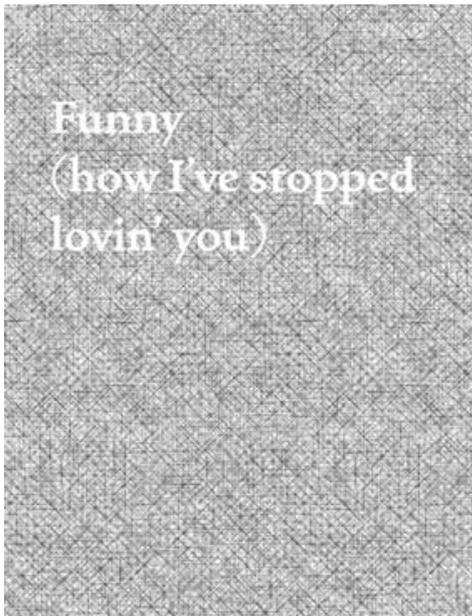


PRESS RELEASE



Gerald Petit

Funny (how I've stopped lovin' you)

February 1 – March 10, 2007

Gallery and exhibition opening on February 1st, 2007:

6–9 pm Press Preview

9 pm Opening

The artist will be present

2007, digital print on paper, 140x105 cm

Caroline Pagès Gallery (new space)

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Opening Hours: Monday-Wednesday 12am-5pm, Thursday-Friday 12am-8pm, Saturday 3-8pm and every day by appointment.

The first solo exhibition of the French artist of Portuguese origin Gerald Petit in Portugal will also be the first exhibition of a new gallery – Caroline Pagès Gallery – the new face of Caroline Pagès's project within the context of national contemporary art. Since The Artroom, the development of this project, both in terms of concept and a new space, has been clearly related to the idea of giving greater visibility to artists, be they established or emerging, national or international. Particular importance is given to the exchange of contacts and artists' mobility in this field.

Funny (how I've stopped lovin' you) is the title of a project started by the artist, Gerald Petit, exactly 10 years ago and one that has recently been reactivated by the discovery of a work of art by James Coleman, *Clara and Dário* (1975). The reminiscence of a memory, of a narration, of a state (in this case of a state of love) informs the works in this exhibition.

The exhibition title comes from a Nat King Cole song (*Funny not much*), which pits an old romantic melody against a love drama while simultaneously working as an oxymoron, just like the titles *Nevermore*, *Out of nowhere* or *Les désirs négatifs* used by Gerald Petit. He puts the anomaly between the perception of the image and its meaning, between the exactness of photography and its very enigma,

between the assembled reference and its resonance towards the image into perspective.

In the exhibition the hypotheses move between the four rooms, offering different viewpoints via photography, wall-paintings, posters and canvases.

This exhibition presents a new vision of Gerald Petit's recent work, one that has long studied all the many means of creating images, from photography to painting, via graphic work or rumour, to expand the sphere of procedures.

The display of the pieces produces the narration contained in each image, creating links between them, and that sparkle lets the viewer organise the adventures that originate from that collection, influencing the interpretation of meaningful images, which the interpretation, in itself, is unable to uncover. Gerald Petit often alludes to Le Bernin's "Composed" principle, which placed painting, sculpture and architecture together in forming one image according to the eye that sees it, supported by the perspective.

In general, the preference for the immediacy for a specific time that ends up, however, lasting in the intense relationship with the world, produces an enduring motivation in the artist's quest. These are moments of the re-discovery of people, places, stories and tales that move within a construction that is almost always, but not only, a fiction of reality.

The image constitutes a productive foundation in the exploration of a relationship between a fictitious world and what is presented in it as a sign of what is real. That is also the relevance of Petit's work: reformulating characters and content and taking advantage of the ambivalence the scenario of the illusion has at its disposal. The displacement of the body, of gestures and of objects in relation to the physical and temporal space creates the image of a parallel world that lives on reality but one that decides to indulge in other artifices.

It is important to think about the representational function of the images that the work captures, the number of questions that each one asks of the conventions that art has established throughout the ages. In the field of painting, the vision takes on a clear line of perception that breaks away from the standardisation of this image typology. In his analysis of Petit's work, the art critic Pascal Beausse states that "The enigma of identity could bring all of the images he produces together", and underlines the imperious view of the mysteries of identity in the artist's quest that his works confirm.

In 2006, Gerald Petit participated in the collective exhibitions *Notre Histoire - une scène artistique française émergente* at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris and *Supernova* at the Domaine Pommery in Reims (curator Judicaël Lavrador), at the Tina B, Prague Contemporary Art Biennial (exhibition curator Pascal Beausse) as well as at the Echigo Tsumari Triennial in Japan (he also participated in the Hiroshima Art Document in 2003, and in 2004), and at the Lisbon Light Biennial, Luzboa 2006.

In New York, Gerald Petit is represented by the gallery Lmak Projects; he has participated in various collective exhibitions in the Yvon Lambert and Robert Mann galleries in the city.

In France, he has had solo exhibitions at the *Musée Nicephore Niepce* and at the *Chapelle du Carmel* in Châlon-sur-Saône, at the *Centre d'Art Contemporain* in Albi, at the *Centre Culturel l'Atheneum* and at the *Interface* gallery in Dijon, as well as at the *Centre Photographique* in Lectoure.

His work is also part of the French public collections at the *Fonds National d'Art Contemporain*, at the *Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain d'Alsace* and at the *Musée Nicephore Niepce*, as well as in private collections in France, the USA and Germany.

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