



GALLERIA CONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HABANA

Via del Castello 11, San Gimignano (SI), Italia
tel. +390577943134 | info@galleriacontinua.com | www.galleriacontinua.com

JUAN ARAUJO

Walled-in Shut

Opening: Saturday February 13th 2016, Via del Castello 11, 6pm-midnight
Until 01.05.2016, Monday-Saturday, 10am-1pm, 2-7pm

Galleria Continua is pleased to present the first solo show in Italy of one of Latin America's most important contemporary artists, Juan Araujo. Entitled *Walled-in Shut*, the exhibition features a group of works inspired by the images that influenced Rothko in the creation of his works for the Seagram Building in New York.

Born in 1971 and Venezuelan by nationality, Araujo is a prominent figure on the international art scene. His works have been shown in prestigious public collections such as the Tate Collection London, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Jumex Collection in Mexico City, the Inhotim Centro de Arte Contemporânea in Belo Horizonte, the Galería de Arte Nacional of Caracas, the Museu de Arte Contemporânea in Caracas and the Centro Gallego de Arte Contemporânea in Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

To introduce the new series of works presented in *Walled-in Shut*, Araujo refers to a journey made by Mark Rothko to Italy in 1959, which coincided with a particularly delicate moment in the American artist's life. Having received the important Seagram Building commission, Rothko had for a year been absorbed in a profound reflection that prompted him to look for echoes of his ideas in works from the past.

"The Rothko and Fischer families landed in Naples and visited Pompeii. According to Fischer's account, Rothko discovered 'a deep tie' between the work he was doing at the Seagram Building and the ancient mural paintings of the Villa of Mysteries. Then the Rothko family visited Rome, Florence and Venice. In Florence Rothko went to the Laurentian Library, designed by Michelangelo, just as he had during a previous visit in 1950. In a subsequent interview with Fischer, Rothko admitted that the sense of space in the Laurentian vestibule had been a source of inspiration for the

works in the Seagram Building. 'The room had exactly the feeling that I wanted', commented Rothko. 'It gives the visitor the feeling of being caught in a room with the doors and windows walled-in shut.'" (Juan Araujo)

Araujo creates his works by taking a photograph of a building or landscape and then focussing on and reproducing a portion of it. This scrap, copied and transformed, yields an image that preserves the original fragment but also reveals itself as a new pictorial fragment. Far from being mere citation or appropriation, Araujo's work dwells on history, on the images themselves and on their permanence in time through different modes of reproduction, adaptation and diffusion.

Juan Araujo was born in Caracas in 1971, and lives and works in Lisbon. The artist has had solo shows at important international galleries and museums, including *Mineirianas* at Inhotim Centro de Arte Contemporânea in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and *A Través* at the Centro Gallego de Arte Contemporáneo (CGAC) in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, both in 2015. His work has featured in many group shows and biennials, including: *United States of Latin America*, MOCAD Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, USA (2015); *Another Part of the New World*, Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Russia (2015); *The Insides Are on the Outside*, curated by Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Casa de Vidrio, São Paulo, Brazil (2013); the Aichi Triennale, Nagoya, Japan (2010); Museu de Arte Moderna di São Paulo (2009); the Sharjah Biennial, United Arab Emirates (2009); the Mercosul Biennial, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2007); the São Paulo Biennial (2006); San Diego Museum of Art (2005); and the American National Society, New York (2005).