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## EDGAR MARTINS – *THIS IS NOT A HOUSE*

9 May – 30 June 2012

Private view: Tuesday 8 May 2012, 18.30 – 20.30

At the Wapping Project Bankside, London SE1, United-Kingdom

### Press Release



Edgar Martins, untitled, from the series *This is not a House*, (Connecticut, NE), 2008

*This is not a House*, Edgar Martins' most talked about body of work, is showing at The Wapping Project Bankside this late-spring, amidst a successful international tour (with stops at the Centre Culturel Calouste Gulbenkian, Paris; The New Art Gallery, Walsall, PM Gallery & House, London; Ffotogallery, Wales; The Wapping Project, London) during which thousands of visitors wondered at Martins' skilful mastery of the photographic medium.

Winter 2008, Edgar Martins is commissioned by The New York Times Magazine to explore the United States' subprime mortgage industry collapse and its impact on the real estate market. In a study that goes beyond pure formal investigation and factual documentation, Martins, a photographic artist, decides to tackle the project from the outset and to use it to explore new models for conceptualizing a hotly contemporary phenomenon and landscape, outside of the photojournalistic canon. After all, fiction is often the most eloquent and fecund representation of reality, and so his series is structured as 'a photographic intervention into a crisis, a crisis that is only in part economic'. Martins sets out to photograph abandoned homes, golf courses, ski resorts, hotels and other building projects in sixteen locations, across six federal states, choosing carefully researched locations in their widest latitude, to expose the full extent and impact of this crisis.

But when the work was finally published in the summer of 2009, it became the focus of a heated debate (now a reference discussion among artistic and photographic circles) as the result of Martins' decision to digitally reshape some of the images. Indeed, what was for some, a riveting polemic about deception and misrepresentation, was to others the re-surfacing of a tiresome, age-old, ontological, epistemological and moral chasm between Art and journalism. The series has since reached a wide audience in the form of a book (published by Dewi Lewis, 2011) and found a home in galleries and museums around the world, as vehicle to consider and address some of the longest-lasting questions around truth and verisimilitude in Photography.

## About Edgar Martins

Born in 1977 in Évora, Edgar Martins grew up in Macau (China). He moved to the UK, in 1996, where he completed an MA in Photography and Fine Art at the Royal College of Art. Recent exhibitions include the 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, Museum of Electricity, Lisbon, PS1 MoMA (New York), the Photographers' Gallery (London), Belém Cultural Centre (Lisbon), Museu do Oriente (Lisbon), Centro Cultural Hélio Oiticica (Rio de Janeiro). Martins' first book *'Black Holes & Other Inconsistencies'* was awarded the Thames & Hudson, the RCA Society Book Art Prize and The Jerwood Photography Award in 2003. Martins was the recipient of the inaugural New York Photography Award (Fine Art Category) in May 2008, the prestigious BES Photo Prize (Portugal) in 2009 and the (Sony) World Photography Award (landscape category). In 2010, he was awarded 1<sup>st</sup> Prize at the International Photography Awards (Fine Art Abstract Category). His work can be found in numerous public, private and corporate collections, including the Victoria and Albert Museum (London), the National Media Museum (Bradford, UK), the Dallas Museum of Art (Dallas, USA), the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon) and the Carmignac Foundation (Paris).

Edgar Martins works and lives in the UK.

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## Notes to the Editors

The Wapping Project Bankside is a gallery focusing on lens-based media founded by the Director of The Wapping Project, Jules Wright. Artists represented include Elina Brotherus, Susan Meiselas, Lillian Bassman, Deborah Turbeville, Annabel Elgar, Peter Marlow, Edgar Martins, Stephen J. Morgan, Paolo Roversi and Jeffrey Stockbridge.

Edgar Martins joined the gallery in 2011. His fine art work is available for purchase through the gallery and includes the photographs in *This is Not a House* and *The Time Machine*.

The gallery is open Tue-Sat from 10am to 6pm and Monday by appointment.

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For press information and images please contact Eva Langret, Gallery Manager:

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