







TOTE BEWEGEN

Francisco Tropa invited to the Cahn Gallery during Art Basel 2019
A joint project by Jocelyn Wolff and Jean-David Cahn

Opening: Tuesday, June 11, 6–10 p.m.

Exhibition: Wednesday–Sunday, June 12–16, 10 a.m.–8 p.m.

Cahn Gallery · Malzgasse 23 · Basel

Jean-David Cahn on the project

The German title of this project defies translation as it plays on the double meaning of the words “Tote bewegen”: physically moving the dead and being emotionally moved by them. The archaeologist who excavates a site containing human remains carefully moves the dead – according to the modern rites of science and scholarship – to their new resting place in the excavation depot or a museum. The dead themselves have the power to move those they have left behind. With ritual objects and actions humans attempt to overcome the enormity and incomprehensibility of death. In his artistic oeuvre, Francisco Tropa thematises this profound human need. His investigation into the finite nature of human existence is characterised by the interaction with objects, thus introducing the dimension of temporality. Tropa’s artistic work will be juxtaposed with funerary objects from Antiquity.

Jocelyn Wolff on the project

When Jean-David Cahn asked me to add another chapter to our series of collaborative exhibitions, it appeared to be natural to invite Francisco Tropa. In his latest show at Foundation Gulbenkian, *The Pyrgus from Chaves*, Francisco Tropa used a recently discovered Roman dice box as the starting point for his artistic reflections. His work is in a constant dialogue with archaeology, literature and the history of art. For the exhibition at the Cahn Gallery, a selection of allegorical works by Francisco Tropa will be displayed alongside archaeological objects selected by both the artist and Jean-David Cahn, to establish new connections between the old and the new, objects from daily life and works of art. Our aim is to offer the viewer a dynamic reading of archaeological objects, thanks to the subtle and sensitive analysis of a major contemporary sculptor.

About Francisco Tropa

Sculpture has been a constant interest in the artistic practice of Francisco Tropa (b. 1968 in Lisbon). He has attracted considerable attention on the part of institutions and art critics since he first presented his works in the 1990s and in 2011 he represented Portugal at the Venice Biennale. Tropa uses different media – sculpture itself, drawing, performance, photography and film – to convene a series of reflections introduced by the different traditions of sculpture. Subjects such as the body, death, nature, landscape, memory, origin or time are always present in his works with their endless process of projection of references from the history of art, from other art works, from previous works of the artist, and from specific authors. Notions of device and spectator are also fundamental to Tropa’s artistic practice, which defies all the traditional categories of art, its representation and perception.

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