

Galeria Estrany-de la Mota

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WAA. Belvedere

Opening: Wednesday, March 8th 2011, 7.30 p.m.

Exhibition: 08.06.2011 – 15.07.2011. Monday to Friday from 10.30 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.

Artists: Gabriel Acevedo Velarde, Curro Claret, Javier Codesal, Patricia Esquivias, Jaume Ferrete, Cyprien Gaillard, Ana García-Pineda, Mario García Torres, Félix González-Torres, Rubén Grilo, Jeleton, Jonathan Millán, Bruce Nauman, Miguel Noguera, Job Ramos, Tere Recarens, Alex Reynolds, Francesc Ruiz, Daniel Steegmann, Ricardo Trigo, WeAreQQ

Curators: Bestué/Vives

In *Belvedere*, we have chosen works by a number of artists that have formed part of our trajectory as referents, as milestones in our journey as well as companions. The objective of putting together all of them in the same space is no other than demonstrate the complexity and at the same time the enjoyment of artistic creation. They are not all there are but none is dispensable for the attempt to create an analogy between the different types of works is understood only as a chain, where the connection between a link and the next can be given only at a given point. Also, the union of the first and last element of this string describes a stable circle that condenses much of our interests.

These points of beginning and end, are two works and two artists who help us frame the entire exhibition: *Violent Incident* (1986) of Bruce Nauman and *Last Night* (1993) of Félix González-Torres.

A good day Nauman decides that art was anything that happens in his studio. Since then he realizes a series of actions where he puts in direct relation his body with the immediate environment. Little by little the artist is refining this immediateness and begins to use constructions and scenes more and more fictitious that, as if it were a boomerang, end up by dismantling the instability of the real. This is the case of *Violent Incident* in which he presents a situation with a couple that prepares to have dinner. What was trying to be a romantic evening turns out to be truncated in a moment, when the man withdraws the chair from the woman right in the moment in which she is about to sit down, falling down to the floor. The "little" practical joke ends in a tragedy that will finish with both dead persons. This and other works were useful for us to show how to call into question the possibility of constructing situations that, from an unexpected turn, end up by illustrating the potency of the absurdity.

Félix González-Torres leaves in the exhibition hall a mountain of candy or a pylon of posters, which the spectator can take away. There are jobs that have their origins in the formulation of a biographical and intimate moment that happens to be shared with all. The work is dispersed, as well as the feeling of lost hidden in it, sometimes only pointed by the title. In the same way, he manages to move us just by placing in front of us a simple pair of synchronized clocks. He activates emotionally industrial objects, which send us away from the exhibition context and allow imagining new narrative routes. And really what we are interested in short of *Last Night* (1993), is its capacity to convey private realms with common elements.

From the union of both intellectual overtures it is possible to draw a whole series of practices that are not understood without the presence of the other. They play dialectically with seduction and hermetism, the affection and the refusal, empathy and wonder. They link the daily thing and the personal thing as a strategy but also out of discursive necessity. Even though revisiting conceptual practices the approach is still narrative and when one speaks about form or abstraction, this can't be understood detached from a body, of its own humanization. They are works that flee from a unique or stable materialization, of an object that when it exists alludes to other places and spaces. It is a question, in brief, of a life invention.

Works on display

Gabriel Acevedo Velarde (Lima, 1976) lives surrounded by his mental objects, anything he thinks has a place in reality, making up new forms of representation (like in a psychotropic journey). In the chosen piece, *Cones Runaways* (2009), we see a series of pen drawings —presented among his negatives— questioning the validity of the document itself. These belong to a work about a complex scientific theory on mating of bats and the occupation of space (*Dancing Cones*, 2009). Acevedo proposes a place where couples of indefinite dimensional shapes —geometric and dynamic— are representing human-like movements. The notion of “I” and the “other” becomes a subjective and extra-sensory coordination. The social body is understood as a fluid in which we find small reactions that affect immediately to what is next to it.

Curro Claret (Barcelona, 1968) is an atypical industrial designer. His projects are usually overlays, intermediate objects that allow us to reuse packages. Some of his known objects are the wall mounts for transport boxes used as shelves or a fruit-bowl made with the net of an orange package. This time we present a series of *Taburetes* (2011) made with a metal plate designed for an easy construction reusing any piece of wood or furniture. For a while this design used in workshops made in Fundació Arrels, an organization working for the full recovery of people experiencing social exclusion.

Javier Codesal (Sabiñánigo-Huesca, 1958) approaches to the ritual of existence. He does it from the unavoidable commonplace that joins us, experiencing a lack in life, in a standing moment when we guess death. He builds stories in which, through its own memory, *El bosque respira* (2003), or through close people’s memory, *Viaje de novios* (2005), aims to complete an iconography of situations, expectations and gestures. In the work shown in this exhibition, *O milagre da carne* (1994), we find a rural context, with a ranching family doing the cattle’s sacrifice. A symbolic world —sometimes surreal— described by relations of different characters. Codesal’s work captures both the underlying family horror and the delicate tension of an scene lived a thousand times.

Patricia Esquivias (Caracas, 1979) addresses to the viewer through explanations in direct style. In her videos, she put the camera in her view position, showing to the audience a slideshow that naturally follows her speech. She presents a comprehensive analysis of reality, linking seemingly opposite elements. In *Folklore II* (2008) manages to juxtapose Philip II with Julio Iglesias, and finds similarities between the two figures and periods —through the culture of Sun. However, *Folklore III* (2010), the work that concerns us, consists in a story drawn by Esquivias about two remote locations that share the same name: Finisterre. We marvel at how she presents himself as an honest filter of reality: “I am what I know” and her ability to communicate simply ideas that keep us far from topics.

In his latest work Jaume Ferrer (Barcelona, 1980) explores the potentialities of sound and speech as a narrative vehicle. He is an Internet man. He uses diverse materials in order to subvert and even unlearn the ways of listening and understanding. Its resources range from “tautology” to “song”, through “greguería”, all being part of the popular repertoire. Using his voice he go through many different ranges: Assembles political speeches and media sentences, melodies and guttural noises, cuddling and provocative statements, comments on the sidelines and technical notes, decisions and self-referential notes. All included in this new production work, *Target rosa* (2011), presented with an image of a hand without a thumb, without an “ok”. Everything will go wrong...

The work of Cyprien Gaillard (Paris, 1980) is tinged with nostalgia, reconstructing places designed by men, inhabited very different from how were planned. In this encounter between what is imagined and an avatar of events is where the maximum violence is generated. It happens in videos like *Desniansky Raion* (2007), a Russian hooligans fight, in *Cities of Gold and Mirrors* (2009), with touristy doing the drinking contest in Cancun, and the video shown here, *The Lake Arches* (2007). In it there is a couple of friends willing to bathe in a lake, with Ricardo Bofill’s postmodern architecture as a backdrop. After jumping into the water one of them comes out with a broken nose and a face full of blood due to the shallow lake. The action took place while these utopian build-ings were colliding with present.

Ana García Pineda (Sabadell, 1984) seeks the impossible task of explaining the world. Although her narrating style seems affable, we cannot entirely trust on her ingenuity, because it can take us, in a moment, from sublime to horror. Thus, in the work presented, *Historia del calamar* (2008), the artist draws a journey through a multitude of objects, characters or situations related through the form. At the junction of a symbol with the following, she traces absurd and surreal analogies suspended in a cosmic order. Her life experience crosses her entire practice. That means that a break may be followed by a musical composition, an anecdote can become a conference or a horror movie can express her love to Catalan people —like in *Tots estimem Catalunya* (2009).

In recent years, Mario García Torres (Mexico, 1975) has conducted a series of works that revisit a number of artists and conceptual practices of the seventies, placing his works in context. The artist seeks a retrospective active look, avoiding melancholy. In his approaching he works like a detective kind to the scene; he collects samples and interrogate witnesses. He did so in *Lo que pasa en Halifax se queda en Halifax (en 36 slides)* (2004–2006) bringing together students who participated in a Robert Barry's work that consisted on keeping a secret. In this work, *Carta abierta a Dr. Atl* (2005) he is submerged in some political disquisitions, proposing a fictional dialogue with the Mexican painter Gerardo Murillo around the imminent placement of a Guggenheim museum on the outskirts of Guadalajara and how can it change the landscape.

Rubén Grilo (Vigo, 1981) presents us the ubiquity as a feature of art with the work *Here, There, Hole, Through. A Restaurant Menu Take-away is Lying on My Kitchen Floor* (2010). As the title says, the menu is hanged in the gallery wall and in the floor of his kitchen at the same time. Most of Rubén Grilo works propose absolute and closed systems. The artist, sometimes based on the analysis of others, generates these systems, as in *Talking to Warja...* (2010) in which he reassembles the visual grammar included in the illustrations of the writer's stories. In such systems you can find results, decision-making and clues to decode the whole machine, everything at the same level. Grilo escapes from scientific method and suggests more suitable ways; even private life moments crystallize into art objects.

In this exhibition Jeleton, Jesus Arpal (Bilbao, 1972) and Gela Alcántara (Murcia, 1975), present two works. *La Conferencia que comença com una missa i acaba com unatempesta* (2011) was first introduced in Bulegoa z / b, Bilbao, and It's written to be read aloud as a dissolution of the artists statement. Both the "conference" and the drawing *Ulisses encadenat assisteix a un concert* (2011), are an example of the peculiar work of the artists who sometimes mix their personal references with literature or academic with low culture. Their ultimate goal seems to establish a new symbolic value to what happens in reality, converting some characters and events into allegories and signs that would be imperceptible without its new status.

Since its inception Jonathan Millán (Barcelona, 1976) has established a problematic relationship with contemporary art issues, always looking for vanishing lines of finished works. This problem has to do with the question of how far an idea can have value — an idea is something powerful because of its own physical impossibility. He presents two recent works: *Actrices si fueran monos* (2011) and *Películas convertidas en montañas* (2011). In both cases the artist use the tension between the concept and its translation to reality, between the plaster and the 3D drawing. He uses a common collective imagination, connecting with the audience and transmitting them his unease and helplessness.

Miguel Noguera (Gran Canaria, 1979) once said that he "was afraid of being swallowed by a machine," and that's why he refuses a physical level and opts for ideas, supporting his work in texts, drawings, or more frequently in speeches through what he calls the "ultrashow." Those are complex narrative systems where different ideas are being communicated in zigzag, deconstructing a reality whilst challenging it. When he works with drawing and/or text he uses formats such as book (*Hervir un oso* in collaboration with Jonathan Millán, and *Ultraviolencia*), blog or any surface capable of supporting an idea. For the exhibition the artist take a chance presenting *Marioneta* (2011). In this work he represents a textual idea physically and builds an object, related to a text in the wall.

Job Ramos (Olot, 1974) joins fragments of low culture, artistic influences and biographical experiences creating a complex narrative system that questions the veracity of those elements. The works presented in this exhibition are a pulse against the idealization of nature, as a place of spirituality and authenticity, by inquiring about the elements of this vision and the relationship between them. *La hamaca* (2008), playing a spiritual guide called Kundalini and chakras, which is reciting a set of instructions with a new age background music. The artist wants to challenge this state of spirituality, comparing it with a set of *Estadísticas* (2008) from a telephone survey of more than 400 people. The questions are referred to the relationship these have with their environment, a volcanic area called "La Garrotxa".

Tere Recarens (Arbucies, 1967) shows her photography *The Hold Up* (2007). The image was taken in a quiet residential area. Actually, the snapshot seems to be very stable except for an strange incident happening at the bottom of the picture, breaking this harmony: the artist is breaking a large glass held up by two operators. This moment of intensity is related to the way the artist risks her body. Sometimes she does it with her biography, as in *Aparecí en casa de mis padres* (2005), when she made a surprise visit to her parents visiting them with a helicopter in their house in Arbucies. From Recarens we like his ability to create situations and froze them with photography, in a snapshot; even it's a hop, a broken glass or the astonished face of her parents.

Alex Reynolds (San Sebastian, 1978) would like to make unique many moments in life. Organize, synchronize and condense all the elements that surround us to create a memorable instant, a real experience. This happens

in *Clara* (2010) where the viewer is equipped with headphones to live an alien story: the audio guide us through the footsteps of some invisible characters following some visual instructions that tell us what to do. The work shown in the exhibition, *When Fire Becomes Smoke, My Love...* (2010), is part of a reflection on the limits of perception. On the one hand showing slides of places that are inaccessible to the eye but accessible to the camera. On the other, a picture showing a detail of the artist body unknown by her accompanies this sequence.

Francesc Ruiz (Barcelona, 1971) drawings are detailed notes on the margins of an specific reality. When trying to include everything, these notes become huge human agglomerations erratically inhabiting unlimited spaces. In *S/T (maig)* (2011), we see a number of people in a strange situation, halfway between a political demonstration, a bank teller or a Rave Party, surrounded by piles of money and waste. This strange situation, which could be the day before apocalypse, seems to overflow. From his work we learned an analytical view of our immediate surroundings. Under its apparent banality, he finds signs of a declining culture or of the sexual impulses feeding it. We've seen him excited against an electronic old-fashioned showcase, in front of a mannequin or in front of a puddle.

Daniel Steegmann (Barcelona, 1977) introduces himself as a medieval builder, not intended to invent, he just wants to explain some concepts, as if the world is predefined and governed for some "divine" rules. Thus, he places and highlights a number of elements in order to clarify something we already knew. Using the tension between geometry and chaos, between form and its dissolution into self-perception crisis. For the exhibition presents *Elegancia y renuncia* (2011), an installation that with a light projector and a leaf. The work is to be found through and in between these two objects. In this concept of transparency, focusing on the distance between objects, there is also *16 mm* (2009–2010), where the artist constructs a camera that moves with the same engine that enables the recording, entering in the Amazon jungle.

Ricardo Trigo (Palafugell, 1980) understands his work in art as a pulse with the viewer. Approaches from the "you" and from the "I". His approach is like the stranger who speaks to you on the subway. His work is based on lies, immersed in the real. For example, in *New Order* (2009) collects a series of testimonies that participated in some Internet secret society called "New Order", questioning the media and the active-passive roles. In *Unrendered* (2010) the viewer tries to read an amount of layers: a discussion between two narrators, some images appearing and a changing space –between an exhibition space and a mental space–. It is a narrative exercise with lots of variations conforming the philosophy of the piece. Therefore this philosophy is fragile, complex and unstable.

WeAreQQ, Usue Arrieta (Arrasate, 1979) and Vicente Vazquez (Tarragona, 1976). In some of their videos they make relations between formal and emotional elements. This happens at work *Canedo* (2010), which combines the mechanical process of printing a book with a familiar story. In their narratives they make visible some immanent structures of landscape, the "free" occupation of time –the leisure time–. In that space, in the artifice surrounding us, struggle between reality and fiction becomes meaningless. This relationship becomes a simple construction of present. In this context was born *The Age of Fiction* (2011), an scoreboard of fiction time from the computation of all the movies and series generated in the world that are added periodically to IMDb (The Internet Movie Database). The marker, which today accounts 72 fiction years, runs inscrutable racing to beat real time.

– David Bestué and Marc Vives

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