

## FAÇA AQUI

The right word cannot be an adjective. Rather, it should be a noun. However, an adverb would do, depending on the context. Precisely. That is, according to English watches (or would them be Swiss watches worn by the English?). The time of those which are not slow or fast – but always on time.

We enter the exhibition *Faça aqui* [Do it here] by Ana Luiza Dias Batista just when we see the core of the lock turning. We cannot see the key, but only the gears moving. Something like an everlasting opening, as if the act of turning the key was not an action that only makes sense when we need to cross a barrier and enter a room. As if we could say: “Yesterday I spent the afternoon turning the keys, I lost track of time”.

As we also say in other situations, such as when we are playing: we keep fitting the parts together, matching equals, making sequences, moving parts, dice, cards or colored blocks. What for? For them to go away. For them to be aligned. For the sides to be equal. The game comes to an end when the same-color pieces land on the square of arrival, when no more pieces are left on the table, on the board, in the hands. Or when there is only one left, like in the peg solitaire that the artist builds directly on the walls of the exhibition space, using only fittings like anchors and screws, relating the construction of the “work of art” to that very specific type of activity – the game – or its sibling, the pastime.

The safe/magic cube, another piece on display, also refers to a game. Again, one of those games one plays alone. The square sides of the safe correspond to those of Rubik’s cube and have been cut into three equal parts, horizontally and vertically. The lines that draw these nine plates on each side imply their independence from the set and suggest they can be moved separately. One, just one rotation of the central block would make the safe/cube fit perfectly. This movement marks the end of the game, the opening of the safe, the turning of the key that opens the door. A click. A different sound, which would break the uniform, homogenous, cyclical passing of time, which always starts over. Time that is reiterated in the audio installation, in the entrance hall of the exhibition – which resembles the beginning of a new computer game or a

passage (of suspense, mystery) of a cartoon soundtrack and signals the viewer's entry into the field: "It's on".

But the exhibition has already begun, out of the exhibition space, on the sidewalk outside Ateliê397 where the artist embeds keys in cement, imitating a locksmith floor. The key mat invades the inside floor, along the corridor that accompanies the house, definitely abandoning there any alleged role of advertising signs. The keys that open the door to the space are among those that were spread on the sidewalk: visible but indecipherable and, anyway, inaccessible. The fact that they cannot be handled – they are stuck to the floor with cement – contrasts with the name of the exhibition, *Faça aqui*, which would invite us to some kind of action.

In the exhibition, the call to action is followed by the impossibility, uselessness, lack of need for action: the keys are stuck on the outside and yet the core rotates inside. The games are shown, but not to be played – even if they were, this action is merely reiterative, a move already prescribed. Something of this sort also happens with the giant keys that have been collected by the artist in many of the city's locksmiths. Inside the exhibition room, they no longer serve as signs advertising services. Their arrangement – hung on the wall, aligned – suggests that we should look at them as new keys waiting to be engraved. By placing these giant keys or keys of "a brand new car won on a TV show" in the real situation of a locksmith, in the context of everyday life, the effect it produces is something among the bizarre (the grotesque nature of some poor representations of real things), the comic (effect of increasing or decreasing too much the size of an object, altering it and spoiling its role) and a children's game (where objects are gigantic to facilitate fittings and handling). These three modes of distortion that appear in *Faça aqui* hinder the immediate understanding of the works. Such noise created by the artist extends contact with the work beyond a moment, requiring adjustments from the viewer (size, position, location), which keep the line that connects the object-work to the subject-viewer tight, creating this extended present.

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