

## CONTEMPORARY IDENTITIES | online exhibition

### Title: *Contrivance*#2

Artworks by Pedro Gramaxo

Texts by Juan Blasco

Video by Flávio Guerra

Video edit by Pedro Covas

Design by Gonçalo Ribeiro

#### **contrivance**

/kən'traɪv(ə)ns/

*Noun*

ref - Cambridge International Dictionary of English. Cambridge University Press, 1995.

1. the use of skill to create or bring about something, especially with a consequent effect of artificiality.
2. a device, especially in literary or artistic composition, which gives a sense of artificiality.
3. the act of intentionally arranging for something to happen by clever planning.

### 2020-2021 | Artmaking in pandemic times

*"During these atypic months every country was under different restrictions, case numbers and preventive care. Since we were locked for a majority amount of days, due to the format of my work – 2020/21 was a time to reinvent processes because I had to keep the workflow.*

*In Portugal we had periods of mandatory confinement and for bigger periods we were only able to travel to other cities during weekdays, so at weekends we still had mandatory lockdown.*

*Of course, for me, it has been a terrible moment of "standby", almost all of my artworks require a natural context, and I was restrained!*

*My studio is 8 km from my house, in the outskirts of the city! All of my projects for 2020 and beginning of 2021 were canceled, and so, everything could only be developed in an imaginative and adventurous way.*

*To successfully accomplish these installations, we (me and my team) had to travel on weekdays before sunrise and sunset – with dismantled installations in our trunks – so we could take full advantage of the shooting day.*

*It was exactly in this atypical method in which the pieces were made.*

*At the same time, because of these constraints and the importance of the moment of the on-site work, I think I have never felt more connected to the natural environments.*

*All of the work presented was made in this context."*

Excerpt from the ArtiNYC interview with Pedro Gramaxo, December 2020

## BIO | Artist Statement

Pedro Gramaxo (1989) is a Lisbon-based artist.

Channeling his practice on exploring the dualism between natural and artificial, the artist creates contrasts of man-made constructive elements in new artistic contexts.

Pedro develops a research based on the importance of on-site bodily presence and its relation within ourselves and memory. This research combines the environment and human perception through the use of man-made constructions.

In our minds, concepts such as length, height or width are not related to a specific form. It is just when we bind together these terms, that we can build an idea around physical space and dimension.

In order to make them understandable, we needed to establish measurement units to be able to handle its existence. This process allowed us to bring indefinite and abstract concepts into concrete, measurable and, as a last resort, tangible forms.

Here is where Pedro settles his practice, deepening how an individual has been able to perceive these abstract concepts and how one-self engages physically and psychologically with volume, scale or dimension.

On his photographs we see geometric expressions such as: linear and rectangular forms placed in an unknown location, without almost any scale reference. These images force us to think about these abstract concepts that we were talking before and have been guided by, for so long.

Through this work, the artist becomes the one in control of our perception and how we visualize the images, forcing us to express doubt about what you are experiencing. His aim is to make us ask ourselves how we consider scale, length, height, weight of forms, and how we engage with these – Spatial consciousness for self-awareness.

Pedro Gramaxo puts in a material world ideas that are intangible, in order to make these abstract concepts, real. It's all about a relation between the immaterial and the artificial. This is the topic that he has been researching in the last years and has been able to translate it into a complex body of work called Dimensions Series.

## ***DIMENSION Series | Artworks***

Dimensions Series is a perceptive exploration, a project that questions abstract notions and an intents to reformulate landscapes.

On his works, Pedro Gramaxo shows us vast landscapes that we are not able to ubicated. Just with a small amount of construtive information, Pedro is making us question about our own perception, on how we visualize and understand when we think about size and our appropriation of space.

The Dimensions Series are part of a temporary perceptive exercise, in which you cannot identify anything with precision. The artist's purpose is to disconnect viewers from the physical space, making them feel lost, uncomfortable; and invite them to participate and experience each piece. With this process, the artist makes the viewer be aware of his own consciousness, that is, be aware of their own physical and psychological existence, and the necessity of being consciously aware of what we visualize.

For this series, Pedro Gramaxo developed a completely new measurement unit, which he named Mx. He knows that these units are important for our understanding of space and nature, that's why the creation of a new unit was necessary to establish an artificial norm that could allow the artist to measure both scales, artificial and immaterial.

Mx is a scheme used to guarantee an aesthetic and geometric balance. The Mx was created as new method to ensure the best use of construction material, Pedro decided to create one unit that could avoid this ecological problem. This is how the Matrix or Artificial Framework – designated by the artist – has become the initial basis of any project and all of them respect this measure regulation.

This is how Mx became, not only a technical process, but also the language of Pedro's work. All of his structures are built in his studio in Lisbon, and then transported and installed in a previously selected secret location. The process, from design to installation, becomes a highly organized process.

The title of each piece is a reference to the "dimension" of it, and it's also connected on how the artist perceive the installation and its context. Its function is to be a guideline for the viewer's perception, and therefore, it becomes the "reality" of size. In this way, the artist controls the viewer's perception of scale and size, and transform it to create a whole new understanding of space.



# pedro gramaxo





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Dimension #3  
20 mx  
2021

—  
installation view  
Santarém, Portugal



Dimension #2  
25 mx  
2020

—  
installation view  
Setúbal, Portugal



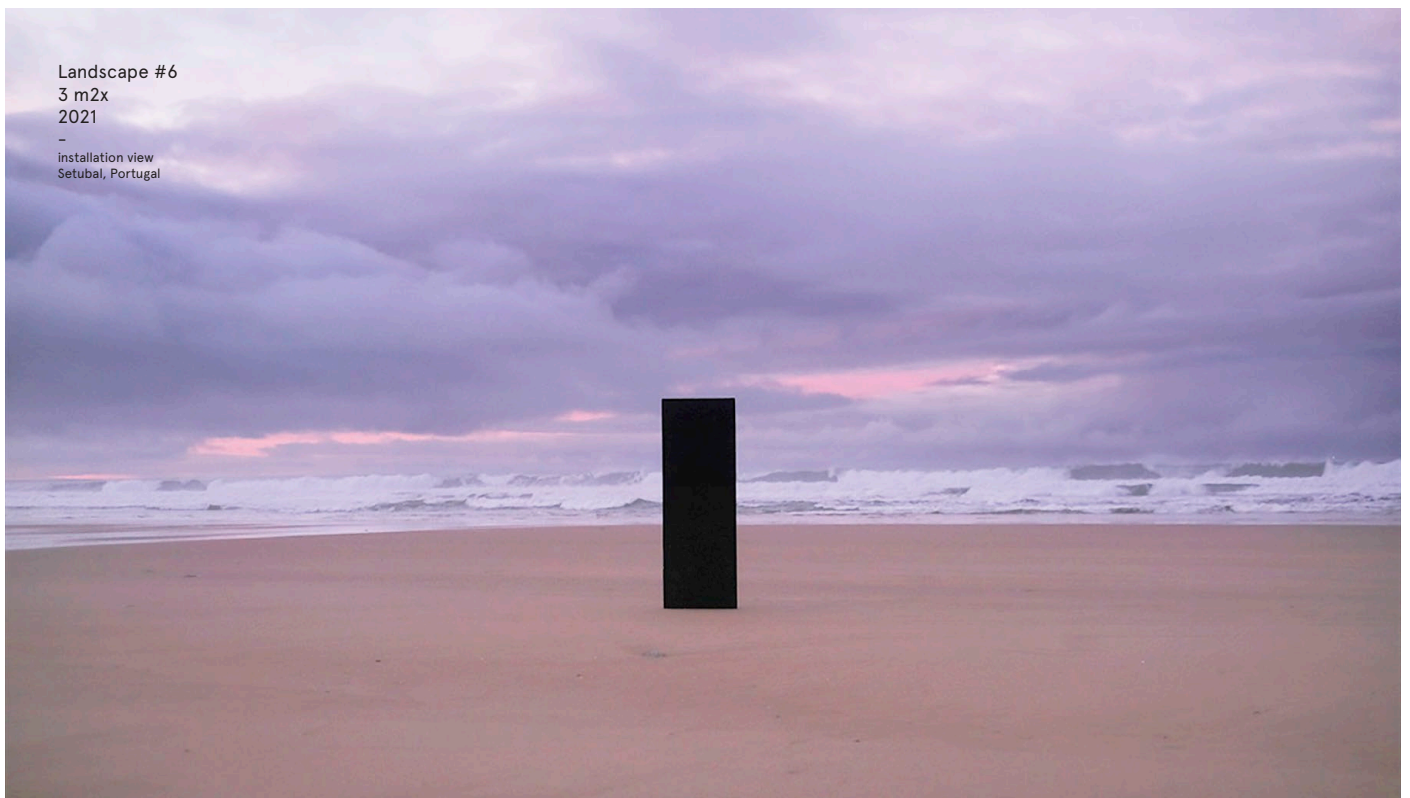


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Dimension #4  
4 mx  
2021  
—  
installation view  
Torres Vedras, Portugal



Landscape #6  
3 m2x  
2021  
—  
installation view  
Setubal, Portugal





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