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Press release

The project we are presenting for the section *Back to the Future* of *Artissima XYZ* is composed of two works by Julião Sarmento in dialogue: *Cazador en su puesto, cazador al acecho* (2020) and *Azul da Prússia* (1987).

The first one is a table-sculpture that belongs to the last series of works, *On Goya*, created by the artist before he unfortunately passed away. The idea for the series came about during the artist's period of selfconfinement caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, in response to the general feeling of confusion and estrangement, and as an exercise in dialogue between monochrome painting (which has invested his work for several years now) and Goya's powerful drawings. The work traces a line of contact between two historical and geographical realities whose genealogies and sensibilities intertwine on several occasions, reflecting on the present in light of the past and laying the foundation for a brighter and more conscious future.

The second one, *Azul da Prússia*, is a painting dedicated to the myth of Minotaur, the monstrous creature that inhabits the Knossos' labyrinth, once again juxtaposing legendary, typological figures and textural monochromes. The choice of representing the labyrinth, symbolizing the mystery and circularity of time, offers an occasion to reflect on the nature of time, on its density and viscosity.

Both in *Azul da Prússia* and *Cazador en su puesto, cazador al acecho* the artist holds together heterogeneous elements and techniques, making the linearity of narration – and therefore of time – implode. This gives to the confrontation between the periods of the two works, the late Eighties and last year of pandemic, even more meaning and perspectives, suggesting alternative and creative ways to conceive our future and its relation with past and present times both on a personal and socio-historical scale. The dialogue is also interesting from a chromatic point of view, the bright tones of yellow and light blue of the table-sculpture, whose vividness is underlined by the presence of a living cactus taking part of the work, create a balanced tension with the intense and textured blue of the painting.