



Sofia Borges

**THE ASHES, THE MIRROR, THE REVERSE OF BRIGHTNESS
AND THE BECOMING OF FIRE**

06/04 – 18/05 2019

Mendes Wood DM São Paulo is pleased to present the first solo exhibition of Sofia Borges at the gallery. Working primarily with photography, the artist creates her images by combining and overlying the incognito in a constant process of excavation - often creating subtracted images from other images, thus proposing apocryphal writing about the origin of the everything.

From a spiraling practice of searching for the origin and density of the image, Borges explores an exercise of observation and addition of layers of meaning, content, and physicality on what is to be seen, triggering like that what can be revealed from behind the surface. Almost in a practical ontological activity on the conception of the understanding on the everything, her practice is antithetical to the photographic media. Borges gives us the doubt from its reverse: dense and monumental images documenting the invisible boundary of perception.

By carefully selecting the angles from which she takes her photographs, the artist breaks with the notion of icon and transforms it into *an image*, releasing the icon itself from its primordial context. By choosing to focus on specific details of an object or composition, the artist causes a discussion about how language can define, blur, or erase questions about the visible and what a photograph is.

In the first room of the exhibition, the walls support indecipherable large scale images that, through an experience with the idea of monumentality, delivers a sphinx. It challenges not only who observes it but themselves, suggesting lineages such as pure and the impure, authentic and uncertain. The result has a strange mythological temperament, bringing to mind the *Sophists*, a philosophical current emerged in ancient Greece that gives to the pictorial activities a mythical quality. The enigmatic of an image is a defining aspect of her work.

Taken by a pigment that covers the walls in the North Room of the gallery, Borges conceives friction between the enigma of the color and the mask. The artist's gaze is no longer a look at an exterior image but at the existences inside perception itself. She proposes the matter of myth, the substance of emptiness, which inside a dark box covered with charcoal calls for light, as well as fire, existing first as light, as well as an image before all the visible.

Sofia Borges (1984, Ribeirão Preto) lives and works Between São Paulo and Paris.

Recent exhibitions include: *Being: New Photography*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2018); *33rd São Paulo Biennial – Affective Affinities: The Infinite history of things or the end of the tragedy of One*, São Paulo (2018); *7th Daegu Photo Biennale*, Daegu Arts Center, Daegu (2018); *Il Coltello Nella Carne*, Padiglione d'Arte, Contemporanea, Milan (2018); *No Mold For White But No Mold For Fire*, Float Gallery, Athens (2017); *CORPO A CORPO: a disputa das imagens, da fotografia à transmissão ao vivo*, Instituto Moreira Salles, São Paulo (2017); *Black Chalk and White Charcoal or The Myth of The Absent Matter*, Foam Fotografiemuseum, Amsterdam (2016); *De Mineralis, pierres de visions*, Institut d'art contemporain, Villeurbanne/Rhône, Alpes (2015).

* The works hereby referred are part of a larger series entitled Teatro para Artificio (Theatre for Artifice). They result from an award the artist won in 2017 from the ZUM / IMS Photography Grant.

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