



DISPLACEMENTS

June 3-27, 2010

ARTS SANTA MÓNICA - CLOISTER (Floor 00)

PRESS DOSSIER

Curated by OLIVA MARÍA RUBIO

Organized by: ARTS SANTA MÓNICA - Department of Culture and Media
AND OBRA SOCIAL CAJA MADRID

Produced by: OBRA SOCIAL CAJA MADRID

Arts Santa Mònica 2010

DISPLACEMENTS

LARA ALMARCEGUI, IBON ARANBERRI, SERGIO BELINCHÓN,
DAVID BESTUÉ Y MARC VIVES, BLEDA Y ROSA,
SANTIAGO CIRUGEDA, PEDRO G.ROMERO, DORA GARCÍA,
FEDERICO GUZMÁN, CRISTINA LUCAS, FERNANDO RENES.

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Displacements presents the **reflections of a selection of internationally acclaimed Spanish contemporary artists on space** and man's age-old desire to dominate.

Lara Almarcegui, Ibon Aranberri, Sergio Belinchon, David Bestué & Marc Vives, Bleda y Rosa, Santiago Cirugeda, Pedro G. Romero, Dora García, Federico Guzmán, Cristina Lucas and Fernando Renes look here at connections between space and time, time and memory, and space and nature, reconsidering space from a variety of perspectives.

These works were produced by La Casa Encendida, Caja Madrid's platform for contemporary art, and selected by a committee composed of **Estrella de Diego, Rafael Doctor, Aurora García, Carmen Jiménez, Oliva María Rubio and Vicente Todolí.**

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Humanity has always sought to dominate space. Over time, the changes undergone in space have been deep and continuous, sometimes due to nature's action and other times to that of human beings. These changes have accelerated significantly in a world like ours in which everything develops at breakneck speed. Borders between countries change; cities, landscapes and environments are altered. Everything has been affected by the voracious maelstrom of time and human actions.

New locating technologies have also transformed the way in which we perceive physical and geographical space. "Cyberspace" is beginning to be an integral part of society. This, together with the dematerialisation of space that is Internet, obliges us to redefine *topos*, the place. It is not surprising that a large number of contemporary artists have adopted space as a subject for reflection. Whether due an interest in natural spaces, urban spaces, borders, archaeology or social and living spaces or to the appeal of virtual spaces, public or private spaces or the spaces of memory, this is fertile ground that attracts the interest of many of today's creators.

Space is interwoven with time and memory, and so some artists develop projects related to the memory and historical time of the locations. The space of art has also been transformed by the action of some contemporary artists who work on space. Whereas in the past sculpture was made to fill space, the actions of some current artists, beyond building sculptures to occupy space, now focus on the space itself, which turns from being a container to a protagonist.

All the projects presented in the exhibition address the topic of space and delve into its various aspects. From their works on public and private space, illusory space, the space of memory, mapped space or urban space, the artists in *Displacements* point out the wealth of approaches that this subject inspires in art today.

Lara Almarcegui

Guía de las Ruinas de Holanda

2008. 26 photographs (30 x 45 cm each) and 21 guides on a table

Courtesy of Colección Bergé, Madrid

The *Guía de las Ruinas de Holanda XIX-XXI* series collects images of modern and contemporary ruins throughout the Netherlands. For years, the artist has travelled across that country tracking down, photographing, studying and documenting the history of the ruins. For Almarcegui, "a building becomes a ruin when it opens," since from that moment on, "it is exposed to time." And to time both in its chronological and atmospheric sense. Rain and vegetation begin to invade it and take over, setting off a process that mixes the building with nature. The artist has used this criterion to select the ruins. A total of 154 have been recorded, shown on the map and catalogued according to type of building. By pointing them out and documenting them, the artist returns the ruin to public awareness, inverting the urban evolution process that tends to renovate, conceal or abolish everything that shows the passage of time.

Lara's interest in these spaces also concerns the possibilities they offer: their lack of functionality implies a dangerous neutrality by leaving them open to all sorts of possibilities and exposed to speculation. The artist seeks, finds, records and documents these spaces; she shows how, beyond the romantic idea of the ruins of the past, our urban environment is scattered with modern ruins, often the product of the process in which we are immersed of acceleration and change in the physiognomy of cities, a process that destroys our memory and the signs of identity of the places we inhabit.

Ibon Aranberri

Dam Dreams (Traversed)

2004-2009. 13 metal traffic signs

Variable dimensions. Courtesy of the artist

The updated *Dam Dreams (Traversed)* project refers to the construction of the Itoiz Dam, which takes its name from one of the towns in Navarra that was flooded together with others such as Aoiz, Orbaiz and Artozqui. Construction of this reservoir was the subject of great controversy that still continues. The artist collected a series of traffic signs from the area to make an installation that also included maps. This action rescued from oblivion signs that were about to be submerged beneath reservoir waters and spoke to us of the traces of places. Signs that in the past had been used to orient the inhabitants of these towns and that would now lie dead, hidden from view and with no purpose, were rescued by the artist to become part of the memory of the place, of its past, and to remind us that once they were essential to the life of the people, situating them and protecting them from possible accidents.

Now the work has been given a new configuration, a double displacement of place and meaning. Whereas in 2004, these traffic signs were presented facing the viewer on the exhibition hall wall, now they are shown with their backs to the visitor. They lie mute, silent, lacking any symbol to make them recognisable, without the signs that indicated the towns through which people passed and the regulations that had to be followed, a simple displacement that nevertheless seems to produce a clamour that questions us even more sharply and deeply about the past, memories and oblivion.

Sergio Belinchón

El bueno, el feo y el malo

2009. HD video, 2 h. 42 m. loop

Director: Sergio Belinchón

Assistant: Marco Segurado

Editing and Colour Correction: Sergio Belinchón, Marcos Sodupe and Asier Mendizábal

Credits: Frank Kalero

Sergio Belinchón has returned to the scenes where Sergio Leone's film *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly* was filmed in 1966 in order to remake it shot by shot, although this time without the presence of the characters. This explains the crossed out in the title of his project: *El ~~bueno~~, el ~~feo~~ y el ~~malo~~*. The artist has respected the total length of the film and its soundtrack with Ennio Morricone's score and the original sounds and dialogues. Furthermore, the shots that took place in interiors or were filmed in the studio. By eliminating the characters, the music becomes the guide that leads us through the landscapes in Almeria, Burgos and Madrid where the film was shot and those spaces, basically exterior but also some interiors, are given the leading role. We could say that people may leave but the landscape remains. More than forty years after the film was shot, nature seems to continue immutable up to a certain point, whereas the passage of time is seen in things built by the human hand.

A deep sense of alienation overcomes us upon seeing this film without its characters, even though we continue to hear their conversations, the neighing and galloping of the horses and the sound of the bullets. There is also a confusion in times. The landscape anchors us in the present, whereas the town makes us go back to another time, that of the pioneers commemorated in so many films. There is also a misleading element: it would seem that this is any town in the American west whereas actually we are in our own country.

David Bestué and Marc Vives

Estado de cambio

2009. Animation. *Loop*, 6 min

Production: Joana Teixidor and Patricia Gea

In this video we witness a series of transformations in an object during its trip inside and outside an apartment. In this return journey, a vase of flowers begins an adventure in which, within certain space-time coordinates, it changes both physically and symbolically. The object, which is mutable, sometimes defined and other times undefined, works at an accelerated pace, changing as an actor would in a film. As soon as the object begins to relate with its environment, it acts grammatically and inserts itself in an initial text. These relationships can imply coupling with nearby objects or architectures or approach strategies that range from camouflage to direct confrontation. In its trip through space, the object will undergo surprising transformations, passing from a solid to a liquid state, from an organic to an industrial element, from a touchable object to energy producing other objects. It turns equally into a chocolate bar and a swan, a computer, Franco's bust, a penis, a toaster or simply a shapeless spot on the floor.

As in previous works in this video we find reminiscences of conceptual art and Dadaism as well as an interest in inner space, a confrontation between public space/private space, everyday objects, things that are overlooked, the tension between the everyday and the alien as well as the sense of humour and irony characteristic of all the artists' work.

Bleda y Rosa

Tipologías

2007-2009. Inkjet on cotton paper, mounted on Dibond, 150 x 165 cm each

With their *Tipologías* series, Bleda y Rosa have begun the complex task of developing an extensive catalogue of architectural typologies. Their references were the first treatise on classical architecture, *De Architectura*, by Vitruvius and *Letters to Miranda*, written at the end of the eighteenth century by Quatremère de Quincy. In 2007, the artists began to photograph the Villa dels Munts, working on the idea of the Roman villa. Later in Pompeii, they dealt with the idea of the Domus Romana, and continued with other typologies from the same culture such as triumphal arches, altars, etc. Their aesthetic starting points include the Arch of Triumph that Albrecht Durer made in 1515 on commission from Maximilian I, the first photographs of architectural vistas captured by Édouard Baldus, among others, and works in which objects belonging to the activity of contemporary archaeologists are seen. With this background and their cold yet subjective style, they address this new series in which they continue their research on the reservoirs of memory, widening this reflection to the historical sense and functional nature of architecture, from its original use to the museumisation that some of these spaces experience today.

The fragmentary, partial and subjective images we see require a text to contextualise them, and the artists incorporate a concise explanation on the photographic paper itself, describing the original typology and reinforcing the traces of its former functionality.

Santiago Cirugeda

Estructuras reversibles

Estructuras reversibles

2009. Scale models / Video. Loop. 15 min

Estructuras reversibles follows the artist's usual line of work in which he develops products that seek to achieve a social impact and find solutions to the need for spaces for getting together or even living and for mobilising social or citizen groups. The project comprises five interventions in various places that have benefited different people. It was carried out, using the aid offered, by his Recetas Urbanas studio and staff. The projects were the following: stabilisation of a home in the process of becoming a ruin, construction of furnishings for peripheral lots, a structure for a home in a central building, a prefabricated concrete building and roof for collective equipment and protocols for recycling empty buildings for their occupation. These projects are presented in videos, email messages, photographs, maps and diverse file cards, reliving the year's work process. Cirugeda acts on the places, on spaces that require his intervention, and his objective is to have his action be of use for needy people or groups.

With his Recetas Urbanas studio, Cirugeda has been developing projects for years in various spheres of urban reality, from systematic occupations of public spaces with containers to the construction of prostheses on façades, courtyards, roofs and even empty lots. He moves through spaces looking for the loopholes or possibilities that legislation offers for undertaking architectural projects in accordance with social demands.

Pedro G. Romero

Tesauro Desplazamientos,

Hojas de Libre Circulación

2009. An edition of 11 different page models, size A2, printed in colour on both sides.
Unlimited printing run

Continuing his project *Archivo F.X.*, on which he has been working for years, Pedro G. Romero has made *Tesauro Desplazamientos, Hojas de Libre Circulación*. Just as he has done on other occasions – as in *Antagonismos* at Barcelona's MACBA, or *Capital de la República* at the University of Valencia, eleven new entries are incorporated, corresponding to the artists who participate in the exhibition. *Archivo F.X.* deals with taxonomies and classifications that relate language to reality. The base of these operations is a vast archive of images of the anti-sacramental political iconoclasm in Spain between 1845 and 1945. Pedro G. Romero has been working on this project since the end of the nineteen nineties collecting images and documents that show the importance that the phenomenon reached in Spain from the end of the nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth century and by encouraging reflection on this subject through seminars and publications.

Each of the eleven new "Free Circulation Sheets", a different model for each author, is printed on both sides. On the front of each there is a photograph from the *Archivo F.X.* related to the work of the artist participating in the exhibition and various fragments of texts extracted from articles written by the artist or by other artists or writers. In this way, Pedro G. Romero creates a dialogue among texts, images and the artist's work looking for a direct or tangential relationship uniting them. Spots of various colours as in an abstract painting are on the back of the sheet.

Dora García

La habitación cerrada

2002-2010. Door in the wall, vinyl letters

Variable dimensions. Single piece

In *La habitación cerrada*, Dora García wants to build a space banned from the first in which no one can enter, a space that, due to a commitment, only exists in the mind. This commitment means that the owner of the space must sacrifice part of it to construct a room in which the owner is not allowed to enter. The room thus becomes a mental space. The artist appropriates part of a house or an institution and prevents anyone from entering, occupying or living in it; she denies the possibility of its existence in reality. This way, she not only opposes what is conventional in all artistic transactions, whether or not in the market, which is sharing the work, letting it be seen or experienced by others, adding something to the patrimony of the collector who purchases her work, but also prevents any physical experience of the space under the threat of destroying the work if we dare open the door and cross the threshold.

Dora García offers us the experience of something we can only imagine. She thus also excludes us from this experience and refuses to share it with us, making the space inaccessible, unreachable, invisible to our eyes and untouchable; however, as the artist points out, beyond this impossibility the work talks to us of the change in expectations. We find ourselves before a room we think we can enter yet we are not allowed to do so. Because of this, we are obliged to think of the room as something completely different. What we are starting up is our own mind.

Federico Guzmán

Hombre = árbol

2009. Polyester resin, fibreglass and polychrome steel, 360 x 260 x 220 cm

This work continues the artist's exploration of nature, something that he has developed in various ways and reflected in his paintings and sculptures. *Hombre = árbol* is a sculptural installation based on a gigantic polychrome figure that resembles and merges into a tree. Exposed roots spring from its feet and the figure rests on them. For the artist, who is determined to explore nature's mysteries, this is everything, and the man-tree represents union with all of creation. The figure's erect posture, with the feet separated at the same distance as its shoulders, knees lightly bent and arms pointing forward forming a circle as if holding a ball, makes universal energy flow and connects the sky to the earth and earthly space with celestial space. This position corresponds to a posture in Chi Kung – a personal equilibrium system developed in the Chinese culture – called *zhan zhuang*, which means “to be planted like a tree” and helps to generate energy.

The tree chosen is a sweet orange tree. The artist seeks to focus attention on the resemblance between the tree and the man in terms of the capacity to transform energy and even create it as well as in the connection of both with their environment. While the tree sinks its roots into the earth from which it takes the sap that makes branches and leaves live, the man is also connected to it and not only symbolically. Our feet as well as our mind root us to it. Detached from the land, like a rootless tree, we wander aimlessly, looking for something to hold onto.

Cristina Lucas

Mundo Masculino

Mundo Femenino

2010. Mobile sculpture. Fibreglass sphere, steel pedestal and a motor
135 x 105 x 105 cm. each

Pantone -500+2007

2007. HD video 16:9,41 min

Following the idea developed in *Pantone -500+2007*, an animated video that makes a political distribution of the world, *Mundo Masculino*, *Mundo Femenino* tries to create a sexual world map. If in *Pantone*, the artist turned to a video animation, in this new work the support is a mobile sculpture. Two spheres, revolving at one revolution per minute like two twin worlds, reinterpret the world map based on the denominations that people give to sexual organs in each country. Although at first glance the spheres seem equal, when we observe them more carefully, we discover differences not only in the words used to name territories, but also in the territories themselves, the area they occupy.

The criterion that the artist followed at the moment of defining this sexual cartography of the world was of a popular, linguistic and gender nature and produced a map that differs from official structures – an idea she followed in *Pantone*, where the political world map is based on government power, represented by monarchies, dictatorships or democracies – to give voice to what is usually left out of these structures but has an important role in people's lives, forming part of their private universe, uniting them and to a certain point identifying them.

Fernando Renes

Soylento

2008-2009

Animation on three synchronised screens with sound. 6 min, 10 sec

Anxiety

2009. Mathew & Fernando Mutoscope

500 drawings printed on white methacrylate

The animated video *Soylento* is an exploration of inner space. Through numerous drawings to which he gives life, the artist makes a topographical study of the house-studio in New York where he lives and spends most of his time. On the screens we see fictitious and real characters and objects. Reality and fiction mix in this work in which drawings, real objects, caricatures and people appear and disappear revealing the work's ins and outs and its handcrafted nature. The project is complemented by the piece *Anxiety* presented in a mutoscope – a device to view images on a paper support – where by turning the handle we see a light with the word “Anxiety” come life and move. The two pieces are related since the *Anxiety* mutoscope appears as just another character in the animated video *Soylento*. Both pieces also deal with the idea of imaginary space. The animation is pure illusion. It presents spaces and situations that only exist in the imagination. This idea of imaginary space becomes even clearer in the mutoscope. Upon being activated by the viewer, the static drawings start to move and come alive, generating an illusion of space and movement. Through a manual, handmade work, a mixture of handcrafted and advanced techniques, Fernando Renes introduces us into the magic of cinema, creating illusory spaces and enabling our imagination to wander.



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CAJA MADRID
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CURATED BY OLIVA MARÍA RUBIO

EXHIBITION-ARTS SANTA MÒNICA – CLOISTER (FLOOR 00)

ORGANIZED BY: ARTS SANTA MÒNICA y OBRA SOCIAL CAJA MADRID

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