



**1. PAULO MENDES**  
*If i'm half dead it's because I'm half alive.*  
 2019

Site-specific installation at the Museum of Neorealism, using the avieiro's houses as reference, built with materials from the Museum of Neorealism and other municipal museum's collections, from the Vila Franca de Xira City Hall's workshops, from local fishermen, from construction sites, from films through images and sounds, from the author's archive of photographic, video and sound material, from books through words and from sound and image playback equipment.

**2. TIAGO BAPTISTA**  
 A. *Clue*, 2019  
 Oil on canvas  
 160 x 175 cm  
 B. *Petrified bridge*, 2019  
 Oil on canvas  
 160 x 175 cm  
 C. *Face*, 2019  
 Oil on canvas  
 40 x 30 cm  
 D. *Barrier*, 2019  
 Oil on canvas  
 55 x 46 cm

**3. SUSANA MOUZINHO**  
*Happen what may in between*  
 Installation of two video projections over a wooden platform  
 Video 1: images from archives, frames, photos discovered, field recordings. HD video, colour, no sound.  
 Video 2: Text and reading. HD video, colour, with sound.

**[Exhibition]**

**ORGANISATION**  
 Municipality of Vila Franca de Xira  
 Mayor Alberto Mesquita

**CULTURAL DIVISION**  
 Councilwoman Manuela Ralha

**GENERAL COORDINATION**  
 DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM  
 MUSEUM OF NEOREALISM  
**SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR OF THE MUSEUM OF NEOREALISM**  
 Raquel Henriques da Silva

**CURATORS**  
 Sandra Vieira Jürgens  
 Paula Loura Batista

**GRAPHIC DESIGN**  
 v-a · studio

**EXHIBITION DESIGN AND GRAPHIC ADAPTATION**  
 COMMUNICATION AND IMAGE DIVISION  
 Carla Félix

**PRODUCTION**  
 MUSEUM OF NEOREALISM  
 Ana Sofia Neves  
 Cátia Alves  
 Clara Silva  
 Fernando Marques  
 Helena Seita  
 Lurdes Aleixo  
 Miguel Salgado  
 Paula Loura Batista  
 Vanda Arsénio

**PLANNING | LOGISTICS**  
 MUSEUM OF NEOREALISM  
 Ana Filipa Caldeira  
 Cátia Alves  
 Clara Silva  
 Fernando Marques  
 Jorge Carvalho

Lurdes Aleixo  
 Manuela Braga  
 Paula Loura Batista  
 Paula Pedras  
 Rute Oliveira  
 Vanda Arsénio  
 Zélia Duarte

**INSTALLATION**  
 MUSEUM OF NEOREALISM  
 Fernando Marques  
 Helena Seita  
 Lurdes Aleixo  
 Paula Loura Batista

**COMMUNICATION AND IMAGE DIVISION**  
 Miguel Oliveira  
 Nuno Correia

**DEPARTMENT OF WORKS, VEHICLES AND INFRASTRUCTURES**  
 António Costa  
 Gilberto Martins  
 José António Luís  
 Carlos Carmo  
 Aquilino Amaro  
 José Machado  
 David Costa

**COMMUNICATION**  
 MUSEUM OF NEOREALISM  
 Fernando Marques  
 Helena Seita

**COMMUNICATION AND IMAGE DIVISION**  
 Carla Coquenim

**EDUCATIONAL SERVICE**  
 Lídia Agostinho  
 Nuno Dionísio  
 Paulo Silva

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**MUSEUM OPENING HOURS**  
 Tuesday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. 18:00 p.m.  
 Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 7: p.m.  
 Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
 Closed on Mondays and public holidays

**Museum of Neorealism**

**Exhibition**  
**26.10.2019 - 23.02.2020**

**COSMO/POLITICS #5**  
**TEMPORARY**  
**COMMUNITIES**



**Contemporary**  
**Art Cycle**  
**2017 - 2020**

**Paulo Mendes**  
**Tiago Baptista**  
**Susana Mouzinho**

## COSMO/POLITICS #5: Temporary Communities

This fifth exhibition in the COSMO/POLITICS cycle addresses the creation of communities and collectives, acquiring a better understanding, from the spirit of the neorealist movement to the present day.

The novel *Gaibéus* by Alves Redol, from 1939, stands out in this exhibition for the attention given to collectives, wage earners and migrants and to a commitment to knowledge, raising awareness and overcoming their condition. Eight decades later, it is important to invite contemporary artists to reflect on their current activity and future projection.

We remain expectant. If there remains an indisputable absence and alienation of the sense of community, of resignation and numbness towards migrants and exacerbated glorification of individualism resulting from neoliberalism, we also feel the emergence of alternatives and different ways of building common meanings in defence of a collective spirit, of unity in the defence of social values and rights.

From the work of Alves Redol we are interested in reactivating the meaning of many cultural and artistic initiatives that developed in the thirties and fifties. Visits, get-togethers, courses, excursions, exhibitions and tours, that met common expectations and forged desirable communities, were organised through initiatives of cultural revitalisation and collectives.

The photographic archives of the Vila Franca de Xira Municipal Museum and the Museum of Neorealism, the literary treasure trove of documentary archives of this same museum, the Portuguese Cinematheque's filmographic collections, and other documentation existing in the municipality's collections and other regional museums, will be the sources for researching guest artists.

### CURATORS

Sandra Vieira Jürgens  
Paula Loura Batista

## PAULO MENDES

At the museum's entrance, the installation *If i'm half dead it's because i'm half alive* (2019), by Paulo Mendes, integrates historic and cultural, literary, cinematographic and photographic references associated with local contexts and the social and economic landscape of Vila Franca de Xira. It's worth highlighting the work of Alves Redol, and the work of Carlos de Oliveira, namely *Pequenos Burgueses*, from which the installation's title derives.

Built specifically for this exhibition, the installation evokes the stilts, the houses of avieiros, a fishing community occupying the woodlands and Tagus landscapes, which would come from the Vieira de Leiria region to capture shad, twait shad and eel. With this provisional architecture, made with wood, iron, pallets, tires and bricks, the artist evokes the nomads of the Tagus river, who Redol described in *Avieiros* (1942), using, in this work, several materials from the Museum of Neorealism collections, from the Vila Franca de Xira City Hall's workshops, from the avieiros fishing communities and the region's constructions sites. Using these elements that are heavily interwoven in local recollections, together with a geometric, rationalist and minimalist organisation of contemporary architecture, this installation occupies

the space as a reminder of ancestral buildings. Destabilizing the perception of the museum's purified space, it shows constructive processes of an ephemeral and organic nature, with very little planning, intentionally gathered in the artist's work, through an edification that is open to informality and improvisation in its assembly.

## TIAGO BAPTISTA

In the contemporary art room of the Museum of Neorealism, Tiago Baptista presents four paintings: compositions of landscapes and portraits, with which he metaphorically ponders the existence and inevitability of visible or invisible frontiers and boundaries, be it related to social structure (conditioning, perpetuating and accentuating class differences and prohibiting changes and emancipation processes) or architecture, urbanism and the organisation of territory (conditioning migratory flows and the free movement of people and goods). Under the first aspect, we highlight *Barrier* (2019), which evokes the "rebellious reaper" character from *Gaibéus*, narrating the story of a group of migrants, seasonally "rented" for harvesting rice,

coming down to the woodlands from Alto Ribatejo and Beira Baixa, suffering injustice and subjugation (both economic and sexual) at the hands of landowners and the hostility of "simpletons," workers from Ribatejo who despised them for their submission to the employers. This nameless, nomad character (purified in Tiago Baptista's painting, based on the cover of the first edition of Redol's book, where the character is shown with a bag hanging from the hoe's pole), with a greater social conscience than the false collective of *Gaibéus*, would be the writer's alter ego. The Lezíria and Tagus river landscapes serve more than mere contemplation in this set of paintings. In *Clue* (2019) and *Petrified bridge* (2019), they evoke the paradoxical nature of bridges and highways, tearing through mountains and separating ecosystems and populations, facilitating faster movement flows, leaving marks in urbanism and the landscape, creating sustainability and ecological balance problems.

## SUSANA MOUZINHO

Also in the contemporary art room, Susana Mouzinhos presents *Happen what may in between* (2019), a video installation in which she evokes the gestures and movements of elements from the neo-realistic group, while highlighting Alves Redol. Her attention focuses on the movement of writing and taking a political stance, starting from an ethnographic, artistic, and even "educational" approach, in a movement of reciprocity: the writer also learned from the same people he duly informed and educated.

There are two alternate projections in the room: in one of the projections, the images abstract themselves and appeal to words, films and documents. They gather the processes, the moments that reference the aforementioned encounters, in a composition that evokes a type of transient constellation, in development. In the other projection, the performative gesture of reading and inscribing takes control of the word to relaunch the memory of a set of quotes from *Gaibéus*, reinforcing the importance of this encounter and the debate and consideration around it.