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Alexandre
Farto AKA

Alexandre Farto
aka **Vhils**

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2020

ARTIST PORTFOLIO

VHILS STUDIO

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STUDIO

ALEXANDRE FARTO
aka
VHILS



Scratching the Surface project
Hong Kong SAR, 2015

Alexandre Farto aka

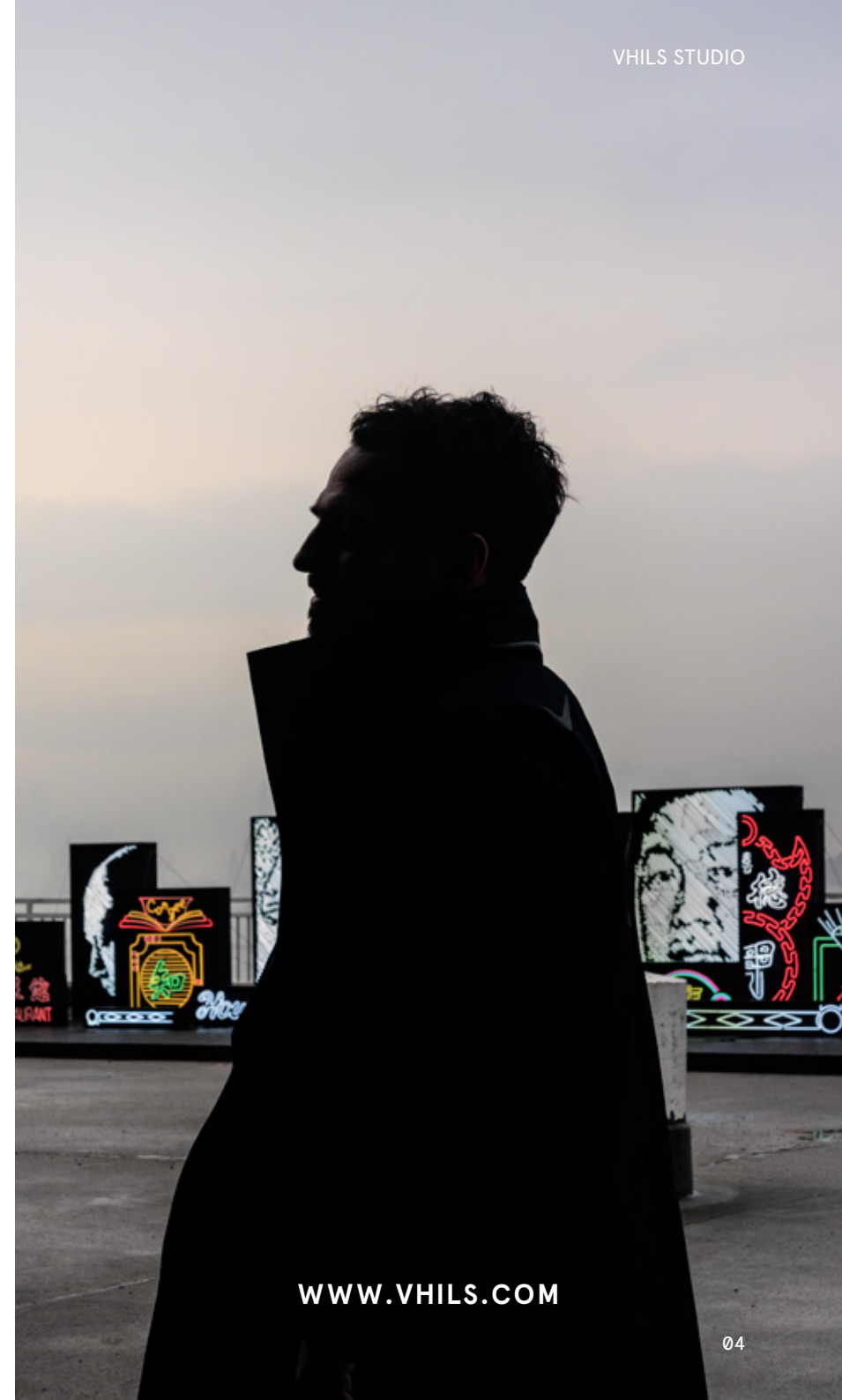
VHILS

Portuguese visual artist Alexandre Farto aka Vhils (b. 1987) has developed a unique visual language based on the removal of the surface layers of walls and other media with non-conventional tools and techniques, establishing symbolic reflections on identity, the relationship of interdependence between people and the surrounding environment, and life in contemporary urban societies, as well as the impact of development, the passage of time, and material transformation. Having begun to interact with the urban environment through the practice of graffiti in the early 2000s, Vhils has been hailed as one of the most innovative artists of his generation. His poignant, poetic portraits chiselled into flaking walls can be seen adorning cityscapes around the world. Based on his aesthetics of vandalism, Vhils destroys as a means to create. He carves, cuts, drills, etches and blasts his way through the layers of materials. Yet, like an archaeologist, he removes in order to expose, bringing to light the beauty that lies trapped beneath the surface of things.


Since 2005, he has presented his work in over 30 countries around the world in solo and group exhibitions, site-specific art interventions,

artistic events and projects in various contexts – from working with communities in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, to collaborations with well-reputed artistic and museological institutions such as the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati (2020); Le Centquatre-Paris, Paris (2018); CAFA Art Museum, Beijing (2017); Hong Kong Contemporary Art Foundation, Hong Kong (2016); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2016); EDP Foundation, Lisbon (2014); and the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego (2010), among others. An avid experimentalist, besides his groundbreaking bas-relief carving technique – which forms the basis of the “Scratching the Surface” project –, Vhils has been developing his personal aesthetics in a plurality of media: from stencil painting to metal etching, from pyrotechnic explosions and video to sculptural installations. He has also directed several music videos, short films, and two stage productions.

Vhils works with several leading galleries, including Vera Cortês Gallery (Portugal), Danysz gallery (France and China), and Over the Influence gallery (Hong Kong and USA). His work is represented in several public and private collections in various countries.



WWW.VHILS.COM



“Vhils is a Portuguese artist who constantly innovates with new techniques and approaches to his art. Much of his work is created in situ and focuses on the transitory nature of the city, its history, and the lives of its inhabitants.”

Tristan Manco, in The Guardian

Global presence



Vhils' work is present in over 30 countries around the world, where he has worked in solo and group exhibitions, site-specific art interventions, art events and projects in a variety of contexts. He has created some 250 public art pieces in the scope of his Scratching the Surface project.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 2020 *Haze*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, USA
- 2019 *Realm*, Danysz Gallery, Shanghai, China
Incisão, CAIXA Cultural Brasília, Brasília, Brazil
- 2018 *Fragments Urbains*, Le Centquatre-Paris, Paris, France
Décombres, Danysz Gallery, Paris, France
Annihilation, Over the Influence Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
Intrinseco, Vera Cortês Gallery, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2017 *Remains*, Over the Influence Gallery, Hong Kong SAR, China
Imprint, CAFA Art Museum, Beijing, China
Debris – Macau, Contemporary Art Center, Macau SAR, China
- 2016 *Debris*, Hong Kong Contemporary Art Foundation, Hong Kong SAR, China
- 2015 *Dissonance*, Lazarides Gallery, London, UK
- 2014 *Vestiges*, Magda Danysz Gallery, Paris, France
Dissecção / Dissection, EDP Foundtion, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2013 *Fragmentos*, Clark Art Center, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Dissolve, Skalitzers Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 2012 *Devoid*, Lazarides Gallery, London, UK
Entropy, Magda Danysz Gallery, Paris, France
Diorama, Vera Cortês Art Agency, Lisbon, Portugal
Visceral, Magda Danysz Gallery, Shanghai, China
- 2011 *Detritos*, Galeria Presença, Porto, Portugal
- 2009 *Scratching the Surface*, Lazarides Gallery, London, UK



Selected group exhibitions & projects

2020 *Design em São Bento – Traços da Cultura Portuguesa*, Palácio de São Bento, Lisbon, Portugal
ARCO Madrid 2020 – Feria Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo, Vera Cortês Gallery booth, Madrid, Spain

2019 *Beyond the Streets*, New York, USA
Conquête Urbaine – street art au musée, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Calais, Calais, France
Don't Believe the Hype, Artcurial, Paris, France

2018 *Imago – A History of Portraits*, MUCA – Museum of Urban and Contemporary Art, Munich, Germany
Do Tirar Polo Natural – inquérito ao retrato português, Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon, Portugal
Art From the Streets, ArtScience Museum, Singapore

2017 *Urban Fine Art*, MUCA – Museum of Urban and Contemporary Art, Munich, Germany
Arte Urbano, de la calle al Museo, MUBAM – Museo de Bellas Artes de Murcia, Murcia, Spain
Street Generation(s), La Condition Publique, Roubaix, France

2016 *Art from the Streets*, CAFA Art Museum, Beijing, China
Choices Paris 2016 – Collector's Weekend, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France
They Would Be Kings, Sotheby's Hong Kong Gallery, Hong Kong SAR

2015 *Station to Station*, Barbican Centre, London, UK
Iberian Suite – Installation, The Kennedy Center, Washington, USA
Sleeping Beauty, Magda Danysz Gallery, Paris, France

2014 *#Street Art*, Espace Fondation EDF, Paris, France
Lasco Project #3, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France
Do Valongo à Favela, Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



2013 *Wooster Collective 2003–2013*, Jonathan Levine Gallery, New York, USA
Hecho en Oaxaca, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Oaxaca, Mexico
Ex Situ, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

2012 *Au-delà du Street Art*, Musée de la Poste, Paris, France
Festival Images, Vevey, Switzerland
Domination, Hegemony and the Panopticon, Traffic Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2011 *Shadows and Reflections*, Magda Danysz Gallery, Paris, France
Observadores, Museu Berardo, Lisbon, Portugal
O Museu em Ruínas, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Elvas, Elvas, Portugal

2010 *Contemporary Prints From the V&A*, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, UK
Viva la Revolución, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego, USA
Eurotrash, Lazarides Gallery, Los Angeles, USA

2009 *Outsiders Selection*, The Outsiders Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK
Grifters, Lazarides Gallery, London, UK
Tunnel 228, Curated by Punchdrunk & Old Vic Theatre, Waterloo Station Tunnels, London, UK

Selected commissions & public art projects

- 2020 The Momentary – contemporary art museum, Bentonville, AK, USA
- 2019 Biblioteca Municipal do Mindelo, Cabo Verde
Everyday Heroes, Vhils & PichiAvo, Super Bock Group, Leça do Balio, Portugal
 MUCA – Museum of Urban and Contemporary Art, Munich, Germany
 90 anos do Instituto Camões, Instituto Camões, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2018 We Yone Child Foundation & Affixed Productions, Freetown, Sierra Leone
Making the Invisible Visible – Hennessy, New York, Chicago, Johannesburg, Moscow, Ho Chi Minh City, London
 Fondation Carmignac, Île de Porquerolles, France
Art Route Across Dams | EDP Foundation, Caniçada dam, Parada do Bouro, Portugal
- 2017 Embassy of Portugal in China, Beijing, China
 Embassy of Portugal in Thailand, Bangkok, Thailand
- 2016 Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal
 GS1 Portugal headquarters, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2015 Heavenly Hundred Garden, Kiev, Ukraine
 Hyundai Card Music Library, Seoul, South Korea
- 2014 Le Freeport Luxembourg, Luxembourg
 MAR – Museu de Arte do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 2013 *Fragmentos*, Ladeira dos Tabajaras, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 2012 *Descascando a Superfície*, Morro da Providência, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



Selected public & private collections

- APPortfolio Asia Collection, Shenzhen, China
 China Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) Art Museum, Beijing, China
 Coleção de Arte Contemporânea Portugal Telecom, Lisbon, Portugal
 Coleção de Arte Fundação EDP, Lisbon, Portugal
 Coleção António Cachola – Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Elvas, Elvas, Portugal
 Collection l'Adresse Musée de la Poste, Paris, France
 Hong Kong Contemporary Art (HOCA) Foundation, Hong Kong SAR, China
 Hyundai Art Collection, Seoul, South Korea
 MAR – Museu de Arte do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
 Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego, USA
 Perez Art Museum Miami, Miami, USA

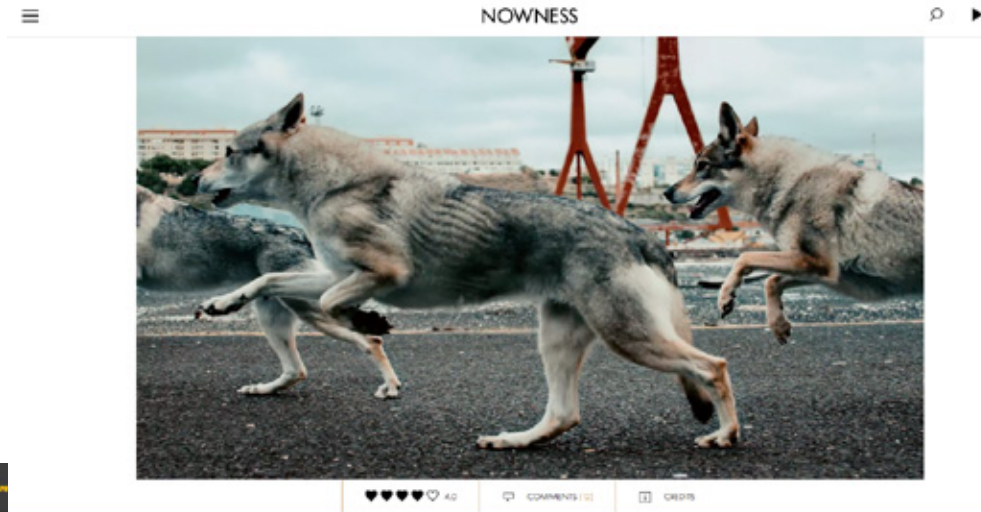
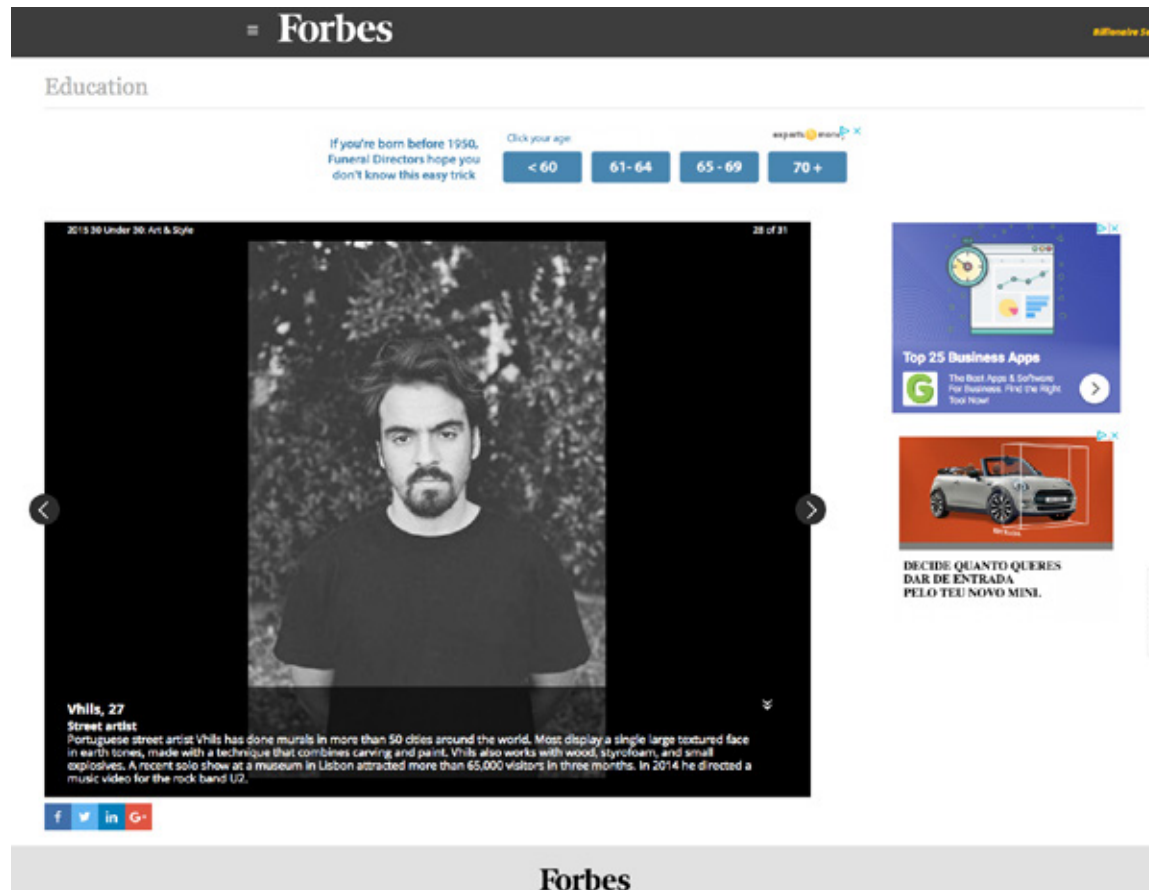
師大周



PRESS – a selection

“Vhils’ most common theme is urban decay; he uses peeling billboards and crumbling walls as his canvas, carving large-scale faces using scalpels, hammers and pneumatic drills. A recent solo show at a museum in Lisbon attracted more than 65,000 visitors in three months. In 2014 he directed a music video for the rock band U2.”

Forbes Magazine



MUSIC

December 8, 2014

U2: Raised by Wolves

Portuguese street artist Vhils kicks off Films of Innocence

A pack of wolves roam the suburbs of Lisbon in U2's explosive collaboration with Vhils for *Films of Innocence*, the 24-hour film project screened with NOWNESS on December 8. The political murals of Northern Ireland inspired Bono, The Edge, Adam Clayton and Larry Mullen Jr. in the series of film couplings with 11 artists hailing from the UK to US, South Africa to Egypt, Belgium to Portugal, inspired by tracks from their polarizing new record *Songs of Innocence*. Vhils is Alexandre Faria, a young urban vanguard from Lisbon whose creative treatment of neglected bricks and mortar reveals haunting portraits of both political figures and the everyman. Working with U2 and Solid Dogma on "Raised by Wolves," Faria's dramatic, slow-motion set pieces were captured in only a day and a half.

"U2 have always been outspoken on social and political issues and the lyrics totally relate to my experience"

The film was shot where I was born and grew up in the south bank of Lisbon around Almada and Seixal," Faria says of the industrial locations so fitting with his work that utilizes drilling and explosions as technique. "The band have always been outspoken on social and political issues and the lyrics totally relate to my experiences and fit with what I've been wanting to put out for a while." *Films of Innocence's* part animated, part live action approach also includes a collaboration with fantastical children's book *Elevator* and artist Oliver Jeffers, originally from Belfast.

U2: FILMS OF INNOCENCE

Eleven urban artists unveil their work through a collection of films, inspired by U2's *Songs of Innocence*, available now on iTunes. Tickets for the *INNOCENCE + EXPERIENCE* world tour are available now.



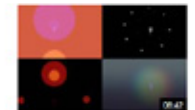
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RELATED STORIES



iStudio: Back to the Future

The Parisian design collective's retro guide to augmented reality for MINI



Continuum

Jamie xx, Four Tet, Keroles and John Talabot score Sofia Martini's vision



Arisãic Vahala

Keyboard shamanic folk command in an ode to lovers past



JR: Now Up



“Vhils is definitely an artist to watch. He’s a young guy, I think that he’s got a great vision. He’s given people a new medium in street art. Vhils has charted a new course and he’s the best at it so far.”

Shepard Fairey in CNN’s “Ones to Watch”



Scratching the Surface project
Paris, France, 2014

OUTDOOR WORKS



"His art is often described as destructive, but he considers it no more destructive than poetry is to a clean sheet of paper."

Reuters.com



Scratching the Surface project
Mindelo, São Vicente island, Cape Verde, 2019



Scratching the Surface project
Cincinnati, USA, 2019



Scratching the Surface project
Aberdeen, UK, 2019



Palimpsesto, 2019
Site-specific wall piece with hand-carved advertising posters
Lisbon, Portugal, 2019



Scratching the Surface project
Barreiro, Portugal, 2018



Untitled painted mural
Macau SAR, 2017



Site-specific mural with hand-carved advertising posters
Hong Kong SAR, 2016



Site-specific piece with hand-carved advertising posters on Hong Kong tram
Hong Kong SAR, 2016



Scratching the Surface project
Hong Kong SAR, 2015



Scratching the Surface project
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, 2014



Scratching the Surface project
Almada, Portugal, 2014



Scratching the Surface project
Lisbon, Portugal, 2014



Site-specific mural with hand-carved advertising posters
Lisbon, Portugal, 2014



Scratching the Surface project
Las Vegas, USA, 2013



Scratching the Surface project
Sydney, Australia, 2013



Scratching the Surface project
Girona, Spain, 2013



Scratching the Surface project
Shanghai, China, 2012



Scratching the Surface project
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2012



Scratching the Surface project
Stavanger, Norway, 2010

BILLBOARDS



“With his creative reductive techniques, Vhils helped push the boundaries of outdoor art in Lisbon and internationally.”

The Washington Post



Diffuse Series #04, 2019
Laser-cut and hand-carved advertising posters
195 × 127 cm



Camada Series #01-#15, 2018
Hand-carved and laser-cut advertising posters mounted on metal structure
Various dimensions



Diminish Series #03, 2017
Hand-carved advertising posters
307 × 675 cm



Matter Series #01, 2016
Hand-carved advertising posters
185 × 137 cm



LOVEHATE, 2015
Hand-cut advertising posters
Love: 45 × 116 × 26 cm
Hate: 40.5 × 116 × 26 cm



Vestige Series #01, 2014

Hand-carved and laser-cut advertising posters, cut and assembled
203 × 223 cm

WOOD



"I first saw Alex's work back in 2007 and was totally floored. Here was this crazy Portuguese kid, doing these mad portraits on the street by chopping out bits of walls. It was one of the most innovative techniques I'd ever seen. It has been a pleasure to see how much he has come on from those early days to his most recent museum show in Lisbon. Long may it continue."

Steve Lazarides in www.blouinartinfo.com



Graven Series #01, 2019
Hand-carved old wooden door
96 × 193 cm



Taint Series #01, 2019
Hand-carved old wooden door
231 × 114 cm



Babel, 2018
Installation with hand-carved old wooden doors and metal scaffolding
Various dimensions



Hoarding Series #04, 2017

Hand-carved old wooden doors and inlaid wooden overlays
275 × 151 cm



Still Series #01, #02, #05, 2016
Hand-carved old wooden doors
193 × 158 cm | 187 × 109 cm | 187 × 54 cm



Lancetar Series #03, 2014
Old wooden doors, hand-carved, cut and assembled
218 × 248 cm



Desvaecer Series #02, 2014
Laser-engraved old wooden doors
202.5 × 75 cm



Ataxia Series #04, 2012
Old wooden doors, hand-carved, cut and assembled
210 × 196 cm

METAL

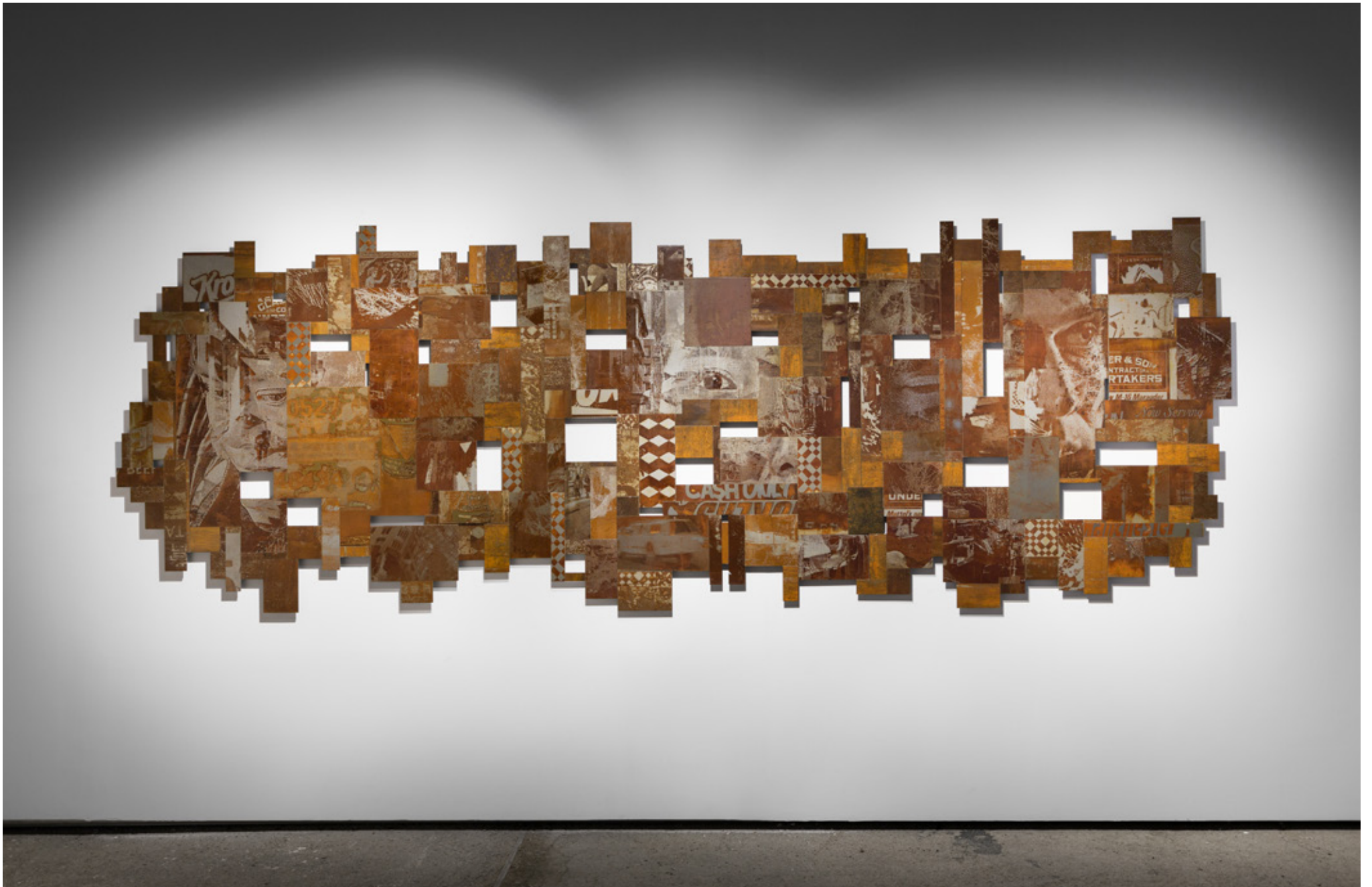




Dwindle Series #03, 2019
Acid-etched metal plate
200 × 150 cm



Rust Series, 2018
Acid-etched metal plates, cut and assembled
Various dimensions



Untwine Series #02, 2016
Acid-etched metal plates, cut and assembled
140 × 417 cm



Tempo Series #07, 2015
Acid-etched metal plate
100 × 70 cm



Anagrama Series #03, 2014
Acid-etched metal plates, cut and assembled
100 × 150 cm



Anagrama Series #01, 2014
Acid-etched metal plates, cut and assembled
130 × 115 cm

DIORAMAS



“Presented by the Magda Danysz Gallery as «the new rising star of contemporary art», Alexandre Farto has already exhibited in several countries, including Brazil, USA, Italy and Colombia.”

Público



Fractal Series #01, 2019
Laser-cut wooden panels, paint
345 × 412 × 9.5 cm



Monolith Series #01, 2018
Cement cast sculpture
60 × 60 × 32 cm



Diagrama, 2014-2018

Styrofoam cut with hot-wire, assembled and glued by hand
Approx. 300 × 510 × 196 cm



Concrete, 2016
Concrete cast sculpture
300 × 300 × 31 cm



Scope, 2016
Lost-wax cast white bronze sculpture
198.68 × 195.13 × 28 cm



Diorama Series #16, 2014

Styrofoam cut with hot-wire, assembled and glued by hand
197 × 170 × 28 cm



Contraste, 2013
Cork sheet and cork agglomerate on steel structure
400 × 1700 × 40 cm



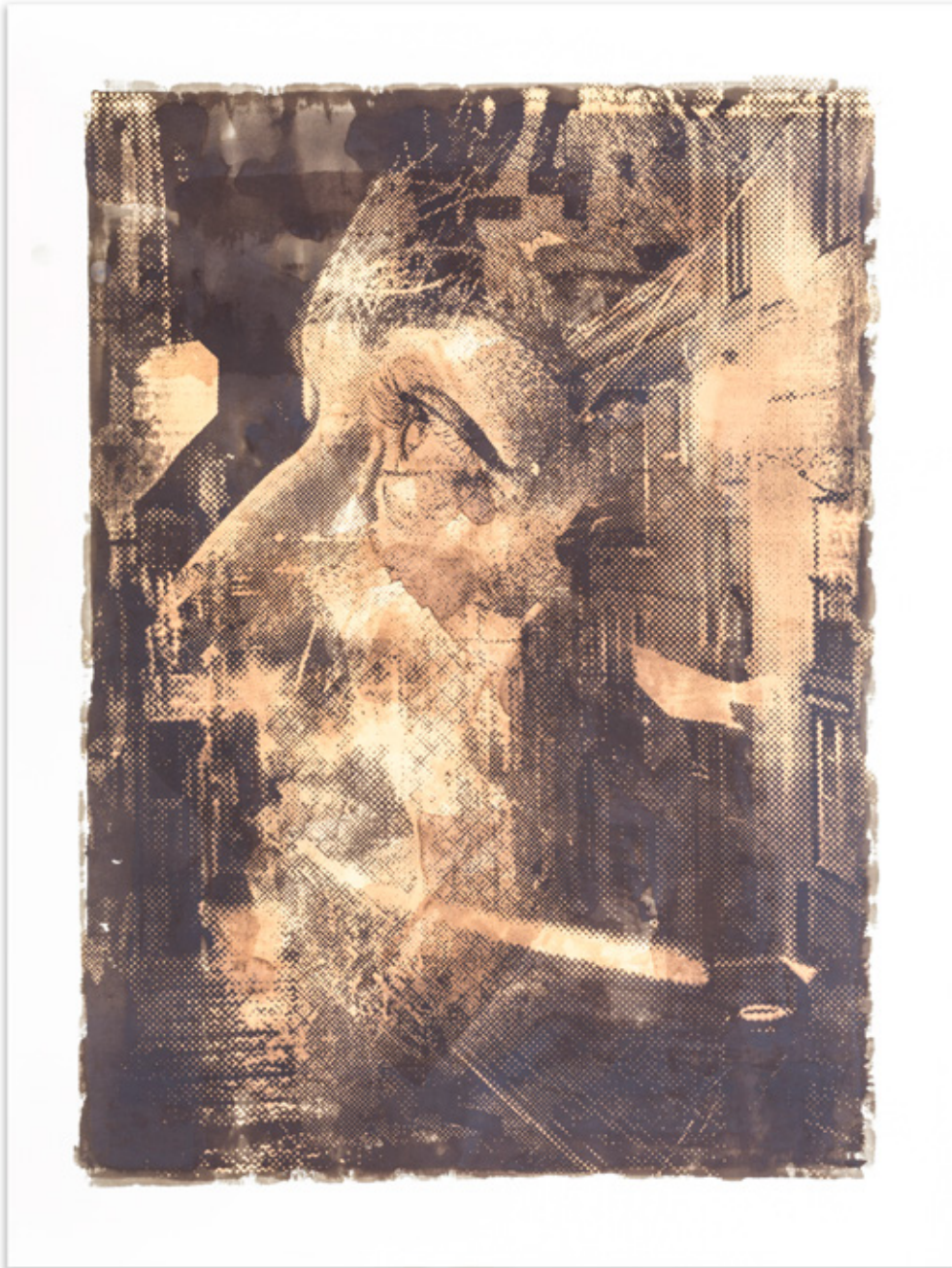
Diorama Series #05, 2012
Styrofoam cut with hot-wire, assembled and glued by hand
190 × 160 × 28 cm

SCREEN PRINTS



“Whether it’s blowing up a building façade in Berlin to reveal a carving of a man’s face or drilling portraits into favela walls in Rio de Janeiro, raucous street artist Alexandre Farto, who goes by the tag “Vhils,” has left an imprint on urban landscapes across the globe.”

CNN (Hong Kong)



Disintegrative Series #08, 2019
Quink ink, bleach, and screen print ink on paper
183 × 130 cm



Disintegrative Series #05, 2018
Quink, screen print ink, and bleach on paper
185 × 130 cm



Vanish Series #06, 2017
Handmade print on paper; Quink ink and bleach
180 × 120 cm



Moment Series #03, 2016
Quink, screen print ink, and bleach on paper
180 × 120 cm



Moment Series #02, 2016
Quink, screen print ink, and bleach on paper
180 × 120 cm



Dilacerar Series #08, 2015
Quink, screen print ink, and bleach on paper
205 × 151 cm



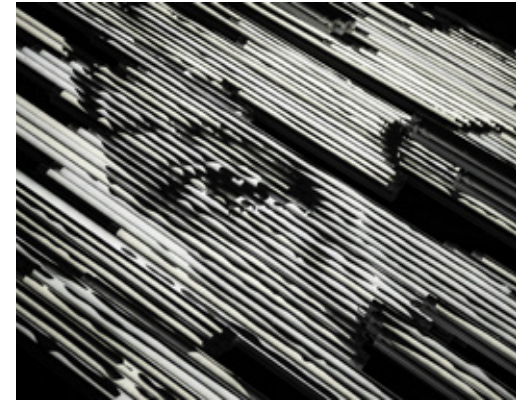
Dilacerar Series #01, 2014
Quink, screen print ink, and bleach on paper
200 × 150 cm

OTHER MEDIA



[VIEW VIDEO >](#)

Vhils x U2 | "Raised by Wolves", 2014



Overexposure #01, 2019

Installation with structure of welded tubes (TIG) covered with stainless steel sheet, T8 tubular light bulbs, steel cables, metal rods, Arduino microcontrollers, motion sensors, and power supply cables
Approx. 365 × 361 × 35 cm



Debris, 2018
Site-specific installation with assorted materials and CCTV monitors
Dimensions variable



Debris, 2018
Site-specific installation with assorted materials and CCTV monitors
Dimensions variable



Crystallize, 2018
Video installation



Intrinseco Series, 2018

Piezoelectric inkjet print dried with UV light on transparent crystal film

Spray paint applied with stencil on transparent crystal film

Each layer: 285 × 138



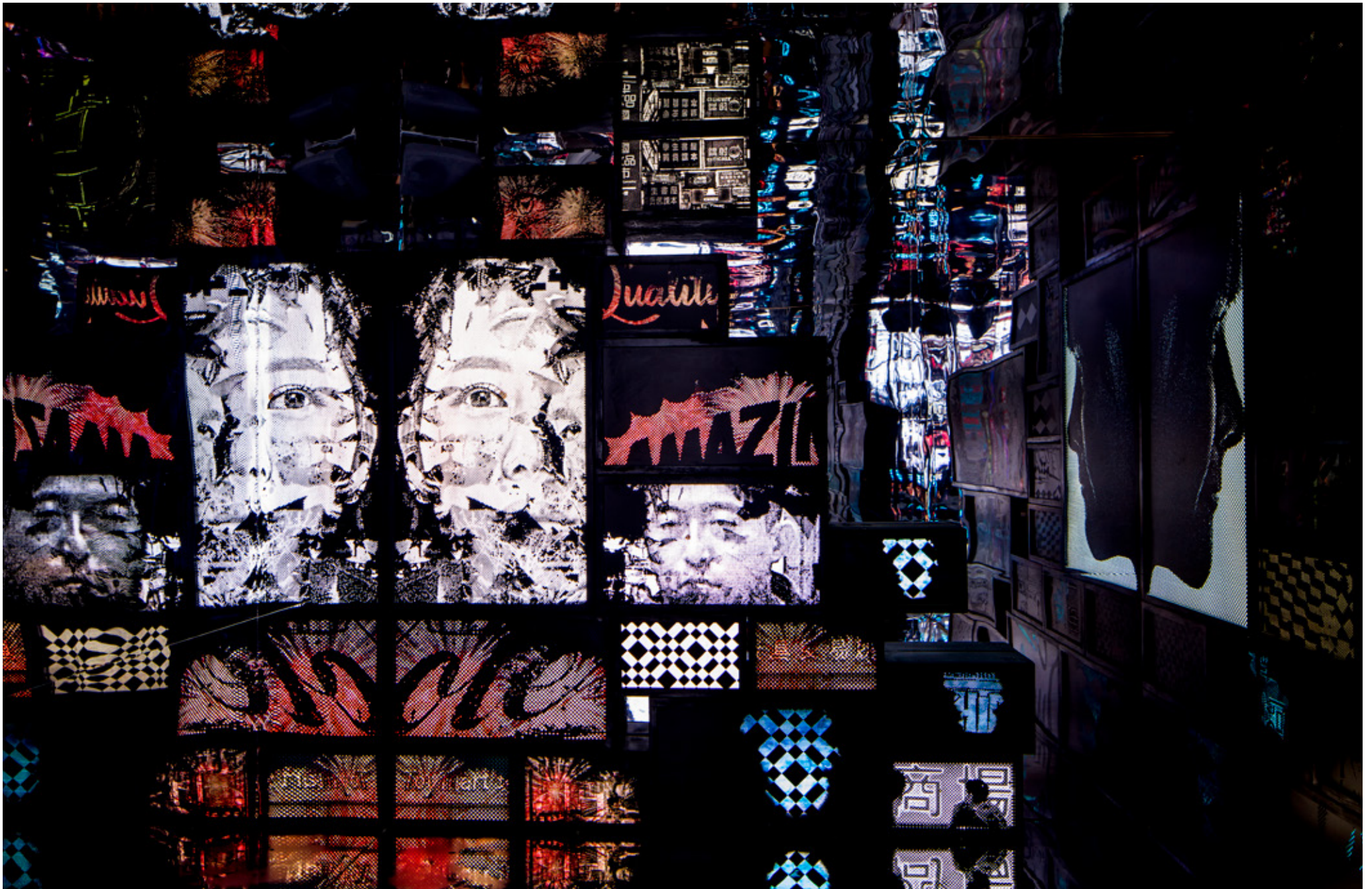
Residue Series, 2017

Bas-relief carving on plasterboard mounted on metal structure

Each piece: 200 × 120 × 40 cm



Gleam Series, 2016-2017
Site-specific installation with neon lights
Approx. 200 × 840 × 360 cm



Flicker Series, 2017
Video installation with laser-cut acrylic boards
Approx. 330 × 610 × 20 cm

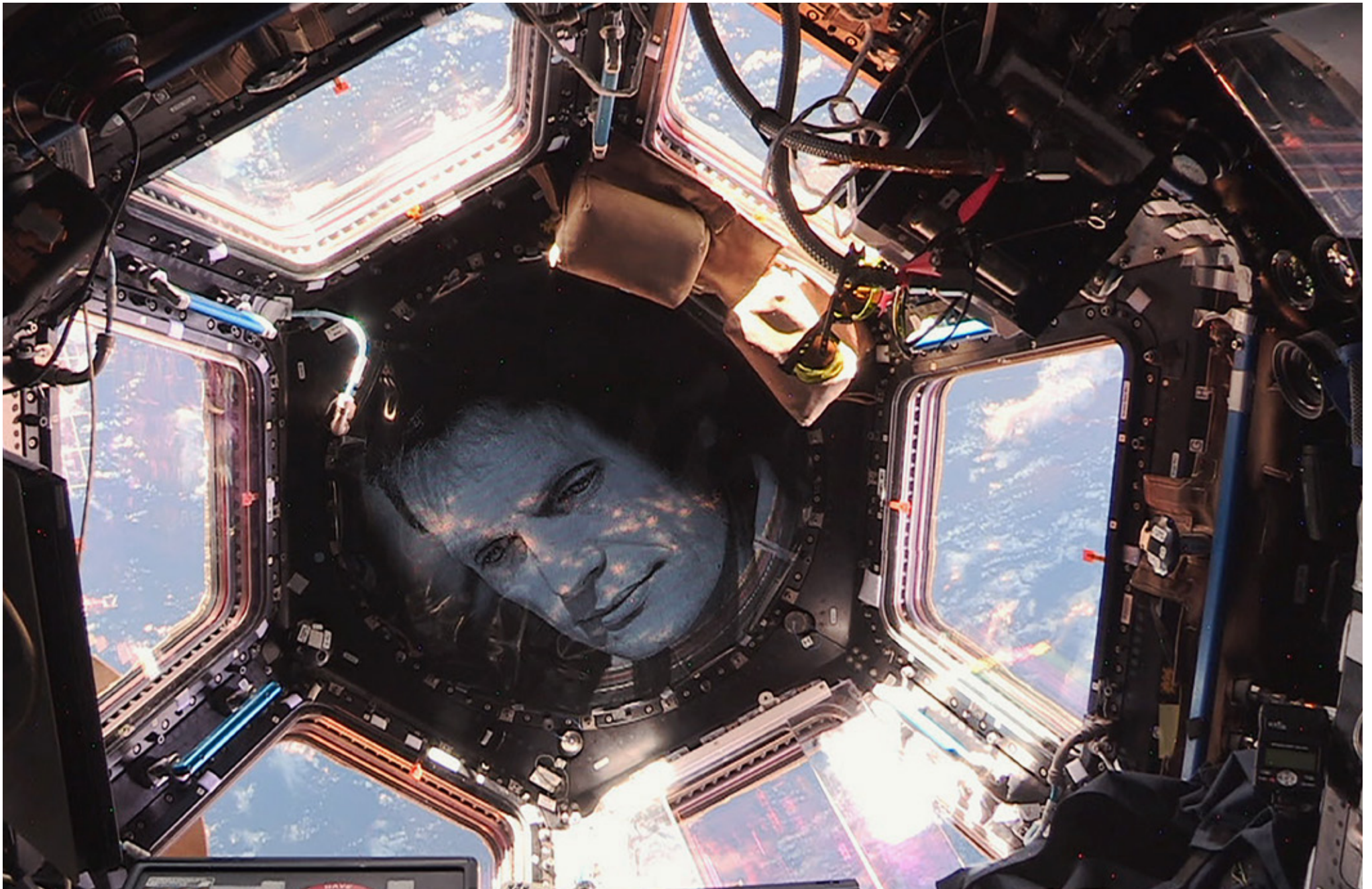


Untitled, 2016
GS1 Portugal headquarters, Lisbon, Portugal
Precast concrete
49 panels, each: 778 × 137 × 30 cm



Olhar, 2016
Newspaper cut-outs on superimposed acrylic sheets
Approx. 200 × 135 × 26 cm

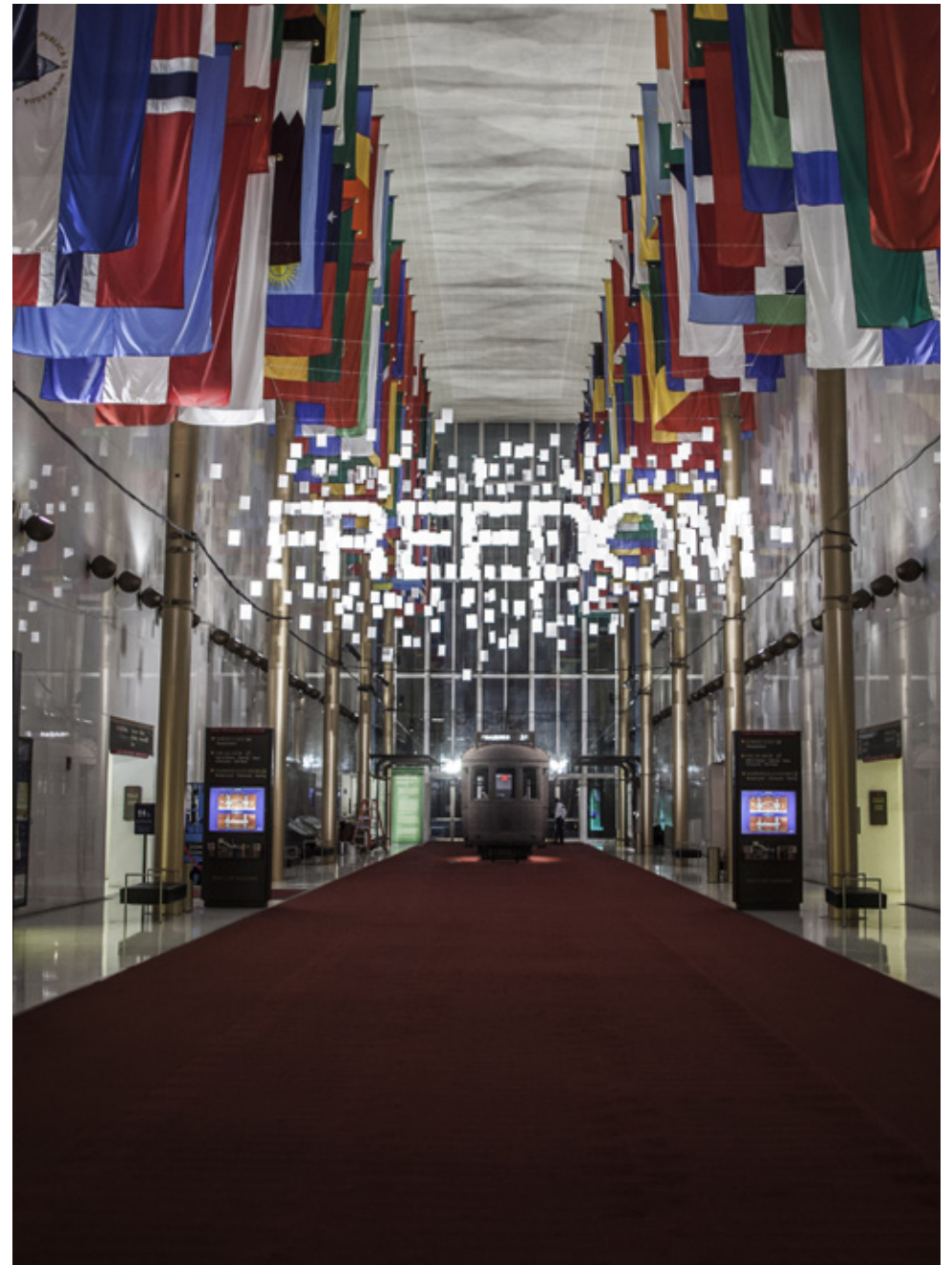




Portrait of Andreas Mogensen, 2015
Site-specific installation
International Space Station
70 cm Ø



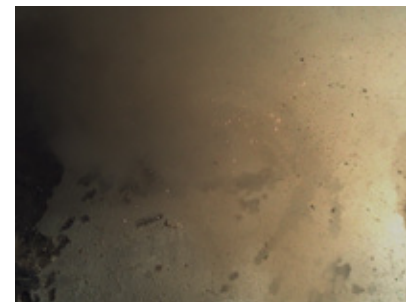
Calçada, 2015 (Portrait of Amália Rodrigues)
Paving stones
Lisbon, Portugal



Perspective, 2015

Site-specific installation with paper sheets and nylon thread
Approx. 300 × 900 × 1200 cm

VIEW VIDEO >



Detritos Series #02, 2011
DVD/PAL, colour, no sound
Running time: 0'41''

VHILS

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