

JULIÃO SARMENTO

Books change and shape our lives. Through them we can find ourselves and develop new thought processes. Julião Sarmento explores this notion and his unique relationship to certain books that have informed his work in addition to the concept of the book as an aesthetic and visceral object. In this exhibition he combines drawings of book covers that have been altered with drawings as well and photographs of a woman reading paired with architectural diagrams.

The massive altered book covers provide the experience of being enveloped by a personal library—this is Sarmento’s selection of books that have influenced and shaped him as a person and artist. The removal of graphic elements, such as publisher information or image, leaves nothing but the author, title, color, and typeface. This focuses our attention on the content, the development of thoughts, concepts, and stories in books as well as the creative process behind them. Furthermore, Sarmento explores the sensuous gestures of holding a book and leafing through its pages in a series of drawings depicting the experience. Additionally, photographs are paired with architectural drawings of specific places that relate to Sarmento’s home, his studio, the Parrish Art Museum, and the Contemporary Arts Center—the physical places that contain Sarmento’s artistic output.

Sarmento was born in 1948 in Lisbon. Sarmento studied painting and architecture at the University of Fine Arts in Lisbon. Today he lives and works in Estoril, Portugal. His exhibition history is extensive—he represented Portugal at the 1997 Venice Biennale and is included in the collection of the MoMA, Guggenheim in New York and the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Julião Sarmento is organized by the Contemporary Arts Center and curated by Raphaela Platow.

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