

PRESS RELEASE // CAROLINE PAGÈS GALLERY



Pedro Amaral, Sem título, 2015, Indian ink on paper, 123 x 150 cm. Photo by: Maria Rita

Pedro Amaral

Trabalhos recentes sobre papel
curated by João Fonte Santa

Opening Friday, May 29 at 10 pm

May 29 – September 19, 2015

Caroline Pagès Gallery
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Open from 3 - 8 pm Tuesday through Saturday, and by appointment.

Pedro Amaral has intentionally chosen a generic description as the title of his new exhibition. Rather than serving as a pretext for bringing together the works selected, the show *Recent works on paper* references the process of researching and exploring paper as a material and as the medium of work.

With this seemingly discrete title, which refers to the material used and not a theme, Pedro Amaral nevertheless surprises us with the characteristics and quality of the works exhibited. In this core group of pieces, *Without title*, that corresponds to a series of India inks on paper, research for which commenced at the end of 2013, Pedro Amaral showcases the results of a crucial period of experimentation, all while opening his work up to a new space.

These recent works differ, to great effect, from the strong mark and more characteristic style of the pictorial and iconographic production that have set out the artist's path since the 1990's, strongly rooted in the creative treatment of powerful references from 20th century iconography. His work, heavily based on a well-established relationship with the aesthetic language of Pop Art, makes the visual appeal and criticism present in the work of artists linked to this movement patent.

The current period of Pedro Amaral's production is more stripped down than earlier series. Opting for essentiality in the figurative register, this research phase moves away from painting in order to approach the practice of drawing, taking advantage of the very favourable approach to experimentation in this medium, its execution being faster, more open, and closer to the original impulse.

In these exercises, Pedro Amaral retains the exercise of appropriation as his basis and working method, proceeding to select images originating both from books or illustrated encyclopaedias, as well as from archives and the Internet. But what stands out is the whiteness of the paper, the treatment of lines, the fine traces that contribute to an overall impression of greater lightness and to a refined and meticulous materiality of the whole. Another defining characteristic of these works is the effective exploration of blue and black India ink, used respectively in the natural landscapes and in the representation of human activity. Here too an economy of language imposes itself, without for that matter reducing the visual impact of this demanding work, underpinned by its high technical quality.

Sandra Vieira Jürgens, May 2015

Pedro Amaral lives and works in Sintra, Portugal. Without any artistic education, he actively worked in the field of illustration throughout the 80s and 90s. Founding the *Sparring Partners* collective with Alice Geirinhas and João Fonte Santa marked his entrance in the universe of contemporary art. Since then his work has been regularly shown in institutions and galleries in Portugal. Painting is his primary medium but he has also tackled video, installation and performance. From the ZdB art centre to the inclusion in some notable exhibitions in the 90s (collaborating with names and curators/artists like Paulo Mendes and Pedro Cabral Santo), from solo shows in galleries to art fairs, but never really moving away from independent contexts like the Salão Olímpico (Oporto), Museu Bernardo (Caldas da Rainha), Pogo Teatro, Atlas Secreto or recent curatorial work on activist art by João Fonte Santa. His work can be found in the collections of the Círculo de Artes Plásticas de Coimbra, the Museu do Neo Realismo in Vila Franca de Xira, the PMLJ Foundation, the MG Collection as well as in many private collections in Portugal and abroad.

For more information and visuals please contact the gallery at [+315] 21 387 33 76 or [+351] 91 679 56 97 or email us at galler@carolinepages.com.