

Galeria **Francisco Fino**

**Vasco Araújo**  
*RITORNARE*

01.10.2024 - 16.11.2024



franciscofino.com  
galeria@franciscofino.com

Rua Capitão Leitão, 76  
1950-052 Lisbon

Mob. +351 912 369 478  
Tel. +351 215 842 211

Dear All,

How does one begin a letter on the topic of Ritornare, or rather, going back, perhaps by starting at the beginning, which in this case, isn't the verb, but the reason that led me to go back, to Ritornare.

I think that when we return to something we've already done, it is always a revisitation of the past, which contributes to an awareness, or even a clarification, of what we did, who we were, or who we are. In this sense, Ritornare is a return to who I truly was and still am, a return to my identity and its construction through voice, a return to the body, to the body of the past, present, and future. It is also about pretending, which helps imitate figures from the past that can provide greater awareness of our existence. Imitation is also a form of mourning through identification: we always imitate what we would like to be able to explain, or what helps us desire and expand our understanding of human beings and their complexities.

Ritornare is to reveal the lining of things, it is a work on revisitation motivated by the need to investigate the Self, in the sense of exploring unconscious roots, not individual, but whose existence is shaped in post-memory. These works, focused on the world of opera singers, on the myths of the Star System, on intimate life, artistic careers, non-binary identities, on what I am, what we are, what we were, what we would have liked to be, and perhaps already are, question the possibility of reinventing ourselves from what we had already built or pointed to. They also question the possibility of reconstructing our identity without restrictions, leading us to a place of greater freedom and learning. And in the end, the question always arises:

Who am I?

I could tell many things, narrate various stories about my career and journey, but that would perhaps be very boring. What I can say is that, at the end of this journey, there were moments when I looked in the mirror and felt that I was looking at someone else, someone who spontaneously represented or I represented in theaters... now, at times, I still cannot recognize myself. Who am I? Who? It seems to me perhaps that the artifice, the staging, have taken over my, our world, and we no longer live in another reality, or that this has become the reality, or even that reality is a great staging where we act, it is like singing. See, listen. Look, this is me singing, interpreting, and living in artifice within the reality that becomes my life, and we are all like this, there is nothing more... and, in the end, the question remains: who are we?

Since going back is not in vain, much less innocent, I hope that this new/old path will be revealing of what I would like to continue doing and practicing. And that this is a contribution to a process of transformation, of change, for a new exit that is increasingly free.

Ritornare to fly farther.

Lisbon, June 8, 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Vano Anjo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small flourish at the end.



Installation view of *RITORNARE*, Galeria Francisco Fino, 2024

**Vasco Araújo**  
*S'HE #1, 2024*

Digital color photographs plasticized on dibond  
Text: Vasco Araújo  
80 x 100 cm

*S'HE* is a series of photographs created from self-portraits taken on Polaroids in 2000. This series reflects on the nature of identity and its construction over time and lived experiences. It is through the text, written on each photograph, that identity is described as an artificial system, shaped by choices and circumstances, built around passions and adversities that eventually fade away. This idea of forgetting as part of the identity formation process is crucial and suggests that the new self is built upon the foundations of the past but is not limited by it.

The works also address the relationship between voice and body, highlighting how the voice can elicit physical responses, from mimetic gestures to an awareness of the presence of the audience. This connection between voice and body invites us to explore the complex processes of formation and expression of human identity, as well as its connections with time, memory, and the external world.





Installation view of *RITORNARE*, Galeria Francisco Fino, 2024

**Vasco Araújo**  
*S'HE #2, 2024*

Digital color photographs plasticized on dibond  
Text: Vasco Araújo  
80 x 100 cm





*The voice initiates vibrations and resonances within our body, to which the body responds with mimetic gestures. This prompts a physical exaltation followed by tremors, sighs, and spasms. Subsequently, the body becomes still, the shoulders relax, and the muscles and spine tense. Finally, an awareness of the audience is felt, establishing an expressive connection with the body to cultivate a contentious presence.*

Detail of S'HE #2, Vasco Araújo, 2024

**Vasco Araújo**  
*S'HE #3, 2024*

Digital color photographs plasticized on dibond  
Text: Vasco Araújo  
80 x 100 cm







**Vasco Araújo**  
*S'HE #4*, 2024

Digital color photographs plasticized on dibond  
Text: Vasco Araújo  
80 x 100 cm



**Vasco Araújo**

*Diva's Props Archive, 2024*

12 digital color photographs printed on 310gr William Turner paper  
(40 x 30 cm each), 12 acrylic boxes

162 x 91,5 cm

*Diva's Props Archive* is a set of 12 photographs taken inside archive boxes, where various objects belonging to the glamour and iconography of opera divas are stored. Each photograph captures a timeless moment, highlighting iconic accessories and props associated with the world of divas. This work invites the viewer to immerse themselves in the dazzling and fascinating world of divas, celebrating the beauty, power, and cultural impact of these iconic figures through what is not commonly accessible.





Detail of *Diva's Props Archive*, Vasco Araújo, 2024



**Vasco Araújo**  
*My Way, 2024*

5 Chariots, 107 costumes inside plastic covers, 213 cardboard tags  
with inkjet print

Text: all operatic performances of Maria Callas

185,5 x 850 x 65 cm



My Way is an installation composed of five chariots containing 107 costumes inside plastic covers and accompanied by 213 labels. On the labels are printed all the operatic performances and concerts that Maria Callas performed during her career. The arrangement of the chariots with the costumes and the labels creates an eight-and-a-half-meter timeline that constructs a visual narrative. The work is about the passage of time, the celebration of life, and the journey of artists.



CONCERT

**BOCCACCIO**  
(Beatrice)

November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1940  
Royal Theater, Athens,  
Greece

**UN BALLO IN MASCHERA**

**SUOR ANGELICA**  
(Mandikian)

May, 1940

**CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA**  
(Enliven)

November, 1938  
Royal Theater, Athens,  
Greece

**TIEFLAND**  
(Marta)

April, 1944

**CONCERT**  
(Songs and Opera arias)

August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1943  
Blanca Tower Theater,  
Santiago

**Vasco Araújo**

*A Testimony (Archive Sound Coil #1), 2024*

Reel-to-reel tape recorder, media player, headphones

Voices: Filomena Andrade e Sousa, Pedro Pla

Text: based on the libretto of the opera “La Traviata” by G. Verdi  
13’02”

38,5 x 28 x 12,5 cm

*A Testimony (Archive sound coil #1)* is a sound sculpture where the female voice becomes a vessel, carrying the weight of a tumultuous existence, expressed through a series of poignant and evocative moments. The recurring refrain, “Camélia, Camélia, Camélia...”, echoes, encapsulating a deep longing and a heartbreaking loss.

The protagonist’s cry is a visceral expression of an unrealized connection, an echoing plea for someone who seems forever out of reach. The repetition of the name “Duval” punctuates the narrative, underlining a persistent search for answers and meaning in the face of an elusive past. The work reflects on the relentless passage of time, acknowledging the ephemeral nature of memory and the difficulty of maintaining one’s own identity amidst life’s tumultuous journey. As the sound narrative unfolds, it invites viewers to immerse themselves in a visceral exploration of the human condition.

**Sound**





**Vasco Araújo**

*A Testimony (Archive Sound Coil #2), 2024*

Reel-to-reel tape recorder, media player, headphones

Voice: Lucy Shaw, Joan Sutherland

Text: Vasco Araújo

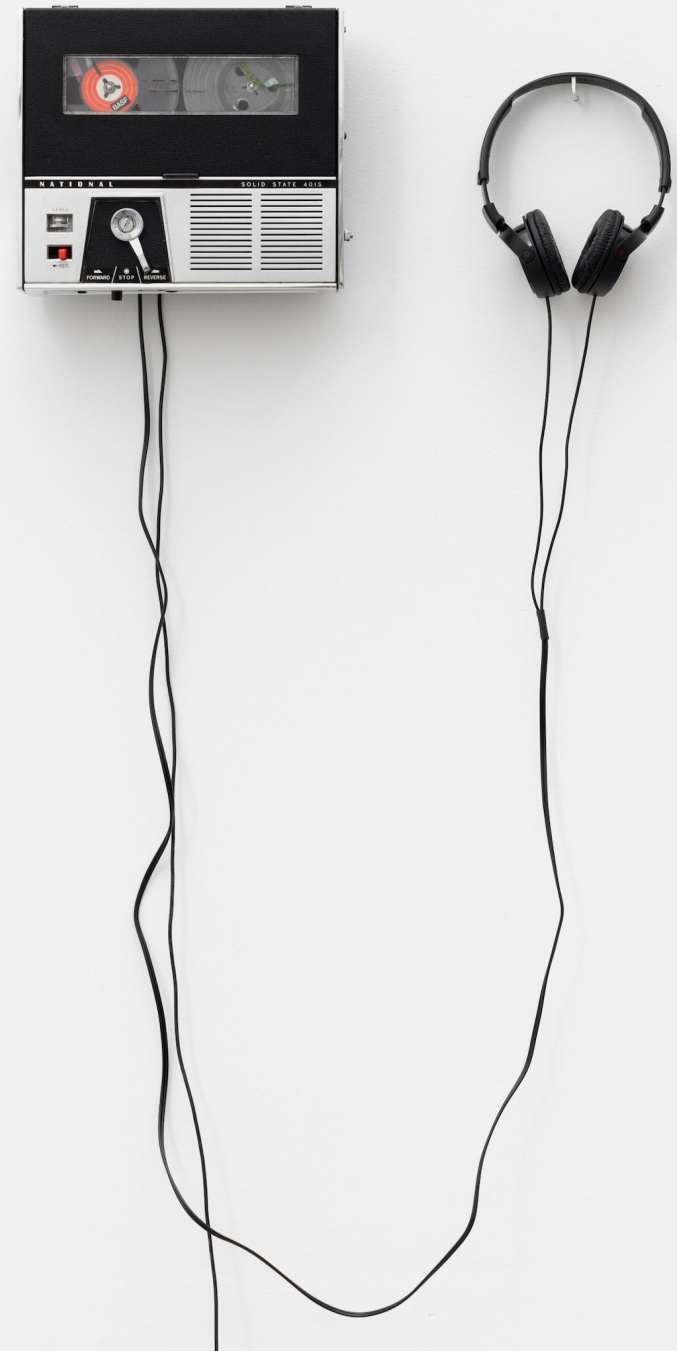
1'42"

26 x 22 x 7cm

*A Testimony (Archive sound coil #2)* is a sound sculpture that delves into the core of identity and representation. The female voice questions the nature of identity and authenticity in the contemporary world, where the lines between reality and representation often blur.

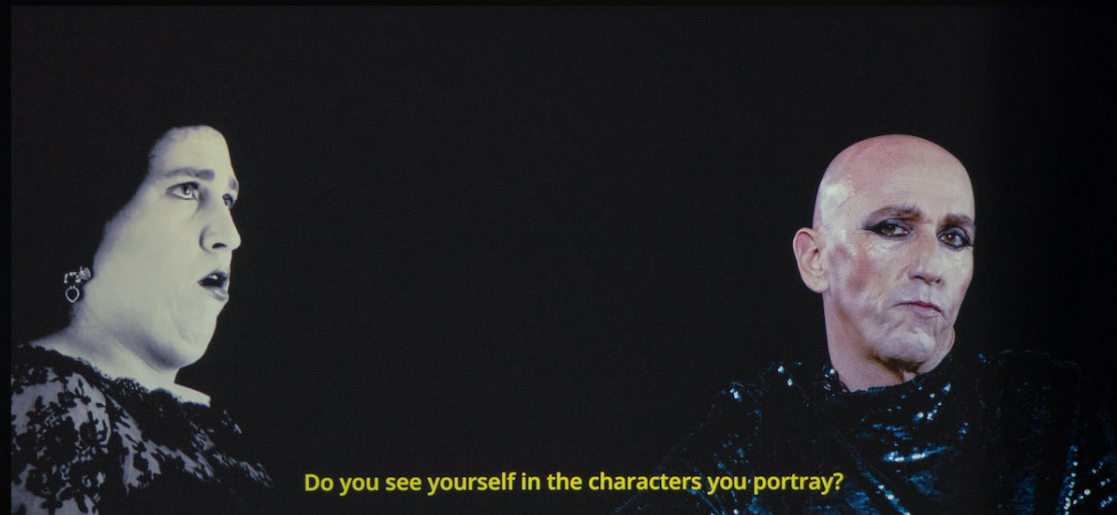
Through sound and narrative, we are led to reflect on the complexity of existence and the constant search for our true essence.

**Sound**





Detail of *A Testimony (Archive Sound Coil #2)*, 2024



**Vasco Araújo**

*Interview, 2024*

Video 16/9

20'40", variable dimensions

Text: based on *Cast a Diva* by Lyndsy Spence

Performed by: Vasco Araújo

Ed. 5 + 2 AP

*Interview* is a video work that is more than just a mere portrait; it is an emotional and introspective reflection that places us between fiction and reality. Based on *Cast a Diva* by Lyndsy Spence, the text of this piece is an exploration of identity, personal power, and the relentless pursuit of true essence. Through an intimate conversation between a journalist and the diva, we are confronted with deep questions about authenticity, transformation, and acceptance.

Throughout the interview, we are taken into a universe of self-awareness and reflection, where every word is laden with meaning and every silence resonates with the magnitude of the human experience. From internal struggles to personal victories, *Interview* offers a vision of the complexity of life and the human condition.

[Watch video](#)





Installation view of *RITORNARE*, Galeria Francisco Fino, 2024

**Vasco Araújo**

*Entre Actos (Vissi d'Arte, Vissi d'Amore), 2024*

Painted wood, 2 LCD monitors; 1 pair of speakers, media player, and 2 videos

Music: excerpt from the aria "Vissi d'Arte, Vissi d'Amore" from the opera *Tosca* by G. Puccini, performed by Maria Callas

3'16", loop

165,9 x 100 x 65 cm

**[Watch videos #1 and #2](#)**





*Entre Actos (Vissi d'Arte, Vissi d'Amore)* is a sculpture with video. The sculpture, based on a model of an opera house, contains within it two videos in slideshow format. One displays images of Maria Callas on stage performing *La Traviata*, *Tosca*, and *Norma*. The other video, also in slideshow format, features images of the artist impersonating Maria Callas on stage, interpreting the same characters from the previous video. The images in the videos are accompanied by an excerpt from the aria "Vissi d'Arte, Vissi d'Amore" from Giacomo Puccini's opera *Tosca*, sung by Maria Callas. The music fills the space around the sculpture, enveloping the viewer in an atmosphere of intense emotion and reflection.

The work evokes a range of emotions, from melancholy to hope, inviting the viewer to reflect on universal themes of life, love, and art. *Entre Actos (Vissi d'Arte, Vissi d'Amore)* transcends the traditional boundaries of sculpture and thus attempts to reflect on alterity, the dichotomy between reality and fiction, and the complexity of the human condition, inviting us to reflect on our own experiences and emotions.



Vasco Araújo

*La Superba*, 2024

16 color digital photographs glued on 3 mm PVC (39 x 49 cm),

21 color digital photographs glued on 3 mm PVC (21.5x29,5cm),

2 color digital photographs glued on 3 mm PVC (39 x 24,5cm)

Text: by Vasco Araújo, based on *Diva - Great Sopranos and Mezzos discuss their art* by Helena Matheopoulos

Variable dimensions







Installation view of *RITORNARE*, Galeria Francisco Fino, 2024

# Vasco Araújo

Vasco Araújo was born in 1975 in Lisbon, the city where he continues to live and work. He completed his first degree in Sculpture in 1999 at FBAUL (Lisbon University School of Fine Art), and attended the Advanced Course in Visual Arts at Maumaus in Lisbon, from 1999 to 2000. Since then, he has participated in various solo and group exhibitions both in Portugal and abroad, also taking part in residency programmes, such as The University of Arts, Philadelphia (2007); Récollets, Paris (2005); and the Core Program (2003/04), Houston. In 2003, he was awarded the EDP Prize for New Artists.

His most recent solo shows include: *E agora para onde vou?*, Fundación DIDAC, Santiago de Compostela (2024); *Eros and Thanatos*, Appleton Square, Lisbon (2024); *Memoria afectiva*, Bodega Piloto, Bogotá (2023); *Pathosformel*, Rialto6, Lisbon (2022); *A Moment Apart*, MAAT, Lisbon (2019); *Vasco Araújo*, M-Museum, Leuven, Belgium, (2018); *Decolonial desires*, Autograph ABP, London, (2016); *Potestad*, MALBA – Museu de Arte Latino-Americana de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires (2015); *Under the Influence of Psyche*, The Power Plant, Toronto (2014); *Debret*, Pinacoteca do Estado de S. Paulo, S. Paulo (2013); *Avec les voix de l'autre*, Musée d'art de Joliette, Joliette (2011); *Mais que a vida*, Fundação C. Gulbenkian/CAM, Lisboa and MARCO, Vigo (2010); *Eco*, Jeu de Paume, Paris (2008); *Vasco Araújo: Per-Versions*, the Boston Center for the Arts, Boston (2008); *About being Different*, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (2007); *Pathos*, Domus Artium 2002, Salamanca (2006); *Dilemma*, S.M.A.K., Ghent (2005); *L'inceste*, Museu do Azulejo, Lisbon (2005); *The Girl of the Golden West*, The Suburban, Chicago (2005); *Dilema*, Museu de Serralves, Oporto (2004); *Sabine/Brunilde*, SNBA, Lisbon (2003).

His most recent group shows include: *Tino Grandío. Correspondencias. Colección de Arte Abanca*, Centro Obra Social ABANCA de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela (2023); *O Castelo Surrealista de Mário Cesariny*, MAAT, Lisbon (2023); *Bienal del Bioceno – Cambiar el Verde por Azul 15.ª Bienal de Cuenca*, Cuenca, Ecuador (2021); *Triângulo atlântico Bienal Mercosul*, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2018); *All that Falls*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2014); *Investigations of a Dog*, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2009); *Everything has a name, or the potential to be named*, Gasworks, Londres (2009); *Em Vivo Contacto*, 28.ª Bienal de S. Paulo, São Paulo (2008); *Artes Mundi*, Wales International Visual Art Exhibition and Prize, National Museum Cardiff, Cardiff (2008); *Kara Walker and Vasco Araújo: Reconstruction*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, (2007); *Drei Farben – Blau*, XIII Rohkunstbau, Grobleuthen (2006); *Experience of Art*, La Biennale di Venezia. 51<sup>st</sup> International Exhibition of Art, Venice; *Dialectics of Hope*, 1<sup>st</sup> Moscow Biennial of Contemporary Art, Moscow, (both in 2005); *Solo (For Two Voices)*, CCS, Bard College, New York (2002); *The World Maybe Fantastic Sydney Biennial*, Sydney (2002); *Trans Sexual Express, Barcelona, a Classic for the Third Millennium*, Centre d'Art Santa Mònica, Barcelona (2001).

His work has been published in various books and catalogues and is represented in several public and private collections, such as at the Centre Pompidou, Musée d'Art Moderne (France); Museu Coleção Berardo, Arte Moderna e Contemporânea, (Portugal); Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian (Portugal); Fundación Centro Ordóñez-Falcón de Fotografía – COFF (Spain); Museo Nacional Reina Sofia, Centro de Arte (Spain); Fundação de Serralves (Portugal); Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (USA); Pinacoteca do estado S. Paulo (Brazil).

[More information](#)

Galeria **Francisco Fino**

[www.franciscofino.com](http://www.franciscofino.com)

Rua Capitão Leitão, 76  
1950-052 Lisboa

[galeria@franciscofino.com](mailto:galeria@franciscofino.com)  
Tel. +351 215 842 211