

WHERE WE'RE AT. WHERE WE COULD BE

"LA CAIXA" COLLECTION
CALL FOR CURATORS

EXHIBITION
WHERE WE'RE AT. WHERE WE COULD BE

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WHERE WE'RE AT. WHERE WE COULD BE

DIANA GUIJARRO

#1

The excuse of an event or gathering of a group of people seems to always mark the beginning of a "something" but beyond the mere physical concentration of the bodies and the activities that may result from that lies an idea associated with deeper, broader meanings that we do not really know whether they come from social contamination from the existing relationship between the various groups, or if on the other hand they are the result of the very setting in which they take place.

The title of this project is inspired by words Lucy R. Lippard used in one of her texts,[1] in which she wonders about some artistic practices which in the future could be able to take us off to a different collective vision of place. *Where We're At. Where We Could Be* is a research project and curatorial experiment that proposes a review of the way we connect with our surroundings, our context and place, understanding those concepts as spaces with transitory definitions and bearers in essence of a long chain of personal and cultural memories.

It is about places that need the implicit existence of an observer that can give meaning and connect interrelated stories, the ones that talk to us about gender issues and power relationships, about transformed geography and economy, or ecology seen as a longed-for home, an idea that only survives now as a memory. So this proposal looks into the relationships that tend to show up behind gestures, relationships hidden beneath a ritualised consciousness and which, following a series of systematic guidelines and repetitions, question us so as to give a new meaning to the idea of collective ethics.

The works which feature in this exhibition explore these concepts and lead us to reflect on the possibility of interactive, process art which, as Lippard mentioned, could take us closer to a new social articulation, whereby the artistic would give back to us the idea of future by building an art that is fully accessible, that challenges, gets involved, is concerned about and takes into account the opinion of the public for whom it is made.[2]

Perhaps, and as she predicted, any new kind of artistic practice should take place, partially at least, away from art, although it is difficult and the territory is fraught with danger.

1 Lucy R. Lippard, "Looking Around: Where We Are, Where We Could Be", in Suzanne Lacy (ed.), *Mapping the Terrain. New Genre Public Art*, Bay Press, Seattle, 1995.

2 Lucy R. Lippard, *op. cit.*

#5

BERLIN, 1973

In late September 1973, a large number of people started driving from different parts of Berlin towards a huge, empty field, a piece of land located near the wall that divided the eastern and western sections of the city. It was a weekend and the event was called Berlin-Fieber.

Allan Kaprow[3] explained that, as with other happenings organised by Wolf Vostell, the atmosphere was charged with a sense of commotion and spectacle. Let's imagine the armed border guards watching over the participants from their tower and the small gardens surrounding the field which had grown up thanks to the local residents' work, and the few ruins left after the buildings had been bombed. There, amid this somewhat strange setting, the participants were asked to be part of a reading programme which would be subjected to the fast execution of some guidelines which, developed without any dramatisation, would have to happen during and after the event in question, including the consequence of the memory. All the participants ended up becoming first volunteers in a new quasi-ritual.

In this kind of symbolic pact the political and personal references and languages intensified and began to become part of an experimental work in which the current world, the one that mattered, was the context in which it was all taking place. But this story also has other characters, other readings and other ways of seeing this particular ritual. Consider for a moment the people walking through those gardens who watched what was happening and then would go on their way, and the guards in their towers who were looking curiously from their high view point or the local residents who heard the noise that was being made there.

3 In his work *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, University of California Press, 2003, Allan Kaprow devotes the chapter "Nontheatrical Performance" to this event (pp. 163-165) and also mentions other activities, such as his *7 Kinds of Sympathy*, an exercise we will make an ironic reference to.

#2

"[...] A ritual provides a frame. The marked off time or place alerts a special kind of expectancy, just as the oft-repeated 'Once upon a time' creates a mood receptive to fantastic tales."

—Mary Douglas[4]

It could be that we have not stopped to think about the real differences between places. Really, there is no reason we should, but when we go through them or occupy them in a transitory way we are making a specific use of those spaces and that is inevitably linked to a character that we have given to them historically or culturally. Classifying the kinds of places would be a task that now we cannot undertake (nor is it the purpose of this text), but it is however the perfect excuse to approach one particular kind of place: the place of ritual.

The first thing we should do is to put to one side the conception of religion and beliefs usually associated with the word *ritual* and think of it as a secular element linked to a series of ceremonies or guidelines, which, if followed in a particular way, give the individual and the group a specific experience and meaning within a community.

Therefore, a place of ritual would be the kind of space designed to stage something and could be perfectly used alone, as what matters is to strengthen participation in a structured experience that may include specific gestures, recommended routes, repetition of words, and so on. In addition, and here's the interesting part, individuals can use it whether they are aware or not of what they are doing and, based on that, react or not to those symbolic messages.

Now let's take this definition and transfer it to an art exhibition, a place with a certain rhythm if we consider the sequential route followed and how we can play with the layout of objects and texts, and how all this affects the way we move through the space and in all that is actually happening.[5] It could be said that we are consciously plunging ourselves into a disguised, slightly ritualised content where the exhibition, which is not at all innocent, controls what is on show and turns into a vehicle for defining stances, identities and social realities that are being confirmed in this ritual,[6] such as, for example, what we see and what we do not see, how it is seen, how much text accompanies the pieces, who does what and whether this formula designed within certain well-defined limits has cracks through which one could get in.

4 Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger. An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, Routledge, Abingdon, 2002.

5 Martí Manen talks about what happens in an exhibition and making sense of it in his work *La historia y las cosas. Arte y cadáveres*, which also inspired us to talk about our experience in museums and its rituals. Consulted online at https://www.academia.edu/35516706/La_historia_y_las_cosas._Arte_y_cad%C3%A1veres

6 Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals. Inside Public Art Museums*, Routledge, Abingdon, 1995.

The truth is that there is a difference between going through individually or as part of a group, and this affects our predisposition to absorb that ritual, since a group, often subconsciously or involuntarily, turns into a meeting where joint action dilutes the responsibility for individual actions, which makes us talk of an act which "is neither my act nor yours, but something that happens by virtue of the relation between us."[7] This would be what allows us in the context of an exhibition to open gaps and tighten situations which, although still happening within the place of ritual, are the ones that open the door towards other possibilities that become much more interesting.

7 Judith Butler had this thought in her work *Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2015.



MIKE KELLEY. *THE TRAJECTORY OF LIGHT IN PLATO'S CAVE (FROM PLATO'S CAVE, ROTHKO'S CHAPEL, LINCOLN'S PROFILE)*, 1985-1996

#3

In the middle of 2017 I coordinated some activities in a contemporary art museum. The workshops had to link up with the museum's permanent collection but also with the temporary exhibitions that were taking place there and, most importantly, they had to be coordinated with the "ritualistic" functions that prevailed there. Obviously there was a series of rules and regulations as is the custom in places like this: elements that on no account should be touched, the need to talk quietly, the existence of a specific route to follow to move through the space and, finally, the restrictions assigned to a temporary framework for all of this. But, furthermore, there were other ways of making what happened inside work, and this framework, with those ritual habits, was what made those who arrived from outside become aware, to different degrees, of the limits that this ceremony implied.

I will give an example: the ritual of mobile sculptures. There were different sculptural pieces in this space belonging to the category we know as kinetic art, some of which could be activated by our own movement or by our body positioning in the space, but others needed a little nudge to get them going. The visitors were not allowed to touch the objects, so if someone was interested in seeing them work they had to call a member of staff, and this is where the ritual began.

The visitors would wait patiently for the arrival of this person who was going to get the piece moving and, in this setting, time slowed down in a rather strange way. There were times when if they had to wait too long some people would give up, although as a general rule quite the opposite would happen and other people coming into the room would join a group waiting in the space, often without knowing who or what they were waiting for. It was then that the member of staff from the museum would appear and greet the assembled group, then take out of their pocket a pair of spotless white gloves. There, amid a deafening silence, they would put them on and placing one arm behind their back used the other to set all the sculptures in motion, one after the other, while the still silent group followed the procedure or processional structure that this person was leading.

Occasionally someone would ask them to set off one of the pieces again, faster if possible, and the ceremony would change a bit though not much, because what the people really wanted, what we all wanted, was to be able to push one of these sculptures, just for a moment. But that was not possible, at least not in this context. As a result of this, and experimenting with other activities and in other art spaces, I realised that when we arranged these visits or workshops we usually started off from some set guidelines, which implied that there was always a concept or a common thread from which we were going to set off.

Usually the group would receive some instructions on which we worked and all this was pursuing an open objective or result. But it was more interesting when, gradually, the guidelines started to fade or they would even play at losing track and turning the idea around, the one it was sure we were going to look into further.

#7

VOSTELL'S CARS IN BERLIN-FIEBER

The sound of car boots closing 750 times certainly would not have the same impact or symbolism on the guards in their towers, the people strolling through the gardens or the local residents, those other participants, but observing it or taking part without any expectation or information also gives an opportunity to take part in a social context, even though such internalisation is not shared, which means that, independently of what we are – casual passers-by, intentional observers or active participants – the ritual[8] or awareness device can mean a change in thinking and perception of our direct experience of the events.

It sometimes happens that the historic moments that surround us demand too much of our present[9] and it becomes necessary to distance ourselves to let time go by. It is the only way of understanding that many of our actions nearly always fit in with something more transitory. Certainly in the case of that weekend in Berlin we are missing a small part of the history and we will probably never know if those who were just observing ever questioned for a moment the structure of the world surrounding them, the same world that others, at the same time, were busy activating. We all know: a huge empty field with gardens on the edges and separated by a huge wall.

8 Carol Duncan, *op. cit.*

9 Joana Masó and Lúa Coderch talk about this idea in the lecture the latter gave as part of the Aula oberta #16 *Saber, hacer, comprender* in the CCCB. Consulted online at https://www.cccb.org/es/multimedia/videos/lua-coderch-aula-oberta-16/228638

#4

'So, now I'm not going to do what supposedly I came to do in this place?'
'Well no.'

Bit by bit as the group were working on some activity, I noticed that there tended to be some people who parted from the guidelines, who skipped the order of things and invented new formulas to hack the activity, and it was this way of making it more their own that enabled us to move towards other places where we could move more freely.

But to get a better idea of the context we need other elements as part of the equation: the people who were not actively taking part in what was happening there and yet, despite that, were in the same place and shared the space, the time, the rhythms and even the views, although not the same gestures. They found themselves in this part of the definition of the place of ritual where the subjects can respond or not to some guidelines or symbolic messages, and this particular "view of the context" was what really was catching, as they turned into one-off characters in the ceremony without even wanting to: going in and out of the space, wandering around there as if it was nothing to do with them, appearing in the room and checking out the situation before finally running out as fast as they could, literally.

At that point everything is put on hold, in liminality, a kind of temporary sensation[10] where receptivity of the situations that had happened depended on our capacity to distance ourselves from those other practical concerns that rule our day-to-day existence, and on how we normally develop our social relations based on this, because ritual implies putting all these rules to one side.

Dealing with some corporeal activities implies that we are more receptive subjects to what we see, live together and perceive, as all of them can respond to different meanings depending on who is undertaking them and also on the degree of connections with the context, in such a way that in the best case possible it brings about a redefinition of responsibilities when we notice that, in some way or other, we are part of something, albeit a temporary and passing something.[11]

10 In his anthropological work, Victor Turner refers to this concept as "a kind of consciousness outside of or betwixt-and-between the normal, day-to-day cultural and social states and processes of getting and spending." Quoted in Carol Duncan, *op. cit.*

11 Judith Butler, *op. cit.*

#8

In *Purity and Danger* Mary Douglas says that people will automatically reject phenomena which prove to be culturally contradictory or ambiguous. This insight coming from the field of anthropology could also apply to the sphere of the exhibition since, as Douglas would have it, perceiving is somewhat similar to following a pre-fabricated external impression to be received by our understanding and so fit in with our previous scheme of things. These are the suggestions that we accumulate with time and those that best fit in to our collective representations ending up shaping our mental framework and also certain conservative prejudices. But all this can be changed, everything can be revised and readjusted in nearly any system.

However, diverging from the path or way that has been set out can make one giddy because it forces us to face situations that we cannot control and might have unpredictable consequences. But questioning ourselves about certain normalisations allows us to be more aware of our present and connects us with forms of coexistence which are more plural and make us see that situations are often shared.

A place where there could be room for exchange, a situation in which it were possible to share certain levels of similarity under the premise that it could be the reason that makes us conquer new territories is in itself extremely stimulating. Obviously all this is very strange; producing a different way of thinking makes life more difficult for us, but to do things in another way involves us in something more plural, multiple and open to other intensities for transformation.[12]

12 Mårten Spångberg, *What is the Meaning of Contemporary?* http://martenspangberg.se/sites/martenspangberg.org/files/Spangberg_contemporary.pdf

#6

"Make maps, not photos or drawings."

—Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari[13]

History is an element which we can classify and periodise in very different ways: a chronological criteria can be established and produce different interpretations as in carefully delimited areas in time, or else focus on ways and means of production in order to obtain information linked to economic, political and social conditions.

However, history tends to be lineal, or at least that is what we were generally told, endowing it with its own characteristics when it came to be studied and therefore interpreted later.

But if society which constitutes the source material for the study of history is transformed, if identities are reformulated, difficulties overlap in ever more diluted layers and if their social practices get reconfigured should we not start to research it in other ways?

The question is not a new one and Michel Foucault in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* had already described a rather innovative way of examining history and how it was possible to establish other links with the present. Instead of following the trail of historical ideas vertically, which would lead us to their roots and origins in a search that would trace a continuous historic path from the past to the future, the author suggests a discontinuous historiography leaning horizontally and so revealing the link between knowledge and power.

This method of assigning new ways of discourse is an element that particularly interests us in this exhibition as it can influence us in our different interpretations of the works. It allows us to refer to all those difficulties that involve the actual subject and so analyse all those implicit codes that exist in our artistic, cultural and social practices.

13 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

#10

THE POST

The exhibition is a medium linked to contemporaneity and experimentation, which means being able to explore in depth the implications, relations of power and ethical positioning by means of a tool linked to performativity, understood as *that which is happening.*

In this way, an interesting revision is constructed around those truths that are given as evident and the bodies convert into a discursive mass that requires relevance starting from another external appearance which, through its method of analysis in a place and a determinate order, we can observe what can or cannot be said according to which period.

This is the point where what we understand as an exhibition can advance one step more and move closer to that concept which Mårten Spångberg described as "the post"[14] and in which one can turn into an active figure for one's past, present and future, into an element which as, he points out, makes us talk of this "from a new set of circumstances, situations and environments and allow it to gain new kinds of agency that resonate with its being here and now today and into de future,"[15] in other words what one is being at that moment.

14 Mårten Spångberg, "Post-dance, An Advocacy", in Mette Edvardsen, Mårten Spångberg and Danjel Andersson (Eds.), *Post-dance*, MDT, 2017.

15 Mårten Spångberg, *op. cit.*, p. 352.

#9

RHIZOME

Transforming the exhibition into an active capacity makes me think of the idea of rhizome, in the space of an experiment of an artistic nature and the construction of critical knowledge relating to this approach inspired by a botanical phenomenon in which organisation of the elements is not determined by hierarchical subordination but any element – and when we talk of element we could talk about bodies – can affect or influence any other. Therefore this is about a place that can and should grow to overreach itself and so mutate into the multiplicity of its messages, allowing itself to be influenced and polluted by other theories and sequences which could be undoubtedly productive and would allow us to work on this exhibition following this "plan of consistency of multiplicities," which Deleuze and Guattari mention,[16] on the understanding that the readings are subject to lines of segmentation and vanishing points in order to create new alternating current breaks and deterritorialisation, and, of course, design maps likely to be altered according to needs or performances, seeing as we are in the presence of a productive and experimental model. With this we will achieve a reconsideration of artistic practice in order to demonstrate that the conventional structure of these disciplines does not reflect the structure of nature but is the result of the distribution of power and authority in the social body.

Therefore, a rhizomatical organisation is a viable method to exert resistance against any hierarchical model, an active answer against the established socio-economic power.

16 In their work *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari talk of this concept linked to the rhizome in the point devoted to the multiplicity principle; in it they explain that the rhizome is made from broken directions and growing dimensions.

#11

So reading Spångberg and his interesting concept of what is “the post” applied to dance, let’s take his words and apply them to the demonstrative, to what it is meant to be, to see what we can do to make the exhibition inseparable from a context. A something or anything which has to be capable of producing its own coherent elements, be critical of the socio-economic system which envelops it and reclaim its autonomy and, with all that, train the world, us, so we can occupy it and claim it based on other terms. That sounds good to start thinking about the post-exhibition, don’t you agree?

#12

Where We're At. Where We Could Be consists of an ensemble of works endeavouring to shape a global scene where it is possible to observe with intensity the concepts that have guided the development of this project. In this way, the exhibition transforms into a kind of landscape, a moment we inhabit occasionally and converts into a medium, inviting us to enter into another symbolic structure in which all of us participate.

"Saber, a cada instante, que en el gesto que hacemos
hay un arma escondida, saber que estamos vivos
aún. Y que la vida
todavía es posible, por lo visto."

[Knowing, at every moment, that in the gesture we make
lies a hidden weapon, knowing that were are still
alive. And that life
remains possible. Or so it would seem.]

—Jaime Gil de Biedma[17]

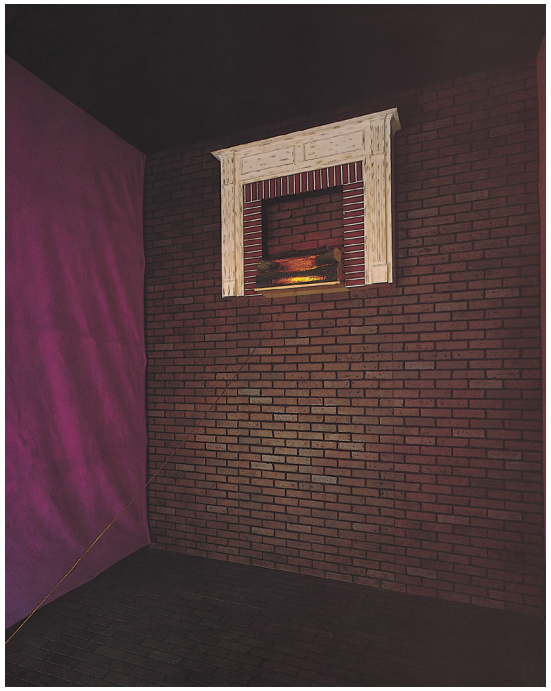
17 Jaime Gil de Biedma, "Por lo visto" (fragment), in *Compañeros de viaje*, 1959. Taken from *Las personas del verbo*, Galaxia Gutenberg, 2012.

#13

It is not mere chance that the first work to welcome us is **Mike Kelley**'s *The Trajectory of Light in Plato's Cave (from Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile)* because the idea is to physically enter something else. This invitation, which is also without doubt a provocation, welcomes us by questioning if all space, in particular an exhibition space, can co-exist in terms of performativity and if this narrative, which our body will generate, can fuse with other elements and other subjects in order to widen our links. Obviously one should be prepared, returning to the cave requires us to give up a certain amount of comfort: we will be asked to crawl, to change our physical posture as a first necessary concession if we wish to discover what could supposedly be the other truth. This is the backdrop in which social ideals and political truths become falsified and allow us to extend this vision to all that is theatrical around us, a material and an essence in the shapes that envelop us to show us within this great space – subject to the simulation of things – that all we assimilate and which fits in with our western scheme of things are ideas that we can obviously destroy.

Kelley uses a philosopher, an artist and a politician (Plato, Rothko and Lincoln) to represent these ideals and uses them to dismantle and demystify a system which has been and still is upheld by a certain way of thinking, culture and social order which, in spite of being inspired by enlightened knowledge and values, only shows up the enormous contradictions transmitted to western society in as much as, if we give it some thought, they do not bring any other possibilities of action but only offer a mask of outward appearance which perpetuates obsolete values and shows how fragile we are in the face of the unpredictability of events. So let us go in with irony and above all the predisposition of altering the order of our own bodies in order to start doubting all things pre-established in these spaces.

MIKE KELLEY. *THE TRAJECTORY OF LIGHT IN PLATO'S CAVE (FROM PLATO'S CAVE, ROTHKO'S CHAPEL, LINCOLN'S PROFILE)*, 1985-1996







MIKE KELLEY. *THE TRAJECTORY OF LIGHT IN PLATO'S CAVE (FROM PLATO'S CAVE, ROTHKO'S CHAPEL, LINCOLN'S PROFILE)*, 1985-1996

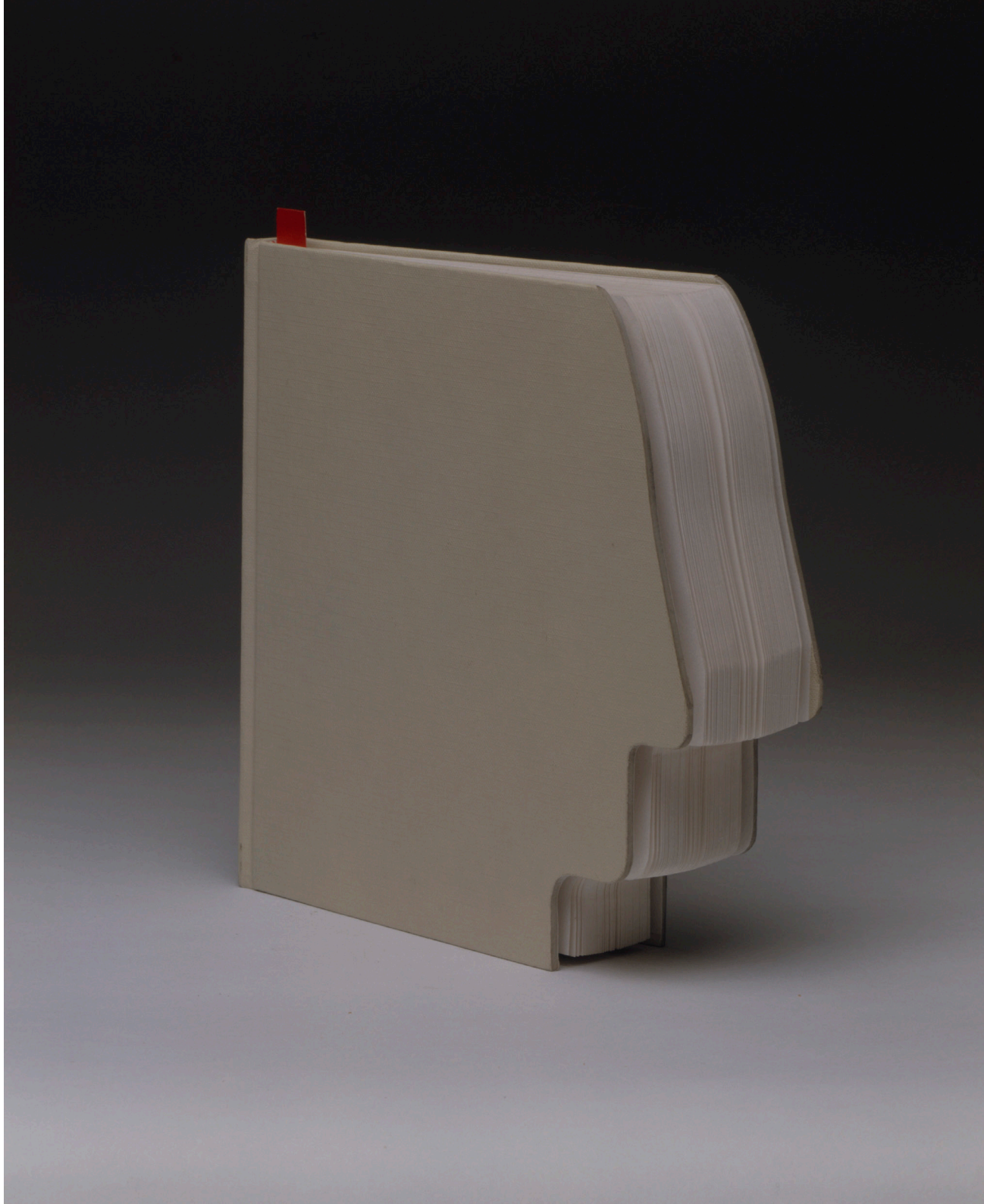
#17

We have talked about the links, about these intangible relationships that can become established between pieces and also between our bodies, with the idea of messages crossing over when we find ourselves in this place where something is staged in front of the breathing or gestures of others, whether we stop or move on, and we wonder if it is any use to question all this.

#14

New connections appear in the space, like talking hands, an isolated profile in the space or some eyes that are not looking. This is how we approach **Joan Brossa**'s visual poetry and object poems, this concept that the artist himself did not know what to call and which in some ways connected with magic, with another way of communicating. Four lithographs – *Careta* [Mask], *Blasfèmia* [Blasphemy] and two more entitled *Poema visual* [Visual Poem], along with the object poem *Perfil* [Profile] – build up another kind of symphony for the eyes and semantics, a kind of comic that narrates quite different stories depending on who wants to tell them and which, if we aim to connect them and combine them, push us towards finding new meanings that are hidden behind another intention. Poems that enclose a more complex reality, only ever visible through the small hints highlighted by the moments that come out in the shared contexts, between us as subjects and between the various works that make up this exhibition. As Brossa himself said, the question lies in amplifying views and concepts, and in using other vehicles to tell, question and perhaps show resistance based on new ways of experimenting: "I think poets today should widen their field, come out of books and show themselves in all the media society provides them and which can be used as unusual vehicles, injecting them with ethical content that society does not provide them with. There the experiences of visual poetry can get going which it seems to me turns into the experimental poetry of our time. The search for new terrain between the visual and the semantic."[18]

18 Joan Brossa (1987) in Alfonso López Gradolí (Ed.), *Poesía Experimental Española (Antología incompleta)*, Calambur, Madrid, 2012.



JOAN BROSSA. *PERFIL*, 1989 (CONCEPTION: 1988)

JOAN BROSSA. *BLASFÈMIA*, 1989 / *CARETA*, 1988

JOAN BROSSA. *POEMA VISUAL*, 1988 / *POEMA VISUAL*, 1988

#15

In order to do a search for new terrain we should understand in a more transversal and horizontal way how history and popular culture are constructed by tracking down gestures, signs and behaviour that are carriers of qualities that enable us to construct another historiography, a terrain yet to be defined. *Los trabajadores* [The Workers] by **Pedro G. Romero** is an audio-visual piece in which, through dancer Israel Galván's movements, we are invited to activate our mind and body and so abandon any form of being static in the exhibition. Gestures transform into a medium through which experiences and memories can be shared, in a connection with the historic and traditional testimonial elements that visit common boundaries between contemporary art and flamenco, to go deeper into all and every part of the body: elbow, finger, foot, arm, palm, leg, eye, mouth, etc., understood as the work space and the context for the experiment; in other words, as instruments and measurements that allude to the body but also to an architecture and a place that is a reflection of what is organic. A new construction of corporeal patterns based on almost mathematical relationships and in which, through the choreography, reference can be made to a code that talks to us about what is essential, about the construction as a starting point to cross the world, liberating ourselves from traditional standards and reinventing them so as to learn a new lesson in which what is important are the new connections and identities that can be clarified.













#16

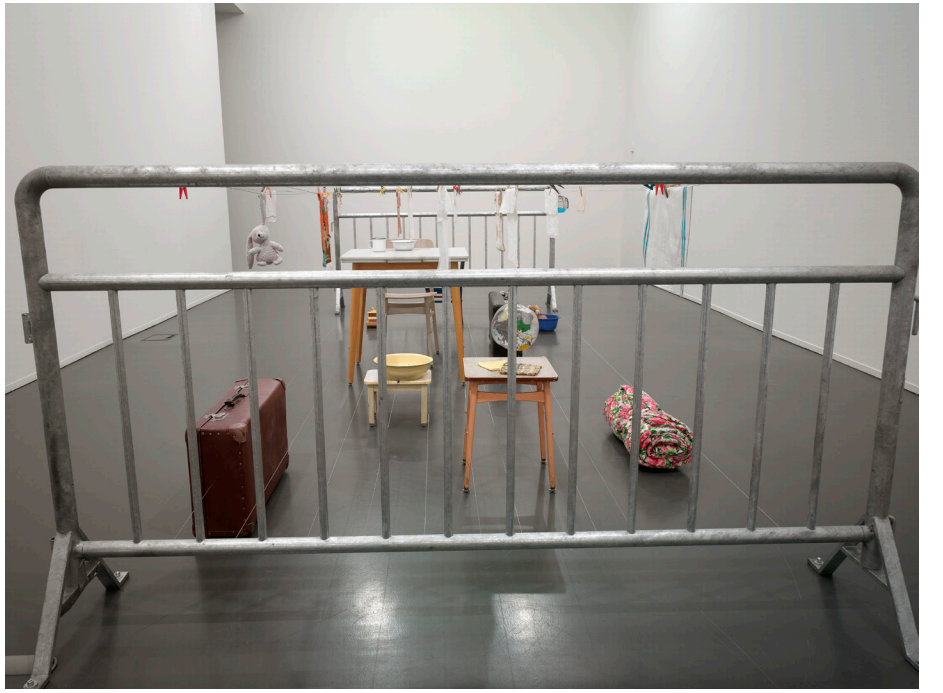
As a social, geographic, cultural, genre identity that again unites with what is spatial and economic in a piece that takes the object into another dimension of order and movement, *Mobile Home* by **Mona Hatoum** reflects on boundaries, exile and our eternal interconnection through an element strangely united to domestic things, playing with objects with which to be seen or not seen, where the most transcendental is capable of linking up with the most prosaic in a kind of metaphor of what could be our present time. Hatoum uses a resource in which the commonplace and familiar evolve into a setting that captures by means of an installation where body, spaces and frontiers move towards other places. In this work we can see this "spatial and performative turn"[19] where the place we occupy is no longer an empty container but is in constant movement and, being somewhat porous, can mix with what is autobiographical, bodily, geographic and the maps that talk to us about another kind of exile, marked by the intensity that these displacements involve.

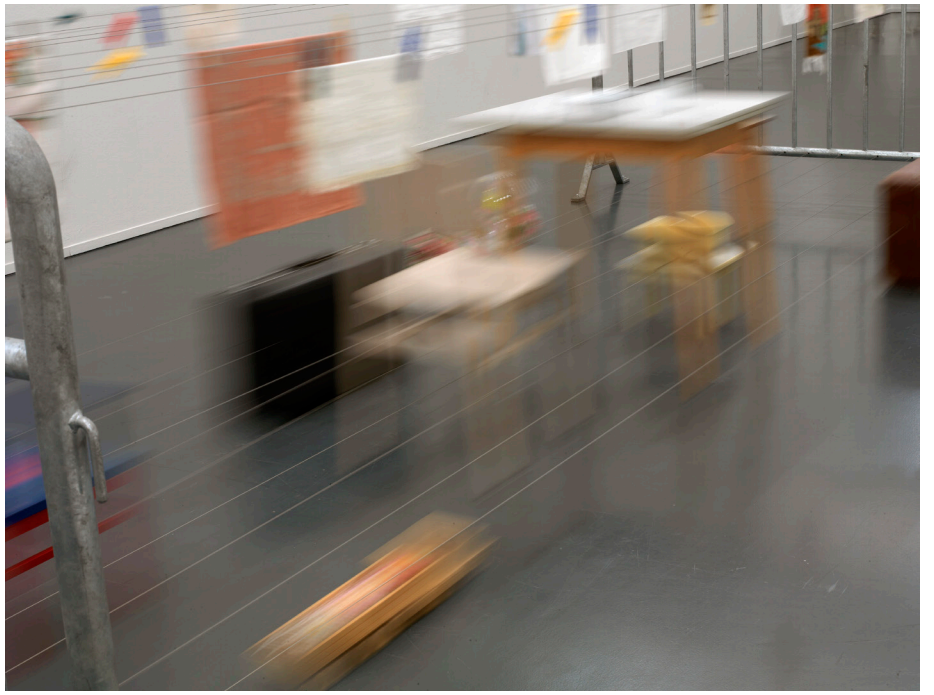
19 Toni Simó Mulet. *Cartografías del afecto en la obra de Mona Hatoum*, Contranarrativas. Consulted online at https://www.um.es/artlab/index.php/politicas-espaciales-en-la-obra-de-mona-hatoum/

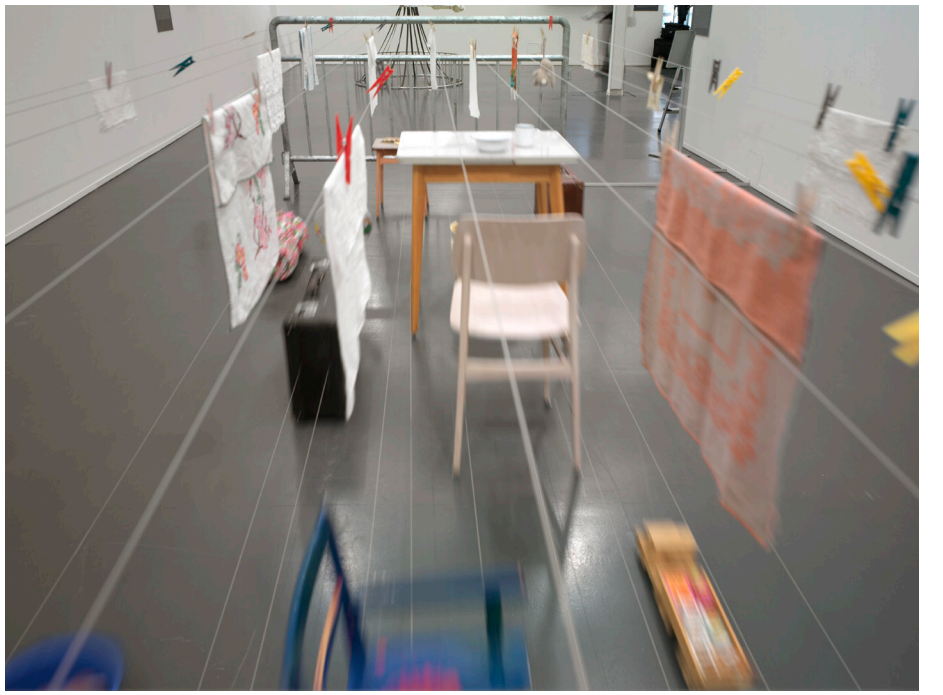


MONA HATOUM. *MOBILE HOME*, 2005









MONA HATOUM, *MOBILE HOME*, 2005

#18

Movements and disruptive readings of the spaces mixed with the rhythms and nexuses that we find in the layers of meanings that lie more or less camouflaged in cultural institutions. Some spatial and patriarchal narratives that emerge from the museum-body dichotomy, from its architectural forms, ways of functioning and mechanisms of power that lead us to think about civilisation's rituals, and which **Andrea Fraser** highlights in her work *Little Frank and his Carp*. A performance in situ which, through an unauthorised activity at the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, lets the artist use her body as a critical tool to question contemporary art and cultural institutions that have anchored themselves in legitimate discourses behind an aura of neo-liberalism. A metaphor in which the element itself (the audio guide) transforms into the provider of sexually suggestive anecdotes, subversive instructions and timings in museum surroundings, a performance which illustrates choreographically and critically the contradictions and complexity that surround our relationship with these spaces.



ANDREA FRASER. *LITTLE FRANK AND HIS CARP*, 2001

#21

Let's talk then about places and works that go further, beyond buildings, that go through walls to open up to establishing an experimental critique of the social mechanisms that limit us. In the case of *Inmensa* (from the Latin *in mensa*, i.e. on the table) by **Cildo Meireles** we find ourselves looking at a sculpture which has at the same time another version, a twin soul in another space: a public park in Brumadinho, in the region of Belo Horizonte in Brazil. These relationships open up the perception of art and allow for immersive, empirical installations where the relationship with the scale of the surrounding landscape, with the human body and with the dimensions of each one of them affects the experience of those observing it. It is therefore a minimalist aesthetic that in its very own title evokes a huge range of meanings and external references and does not only speak to us about size but also about what working with domestic objects represents, like the table and chairs, which change their usual proportion and context, playing around with the opposite logic (the smallest elements support the largest) so as to say that notions of hierarchy and balance in the political, economic and social order can be changed.



CILDO MEIRELES. *INMENSA*, 1982

#19

This requires an effort though, and this invitation can be found in the work of **Martin Kippenberger** *Love Me and Leave Me and Let Me Be Lonely* where it is the spectator who has to make an effort to rid themselves of their codes of artistic interpretation, descendants of a long historical and social tradition, and by so doing confront once more the work, for it is now their turn to find the clues. In this way the spectator is faced with a new responsibility, and has to activate with their presence other ways of understanding a hybrid piece of work which is both sculpture and painting, jumbling everything up to then put established rules into a new order and to tell us there are equally valid ways to see and confront the artistic element, something which will depend on the individual reality or the context of each moment. It is for this reason that this piece linked to allegory, to the object and the sign, is so interesting because it has the capacity to make us nervous as Susan Sontag would say and, at the same time, as Jutta Koether points out, "[Kippenberger] sows words and provokes conflicts."[20]

20 Jutta Koether quoted in Jorge Luis Marzo's text on Martin Kippenberger's piece in the "la Caixa" collection. Consulted online at https://coleccion.caixaforum.com/en/obra/-/obra/ACF0691/Amameyabandonameydejameestarsolo

MARTIN KIPPENBERGER. *LOVE ME AND LEAVE ME AND LET ME BE LONELY*, 1989



#25

Everything is moving, the stones are moving, you realise that the landscape is something totally different.

#20

This confusion also comes about when we confront the visual excess that surrounds us, since our world is constructed into patterns which are not neutral. Within a framework of contemporary coexistence our capacity of resistance tends to get neutralised and this is where **Cindy Sherman** with her *Untitled No. 85* leads us to a concoction of images loaded with narrative feeling, giving a documentary shape to staged feminine identities in which portrait and above all self-portrait tell us about social and historical processes in which the construction of identity is always put into question. This implies coming up with something "meaningful" and which reassesses history using a deforming format approaching the grotesque, a gestural device which we do not understand at first sight, which does not fit in with our usual scheme of things and which uses photography as a strategy loaded with a strong, symbolic presence. A medium telling us about hierarchy and socio-historical constructions that need a revision of their orders.

CINDY SHERMAN. *UNTITLED No. 85*, 1981



#22

Different equilibriums of power which in **Txomin Badiola**'s *Quién, cuándo o cómo (desconocidos)* [Who, When and How (Unknown)] materialise in a multiplicity of elements, materials and contents through this installation sculpture generating confusing accounts. Wood alternates with other elements such as rope, a chair or a table, accompanied by four photographs to put together a scene in which objects are not framed within any explanatory order but it is up to us to give it some kind of sense. This interpretation will never be the same and will be subject to indeterminate meanings, with different ramifications and will always be different, indicating to us that having reached a certain point everything will be able to be connected because languages are hybrid.



TXOMIN BADIOLA: *QUIÉN, CUÁNDO O CÓMO (DESCONOCIDOS)*, 1985

#23

Just as they are in the case of **Alex Reynolds**' works. If we observe them closely we will see that we can travel through them in different narrative patterns. In this way the artist generates a cinematic language which transforms into a museographic element in which the rhythm can take a more fragmentary focus. These are works which, if we immerse ourselves in the exploration of their codes, they will return us to an interchangeable position, one in which we will not know whether we are spectators or protagonists and in which stability gives way to other alternative perceptions of the stories. *Spinario* makes us into involuntary participants in a story, an account which turns out to be the result of the interpretations of a text told by a young woman and belonging to a programme of therapy activities. An exchange of gestures and sensations which invite us to draw our own conclusion as our attitude regarding these works is without any doubt important.

In this way the exhibition transmutes into a gestural ecosystem, a haven in which the assembly of external appearances permits that, at certain moments, statements emerge and others do not. A medium with which to reclaim a new *there* understood as a place where things begin.









ALEX REYNOLDS. *SPINARIO*, 2012

#24

MA LIGNE DE CHANCE

It would be good to think about art works and artistic practices as if they were gestures that point to places that did not exist before. A kind of fate line that guides us towards a territory which we would never have been able to reach without the knowledge of these new forms.

But this implies asking ourselves if we will be able to question the structures by which art exists in this world. A world of fluid hierarchies and open opportunities, where maps tell us where we are and where we are heading.

We draw in the earth with our fingers without realising that these are not barriers but rather lines that join up distant points in space.

"*Moi j'ai une toute p'tite ligne de chance*
Si peu de chance dans la main
Ça *me fait peur des lendemains*."[21]

21 These words are part of the chorus of the song *Ma ligne de chance* that Anna Karina sang in the film *Pierrot le Fou* by Jean-Luc Godard.

LIST OF WORKS

TXOMIN BADIOLA

Quién, cuándo o cómo (desconocidos)
[Who, When and How (Unknown)]

1995
Wood construction, electrical equipment, rope, chair, table and four colour photographs
Main structure: 241 x 130 x 130 cm
Photographs: 128 x 126 cm each
"la Caixa" Contemporary Art Collection

JOAN BROSSA

Blasfèmia
[Blasphemy]

1989
Lithography on Guarro paper
50 x 38 cm
"la Caixa" Contemporary Art Collection

Careta
[Mask]

1988
Lithography on Guarro paper
50 x 38 cm
"la Caixa" Contemporary Art Collection

Poema visual
[Visual Poem]

1988
Lithography on Guarro paper
50 x 38 cm
"la Caixa" Contemporary Art Collection

Poema visual
[Visual Poem]

1988
Lithography on Guarro paper
50 x 38 cm
"la Caixa" Contemporary Art Collection

Perfil
[Profile]

1989. Conception: 1988
Paper and cardboard on wood
24 x 29.8 x 29.8 cm
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium. Joan Brossa Fund. Long-term loan of Fundació Joan Brossa

ANDREA FRASER

Little Frank and his Carp

2001
Single-channel video, colour, sound, 6 min
Variable dimensions
MACBA Collection. MACBA Foundation. Work purchased thanks to Taller de la Fundació

MONA HATOUM

Mobile Home

2005
A range of objects and engine
119 x 220 x 600 cm
"la Caixa" Contemporary Art Collection

MIKE KELLEY

The Trajectory of Light in Plato's Cave (from Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile)

1985-1996
A range of materials
382 x 327 x 1,413 cm
"la Caixa" Contemporary
Art Collection

MARTIN KIPPENBERGER

Love Me and Leave Me and Let Me Be Lonely

1989
Wood, wire, Gober wallpaper, papier mâché and mirror
183 x 76.5 x 80 cm
"la Caixa" Contemporary
Art Collection

CILDO MEIRELES

Inmensa
[from the Latin *in mensa*]

1982
Sapele wood
100 x 125 x 163 cm
MACBA Collection. MACBA Foundation. Long-term loan of Brondesbury Holdings Ltd.

ALEX REYNOLDS

Spinario

2012
16 mm film transferred to video
Colour, sound
24 min 36 s, played in a loop
Courtesy of the artist and the Galería Marta Cervera

PEDRO G. ROMERO

Los trabajadores
[The Workers]

2012
Single-channel video
17 min 40 s
Variable dimensions
"la Caixa" Contemporary
Art Collection

CINDY SHERMAN

Untitled No. 85

1981
Colour photograph
62.5 x 126 cm
"la Caixa" Contemporary
Art Collection

BIOGRAPHY

DIANA GUIJARRO

Diana Guijarro is an independent curator and art critic. Her research work has focused on studying exhibition spaces, in which she has analysed the conceptualisation of discourses and different museographic elements, seen as an area full of resources. During the 2018-2019 season she curated the cycle *Totalidad e infinito. Economía(s) de la transferencia en otro(s) tiempo(s) para el arte* and coordinated the programme of activities *Ritmos, cuerpos, ciclos y gestos* at the Centre del Carme Cultura Contemporània, as part of the 365 VLC call for projects by the Consorci de Museus de la Comunitat Valenciana (CMCV). In 2017-2018 she developed *Here Together Now*, a programme of cultural mediation as part of CMCV's Tangent call for projects, which proposed various educational activities to get different understandings of the collection of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Alicante (MACA). Her most recent projects include the exhibitions *Whatever o lo que sea* in the Almudín in Valencia; *Un sujeto construido en el punto de intersección de la multiplicidad de posiciones de sujeto*, at the Casal Solleric in Palma; *Narrativas de andar por casa*, in Madrid's C Arte C, and *Display-me*, at Las Cigarreras Centro Cultural in Alicante. She has also run several workshops related to multi-platform storytelling and experimental museography in a university environment. She is currently preparing an exhibition *La inconsistencia de lo visible* for Las Cigarreras Centro Cultural.


"la Caixa"