

Galeria Zé dos Bois  
¶ Parágrafo ¶  
Marco Franco ¶  
Curated by Natxo  
Checa ¶



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## ENTRANCE

Untitled, 2019

Rubber bands and pushpins on  
expansive polyurethane board

In Jim Jarmusch's *Paterson* a bus driver named Paterson notices the prodigious proliferation of twins in the suburban town of Paterson, New Jersey. After seeing his poetry notebook get shredded by his girlfriend's jealous bulldog, Paterson considers giving up writing. By the Passaic waterfall he meets a Japanese poet, a fan of William Carlos Williams on a pilgrimage to the settings of the epic poem *Paterson*, from 1926. "Sometimes the empty page presents more possibilities", says the Japanese poet while handing a new notebook to Paterson, the poet.

When vacating the old offices of a duplication company in the center of Lisbon, Marco Franco found an improbable treasure: a stock of blank, obsolete technical paper. In this space closed for more than 30 years, bankruptcy had protected, from use and light, the chemical surface that gives these papers a peculiar texture, color and vinegary smell.

On sleepless nights, Marco converts the family's table into a workbench and studies the reaction of these papers to stroke and stain. The chromatic effects of the felt-tip pen on the vague colors of repromaster paper, the contrast of china ink against the ultra-glossy plastic surface of acetate paper, the kinetic possibilities of dragging iodine on the back of the self copy paper sheet.

Franco's discovery is in the experience of drawing a serial writing system with no signification. With monastic discipline he replicates the same gesture dozens of times until memorizing it with his body, until he becomes a true drawing machine capable of

repeating a pattern, adjusting it to different scales and surfaces, even capable of computing his production index. A *soft machine* that multiplies the first intuitive gesture that makes the drawing.

Marco Franco's career leads us into reading his drawings as musical notations. But instead of instructions for a performer, they are still animations that record the movement and time of their making - just like the rings on the tree trunk are the record of the time of its vertical movement.

Days before the opening of his first solo exhibition at Galeria Zé dos Bois, Marco went to the flea market to look for a new stock of blank paper. He ended up buying a well-known image: Sancho Panza on the donkey and knight Don Quixote on horseback, paper-thin in the sun. The plain dark wood frame, the greenish-black paint and the fungus speckled French cotton paper gave the authentic feeling of an original. On the back the inscription: "3/339". How lucky to find on such a beautiful paper traces of Picasso. And after all, Picasso's drawing was never found ... it is said that the original was done in a dark blue, almost greenish wash...

Two months after the last flea market where valuable findings were still mixed with the germs of the sidewalk, Zé dos Bois reopens to present *Parágrafo*, the writing beside (the music) by Marco Franco.

Ana Baliza

1. Untitled, 2015  
Védeo 3'42''

2. Untitled, 2018  
Collage on paper

3. Untitled, 2018  
Collage on paper

4. Untitled, 2018  
Collage on paper

5. Untitled, 2018  
Collage on paper

6. Untitled, 2019  
Permanent ink on synthetic canvas

7. Untitled, 2019  
Permanent ink on synthetic canvas

8. Untitled, 2017  
Pen on back of carbon paper sheet

9. Untitled, 2018  
Permanent ink on graph paper

10. Untitled, 2018  
Permanent ink on graph paper

11. Untitled, 2019  
Graphite on paper

12. Untitled, 2019  
Graphite on paper

13. Untitled, 2017  
Permanent ink on paper

14. Untitled, 2017  
Pencil on paper

15. Untitled, 2017  
Carbon paper transfer on paper

16. Untitled, 2017  
Carbon paper transfer on paper

17. Untitled, 2017  
Carbon paper transfer on paper

18. Untitled, 2017  
Carbon paper transfer on paper

19. Untitled, 2018  
Dry pastel on paper

20. Untitled, 2018  
Dry pastel on paper

21. Untitled, 2018  
Dry pastel on paper

22. Untitled, 2018  
Dry pastel on paper

23. Untitled, 2019  
Chinese ink on paper

24. Untitled, 2019  
Chinese ink on paper

25. Untitled, 2019  
Chinese ink on paper

26. Untitled, 2019  
Chinese ink on paper

27. Untitled, 2017  
China ink on photosensitive paper

28. Untitled, 2017  
China ink on photosensitive paper

29. Untitled, 2017  
Dry pastel on paper

30. Untitled, 2019  
Engraving on acetate

31. Untitled, 2018  
Carbon paper transfer on paper

32. Untitled, 2018  
Iodine on paper

33. Untitled, 2018  
Iodine on paper

34. Untitled, 2018  
Carbon paper transfer on kraft paper

35. Untitled, 2018  
Carbon paper transfer on kraft paper

36. Untitled, 2020  
Collage on acetate

37. Untitled, 2020  
Collage on acetate

38. Untitled, 2020  
Collage on acetate

39. Untitled, 2020  
Collage on acetate

40. Untitled, 2019  
Chinese ink and sealing wax on paper

41. Untitled, 2019  
Chinese ink and sealing wax on paper

42. Untitled, 2019  
Chinese ink and sealing wax on paper

43. Untitled, 2019  
Chinese ink and sealing wax on paper

**Parágrafo**  
**Marco Franco**

**Curated by**  
Natxo Checa

**Text**  
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**Production**  
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**Communication**  
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