

For the tenth edition of the ongoing exhibition programme dedicated to nature, Abreu Advogados, in partnership with Carpe Diem Arte e Pesquisa, presents a series of works by the artist Domingos Loureiro specially made for this exhibition.

## Domingos Loureiro

Abreu Advogados, in partnership with Carpe Diem Arte e Pesquisa, is presenting a series of works by the artist Domingos Loureiro. Now in its tenth exhibition, the programme dedicated to nature as a theme presents a set of works specially made for this exhibition.

The artist has called this set of new works The Cathedrals. Made of hand-carved mdf, engraved stone or paper, they belong to Domingos Loureiro's most recent series of works, continuing the work he began in the early 2000s. They are panels where transformed nature is treated as the main theme, where the light of each image is torn by handmade gouge grooves. Eucalyptus and pine forests are organised as structures where repetition, symmetry and duplication refer to processes that are not natural, but industrialised. The artificial forests thus become anthropomorphisms, where human, concept and matter affirm and mould each other. Symmetry harks back to formulas used in medieval architecture, as well as in stained glass, where buildings are now temples of nature. In turn, the repetition of certain elements refers to temporality and the sense of singularity and community.

### About cathedrals

A cathedral is built by combining scientific knowledge and spiritual belief, where architecture, engineering, sculpture, painting and many other areas of knowledge are organised to respond to the desire to encounter the sacred. Cathedrals, mosques, synagogues, mandirs or any other type of temple are physical marks of the combination of science, technology and the transcendent. Not always understood, the relationship between the concrete world of science and technology and the intangible world of faith shows a long history of coexistence in the building of spaces to respond to the divine and sacred. Every temple, every place of worship emerges from the combination of concrete knowledge with the feeling of the immaterial.

In turn, the natural and nature seem to be the body of a sacred presence where chance and the wild are manifested as the supreme form. Nature is the home of the wild, of what frightens and fascinates scientists and religious alike. It is the physical body of an extraordinary manifestation of the sacred, an earthly paradise with a celestial dimension.

The Temple replaced Nature as the manifestation of the sacred. Not intentionally, nor as an attempt to destroy it, but not by avoiding it. Trees hundreds of years old were felled to build church roofs, floors and altars. Mountains and rivers were gutted to harvest the gold that brightened the spaces. Lives were swallowed up to make the foundations, the stones and the stained glass windows possible. - How marvellous it would be if our devotion were directed towards nature with the same devout commitment to building temples!

Nature, the tree, the plant, each animal, each human being, should be treated as part of this temple, or as a temple in itself.

Devotion is a driving force capable of moving empires. Temples have been built for the sacred. Temples have been destroyed for the sacred. For the sacred they sowed. Through the sacred they have reaped. It's a complex cycle in which science and technology find arguments and cunning to produce solutions for the functions that are established. A cathedral is a marvel of technology and science. So is a gun. A cathedral is a symbol of unshakeable faith. So is a flag. Through faith, salvation is fought for. Life is taken by faith.

The Age of Cathedrals is objectively known as the Middle Ages, what many would describe as the Dark Ages or the time when ideology took precedence over reason. The Middle Ages, a period marked by upheaval and the strong presence of moral values derived from sacred books, contrasted with the expansive civilisation of the Roman Empire, devoted to technological advances, urban societies and the establishment of a transversal culture, which originated in Rome. However, the technology used in the construction of fortresses, canals, medieval cities and, above all, cathedrals, does not allow us to accept that the Middle Ages were a retrograde period. It was during this period that today's geography began to take shape. It was during this period that some of the most elegant, complex and extraordinary constructions were built.

The balance between the rational and symbolic dimensions is, in turn, the most complex element to achieve, since the tension and excess that each can mean quickly promotes the destruction of this balance. This point of support is too ephemeral. It is vulnerable to the simplest things: ambition, ignorance, the desire for possession, subjugation, greed, excessive devotion, success, wealth and poverty.

We can therefore say that we are living in a time of transition, a period of tension towards imbalance, where reason and ideology are confronting and arming each other. A period in which we are witnessing the growth of selfishness, where irrational ideologies hold sway in the balance of arguments. A time when fear grips every thought and every subject. We are on a path with a single direction, which will invariably materialise, whether we like it or not. Without nostalgia or complexes, we realise that the world's geography and the structure

we've been living in is moving towards a different place, a place where reason is reinforced by ideology, often assumed to be scientific or logical, where the symbolic dimension objectively reaches levels similar to those that occurred at other times in history, such as the Middle Ages.

That's why this series of works is about cathedrals, about those temples erected on the basis of the symbolic, in the search for an experience with the divine and the sacred. But in the desire to build other temples, the Temple of Nature, the Temple of the Body, the Temple of Life. These are cathedrals that seek to understand the simple things that deserve our devotion and contemplation. They are cathedrals of Nature, wilderness that is converted to human order. They are cathedrals of salvation at a time of climate change, moral and military conflicts, loss of a sense of community, of emptiness, in which transformations depend on civilisation cooperating with the natural territory. Let's build cathedrals that share the values that the Sacred offers us, the experiences that the Transcendent provides us with, the values of salvation that can empower us. Let's build cathedrals in which the sciences, technologies and beliefs participate in a coherent way to find solutions that are as extraordinarily beautiful as each of the temples that have been built for the purposes of our faith. May Nature and Humanity be the cathedrals of this new era, this era in which we all have to fight for values of humanism and balance for life and peace.

**Domingos Loureiro**