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Miguel Palma's Inverted World

Throughout the summer both Lisbon and New York audiences have the chance to discover Lisbon-based Miguel Palma's body of work. Currently, Portugal's Culturgest galleries are presenting eleven of his large-scale installations and a new sculpture is featured in the artists-in-residence exhibition at Soho's Location One. Based in diverse types of machinery, Palma's pieces range from a stylish altered monocoque that he drove from Lisbon to Porto, escorted by the police, to a transparent container in which layers of sand, revolved by a mechanized device, enfold miniature houses and vehicles. In order to examine the political condition that characterizes our age, he also once made an F-16 cockpit chair, kept in balance by means of a turbine, placed over an Iranian carpet. Like an engineer, Palma devises--in his own words--an 'inverted world,' the title of the show at Culturgest. This notion immediately comes to mind when viewing 'Deep Breath,' on view at Location One. At first sight, one just notices a dark nylon cloth covering a construction atop a bench, below which is a TV set displaying an abstract image. Suddenly, three hidden fans blow air into the piece of fabric, which rises and allows an attached micro video camera to shoot an aerial perspective of an urban landscape, revealed in the television screen. This action takes place every 70 seconds, alluding to the functioning of the heart and thus situating the piece in the long artistic tradition of the city's bodily depiction. Dating from the beginning of the 1990s until today, these must-see projects chronicle the fascination for technoculture that informs Palma's entropic vision of society. - Miguel Amado

<http://www.mpalma.net/>

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Rhizome
210 11th Ave, 2nd floor
New York, NY 10001

tel. +1.212.219.1288
fax +1.212.431.5328
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