

# 1000 images

a word is worth a thousand pictures

curated by Alexandre Melo

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OPENING 29 NOV. 22H00

29 NOV. 4 JAN. 2018

VASCO ARAÚJO | JOHN BALDESSARI | ROBERT BARRY | FILIPA CÉSAR | JIMMIE DURHAM | GARDAR EIDE EIDERSSON | HORÁCIO FRUTUOSO | ROBERT GOBER | DOUGLAS GORDON | RENÉE GREEN | DEREK JARMAN | JOSEPH KOSUTH | JOÃO CÉSAR MONTEIRO | MATT MULLICAN | JOÃO ONOFRE | RAYMOND PETTIBON | PRATCHAYA PHINTHONG | ROSÂNGELA RENNÓ | ED RUSCHA | JULIÃO SARMENTO | WANTANEE SIRIPATTANANUNTAKUL | RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA | JOÃO PEDRO VALE + NUNO ALEXANDRE FERREIRA | LAWRENCE WEINER | YONAMINE

Image, images – they seem to be the undisputed winners of the ever-swifter contest of cultural transformations that have taken place over the last century. From the celebration of the rise and generalization of the global circulation of a new type of images (photography, cinema, TV, digital), in the turn of the century we moved on to the realization of the triumph of the empire of the images. Concurrently, due to the contradictory nature of all processes of cultural transformation, we start hearing ever louder denunciations of an excess of images, warning us of the dangers they pose as they drown meaning itself in a swamp of endless images which are made irrelevant by their sheer volume and the speed of their epidemic spreading. This phenomenon has been growing in the snowballing commotion of the (anti)social networks that feed the great digital-communicational sty; and whose criminal and predatory vocation only now starts to deserve our attention.

And what about words?

What has happened to words, reduced to a grotesque blather at the fingertips of illiterate youths and foolish leaders? Who will read Proust? Who will have the time for the words with which we make our thoughts and feelings? And this word, “word”, what will be its value in the future, what will it mean?

It is not for me, or an exhibition, to answer these questions; but, as it happens with many other issues, the artists and their works may help us to approach these problems in different ways.

In the context of the visual arts, words are markedly present in the early-20th century historical avant-gardes, noticeably in the Dada movement, which can still be looked on – probably – as the most radical in recent history. Even if I want to avoid summarizing the history of words in 20th century art, it is important to highlight their importance in conceptual and post-conceptual art, in artistic practices focused on political and civic activism, and in the works of latter artists who have been revisiting and continuing those lines of research.

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Without historiographic pretensions, nor aiming to present the programmatic demonstration of a thesis, this exhibition brings together a diversity of works produced by authors who have, according to their sensibilities and in the context of their lines of research, given words a special place. In this perspective, they offer us the possibility to think and to decide the value of words and what level of attention we want to give them.

Alexandre Melo