



CALOUSTE  
GULBENKIAN  
FOUNDATION

UK BRANCH

Unlocking Europe's best kept secret

Highlights from the  
Portuguese Visual Arts Programme



## **Acknowledgements**

The Portuguese Visual Arts Programme has been a great collaborative endeavour made possible by the expertise and engagement of many individuals and organisations. The Foundation is especially grateful to Gill Hedley and Filipa Oliveira who produced the scoping study and provided coordination work and general advice throughout the programme; Isabel Lucena at the Foundation's UK Branch for leading on this strand of work; Isabel Carlos and her staff at Centro de Arte Moderna for their general engagement and collaboration on the residencies element of the programme; Ana Paula Gordo, Eunice Pinto, Carla Seixas and Cristina Ramos from the Gulbenkian Art Library, and Jane Bramwell, Maxine Miller and Maria White at the Tate for their contribution to the development of the Portuguese art research collection; Miguel Amado for his work on the development of the Lusophone African art research collection at the Tate; Marjorie Allthorpe-Guyton for producing the independent evaluation of the programme; Sharon Telfer for writing this publication; Helen Swansbourne for its design; Julia Lewis as editor; and finally Siân Ede, former Arts Director at the Foundation's UK Branch who originally encouraged the whole initiative.

We would also like to express our deep gratitude to the artists, galleries, institutions and individuals who were our hosts in Portugal and who generously shared their time and expertise with us; all the curators who travelled with us for their time, wisdom and companionship; the artists and gallerists who lent works to the Art for Hoxton Square exhibitions; Turner Contemporary, Glasgow School of Art and the Hepworth Wakefield for their administrative support; Guimarães Capital of Culture for the invitation for us to share this project; Spike Island, ACME and Gasworks for hosting the Portuguese artists' residencies; and the Tate for hosting the Portuguese and Lusophone African art research collections at the Tate Archive and Library.

**Front cover: Jorge Santos, *The world appeared to her reflected by pure inwardness*, 2010, Spike Island, Bristol, installation view. Photo: Diana Ferreira**

Published in 2014 by  
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation  
UK Branch  
50 Hoxton Square  
London N1 6PB  
**+44 (0)20 7012 1400**  
**[info@gulbenkian.org.uk](mailto:info@gulbenkian.org.uk)**  
**[www.gulbenkian.org.uk](http://www.gulbenkian.org.uk)**

# SUMMARY

**The richness and diversity of Portuguese art has been particularly under-represented in the UK. In 2009, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK Branch began a programme of work to promote contemporary Portuguese visual art and artists in the UK. The Portuguese Visual Arts Programme included:**

- visits by UK curators to Portugal
- support for exhibitions in UK regional galleries
- residency programmes for Portuguese artists in the UK
- the creation of a Portuguese art research collection at the Tate

The programme's short-term impact has been immediately visible: exhibitions were well attended and received strong regional and national press coverage. Longer-term benefits are also beginning to emerge. A growing group of influential and articulate curators now has a good working knowledge of Portugal, its

contemporary art scene and artists. Networks of artists, professionals and arts organisations are developing within and between both countries. Demand for the work of Portuguese artists is increasing in the UK.

The art research collection – a specialised resource for arts students, professionals and the public deposited at the Tate Library and Archive – is raising the visibility of Portuguese art and artists in UK galleries, museums and academic works.

A number of projects were conceived and developed with impressive speed. Others will take time to reach fruition, but such deep-rootedness was the programme's goal from the start. An important aim was for the work to be sustainable without continuous funding. The creation of strong networks between curators and artists, and among curators themselves, will have lasting results. In the long term, the Foundation hopes that this work will contribute to a better understanding of Portuguese culture in the UK.

**A curators' visit, 2011, Serralves Museum, Porto. Photo: Filipa Oliveira**



“We set out explicitly to help make a sustainable difference – something with a life beyond any funding or particular project.”

**Andrew Barnett, Director, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK Branch**

## WHAT WERE THE AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME?

**The strategic aim of the Foundation's Cultural Understanding area of work, of which the Portuguese Visual Arts Programme is one part, is to improve people's perceptions of each other by providing opportunities for interaction between cultures and through culture. One way in which the Portuguese Visual Arts Programme helped do this was by supporting initiatives to promote international arts practice.**

The Portuguese Visual Arts Programme fell within this work to encourage dialogue between cultures and promote cultural understanding. It also reflected the Foundation's concern to *explore, experiment, exchange, explain* and *exit*. The programme's main objective was to make contemporary Portuguese visual art better known in the UK.

The programme built on the Foundation's previous support for Anglo-Portuguese cultural relations. This had comprised a large number of small grants to artists and projects, mainly for travelling expenses.

The Foundation wanted to change this approach. It wanted to make fewer but larger investments which, cumulatively, would have a more sustainable impact beyond the life of individual projects. It also wanted to explore how it could work internationally in a way that honoured previous work but addressed a specific issue or filled a defined gap.

“You can't just rely on seeing artists on the international circuit of art fairs and biennales, you have to see them in their cultural context.”

**Isabel Carlos, Director of Centro de Arte Moderna, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon**



### INSIDE ME, HELENA ALMEIDA

**Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge, and John Hansard Gallery, University of Southampton, 2009 and 2010**

Helena Almeida has represented Portugal twice at the Venice Biennale. This selection from her work over the last 40 years was her first major UK show. Always in front of the camera, she assumes painstakingly choreographed positions which create complex visual compositions. These are as much about space and line as the relationship between the artist and the image. The Tate later purchased some of her work.

Photo: Paul Allitt





## WORKS ON MEMORY, DANIEL BLAUFUKS

**Ffotogallery, Cardiff, 2012**

*Works on Memory* is the first solo UK exhibition by one of Portugal's most celebrated contemporary artists, Daniel Blaufuks. His work combines video, photography, sound and installation to explore time and memory.

Blaufuks focuses on what we remember and what we forget, occupying the territory between public and private memory, recollection and oblivion. The show at Ffotogallery presented a powerful and emotional reflection on time, of our relation to materiality, to memory, to history, to living and to dying. The exhibition was curated by one of the programme advisors, Filipa Oliveira, working with gallery director, David Drake. The final Saturday attracted a record number of visitors to the gallery, and overall numbers were 50 per cent higher than usual.

Photo: Rory Duckhouse

## HOW DID THE PROGRAMME WORK?

**The Foundation first commissioned research to identify existing challenges. Filipa Oliveira and Gill Hedley, independent curators with in-depth knowledge of the Portuguese and UK art worlds, undertook a scoping study. This study made a series of recommendations which became the basis of the Portuguese visual arts programme strategy. Their report confirmed the richness and diversity of the contemporary Portuguese visual arts scene, but also showed that it was largely unknown in the UK. They found this lack of exposure to be rooted in a lack of awareness on the part of UK curators.**

Interviewees from both countries were very enthusiastic about developing stronger links between Portugal and the UK. They emphasised the need to increase and maintain awareness of the Portuguese visual art scene in a systematic way. Portuguese interviewees also stressed that any strategy should promote contemporary Portuguese art in an international context, rather than looking at it in isolation.

Drawing on this, the programme was then designed with specific objectives:

- Exposing established and emerging Portuguese artists in the UK
- Raising awareness of Portuguese art and artists with a large number of UK curators
- Placing Portuguese art in an international context
- Creating a Portuguese art research collection in the UK

The programme remained flexible enough to support both large- and small-scale projects and to accommodate new proposals. Conversations between Portuguese and UK curators, for example, led to proposals for an exchange scheme between galleries in the UK and Portugal. Filipa Oliveira and Gill Hedley continued to be involved throughout the programme, in particular in working with curators.

The programme was originally designed to run from 2009 to 2011. In 2012, an 'exit year' was added to help consolidate the relationships and projects that had developed across the three years. Marjorie Allthorpe-Guyton, former National Director of Visual Arts at Arts Council England, undertook an objective evaluation of the strategy in 2012.



**Group of curators in studio visit to Vasco Araújo, Lisbon, 2011. Photo: Filipa Oliveira**

## CURATORIAL RESEARCH TRIPS

In the scoping study, interviewees in the UK and Portugal had cited visits by curators as central to developing both a network of visual arts professionals and an improved system of information exchange.

Curators' visits became the core of the programme. In each of the three years, different curators from regional galleries across the UK were taken on research trips to Portugal. Selection of the first group was based on:

- a geographical spread from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Ireland
- a mix of those responsible for collections and exhibitions
- those who were on their way up the career ladder, at both senior and more junior levels, and
- the exclusion of London-based curators as well as national museums or galleries with large travel funds.

The 2010 visit added:

- freelance curators, and
- those commissioning for public art projects.

The 2011 group was selected from major, often new, galleries, which might work directly with the Serralves Museum in Oporto; Serralves has an extensive representative collection of Portuguese and international contemporary art. This group also included two curators based at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, but also working for a range of other institutions.

Each group experienced five intensive days of meetings with key curators, studio visits, and tours of commercial galleries, and small and large institutions. They were accompanied by the two programme advisors – Gill Hedley and Filipa Oliveira – and Isabel Lucena from the Foundation.

“What was wonderful is that it opened up this new art scene to me.”

**Caroline Hancock, Independent Curator, Paris**

“A really fruitful opportunity. The trips were brilliant and well put together. They included meetings with artists in their studios as well as visits to the big institutions.”

**Jenny Brownrigg, Exhibitions Director, Glasgow School of Art**

Follow-up meetings at the Foundation's premises in London established and maintained connections between members of the different groups. These events proved to be important networking opportunities, generating further collaborations between those attending.

In 2012, six of the curators were invited to the Portuguese city of Guimarães, during its time as European Capital of Culture. Gill Hedley and Filipa Oliveira devised a series of discussions topics for this event, 'Curators in Conversation'. The curators then explored these issues in public conversations with Portuguese artists of their choice.

### EXHIBITIONS IN UK GALLERIES

Before the programme formally started, the scoping exercise itself resulted in two major exhibitions of work by Helena Almeida, João Maria Gusmão and Pedro Paiva.

These were followed by a series of exhibitions across the UK, which mainly resulted from the curators' trips to

Portugal. The case studies featured in this document highlight the rich range of this work, in location, subject matter and form. These exhibitions, in turn, prompted further invitations to show in the UK and abroad and led to acquisitions of work by UK collections.

Particular highlights included the first UK exhibition of the work of Helena Almeida – *Inside Me* – commissioned by Kettle's Yard in Cambridge and the John Hansard Gallery in Southampton. The Tate later added several of Almeida's works to its collection. The Foundling Museum in London commissioned Portugal's best-known painter, Paula Rego, to exhibit alongside Tracey Emin and Mat Collishaw. Rego's disturbing images made a strong match with the troubling history of the Foundling Hospital. This exhibition placed Rego, the best known of contemporary Portuguese artists, centre stage alongside two leading British artists who had long admired her work. This well-received exhibition reinforced the belief that artists from different cultures and generations can be shown together successfully.

### MAT COLLISHAW, TRACEY EMIN AND PAULA REGO

#### Foundling Museum, London, 2010

Three artists, Mat Collishaw, Tracey Emin and Paula Rego, installed artworks throughout the Foundling Museum that resonated with the extraordinary story of the Foundling Hospital.

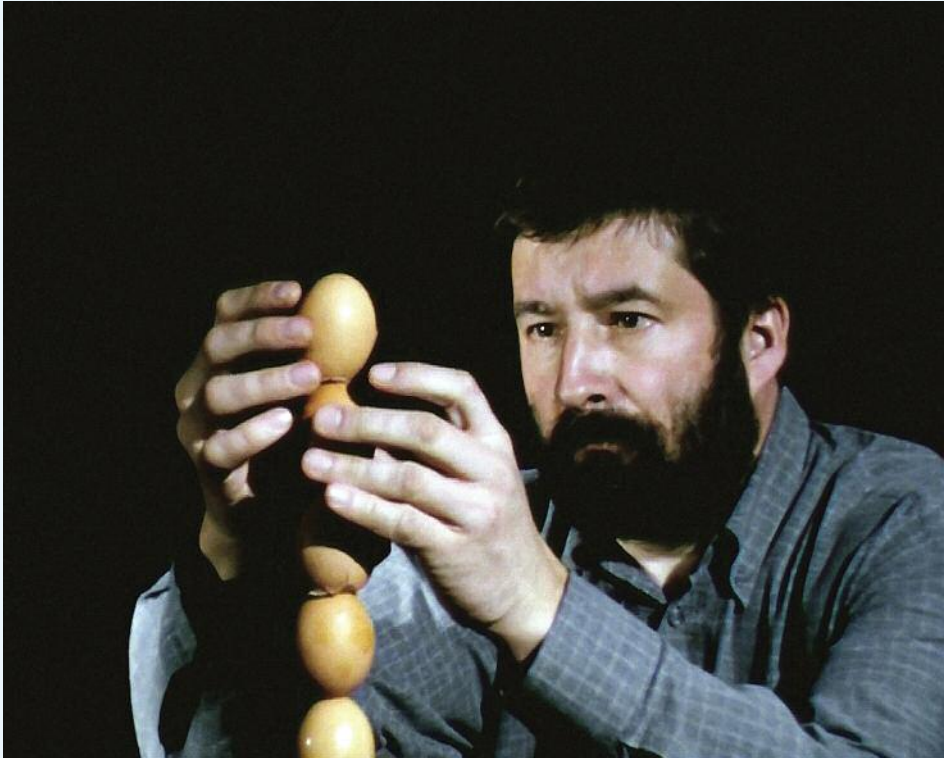
Paula Rego created a major new work, *Oratorio*. This combined several drawings with figures inspired by the foundling children, taking the form of a traditional Portuguese devotional altarpiece. Rego also displayed seven preparatory drawings for *Oratorio*, alongside seven works on paper by Tracey Emin. This show was curated by one of the programme advisors, Gill Hedley. *Sunday Times* critic Waldemar Januszczak described it as, “One of the most successful acts of commission I have witnessed from a historic institution”.

Paula Rego, *Oratorio*, 2008–09



**OF THE MOVEMENT OF THE FRIED EGG AND OTHER  
ASTRONOMICAL BODIES**, JOÃO MARIA GUSMÃO & PEDRO PAIVA

**Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, 2010**



Working together since 2001, João Maria Gusmão and Pedro Paiva create objects, installations and short films which they describe as 'poetic philosophical fiction'. They represented Portugal at the 2009 Venice Biennale but this exhibition, curated by Helen Legg, was their first in the UK. It featured new, short films made in Brazil, alongside others made in the last five years.

Playful and inventive, the carefully crafted 16mm films reflect their ongoing preoccupations such as vision and blindness, metaphysics, the void and infinity. As a result of this exhibition, the artists were invited to show in Holland and supported to work in Africa.

*A still from [Columbo's Column](#), 2006*

The Ikon Gallery in Birmingham hosted the UK debut of younger artists, João Maria Gusmão and Pedro Paiva, who represented Portugal at the Venice Biennale 2009.

The regional exhibitions were complemented by a series of art displays in the Foundation's own London office, curated by Gill Hedley.

"This project has been a catalyst for the stimulation of conversation simply through individuals coming together from different places."

**Lisa Le Feuvre, Head of Sculpture Studies,  
Henry Moore Institute, Leeds**

**HYDRARCHY: POWER AND RESISTANCE AT SEA,**  
JOÃO PEDRO VALE WITH OTHERS

**Gasworks, London, 2010**

This group exhibition brought together international artists whose work explores power relations at sea, including the slave trade, sea tourism and offshore finance.

This was the first UK show for João Pedro Vale. His work drew on representations of whales, ships and sailors, with reference to the distinctive nautical artform of scrimshaw. The exhibition coincided with Frieze Art Fair, with a Frieze breakfast being held at the gallery.

*Photo: [Matthew Booth](#)*





The 'Three points of contact' project provides a new model for artists' residencies. Von Calhau and Stuart Gurden experiment with sound recording at Spurn Point, 2012. Photo: Judit Bodor



## ARTISTS' RESIDENCIES

The UK Branch has been engaged with the Gulbenkian art residency in London, working closely with the Foundation's headquarters in Lisbon. This includes contributing to the choice of host

organisation, monitoring residents' progress and supporting their final projects. Five Portuguese artists took up residencies, first at ACME and later on at Gasworks. Two further residencies for Portuguese artists formed part of a three-year grant to Spike Island in Bristol.

Strong relationships have been created between the resident artists and their local and international counterparts, as well as with the host organisations and other stakeholders.

The curators' visits have also sparked innovative approaches to residencies. Three curators from York, Glasgow and Penzance created an experimental residency programme for UK and international artists in each of the three regions, pooling resources. This project – 'Three Points of Contact' – provides a new model for artists' residencies, creating an evolving network that enables curators to work together, bringing international artists into contact with UK artists at contrasting locations. The residency sets up as an investigational space in each participating gallery, where the artists can research and develop ideas through collaborative experiments, dialogue and public interaction.



## JAGUAR/PRIVATE VIEW, MIGUEL PALMA

Mead Gallery, University of Warwick, 2010

The works of one of Portugal's most significant living artists, Miguel Palma, examine ideas about value, transaction, risk and technology, relating in particular to the car industry.

In 2009 he bought a 1963 Jaguar car made in Coventry and later took it to Lisbon. He decided to bring the car back to Coventry, filming the journey. Palma made 47 drawings, one for each year of the car's life. He offered twelve to collectors prepared to come to Lisbon and be filmed choosing their drawing. These twelve films open the process of collecting art to the scrutiny of the gallery visitor.

Curated by Sarah Shalgosky, this exhibition is imbued with nostalgia for a period in Coventry's history. Its popularity meant visitor numbers were ten per cent up on the same time in the previous year.

Photo: Miguel Palma's studio



## LIVE YOUR QUESTIONS NOW, HELENA ALMEIDA AND ANA JOTTA WITH OTHERS

Glasgow School of Art, 2011



This was a unique survey exhibition of Scottish, UK and international contemporary artists over 60, including distinguished Portuguese artists, Helena Almeida and Ana Jotta. Increasingly, survey shows focus on emerging young artists. 'Live Your Questions Now' asked what we can learn from a later generation of contemporary visual artists. Coinciding with Glasgow hosting the 7th British Art Show, it saw visitor numbers up 23 per cent on its previous summer exhibition. One visitor commented, "Love the concept and the refreshing art showing that art has no age boundaries".

Photo: Alan Dimmick



“I hit the ground running. I had no take on Portuguese artists.”

**Paul Bonaventura,**  
Senior Research  
Fellow, Ruskin  
School of Drawing  
& Fine Art, Oxford

## THE PORTUGUESE VISUAL ART RESEARCH COLLECTION

In 2010, the Foundation donated its collection of over 600 Portuguese art publications to the Tate Library and Archive. The Foundation's Art Library in Lisbon seconded two members of staff to the Tate to organise and catalogue the collection and set up a catalogue exchange scheme between the Tate and Portuguese arts venues.

In 2011 Miguel Amado was asked to develop a follow-up project to establish a digital and print collection of documents about art from the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa for the Tate Library and Archive. This collection includes catalogues, articles and other publications; portfolios of key artists; images of studios, museums and non-profit and commercial galleries.

New donations are now flowing from Portuguese institutions and private galleries; the private Filomena Soares Gallery in Lisbon, for example, has given 40 titles.

## POLITICAL CAMERAS, ANGELA FERREIRA

Stills, Edinburgh, 2013

For her first solo exhibition in a public gallery in the UK, Angela Ferreira presented her renowned project, *Political Cameras*, alongside a new commission referencing the legacy of David Livingstone's life and work, and the relationship between Africa and Europe from colonial days to the present.

Although considered a sculptor, photography and film have become an integral part of Ferreira's works since the early 1990s. By presenting sculptures alongside the reference images which inform them, Ferreira enables the viewer to devise their own meaning from within the two realms.

Photo: Alan Dimmick



## WHAT HAS THE PROGRAMME ACHIEVED?

**Through an emphasis on structural support, the programme has delivered “impressive short-term outputs”, according to the independent evaluation, “effectively maximising existing networks and infrastructure”. Results include:**

- A series of well-attended exhibitions in regional galleries across the UK which have developed new audiences for the Portuguese artists featured and Portuguese art in general. This, in turn, has resulted in a flow of new commissions, projects and exhibitions. The evaluation report recorded visitor figures for exhibitions and projects at 114,000 by April 2012.
- Nineteen UK curators have made research visits to Portugal, increasing the exposure to and knowledge of Portuguese art and artists in the UK. It is inherent in the way curators work that some projects may take years to develop and some outcomes will be long-term and unpredictable. However, a number of excellent projects have been swiftly conceived and developed. Jenny Brownrigg of Glasgow School of Art, for example, has used her knowledge of Portuguese art to inform the School's exhibition policy 2009–2012.
- The artists' residencies have resulted in in-depth relationships between Portuguese artists, their UK peers and art organisations. The 'Three Points of Contact' model being developed by Glasgow, York and Penzance offers an innovative residency scheme which has the potential to be a model of best practice for international collaboration.

**3, 2, 1, A A AND AWAY, 1, 2...**,  
CARLOS NORONHA FEIO

**Bridport Arts Centre, 2011**

Carlos Noronha Feio engages with the points at which different cultures collide, interfere and impose their own imperatives on each other.

Noronha Feio has been inspired by the tradition of 'war rugs', made in Afghanistan. He works with carpet weavers in Arraiolos, Portugal, to produce a cross-cultural series of rugs that metaphorically create a common future for both cultures. The weavers use local traditional methods, similar to those found in Afghanistan.

For this exhibition, a single giant rug filled one room of the gallery. A collaborative sound piece by Carlos Noronha Feio and Ergo Phizmiz creates a soundtrack, reflecting on the several layers of meaning implied in the rug.



Photo: Carlos Noronha Feio

## STORYTELLING, VASCO ARAÚJO

### Fishmarket at various Northampton Galleries, 2012

This solo exhibition by internationally acclaimed Vasco Araújo consisted of newly commissioned and previous work. Over twelve months, the Lisbon-based artist made a series of research visits to Northampton. This inspired a new body of work based upon the town's heritage in the making of shoes and boots. The symbolic resonances of shoes – what they can mean in terms of identity, journeys and traces left behind – feed into the work.

A series of events ran alongside the main exhibitions, including film screenings of the artist's past works at the Picturedrome. As well as giving a talk about his work, the artist conducted a Singing Stories family workshop exploring ways to interpret the exhibition musically.

Photo: Andrew Hilton



- The creation of the Portuguese art research collection at the Tate has increased visibility and knowledge of Portuguese visual culture. The secondment of staff from the Gulbenkian Art Library in Lisbon to the Tate, and a return visit by the Tate have forged close ties between the UK and Portugal. The Tate is keen to replicate the model to enable the development of art research collections for other cultures.
- The initiative has also led to the development of a Lusophone African art research collection. This is a new collaboration between the Tate and the Foundation which reflects the interest of both organisations in African art.
- This project has also strengthened ties between the UK and Lisbon branches of the Foundation. The appointment in 2010 of the international Portuguese curator Isabel Carlos to direct the Gulbenkian's Centro de Arte Moderna in Lisbon has refocused attention not only on its strong British collections, but also on the potential for new partnerships with the UK.

In addition to these impressive short-term outputs, participants have formed significant partnerships, establishing trusting relationships on which to build.

For Andrew Barnett, Director of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK Branch, the key lesson has been the value of exchanges between curators themselves: "They are the intermediaries who stand between artists and their audiences – the ones who decide what is shown. Exchanges that dig deep, last a sustained period of time with follow-up and, most importantly of all, in groups have proved so much better than one-person, one-off exchanges... The network effect is profound."

"The important thing is that this is sustainable in its own right, the knowledge is vested with the change-makers, the curators themselves."

**Andrew Barnett, Director,  
Calouste Gulbenkian  
Foundation UK Branch**



**THIS IS NOT A HOUSE**, EDGAR MARTINS

**New Art Gallery, Walsall, The Wapping Project Bankside, London, and Gallery of Photography, Dublin, 2011/2013**

*This is not a House* is Edgar Martins' most talked-about body of work. Originally commissioned by *The New York Times Magazine* to examine the collapse of the US subprime mortgage industry, Martins uses photography to

explore new models for conceptualising a hotly contemporary phenomenon and landscape. Martins' decision to digitally reshape some images led to heated debate on publication. The series has become a reference point in artistic and

photographic circles in discussions about the longest-lasting questions around truth and verisimilitude in photography.

[Installation view at the Wapping Project Bankside](#)

**WE BELONG TO THE PEOPLE WHEN WE'RE OUTSIDE**, PEDRO BARATEIRO

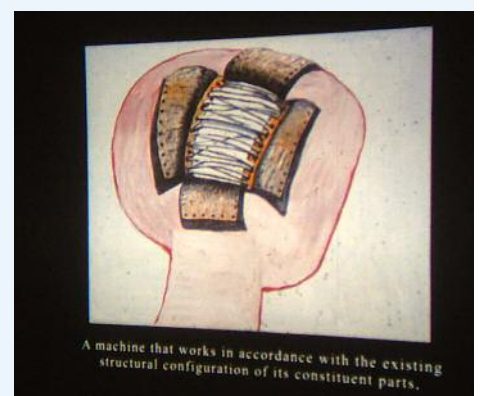
**Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge, 2013**

Portuguese artist Pedro Barateiro has developed a new film taking, as its starting point, two particular objects: a letter from the artist Constantin Brancusi, and the painting *Composition*, 1936, by Portuguese abstract artist Maria Helena Vieira da Silva. Both Brancusi and da Silva lived as exiles in Paris in the 1930s.

The film consists of a timeline of several images of artworks – in different mediums – that correspond to a certain vision of art history.

After the premiere at Kettle's Yard, the film will be presented at the Fundação Arpad Szenes-Vieira da Silva in Lisbon, which houses the painting by Vieira da Silva which inspired it.

[Installation view, Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge](#)



**AN URBAN SILENCE**, NUNO CERA, MAURO CERQUEIRA, GIL HEITOR CORTESÃO, FILIPA CESAR AND JOÃO TABARRA

**Newlyn Art Gallery/The Exchange, Penzance, 2011**



Curated by Blair Todd, *An Urban Silence* addresses the disquiet of city living through observations of Lisbon and Porto. A number of events were integral to the exhibition, alongside the display itself. These included *Biblioteca*, a cultural library presenting books and objects that offer a social and political portrait of Portugal, an insight into the current art scene, and influences and references for each of the artists.

Other activities included family workshops, networking sessions for the exhibiting artists with regional artists, artist-led groups and gallery curators. The opening events included introductory talks by each artist and a programme of Portuguese performance/video.

*Nuno Cera, Room with a View, 2008–2009*

**TO HAVE A VOICE**, BRUNO PACHECO WITH OTHERS

**Glasgow School of Art, 2012**

This group show considered how contemporary artists give a fresh perspective to the established canon of figurative painting. Why do artists choose to give a voice to the characters they create? *To Have a Voice* explored a variety of approaches with work from a spread of

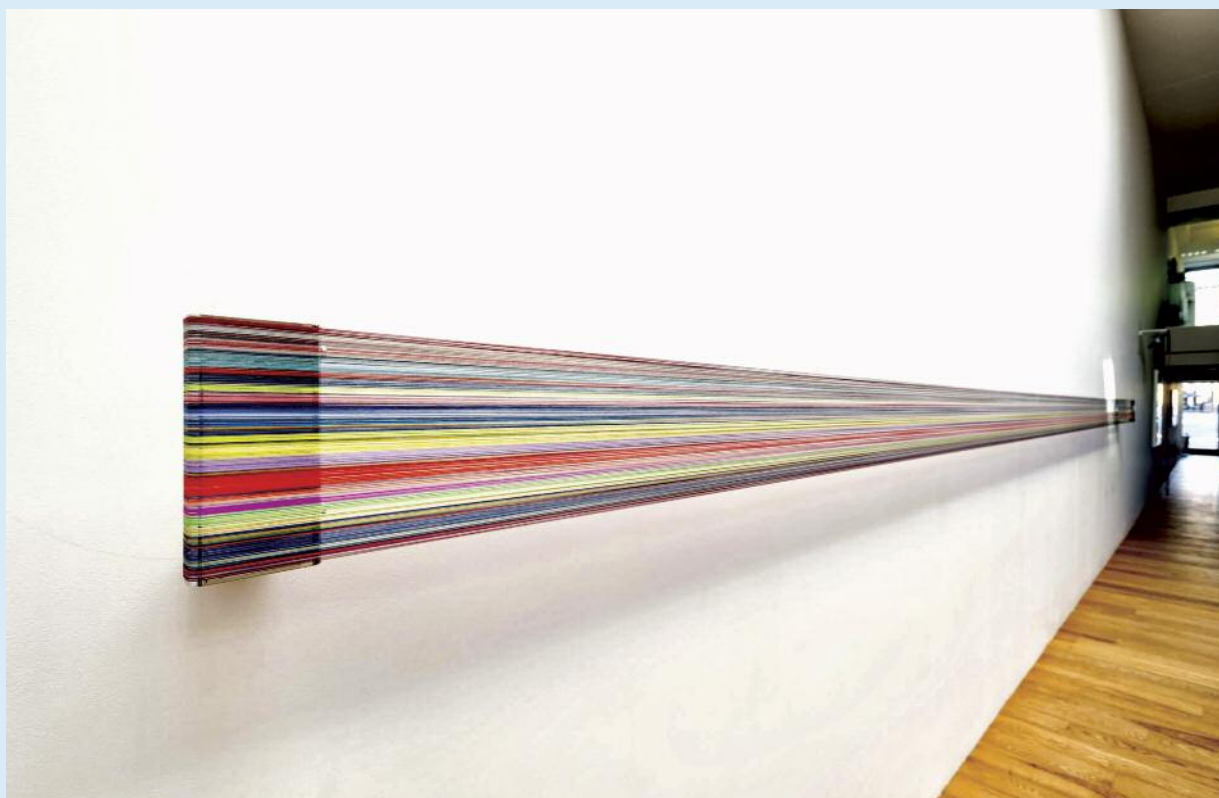
international artists, from those born in Glasgow to those from Israel and the US.

Pacheco's installation offers different viewpoints of a guard observed in Tiananmen Square. Curated by Jenny Brownrigg, the show was part of a series

of Glasgow School of Art exhibitions looking at figurative painting, a subject art school students are perennially drawn to as they develop their practice.

*Photo: Janet Wilson*





## ART FOR HOXTON SQUARE

The 23m, double-height white wall in the Foundation's offices in Hoxton Square offers a prime site for displaying contemporary artworks, including those by Portuguese artists.

Three displays have been held in the Hoxton Square headquarters to complement the architecture, to enhance the environment for staff and visitors and to tell some of the story of the work that the Foundation supports through images of architecture, people and plants with overall themes of environment and communication. The main displays have been complemented by loans from the Centre de Arte Moderna which included Paula Rego, Bartolomeu Cid dos Santos, Henry Moore and other senior British and Portuguese artists, and a boardroom table commissioned from Tania Kovats.

One major work currently showing is Fernanda Fragateiro's work (*Not) Connecting #1, 2007*. Monumental yet fragile, this sculpture is made from hundreds of silk threads attached, under great tension, to two steel brackets, 10 metres apart. The work was first made for the Museum of Communication in Lisbon and was commissioned by Isabel Carlos, now Director of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's Centro de Arte Moderna. It is showing alongside works by British artists, Bridget Riley and Alison Turnbull.

The displays were curated by Gill Hedley, one of the programme's advisors.

**Fernanda Fragateiro, (*Not) Connecting, 2007, installed at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation headquarters, 2013. Photo: Damian Griffith***



## THE PROGRAMME'S LEGACY

**Notable aspects of the programme's legacy are the strong links that have been forged between the art worlds in the UK and Portugal and the potential international application of the model.**

**Group of curators in Dan Graham Pavilion at Serralves Museum, Porto 2011. Photo: Barry Phipps**

The Foundation is working with the EU Commission Office in London and EUNIC (the European Union National Institutes for Culture) to explore the development of a toolkit for this sort of work.

For the Foundation, this programme was an opportunity to pilot a model to promote international arts practice across borders. The move towards developing infrastructure and fostering new partnerships has been successful in achieving change. The Foundation is now considering applying this model to its work in other areas, specifically with performing arts producers.



## Participating curators

### 2009 GROUP

**Jenny Brownrigg**, then Duncan of Jordanstone, University of Dundee, now Glasgow School of Art

**Olga Ferguson**, Aberdeen City Art Gallery

**Caroline Hancock**, independent curator, then based in Dublin, now Paris

**Catherine Hemelryk**, then Bury St Edmunds Art Gallery, now NN Contemporary Art, Northampton

**Victoria Pomery**, Turner Contemporary, Margate

**Sarah Shalgosky**, Mead Gallery, University of Warwick

**Fiona Venables**, then Tullie House, Carlisle, now Mead Gallery, University of Warwick

### 2010 GROUP

**Judit Bodor**, then East Street Arts, Leeds, now independent curator

**Jenny Brownrigg**, Glasgow School of Art

**Michelle Cotton**, FirstSite, Colchester

**Jes Fernie**, independent curator, East Anglia/London

**Aldo Rinaldi**, Public Art Officer, Bristol City Council

**Blair Todd**, Newlyn Art Gallery

### 2011 GROUP

**Karen Downie**, Belfast Exposed

**David Drake**, Ffotogallery, Cardiff

**Lisa Le Feuvre**, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds

**Victoria Pomery**, Turner Contemporary, Margate

**Simon Wallis**, Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield

**Clare Lilley**, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield

**Paul Bonaventura**, Ruskin School, University of Oxford

**Barry Phipps**, Institute of Astronomy, University of Cambridge

### About this publication

This summary draws on information from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK Branch, including the following reports written for the Foundation:

- *A Strategy for the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK Branch) Regarding Contemporary Portuguese Visual Art in the UK and Ireland*, Gill Hedley and Filipa Oliveira, February 2009
- *Portuguese Visual Arts Policy 2009–2011*, Isabel Lucena, April 2009
- *Portuguese Visual Arts Policy 2009–2011, Mid-term Review*, Isabel Lucena, November 2011
- *The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK Visual Arts Programme 2009–2012: Evaluation*, Marjorie Allthorpe-Guyton, April 2012

It has been written by freelance writer, Sharon Telfer.

### About the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK Branch

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is a European charitable foundation established in Portugal in 1956 with cultural, educational, social and scientific interests. Its founder, Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian, was an Armenian born near Istanbul. Multicultural and multilingual, and a noted art collector, he spent his career bringing people from different cultures and nationalities together. Based in Lisbon, with branches in London and Paris, the Foundation has a long history of support for the arts and projects which support and promote cultural interchange. In Lisbon, in addition to the Museum which houses the founder's art collection, the Foundation runs a Modern Art Centre, an Art Library, an Orchestra and a Choir. It is in the privileged position of being able to address national and transnational issues and to act as an 'exchange' for ideas. For more information see [www.gulbenkian.org.uk](http://www.gulbenkian.org.uk)



**Margarida Gouveia, Calouste Gulbenkian  
Foundation Resident at ACME Studios,  
2008–09.**

# Unlocking Europe's best kept secret

## **Highlights from the Portuguese Visual Arts Programme**

Contemporary Portuguese art has been called 'Europe's best kept secret'.

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK Branch set up its Portuguese Visual Arts Programme to make this vibrant art scene better known in the UK. This is part of its work to promote understanding between cultures. This publication highlights the programme's innovative approach and what it has achieved.

**[www.gulbenkian.org.uk](http://www.gulbenkian.org.uk)**

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation  
UK Branch  
50 Hoxton Square  
London N1 6PB  
**+44 (0)20 7012 1400**  
**[info@gulbenkian.org.uk](mailto:info@gulbenkian.org.uk)**