

DIOGO PIMENTÃO
INSTANCE

13 June, 2015 - 31 July, 2015

SCHLEICHER/LANGE BERLIN
Opening Friday, 12 June, 2015, 6-9pm

For Diogo Pimentão's current exhibition "INSTANCE" the artist goes in search of forms of representation and depiction within the medium of drawing, or rather investigates the latter's boundaries. To this end, not only does he implement the transformation of his material with the means and prerequisites inherent in it or rather in the medium. In this exhibition, he also combines and contrasts the drawing aspect with materials from other areas such as concrete, with his focus being on installations and sculptures.

Generally, his drawings often break away from their two-dimensionality, reaching out into space, often in combination with performative approaches. This is an idea that Pimentão has taken up once again in "INSTANCE", but this time from the angle of tense relationships and pairs of opposites: heaviness and lightness, weight and counterweight, presence and absence. At the same time, the individual works interact with one another, primarily within their work groups, becoming part of something larger without losing their individual quality. What happens is a process of alternating between their individuality and their interdependence in connection with or in contrast to their relevant dichotomies.

Each of the works in the "Depth (disjunction)" series (2015) consists of a concrete slab and a matching paper element onto which graphite has been thickly applied. Despite the strong contrast between the two materials, they are still mutually dependent - the paper installation is held in place by the concrete, positioned at a certain angle to the wall. Unsettlingly, its weight instills the paper with lightness and allows the paper to float before the wall without any other mounting being necessary. Since there is likewise a volume to the paper given the folds in the sheets, it seems to act as a wrap for the concrete block that has the same dimensions. It now embraces emptiness, while the concrete block, the inside, has been turned outwards to render it visible.

A clearly duo-modular structure exists, without the two elements melding in any way. The feel for the special material remains upheld and therefore the individuality and independence continue to remain as the respective structures of the other.

There is also a dichotomy of weight and counterweight or of weight and lightness and the resulting tension. The colors likewise create a contrasting pair. For example, the bright tone of the concrete contrasts with the deep black of the drawing steeped in graphite, thus creating a distribution of weight that is actually the opposite of the materials involved. One has the sense of forces and counter-forces that are continuously effective and in play.

The drawings are positioned against the wall at different heights and also create a rhythmic visual pattern reminiscent, for example, of swings in music or a fingerboard.

The "Walldrawings" (2015) consist of lines of graphite on fragments of dry dispersion. In a first step, Pimentão hand draws the straight lines on a section of the wall. He explores the surface and the space with these lines.

The texture of the color on the wall is mirrored (depending on whether the surface is smooth or rough) in the way the individual lines are executed: sometimes the passages are straight, other times they are irregular. The multiple repetition of the process of drawing adheres to a form of protocol. The lines are drawn free-hand as high as the artist's reach extends, and according to his eye, and he attempts to repeatedly place them at the same interval next to another, never more than a centimeter apart. It is a method he used in earlier works, whereby in them the density was far greater, the distance between the lines being as minimal as the hand would allow - examples being "Formação Linear Triangular" (2011) and "Immeuble" (2010).

In a second step, he then detaches the sections that bear the drawing from the wall. This phase is far harder to control, and, depending on whether the dry paint can be removed from the wall's surface, smaller or larger surfaces with drawn sections are the result.

In a third step, Pimentão places the individual particles with what are now interrupted lines within the outline of a pre-defined square - on the floor. The overlay of the fragments means that the drawing now has three dimensions; the structure lends it a volume.

The rupture (and this also applies in the physical sense) to the organized line and the dissolution of it into individual particles is arranged in the space to form a different, new, albeit unspecific overall setting. Extracted from their continuity, in this new order, in their chance and chaotic encounter in layers, the lines resemble a kind of narrative with abstract elements of a story. Since some levels of the segments are lower

or higher, the element of time plays a role, a characteristic of various of Pimentão's pieces. A kind of chronological order arises – and a sense of archaeology. The layering feels like memories, although with a strong link to the future. Thus the individual particles are parts of a whole or of several different future wholes: Each time the piece is shown at another place, the smaller and larger sections align in a different way to form a unity on the floor.

In his drawn "Subject" wall pieces Pimentão takes as the base for his drawing foam carton, the surface and back of which are made of smooth line board with a thin layer of foam in-between. On it, he uses graphite to apply the outer left and right side lines of another, cut-to-size strip of foamboard. He draws its slightly reduced silhouette, thus referring to the origins of drawing as, according to legend, Pliny described it: A girl took leave of her lover in candlelight. To capture his image for the time he was to be away, she drew the outline of his shadow on the wall with a line. The drawn line meant that the contour of a man then remained. In his "Subjects" Pimentão repeats this process of marking outer lines several times, shifting the line by a few centimeters each time. Through this accumulation of lines they become individualized, no longer describing the contours of the foamboard. The contours gradually dissolve the way a dancer's silhouette does in motion.

Moreover, a paradox arises. Pimentão captures presence, but what remains is absence, or, put differently, by drawing presence he at the same time draws absence.

"Walk" (2015) is a floor-based piece made of paper coated with graphite. It consists of an element that folds in on itself, creating in the space a triangular-formed, dynamic structure. Here, we see Pimentão not only continuing to pursue the practice of transforming surfaces or materials through the dense use of graphite dust, as with an alchemist's processes of transformation, but also exploring the idea of folds and of drawings intervening in three dimensions. He does this on the one hand by placing the piece in a free space and, on the other, by folding the paper such that it has volume and becomes a sculptural object without ever ceasing to be a drawing.

With "Remaining" (2015) we again encounter drawings that are folded in on themselves. Here Pimentão returns to another method he has already used, for example for "Corte/ Coupe" (2011): He makes use of remnants or left-overs of other existing works, work processes or performances. These elements which actually belong to other, prior works, and were consciously not included in them, now become independent in the new context, having their own function irrespective of that past context.

The focus is once again on interaction with the space and on the idea of an economy of space as well as the corresponding arrangement of existing pieces when recycling or first using them. In this way, Pimentão offers us, among other things, a new approach to space by combining formerly marginal elements in a new meaningful context. In the process, he repeatedly squares up to the question of what space fills or defines a space.

Text: Kirsten Eggers (2015)
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