



Flag (2), Omega



Installation view

At a time when the prospect of biospherical problems, 'limits' and critical tipping points with possibly deleterious consequences for humanity continue to fuel debate and division about how to protect the whole Earth, Omega, an exhibition by artist Will Handley, reflects on images of a unified globe. And this includes unity amongst human and non-human beings and objects.

The first work one encounters upon entering the gallery is an *invisible* wall that the artist has projected into the space. On it hang flags of Earth's geographic grid system resembling the UN flag or the little known, International Flag of Planet Earth. But the lines suggest an unfinished planetary design. They give us an image of the planet not yet rendered, consistent with the lack of consensus regarding the current state of our world.

On the other side of this wall, and framed by the backside of the blue flags, Handley displays a series of monochromatic engravings of classical greek statues, *ancient authorities*. The authority of these figures, as that of the flags are, however, defaced by pencilled ruminations - in the spirit of graffiti - on climate change, savage economies and other competitive contemporary modalities associated with globalism and globalization.

On the floor and around this wall, the artist has orchestrated a series of everyday objects: TV monitors emit a blue hue made up of handheld camera footage of rhythmic human and non-human movements - as well as cleaning articles assembled as figures of plants and perhaps animals - and speakers broadcasting a noisy field of analog sound. Surely the blue is not gratuitous. It is the blue in which flags unfurl, the one that distinguishes our planet from others and the blue that could eventually swallow us all, if sea levels continue to rise.

Interestingly, all of the works in Omega are unnamed. The artist's use of content over semantics and of a non-hierarchical organizational structure inside the glass-walled Artes gallery gives the exhibition opacity. Omega is a symbol of the last, best, or final nature of something and this may well be the artist's intention too: to drown the manipulated perspectives, multiple contradictions, and the irrational involvements currently inherent in the way we are attempting to keep our commitment to the planet but also to raise instead a phenomenal unity amongst all.

Exhibited at Omega  
Artes, Porto, Portugal  
June - July 2019

Text - [Joana Rafael](#)  
Sound work produced in collaboration with [Xavier Paes](#)  
Commissioned by [Luísa Mota](#)  
Photography - Carlos Campos