

Galeria Miguel Nabinho

Born in Lisbon in 1954.

After finishing his secondary education enrolls in the Lisbon Medical School.

In 1974, Rui Sanches quit the third year of his degree in medicine to join Ar.Co - Centro de Arte e Comunicação Visual, where he did his basic training. Given the unstable post-revolution period in Portugal, the Ar.Co course was not able to continue. At the invitation of Pedro Vieira de Almeida, his teacher from the previous year he moved to Bragança (Trás-os-Montes) at the end of the summer of 1975 to work in the local GAT (technical Support Office).

In autumn 1976, he returned to Ar.Co and enrolled for the workshops of drawing and painting, under Manuel Costa Cabral and João Hogan respectively. Robin Fior, who was then lecturing in design at Ar.Co, encouraged him to go to London and make contact with several people to see if he could go and study there. He was accepted into the first year of the BA at Goldsmiths' College in May 1977 and left for London in September.

During the three-year course in London, in a system that was based on studio work, went through experimental phases that involved discovering contemporary art, whose echoes were only faintly heard in Portugal. He stopped painting during this period and instead adopted a range of means and languages. As from the middle of 1979, he started to produce installations that expressed his interest in questions such as time, process and history. He was an assiduous presence at the city's museums, especially the National Gallery of Art. While at Goldsmiths', he came into contact with many artists and art historians who would have an impact on his development, namely Michael Craig-Martin, Yehuda Safran, Richard Wentworth, Tony Carter and Sarat Maraj.

Pedro Cabrita Reis, whom he had met while visiting Lisbon, invited him to work on the magazine Arte-Opinião, published by the students' union from ESBAL (Lisbon Fine Arts School). His contribution was to send a series of "Letters from London" reporting on the main exhibitions held in the city.

His growing interest in American art led him to apply to do the Master of Fine Arts course at Yale University, where he was accepted. He set off for the United States in August 1980 with a scholarship from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. The atmosphere at the university was especially stimulating, not only due to the good working conditions, but also because of the contact between the different departments of the Art School (painting, sculpture, architecture, design, etc.) and between that school and the others at the university. The fact that New York was close by also allowed him to keep his finger on the pulse of the most important events taking place in the city's museums and galleries. During those two years, his work focused more firmly on sculpture and he started to use wood and its derivatives as

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the main material for his work. The figure of the guest artist, a fundamental of the educational system in American art schools, brought him into contact with artists such as Donald Judd, Vito Aconcci, George Trakas and Barry le Va. At the exhibition of work by final year students, he showed a sculpture based on Nicholas Poussin's The Holy Family on the Steps.

He returned to Lisbon in June 1982. During the academic year 1982-83, he started giving classes at Ar.Co and also taught at IADE as Espiga Pinto's assistant. He started working, using the basement in his parents' house as his studio, and writing a column on the plastic arts for the magazine Destaque. In 1983, he held his first exhibition in Lisbon (at Ar.Co) as part of an exhibition of work by instructors from the drawing department.

He held his first individual exhibition of drawings - "Windows, maps, mirrors" - in May 1984 at the Modern Art Gallery of the National Society of Fine Arts (SNBA). He met Pedro Calapez, who proposed that he should hold an exhibition at the Cooperativa Diferença. The cooperative's board accepted the the project and the exhibition - "Et in Arcadia Ego, etc." - consisting of six sculptures and reliefs, was held in October of that year.

He joined Ana Leon, José Pedro Croft, Pedro Calapez, Pedro Cabrita Reis and Rosa Carvalho to help prepare the exhibition "Archipelago", which was held in autumn 1985 at the SNBA's salon.

In 1986 he sold his first sculpture, when the Secretary of State for Culture purchased "Still Life I", one of the works exhibited at Diferença. José Sommer Ribeiro invited him to participate in the exhibition "Le XXème au Portugal", held in Brussels. At the end of 1986, he started working with the Galeria EMI-Valentim de Carvalho.

In June 1986, Manuel Reis invited him to design the decoration for Frágil, a pioneering bar in the Bairro Alto and the most important meeting point for those involved in the arts during the 80s. Working alongside Manuel Castro Caldas, he was involved in setting up the collection belonging to the Fundação Luso-Americana para o Desenvolvimento, where he was a consultant for three years. In the summer of 1986 he won an acquisition prize at the Vila Nova de Cerveira Biennial.

He was selected by José Sommer Ribeiro to form part of the Portuguese representation at the 19th São Paulo Biennial, which took place in October 1987. Other participants included Teresa Magalhães, Joaquim Bravo, Pedro Calapez and José Pedro Croft. He had a one-person exhibition at the Galeria Diferença called "Black and white". He set up his studio at Made-In, in Alenquer, a stone - processing factory purchased by Cristina Ataíde, José Pedro Croft, Antonio Campos Rosado and João Taborda.

He was invited to participate in the exhibition "Unicer Prize for new sculpture", held in 1988 at the Fundação de Serralves (Oporto), where he won first prize. In May 1989, he exhibited a series of

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drawings “To Marat” at the Loja de Desenho. At the end of the year he stopped working with the Galeria EMI-Valentim de Carvalho.

In 1990, he started working with Galeria Atlântica (Oporto), exhibiting “Some martyred saints and an un-Catholic figure”. He also exhibited “Saints and fragments” at the Loja de Desenho and organised a project, published in February 1990, for the magazine Artforum. He was invited by Jorge Castanho to exhibit his work alongside that of Pedro Calapez at the S. Francisco monastery in Beja. His installation, called “Chapel of the Tombs”, occupied the monastery’s small Gothic chapel. He also designed a limited edition carpet for a shop called Domo. He stopped working at Made-In and started using part of a warehouse in the Xabregas area of Lisbon.

In January 1991, he held the exhibition “Drawings” at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Modern Art Centre, which included a selection of drawings produced between 1982 and 1990. He also exhibited a group of sculptures and drawings in Rome, at the Galeria Stefania Miscetti. In addition, he started working with Galeria Cómicos and held his first exhibition there in late 1991. He produced “Annunciation”, specially designed for the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Ghent, as part of Europália 91. As part of the same event, he also participated in a series of Artists’ Books, organised by Alexandre Melo, where he worked with the poet Joaquim Manuel Magalhães on the book Sloten.

In May 1992, he held an exhibition of a group of sculptures and drawings entitled “Body Building” at the Loja da Atalaia (Lisbon), a joint production between the Loja da Atalaia and Galeria Cómicos. Some of the work from the “Body Building” series was later exhibited at Galeria Arco (Faro). He also participated in the “Silence to light” exhibition at the Watari Museum in Tokyo, producing a piece (made in Japan) especially for the museum.

He moved to his current studio. At Isabel Vila Nova’s suggestion, he exhibited his work in Paris alongside that of Pedro Calapez. This exhibition took place in March 1993 at the Chapelle de la Salpêtrière and consisted of two installations designed for two side chapels. He held his first exhibition at Galeria J. M. Gome Alves in Guimarães. In the summer, he held an exhibition in S. Paulo (Brazil) at Galeria Camargo Vilaça. He created his first sculpture for a public space, in Santo Tirso. Called “A space for Santo Tirso”, this was produced during the Santo Tirso sculpture symposium, a biannual event organised by Alberto Carneiro. He participated in the “Siege” exhibition at the Óbidos Biennial, where he produced an installation in one section of the house that had belonged to the painter Eduardo Malta. At the invitation of Artefacto 3, he designed a necklace and earrings as part of the “Illegitimate” series produced by that shop and workshop.

In January 1994, he exhibited three sculptures and a series of drawings at Galeria Cómicos, under the title “Bodies(and)furniture”. He produced a piece for the façade of the restaurant Zutzu, Lisbon. In July 1994, he started working as Vice-Director of CAMJAP (Jose de Azeredo Perdigão Modern Art Centre) at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

In 1995, he held his second exhibition at Galeria J. M. Gomes Alves in Guimarães. In September and

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October 1996, he exhibited a series of drawings entitled “Doubted shade” at Loja da Atalaia. In summer 1997, he produced a granite sculpture for the Inatel Palace in S. Pedro do Sul and held his third exhibition at Galeria J. M. Gomes Alves.

In May 1998, he completed a steel sculpture for the Olaias underground station. Another piece called “Mountain River” was also installed at that time at the Olival Dock in Lisbon, a commission as part of the Expo ‘98 Urban Art project. In September 1998, he left CAMJAP to devote himself full-time to working in his studio.

He restarted working at Ar.Co, as head of the department of sculpture. In September 1999, he simultaneously opened two exhibitions in Funchal: an anthology of drawings at the Museu de Arte Contemporânea and an exhibition of the drawings from the “To Marat” series at the Museu Francisco e Henrique Franco. These drawings, based on J.-L. David’s image of the death of the French revolutionary, were confronted with the work produced by the Salazar regime’s sculptor. In November 1999, he exhibited his work at Galeria Quadrado Azul (Oporto), with which he started to work.

In May 2000, he opened the exhibition “Sculpture+Drawing” at the Pavilhão Branco of the Museu da Cidade, Lisbon. The exhibition was curated by Maria Nobre Franco and supported by Galeria Quadrado Azul. At the invitation of the Sintra Museu de Arte Moderna, he selected some works from the Berardo collection for exhibition, including a sculpture and a large drawing that he produced, all under the title “One Look at the Berardo Collection”. Simultaneously, in June 2000, a small book on the project, the first volume of the Museum Notebooks collection, came out. In November 2000, he exhibits a series of drawings and collages at the J. M. Gomes Alves gallery.

The Gulbenkian Foundation organises a retrospective exhibition of his work that takes place in April 2001 at the Modern Art Centre. The exhibition, curated by Leonor Nazaré, is a survey of his work from 1983 to 2001. Invited by the Spanish curator Aurora Garcia takes part in “Dentro y Fuera”, an exhibition in Cáceres, where he shows a site-specific piece made for the cloister of a local palace.

In 2002 shows a group of drawings and three sculptures at Galeria Quadrado Azul, in Oporto. In July 2002, as part of the “Art at the cloister” series, organised by the Alberto Sampaio Museum in Guimarães, shows a series of sculptures made with this special context in mind. Following a suggestion made by Francisco Clode de Sousa, shows part of the Martyrs series of sculptures and drawings in dialogue with the magnificent Flemish paintings in the collection of the Museu de Arte Sacra in Funchal. A new sculpture, “M (Mártir ?)”, 2002, is shown alongside the works made in the 1980’s. Three of his sculptures are shown in dialogue with three paintings by Jorge Pinheiro as part of a series of artistic confrontations curated by João Pinharanda for the Centro de Arte de S. João da Madeira.

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In April 2003 is unveiled a sculpture made in Corten steel for a garden in Alcobendas, Spain. Integrated in “Art in Alcobendas”, this is one of ten sculptures commissioned from international artists by the city of Alcobendas.

In 2004, the Gulbenkian Cultural Centre in Paris, shows a series of recent drawings together with a sculpture from 2000, that is now part of the this Foundation’s collection. In the magnificent rooms of the Palace of Queluz shows “Lights”, a group of sculptures and drawings where light is used as a material, either factually or as representation. Receives the commission to make a site-specific sculpture for the Assembleia da República. Titled “Colonnade”, this piece will become a permanent feature of the new wing of the Portuguese Parliament.

During the year of 2005 shows new work at Évora-Arte in Évora and at Galeria Gomes Alves in Guimarães. Has an important one-person exhibition in Madrid at Galeria Fúcares, featuring a series of new sculptures in wood and metal and drawings done during the summer of 2005.

The Gulbenkian Foundation commissions a medal to commemorate its fifty years of existence that will be celebrated in July 2006.

During 2006 is invited to take part in a competition to design a trophy for the EDP prize for energetic efficiency. His proposal is chosen and the trophy is made in blown glass, bronze and wood. In June exhibits a series of drawings, titled “Solid and liquid” at the Museum of Porto Santo. Also in June shows a series of new pieces at Galeria Quadrado Azul in Porto.

In 2006 he organizes a travelling exhibition presenting a selection of drawings from different periods. The show, curated by Emília Ferreira, opens at Centro Cultural de Lagos in August 2006 and later travels to Centro Cultural de Cascais and later to the Galeria Municipal de Matosinhos.

In October, one of his sculptures from 1985, “Portrait of a Painter”, is included in the exhibition “The 80’s: a Topolgy”, at the Serralves Museum. Some of his sculptures are included in the exhibitions “3D, Sculpture from the Berardo Collection at the National Assembly”, at the Assembly and “50 Years of Portuguese Art” at the Gulbenkian Foundation.

In June 2007, Casa da Cerca organizes a large exhibition establishing a dialogue between his sculpture and drawings of the last five years. His work is shown at the opening exhibitions of the new Museum of Contemporary Art in Elvas and the Fundação António Prates at Ponte de Sôr. Takes part in the exhibition “Livre Circulação! Toll Free!” organized by the Serralves Museum in Faro.

Ends his collaboration with Galeria Quadrado Azul and begins working with Galeria Fernando Santos.

Works in the project “Museum” that involves studying the collection of the Museu Nacional de Arte

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Antiga and creating a large exhibition/installation where his work is shown alongside pieces from the Museum's collection. Some of the pieces shown in Lisbon were again shown in September 2008, at Galeria Fernando Santos in Porto. Some new sculptures and paintings on steel were also shown. During the summer takes part in the exhibition "Articulações", included in the event "Algarve", with an installation at the Santo António Monastery in Loulé. For this series of exhibition is awarded the prestigious AICA-MC Prize for 2008.

His sculpture "Annunciation", 1991, is included in the first major presentation of the collection of the Serralves Museum in Porto, scheduled to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Museum. A sculpture in plywood and mirror, comitionned for the Chapel of the Torre do Capitão in the island of Madeira is shown for the first time in Casa das Mudanças, Calheta, during the exhibition "A experiência da forma. Um olhar sobre o Museu de Arte Contemporânea".

The University of Algarve, where he has been teaching since 2006, asks him to make a sculpture to commemorate its 30 years. The sculpture is installed in the main reading room of the Central Library.

A large exhibition covering his production since the year 2000 takes place in Tavira at the Palácio da Galeria under the title "(in)forma". At the time of the celebrations of the 100 years of the Republic creates a new version of the bust of the Republic, at the bequest of the EDP Foundation. The sculpture is first shown in the exhibition "Povo-People" and is then presented in the main hall of the Lisbon Câmara Municipal until the end of 2010.

Rui Sanches was chosen, with seven other artists, to integrate the exhibition "Professores" that took place at the CAM of the Gulbenkian Foundation. A sample of the population of young Portuguese artists was asked to name the artists that had had a major impact in their growth and these eight artists were the ones that had more nominations.

In January 2011 a selection of his sculpture and drawings is shown at the Centro de Arte Contemporânea Graça Morais in Bragança. "Aqui e além" is the title given to an exhibition where a dialogue was established between his sculptures and the paintings of Michael Biberstein, that took place at the Pavilhão Branco of the Museu da Cidade in Lisbon. Some of these sculptures and some new work was shown at the Galeria Fernando Santos in Porto.

Shows for the first at the gallery Miguel Nabinho in Lisbon. The exhibition titled "Porta entreaberta", is made up of several sculptures and drawings, including several pieces where terracota was used for the first time as a final material. Some months later, at the shop tp, shows a number of small sculptures that also include this material and some others that were cast in bronze and issued in small editions.

Alda Galsterer invites him to produce a project for one of the spaces of the new gallery Belo –

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Galsterer.

For some time now Sanches has spent some months every year working in a new studio in Alentejo and as a result natural landscape has occupied a larger place in his work as can be seen in some of the sculptures and drawings done since 2010. Landscape was also a central subject in the series of paintings from 2012 and 2013 that were shown under the title “Suite Alentejana” at the gallery Fernando Santos.

Receives from the Câmara Municipal de Lisboa a commission to make a monument to Maria José Nogueira Pinto. The monument will be placed in the Ribeira das Naus an area of Lisbon that is undergoing a profound requalification.

Signs a contract with the Câmara Municipal de Vila Nova da Barquinha to make a sculpture to be sited in the island of the Almourol Castle. This commission is still waiting for the necessary funding to be raised from European sources.

A major show of drawings curated by João Pinharanda takes place at the Carmona e Costa Foundation. The exhibition includes about seventy drawings from different periods between 1982 and 2013.

The exhibition “Reflexos na água” took place at the gallery Appleton Square. Due to the characteristics of the space decides to present a variation on the installation shown at Plataforma Revolver in 2012. This time the piece had its own space becoming independent of the architecture. In the lower floor showed a series of diptychs, each with a photograph and a drawing in a symmetrical relationship. The following week opened at the Fundação Leal Rios an exhibition of sculptures and drawings that integrate the collection of this foundation. Aurora Garcia wrote a text for this occasion.

Halfway through 2015 showed at the gallery Miguel Nabinho a new series of sculptures under the title “Tensão superficial”. For the first time some of the pieces had an element in bronze cast from wet clay that had been heavily manipulated.

The Companhia de Teatro de Almada commissioned the visual identity for the Festival Internacional de Teatro de Almada, 2015. Created a collage that appeared in all the materials for the communication of the Festival. Included in the deal with the TdeA was a small exhibition at Casa da Cerca in Almada. In January 2016 showed the series of paintings named “Suite Alentejana” at the Fundação Portuguesa das Comunicações. For this occasion a catalogue was published with the reproduction of all the paintings in the series and a critical text by João Pinharanda.

The exhibition “Backstories”, with works by Mitsuo Miura, Pedro Calapez e Rui Sanches, took place at the Fundação Arpad Szenes-Vieira da Silva. The exhibition had as a reference the painting “Bibliothèque

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en feu” by Vieira da Silva. For this occasion created a large sculptural instalation and a series of 25 drawings based on the poem “The Wasteland” by T.S. Eliot. In June 2016, coinciding with the first Arco Lisboa, the collector Armando Martins, showed part of his collection, that integrates a sculpture dated 2005, at the Palácio do Correio-Mor, in Loures.