

PEDRO OLIVEIRA GALLERY

BLEDA Y ROSA

Ciudades (Cities)

Maria Bleda and José Maria Rosa are two young Spanish artists who are returning to this gallery and to Portugal for the second time in order to exhibit their most recent photographic series, entitled *Ciudades (Cities)*.

We may recall the two first series produced by them and presented at the 1999 exhibition at the Pedro Oliveira gallery. The beautiful images of old football fields on the outskirts of small cities in the Spanish countryside, formerly the stages for humble actors in second-rate competitions, from the series *Campos de Fútbol (Football Pitches)*. Or the excellent diptychs from the series *Campos de Batalla (Battlefields)* in which Bleda y Rosa, after constant historical research into documents and in the field, come to the magnificent photographic and often bucolic images of places now revisited, where important battles between Iberian peoples took place, and which were once landscapes bathed in the blood of victors and vanquished and are now silent and green.

In the present series *Ciudades*, Bleda y Rosa continue their main thrust of work about the past, about places and, in this case, on ruins of cities that long ago disappeared. History told in its factual crudeness, revisited as a collective memory, imaginarily recreated in the privacy of each one of us.

The artists have the following to say about this latest series:

"Throughout history, the Iberian Peninsula has maintained a tight relationship with many cultures and civilisations, which immediately suggests a significant cultural and inherited wealth. There were frequent experiences of colonisation and, at other times, it acted as a coloniser. Important cities representing major cultures were established in the peninsula, leaving an indelible mark on the collective memory. A mark that is not only cultural, but also physical.

Iberian, Celtic, Roman, Greek or Phoenician cities established in the peninsula formed the emblem of their respective cultures. Cities that today have disappeared; emotively perpetuated in our memory through myths, legends and traditions. There are many and important sources that have been left behind by these cultures on several different levels. Written, architectural and sculptural sources on which we have based ourselves in order to technically and aesthetically carry out this work.

In this project we intend to come close, through the artistic act and through cities that are as important as they are suggestive, to the people who once populated the west. Which presupposes an approach coming to our time, to ourselves, as the heirs to ideas, attitudes and behaviour patterns in relation to life that have become engraved on our most remote memory and which once belonged to other peoples and to our past".

Pedro Oliveira Gallery
September 2003

* Next solo exhibition by Bleda y Rosa – Kunsthalle Kiel, Germany (November 2003)

Inauguration: Thursday September 18th, 2003, at 10 p.m.

Exhibition dates: From September 19th to October 31st, 2003

Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.

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