

EDSON CHAGAS

Pavilhão Branco

GALERIAS MUNICIPAIS – PAVILHÃO BRANCO
Jardim do Palácio Pimenta, Campo Grande
1700-091 Lisboa

Tuesday to Sunday: 10 am–1 pm and 2 pm–6 pm
Free entrance

Guided tours by appointment
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www.galeriasmunicipais.pt



Supported by



Curated by
Ana Balona de Oliveira

12.09–
29.11.2026

INTIMATE DISTANCE, UNCAPTURED CITY

In *Intimate Distance, Uncaptured City*, Edson Chagas presents several bodies of work developed over the last two decades: *Found Not Taken* (2008–2014, London, Newport, Luanda), *Archives of Absence: Involuntary Images* (2019, Namibe), and *Common Walls* (2022–2024, Lisbon, Brescia). The exhibition brings into dialogue photographic series that are formally very distinct yet closely related conceptually. Through them, the photographer has reflected not only on the medium of photography itself, its imaginative and affective possibilities and the limits of the documentary, but also on the bodily and emotional, physical and psychic experience of inhabiting the urban spaces that have shaped his life. Through various strategies of abstraction, the works evoke different ways of inhabiting Luanda (the city where he was born, lived and to which he continues to return), Lisbon, London and Newport (cities where he lived and studied photography), as well as frequent visits to the city of Namibe, in southern Angola, and the city of Brescia, in northern Italy.

Over time, such ways of living and moving between cities in the North and South have entailed multiple experiences of departure, arrival, permanence and return, as well as the construction and deconstruction of new and old forms of familiarity. The diasporic and migratory experience has frequently distanced what was once intimate (without, however, erasing that intimacy), while making intimate what was once distant (without, however, negating the inescapable distance). Consequently, Chagas' photographic gaze – particularly the one shaping the series in this exhibition – highlights the emotional complexity of such experiences, of their memory, and of their visual and photographic representation. The exhibition reveals the opacity inherent in the city's refusal to allow itself to be captured and in the photographer's refusal to seek such capture. A wandering observer of and listener to materials (their textures and rhythms) and objects (their energies and murmurs), beyond the accelerations of capital, commodities and algorithms, of tourism and gentrification, Chagas invites the viewer to take slow, attentive walks to observe and listen to his images in the space of the gallery, in a way that somewhat evokes his own walks through the space of the city.

The curatorial approach sought to highlight this artistic gesture by opening up the Pavilhão Branco – in itself a luminous architecture open to the outside – to an alternative vision of the city, one where walls neither divide nor separate, but rather support and welcome: the inscriptions made by those who built or repaired them, passed by or inhabited them (humans, animals, plants, minerals, etc.; time itself in its chronological, geological and meteorological passage); the still-vibrant density of used objects that someone abandoned and the photographer revived; the involuntary

[Series] *Archives of Absence*, Namibe, 2019

Double-sided Fine Art inkjet prints on oxidized iron; Variable dimensions

Courtesy of the artist, Apalazzo, Brescia, and Stevenson, Cape Town and Amsterdam

1

[Series] Common Walls, 2022–2024

Double-sided Fine Art inkjet prints framed on a plinth; Variable dimensions

Courtesy of the artist, Apalazzo, Brescia, and Stevenson, Cape Town and Amsterdam

- a) Lisbon, 2023
- b) Brescia, 2023
- c) Lisbon, 2023
- d) Lisbon, 2023 | 2024
- e) Lisbon, 2024
- f) Brescia, 2023 | Lisbon, 2024

2

[Series] Found Not Taken, 2008–2014

Vinyl prints on wall, 120 × 80 cm | 80 × 120 cm

Courtesy of the artist, Apalazzo, Brescia, and

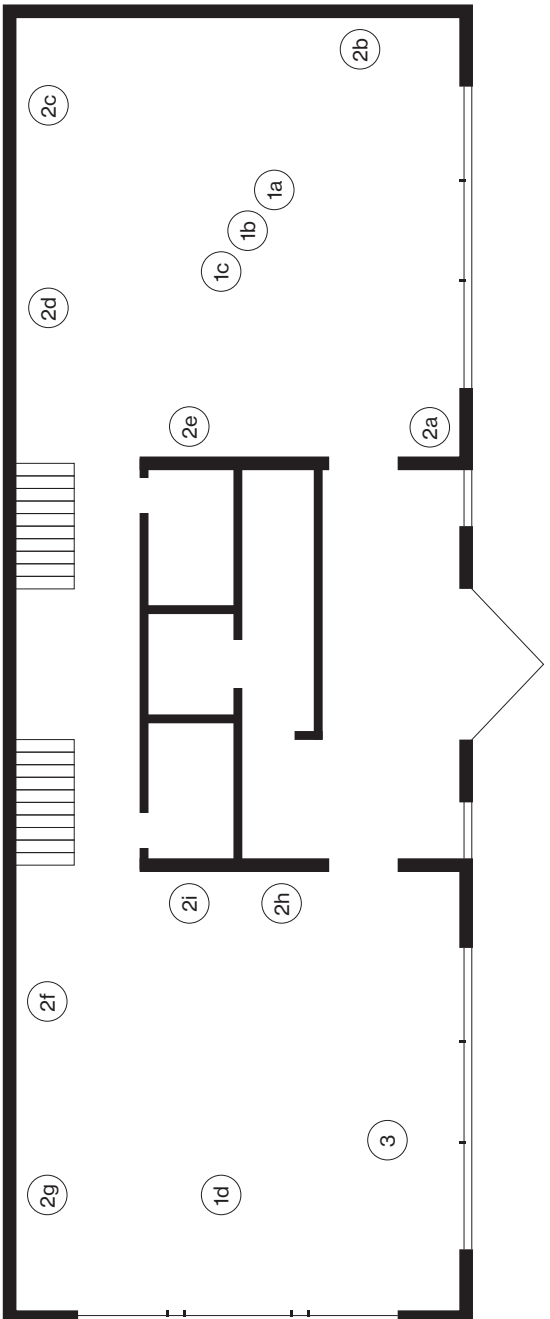
Stevenson, Cape Town and Amsterdam

- a) London, 2014
- b) Newport, 2008
- c) London, 2008
- d) London, 2013
- e) London, 2008
- f) Luanda, 2013
- g) London, 2014
- h) London, 2014
- i) Luanda, 2009
- j) London, 2008
- k) Newport, 2008
- l) London, 2014
- m) London, 2014
- n) Luanda, 2009
- o) Luanda, 2009
- p) Luanda, 2009
- q) Luanda, 2013
- r) Luanda, 2009
- s) London, 2014
- t) London, 2014
- u) London, 2008
- v) Newport, 2008

images that a mobile phone, forgotten in a pocket moving through the city, captured of it. The exhibition invites a contemplative yet close, situated, corporeal gaze; as abstracting as it is material and performative; less panoramic than fragmentary and multidirectional: pointing downwards and upwards and calling for attention to detail; sustained by the solidity of walls and the aerial suspension of metal; attentive to the exterior and interior, both of the gallery and of subjectivity itself; without neglecting the invitation to a dual circulation between front and back, visible and invisible, presence and absence, and to an unusual pause in typical spaces of passage. Like the front and back of its walls, the uncaptured city thus reveals itself at an intimate distance.

Ana Balona de Oliveira

Floor 0



Floor 1

