

**Studies for a narrative**

Filipa Oliveira

In L+Arte June 2006



*Marquise (2005)*  
125 x 156 cm



*Ofélia (2006)*  
126 x 156 cm

One of the modern paradigms in which photography is based is the idea of suspended moment. Many artists have explored and exaggerated the potential of this suspension, such as Tom Hunter or Philip-Lorca di Corsia who, through distinct and even divergent strategies, dramatize the photographic instant with the purpose of demystifying it. It's the highlighting of that moment that allows the photographer to reveal the subjectivity of the view, of the framework and of the instant itself. Bottom-line, what is being conveyed is that the act of photographing inevitably delivers a construction, an acting (questioning, too, the conception of truth of the photographic image). The choice of revealing an image lives intimately with the choice of not revealing everything that surrounds it.

The images Duarte Amaral Netto (Lisboa, 1976) selected to be part of his third individual exhibition are revolve around the issue of what is not visible when observing [viewing, studying] a photographic image, thus opening the narrative possibilities of each image.

Amaral Netto's work has been diverging itself into two thematic fields: the portrait and the landscape (urban/architectonic), holding as common element the idea of the stillness of time. The chosen moment to take [make the picture, is not now a decisive instant, but a supposedly common instant. The apparent simplicity countered by an intense dramatization, often of psychological nature, is revealed through the lighting and pose of the characters.

In this exhibition, it's noticeable a turn towards the harmonization of that divergence, presenting a set of works that gather the two sides of his work.

The first two images of the set aim at introducing the exhibition, suggesting a possible theme – the search for light. This allegory may be understood directly: the search through the perfect illumination of the image (the literal quest, or the journey through an unknown path to attain it), and in this way the spots of light are central moments when reading the following pieces. The search for light may also persuade, by opposition, everything that is not visible and builds the image, everything that opens it to a new dimension.

Amaral Netto quotes Wim Wenders and the sentence “the most important is what you don't see” to transform the feeling of absence into the main issue of this set of photographs. The empty space is manipulated in order to build and incorporate the subjectivity of someone who is not present but is linked to that image. An example of this concern is “Ofélia”, 2006. A photograph of a marsh apparently anonymous. The title assigns the image a new dimension of reading – that of the history of painting, or of its memory. The landscape changes itself into the scenario of a famous painting, being that this transformation occurs in the mind of the spectator while visualizing, in the image, the absent Ophelia. It's like if the photographer showed, in a wider plan, what is beyond the frontiers of the original work. Amaral Netto wants to explore the whole field made available by the image, but that is built outside of it, whether they are the photographic manipulation's own mechanisms, or the storyline suggested by each spectator. What is being searched here is the identity of the image itself through what can't be represented. The denial of the representation allows Amaral Netto to preserve the heterogeneity of interpretations, even of contradiction, and hence of a radical openness of the image to everything that may form it.

Módulo – Centro Difusor de Arte  
22 de Junho a 29 de Julho