

Galeria Estrany-de la Mota

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VV.AA. Displays of Affection I: Cartografiar la memoria

Opening: Friday, June 30th 2017, 19.30 p.m.

Exhibition: 30.06.2017 – 15.09.2017. Monday to Friday from 1.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. and by appointment

Artists: Antoni Abad, Ignasi Aballí, Sergi Aguilar, Pep Agut, Guillén-Balmes, Miquel Barceló, Natividad Bermejo, David Bestué, Bestué/Vives, Black Tulip, Jean-Marc Bustamante, Daniel Canogar, Patricia Esquivias, Pauline Fondevila, Alicia Framis, Douglas Gordon, José Antonio Hernández-Díez, José Maldonado, Bruce Nauman, Rasmus Nilausen, Perejaume, Sara Ramo, Joan Rom, Thomas Ruff, Francesc Ruiz, David Shrigley, Nedko Solakov, Thomas Struth, Richard Venlet and Marijke van Warmerdam.

The Galeria Estrany-de la Mota is pleased to present the group exhibition *Displays of Affection I: Cartographing the Memory*.

In 1905 Aby Warburg proposed a heuristic research method based on images. He built sixty-three panels where he rearranged his personal archive of images, establishing a new system of non-obvious links. This cartography known as the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* is an open network of cross-relations, which can be expanded through the incorporation of new data as well as the discovery of new territories. This form of reorganization of information is close to Michael Foucault's idea of "heterotopy"¹ or, to the ideas of the cinematographic montage proposed by Sergei Eisenstein.²

The project *Displays of Affection*³ uses these methodologies of dialectical conflict, in which new ideas emerge from the apparent collision of different images in order to construct a possible mapping of the lines of research of the Estrany-de la Mota gallery. This map is the result of a process of inventorying and cataloguing of the funds that has been carried out in the last year and a half in the gallery. Like Aby Warburg's atlas, both projects have been interrupted: in the case of the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* because of the death of the historian in 1929 and in the case of *Displays of Affection* due to the death of Antoni Estrany the past February. Both are a work in progress that allow us to discover new territories. This process has led to heterogeneous results very close to the archaeological proposals of visual knowledge by authors such as Georges Didi-Huberman,⁴ where the overlays of all these images allow endless cross-relations.

The project wants to emphasize the links that can be established between these images as well as reading these links with the tools provided in the "affective turn" coined by Patricia Clough.⁵ It pretends to rebuild the interstices between these images, paying special attention to the significance of affections. From visualizing all these affective links, we can rebuild a community, which is definitely the most faithful image of the gallery project.

The project *Displays of Affection* is conceived as two exhibition moments. The former works as cartography of the past that allows a balance of the trajectory (*Cartographing the Memory*), while the latter proposes a future hypothesis as a responsibility for its continuity (*Imagine the Future*). Both are understood as representations for the activation of ideas and relationships that enable the continuous enriching of the forthcoming future.

The first stage of the project, *Cartographing the Memory*, is considered as a reading tool to connect with, the artistic works that the gallery has represented throughout its history. It is displayed as a map, however, it is closer to a device that allows us to reconsider all these works, by way of conclusion and, at the same time, deploy them in order to discover their unnoticed possibilities.

The approaches and processes of artistic practices that the gallery has supported throughout all this time are located in a point of tension between two of the new practices that arose at the end

20th century: the language and the body. Two concepts that, as demonstrated by current neoconceptual strategies, are not necessarily opposed, on the contrary, they are faced with a displacement in which the neutrality and/or the purity is crossed by subjectivity, what the commissioner Ellen Blumenstein catalogued as "the human stain".⁶

The cartography proposes a link in five blocks, or panels if we recover the formalization of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* d'Aby Warburg:

- The impossibility of constructing true images faithful to reality and the search of a bordering place where questioning about the representation, the paper of the artist and the place of the art (*Out of the Frame*).
- The appropriation as a tool to construct new imaginaries that constitute new sensitivities to give voice to other discourses or forms of collectivity (*Disappearance of the Author*).
- The elaboration of stories to construct alternatives to what we understand as hegemonic history, in which the text and the image are read in the same way of the language (*The Narrator*).
- The relation between object, action and public, where the body acts as an element of activation as well as individual and collective self-recognition (*Re-signification of the Body*).
- The linguistic reconfiguration of the artistic object to analyse the artistic structure, to make visible the devices of the process of creation and to blur the boundaries between the artistic and its relation with everyday life (*The Medium*).

However, these five links do not pose a single and closed reading, they function as a mechanism of production of subjectivity in which the viewer, as Roland Barthes⁷ pointed out when reading the pieces that make up the exhibition may be establishing new links in that endless cross-relations

— ferranElOtro

¹ Proposed by the author at the conference «Des espaces autres. Hétérotopies» carried out on March 14th of 1967 at Cercle d'Études Architecturales in Paris (published in *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité*, no. 5, october 1984, pp. 46–49).

² Sergei Eisenstein, «El montaje de atracciones» in *Lef*, no. 3, 1923 (republished in Sergei Eisenstein, *El Sentido del cine*, Siglo XXI, Madrid, 1999, pp. 169–171).

³ The title of the project is a play on words of the exceptions and meanings of the English word *display*. The literal translation would be «demonstrations of affection», but at the same time, it refers to the exhibition device in which it is intended to re-read the relationships between the diversity of the exhibit material.

⁴ Georges Didi-Huberman, *Atlas, ¿Cómo llevar el mundo a cuestas?*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, 2011.

⁵ Patricia Ticineto Clough and Jean O'Malley Halley (eds.), *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2007.

⁶ Ellen Blumenstein (ed.), *La mancha humana: en busca de la subjetividad en el arte conceptual de la década de 1960 y en obras relacionadas con el concepto*, Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, Santiago de Compostela, 2009.

⁷ Roland Barthes, «The Death of the Author» in *Aspen Magazine*, no. 5–6, 1967 (in spanish published as «La muerte de un autor» in *El susurro del lenguaje*, Paidós, Barcelona, 1987).

With the support of:

Abe **INEDIT**
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Acknowledgments: Harold Berg, garcía|galería, Horta–Antoniou family and all the participating artists.

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