

Galeria Estrany-de la Mota

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VV.AA. Displays of Affection II: Imaginar el futuro

Opening: Thursday, September 28th 2017, 19.00 p.m.

Exhibition: 28.09.2017 – 17.11.2017. Tuesday to Friday from 13.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m., Saturdays from 10.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. and by appointment

Artists: Ignasi Aballí, Martí Anson, Natividad Bermejo, Gregory Crewdson, Patricia Esquivias, Pauline Fondevila, Cyprien Gaillard, Douglas Gordon, José Antonio Hernández-Díez, Mariona Moncunill, Jonathan Monk, Juan Luis Moraza, Rasmus Nilausen, Gerard Ortín, Ana Prada, Alex Reynolds, Thomas Ruff, Francesc Ruiz, Richard Venlet, Oriol Vilanova, Danh Võ, Marijke van Warmerdam and Clemens von Wedemeyer.

The Galeria Estrany-de la Mota is pleased to present the group exhibition *Displays of Affection II: Imagine the Future*.

||||| (18 men)
||||| (7 women)

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

||||| + ||| (21 men)
||||| (7 women)

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.

Sometimes I think that we are too concerned about not to fall into categorical and positivist statements, to relativize our actions and affirmations, rather than to imagine something that is the only possible option (in this case, the proper cartography, which we choose as the best) which we claim with capital letters, would give us vertigo.

||||| + ||| + | (22 men)
||||| + | (8 women)

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 second stage of the project, *Imagining the Future*, is an exercise of speculation about the future⁵. However, the future is a mirror that can show only our own reflection. Even if, we think that anything can happen, when it comes to use our imagination or imagine what is going to be inevitably, everything looks like other pre-existing things, since we can imagine only the forms we know⁶. As in the first part of the project, it is displayed as a map, however, it is closer to a device that allows us to reconsider all these works, by way of prologue and, at the same time, deploy them in order to discover their unnoticed possibilities.

Is it possible to make a non-speculative exercise about the future?

The approaches and processes of artistic practices supported by the gallery are focused on a number of artists who, in a heterogeneous way, place their work context in a systemic inquest of critical discourses about the concept of representation. Art ceases to be an abstract concept and becomes a tool in the process of constructing subjectivity⁷. A reflection on the institutional, which does not refer only to cultural institutions but it involves also historical, social, economic and emotional aspects⁸.

Even when it is (or for those who it is) an abstract concept, it is still a tool for constructing subjectivity. As such, it is even more powerful because it is more taken for granted.

The cartography proposes a link in five blocks, or panels if we recover the formalization of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* d'Aby Warburg, a logical evolution of the blocks of the first part of the project in which some of them have disappeared due to their contextual character, others have been maintained because of the interest that they continue generating, others have mutated by merging, finally deriving in new research areas in which new ones appear that propose new problems:

Institutions (of any kind) ARE historical, social, economic and affective aspects! Is a process of institutionalization that is not a product of these aspects even possible?

– 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*).

– Power technologies linked to translated human work in financial capital, responses to neoliberal models and to the consumer society (*The homo oeconomicus*).

– 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*)⁹.

Do I fit in here?

– Las hibridaciones del arte parasitando el campo del cine, sus lenguajes y sus códigos, donde el espectador no tiene un punto fijo de visualización sino que se mueve en el interior de las imágenes proyectadas (*Expanded Cinema*).

– The elaboration of alternative stories to the hegemonic discourse, which enhance the self-presentation of historically silenced voices, making different subjectivities visible and blurring the existing social constructions (*Other Speeches*).

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

— [ferranEIOtro*](#)

*Mariona Moncunill

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 Arthur C. Danto, *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996.

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).

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