

LEVEL 1

Atmosphaerae

1. *Barricada #02*, 2019
Acrylic on paper on wood top,
97,5 x 103 cm
2. *Cinzento Chumbo #03*, 2015
Acrylic on paper and printing
and stitched canvas,
46,5 x 34,5 cm
3. *Cinzento Chumbo #04*, 2015
Acrylic on paper and printing
and stitched canvas, 44 x 32 cm
4. *Blast #17*, 2017
Laminite and screen printing,
51 x 52 cm
5. *Blast #07*, 2016
Acrylic on canvas sewn,
49 x 48 cm
6. *Blast #02*, 2016
Acrylic on canvas sewn,
33 x 26,5 cm
7. *Barricada #01*, 2019
Acrylic on paper on wood top,
diam. 90 cm
8. *Cinzento Chumbo #02*, 2015
Graphite on canvas, 57 x 45 cm
9. *Blast #19*, 2018
Graphite on embroidered fabric,
48 x 57 cm
10. *Barricada #03*, 2019
Acrylic on paper on wood top,
120 x 75 cm
11. *Blast #16*, 2017
Laminite and printing on paper,
47 x 47 cm
12. *Cinzento Chumbo #09*, 2018
Printing on wood and graphite,
26 x 21 cm
- 13-15. *Tabela Periódica #01-#3*
Fabric and vinyl, 114 x 146 cm
- 16-19. *Céu de letras #1-#4*
Photograph on printed vegetable
paper, 42 x 29,5 cm
20. Various documentation
21. Hugo Ball, *Karawane* and
Totenklage, 1916
Kurt Schwitters, *Ursonata*, 1922-
-1932
Poems read by Hibou de Gris,
sound, 17'21"
- 22-32. *Ni le soleil ni la mort #1-
#10*, 2016
Graphite on paper,
41 x 36,5 cm
33. *Blast #03*, 2016
Acrylic on canvas stitched and
embroidered, 104 x 83 cm
34. *Blast #21*, 2019
Graphite on linen,
200 x 300 cm

BIOGRAPHY

João Louro was born in 1963 in Lisbon where he lives and works. He studied Architecture at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Lisbon and painting at Ar.Co. His work encompasses painting, sculpture, photography and video.

A descendant of minimal and conceptual art, he has a particular interest in the avant-garde movements of the early 20th century. His work draws a topography of time, with references that are personal and, above all, generational. He uses language and the written word recurrently as a source, and seeks to revise the image in contemporary culture, starting with a series of representations and symbols of the collective visual realm. Minimalism, conceptualism, pop culture, structuralism and post-structuralism, authors such as Walter Benjamin, Guy Debord, Georges Bataille and Blanchot, or artists like Donald Judd and Duchamp, form the lexicon with which João Louro expresses himself.

He represented Portugal at the Venice Biennale in 2015, with the exhibition *I Will Be Your Mirror | Poems and Problems*.

Acknowledgement

José de Guimarães
Museu do Caramulo

PAVILHÃO BRANCO

Museu de Lisboa Gardens
Campo Grande, 245

tuesday to sunday, 10am-1pm / 2pm-6pm

www.galeriasmunicipais.pt

Organization

Support



JOÃO LOURO

NI LE SOLEIL NI LA MORT

15/05 — 01/09/19

Destroying language, exploding the image

*We are digging a grave in the sky
it is ample to lie there*
— Paul Celan

The exhibition *Ni le soleil ni la mort* [‘neither the sun nor death’, in French] is the inaugural presentation of a long process of investigation into the First World War, a defining moment of the destructive schizophrenia which seems to have since established itself as one of the main foundations of the contemporary world.

This project, which João Louro has developed slowly and meticulously over the past few years, marks a transformation in the artist’s own creative process, breaking away from what we recognise as his authorial mark. Returning to the historical moment where the outbreak of the First World War and the avant-garde project coincide, like two sides or versions of the same story, the artist searches for the umbilical cord of our cultural heritage.

On 5 February 1916, *Cabaret Voltaire* was founded by a group of artists, poets, performers and political activists who came together under the strange, childish and

primitive sounding alliteration-word DADA, giving rise to one of the most radical artistic and political ventures of all time, whose actions, as we know, would eventually transform artistic practice as we knew it.

Indeed, DADA endures in our heads like a body that, defeating inertia, never stops swaying. Just like the surrealists, their direct successors, the Dadaists focussed more on the incantations of language than on variations in form or style — valuing ethics above aesthetics.

One of the most distinctive traits of DADA semantics was the way it destroyed conventional language — the same language which provoked the dissensions that led to the insanity of the war — through a collage of fragments, vocabularies, sounds and motifs from different places that results in a kind of primitive and original syncretism.

Freeing the impulses of the unconscious to recover the innocence of childhood and the pre-linguistic primitive origin of man was one way to neutralise the devastation of the humanist project born in Ancient Greece, and which saw, in the inconceivable slaughter and desolation of the muddy and entrenched camps, the beginning of the end.

Today, in a world whose proclaimed fate makes us look back to moments where collective insanity led humanity to the brink of the abyss, artists seem to have rediscovered the transformational and regenerative energy, strength and creative power of their Dadaist ancestors.

War is a strange and eccentric theme in contemporary art. Recovering an unprecedented set of images, texts, written and visual accounts and poetic and/or philosophical projects, the artist produces a set of simultaneously sombre and luminous works which he contrasts with images, reflections and representations of the theatre of war, visual and audio records of the performative dissonances and deconstructions of Dadaism, thus arriving at a political and poetic collective counter-model established in response to the insanity of the war.

The exhibition, divided into two parts — *Figuratio*, on the ground floor, and *Atmosphaerae*, on the first floor —, brings together drawing, painting, sculpture, photography,

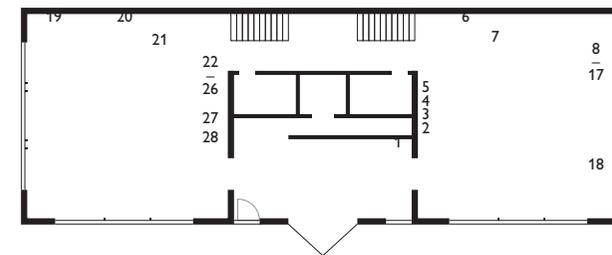
text and documentation. These two parts are organised in a montage that works in approximations and disjunctions, rhymes, echoes and fragments, similarity, alterity and strangeness.

Louro takes objects of exceptional quality from another time and other places, which here symbolise magical and religious forces — a medieval Christ, from the collection of the Caramulo Museum, and a set of masks made by the *Pende*, a group of Africans from the Congo, who created them for protection against diseases, from José de Guimarães' collection of african art.

The *Pende* masks, very similar to the representations and deformations of Pablo Picasso and Francis Bacon, for example, on the one hand recall how the Dadaist project was influenced by other cultures, specifically and to a large extent that of Africa, and, on the other, draw an unsettling parallel with faces disfigured by the war.

The effigy of Christ on the cross was often used in improvised altars, placed next to trenches and latrines, destined to bring spiritual comfort to men who, from each side of the barricades and ideologies, could see no horizon other than that of infinite suffering and death.

Religion, magic, poetry, symmetry, information and memory are the diverse forces that João Louro calls on to investigate. His work turns suffering and destruction immanent, while the human condition perpetuates its determination not to become extinct.



LEVEL 0

Figuratio

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| <p>1. <i>Cinzento Chumbo #01</i>, 2015
Acrylic and graphyte on copper,
53 x 63 cm</p> <p><i>Máscaras, Pende, Congo</i></p> <p>2. Wood and pigments,
30 x 17 x 14 cm</p> <p>3. Wood and kaolin,
25 x 15 x 9 cm</p> <p>4. Wood, kaolin, rope, cloth,
burlap and fibers,
38 x 20 x 15 cm</p> <p>5. Wood, kaolin and rope,
27 x 19 x 9 cm
Col. José de Guimarães</p> <p>6. <i>Christ on the Cross, Sec. XIV</i>
Iberian peninsula, polychrome
wood, 244 x 149 x 33 cm
Col. Museu do Caramulo</p> <p>7. <i>Casa de Deus</i>, 2019
Wood and metal,
210 x 100 x 100 cm</p> <p>8-17. <i>J'ai tué #1 – #7</i>, 2016
Acrylic and graphyte on paper,
41 x 32 cm</p> <p>18. <i>Cinzento Chumbo #06</i>, 2016
Acrylic on canvas sewn on black
cloth, 51 x 57,5 cm</p> | <p>19. <i>Cinzento Chumbo #08</i>, 2017
Acrylic on paper, print and sewn
canvas, 26 x 21 cm</p> <p>20-21. <i>Storm of Steel</i>, 2019
Bronze, 80 x 48 x 20 cm</p> <p>22. <i>Sudário #2</i>, 2016
Acrylic on canvas stitched,
45 x 53 cm</p> <p>23. <i>Sudário #7</i>, 2016
Acrylic on canvas stitched,
42 x 37,5 cm</p> <p>24. <i>Sudário #8</i>, 2016
Acrylic on canvas stitched,
41 x 43 cm</p> <p>25. <i>Sudário #1</i>, 2016
Acrylic on canvas stitched,
55,5 x 45 cm</p> <p>26. <i>Sudário #3</i>, 2016
Acrylic on canvas stitched,
56,5 x 40 cm</p> <p>27. <i>O Nascimento do Moderno</i>
#1, 2019
Acrylic on paper and photograph
printed on parchment paper,
49,5 x 64,5 cm</p> <p>28. <i>O Nascimento do Moderno</i>
#2, 2019
Acrylic on paper and photograph
printed on parchment paper,
52,5 x 67 cm</p> |
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CURATOR Nuno Faria