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Museu Coleção Berardo

Diogo Evangelista, *84%* (still), 2016. Video.

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MATTER FICTIONS

May 4–August 21, 2016

Museu Coleção Berardo

Praça do Império

1449-003 Lisbon

Portugal

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MATTER FICTIONS opens this evening at Museu Coleção Berardo.

Recounting a partial history of our relation with matter, this exhibition explores how the crossover between cosmological narratives, the spatial revolutions of concrete poetry, and hypertextual and territorial fictions might have an impact on the recognition of human agency in a time that calls for our action on climate change.

In the advent of genetic algorithms, the decolonizing force of poetic resistance has predicted the viral impact of programming and its consequences on the physical world. By liberating the sign, generations of cyberutopians and poets opened up the path to an understanding of the potentiality of language as a carrier of turbulence and material entropy. And as we grow aware of the fluid faculties of code as a technological subconscious to reality, we begin to inquire into the causes of planetary transformation and contest the prevailing predatory and extractive use of matter, just as technological determinism and machinic labor rule out the possibility of an earthbound democracy. Exploitative resource extraction neglects any understanding of deep time and nonhuman ontologies—be it plants, animals or minerals—swerving beyond the cognition of our complicity with matter. But how can we navigate this liminal space and think of ourselves as responsible agents?

As the world is increasingly subject to predictive algorithms, artists have become highly aware of the metabolic circuits of matter, its agencing and potentiality as a catalyst of biopolitical and economical transformations. Their knowledge has proved alchemical, as they are transducers of planetary ecologies, while being indispensable mobilizers of collective agency. From them may we re-learn our ontological position in the world, by inquiring into how matter is transformed—at the pace of a lava flow.

Curated by Margarida Mendes.

Artists:

Ana Hatherly, E. M. de Melo e Castro, The Otolith Group, Orphan Drift, Mumtazz, Nina Canell, Joana Escoval, Jenna Sutela, André Sousa, Ursula Biemann, Zhou Tao, Nobuko Tsuchiya, Diogo Evangelista, Martin Howse, Ryan Jordan, Jonathan Kemp, Don't Follow the Wind, Listen to the City, Inhabitants, Liu Chuang

Publication:

Co-published by Museu Coleção Berardo and Sternberg Press, the exhibition catalogue includes contributions by Francis McKee, N. Katherine Hayles, Mariana Silva, Lars Bang Larsen, Jennifer Teets, Orphan Drift, E. M. de Melo e Castro, Jussi Parikka, Margarida Mendes, among others, in an English-Portuguese bilingual edition.