

Galerie Daniel Templon

Paris

JULIÃO SARMENTO FLASHART, October 2011

JULIÃO SARMENTO LA CASA ENCENDIDA - MADRID



The solo exhibition by Portuguese artist Julião Sarmiento at La Casa Encendida in Madrid can be described as a triangle pointing upwards. All the cultural center's spaces have been dedicated to the artist: from the terrace (the top of the triangle) to the basement spaces (its base), passing through the halls on the first floor. Paintings, sculptures, installations, films and performances seem to be continuously triangulating through these well-designed

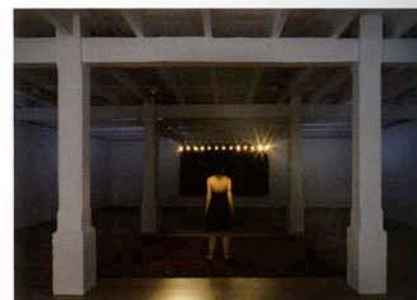
spaces. But we could also read the triangle as if the artist and the curator, Adrian Searle, were located at the upper vertex, the spectator at one of the two bottom vertices and the female bodies that figure in most of the works, at the third. The works in the middle would then be moving closer or further from each of these vertices, producing at times an uncomfortable proximity and, at other times, a disembodied contemplation.

The title of the show, "Distancia cortas / Close distance," unquestionably refers to the physical nearness that characterizes both the artist's subjects: the overlapping and therefore ambiguous black silhouettes extracted from pornographic magazines in the pictorial series "Pornstars"; and the body of the spectator, as in the film *Close* (2000-01), a collaboration with filmmaker Atom Egoyan in which the size of the screen and the narrow space in front of it makes it impossible to clearly appreciate the image.

Desire, eroticism, pleasure, but also voyeurism, discomfort and spectatorship seem to be at the heart of the triangle. In relation to the ubiquitous presence of females, Sarmiento

has stated, "Women are a leitmotiv for me. To start working I need a pretext and I find it in the representation of the female body." Not by coincidence, if we were now to reverse the triangle that represents this show so that it was pointing down, we would obtain a very recognizable feminine symbol.

Emma Brasó



Above: JULIÃO SARMENTO, *Film Noir* (with carpet) (genérico 21), 2007. Fibreglass, resin, fabric, velvet, persian carpet, wood, spotlights, 170 x 390 x 277 cm. Courtesy the artist and Pedro Oliveira, Porto. Left: JULIÃO SARMENTO, *Jolie Valse*, 2007. Video, color, sound. Courtesy Joan Prats, Barcelona.