

PATHOSFORMEL

Vasco Araújo

Rialto6

Pathosformel, 2020

Installation

42 digital prints on poster fragments; sculptures/
video; 3 curtains with painted text.

Texts: Pathosformel by Vasco Araújo.

Variable dimensions

Installation texts:

Perhaps the attempted consciousness of the self is the heaviness that weighs upon the spirit. Or even, the attempt to overcome this consciousness of the self is mastery or lightness of living, is it not?

Knowing and unknowing, knowing and ignoring circumscribe our horizon and our condition as beings between everything and nothing. Perhaps because of this, because they accompany this outline of something that is human, knowledge and ignorance have, or can have, a tragic dimension.

Fear not, these are all but ruins of our passing.

All this is just as someone said... is it not? This body where I hid myself is gone to waste.

Nothing is impossible...



Pathosformel, 2020/21

Video 16/9

Duration: 60'32"

Actors: Diogo Bento; Jorge Andrade; Bruno Silva; Arlindo Silva; Diogo Bernardes; Paula Sá Nogueira; Patrícia da Silva; André e. Teodósio; Vasco Araújo; Cláudia Jardim; Rui Cunha Martins; Francisco Rolo; Nuno Nolasco; Joana Barrios; Rita Só; João Abreu.

Voices: Francesco Troisi; Irene Pomatto; Maria José Chousal; Pedro Faro; Rafael Esteves Martins; Matilde Menezes Ferreira; Laura Ward; Tomás Frazer; Luís Estarreja.

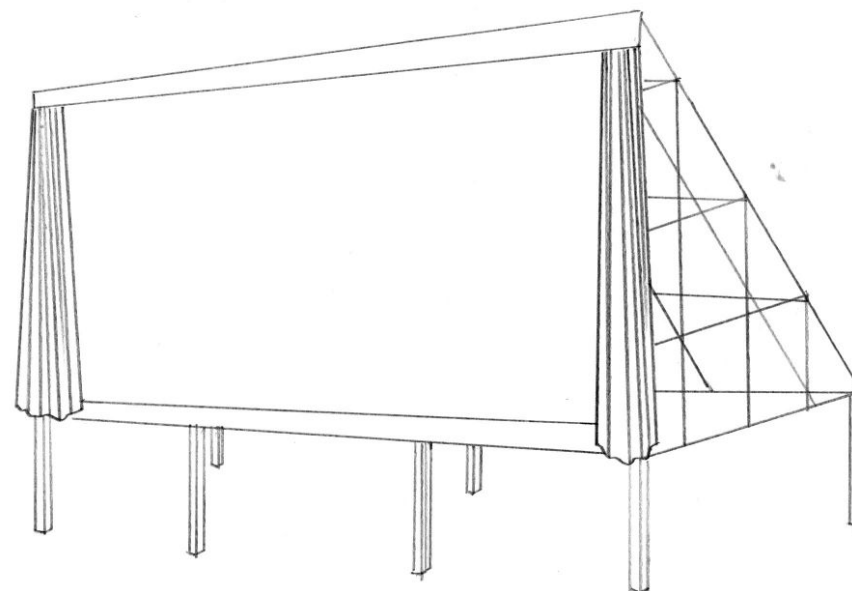
Texts: Based on the works *Die Geburt der tragödie oder Griechertum und Pessimismus* by Friedrich Nietzsche; *Pensar o Trágico* by José Pedro Serra; *O Demónio das imagens – sobre Aby Warburg* by António Guerreiro; *Poesia Completa* by Luís Miguel Nava; *Plantation memories* by Grada Kilomba; *Metamorphoses* by Ovídio. And with original texts by Rafael Esteves Martins; José Maria Vieira Mendes; Diogo Bento.

Paintings: Posters with reproductions of paintings by Bronzino; Lotto; Rafael; Moroni; Ingres and Pompeii Frescos.

Still life paintings: *Natura morta con vaso di fiori tombada*, Mario Nuzzi (1640); *Stilleven met gouden bier mok*, Willem Claesz Heda (1634); *Bodegón con entrega de membrillos e uvas*, Juan de Zurbarán (1645); *Srilleven met boeken en zandloper*, Unknown artist; *Bodegón con alcachofas, frutas y tarros de tlavera con flores*, Antonio Ponce (1657); *Pauw en jachttrofeeën*, Jan Weenix (1708)

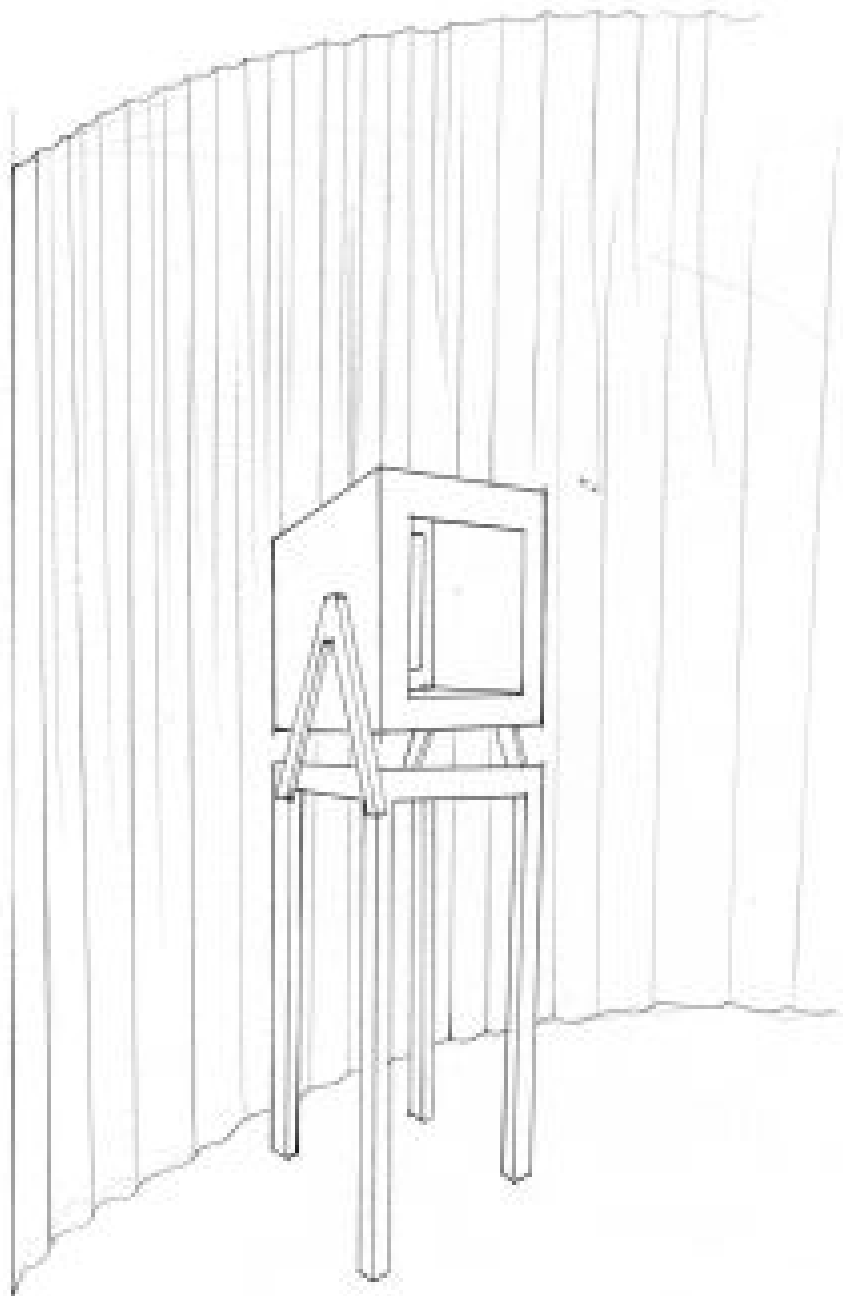
Music: Original music by Pedro Monteiro based on: *Electra* by Richard Strauss; *Adriana Lecouvreur* by F. Cilea. Piano arrangement of excerpts from the opera *Electra* by Richard Strauss, performed by Pedro Monteiro. Piano arrangements of excerpts from the prelude of the opera “*Adriana Lecouvreur*” de F. Cilea performed by Pedro Monteiro. Final credits song performed by Pedro Monteiro and Tânia Carvalho.

Variable dimensions



PATHOSFORMEL is an interdisciplinary work/film in terms of both form and content. Through various scenes and episodes, it offers a look at the historical past interconnected by figures from Greco-Roman mythology to reflect on the human condition. As the name suggests, PATHOSFORMEL (Aby Warburg's concept) evokes the experience of suffering through empathy. At the centre of the work is the notion of crisis understood as a fracture, a disharmony. This collapse (so to speak) foreshadows a radical and decisive “experience” in which no internal or external element, not even the ending foreshadowed by the title, is guaranteed. The emphasis is not placed on the result but on the process, on the development of the experience. The work is not a bed where the patient is “invited” to cuddle up and die, but a demand for distance from the superficial brightness of the “fall” and from the aesthetic anaemia of decay and death. Above all, this work is presented as a risk combined

with an idea of crisis. The film structure is a sequence of episodic actions united by a global scene and a series of intertitles that, despite being aligned by a chain of cause and effect, do not form a narrative progression, thus confronting the audience with a truncated narration that suggests a crisis of a narratological nature. The entire structure focuses on verbal action, imaginary violence, psychological emotions and the exaltation of feelings, so as to reflect on how to bear the pain caused by forces beyond our individual control: the loss that can never be recovered; the irreversibility of time; or as a reflection on Humanity, its destiny and its life.



Entre Actos (*Between Acts*) #1, 2020

Video-sculpture

Painted wood, LCD monitor, headphones, media player and video.

Performer: Fernando Santos.

Video duration: 3'35"

Dimensions: 170x45x40cm

The gaze of the Medusa, a female figure from Greek mythology that petrified anyone who looked upon her, is here inverted to look directly into a mirror, revealing a man who incarnates her while singing a fado about the fate of her destiny. *Entre Actos #1* (2020), a video-sculpture, operates as an exercise in the deconstruction of the constancy and conventionality of certain systems – where Medusa can be a man looking directly into a mirror. In the myth, it is the mirrored surface of the shield that determines Medusa's decapitation – imprisoning her by her own image through a game of gazes involved in tensions between self and other.

Video text:

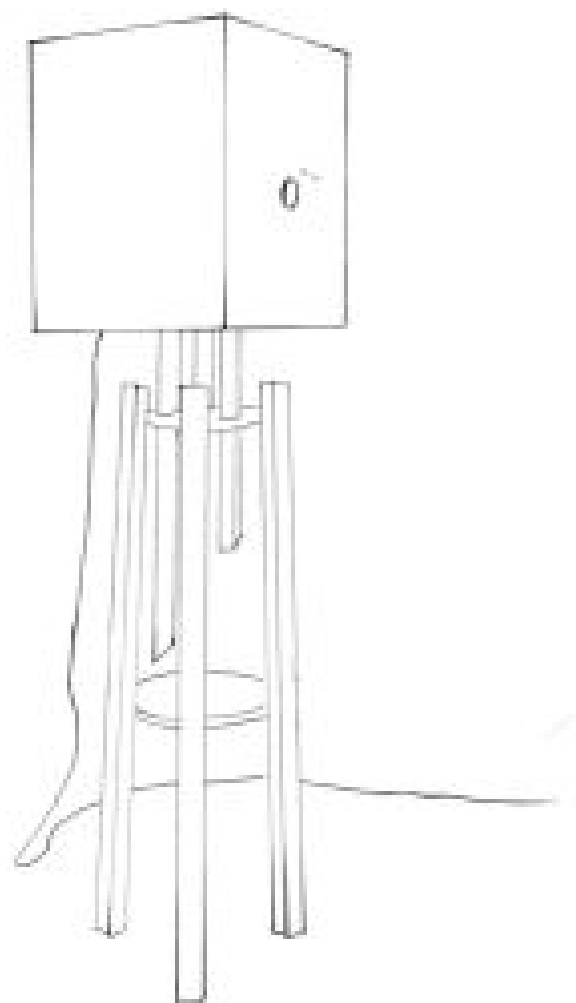
Amália Rodrigues – The Fate of Each of Us

Very well thought
We all have our fate
And those born unlucky,
Cannot ever escape!
Fate is one's luck
From cradle to death,
No one escapes, no matter
how strong
The destiny with which one
has been born!

In my bitter fateMy harsh destiny
Was clearly revealed
Because when I sing

Anyone can detect
That in my wailing voice
I pretend to be who I'm not!

It would be nice someday
To change one's fate
For any other one
But everybody is born
With their fate foreordained
And none more unmerciful
Than this of being a woman!



Entre Actos (*Between Acts*) #2, 2020

Video-sculpture

Painted wood, LCD monitor, headphones, media player and video.

Performer: Luiz Antunes.

Voice: Francisco Fino.

Text: Diogo Bento.

Video duration: 3'23"

Dimensions: 165x45x40cm

Like its own name, *Between Acts* #2 suggests an idea of an interval, an interlude or something in between in relation to the whole, even implying an individual viewing experience. This video-sculpture displays a representation of Jacques-Louis David's painting *La Mort de Marat* (1793) composed of an account of the letter written by the subject before he died. Often using antiquity as a metaphor for the present, in this painting David represents the imminent moment of the death of one of the leaders of the French Revolution, displacing man's death to create his myth.

Video Text:

My dear friend,

It is with little faith in humanity that I write you this letter. We live in troubling times. We must learn who to trust. Otherwise, we run the serious risk of our fate becoming terminal.

We continue to observe reality from the vantage point of oldest and most tired of paradigms. We are stuck. We are too rigid and obsolete. We wrongly insist on the notion of individuality. We insist on imagining ourselves at the centre of the world, of the universe. We wish to free ourselves of all despotism when, in fact, the worst tyranny of all is that which traps our own thoughts. We are our own dictators. We impose on ourselves the most severe of limitations: ourselves! Eureka!

Let the fire, heat and light cleanse our eyes and free our souls from the heart. We must deal with our oppressors by devouring their beating hearts. Instead of seeking refuge in catacombs and concealing our skin in shame, let us declaim that nothing superfluous can be legitimate property while others live in need. And that is almost everything. Since I saw you yesterday, I can't help thinking that...

Do you still recognise me?, 2022

Installation

3 wooden frames with text (poems by Emily Dickinson);

8 digital photographs and text.

Variable dimensions

The installation consists of three upside-down frames with inscriptions of excerpts from poems by Emily Dickinson and eleven small frames with photographs (Lover's Eyes). These photographs come from an 18th-century tradition in which lovers wore small jewellery (rings and medallions) with the representation of the eyes of their lovers. In this sense, the installation "Do you still recognise me?" places us within the experience of the other as an exercise in memory, recognition and discovery as an intimate act of affection, or the memory of an act of love.

Installation texts:

I died for Beauty – yet no sooner
Had I settled in my tomb,
Than one who for the truth had perished
Softly lay down by my side.
He asked for whom I fell...
- For Beauty – I declared.



- And I for Truth. They're both the same,
we're brothers – he replied.
And like in the night those who meet converse
From room to room we talked
Until the moss on our lips grew
And our names obscured.
I am nobody! Who are you?
Are you – Nobody – Too?
We are a pair – be silent!
They would expel us – I thought you knew?

Faced with some situations, we are simultaneously the person we think we are, the one we would like others to think we are, or the one they think we are or even the one they use to serve a certain purpose. We never stop imitating ourselves and, perhaps, that is why we allow ourselves to be portrayed.

You see, you must narrate your own life, and you must comprehend it...

Do you still remember me?

You are who you meet, don't you think?

Do you still remember this image?

Are you leaving? Don't leave! I hold you tight... in my hands you left the imprint of your love.

I have reached the bottom. I cannot fall any lower than your heart. What exists between us is better than love: it is complicity, isn't it?

Are you here no more? What a pity... on my skin you left the indelible memory of your taste... I loved you!

Are you still engaged with me?

It is necessary to love someone in order to run the risk of suffering for their sake. I need to love you a great deal in order to remain capable of suffering you. Do you still desire me? All that we know is an impression of ours, and all that we are is someone else's impression, a melodrama of ourselves, who, as we feel ourselves, becomes a free and active spectator of our doings.

Are you still... there?

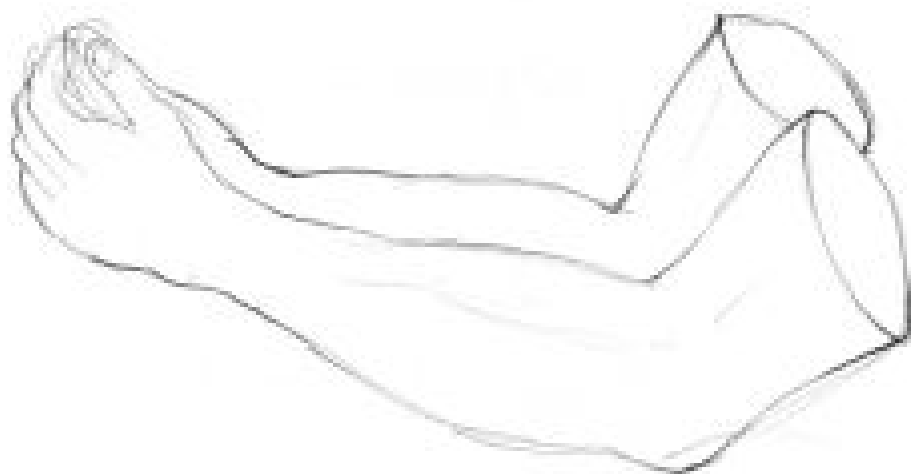
When what you see reminds you of an eternal love, 2022

Sculpture

Acrylic resin, rope.

Dimensions: 47x15x12cm

This sculpture in painted acrylic resin places us in an experience of the body, the memory of a gesture, an action of one body on another, the experience of a moment of affection, the memory of an act of love. Composed of hands and arms intertwined and attached with ropes, these sculptures open a space through memory in search of human freedom.



When what you see reminds you of a moment of sharing, 2021

Sculpture

Acrylic resin, rope.

Dimensions: 27x15x12cm

This sculpture in painted acrylic resin places us in an experience of the body, the memory of a gesture, an action of one body on another, the experience of a moment of affection, the memory of an act of love. Composed of hands intertwined and suspended on ropes, these sculptures open a space through memory in search of human freedom.



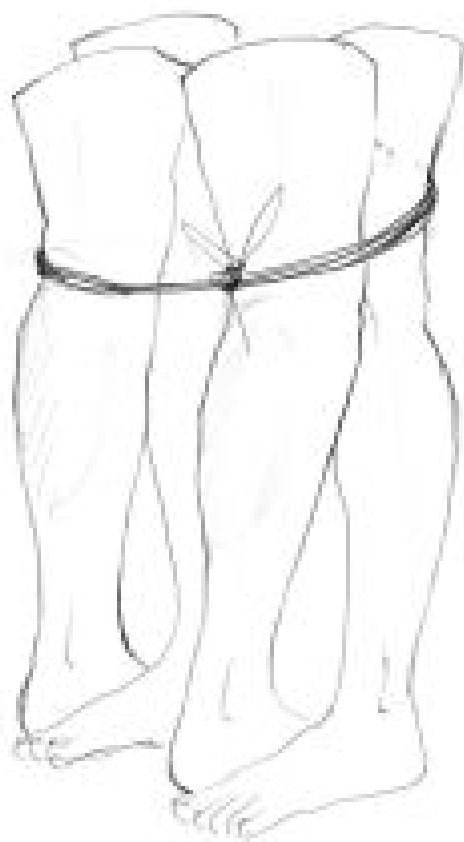
When what you see reminds you of him, 2022

Sculpture

Acrylic resin, rope.

Dimensions: 70x50x42cm

This sculpture in painted acrylic resin places us in an experience of the body, the memory of a gesture, an action of one body on another, the experience of a moment of affection, the memory of an act of love. Composed of legs and feet intertwined and tied by ropes, these sculptures open a space through memory in search of human freedom.



Entre o tempo e o desengano... (*Between time and disillusionment...*) #2, 2022

Installation

3 painted wood boxes, 3 prints on coloured paper.

Text: by Vasco Araújo based on several authors.

Variable dimensions.

The installation consists of three volumes of pages of two different dimensions (64 x 44 x 25cm and 100 x 70 x 25cm). Each of the volumes of piled up pages has different impressions of stone tombstone photographs with phrases from various authors about desire, death and consciousness as an evolutionary process.

Pages phrases:

“The best that we can do, as we don’t have a perfect knowledge of our own being, nor of our being in conflict with others, is to devise a principle of bewilderment, and to live in this spirit of bewilderment, forcing us always to choose the path of knowledge over that of ignorance. We need others to hold up a mirror to our knowledge, to ‘know thyself’. ‘Knowledge might be tragic, but it makes us all more human.’”

- Nothing that is human is alien to us ...
(Publio Terêncio Afro)

- ‘Knowledge might be tragic, but it makes us all more human.’



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