

PRESS RELEASE



Untitled (from the series 'Maps'), 2007, Acrylic on aluminium, 200x200 cm

Marco Pires

White Lies

May 10 – June 9, 2007

Opening reception on Thursday, May 10 at 10 pm

Guided tour on Saturday, May 12 at 5 pm

Caroline Pagès Gallery

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

White Lies is the title of this exhibition of Marco Pires' work and one that heralds a new look at reality with yet another very individual experience of perspective. Based around cartographic research and the study of various city maps, the direction taken by the artist was one of reusing and re-working those images via the use of painting.

The effect of these works, acrylic on aluminium and paper, is the result of conceptual endeavour that asks questions about what maps truly represent; *White Lies* is a concept that Mark Monmonier refers to in the essay *How to Lie with Maps*, which translates the inherent ambiguity in the information contained in a map, in favour of a better understanding of the signs and symbols that are part of it and which abbreviates that same information creating "white lies", making it more concise and visual on the one hand but less precise and exact on the other.

The flexibility between the complicated reality and how it is represented, within a cartographic context, establishes a close relationship that, for that very reason, can only be communicated via

distortion. There is no place for the finer details and features of that same reality when the objective is clarity; the sacrifice of the suppressed information will make the map more functional, it transforms that information into characteristics that allow it to contain partiality, characteristics such as scale and symbols, where colour plays a crucial role. The determination of reference points, alongside the abstraction of the map's geometric design, may define the different uses of the map itself. The responsibility of managing the content of a map is very important; not only in relation to its use but also in how real things are reflected and communicated. Cartography as a language possesses an intrinsic strategy that is neither static nor linear, quite the opposite; it is projected via models and forms that adjust themselves to the model, demonstrating its ability to produce different interpretations.

From this perspective, Marco Pires has moved even further towards a question that imposes opposing visions: he puts up for debate the scientific exactitude of geography with the essential generality that cartography requires to be understood, at the same time, in relation to painting, presenting it via a disciplined process, subverting canons when questioning its pictorial function, he uncovers the physical flaws that the paint leaves behind on the regularity of the lines. The idea that rules and science have a fallible streak is clearly expressed in the debate that Marco Pires encourages in his artistic premises.

Marco Pires' work in this exhibition is based on the purity of forms, which is dictated above all by the articulation of lines where the essential construction is communicated via architectural reminiscence. In the same way perspective is a mainstay of his work, he seeks to emphasise the importance of structural lines, both from a schematic as well as a pictorially organised point of view. However, it is crucial to understand the importance of drawing as a structural element, the technical aspect required for the projection and overlapping of levels that have influenced one facet of the artist's work. Certain pieces reveal a dialogue between aspects of the surrounding nature and architectural elements – these are annotations and impressions that define the landscape – that, despite existing via a three-dimensional artifice that makes them autonomous, does not mean that they are not part of a truly interesting global congruity at a formal and conceptual level, questioning the domain of our understanding of landscape.

In 2001, Marco Pires graduated in painting from the Lisbon School of Fine Arts. *White Lies* is his first solo exhibition in Lisbon since 2002. In recent years the artist has had exhibitions in Coimbra, Guimarães and Porto, for example, *Horizon* (2005) at Pedro Oliveira Gallery and *Magnificare* (2006) in Sala Poste-Ite, at the same gallery. In 2006, Marco Pires's work included a collective exhibition *Opções & Futuros: Obras da Coleção da Fundação PLMJ*, initially at Arte Contempo in Lisbon and later at the Municipal Museum in Faro (Algarve).

In 2005, the artist participated in the collective exhibition *Representações da Ciência na Arte Contemporânea*, curated by Miguel Amado, at the Science & Technology National Museum in Coimbra, as well as in the exhibition *Ariane de Rothschild, II Painting Prize*, which was held at the Galveias Palace, in Lisbon. His work is part of the PLMJ Foundation collection in Lisbon, the Junta de Extremadura in Spain, as well as being part of many other private collections in Portugal, Spain and Holland.

Rita Santos, April 2007
Caroline Pagès Gallery

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