

RUI TOSCANO

He studied painting and sculpture at Ar.Co and at the Fine Arts School of Porto. He had his first exhibitions in 1993 while still a student. At the same time he carried out his work as a visual artist, he sought out other creative undertakings, namely music and video jamming, and he became a member of several bands (such as the Tone Scientists) that had great impact on the domestic cultural scene. The author has revealed a great capacity in terms of exploring the most disparate of media, from drawing to multimedia installations, thus also revealing a creative power - in the classical sense of the word - albeit channelled through an obvious post-modern attitude. Before anything else, Rui Toscano is someone with a very clear understanding of contemporary experience and its related technologies. At the core of such an understanding lies the notion of a contemplation state that dispenses with the formerly related notion of interiority, and outright dismisses the individual. Consequently, attention from the part of the spectator no longer needs to imply any sort of intention. In works such as *Infinity* (2001), a video-landscape of the city of São Paulo projected on a cutout of the word INFINITY, *Rio 09 May 2001* (2002), yet another video-landscape, this time around of Rio de Janeiro, *My Bloody Valentine* (2000) and *The accelerating Collision of Future and Past in the Post-Modern Era* (1997), Rui Toscano shows this new contemplation state as something with an alienating effect. This is the symptom of a technological sublime that was imposed on the individual in the true sense of the word, and it is in that sense that Rui Toscano becomes actually the most romantic of artists, given the fact he acknowledges his own romantic urges within his original radicalism (as in *One hundred over the rainbow*, 2000), precisely at a time when romanticism can only emerge as a sort of nostalgic projection of oneself. In *T* (1998), a self-portrait as a letter of the alphabet, or in *Black Painting-Perfect Lovers* (1997), the very notion of an "I" - an instance of introversion - externalises itself as an automatism. In the end of *The Foyer Affair* (2001), in which Rui Toscano appears as a film noir gangster, for example, he smokes a cigarette and fades to blue.