; in this case the search for a studio may turn into an obsessive view of previous levels that little by little we deform and shape to our liking. They are virtual images, dominating forces that have a lot to do with the psychic, impressions of similarity or of analogy that may manage to be simple mental constructions. Perhaps for this reason Deleuze wonders, "Is it not, in short, the definition of perception to make imperceptible forces perceptible to the senses, the forces that populate our world, which directly affect us, which make us perceptible?" The artist's fantasy may be found there. And it is in that sort of imperceptible fantasies that Alexandra do Carmo manipulates her structural bases in order to uncover her particular view, disturbing all distinction between the real and the virtual, without betraying her fidelity to some conceptual presuppositions that remain firm, dealing with democratising aesthetic experience through forcing the idea of an active spectator.

As I was stating, Alexandra do Carmo's work offers a certain resistance. It emerges there were the meaning still lives without being flattened by the image. The patient gaze unveils that first ambiguity and generates a kaleidoscope of possibilities in one's gazing, as Berger points out so clearly. Alexandra do Carmo imitates the process of seeing and only thus is it possible to discover her intentions. Everything becomes obvious when she draws the head of a Tyrannosaurus Rex with a thin orange marker pen, a head that is not recognisable at first sight, which leads us to a virtual, ambiguous landscape. Once the head has been recognised the doubts as to how to interpret it remain, with form and meaning never seeming to come together. Robert Knafo explains this with some feeling: "What I see as interesting in this is that some aesthetic projects of disruption or of radical redirecting, of that liaison between form and meaning can produce very different results: some art provokes a sort of semiological dyspepsia; it seems to actively frustrate understanding and appears arbitrary, or even perverse, impermeable to interpretation. On the other hand, artistic instances and strategies like those of Alexandra do Carmo, even when they are disorientating, may at the same time seem thrilling, reverberating and stimulating; instead of raising up an impenetrable wall, throw open a series of doors and windows that is greater than usual". Alexandra do Carmo fractures and decomposes the meaning, effectively multiplying it and even exploding it like Lewis Carroll's Alice: "In another moment Alice was through the glass and had jumped lightly down into the Looking-glass room (...). Then she began looking about, and noticed that what could be seen from the old room was quite common and uninteresting, but that all the rest was as different as possible. For instance, the pictures on the wall next the fire seemed to be all alive, and the very clock on the chimney-piece had got the face of a little old man, and grinned at her." Carroll's words are particularly revealing of the leaps that the image also undertakes with Alexandra

do Carmo, although in her everything is turned into something more subtle, into a palaeontological poetry that is born out of the note, the indication and of insistence. Deep down it is a matter of producing meaning by showing the fiction and the gaze as a product of time. Like in her chimpanzees, the artist's reality precedes the image, and the latter precedes the meaning that the spectator may be able to assign to the group of drawings that acts as a set. Just as in the overall set of her work there is a conscious process of absorption of forms and contents, involving the spectator in that process of creating the product, although it may be a performance, in order to seek a direct relationship, the creation in symbiosis that would traditionally only be the function of the artist and now has cut short the distances. Therefore she attempts to strip creation and grant music to these ideas, which more than ever are the material for action. In Alexandra do Carmo's work everything seems simple although it is a product of an analysis of the complexity connected to the visual. Thus questions referring to alterity, to repetition, to the process, to error, to reception and, in short, to the imperfect act of creating and the difficult position of the creator as the generator of meaning – all this is hidden in each one of her drawings, videos or performances. They are perceptive fissures that positively draw a lost identity.

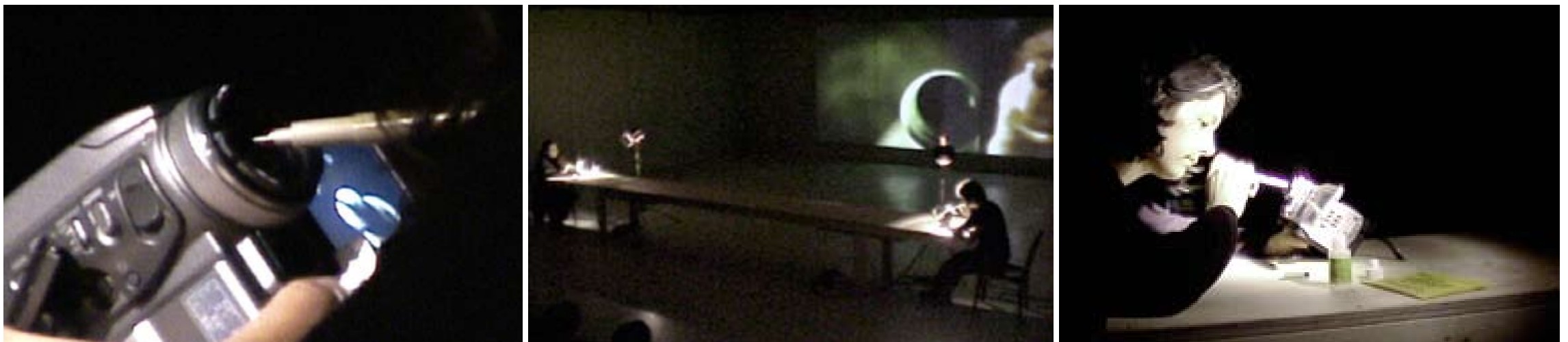
— So, are we doing a documentary
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MICRON 004

2002-2004

Performance, 1 hora

Performance, 1 hour



Imagens da exposição no Pratt Institute, Brooklyn 2002 Views of the exhibition at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn 2002

Em Micron 005, uma performance realizada no Lugar Comum-Fábrica da Pólvora de Barcarena, é utilizada uma mesa estreita e comprida (6 metros), a artista apenas estabelece contacto visual com a outra pessoa. A actividade dos participantes consiste em desenhar directamente nas lentes da câmara de vídeo, esta imagem é projectada em tempo real na parede adjacente. Estabelece-se assim uma situação onde o papel do espectador e do autor se entrecruzam; pelo acto de desenhar vendo a sua própria face ampliada, cada participante é confrontado com os seus próprios pensamentos, enquanto os revela aos outros no através do desenho.

The performance consists of the following: in a large (12m x 10m x 4m) darkened hall, there is a long, thin table (5.4m long and 60cm wide). The artist sits at one end of the table, and members of the audience are invited to take turns sitting at the other end of the table, with a small spotlight aimed at both parties. In front of each of us is a digital camera turned towards the seated party, a small pen (micron 005), and fluid and paper for cleaning the camera lens. The cameras are attached to video projectors, which are mounted underneath the table, and project the images from both cameras side by side, with a small overlapping area, onto an adjacent wall to the size of 4.4 m x 3m. They both draw directly on

the lenses of the cameras, with the images projected onto the adjacent wall.

As the camera is aimed toward each person's face, the lens drawing appears on top of the person's face, the drawing is amplified by the projection. It is through the projection that the parties become connected; as their drawings overlap by one meter, one can interfere with the projected space of the other. The participants can see the ongoing results of their drawing through the camera's small viewing screen, which is turned towards the participant. The camera is permanently on auto-focus. Each participating audience member can stay at the table for as long

as they want. On the table there are information and one instruction for the participants which is : 1. please erase the drawing before you leave the table. The length of the table prevents verbal communication. The distance between the artist and the participant is emphasized by the long and narrow dimensions of the table, which is related with the traditional scenario of the intimate moment of a couple at the dinner table. The communication, therefore, is created through the visual elements of the projection. The duration of the performance is one hour.



Imagens da exposição no Lugar Comum, Barcarena, Portugal 2004. Views of the exhibition at Lugar Comum, Barcarena, Portugal 2004.

ROGGENBROT

2002

Performance

1 hora / 1 hour

Stills do video número 1, apresentado em Breadmatters III, Cork Arts Center, Ireland, 2005

Stills of the video number 1, presented at Breadmatters III, Cork Arts Center, Ireland, 2005

Colaboração com Alison Knowles

O projecto Roggenbrott é composto por três projecções video; nos vídeos laterais podem ver-se imagens das viagens pelo rio Hudson; Manhattan-Barrytown, Barrytown-Manhattan, o audio é uma gravação de Knowles de 1995, o conteúdo refere-se ao rio Hudson e é retirado do texto de Knowles para o projecto Bread and Water do mesmo ano; neste, imagens de pão estão associadas a perfis topográficos de rios. O video central mostra o encontro entre as duas artistas e a performance realizada (o fabrico de pão).. O video investiga a produção artística em colaboração e o que significa interpretar o trabalho de um outro artista.

Roggenbrot is a video work that investigates collaborative production in art. The starting point came from Alison Knowles' piece Bread and Water, where the two elements of the title are paralleled through images of bread that double as specific topographical profiles of rivers. For Roggenbrot, the artists baked bread together in upstate New York at Alison Knowles' studio. The journey along the Hudson river between both artists is energised by a series of resonances -- the site of the practice is extended to other domains such as the river and the place of living. In this video, two narratives are interwoven - a static framed situation inside the studio where the artists are discussing the project and by opposition, the actual making in an outside dynamic context where the practice becomes richer.



Vista da exposição no Cork Arts Center, Ireland, 2005 View of the exhibition at Cork Arts Center, Ireland, 2005

WILD M5

Video Video
17 Desenhos 17 Drawings

Alexandra do Carmo: Time's Archeologist
by Jonathan Goodman

More than anything else, the New York based-artist Alexandra do Carmo is an archeologist, scrutinizing memory on both a public and private plane. Her video Wild m5 and series of dinosaur drawings articulate a process whereby the impact of the art has much to do with the audience's perception; the activities presented in the video, in which a paleontologist sifts through mud and silt while looking for such things as tiny teeth that would date the material being studied, enderings of what we do not easily internalize. Both video and drawings present a specifically materialist point of view and a deeply personal reading of what creativity and content is capable of, very early in the 21st century. do Carmo, like many other artists working today, proceeds along oblique paths, trusting to a degree of indirection that may make initial understanding of her work difficult in all its metamorphic implications.

Part of the struggle to understand, and in a way to complete, do Carmo's art, stems not so much from the complications of her vision as it does from the increasingly indirect notion of creativity itself. The context surrounding the art object has become as meaningful as the artwork itself; this is because many of the ideas in contemporary art are intellectually driven, understandable only insofar as the ideas surrounding the work are made intelligible to those viewing the object. Much art conceived of in this way is political by implication; there has been a steady push to politicize the implications of art because we are entering an age in which the democratization of

culture is seen as central to the art effort. The ideas inherent in such work are likely best adumbrated as language-based communications, in which the idea of the piece takes over as the justification of its meaning, rather than the sensuous given of the image itself. do Carmo's art doesn't necessarily trade on the politicization of her message, but the implications of what she does are profoundly intellectual, and therefore conceptual to an extent. The brilliance of her dinosaur series is that it is based on an extended understanding of drawing--what mark making means. Her barely visible imagery at first suggests misty mountains in the Chinese tradition; however, closer appraisal shows the landscape to consist of specific dinosaur forms, for example, the head and teeth of Tyrannosaurus rex.

In certain kinds of metaphorical understanding, one thing becomes another, which becomes another. There is a protean freedom in our reading of art whose intellectual basis supports, indeed encourages, multiple readings on the part of the viewer. When the notion of memory is also invoked, the interpretation of the image is made richer and more complex by virtue of its relationship to tradition as an environment supporting the artist's current efforts. In do Carmo's video Wild m5, we see a physical paleontologist sift through a small amount of dirt as he searches for the small teeth and bits of bone that will in fact date the ground from which the material was taken; later in the video, we see larger amounts of mud, in which the hard remnants of animals are seen. If the short scenes of research are taken together, the film becomes an inspired attempt to read such activities as central to

the process of finding, even of categorizing the act of scientific research as a major way of ordering the world, of making sense of our environment. What do Carmo is after, in her powerful filmic exposition of the scientific method, is not so much an expression of the physical specifics of research (although that is a meaningful part of the video) as a sense of **tradition** that would bind the anthropological effort to the image-making undertaking. The search in the mud for small evidence of animals is not unlike the artist's search for an imagery adequate to the genuine intricacies associated with living in contemporary life--the key to both endeavors is a sense of history, no matter whether literal, as occurs in the video, or oblique, as intimated by the artist's efforts to forge a new vision based on the past. (...)

For many reasons, memory is crucial to do Carmo's understanding of art and tradition. The scientific process attempts to quantify the past, while the artist's psyche is driven to interpret it, yet the point of the artist's work is that the two processes are not so different from each other as might seem at first. The viewer is also an important part of the equation, as he or she completes do Carmo's task of presenting processes and images in time. Research may be a central part of the artist's equation, whose elements are dug out from time much as an archeologist might unearth bits of culture from dust; however, the viewer's interpretation of what is seen depends upon how the drawing is read--as a version of the Chinese landscape, as a seamless representation of the dinosaur, or as a

comment on the nature of creativity itself, namely, the representation of something just barely visible in the imaginative landscape, in which mark making becomes a trope aimed at demonstrating the importance of the effort--searching the mud, marking the paper--in a larger quest for meaningfulness in the postmodern landscape. do Carmo's gift to us is that she refuses to align herself with any single interpretation in particular, in part because she knows that the constraints of a single reading do not do justice to the complexity of her task. The dinosaurs in the series first read as mountainous landscapes hidden by mists; a more careful look shows that the forms are dragon's heads and long teeth, portrayed with a subtlety and delicacy that belies the ferocity of the real-life dragons do Carmo is portraying. The artist just barely portrays the forms with an orange pen; she demands that we not only casually see the imagery but also study it for the sake of the meaning it makes upon closer scrutiny. That the images reaches toward invisibility is central to Carmo's esthetic because absence is as important to her as the presence of form. Drawing is not only a matter of imposing form on the page; it also concerns the experience of absence or emptiness, which the artist presents as though her structures were conforming to a nearly Zen investigation of what is no longer there. That the dinosaur drawings conform to another genre, their seeming appearance as Chinese landscape, complicates do Carmo's rhetoric, wherein the given is treated as a multiple reality. The artist's interest in forms of the real is available to her audience in a process of becoming that implies a belief in more than one reality; this gives do Carmo her interest in



Vista da exposição na Sala do Veados, Lisboa, Portugal View of the exhibition at Sala do Veados, Lisbon, Portugal, 2004, view of the drawing installation, 17 drawings, pen on paper

an imagery that may be applied to more than one notion of being. The complications bring out the idea of drawing as a phase of creativity; understood in its largest manifestation, drawing possesses a realism that implicates or includes its absence or anti-self. As a result the forms, which are literally taken from a child's natural history book, participate in their own undoing.

do Carmo's esthetic, then, involves its own negation--a stance whose remarkable sophistication is understood by its very absence as form. As an audience, we are invited not only to see, but also to imagine a reality whose presence is implied as much as it is publicly stated. The video convinces us of the parallel between the objectivity of science and the subjectivity of art, just as the drawings hover delicately between absence and existence; both the video and the drawings wait for completion on the part of their viewer, who internalizes the material he or she sees in a process that imitates the creativity of the artist herself. As a result, meaning is generated within the triangle of the artist relating the work to her audience, in a way that reads creativity quite democratically--as one form of information among others. This is why do Carmo spends her time filming the working paleontologist; she sees his activities as parallel to her own. Both do Carmo and the paleontologist are archeologists of time, even though the time of the mud and teeth is literal and the time of the imagined dinosaurs is figurative or metaphorical. Both activities insist on an inner integrity, through which statements about the past may be made. The dinosaurs are icons of patience, relating brilliantly to the slow, methodical work of the scientist in the film.

do Carmo is unusual, even remarkable as an art artist because she insists on so much: the ability of her drawings to function as landscape and creature, the ability of her film to serve as a point of creative representation. Her largest theme is the meaningfulness of creativity, which she extends to include much more than what we usually associate

with such a concept. For all her art's complexity, a simple reading, based upon democratic impulse, is capable of being just to what she does. It is an interpretation that calls attention to the meaning of observant activity: an awareness of the call of the real in actions that serve as metaphors for ways of living in the world. Consequently, do Carmo's demand that we read her art in all its intricacy becomes in its own way a request that we suspend our judgment in favor of more sophisticated awareness--of absence, of the deeply metaphorical nature of our own actions. Drawing becomes the stand-in for creativity, such that it becomes its own reality. The play of form, based as it is upon absence and archeological awareness, is



Stills do vídeo Wild M5 Stills of the video Wild M5

50 RICHARDS

50 Richards 2004

Instalação video/audio

Installation video/audio

35 min loop, Location One, NY 2004.

Instalação sonora criada por Paul de Jong

Sound By Paul de Jong

No vídeo-instalação 50 Richards apresentado no Location One em Nova Iorque, o atelier da artista (número 50 da Richards Str.) é utilizado como cenário para uma auto observação em vídeo. Este vídeo é mostrado num pequeno monitor por debaixo das lentes de um microscópio onde o espectador o pode observar. É criada uma situação de conflito entre o que é a observação científica e um acto de voyeurismo. Neste projecto, o atelier não só é necessário em termos práticos, como é também uma condição primordial para a investigação.

“A peça junta a ideia do ‘voyeur’ e do ‘investigador’ e efectivamente questiona a distinção entre os dois.”

This installation consists of a microscope (Olympus SZ) on a table and one chair; video images pass underneath the main lens. A sound system (sound tube) is provided to the viewer, it comes from the ceiling and covers the specific area where the microscope is placed and consequently envelopes the person seated at the table; the video piece is a continuous recording of the artist studio practice. The sound is created by the musician and composer Paul de Jong and it was inspired by Alexandra do Carmo studio practice.

“I used my studio at 50 Richards Street as the scenario for a self-observed video that was then shown to the audience through the lenses of a binocular microscope. Public knowledge of the hermetic studio practice was evoked with the conflicting dynamics of clinical detachment yet voyeurist investment of viewing time. “The work couples the idea of ‘voyeur’ and ‘investigator’ and effectively throws open the distinction between the two.”² Can one measure the distance from author to viewer? How close is this relationship? How public is our artistic practice?”
Alexandra do Carmo

“In composing a soundtrack for 50 Richards I attempt to create a continuous shifting between involvement and isolation. I try to manipulate these relations

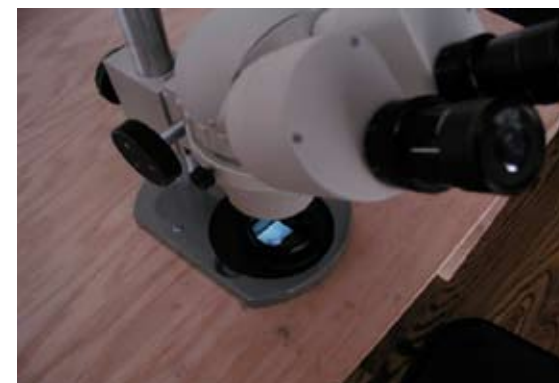
of sound to the visual material as much as the relations of the viewer to the environment outside of the presented work. Sometimes the sound has an immediate relationship to the actions that can be seen in the video; isolating the viewer deeper inside the world of the studio.

The sound gradually drifts in and out of musical elements mixed in with the sound of the actions in the studio, and eventually these musical sounds blur the borders between a musical backdrop relating to the studio space to an exclusively musical environment which isolates the viewer from the gallery space in which the work is being presented.”

Paul de Jong







Imagens da exposição na Location One, Nova Iorque, 2004
Views of the exhibition at Location One, New York, 2004

ARGON CORPORATION

2004

video

9 minutes, 17 seconds

O video Argon Corporation é o resultado de uma recolha video continua durante 15 dias. A artista propôs-se construir um espaço de “atelier” numa area de passagem de onde ocorria em simultâneo a construção de uma das paredes deste espaço ;(todo o piso estava a ser renovado e esta parede era a ultima a ser construida); durante estes dias o trabalho realizou-se simultaneamente ao dos trabalhadores da empresa Argon Corporation, a qual é a responsável por esta empreitada.

A parede semi aberta define uma separação de território, o colectivo de pessoas presentes e as suas acções encontram modos de modificar esta separação. Interessou-me definir um espaço com base na dinâmica social construida, pelo que a arquitectura ou mesmo o décor do sitio provem de uma situação particular, de comportamentos e atitudes de um grupo com diferentes pessoas na mesma situação; o atelier foi mobilado com objectos que os moradores deste edificio deitavam fora ou aos quais foi pedido um empréstimo temporário. Constitui uma reflexão sobre as possibilidades e contradições da pratica artistica em confronto com outras situações de trabalho.

Após este evento de 15 dias, a artista trabalhou durante seis meses sobre papel, com base nas ideias presentes no video. Isolei uma sequencia de 30 segundos deste registo video, uma situação particular do meu relacionamento com um trabalhador; [situação: ele entra no meu espaço, utiliza a minha camara fotografica e tira duas fotos e volta para o seu espaço], o papel de observador que era constantemente desempenhado por mim ou pela camara de video, é por breves momentos invertida, passando a pertencer a este trabalhador por intermedio de uma camara fotografica. O desenho reflecte preocupações sobre o confronto e da distância entre estas duas personagens.

Desenho: (lapis s/papel, rolo de 6 metros): Cada imagem desenhada tem uma correspondencia com uma imagem video (still); O desenho tem a presença de erros constantes ao longo do tempo em que foi feito, o par de rinocerontes encontra-se em permanente opposição física.

The video presents the construction of an artist studio space for a period of 15 days based on the human and physical resources of the building. the site chosen to build the studio is a space of transit for the people as well a site of renovation where workers were building. The existence of a semi-open wall and a division in between the artist and everyone else are used to investigate the existent social limits in this specific place.





Imagens da exposição em Coimbra, Museu da Ciência e da Técnica, 2005 Views of the exhibition at Museu da Ciência e Técnica, 2005



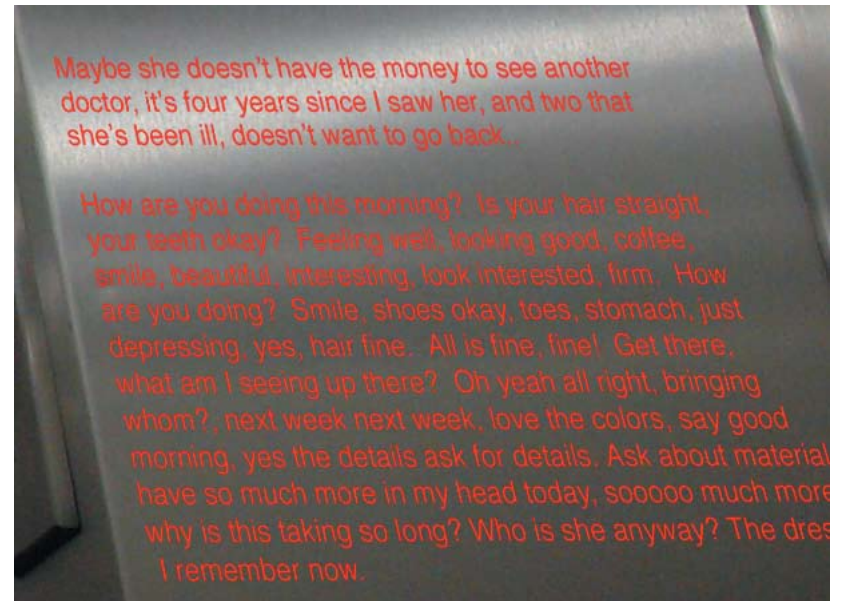
Imagens da exposição no Whitney Museum, Nova Iorque, 2005 Views of the exhibition at Whitney Museum, New York, 2005

S/ TÍTULO

2010

S/ título, Lambda print, 60 x 90 cm, Ed. de 5

Untitled, 2010, Lambda print, 60 x 90 cm, Ed. de 5





S/ TÍTULO

2010

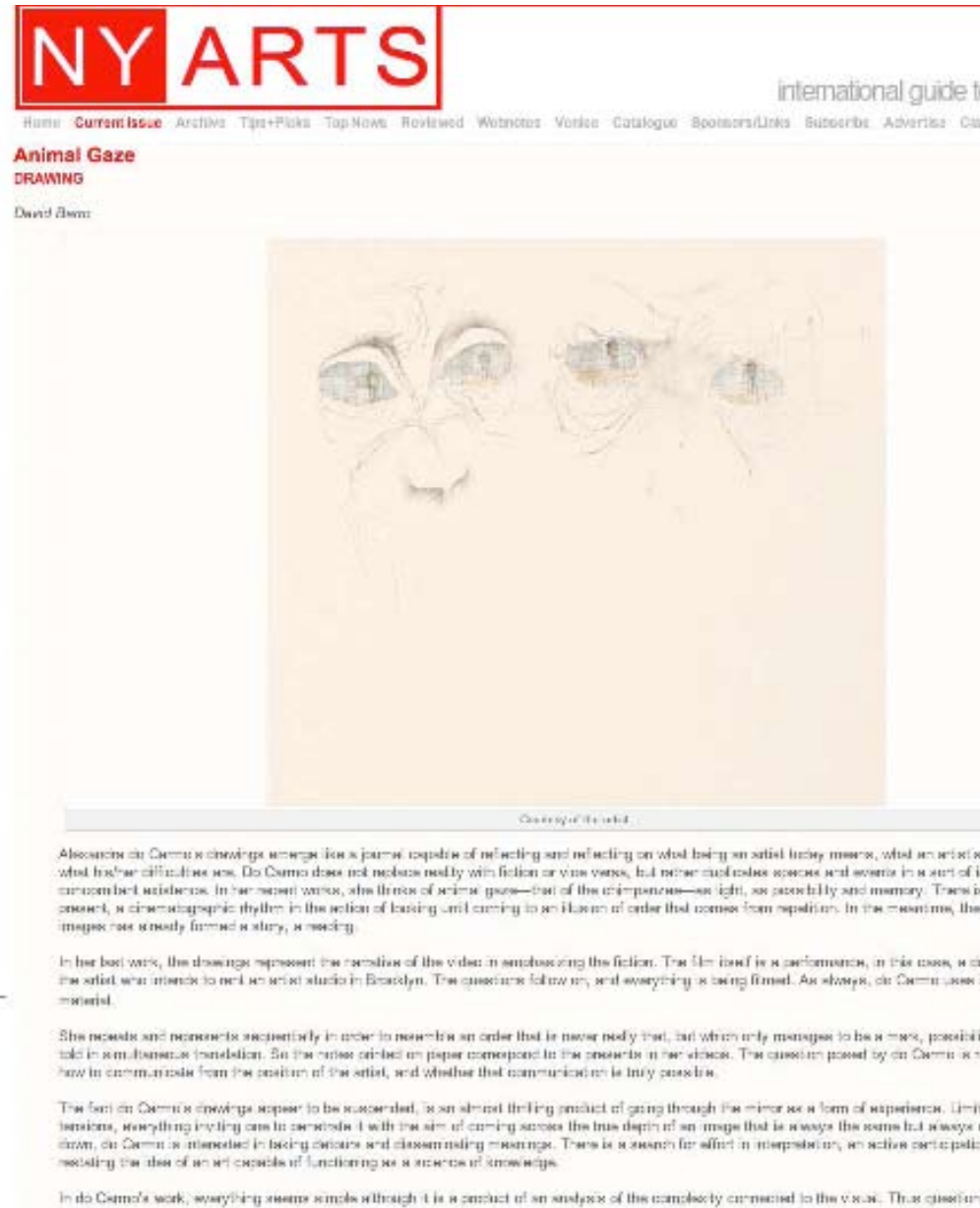
S/ título, Lambda print, 60 x 90 cm, Ed. de 5

Untitled, 2010, Lambda print, 60 x 90 cm, Ed. de 5

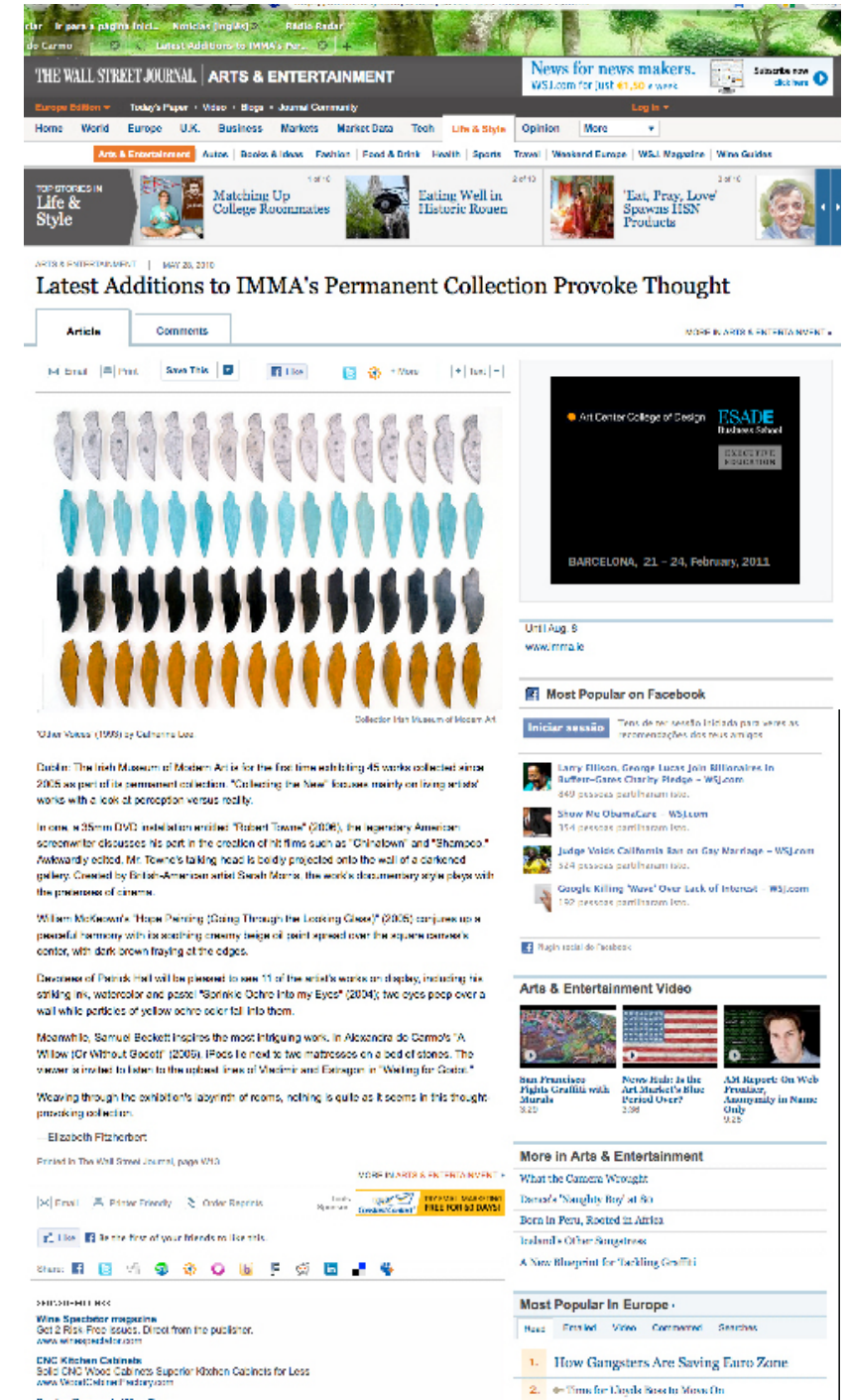




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David Barro - Animal Gaze on NY Arts - International Guide
<http://www.nyartsmagazine.com>



by SIMON JUDGE & RUTH KENNY

The Dubliner magazine

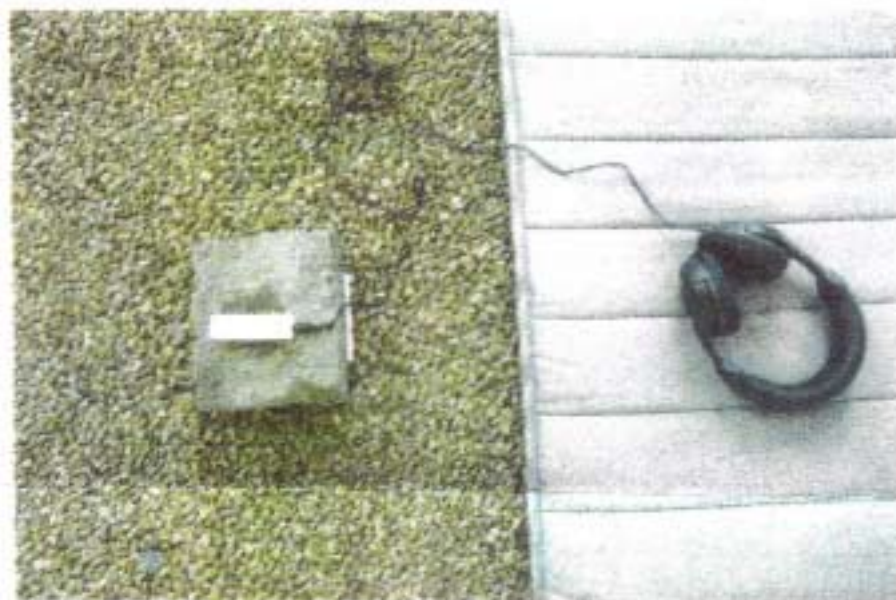
CAPITAL ART 

COLLECTING THE NEW ★★★★★

Imma opinion...it's great

WHAT BETTER way to celebrate the arrival of summer than for the country's leading modern art museum to take stock. This exhibition reflects the acquisition policy at IMMA, whereby works by living artists are given priority. With 42 pieces by 26 Irish and international artists on show, it's a display of the ambition the museum has for its collection. Co-curators Johanne Mullan and Georgie Thompson have put together an intriguing exhibition.

The stand-out piece is surely the stunning 'A Willow (Or Without Godot)' by Portuguese artist Alexandra do Carmo. Originally created and exhibited in 2006 as part of IMMA's residency programme, the artist takes snatches of affirmative statements

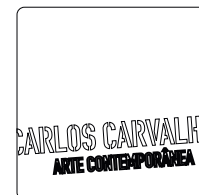


made by Estragon and Vladimir in the Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, and places them in the unusual context of soundbites on an iPod. She also gives the Godot bench a new twist by placing two futons on the ground, encouraging the viewer to engage in the work and lay down to listen to these script snippets

on the iPod. The futons themselves are laid out upon gravel taken from IMMA's grounds (including the ubiquitous cigarette butts), adding to the surreal nature of the installation.

Other highlights include Jackie Nickerson's wonderful photograph, 'Green Room' (2005), in which nuns from the Perpetual Adoration Convent, Wexford, are surrounded by their prayer books and Agatha Christie novels. Makiko Nakamura's 'Untitled' (2002), is a painting of stunning execution, while David Roche's 'Machina' (2006) is playful with its illustrations and mechanical machinery. A series of

ink, watercolour, and pastel pieces by the venerable Patrick Hall, such as 'Black Stone Being Lifted by Angels' (2004), are exemplary examples of the painter's work, rounding off these must-see additions to the collection. (SJ) IMMA until August 8th. imma.ie



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Seg a Sex das 10h às 19h30 / Sáb das 12h às 19h30

From Mon to Fri: 10am to 7:30pm / Sat: 12:00 to 7:30pm

Artistas Artists Ricardo Angélico | José Bechara | Daniel Blaufuks
Catarina Campino | Mónica Capucho | Isabel Brison | Carla Cabanas
Manuel Caeiro | Alexandra do Carmo | Paulo Catrica | Sandra Cinto
Roland Fischer | Javier Núñez Gasco | Susana Gaudêncio | Catarina Leitão
Álvaro Negro | Luís Nobre | Ana Luísa Ribeiro | Richard Schur
José Lourenço | José Batista Marques | Antía Moure |
Eurico Lino do Vale | Manuel Vilariño