

# Press Release

***Linha de Sombra – Schattenfuge***

**Miguel Branco & Wolfgang Wirth**

**Galeria Belo-Galsterer,**

22nd May, 7pm to 26th July 2014

The Belo-Galsterer Gallery takes great pleasure in presenting the most recent works of Miguel Branco and Wolfgang Wirth in an exhibition designed specifically for this gallery's space.

The title “Linha de Sombra” (inspired on the title of the novel by Joseph Conrad “The Shadow Line”) emerges as an idea about *limitations*, about *borders*, about what gets clearly defined and that which remains shapeless and obscure.

In the text accompanying the exhibition, the writer Rui Cardoso Martins sets out a pathway based upon a series of visual perceptions. The stepping out over snow, the sinuous and irregular path, the drops of blood against the white of the snow, the climb to the mountain summit, the view from above and the descent down the slope before the arrival at a hotel in the midst of the landscape. Finally, the entering into the building, viewing the restaurant room invaded by a group of monkeys feeding off food that has fallen to the floor or still on the tables. This disturbed journey that traces some kind of sinuous, surreal and unstable design echoes in each of the works of this exhibition. The Alps emerge as a metaphor for overcoming and transcending, for the mythical stage of European dreams of grandeur. In the opposite pole, the restaurant scene becomes a parodying metaphor for the barbarity that cyclically devastates Europe.

In Wolfgang Wirth's works, made on maps of Alpine border areas between Austria, Switzerland and Italy, the layers of paint submerge and hide the rigorous description of places in repeated, geometrically constructed, gestures of erasure. The map becomes transformed into a screen that absorbs the liquidity of the paint and dissolves the territory it represents with its topography rendered fragmented and dysfunctional. The works of Miguel Branco, whether in his clipped views of the Alps under snow or in the “cinematographic” scene of the restaurant, stem from complex construction methods. Successive screens are outlined by the cutting of a blade in a kind of plastic surgery that sections the forms, constructing the whole as a sum of fragments, turned into an abstraction.

In both cases, the works expose the very method of their own *construction*: the construction of an obsolete topography, of a fragmented narrative, the constant emptying out of forms.

“Linha de Sombra” is a metaphor for *limitation*, between visibility and invisibility, between clarity and the unformed and based upon a line that is, in its own self, tenuous, unstable and elusive.

The exhibition inauguration takes place on 22nd May at 7pm and remains open to the public through to 26th July.