

Sean Kelly Gallery
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IRAN DO ESPÍRITO SANTO

SWITCH

MARCH 21 - APRIL 28, 2012 OPENING RECEPTION: TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 6-8PM

Photo by Mauro Restiffe



Sean Kelly Gallery is delighted to announce *SWITCH*, an exhibition of new work by Brazilian artist Iran do Espírito Santo. **The opening of the exhibition will take place on Tuesday, March 20, 2012 from 6pm until 8pm.** The artist will be present.

Three new bodies of work are included in the exhibition, all of which extend Espírito Santo's investigation into the connections between light, form and space. Early employment at a photo laboratory creating white-to-black test strips on photographic paper instilled in the artist a fascination with the transformative properties of light as registered upon a grey scale. The breadth and scope of that ongoing interest is evidenced by the works in *SWITCH*.

The first gallery contains a new hand-painted, site-specific wall installation, seen for the first time in New York. The installation is part of a series that was originally debuted at the Mercosul Biennial in Brazil in 2009. Beginning on a background surface of medium grey, "windows" on two walls of the room are created by employing a series of gradations, one made of white and the other black. The precision and technical rigor with which they are painted, and with which Espírito Santo has been associated from the outset of his career, makes it possible for the eye to perceive a sense of depth to the wall paintings, though in fact they are flat, two-dimensional surfaces. The visual push and pull of what appear to be receding and protruding shapes on the wall create a vibrating, dynamic surface.

The second gallery contains an installation of the artist's recent *Globe* sculptures. Made from the purest solid white marble available, these sculptures take their shapes from glass light coverings that Espírito Santo has been collecting from around the world for the past few years. While some of the fixtures are vintage examples discovered at flea markets, other designs are still being manufactured. The sculptures mimic the shape and size of the light coverings exactly, but by making them in marble, their original intent is rendered obsolete, thus transforming an industrial found object into an iconic, minimalist form.

The main gallery contains a series of reflective "folded" glass sculptures, in which one section of glass is leaned against the wall, abutted against another section placed onto the floor; as such, the glass appears to be bent in half. The architectural glass used for these works was manufactured in Brazil and comprises a layer of reflective coating sandwiched between two layers of clear glass, which allows the surface of the work to be simultaneously partially transparent and reflective. While the viewer can see through the glass to the floor and wall behind it, they can also see the reflection of the ceiling. The "mirrors" offer fragmented visual insertions into the space that are a direct response to the surrounding architecture.

Espírito Santo has exhibited extensively in museums worldwide; his works are included in the collections of many prominent international museums including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin. His work was featured in the 2007 Venice Biennale and in a touring retrospective that included stops at MAXXI, Museo Nazionale delle arti del XXI Secolo, Rome; the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; and the Pinacoteca do Estado in São Paulo. Espírito Santo's work was also included in the 28th São Paulo Biennale in 2008, and the Mercosul Biennial in Porto Alegre in 2009. In 2011, Espírito Santo was the subject of a major exhibition featuring site-specific wall works at the Illingworth Kerr Gallery in Calgary.

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