

ARCOMadrid 2020  
Galerias Municipais / EGEAC  
Stand: 9J06  
Artist: Marc Blondeau  
Dates: Wednesday, February 26, 2020 – Sunday, March 1, 2020

The Municipal Galleries of Lisbon are pleased to present *Lisbonne* (1991), a work by Marc Blondeau at the ARCOMadrid 2020 art fair. In 1987, the French artist Philippe Thomas (1951– 1995) founded the agency readymades belong to everyone® as a conduit for collectors to become the authors of the artworks they purchased. Marc Blondeau was a figure who participated in this gesture, and this project by Galerias Municipais presents one of the artworks that underwent this transaction.

*Lisbonne* (1991) is a color photograph that is part of a series of 8 photographs signed by Marc Blondeau (1990–1991), belonging to the collection of MAMCO, Geneva. The image immediately invokes a quotidian scene from its titular city. It centers on the sun-dappled surface of an outdoor café table upon which we see a napkin holder, the leftovers of a freshly-consumed beverage, and some money left in payment. A chair and one of Lisbon’s signature cobblestone esplanades occupy the background. An empty glass and green bottle stand beside a small dish upon which several paper bills, coins, and a receipt are carefully laid, indicating that the patron has paid-up and already departed. The image depicts the pre-Euro era, when Portugal still used Escudos as its currency. The country’s now-antiquated blue one-hundred Escudo bill, featuring the illustrious Portuguese poet and writer Fernando Pessoa (1888–1935), is prominently displayed. It is an archetypal representation of the city that evokes a sense of nostalgia for a now bygone era, and that nods toward contested marketing strategists in the age of global tourism.

The ideas surrounding Philippe Thomas and his readymades belong to everyone® agency are unmistakably linked to other notable conceptual artists and thinkers, from Marcel Duchamp and Marcel Broodthaers, to Pessoa himself, considered one of the most significant literary figures of the twentieth century. Pessoa not only wrote under his own name, but also used the nom-de-plume of many fictional authors, which he described as his “heteronyms”, an approach that recalls Thomas’s similar artistic gesture of self-erasure. Working in the 1980s and 1990s, Thomas updated the strategies of these earlier figures by responding to the then-current trends of the explosion of the art market and the prominence of the art star. He redefined the value of the commodity being exchanged—authorship replacing the art object—while still fully participating in the market system within which art circulated.

Thomas’s work also recalls the recent programming of the Galerias Municipais of Lisbon, a group of five contemporary art galleries spread across different Lisbon boroughs. For instance, one recent exhibition by Claire Fontaine at Galeria Avenida da Índia titled *YOUR MONEY AND YOUR LIFE* (October 25, 2019–January 5, 2020), similarly addressed themes around capital, value, and authorship. It also summoned Philippe Thomas explicitly in a work titled *Untitled (pubblicità pubblicità!)* (2015), featuring a light box displaying the Italian version of one of Thomas’s posters advertising the services of his readymades belong to everyone® agency.

Organized in collaboration with Claire Burrus, Paris; Jan Mot, Brussels; MAMCO, Geneva; and Ricardo Valentim.

For further information please contact  
info@galeriasmunicipais.pt  
or +351 916571200