

Galeria Estrany-de la Mota

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Alex Reynolds. Esta puerta, esta ventana

Opening: Friday, December 15th 2017, 19.00 p.m.

Exhibition: 15.12.2017 – 16.02.2018. Tuesday to Friday from 11.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. and Saturdays by appointment.

Galeria Estrany-de la Mota is pleased to present the first solo exhibition by Alex Reynolds (Bilbao, 1978) at the gallery.

The film begins in the corner of a room with a door and a window. A man and a woman will appear shortly. He plays the drums. She plays her body and her voice. But before we get to see them, we hear them. While the camera travels through an empty space, we hear irregular sounds from a drum and a voice humming. The opening of *Esta puerta, esta ventana* [This Door, This Window] –a slow sequence of distant, distracted, and indolent sounds– is one of those that portray the calm before the storm. Those that contain a premonition or a clue that we will need later, but which we are about to miss out on now: the characters' first encounter occurs in sound. This is how they coincide, and we will never know how they got in.

Sound has this capacity of entering unnoticed, of intruding imperceptibly, even if it seems paradoxical. We may close our eyes in order not to see, but it is impossible to become impermeable to sound. It sneaks into our ears, our skin, it travels through matter, we even carry it inside us: our body generates noise and rhythm. There are no doors or windows to keep out sound, or inversely, anything may serve as door or window. The film results from fantasizing with a calculated –and perverse– use of sound and rhythm in order to consciously invade and alter the body. In other words to affect it, sing it, synchronize it, fine-tune it, make it change or stop its pace. For better or for worse, but without touching it, from a distance, so that it's impossible to see it coming, or avoid it.

Esta puerta, esta ventana is nourished by the practices of Alma Söderberg and Nilo Gallego, through which it tests out the contagions and transfers, inputs and outputs between them in order to show how the communicating bodies look for each other or grate against one another when negotiating their boundaries.

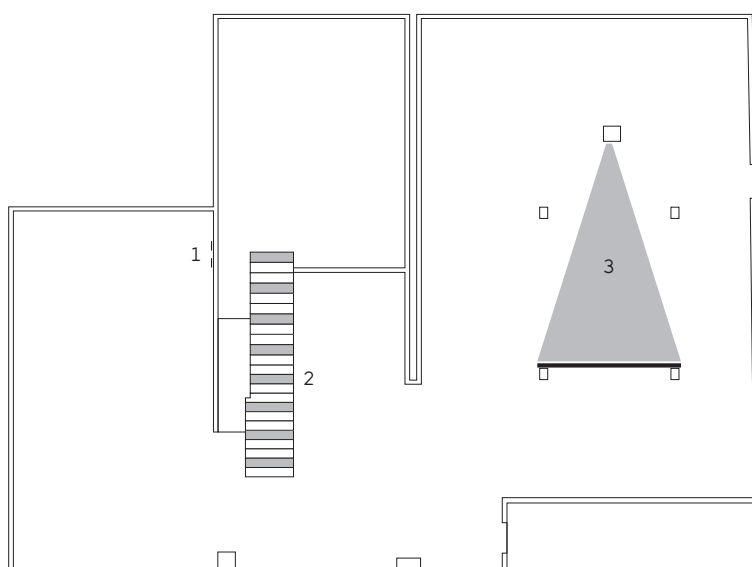
At times, something appears to interrupt them. Sitting in front of the drumkit, he suddenly leaves his drumsticks suspended in mid air, closes his eyes, and waits. Half way through a movement, she aborts her impulse or lets her voice wane. She doesn't close her eyes, but looks without seeing. During those sudden pauses we wonder whether they are listening or remembering. The grimace and gesture of someone who listens is easily confused with that of someone who remembers. *Esta puerta, esta ventana* is a film that sits/settles in the confusion between listening and memory, it explores and exploits it. Alma and Nilo's voice-overs punctuate the film with memories of a house. Some are repeated, some come back, they insist. So when something suddenly interferes with their actions, we don't quite know if what short-circuits them is what the other is doing, the effort of keeping him or her out, their memories, or each other's voices. It is however clear that something, or all of the above, has just slipped in through the cracks. Like a worm.

An earworm is a song that sticks, an uninvited sound parasite that we cannot get to leave. To listen and to remember come together in an earworm. Without warning, a memory regurgitates a song and settles it in our body. Earworms change our gait, they fuck up our day, bring back ghosts, make drumsticks pause in mid air, stop our movements, make us start humming, breathe at a different pace, or take us back to the warmth of a blanket or to the cold of a house. *Esta puerta, esta ventana* is infested with earworms. It is

a film that makes earworms out of sounds and memories. From the outside, from afar, and unexpectedly, Alex Reynolds enters and exits the bodies of Alma and Nilo exactly so, with earworms. She crosses their sounds, their rhythms and their sentences, turning them into intruders in each other's ears. On one occasion, almost imperceptibly, the metallic buzz of an interference betrays her.

The synchronicity of Alma and Nilo's rhythms, pauses, and movements produces an effect of coexistence, but they never appear together onscreen. The rehearsal room they inhabit is like a physical rendering of the only place that holds them together: the virtual space of a film. Sound is not only the manner in which they first appear together; it is their only way of being together. What Alex Reynolds achieves with the orchestrated (a)synchrony of their bodies, rhythms and memories –both during the shoot and in the edit– is to produce a sense of togetherness. Because in fact, what is at stake in the cohabitation of a film is the same thing that is at stake in cohabitation in general. Living together is a matter of listening and of negotiating rhythms, worms and boundaries. So, when we hear Alma say: "Do you think we could change rhythms from time to time?", the question is relevant for her interaction with Nilo, for the film, and for whoever she shares a home with. Nilo's concern is also a rhythmical one when he asks: "Will you wait for me when problems come up, the kind that appear and destroy everything a little, that you're stuck with for who knows how many years?" Sometimes synching up rhythms is a game, sometimes it is a boxing ring. The film moves between, and moves us with, that very Reynolds combination of joyful play and painful blow.

— Anna Manubens



¹ *Palais*, 2017
B/W print on paper and graphite on paper
1 element; of 21 x 29,7 cm and 1 element; of 23,5 x 22 cm
Unique
Code 11040

² *Un vals*, 2017
Carpet on stairs
Variable dimensions
Edition 3 + 1 A.P.
Code 11043

³ *Esta puerta, esta ventana*, 2017
Video HD color and sound
36.03 min.
Edition 5 + 1 A.P.
Code 11041

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*For further information and/or images contact ferranElOtro (ferranelotro@estranydelamota.com).