ADORO A ARTE (NEM MAIS NEM MENOS)

18.04.2024 — 04.05.2024

NEM MAIS NEM MENOS (ADORO A ARTE)

30.11.2023 — 12.04.2024

exhibition by

Artur Varela

curated by friends of Artur

At the end of the 18th century, Francisco de Goya launched the first edition of Los Caprichos, a satirical series of eighty aquatint etchings that criticised aspects of Spanish society, sparing no institution or social class. One of the most celebrated plates, entitled Ni mas ni menos (Neither more no less), depicted a portrait painter and a model, both caricatured as animals: the monkey in the role of court painter, mischievous by nature, and the donkey, symbolising the aristocratic class. Goya's allegory reminds us of the main character in this exhibition, Artur Varela's hero, The Donkey.

For those who don't know Artur Varela (1937-2017), he may yet be the last of the artists to be revisited of the famous Alternativa Zero, a multidimensional and seminal exhibition of contemporary Portuguese art subsequent to the 25th April Revolution, organised by the equally famous Ernesto de Sousa.

Artur, born in Almodôvar, enrolled in the Lisbon School of Fine Arts and on the day he completed his degree in 1963, escaped to Paris and later to Holland, the country that naturalized "van der Hella", prize-winning sculptor. Ten years later, he returned to Portugal, but it wasn't until the end of the 1980s that he washed ashore in Portugal for good.

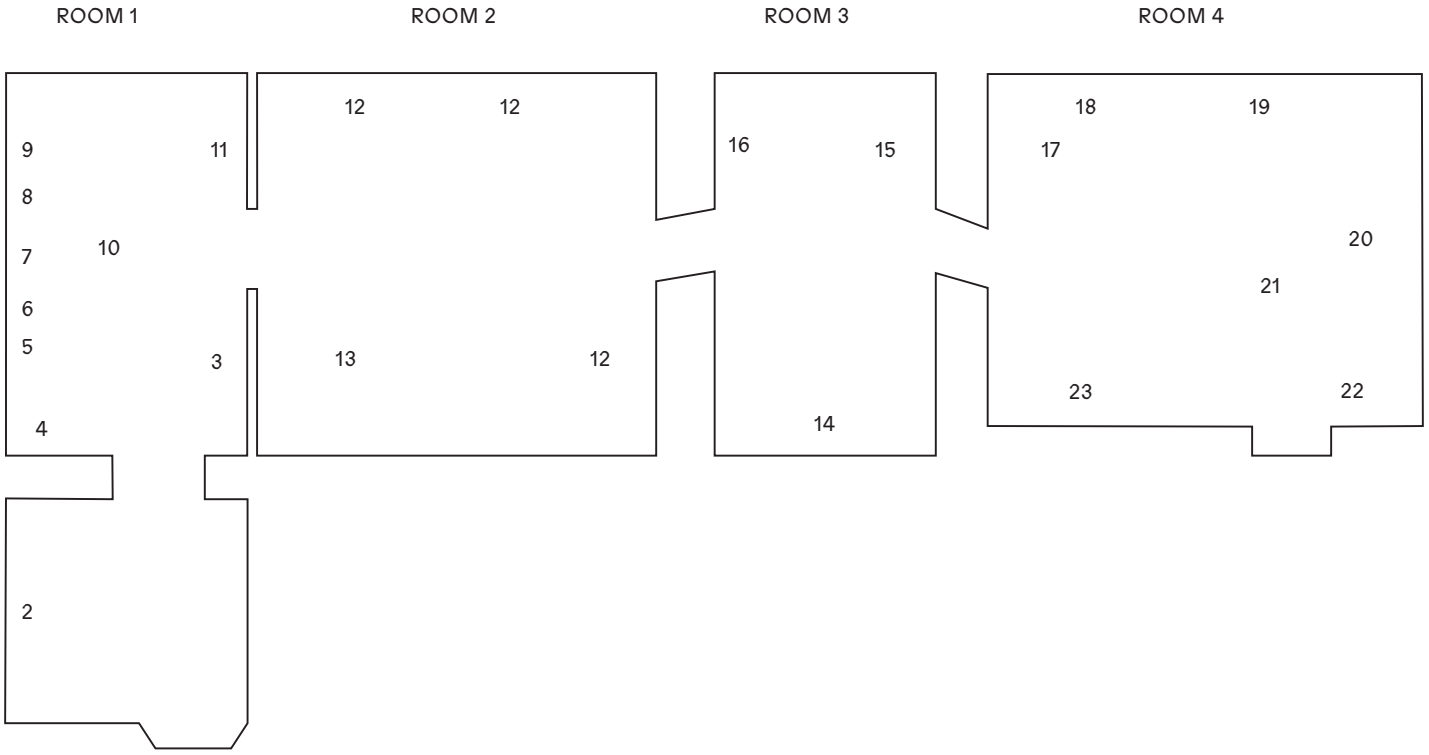
The adoration to art of the infamous Artur Varela at the Zé dos Bois Gallery will have two moments.

The first moment centres on the artist's corrosive and caricatural relationship with this little land of mild manners. Artur's humour is a rapacious conceptual operation that appropriates art to do neither more nor less than topple any structure of power whatsoever.

He spits on the Portuguese petite bourgeoisie, the pious old ladies and paedophile priests, petty-minded power, the miracle of the State and the Church, the masturbations of imperialism and the snotty legacy of the tragic-maritime enterprise...

In the second part of this exhibition, we celebrate Varela's distrust of the art world's royal courtiers, of which we may or may not be a part. An irony we welcome with bared teeth.

Lisbon, 30 November 2023
Friends of Artur



ENTRANCE

1. *I Love Art,* 1974
Collage of coloured paper and aluminium foil on cardboard; permanent ink and acrylic on plexiglas, 40 × 55 cm
Private collection

BOOKSTORE

Tony S. El Bimbo and Tony S. My Latin Lover, ed. 200 ex., offset, 2024
Two novellas freely edited and sequenced from the bad film *Tony S.* (2005) and the fanzine *Piolheira Blues* (2007).

ROOM 0

2. *Adoro a Arte*, 1974
Silkscreen print, 77 × 58 cm
Private collection

ROOM 1

3. *Artur Varela and Micromegas*
Holanda, August 1964
(Photo: Uipko Berghuis)

4-9. Photographic documentation of sculptures from the 1960s produced in the Netherlands

4. *Micromegas*, 1964
Iron, 170 cm

5 e 6. Untitled, 1967
Chrome plated iron, 160 cm

7. *Qua-Qua*, 1966-67
Iron and acrylic paint, 110 × 110 cm
(Photo: Oscar van Alphen)

8. Untitled, 1967
Nickel-plated iron, 160 cm

9. Untitled, 1967
Nickel-plated iron

10. Untitled (Character), 1965-66
Acacia wood and acrylic paint, 157 × 85 × 20 cm
Private collection

11. *Artist Profiles*, 1973
Super 8 mm transferred to digital, colour, mute
Manuel Baptista, 3'30''
João Hogan, 3'07''
José Escada, 4'07

ROOM 2

12. *Germans are coming*, 1982
(from the Bad Painting series)
Acrylic paint on canvas, variable dimensions
Projection of 9 paintings from this series, based on photographic documentation

13. Untitled, 2015
Fibreglass and stone dust, 80 × 115 × 60 cm

ROOM 3

14. Untitled, 1984
(from the Bad Painting series)
Oil on canvas, 100 × 120 cm

15. *Where are the paintings?...*, 1975
Graphite, biro pen and coloured pencil on paper, 64.8 × 48 cm

16. Untitled, 2000s
Glazed clay, 18 × 38.5 × 16 cm
Private collection

ROOM 4

17. *Self-portrait, 1973*
Plexiglas, paper rolls, satin ribbon, wooden cube, 139 × 34 × 34 cm
Recreated from photographic documentation

18. *Small Album, 1973*
Collage and china ink on cardboard, 70 × 100 cm

19. *Lé xatôu de Láluare*, 1973
Silkscreen print, 70 × 50 cm

20. [Congress of the AICA (International Association of Art Critics)] Illustrations reproduced from the leaflet in the exhibition catalogue *"Alternativa Zero"*, 1977
offset, 23.5 × 16.5 cm

21. *Museum of Modern Art,* 1973
Plexiglas, 25 × 50 × 23 cm
Manuel de Brito Collection

22. Back of the catalogue for the exhibition "Collages, Objects, Films", SNBA, Lisbon, 1973
offset, 16.3 × 24.4 cm

23. *Modern Art*, 1975
Photographic print on canvas, acrylic paint and trapezoidal frame, 97 × 76.5 cm
Private collection

All pieces courtesy of Amanda Booth / Artur Varela estate, except where indicated.

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Production
ZDB

Assembly
Ana Baliza
Natxo Checa
Carlos Gaspar
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Sílvia Prudêncio

Communication
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Monday to Saturday
6pm to 10pm

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