

Al Tramonto

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GALERIA VERA CORTÊS is pleased to announce 'Al Tramonto', a group exhibition with the artists Ana Santos, Fala Mariam de Lisboa, Juliana Matsumura and Manuela Marques, curated by Antonia Gaeta.

The exhibition at Galeria Vera Cortês is an opportunity to discover the practice of these four artists and their body of work, in a dialogue of new and recent works. Bringing together for the first time the work of these four artists, 'Al Tramonto' proposes an encounter between distinct practices, crossed by an attention to matter, language and image construction.

In the words of the curator, 'Al Tramonto' "is a premise of quiet, an awareness of the end, of transition, but also an implicit promise of bonanza. The works presented do not hide fragility or unease; rather, they allow these to coexist with astonishment, with the gesture of wonder at what is fleeting, delicate or incomplete."

The exhibition opens on Thursday, July 3, between 6 and 9 PM.

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Al tramonto¹,
down the slope,
from heat to vibrancy to softness.

The air gradually cooler,
an apparent and sudden stillness.

The wind is heard,
the legs find relief,
we pause for a moment.

A continuous line
and a certain melancholy.

We are divided by a river,
as in Giorgione,
among beings who may be only light.

A premise of calm,
something coming to an end,
a blink of an eye.

No subterfuge,
no offerings,
no fallacies,
only the wonder and awe
of realizing that calm follows hardship.

*Il carnato del cielo
sveglia oasi
al nomade d'amore*².

Half shadow,
half colour,
a sigh.

Antonia Gaeta, Penedo, 11 June 2025

1. At sunset
2. Giuseppe Ungaretti, Tramonto, 1916
My translation:
*The flesh of the sky
awakens oases
in the nomad of love*

Antonia Gaeta

Antonia Gaeta (1978, Lanciano, ITA) has a BA degree in Conservation of Cultural Property from the University of Bologna, a Master's degree in Curatorial Studies from the University of Lisbon's Faculty of Fine Arts (FBAUL), and a PhD in Contemporary Art from the University of Coimbra's College of Arts.

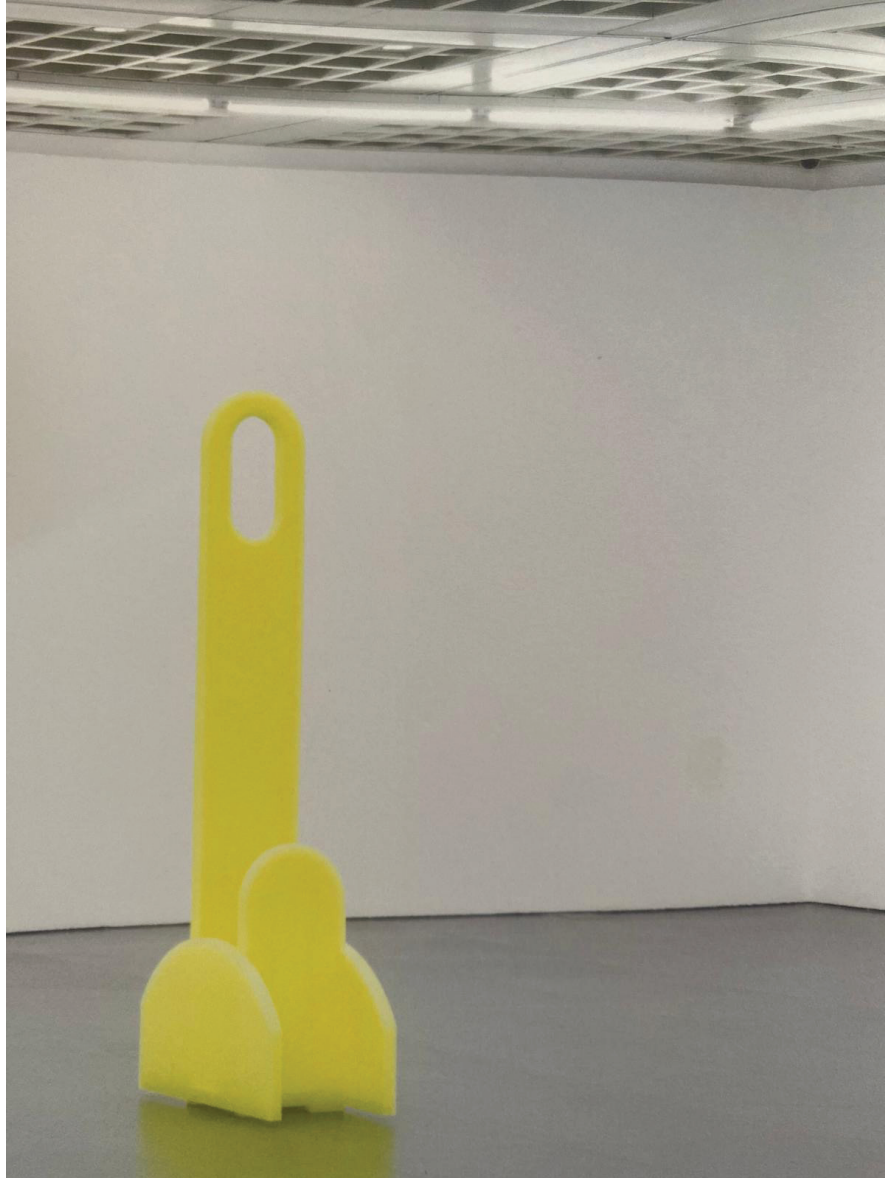
Antonia Gaeta has developed research projects and exhibitions with various art institutions in Portugal and abroad, and has also published numerous texts in catalogues, specialised magazines and exhibition programs.

For the Directorate-General for the Arts, she served as the executive coordinator of Portugal's official representations at the art biennials of Venice (2009 and 2011) and São Paulo (2008 and 2010). Between 2015 and 2022 she worked with the Treger Saint Silvestre collection, held on deposit at the Centro de Arte Oliva. In 2019 she inaugurated the Verão in Lisbon, a space for experimentation in the visual arts. Since 2022, after completing her studies at the Ricardo Espírito Santo Foundation, she has been working on carpentry-based projects, alongside her work as a curator.

Ana Santos

Ana Santos (Espinho, Portugal, 1982) lives and works in Lisbon, Portugal.

Ana Santos' work develops from a daily practice of finding and accumulating materials and objects. Each object, each material, contains within itself the key to its solution: it is the exercise of practice that allows us to test, choose, alter, redo, reject, until we finally find the solution. Making is constituted through exercise and studio practice and operates from the relationship with materials. Thinking is pragmatic, i.e. it seeks to understand the intrinsic qualities of the material and how they are resolved in the artistic object. First comes the material and then the solution. The materials do not have a fixed provenance, they can come from the street (found objects) or from building materials stores. The choice of material is based on its physical behavior and the possibilities of what it can and cannot do. Speculative thinking interrogates the intentions, motivations and decisions that guide the work, and operative thinking constructs the relationship with the materials. Objects function not as things but as signs. Objects are evocations of form: they are signs of thinking about the material. There is a rapid operation that wants to make the gesture that produces it evident.



Ana Santos, *Untitled*, 2017. Acrylic glass. 210 x 42,5 x 74 cm.

Fala Mariam de Lisboa

shield and small memory

the 1960s-70s, a girl born to a politicized, rationalist family, all neat and proper until the ground vanished under her feet: it was there, more accurately along the Paris-Lisbon axis, that a handful of very young, very intense people, happened to seek for a magical way of thinking by availing themselves of poetry, painting and music. they lived 'an eternal present', perhaps too vividly, and everything or almost everything fell apart. but, in the meantime, I had discovered images, certain pictures by William Blake and latter symbolists, which appeared to me as a painting of visionary reason, arguably seeming to transcend its own time...

after this youthful youth I came into contact with painting-people from over here. a host of nomadic and casual experiences ensued: I was a cursory student of printmaking, an illustration intern, a model, etc. my first intelligent relation to the milieu came with a grant (1986-88); I was then fortunate enough to meet someone who supported me and took a generous interest in my early achievements, Painter Fernando de Azevedo. at a certain moment, I was also helped by Painter Júlio Pomar, Painter Fernando Calhau and then by Ana Isabel, who hosted my second solo show at her Gallery in Rua da Emenda.

at a certain point in the 1990s I felt the need to make my notion of Painting more analytic, seeking to deepen the knowledge of its human history of schools and legacies. but I cannot forget my debt to the immemorial, almost timeless so-called primitive arts, a true gift of fertility that came to me from early on; and I should also not forget how ancient Chinese painting, with the utter subtlety of its medium, would later on teach me to handle acrylic paint; or the natural Enlightenment that I felt when meeting with the various states of pictorial art from the early twentieth century and up to just after the second world war, which was after all my closest antecedent.

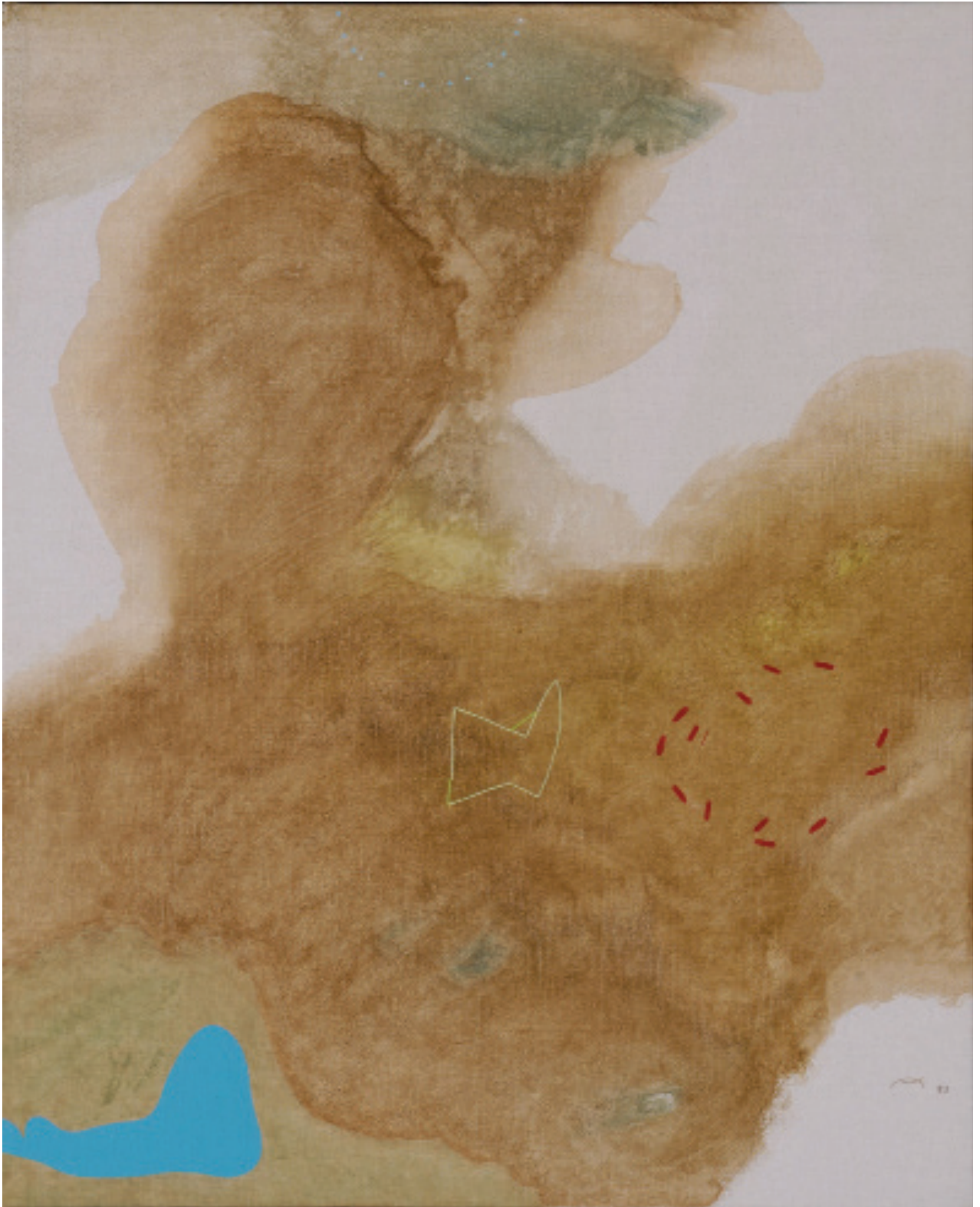
these autodidactic — whatever that might be — studies were manifold. and the apprenticeship was lonely.

perhaps because the circuits of the so-called 'visual arts' did not particularly relish my things, I irremediably entered the circuits of jazz and music of that ilk, but as a 'sideman', a trombonist. I may in fact owe whatever is left of my mental (and social) health to that practice and to some unfortunate instrumentalists in that field.

the first person to truly and significantly consider the specificity of my work was Professor Rui-Mário Gonçalves, a regular, ever-friendly presence across the good and less-than-good moments that my Studio witnessed.

it would be unfair not to mention the lucid availability of José-Augusto França — une personne toujours très occupée — on more than one occasion; I must also mention the unstinting support, against all odds, of my Gallerist, Francisco Pereira Coutinho.

and now I would like to go back to my exact words printed in a 2007 catalogue: today, after many contradictions, transitions and other revolutions, my work exists on a few planes. its boundlessness is due to the dimensions created by the purity of those planes that occur simultaneously on the canvas. being able to paint that luminous occurring has been my personal drama and my profound joy.



Fala Mariam de Lisboa, *Retrato da tempestade boazinha*, 2023. Acrylic on canvas. 55 x 45 cm

Juliana Matsumura

Juliana Matsumura (1993, Mogi das Cruzes - Brazil) studied Drawing at Ar.Co - Art and Visual Communication Centre, Lisbon (2017). Selected exhibitions: 'Um Corpo no Mundo', at Galeria Coletivo Amarelo, Lisbon, Portugal (2024); 'Um gesto, todos os desenhos', part of the cycle 'O Desenho como Pensamento', at Centro de Artes de Águeda, Águeda, Portugal (2024); 'chave na serradura', at Arquipélago Contemporary Arts Centre, Ribeira Grande - Azores, Portugal (2022) and 'Kawa-Kami', at Casarão do Chá, Mogi das Cruzes, Brazil (2022). In 2022 the artist took part in the FLAD Visual Arts Course and received a Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Grant for her residency project entitled 'Kawa-Kami', which she developed in São Paulo. She has been exhibiting her work since 2017. In 2024 she published her first book of poems 'andar como as nuvens andam' (Walking like the clouds walk) by Urutau. Her work is represented in the collections of the Arquipélago - Contemporary Arts Centre, the PLMJ Foundation, the Fondazione Fiera Milano and the FAAP São Paulo Residency.

Her artistic research deals with relationships between the body, ancestry and territory, and is situated at the intersection of drawing, installation, writing and performance. In the process of making images, she uses elements and phenomena from nature, symbols and archetypes in an attempt to speculate on the invisible and on memory (interpersonal and historical). Her visual work refers to flows, power plays, movement and the passage of time, in a kinematic apprehension of the world.



Juliana Matsumura, *The Remnant III - Untitled 8*, 2025. Monotype on paper. 60 x 42 cm

Manuela Marques

Manuela Marques is an internationally acclaimed photographer whose work investigates the structure of the image and its relationship with perception. She currently lives and works in Paris, developing an artistic practice that merges a poetic sensibility with rigorous conceptual reflection.

A graduate in Modern Literature from Université Paris III – Sorbonne Nouvelle, Marques discovered in photography a new visual grammar, which has become the central axis of her artistic research. Influenced by structuralist thought, she has developed an innovative practice, exploring the image as a network of visual constellations that challenge its materiality and meaning. As she explains:

In a way, this corresponds to an inventory of the constitutive structures of the image, with the aim of understanding its global meaning.

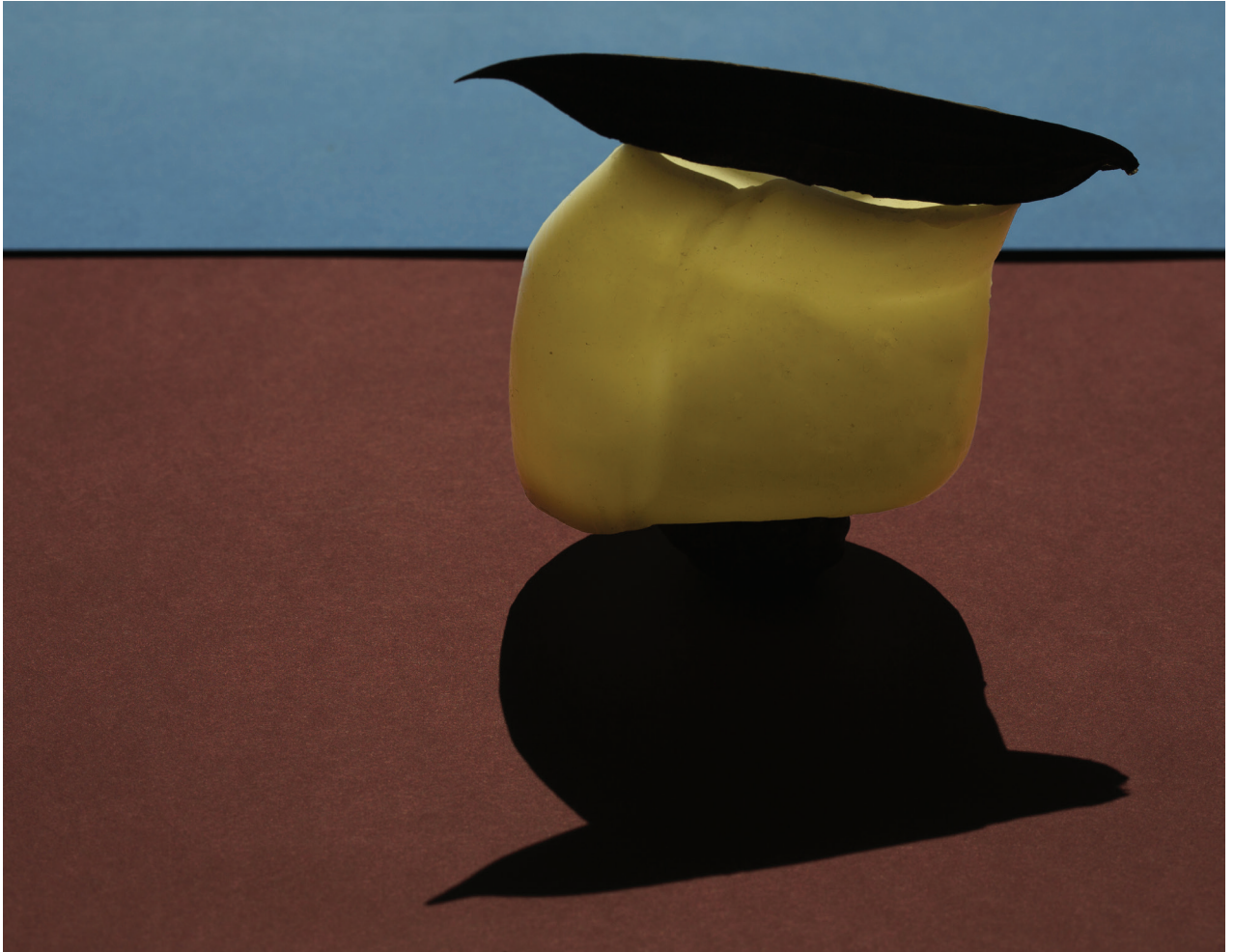
Since 1992, her work has been widely exhibited in major institutions such as Musée André Malraux (Le Havre), Centre d'Art du Domaine de Kerguéhennec, and Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea (2022-2023 Lisbon). In 2015, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation presented Versailles - La Face Cachée du Soleil, a photographic and video project created at the Palace of Versailles during its winter closure. Another major project was La Force de Coriolis (Le Collier, Reims), an exhibition designed for the cellars of a prestigious champagne house, where she explored reflections and the subtle presence of natural elements.

In 2011, she was awarded the Besphoto Prize, and her work was exhibited at the Berardo Collection Museum, in Lisbon. Throughout her career, she has been widely studied and analyzed by art critics and historians such as Gilles A. Tiberghien, Michel Poivert, Sérgio Mah, Jacinto Lageira, Lisette Lagnado, Léa Bismuth, and Emília Tavares. Several monographs have been dedicated to her work, published by Éditions Marval and Loco Éditions, in Paris.

Manuela Marques recently exhibited *In the Night* (February 14 – May 20, 2024) at the Saudi Arabia Museum of Contemporary Art (SAMoCA) in Riyadh, curated by Géraldine Bloch. Her work was also presented in *Campagne-Première* (June – July 2024) in Revonnas, France, curated by Fanny Robin. In September and October 2024, she participates in the International Contemporary Art Festival Sète-Lisbon (SLA), first in Sète, France (September 9 – 14, 2024), and then in Lisbon, Portugal (from October 16, 2024), under the curatorship of Philippe Saulle.

Manuela Marques' work is included in several prestigious institutional and private collections. In Portugal, her work is part of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon and Paris), the State Contemporary Art Collection, the Berardo Collection Museum, the National Museum of Contemporary Art, the EDP Foundation, the Lisbon City Museum, the Novo Banco Photography Collection, and the Museum of Image (Braga). In France, she is represented in the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain (Paris), FRAC Auvergne (Clermont-Ferrand), FRAC Haute-Normandie, Musée André Malraux (Le Havre), Fonds Départemental d'Art Contemporain de l'Essonne, Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, Musée de La Roche-sur-Yon, and Agnès b. Collection (Paris). Internationally, her work is included in the Banco Espírito Santo Investment (Brazil), Camões Institute (Paris), Wedge Collection (Toronto, Canada), The Büyükkuşoğlu Collection (Bodrum, Turkey), and the Saudi Arabia Museum of Contemporary Art (SAMoCA, Riyadh).

With a constantly evolving body of work, Manuela Marques establishes herself as one of the most distinctive figures in contemporary photography, exploring the tensions between image, perception, and materiality.



Manuela Marques, *figuration 2*, 2024. Pigment print. 70 x 90 x 3 cm. Ed. 3