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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF BUSINESS & LAW

Winchester School of Art

**Crosswords, problems and expectations of the curator of contemporary
art exhibitions: a personal experience from the project *Economy: Picasso***

by

Valentín Roma Serrano

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

July 2013

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

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Crosswords, problems and expectations of the curator of contemporary art exhibitions: a personal experience from the project *Economy: Picasso*

Valentín Roma Serrano

The present investigation project is an attempt to try to deepen in the vicissitudes, in the curatorial decisions and in the ways to dialogue in an exhibition carried out by Valentín Roma, with the purpose to explore critically which are the roles, the working lines and the responsibilities of a curator of contemporary art.

Because its complexity and its longitude in the time, the show chosen as a study case, that was entitled *Economy: Picasso* and which different phases were held in the Museu Picasso of Barcelona between May 2011 and February 2013, offers an authentic panoptic of each and every one of the problems (design, managing, production, and mediation) that affect the curatorship, for what it constitutes, as well, a perfect example where we can observe the dynamics of the cultural policies and its difficulties to fit in from of the institutional frameworks until the ideological usages of the artists, audiences and curators.

In order to contextualize this study we have elaborated a short chronological assay about the recent history of the curatorial practices

since the seventies to our days. From another hand, and to help defining *Economy: Picasso*, we performed four interviews with the different agents involved in the project.

Besides realising a very exhaustive analysis, this investigation work aspires to establish a certain pattern of analysis about the contemporary art exhibitions that could be extensible to other exhibition cases and to other curators.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, Valentín Roma Serrano,

declare that this thesis entitled

Crosswords, problems and expectations of the curator of contemporary art exhibitions: a personal experience from the project *Economy: Picasso*

and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

7. Either none of this work has been published before submission, or parts of this work have been published as: [please list references below]:

Signed: Valentín Roma

Date: 2013-07-25

PREFACE

The investigation project that I am carrying out is about trying to point out the double absence that is occurring inside the contemporary curatorial practices.

From one hand we have what we could name as *theoretical void*, which is to say, when the curators project exhibitions we usually spread a vast quantity of ideas, of slogans, and of precepts that are trying to explain to the different audiences how our exhibition works, what are we trying to remark, which are the associations in between the art works and the ideas that we consider the most original. However, all our efforts – addressed to a generic and hypothetical viewer – supplant the fact that the curator theorises his own practice, about why some works are dismissed, which objectives beside the audience are being pursued and related to the symbolic and institutional expectations that were transferred to him and his proposal. Let's say then, that it exists a theoretical inflation heading outside the project and a lack of reflection inwards the same. The immediate consequences of this insufficient recapitulation are evident: repetitive subjects and points of view, formal mannerisms of all kinds, wash up the ideology and the radicalism, mythomania about the curator now turned into a new artist that operates from the brilliance and individualism, over-dependency towards a media repercussion or just

fashion and trend, absence of a true critical questioning regarding the institutional procedures, etc.

From another hand we find a methodological void, meaning that the visitors are not demanding from us continuity in our work, it seems that with the exhibition our conceptual and theoretical goals are being satisfied, reason for which we are not feeling obliged to explicit which particular or collective ways, we use to develop our activities.

In some way the exhibition is noticed as an exception and as a milestone, as a discursive cut without memory and, especially, that remains absolutely interrupted towards the future. In this sense, what is usually called as a curator's career seems to be not submitted to any kind of continuity besides the simply formalist one –a well defined type of decorative “finishing coat” of the exhibitions– or the thematic sample books that normally are quite heterogenic and not very identifiable. This benefits certain heroic and legendary perception about the curator, whom seems to operate from the lack of methodology, following intuitions and without an evolution in their respective capacity of producing discourse and to make it more complex through each exhibition.

When I first consider this work of analysis, I wanted to emphasize in a very concrete way in the two conflictive zones that I just brought out, but most of all I have pretended, besides carrying out a critical exercise, to

offer a model of reflection that could be extended to different proposals of curatorship, using for that my own project that could allow to comprehend in depth the difficulties, the achievements and the mistakes, and that for its scale seemed to me a true example of all the problems that affect to any kind of museographic intervention.

From there the structure of the investigation is generated, which is divided between an area completely theoretical, that occupies the whole part I, dedicated to a plausible chronology of curatorship and that perhaps it should have been more exhaustive, and the part III constitutes a critical exercise of recapitulation about the show that I developed for the Museu Picasso of Barcelona.

In the middle of this frame that surrounds my own activity between a general historical context and a particular conclusion, meaning that, between the times and the personal confusion, just to say it in a jocose tone, I have spread a model of analysis that, I insist, pretends to divide that expanded continuous that is the exhibition to be able to look in detailed each one of its phases and to these were dealt with.

I considered convenient to keep this distancing gesture in order to avoid the difficulties and anecdotes without a scientific value and, at the same time, I have considered correct to “submit” the exhibition *Economy: Picasso* to a sort of analytic pattern, to a almost linguistic or grammatical

dissection to not fall into generalities and keeping it away from entering to the multiple perspectives that were related to this project.

The same configuration of the mentioned paradigm, based on a voluntary forced discrimination between the commission, idea, development and designs, was not only about noticing the different working lines, with their distinct methodologies, requests and interlocutors, but also was trying to be an hypothetical structure applicable to other curatorial proposals, could be mine or some other curators'. The shortage of bibliography or more similar examples to this diagnosis that I have dealt with obliged me to observe with a maximum level of detail, perhaps excessively, the exhibition *Economy: Picasso*. In this sense, I am aware of how artificial it is to "contemplate" and exhibition from the words of textual analysis, especially when we usually do it with the sight, from its plasticity, anyhow I consider my project of investigation as a new "exhibition format", a reconfiguration, now to be read by different agents and shown by myself that I am "on display" as well.

I would say that this work gives a third way of expression to *Economy: Picasso*, which is added to the physical one and to all the other lectures, speeches and debates created around it, as well as an exhaustive – size and weight wise – publication that we did as a general memory of

the project.

Carrying out this investigation has supposed to me not only an academic or even a theoretical challenge, but also a truly revelation about my own practice as curator. Then, observing that meticulously *Economy: Picasso* I have realised that an exhibition must have some fissures, gaps and wilderness that allow the visitor to entry in it from multiple manners, and make it “theirs” despite of that with this some looses of meaning and depth might occur. Anyway, from the distance, I would dare to say that *Economy: Picasso* it was too neat show, excessively coherent and, therefore, a bit abusive in the viewer’s eyes. From here it comes the fact that when I was writing this paper I was simultaneously working on the next exhibition, entitled *Contra Tàpies*, I have noticed in a determinate moment that I should modify drastically that upcoming project, avoiding the excess of, what we could call, erudite references, putting into proportion the explicative texts, leaving, in the end, some space to those that would get close to the exhibition, without providing many filters and ideas.

The success of *Contra Tàpies* is bringing me the opportunity to think that I was not mistaking so much, for what maybe, I must add one more to the numerous consequences of this investigation: exploring my curatorial “failures” has made visible some working scenario that

otherwise, perhaps with less presence of critical vocation and such a detail level, it would not have occurred to me.

Part 0: Introduction

Chapter 0 - Objectives and methodology

There is a considerable disproportion between the scarce bibliography on curator practice in the area of contemporary art and the importance acquired by exhibition curating, as well as the volume and media dissemination of museographic programs taking place in contemporary urban environments.

The first explanation for this lies in the difficulty of defining the profile of a curator today, a person who has very broad, and at the same time highly diffuse, attributions, for their field of work covers writing, design, communication, heritage management, historiography, pedagogy and mediation with the culture institutions, amongst others. Besides, from the strictly academic area, there are no regulated studies configuring a curricular route for future art curators, so most come from different disciplines and learn the trade from professional practice, that is, without previously having exercised their capacities or receiving any kind of specialised guidance.

It is true that in recent years numerous university colleges and different institutions have offered masters degrees, postgraduate courses,

seminars and other areas of study that try to overcome these shortcomings; however, in most cases the research programmes present a highly partial and strictly theoretical view of curator practice, so aspiring exhibition curators can rarely exercise their knowledge or their intentions with a specific project that allows them to most broadly understand what it means to conceive, organise and manage an exhibition.

In another sense, the gradual absence of a map of more experimental museographic spaces, with more open management, means that in practice it is very difficult, and virtually impossible, to develop exhibitions outside the public institutional context, which is usually fearful when administering budgets, and more still when granting part of the programs to new, untested professionals.

Apart from this absence of a curator pedagogy which would undoubtedly produce adequate theoretical studies, another possible explanation to the scarce specialised bibliography in exhibition curating is that, once they have achieved certain professional experience, curators focus their efforts on new exhibitions and not so much on reflecting, documenting and critically assessing those they have already done. Furthermore, the expectations of institutions calling for external curator projects do not include investigating their own productions, so either due to a lack of concern on the part of the curator themselves or the theoretical

absenteeism of the museums, this analysis is generally not attended as due.

An exhibition is a medium, multimedia, with highly intense management and communication demands, which occupies a very small-time band in programmes which are sometimes excessively scarcely expressed and which, in the area of contemporary art, have relative audience volumes not entirely predictable. This situation, which in a certain way is anomalous within the cultural offer, means that beyond the criticism or analysis of specialised media, there are few spaces for reflection and assessing the work of curators, so a curator very often lacks a clear diagnosis of their work or, at most, measures their work by the media band it occupied, by the number of visitors to the exhibition or the opinions of the artistic community where their project was carried out, all interesting parameters that which hardly contribute to furthering in a proposal, and less still to providing steps to give a curating career as a whole.

This research project, modestly, deals with reconceiving the function, the attributions and the objectives that the curators of contemporary art exhibition can have today. For what, and as a study case specific, has been taken as analysis object the museographic project carried out the same investigator – the exhibition Economy: Picasso (25th

May – 2nd September 2012)– which theoretical complexity, institutional repercussion and budgetary scale configure sort of a collection of samples about the tensions and the challenges that appear in front of a curator whenever this one displays his task.

Then the objective that orients the present investigation is to elaborate a study detailed and exhaustive that could re-evaluate a personal museographic project, not so much with the intention of making a self-exegesis, but rather to suggest a possible methodology for approaching and studying other exhibitions of different curators and institutions.

On another side, beyond the purely academic area offered by the University of Southampton (Winchester School of Art), which gives an ideal framework thanks to their specialisation in the field of visual culture, this project and its consequent public dissemination on a website and through the publication of part of its contents is intended to be a platform for discussion and sharing of problems, projects and vicissitudes that affect contemporary curator practice.

The methodologies of work used in the present investigation have two fundamental aspects, suitable to the double nature of the contents that are developed and to the compiled materials.

On one hand, inside the Chapter 1, and in a manner of Introduction, we dealt with a possible theoretical evaluation about the

functions, the demands and the procedures that the curator of the contemporary art world has to take in consideration in order to realize his job, getting deeper in the role of that one in the field of culture.

As an extension of this conceptual frame, which will be used as an arcade of ideas for the present project, it has been considered to elaborate a group of chronologic study cases that would allow placing the different professional and conceptual guidelines that the curatorship of exhibitions has been assuming since the late seventies until our days.

In this section, the methodology of work will be the critical revision of the not very numerous bibliographies about this subject and the elaboration of a text with essayist nature where the ideas and data will be exposed in relation.

On another hand, in the five chapters that articulate the Part III, entitled *Economy: Picasso*, which is useful as a nucleus of investigation, is analysed exhaustively a particular study case, an exhibition realised by the investigator, that as we had already noted allows the deepening on the complexities of a curatorial task from multiple points of view.

It is precisely because of the scale of *Economy: Picasso*, that we propose the elaboration of a pattern of analysis that would try to cover chronological and thematically the “momenta”, the “zones” and the “tensions” of the whole project; a possible model of critic susceptible to be

applied to other kind of curatorial projects whichever it might be its budgetary limitations or public visibility.

In this pattern of study to which we are referring to is taking in consideration the following phases of the project.

- a) Presentation
- b) The commission
- c) The idea
- d) The development
- e) The designs
- f) The critical reception

Each one of these entries starts with a description of the presented contents and, specially, it expands after a certain critical recapitulation around the idea of what supposed each item during the development of the project. Finally, as a counterpoint, there is an interview with different agents that are associated to the project in its six different sections.

The methodology of analysis used is stick to the exercise of exposing the data, number and ideas, to the compilation of documentary materials added to the different appendix and, at last, the interlocution and dialogue activity with the different agents.

As a conclusion, in the Chapter 3, entitled General conclusions, we tried to deepen, in a global way, beyond the diverse phases already seen, what did it really mean *Economy: Picasso*, which were its good choices and, particularly, which difficulties offer proposals with such a nature, with the determination of establish a possible criterion suitable to carry them out.

Finally, we are going to incorporate two additional episodes, Appendix and Bibliography, which compile supplementary documents to the project and a list of publications that could be used to frame the present investigation, especially in its more theoretical and historiographic aspects.

Part I: General considerations regarding the curatorship

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 – Curator responsibilities

In a certain way we could say that exhibition curators work in the field of contemporary art are besieged by three different, contradictory tensions.

One calls upon the curator to produce new forms of interpretation to allow the artists' work to be understood from original prisms, from point of views not applied before. In this sense, exhibitions expressed as a search for new paradigms of aesthetic reading usually suggest forms of observation that are not only aimed at historiographical accuracy, but above all offer perspectives that are open and sensitive to the different audiences coming to an exhibition.

Another of the tensions that measure the capacity of curators in contemporary art is their responsibility to organise the accounts presented in the museum, in other words the curator is required to provide a series of narrations to discriminate the evolution of artistic memory, where the present is dissected for more complex perception to allow the different aesthetic practices and their respective problems and

interests to be located, and where the most singular future paths that artists will take are indicated, discriminating the tendencies or passing fashions of more structural lines of research.

Finally, the last of the demands affecting contemporary curators is the creation of interfaces of design, displays, spaces for consultation and documentation, material collections and suitable archives for art to be offered, understood and enjoyed without losing the capacity to make us more intelligent, more aware of our creative reality and therefore more critical of it.

In this sense, we might say that an exhibition curator is at the same time an editor who produces unexpected associations before reading the artists' work, a historian who makes tales and methods for organising art according to the importance of the different chronological, social, political contexts, etc. and finally, a designer who creates visual and material structures so that the ideas, works and documents making up an exhibition acquire narrative meaning and are able to interact with the spectators and/or users.

However, everything considered up to now can exclusively be understood as a declaration of intentions, so it might be better to consider a first specific question:

What do we do as curators?

For over ten years I have conceived and made exhibitions in different museums around the world, in the Iberia Centre of Contemporary Arts in Beijing, in the Venice Art Biennale, in the Württembergischer Kunstverein in Stuttgart, in Barcelona Contemporary Art Museum and in the Picasso Museum in the same city, in the Centro Matucana 100 in Santiago de Chile, and others.

Furthermore, in this time I have worked with numerous internationally reputed artists such as Antoni Tàpies, Bruce Nauman, Paul McCarthy, Muntadas, Adrian Pipper, Sophie Calle, etc., with whom I have sometimes been in personal contact to draw up the projects in which they presented their proposals and, at other times, I have simply worked with their works, trying to give them my particular view and my interpretation of possible meanings that I felt should be indicated or which I believed had not been sufficiently highlighted.

At the same time I have done exhibition projects showing very important historical pieces, such as *Las Meninas* (1957) by Pablo Picasso, *Tzanck Check* (1919) by Marcel Duchamp, *El rostro de la guerra* (1941) by Salvador Dalí and *La rivoluzione siamo noi* (1972) by Joseph Beuys, to

give a few examples of authors holding an outstanding place in the history of contemporary art.

In all of these cases, my concern as a curator and maybe the concern of any curator, has always been the same: how to offer original reading perspectives to allow the work of these so observed and analysed artists to be reconceived; how to transmit my point of view to the people visiting the exhibitions without this betraying or twisting the intentions with which all of these works were made.

However, this challenge which, I insist, drives all museographic projects and which is the principal contribution of a curator and their main responsibility, is rapidly buried in the management and production of an exhibition and, even more, is turned into a kind of hindrance when the exhibition ends, for when the pieces are removed from the museum halls, something of the curator's memory, of my memory, also seems to be lost.

The essayist Georges Didi-Huberman, who has made magnificent exhibitions throughout his career, defines the exhibition as a war machine, and specifically, "The museum, the institution entrusted with organising exhibitions, is the state apparatus that requires centralism, which territorialises and cannot do away with ideas such as «masterpiece», «collection»... But at the same time, an exhibition is a

machine of war, a device associated with nomadism, de-territorialisation. The state apparatuses are on the side of power and the war machines are on the side of strength. I believe this opposition is fundamental. An exhibition must not try to take power from the spectators, but rather provide resources to enhance the strength of thought”³.

Effectively, as Didi-Huberman says, the aspiration of any exhibition is to show to what extent we can reconceive the messages of certain works and the relationships between them time and time again; however, in the face of this exercise of confronting the “infinite” shown by art, we must ask when the reading we suggest as curators ends.

Undoubtedly in the museum, the curator gives his look of the artists, his ideological and formal positions and their influences on the readings of the audience from the exhibition. However, paradoxically all of this is a mirage of authorship, or, less categorically, an authorship strongly mediatised by the devices of the museographic institution, by its protocols as a “state apparatus”, as the French essayist warns us. At the same time, it is an authorship that receives no reply or which receives a highly diffuse reply filtered by the appreciation of the works of art and by the appreciations of the very institution with its generic vocabularies and

³ George Didi-Huberman: transcription of the talk the author gave in the Escuela de las Artes 2010 about his *Atlas exhibition. How to carry the world on your shoulders?* at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid (26 November 2010 – 28 March 2011)

Consult: <http://www.revistaminerva.com/articulo.php?id=449>

voraciousness for time and cultural leisure. In this sense, we might say with Didi-Huberman, that the exhibition is an essay, to which we might add that it is an essay where the author, the curator, does not have access to the last edition and works on the ideas, selects the materials and reappears as a spectator of his own project, a reader of his own text.

If the museum is not the place for carrying out the exercise of critical review that all essayist authorship calls for, where should this be done? In what way should it be shared with others? How to find points in common with other tensions in different disciplines in the specific problem of the curator

1.2 – Critical curating timeline

It is difficult to establish at what time the figure of the curator, as we know it today appeared. By extension, we also lack some kind of generic, scientific or minimally objective parameter to allow us to distinguish suitable curator practice from erroneous. We get the impression, and this is the first paradox that this research tries to face, that each exhibition project claims a different action. However, we see how a large part of the curator solutions repeat very similar historiographical springs, and what is even more contradictory, they are handled with a vocabulary of similar terms that have been reformulated in time.

In his *Brief history of curating*⁴ the curator and editor Hans Ulrich Obrist, through different interviews, follows a route that tries to establish a certain evolution in curator practice. This and other examples in some way mark the type of habitual genealogies that historically explain the work of the curator, which are characterised as locating the trajectory of the contemporary curator at the end of the 1970s and as turning to direct accounts from several highly renowned curators.

Notwithstanding, the most important objection that can be done to this kind of historicist approaches is to consider the exhibition as an

⁴ OBRIST, H. U. (2008) *A Brief History of Curating*, Zurich: JRP|Ringier

“author’s milestone” and not as a complex process, full of frictions, in which are participating many interlocutors and where, especially, the dialogue or the institutional confrontation defines completely the dimensions of the analysed proposals. Then, in the study of Obrist and in others in the same path, can be seen a paradoxical inclination to avoid the unquestionable importance of the management in a exhibition project, originating with it an idea, totally inexact, according to which the curators operate after epical and original “gestures ” or “narrations”, extracted of all ideological, current or symbolic circumstance.

Precisely this quite ethereal approach to the curator’s figure has encouraged certain perspective about that as a kind of new and unexpected hero inside the current world of art, connoting his role from a perspective uncritical and legendary. From here emerge many of the phobias that have gone with the recent curatorial analysis, until to the extend to transform the curators into the responsible of the always populist and incessant crisis of the contemporary art. But from here have sprouted as well some pervert institutional usages, homologation of deficient cultural politics based on participation and leadership of the curators with more or less celebrity, who contributed with the value of their signature to projects, some of them, lacking of collective and/or sectorial validation.

But if the historiography of the curatorship has abused of the testimonial discourse of the proper curators to establish canonical lines and figures to worship, we must say, besides, that the same chronology about the curator perhaps has to go back in time, dissociating from the strict cycle of what is contemporary in art. In fact, what we nowadays consider a curator is not more than a series of consequences, modifications, evolutions, and adaptations that started around year 1926, with the work in the design field signed by El Lissitzky for numerous propaganda exhibitions after the triumph of the Soviet Revolution.

However, being as it is a work about a determinate study case, the present investigation is not the right place to deepen in this historical timeline about the curatorial practices, even if it would be interesting to make a critical review to that chronology that somehow certifies the Obrist's study to which we are referring to.

1.2.1 – Exhibitions during the 70s

In the transition from the decade of the sixties to the seventies the multiple circuits of contemporary art start to mobilize. Obviously, the situations between Europe and United States are diametrically opposite, in countries with democratic political spheres and in nations where the military dictatorships and the absence of freedom are still dominating, nevertheless, in the period from 1968 to 1978, approximately, we could say that each country starts to build its artistic circuit, appropriate its own economical and social conditions.

This process coincides with the irruption of a series of aesthetical movements that were demanding new pedagogical mechanisms suitable to the sudden need of making comprehensible the contemporary practices and, at the same time, to inscribe them in the dynamics of common leisure, as well in the media channels of the time which had the all the attention.

Is in this moment when an intermediate figure appears, the curator, who to some extent will reconfigure various traditional roles, such as the specialized critic, the historian, the cultural mediator and the artist converted in art narrator of his/her time. Besides, we must point out how this new agent allowed better and more agile links between the museum,

the present and the market.

Is in this conjunction when the first curators appears or, at least, the firsts curatorial authorships begin to be recognisable, which are characterized for certain practical vagueness and for the use, unexpectedly narrative, of the capacity of the exhibition to create “accountings” instead of focus on historiographical phases, creative trends or personal careers.

In accordance with this perspective, achieves a very important significance a determinate kind of collective shows, where the artistic projects work in such a way that they can illustrate a preliminary thesis that, in general, dips its conceptual roots outside of the territory of art. It is interesting to remember that already then there was a certain idea of depletion of the theoretical discourses, and because of that the curator seems to add a look that seems to participate of the dominant aesthetic codes but at the same time, overflows their limits with some eccentric contributions, after ideas or suggestions coming from a personal observation of the world.

Then, it is not difficult to discover in these firsts exhibitions of the seventies – perhaps the show *Live in Your Head. When attitudes Become Form* by Harald Szeemann⁵ is the most clearly recognisable and

⁵ LIVE IN YOUR HEAD. *When Attitudes Become Form (Works, Processes, Concepts, Situations, Information)*. From 22nd March to 27th April 1969. Kunsthalle of Berne / Museum Haul Lange of Krefeld / The Institute of Contemporary Arts of London.

praised, and that operates as an authentic manifest – certain confusion between the roles of the curator and the artist, to the point where in many cases the historiography has recovered this shows as autonomic and independent “pieces”.

Nonetheless, beyond their success, it is convenient to note that, unlike the propaganda exhibitions during the forties and fifties, it happens a fundamental change in the usage of the displays, which no longer refer to scenography or to theatre, but to theoretical interfaces appropriately illustrated. Perhaps this change of attitude from the volumetric to the narrative, with its own implications referring to immediacy, transitoriness and low budget, is one of the aspects to take in consideration at this point, although at the same time is when the curator begins to have a unstoppable public relevance, since not only gives more visibility to the artist’s work, but seems to update this one with new reading parameters suitable for the less strict look, less dependent on the historicist standards and more eager to originality.

On the other hand, from this recently new narrative position the museography discourses begin releasing themselves from the purely technical nomenclatures or the inherit codes from de academic side, appearing, as well, a new vocabulary called curatorial that, to some extend, was sort of a picnic between multiple metalanguages and where,

maybe for the first time, the museum gain the possibility of innovating from the present instead of certifying the past.

1.2.2 – The happy eighties: the birth of the star curator

In the decade of the eighties, with the definitive consolidation of the artistic circuits and their reflexion in the public environment as well as in the market sector, all together with the dominant economical strength, the figure of the curator sees how much his attribution are increasing from multiple levels.

However, to distinguish different dimensions we must say that the characteristic curator during the eighties united three distinct functions: the first was a political function, since many of the curators were getting in and out of the institutional sphere with the goal of bringing some visibility and to consolidate certain canonical proposals in despite of others; the second one was related to historiography and critic, since some of the best known curators, especially those that had certain theoretical pretentions inherit from the curatorial model of the previous decade, assumed by themselves the task of elaborating the main discursive lines, legitimizing aesthetic models and crating strict genealogies that, for its public and media vigour, segregate to the most eccentric any subject, current o trend with antagonist vocation; the third and the last function was entirely administrative, after which a great number of curators were assigned with the responsibility of negotiating

and supervising the market value of the artistic firms and the symbolic patrimony that themselves already used in their own projects.

By this means, if in the seventies conceptual originality had been the keyword to evaluate the curatorial practices, in the eighties mediation, in the sense of, the capacity of the curators to link different territories – institutional and public sector with the private field, cultural policies with the media, art with consumption products – became the main item and the most characteristic one.

In this moment is when the concept of “star curator” was born, which not only certifies the importance and the power of the most popular curators, but also proves how these become portable institutions, small corporations with surprisingly influential on the decisions taken by the divers strata that organize the culture.

Then, if the curator from the seventies had implemented his/her condition of author in despite of other questions related with the management of the economic or the symbolic resources, neglecting any kind of ideological or conflictive perspective, the typical curator from the eighties acts in a completely opposite direction, so it is to say, he/she is in the middle of a commercial and political structure of art, building for himself a specific and unavoidable place inside the institutional framework and the institution of art, although it has in return a lightning

of most of the theoretical approaches of their exhibitions.

Precisely from this view we could understand the emergence during this period of a series of curatorial paradigms – the idea of what is young, what is modern, the otherness⁶, etc.– perfectly suitable to the new processes of commercialization, banalization, and “festivalization” of culture, which find their most purified expression in the great artistic-corporative events that proliferate all the decade long.

However, with the consolidation of the curator as a *star system* or as a new main character of the future of the artistic circuits, some other opposite currents and furious⁷ allegations begin to be produced and that will result, already during the nineties, as a antagonist position towards the role of the curator and, indiscriminately, towards certain creative zones associated to contemporaneity.

⁶ A paradigmatic case of a curatorial discourse strongly related to media and with obscure colonialist connotations is the well-known exhibition curated by Jean-Hubert Martin in the Musée National d'Art Moderne – Centre George Pompidou and the Grande Halle de la Villette of Paris entitled the *Magiciens de la terre* (from 18th May to 14th August 1989). However, in a completely different sense we must remember the show signed by Kasper König for the Mesehallen of Colony, under the title *Westkunst. Zeitgenössische Kunst SEIT 1939. Von hier aus. Zwei Monate neue Deutsche Kunst in Düsseldorf* (from 3rd May to 16th August 1981) and especially, the XVI Biennial of São Paulo, curated by Walter Zanini between 16th October and 20th December 1981.

⁷ See, for instance CLAIR, J, (1988) *Paradoxe du conservateur*, Paris: Echoppe.

1.2.3 – Curating in modern times

During the nineties a series of different circumstances and scenes is getting activated, which, without a doubt, intensify some of the questions that we have been pointing regarding the curatorial practices.

From one hand, the importance achieved by Internet as a new space of artistic production, exhibition and distribution increased substantially the spectrum of possibilities for the curatorship⁸, allowing that new generations of curators, not longer connected with the historiography, the essay or the cultural mediation, could develop projects at the expense of the institutional dynamics, with very low budgets and with and with an important level of self-sufficiency and self-management.

Nevertheless, after the illusion of the net-curatorship, few proposals were able to stand by themselves and could feed back, reason for which they remained inactive, disregarded by most of the institutions that had contributed to their creation or simply as an obstacle of an unfortunately

⁸ See, for instance, the proposal of Peter Weibel, Walter van der Cruijesen, Johannes Goebel, Golo Föllmer, Hans-Peter Schwarz, Jeffrey Shaw and Benjamin Weil: *NET_CONDITION* (1999), produced by the ZKM in Karlsruhe in collaboration with the AVL Art Gate of Graz, the Media Center of Art and Design (MECAD) of Barcelona and the InterCommunication Center (ICC) Of Tokyo.

Very interesting as well but a bit later are the projects of Karin Ohlenschläger and Luis Rico entitled *Banquete* (2003), in the Centro Cultural Conde Duque / MedialabMadrid, the Palau de la Virreina of Barcelona and the ZKM of Karlsruhe, also the exhibition of Inke Arns: *The Wonderful World of irrational.org* (2006), in the HMKV Dortmund.

occasional⁹ trend.

On the contrary, in the moment it been confirmed an unstoppable process of biennialization which, somehow, enforced the media type curator typical from the previous decade, producing the mirage of an existence of divers curatorial currents suitable to work lines and various professional conceptions. Precisely with the arrival of the crisis in the economic world, the devaluation of the cultural politics and the change course in the leisure dynamics has been proved that the outlook for the curatorship did not have enough strength and that, likewise to the cut backs of the institutional museography programs, the curators have seen how their attributions have been reduced including their public presence.

Even though it is convenient to point until which extend the current scenario has been hostile with the curatorship – from the professional side and the lack of projects, as well as in the sector perspective with the disrepute that this figure generates in many fields–, we have to accept that this purification has permitted that proposals and lines of activity previously dismissed for being minority, excessive of ideologically confrontational could nowadays develop and obtain certain audience and proper resources.

⁹ Here we would find a project as paradigmatic as *artport* (2001), virtual platform led by the curator specialized in new media Christine Paul for the Whitney Museum of New York that lost its activity few years after being opened.

Therefore, the present perspective of the curatorship has to be defined as a deep disorientation, which, paradoxically, opens the possibility of new ways to understand the cultural mediations and artistic swipes. An era distinguished by ideological challenges that, definitely now, might be impossible to cope with.

Obviously there are some former ways still opened, anachronistic positions that keep on thinking about the exhibition as an author gesture, as we have already pointed. From another hand, there are even arriving to the curatorship field authors coming from other disciplines, philosophers, architects, historians or planners¹⁰ that are using museography as a theoretical display. However, some other rebel or apocryphal forms can be found in curatorship, which reply or amplify other ways to understand the political and social action.

The challenges seem to be wide open –but the dangers of a renewed “traditionalism” as well–, reason for which maybe it is the right moment to deal with other attributions and to question, also, that current trend –and temporary fashion– that sees in the curator the incarnation and the guilty of the disconnections between the contemporary art and the audience.

¹⁰ Likely was made at that time by, among others, Jean-François Lyotard with *Le Immatériaux* (1985), in the Centre George Pompidou of Paris; Paul Virilio with *Ce qui arrive / Unknown Quantity* (2002-03) in the Foundation Cartier in Paris and more recently, Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel after the project *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy* (2005) in the ZKM of Karlsruhe.

Part II – Economy: Picasso

Chapter 2 – Presentation

2.1 – A brief description

Conceived after the commission from Museu Picasso de Barcelona to the artist Pedro G. Romero, *Economy: Picasso* (25th May-2nd September 2012) was a project that was about attending a series of demands with different nature and, even, apparently contradictory. For that, besides of the curatorial idea and its consequent content management and museography formalization, was evident the need to establish mediation strategies and critical interpellation mechanisms suitable with the needs of each one of the agents involved during the developing process.¹¹

Being a proposal with a high-level budgetary taking in consideration the context of Barcelona at that time and, even more, inside the contemporary art scene, the administration of monetary resources and its appropriate distribution occupied a very significant place not only from a entirely productive perspective, but from the very same concept of a project that, as in its title, was already referring to aspects of economic

¹¹ For a much more exhaustive index of the different areas of work see the section Appendix (9.1 – General credits)

nature.

From another hand, the temporary duration understood between the order from the institution, the first parallel public activities and the elaboration of a book that compiled the totality of the generated documents – three years since the beginning of 2010 until February of 2013–, were making that *Economy: Picasso* was being expanded along an unusual period of time for a collaboration between an institution and an artist.

At the same time, and due as well that extension of time, the working methodology had to extremely take in consideration the following phases of the project, the different interlocutors that gradually were appearing and, at last, the codes of dialogue that these were demanding in order to fulfil their respective attributions, all of it trying not no betray the complexity of the discourse and avoiding to transform the exhibition in a bureaucratic institutions or in a dense web of merely technical executions.

Conclusively, as one last added difficulty, appeared the public communication of a project that was building and disclosing little by little, after certain anomalous evolution, where the sessions called *Laboratories* started previously the exhibition; where some of the theoretical activities had a double venues, one was the Museu Picasso and

the other, simultaneously, in different alternative spaces in the city; where the audio-visual register of these actions was incorporating live in two different web pages, one from the institution and the other was the project¹² one; and, finally, where a book that had to translate everything into a editorial format, incorporating sort of a theoretical recapitulation about the subjects treated and about some conceptual details of the global proposal.

¹² See <http://www.bcn.cat/museupicasso/es/exposiciones/archivo-fx.html> and <http://fxysudoble.com/es/archivo/cronologia/2012>

2.2 – Teams

We have already noted how the evolution and the chronology of the project, together with the logical productive limitations of the Museu Picasso, provoked certain division between a management zone developed inside the institution area and another, completely different, that was carried about in peripheral territories and, even, opposites to the purely patrimonial resources and the public representation.

In order to guarantee this connection and permeability between an “inside” of the institution and an “outside” of it – that even would be a metaphor used by *Economy: Picasso* in the museography– there were created two teams that, at the same time, were divided in specific areas, according to the productive responsibilities.

The first group was composed by the curators, Pedro G. Romero and Valentín Roma, whom were working together with a content coordination responsible and general production, Carlota Gómez, who managed the development of the project, the art pieces loan coming from international collections and documentary research, as well as the follow-up during the elaboration of the specific proposals.

Closely related with this triangle eventually arrived the authors of the museum plan and the direction of the assembly and the dismantling,

the studio called Roura y de León Arquitectos, who worked very closely with the curators of the project. In a determinate phase of the proposal, when it was necessary to carry-out twenty-one specific interventions made by Pedro G. Romero, an additional team was established, BNV producciones, located in Seville, where the artist and co-curator was living, fact that simplified the direct supervision of the author of his productions.

From the institutional side different departments were activated depending on the moment that the project was going through.

Scheme of the work teams:

A – Conception and authorship

- 1- Curatorial team: Pedro G. Romero and Valentín Roma
- 2 – Curator's assistant and content coordinator: Carlota Gómez
- 3 – Museum design: Roura y de León Arquitectos
- 4 – Specific interventions production: BNV producciones

B – Institutional coordination and production

- 1- Museu Picasso coordination: Isabel Cendoya and Mariona Tió
- 2- Documentation: Margarida Cortadella
- 3 – Preventive conservation: Reyes Jiménez and Anna Vélez
- 4- *Laboratories* coordination: Anna Guarro and Marta Iglesias
- 5- Publication coordination and editing: Marta Jové
- 6- Press responsible: Manel Baena

2.3 – Curators

One of the main complexities of Economy: Picasso and, at the same time, one of its most immediate challenges was to find the modality with what the curators will operate. The given circumstance was that one of them, Pedro G. Romero, had to work not only as a curator, but as an entirely artistic perspective, since the project had in itself, besides diverse work lines, an articulated revision of the artist's recent career, as well as regarding the proposal under which the artist is working since the late nineties, the so-called Archivo F.X.¹³, that was presenting a series of unknown interventions, produced by Museu Picasso, from the same project that we are analysing.

In order to solve this imperative, and coming from a previous experience, carried-out with the project *Archivo F. X. / Pedro G. Romero. Wirtschaft, Ökonomie, Konjunktur*, which was held in the Württembergischer Kunstverein of Stuttgart, it was chosen a non-programmatic solution, meaning, a voluntary blurring of the pre-

¹³ The Archivo F.X. works around the taxonomies and classifications that refer the language and "the real". The base for these operations is constituted by a vast archive of images about political iconoclast anti-sacramental in Spain between 1845 and 1945, images that are organized under a critical index of terms that are coming from the visual constructions of the wide field of the project of modernity. Since the late nineties it has been working, sometimes compiling images and documents that show the significance that the phenomenon achieved in the Spanish state since the ending of nineteenth century until the middle part of the twentieth century, activating the reflection about the subject by means of seminars and publications, or boosting from inside the artistic, social and political practices the importance of iconoclast as a constitutive element of our society's behaviours and forms.

established roles. Therefore, Pedro G. Romero would spread his activity as the author of the project and Valentín Roma would develop an interlocution task, underpinning and adjusting certain shades and discursive lines that when they arrived to materiality, which is to say, when penetrating the symbolic web of the institution and in the interface of the proper museographic project, were demanding an exercise of translation and proportion in accordance of the density that articulated the project.

Somehow, and on the contrary what usually happens in a bicephalic curatorship, the vague nature of the curatorial roles eased working in the interest of contents that coming from Pedro G. Romero's mind, were stretching, sort to speak, both curator's capacities, obliging them to getting in and out repeatedly of the functions simply assigned to them from a hasty mode.

Notwithstanding, to draw more precisely the attributions, we must say that Valentín Roma assumed the curatorial narration of the presentation of Archivo F. X. in the way that a curator- lets say- orthodox and Pedro G. Romero performed as a author and responsible of the conceptual architecture of the museographic proposal, of the *Laboratories* and of the publication entitled *Economy*.

2.4 – Technical specifications and budget

Before analysing exhaustively each one of the sections or zones of work that were articulating Economy: Picasso we must point out, as a break down, some of the technical and budgetary details that could help to understand the scale of the project.

A – Chronology

1 – Conception: from February 2010 until February 2011

2 – Production:

2.1 – Laboratories *Intercambios, Particiones* and *Amistades*

(*Exchanges, Partitions* and *Friendships*): from February 2011 until May 2012

2.2 – Exhibition *Economy: Picasso*: from February 2011 until May 2012

2.3– Publication *Economy*: from May 2011 until February 2013

B – Participants

1– Laboratory *Intercambios* (22 speakers): Pedro G. Romero, Valentín Roma, Esteban Pujals, Manuel Prados Sánchez, Alejandro Peña,

Rogelio López Cuenca, Joaquín Vázquez, Marina Garcés, Santiago López Petit, Colectivo Todoazen, Beatriz Cavia and Miren Jaio (Bulegoa z/b), Flo6x8, Isidoro Valcárcel Medina, Isaías Griñolo, Juan Luis Moraza, Oier Etxeberría, Patricia Molins, Inmaculada Salinas, Carme Nogueira, Miguel Benlloch, Manuel Delgado.

2- Laboratory *Particiones* (15 speakers): Ignacio Echevarría, Erick Beltrán, Paz Moreno Feliu, Julio Jara, Horacio Fernández, Joan Vila-Puig and Elvira Pujol (Sitesize), Agustín García Calvo, Observatorio Metropolitano, Salvador Cayuela, Alejandra Riera, Beatriz Preciado, Nancy Garín, José Luis Ortiz Nuevo, Niño de Riche.

3- Laboratory *Amistades* (7 writers): Nuria Enquita Mayo, Carlota Gómez, Juan José Lahuerta, Antonio Molina Flores, Antonio Orihuela, Julián Rodríguez, Susana Serrano.

4- Exhibition *Economy: Picasso* (58 artists): Pablo Picasso, Mel Bochner, Rafael Barradas, Felipe Aláiz, Helios Gómez, Pedro G. Romero, Joaquín Torres García, Rafael Laffon, Louise Lawler, Lucía Sánchez Saornil, Leticia El Halli Obeid, Alejandra Riera and Fulvia Carnevale, Richard Hamilton, Eduardo Paolozzi, Rafael Agredano,

Frédéric Bruly Bouabré, Gavin Jantjes, Fred Wilson, Adrian Piper, Max Jacob, Francis Picabia, Salvador DALí, Max Aub and Jusep Torres Campalans, Josep Renau, Marcel Duchamp, Mark Tansey, Hans Haacke, Dimitri Prigov, Mark Lombardi, Ayreen Anastas and René Gabri, Zbyněk Baladran, Ricardo Basbaum, Ivan Kliun, Cildo Meireles, Tibor Hajas, Joseph Beuys, Marcel Broodthaers, Zachary Formwalt, César Aira, Carl Einstein, Raymonn Roussel, Michel Leiris, Nacho Criado, Ramon Casas, Juan Gris, Orson Welles, Elmyr d'Ory, Isidoro Valcárcel Medina, Simon Wachsmuth, Ad Reinhard, Guy Debord, Asger Jorn, Aleksandr Rodchenko, Art & Language and Archivo F. X.

5- Publication *Economy* (5 essayist and 21 unpublished texts): Rosalind Krauss, Ángel González, Georges Didi-Huberman, Pedro G. Romero, Valentín Roma

C - Location

1st Floor of the Museu Picasso de Barcelona: 829 m2

D - Audience

Museu Picasso de Barcelona: 1.087.765 visitors on 2012

Economy:Picasso: 25.134 visitors

E - Budget

1- Laboratories: 30.132,86€

2 - Exhibition: 513.000€

3- Publication: 89.000€

Chapter 3 – The Commission

3.1 – Who, why and wherefore of this exhibition?

At the beginning of year 2010, after accomplishing the first phase of the regeneration of the Museum that covered since 2006 – year of his designation– until 2009, moment were the architect and historian of art Juan José Lahuerta joined the team of the museum to make a re-reading of the permanent collection, Pepe Serra, the former director of Museu Picasso, starts a second episode that has as a primordial goal to confront critically the historiographical position of Pablo Picasso after working with contemporary artists.

The perspective that was feeding this work line had to do with an urgent need to demystify the celebrated figure of the artist but, especially, with the very own identity of the museum, an institution which disproportionate levels of audience – it must not be forgotten that it is the most visited museum in Catalonia and that receives the same amount of visitors than The Mosque of Cordoba– find themselves with an imbalanced proportion between the lack of public repercussion inside the local context of Barcelona and with the null presence in the aesthetic

dialectics of the moment.

This urgency to pay back the museum to the citizenship and to move away gradually from the fluctuations of tourists had been already dealt with Pepe Serra throughout a series of measures that limited the access to too large groups and that favour to the local inhabitants with ticket reduced weekly days. However, the director was concerned about the “penetration “of the contemporary discourses inside the institution and that, together with the reorganization of the collection, led by Juan José Lahuerta, configure an unknown image of the museum, that would tend towards a specialized centre of Picassian studies, something unprecedented in an international scene. The idea of an equipment saturated by a tourist audience lacking of critical capacity, simply spurred on the cultural consumption, created a very particular idea about the Museu Picasso and was precisely there where was more urgent to deal with other kind of projects that would “normalize” the activity of the institution in relation with other similar ones of the context of Barcelona.

We must add the opening of a documentation centre and of a specialized library, both located in a building connected to the principal palaces, which at the end of 2008 begun holding divers investigation and university projects.¹⁴

¹⁴ The project Culturas de Archivo, led by Jorge Blasco and produced by Fundació Antoni Tàpies in collaboration with Museu Picasso, started a chapter of its path in December 2008, inside the venue

Finally, and this was one of the most important parts of the commission, the project had to be useful “to force the seams of the institution”, in the former director’s words, “staining each and every department”, so it is to say, obliging to their respective responsible to step out of the common dynamics, focused on exhibitions with patrimonial range, shows cut by historiography or in itinerant packages that had in Museu Picasso one of their obligated stops.

The requirement of the commission, translated as well as a wide infrastructure regarding the evolution of the project, defined the scale of it and a great part of the working lines, which involved the whole of the workers of the institution, from those who were usually dedicated to the coordination, promotion and conservation, until those other ones that normally held administrative and economic management positions, who had to deal with, an absolutely odd situation for a museum with the Museu Picasso characteristics, a very complex production of an artist not historical but contemporary.

Obviously this director’s demand placed on the front line of importance essential questions of the nature of Economy: Picasso, aspects that were related to the notion of authorship, to the idea of interaction

of the museum. From another han, the course “Repensar Picasso”, inside the post-degree of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Bellaterra), under the direction of Gerard Vilar and Jèssica Jacques, with the collaboration of Museu Picasso and Fundació Joan Miró of Barcelona, was activated in 2009.

with the public, with the protocols of security, with the basic regulations of the museum and, at last, with the ways to perceive the public function of an institution and its relationships with changeable conceptual contents, fluctuating and tentative, even without the logic historical legitimation and the formal and patrimonial approach usual in the exhibitions about Picasso.

A first approximation to these kind of contemporary proposals had been already accomplished with the show dedicated by Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) to Rodney Graham¹⁵, which had, as an essential part of its achievement, the intervention of the Canadian artist in the Museu Picasso under the title *Possible Abstractions*. The mentioned institutional collaboration, never done before, started a line of activities that should be validated by *Economy: Picasso* and that, on top, was going to continue with following projects of other artists that had delved into the re-reading of Picasso from different perspectives, such as Muntadas, Joan Fontcuberta, Rogelio López Cuenca and Daniel G. Andújar, amongst other.

¹⁵ *Rodney Graham. Through the Forest* (30th January – 18th May 2010) – MACBA, (12th June – 26th September 2010) – Museum für Gegenwartskunst Basel, (20th October 2010 – 23rd January 2011) – Hamburger Kunsthalle; *Rodney Graham. Possible Abstractions* (18th May – 17th June 2010) – Museu Picasso of Barcelona. Curator: Friedrich Meschede.

3.2 – Institutional Expectations

Accordingly with the realized commission, the institutional expectations were placed on three priority aspects: from one hand, building a new historiography narration about the Pablo Picasso's figure; from another, to guide the museum towards a different kind of programming and different working dynamics; and finally, interpellate to a distinct audience and, by means of that, start a period of collaboration with various museum institutions not necessarily linked with the traditional exegesis of the Málaga painter .

Regarding the first expectation we must note until to which extend the Picassian historiography is based on a double inclination, the one that interprets Picasso with legendary arguments and academic formalism methodologies, and the other one that estimates its importance in a hierarchic position inside of the art system, fundamentally dealing with questions related to commerce, media and, simply, celebrity.

Somehow, Picasso is trapped in the discourses of his own specialists, who not only manage – sometimes in an autarchic manner– the aesthetical patrimony of the artist, but also agglutinate those exhibition narrations, which slowly, since almost twenty-five years, are being celebrated around the different museums of the world.

Due to its small scale, the Museu Picasso had been the holder, during a great part of its recent history, of these kinds of shows and their pursuant discourses, for what in the moment of the commission to Pedro G. Romero and Valentín Roma was urged trying to break and question the traditional vision of Picasso.

Besides, in a different sense, Picassian historiography finds its high point of intensity in the academic world, something that provokes an almost total lack of new generations of researchers about the artist, regenerated points of view from a generational perspective and, at the same time, another kind of projects that would question the artist.

Finally, in the Spanish context, there are few recent studies about Picasso and the bibliography about him seems to be surprisingly anachronistic. Therefore, the museum, through the director, not only was pretending to carry out a museographyc project, but specially, to spread a series of critical documents that would be used as a roadmap after which re-launch the interest of the painter.

Regarding the second expectation, we have already pointed out how the Museu Picasso personified a process of *touristification* excessively associated to Barcelona, which was settled on a programme without any critical depth, created with light exhibitions with a laudatory accent that, in many cases, were part of museum packages and simple

thematic tributes to some not really fundamental aspects about Picasso's work.

Somehow the institution needed to test itself using a different kind of proposal, opening a series of chapters that would remove it from certain autism. The Museu Picasso of Barcelona is, perhaps, one of the few organizations in Catalonia that achieves economic surplus with the ticket selling, however, this economic autonomy is not translated in a capacity of reaching the local population and, even less, the contemporary art sector. In a very crucial moment for the museum, when its director was negotiating with the local government to have a proper fiscal and administrative regime, that would allow to become independent from the Institut de Cultura de Barcelona (ICUB) and to assume particular challenges, not dependant of the political guidelines of the consistory of Barcelona, it was becoming fundamental to prove – and to prove to themselves– that the departments of the museum could carry out a radically different proposal to which they have produced until then and that, in a contrary case, this generalized tension produced by a very complex project would be useful as well to alert, from the management of the museum, which areas needed a reinforcement, a complementation or a implementation.

Finally, the third expectation, equally related with the audiences

and the nature of the Museu Picasso, demanded that *Economy: Picasso* oriented the institution towards a wider collaborative frame, where to be part of different kind of worries and to share proper and external resources. At this point seemed a very important requirement that the project itself could be executed as a network and that would not become another closed interpretation, maybe simply eccentric, about Picasso. Therefore, from certain perspective, *Economy: Picasso* had to be used as a presentation card and as an essay of a decentred project, that necessarily had to unite agents and interlocutors very diverse, coming from opposite zones of knowledge and intellectual activity. This same idea of creating a fabric of work opposing it to a enclosed narration was, most certainly, the main demand that was thrown to the curators, to who was required to incorporate their respective particular networking, which must had served, as well, as a intersection places between the museum and other institutions, private individuals and collectives.

3.3 – Links to the different audiences

The commission of Economy: Picasso had as one of its priority goals to interpellate diverse audiences until then alien to the dynamics of the museum.

We could establish four types of visitors with whom the project had to dialogue in very narrow relation with the demanded intentions from the Museu Picasso director's office:

1 – Audience coming from the Spanish contemporary art field

Due to its particular idiosyncrasy – a monographic institution, articulated around a small size collection that had been donated by an artist historically important–, the Museu Picasso had quite a few difficulties to get involved with what we could call its natural audience, a kind of visitor that frequents the contemporary art spaces. From another hand, being a museum with a very close relationship with the cultural offer of Barcelona, did not have any dimension within the Spanish state.

When the commission demands this link with the contemporary art audience was trying to absorb from it not only some of the ways of critical interpellation updated respect Picasso's figure, but also an enlargement

through different promotional and interactive means typical of this group of audience.

We must note, in this sense, that the webpage of Museu Picasso had achieved a remarkable implementation during the moment of the commission, for what resulted logical that the social media, bloggers and other spaces for digital opinions, were incorporated to the follow-up of the institution. In a different direction, we must insist in the propriety of receiving discourses coming from not academic fields, so as in the urgency of making partakers the contemporary artists regarding the subjects, the looks and the updates about Picassian studies.

2 - Audience coming from the social context and urban context of the institution

One of the aspects that the management of the museum wanted to reinforce most immediately was the dialogue with the neighbourhood where the Museu Picasso is located and, afterwards, the whole city.

An equipment with such a scale and public impact has not been stranger to a different critics relative to its social function, which were observing the museum as a sample of the policy of touristification of the consistory of Barcelona and, in some way, as the flagship of a manner of

understanding the hegemonic and unconnected culture that was not taking in consideration the concerns of the local citizenship. From another hand, the Museu Picasso is located in one of the most punished areas of the real-state speculation and the police control, which was provoking an initial rejection regarding the institution that needed to be analysed in depth and with all the possible arguments.

3 - Audience coming from the University field

The historiography about Picasso seems to be calling for new points of view, reason for which was very important to invite to the University students to penetrate the institution and to leave as a testimony their own researches. As we have already noted, they existed some lines of collaboration between different Catalan Universities, but the project had to reinforce the prominence of the students, offering to them particular working lines where to spread their own perspectives and critical essays.

4 - Audience coming from the antagonist's discourses

The most traditional interpretations about Picasso insist on remarking about him concepts such as masculinity, Hispanic, celebrity, etc.

Questioning these series of stereotypes involved, as well, working together with a great number of collectives that were developing and acting in the very centre of those political and social conflicts. This type of audience resistant in front of any kind of imposing narration had to have its own space and, besides, had to have it with all the possible consequences, not as a cultural rarity, but as a operative mechanism of critic, which somehow would shake the hegemonic readings about Picasso and, as an extension, the very own nature if the institution.

3.4 - INTERVIEW I - Pepe Serra - Former Director of the Museo Picasso of Barcelona. Currently, Director of the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya

1) Which were your intentions, as a director of Museu Picasso at that moment, when you commissioned the project Economy: Picasso to Pedro G. Romero?

The intentions were transparent and they could be synthesized in five: firstly, to shake the readings about Picasso; secondly, to establish a bond between the museum and contemporary artists that would contribute with their critical vision; thirdly, to force the production and administration structure of the institution, so it is, the various departments; fourthly, to re-define the relationship between the Museu Picasso with its surroundings and; fifthly, to increase the interpretations about Picasso with inputs not coming from the world of historians.

2) How do you think *Economy: Picasso* contributed to the museum?

Well, I think is a very difficult question to answer because in the end I was not until the end of the process of reception of *Economy: Picasso*; however, indeed I think that for the first time in a long time the Museu Picasso had some more visibility than usual being in the centre of certain debates about contemporary art of the city, something really important and very worthwhile to the perception of the museum from the citizenship point of view. Besides the great media attention that the project had, I think that it started some paths that could be perfectly passable in a future.

Chapter 4 – The idea

4.1 – Initial impressions

Because the commission was very wide and it had many horizons, the first impressions had to do with a series of questions about which were the places where a project such that should point at and, specially, which catches should avoid.

Paradoxically, one of the aspects where the curators were agree since the very beginning was to confront the proposal as an amplified episode about a collection of lines of investigation that already had its own path inside the Archivo F.X.. This point of view, we must say, of continuity, and not necessarily of exceptionality or anomaly, marked since the start the tone that Economy: Picasso had to have, that was understood as a great recapitulation where to sum up and promoted aspects that would have had a different visibility in other projects. A different rhythm was imposed with this first decision: in front of to the urgency of the commission and the needs of the institution, the proposal had to maintain certain autonomy and compromise with their own logics, developing zones of intersection and contamination that, albeit, would not jeopardise its natural development, as well as its evolution with the

participation of the numerous interlocutors that were appearing.

Obviously, there was the imperative of providing a new vision about Picasso, but instead of choosing certain premature search and simply conceited of originality, the proposal should orient towards the aggrupation of those questions, to make explicit the tension zones that would be against the readings with a definitive cut that had prevail until then. Therefore, more than building a different narration, Economy: Picasso had to try to establish sort of a structural argument whose display was not going only in one direction, but to many impacts in external areas even to the artist. So, it was about liberating Picasso of the appropriation to which he was being summited by the exclusively theoretical historiography and by its own myth.

From this point of view, Picasso had to be enclosed, surrounded and, why not, ignored. Precisely, this vision literally cubist, an image that is cracking in uncountable perspectives, was perhaps the first metaphor that encouraged the project.

In a different level of analysis we could find where to head the researches that were nourishing the proposal. The work about the art economy was one of the essential lines of the Archivo F. X. and, in that sense, Picasso was presented as a perfect synopsis, we could say something like a total compendium, of the paradoxes of a possible

economic and materialistic inquiry about one of the icons of the history of art. This great focus of attention, almost as a trope, that unites Picasso and the art market, finished completing the working field. From another hand, pulling out this pecuniary string, not only was accessible to a opaque zone in the interpretations about the Málaga painter, but also a general spectrum was being drawn from which read a period of time, ours, characterised by the commercialization of culture and a territory, the art one, where the transactions between the value and the price seems to be suspiciously unattended.

Finally, the symbolic meaning and the dynamics of the Museu Picasso were submitted to a deep recapitulation, its condition of container pejoratively connoted and, however, with a somehow boundless public amplification. Arrived to this point, the curators considered that they had to participate direct and incisively in the protocols of the institution, questioning three basic ideas: the notion of patrimony and authorship; the concept of exhibition rhetoric, with its consequent accuracies on theatricality, security and scenography; and, finally, the pedagogical dimension assumed by the museum in a sometimes uncritical way, thing that invited to re-think the relationship between the audience and the institutional discourses.

With these five keywords – continuity, interrogation, critical

polyphony, economy and interception– the project started.

4.2 – Analysis methodologies

The methodological aspect of *Economy: Picasso* turned out to be of a great importance taking in consideration the complexity of the project. In this sense we realized the need of establishing a solid nucleus that, during the firsts months of work, would liberate the proposal from the institutional needs, from its interferences and that, at the same time, would generate mechanisms of protection towards the conceptual rhythms that, sometimes, are difficult to assume by the institutions which are not used to produce peculiar projects.

One of the first demands arrived in with the need to explain what is Archivo F. X., where its interest were going and with which mechanism was spreading put, who was the artist Pedro G. Romero, which other project he had had in the past and in which places *Economy: Picasso* supposed a continuity or a rupture. For what a series of private presentations were elaborate, to the divers departments of the technical staff of the museum, where we tried to achieve a familiarity of ideas, languages and narrations that will be worked with further on.

Additionally were established some roles inside the project that, at the starting point, were very noticeable, with two curators assuming very clear attributions, an external to the museum coordination that was

acting as a bridge and the teams of museography and editorial conceptualization that had they own working spaces outside the institution.

The idea that was encouraging this very strict definition of functions was to establish an exteriority and an interiority regarding the museum that would allow to both sectors to get in and out depending on the needs of the situation, permitting an opposite vision of each working zone.

In a different sense, the first line of investigation obliged to go over the editorial and patrimonial archives of the institution, for what a preliminary phase of documentary work was planned was planned, after which sort of a economical library about Picasso was created and when, as well, was drawn a first line of works from the collection of the museum susceptible to be critically explored.

From another hand, a big mind map was formed with terms that will delimited the areas were to act and reflect on, that would discriminate the type of work regarding the seminars, speeches and debates and, at the same time, the demands with respect to the exhibition.

To reinforce the different lines of the project a series of explicative texts were written to help to communicate, partially at least, without

falling into over informing, to each one of the interlocutors. Besides, the institution was liberated from the direct management of some of the working lines, which could have been disrupted by some unnecessary technical and administrative protocols. Then, the specific budgetary distribution was made by the curators, who dimensioned the project depending on the interests and not on the public visibility of the different equipment.

In this sense, the first part of the methodology of the proposal consisted on building a proper space of investigation inside the institution, sort of prosthesis on it that was distributing the timings of decanting the information, that was filtering the relationship with the people and collectives that would participate and that, at the same time, was activating each one of the departments through the partial presentations of the contents.

Once this operating system of work was consolidated, a complete theoretical proposal was presented and the different production calendars and budgets were crosschecked.

4.3 – Preliminary texts

Due to the complexity that was already suggesting the project and with the aim of presenting the Archivo F.X. to the proper institution we decided to elaborate a textual report, composed by two wide and exhaustive essays, that will be reproduced shortly, which were trying to focus on the field on which Economy: Picasso would be working on.

Despite of having an internal use, those writings had a double nature, strictly economical, as a “contract” , in the sense of a certification and a compromise about some contents, but also as a “narration”, meaning an explanation about choosing some theoretical options instead of others. Then, we could say that by means of these two documents the project not only was starting as a transaction or institutional exchange, but also with a series of communications codes based on the writing as a certificate.

Economy: Picasso (provisional title) – long version

In most cases the work of modern and avant-garde art was intended not only to transform the sensible but also to bring about changes of a social and political order, to which end it had to operate with a different sense of the economy. 'Economy' is understood here in its two senses, as a change in the order of things that occur in the world, a new kind of distribution, and also a new configuration of exchanges, transfers of value, a shift in the mechanisms of trade and communication.

This attention to the economic is evident in the Russian productivisms, of course, but there are other crucial examples: William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement, the divisionist movement championed by Fénéon, the German Dada group spearheaded by Hugo Ball and the Surrealist dissidence led by Georges Bataille. In fact, we can see that the process we know as the dematerialization of art draws on all of these strands, which were not always utopian, often with paradoxical results. In a sense, different models of economy came into being, all aspiring to present the world in different ways. We are talking here not only about the economic models that communism and fascism came to embody, but also about other ways of understanding the capitalist economy, from small-scale liberalism to social democracy, which were also real paradigms that presented and formalized the world in different ways.

Nowadays, however, a vast global capitalist economy manages and lets itself be represented by all kinds of forms and gestures, which we cannot even call cynicism; rather, this polysemy is its way of being. The

dematerialization of art has here reached its zenith, paradoxically taking advantage in a single economic model of all these dissident, alternative and critical forces. Paradoxes abound, and not only in the prices that these artworks achieve at auction. Dematerialization has made little contribution to the democratization of the artistic experience, although it has aided its distribution among the things of the world. Democratization has reconstituted the margins of economic value to the extent that the works themselves and artistic operations escape its effect. The paradoxes, of course, should not immobilize the discourse or impair the capacity to invent other forms of sharing and exchanging things. Archaeology and the work of genealogy proposed here are committed to problematizing certain schematisms and common places of the present artistic landscape.

The economy of art we know, in the two senses indicated — trade and distribution of the sensible — is indebted to Picasso above all for its way of being, and yet the genealogies of dematerialization of the arts we know, those that have hegemonically imposed their discourse, derive on the one hand from Duchampian operations and, on the other, from the influence of Russian productivism. In the real economy of art no-one doubts that it is the path opened up by Picasso that has led to the present state of affairs, but perhaps on the fringes created by the academic elite and the radicalization of art practices this certainty often goes unnoticed.

With *Economy: Picasso* we hope not only to help rewrite this line of force inherent in the work and the trade of art by Picasso for the landscape of current artistic practices; we also hope to find in its most radical manifestations and in its most original operations ways of reformulating

the present state of relations between art and the world, relations that are always economically mediated, whether it be, I repeat, by their sharing or in the exchange of things themselves.

The exhibition will especially include pieces by Picasso and also works by artists from his milieu — Guillaume Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Georges Braque, Juan Gris, Manolo, Marius de Zayas, Alfred Stiegliz, Max Aub, José Bergamín, Helios Gómez, Felipe Alaiz, Barradas, etc — by key figures in the art of the mid century — Richard Hamilton, Eduardo Paolozzi, Piero Manzoni, Yves Klein, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Asger Jorn, Constant, Antoni Tàpies, Antonio Saura, Alberto Greco, Roberto Matta, etc — and by other artists of the long present of the dematerialization of art — Marcel Broodthaers, Guy Debord, Nicanor Parra, Lygia Pape, Hélio Oiticica, Lygia Clark, Mel Bocher, Jan Dibbetts, Hanne Darboven, Isidoro Valcárcel Medina, Hans Haacke, Adrian Piper, Nacho Criado, Sherrie Levine, Zachary Formwalt, etc.

Economy: Picasso (provisional title) – short version

The dematerialization of the arts tends to present itself by means of two genealogies that are clearly differentiated but abounding in points of intersection, one determined by Duchampian operations and the other having its most characteristic way of working in the various Russian productivisms. However, the path opened up by the artistic work of Pablo Picasso, together with its material consequences, not only constitutes the ‘configuring element’ of the present art economy, but the oblivion into which its own genealogical trace has fallen leaves us scarcely able to address the current landscape of the arts with realism.

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Alberto Greco, Roberto Matta, etc — and by other artists of the long present of the dematerialization of art — Marcel Broodthaers, Guy Debord, Nicanor Parra, Lygia Pape, Hélio Oiticica, Lygia Clark, Mel Bocher, Jan Dibbetts, Hanne Darboven, Isidoro Valcárcel Medina, Hans Haacke, Adrian Piper, Nacho Criado, Sherrie Levine, Zachary Formwalt, etc.

4.4 – INTERVIEW 2 – Pedro G. Romero – Artist and co-curator

i) A part from the objectives and the “unfolds” of your proposal, seen afterwards, what do you consider the most singular of *Economy: Picasso* taking as reference other of your projects regarding the line of Archivo F. X. “*De Economía cero*”?

I am not sure if it is the most singular but indeed I would say that *Economy: Picasso* constituted a radical attempt to penetrate what would consider the heart of the reading about the economy of art, where Picasso differing to Duchamp, accumulates the annoying role of Machiavelli of the finances.

But, pay attention on that perhaps the greatest Picassian contribution, the gigantic Picasso’s legacy was to leave us an economical system for the posterity, instead of a collection of master pieces. Art had to become market in order to be able to embrace an artist that was bringing with him thousands of pictures, papers, sculptures, etc., that was carrying behind him a court of forgers. The bureaucracy of conservators, guardians, inspectors, and so on was born with Picasso and this is what I consider the most interesting heritage, this tremendous commercial structure that he left for his successors. Because, besides, Picasso was the

first one on negotiating his rights as an author with someone as harsh as Kahnweiler, former bourse agent.

With the project for the Museu Picasso I wanted to explore the “badness” from the very inside of the malign institution that is managing, with iron fist, his celebrity. And I pretended to do it playing with their same cards, undercovering myself with their historicist languages and staging, although in the “backsides” of the whole project were appearing all those percussions to which we are calling Laboratories and that, somehow, were constituting a rattle of critic to certain hypocrisy of the History of art.

2) How would you consider Economy: Picasso now, with some distance?

I remember that at some point I said that inviting me to realise this project was like if The World Bank had invited the committee of 15th-M to work for them. Truly, my consideration is very positive because I think that the complexity of the project, the excess of its discursive lines, the number and the orientation of the infinite contributions that we develop during almost two years was very arduous and complete. Albeit, of course, the institution after Pepe Serra's leave imposed us a system of work so Spartan that practically we had to dedicate our time to argue with the machinery of the museum, something that was not foreseen, but that undoubtedly tensioned as well the project from the speculation until the reality, because effectively it seems that there are certain taboos still

about Picasso.

Chapter 5 – The development

5.1 – General map about lines of work

The conceptual architecture of *Economy: Picasso* was articulated after a series of questions that seemed to demand the need of being explored critically.

Each one of these questions adopted a different formalization in the context of the project and, somehow, characterized the plotline around which the various operations were taking place. At the same time, these different arguments were part, in a manner of speak, of a general fabric, a net of ideas and knowledge that were stitching the whole of the proposal.

Next we present these plotlines together with the formats that were adopted in the context of *Economy: Picasso*

First question: **How to re-read and, especially, with which parameters make problematic a figure with such a consensus of the media and the history like Picasso?**

This question oriented three particular lines of the project: a) the proposal exclusively museographic entitled *Economy: Picasso*, b) the laboratory referred to as *Amistades*; and an important part of the publication called *Economía*.

Following the criterion of the curators, approaching with new standards of interpretation to the figure of Picasso involved setting a series of genealogies different to the traditional ones, relegate the evolutionary discourse to a second level of importance and, at last, to articulate a thematic constellation that would allow questioning the stereotypes of interpretation that, historically, had accompanied the artist.

Second question: **Which was the importance of Picasso during the construction of the economic system of art of the 20th century and, by extension, in the process of commercialization of the contemporary culture?**

This question oriented, peculiarly, the whole laboratory called *Intercambios*.

Focus on what is the meaning of the art market today, commenced at the beginning of the 20th century but arriving nowadays with hardly any variation, involved a deep reconsideration of its origins, in which Picasso had a singular significance, because he represents a new paradigm of what is being an artists and a monumental production that produced bureaucratic, administrative and patrimonial regimes radically unexpected on that time.

With this line of work, articulated by means of speeches. Conferences, studies, lectures, performances, etc., we pretend to carry on an exploration in depth of the mechanisms of the current economy of art and, as well, of the effects of the omnipresent crisis in the divers areas of the cultural production.

Third question: **If Picasso is, perhaps, one of the artists most affected by certain interpretations puerilely dialectic – heroic artist or capricious genius, absorber of other creators or epitome of originality–, what else is splitting besides Picasso, in the same field, between the thinking and the acting, between the politics and the poetry?**

This question was settled, in a precise form, with the laboratory called *Particiones*.

Once again, in the attempt of the curators to generate critical zooms about Picasso's figure, not only was necessary to get some distance from the art territory until reaching the economy of culture, likewise the previous question, but as well was considered priority to explore a group of contemporary confrontations (democratization of the cultural products versus the patrimonialization, communitarism versus financial capitalism, indebtedness of the body versus socialization of work) that were continuing the economic path traced by the proposal but that, however, were inscribed in an ideological context of a wider dimension.

Fourth question: **How to promote the essayistic update about Picasso's works and, in particular, about his relation with the art economy?**

This question was formalized in a vast group of texts compiled in the publication *Economía*, written purposely by the historians of art Georges Didi-Huberman and Ángel González, as well as the curators of the project, and that incorporated an updated edition of the well-known text “The Picasso Papers” by Rosalind E. Krauss.

The idea that was feeding this work line was to increase the bibliography about Picasso with points of view that could be seen as conflictive but that, nonetheless, were pointing to new focus of interest related to the artist.

Fifth question: In which way an artistic project such is *Archivo F. X.*, constantly in upgrading process, can dialogue and interpellate to an artists like Picasso and, as well, to an exhibition that is radically different about his career and position on History of Art?

This question was answered in a series of interventions conceived and produced specifically for the project and that were splashing or interrupting, in a manner of speech, the show *Economy: Picasso*.

One of the conditions of the proposal was not only to re-read widely Picasso but, most of all, that the works of the Archivo F. X. and Pedro G. Romero acted as nucleus of all the operations. This made that in the multiple concentric circles that were spreading from Economy: Picasso could be seen, clearly, that the project had an artistic authorship and, even more, that the whole of it, despite its tentacular sense, was the result of this kind of machinery of knowledge that defines the Archivo F. X.

5.2 – Selection of works¹⁶

As I had already discuss previously, the project gathered since the very beginning a series of authors over which were revolving divers theoretical deployment. In this sense, we could say that the polyphony of voices was the proper structure of the proposal and that, somehow, this was formalized stitching presences further more the particular formats. Precisely because of that it was conferred the same museographyc importance to works considered well-know, than to documentary materials with no economic value, putting on all of them the same kind of theatrical rhetoric. Then, besides some of the works that were especially significant and unavoidable, the rest of the pieces were selected depending on the ease of loaning, the transportation and the availability, being substituted by others from the same author in case of insuperable difficulties.

¹⁶ For a more detailed selection of the works that are integrating the exhibition Economy: Picasso, as well as the descriptive texts that put them in relation with the museographyc space, see section Appendix (9.2 – List of works and 9.3 – Descriptive texts)

5.3 – INTERVIEW 3 – Carlota Gómez Rodríguez – project Coordinator

1) Could you comment on which ways your interlocution was establish with the curators, which were the working procedures?

From my point of view the relationship with each one of the curators was diametrically opposite by need, due to, and at expense of know that it actually is a topic, that the project needed this duality of visions and working methods, meaning, one much more expansive and of certain overflowing and another one for dimensioning and defining.

Therefore, my work with Pedro G. Romero consisted on offering a favourable frame in order to allow that overflowing to have space and not making the project to drown, not from the conceptual point side but from the side of the materials and “the things”, taking as a reference the limits of the budgetary and timings. For another hand, my working bond with Valentín Roma was based most of all in controlling and managing that those frames were kept in place and that the project was still holding on; in this same line, from the coordination of both of them emerged the communication between the external team and the institution, so, it was from us that the Museu Picasso received the updating about the status of the project.

Regarding the working procedures, they were arising together with the gestation of the project, and maybe at the same time that we were discovering the tension points, the necessities, the normal lacks that appears in any external team that is facing an institution with a very defined and inflexible methods. I don't want to say that it was something intuitive, but almost. In fact, the dynamics in between the three of us it was getting greased by itself. Anyway, it's true that there were different phases of work with each one of them, coinciding with the phases of progression of the exhibition. In this way, in a first phase – that could perfectly last a year approximately – in which it was being decided and organized the request of the works, I was much more in contact with Pedro G. Romero, who, adding another difficulty, lives in Sevilla, having as a result that the communication was exclusively “virtual”. In a second phase, when the list of works was almost completely defined – or we thought so– Valentín Roma got in the project fully and besides of keeping on filling up the exhibition with “things” we started to formalize it: the design of the space and the articulation of the publication, closing the list of works and the budget, while, as well, the parallel activities of the project were taking place, what was called *Laboratories*. In a last phase, and in the middle of a situation of a hollow director's office – during almost three months the institution didn't have director, fact that added

another more difficulty– and the arrival of a new director that was not in the conceptual tail nor in the formal either of the project, we were compacting the work done for almost two years, this time with more institutional presence that dilute apparently the figure of an external coordinator, which I represented, and obliged the curators to have more visibility, and once more, reconfigured my work with them towards something that was close to a production assistant.

2) From your point of view, which were the main difficulties to get the loans for the exhibition, could you give some examples?

The base of the exhibition, that overflowing that I was talking about previously, was an enormous quantity of materials. Amongst art works, drawings, videos, objects, magazines, books, documents, etc., which were coming from national and international loaners. There was no pattern that could ease a request criterion. What it existed was the ability with which Pedro found a substitute for those materials that were denied and the possibility of displaying a material that was not original, at least at the beginning.

One of the principal and first difficulties with which I collide was that being an external coordinator the whole tools of communication that

I had – furthermore than letters with the letterhead of the institution and hand signed by the director that were written by me but were going out of the institution offices– meaning, mail address or telephone were personal and did not have the aspect and therefore the “support” of an institution. The Museu Picasso, because a most certainly intern policy as well with together with another from the local consistory, they could not provide me not a working place neither a email address inside their intranet. Having to communicate with great institutions used to deal with intern personnel being an external coordinator supposed a super endeavour presenting the project and about myself that slows down the first steps of the task. This, together with, that the project did not had a director that could sign the letters during three months, was definitely weary.

However, I must say that despite of that, we did not have any denial caused by these circumstances, but because of other reasons such as schedule incompatibilities, the sensitiveness of the pieces, for being a very high expense for the general budget or because of other reasons completely external to the project or to the team.

The requests that supposed a bigger challenge were the ones signed by Picasso that were not coming from the family collection but from other institutions, mostly North Americans, with a very harsh policy for transatlantic loans for these delicate works.

Another difficulty that the project encountered was the type of work that was being requested, because a great part of them were works that had to be located and in other cases they had to be “defined”. One of the pieces that could work as an example of what I am saying, was the *Tzanck Chèque* by Marcel Duchamp, a cheque invented by the French artist with which pretended to clear the debt with his dentist, Daniel Tzanck. The original is a quite unknown piece and is more recognizable because is one of the objects of the *Boîte-en-Valise*. After consulting many catalogues about Duchamp, finally I found that in one of the footnotes of an image of the cheque there was a reference to “A. Schwarz”, which at first did not have to be something important since the catalogue was from the seventies and in almost fifty years a piece of art could have had uncountable owners. In parallel, I have contacted the *state* of Duchamp, to inquire them about their knowledge about the cheque, which did give me any result but they offered me the possibility of lending me one of the cheques of a rare version of *Boîte*, so we kept it as a B plan.

Only with A, Schwarz I did a research and I found out that it was the art collector Arturo Schwarz, that he had a webpage and that this one included an email address, so I wrote him, I gave him a briefing about the project and I requested the work. His answer sounded very excited but unfortunately he had ceded all his collection to the Museum of Jerusalem,

he gave me the right person's name and contact and he allowed me to give his name to ease the procedures.

Other examples could be the three works of Mark Tansey that we held and that most certainly were the three first ones that were showed in Barcelona until then. Apparently, Tansey is quite of a "peculiar" artist and he checks very conscientiously the context where his works will be. The gallery with what he works is The Gagosian Gallery in New York, which, most certainly, together with The Pace gallery, is one of the most exclusives in the United States. Tansey has had a solo exhibition in the Kunstverien of Stuttgart, so I thought that maybe through them I could get a hint how to contact him. I wrote Iris Dressler, director of the institution, and she gave me the name with the person with whom I should get in contact. I probably tried to contact him six or seven times, insisting on the project and on the significance of having Mark Tansey's works. I did not receive any kind of answer.

In December 2011, I've travelled to New York for a pleasure trip, and taking advantage of being there I've contacted again the Gagosian and I got an appointment for a meeting with John Good – artistic director of the gallery–, after which he agreed on speaking to the artist and proposing him his participation on the exhibition. We had to make a new dossier much more extended and detailed and, thanks to a series of

factors, we got the loan.

Chapter 6 – The designs

6.1 – Concept of museographic implementation

Unlike other lines of work followed by the F.X. Archive, the successive presentations of the project entitled *Zero Economy* have been formulated around a unitary concept with variations, that considers walls, panels and dividers a sort of museographical metonymy in which to explore the contrasts between front and back, discourse and contradiction, story and parody.

The first time this element was used was in *Silo*, an exhibition organised by the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia at the Santo Domingo de Silos Abbey (13 May–27 September 2009). The same system was used in the design of the first Catalan pavilion at the 53rd edition of the Venice Biennale in 2009, in the context of *The Unavowable Community* project. In both cases visitors found themselves before a huge panel, that looked as if it had come from the galleries of a stereotypical history museum, and had to be negotiated in order to reach a back space that displayed a number of operations, forms of knowledge and works produced for the aforementioned shows, alongside other material that documented the previous activity of the F.X. Archive.

However, the presentation of *The Unavowable Community* at Bòlit Contemporary Art Centre in Girona entailed a significant change with regard to the previous museographical model. Rather than participating in a theatrical recreation, it implied introducing a series of proposals into the actual exhibition itineraries of the Museu d'Història de la Ciutat and the Museu d'Història dels Jueus to question the contents of the two institutions.

Another step forward regarding this display emerged in *F.X. Archive:*

Wirtschaft, ökonomie, Konjunktur, a project presented at the

Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart (10 February–25 April 2012).

The central space in the so-called Kunstgebäude – an Art Nouveau building designed in 1910 by Theodor Fischer – became a huge drop that paradoxically concealed three exhibitions on Joseph Beuys, Alexander Kluge and Dada, the only ‘visitable’ parts of which were the intersections that penetrated the interior of the building, brusquely interrupting the size of the hall and somehow fragmenting the visual tone of the show with three spatial paradigms – White Cube, Black Box and Salon d’Or, respectively – that heightened the sensation of travelling through an anomalous place destined to another use.

Along these lines, the last episode is *Picasso: Economy* where, contrary to the proposal made at Kunstverein Stuttgart, the museographic tale

spreads through the various halls of Barcelona's Museu Picasso, unfolding into a series of 'behinds', of places with different regimes of visibility that welcome *gagdets*, comments and appreciations of the F.X. Archive, that both accompany and question the various stages of curatorial discourse.

For the very first time museographic design is born out of the dialogue with a specialised studio. Roure/de León arquitectos s.l.p. was commissioned to conceive an exhibition itinerary arranged in six thematic areas that would welcome documents, works and a host of explanatory texts, following an ostensibly dramatised architectural code to a certain extent characteristic of the nineteenth century, that would not only prevent the typical crowds of visitors at Museu Picasso but would also favour a perceptive look at the discursive links between the works on display. Furthermore, it was vital that this space should offer each and every one of the liturgical resources of fetishistic museography (carpets, display cabinets, adjusted lighting for conservation purposes, elements for indicating and protecting works, standardised typography, etc.), thereby creating a sharp contrast between a sacramental gaze, following the 'orthodox' itinerary, and an inconvenient use, in the succession of more or less hidden spaces.

The result is a sort of theatrical *déjà-vu* that opposes the formal neatness

of one territory to the incompleteness of another; the somewhat hollow rhetoric of safety and indoctrination to a certain degree of disorientation and drift between free circulation and use of materials contextualised at the end of the itinerary, where the F.X. Archive presented some of its previous displays in a unitary fashion.

6.2 – General and detailed plans¹⁷

Taking in consideration the complexity of the production, the volume and the importance of the museographic design, as we as the previous dialogue that had to be established between the curators and the architects, before the final formalization, we develop a few fragmented spatial representations that favour working in the project in accordance with its conceptual nature, inside areas clearly differenced. Far from being, only, an utility decision, this methodology of work permitted to articulate each section in a independent way, trying to find what we could consider a language of architectural expression simultaneous to a general grammar, sort of a common museographic idiom that would arrange the variety of solutions adopted without turning them into a collection of particular designs.

¹⁷ In the section Appendix (5.3 – General and detailed plans of the museographic proposal implementation) can be found the complete sequence of general and detailed blueprints by chronology according to which were developed and after the following modifications that were incorporated.

6.3 – Critical analysis on the changes from the beginning of the project until its final resolution

We have already pointed out that the museographic project *Economy: Picasso* started with a format of presentation that we could consider preconceived, sort of a staging that was set by means of two opposite models and, at the same time, one could visit them simultaneously: a display articulated around the traditional protocols of a nineteenth-century museums and a collection of semi-hidden places of unexpected visibility.

On a first moment we thought on taking the proper building as a hinge around which the orthodox exhibition would spread and that, from another side, would unfold that group of *rareities*. Precisely this same metaphor of unfolding and folding, of a front and a rear that, as a fragmented room divider, was interrupting the existent architecture and was enabling some anomalous spaces at the same time that it was implanting in the space, was the first solution adopted that accompanied the project during quite many months.

However, due to budgetary problems and above all, to the very strict security imperatives and rules of circulation of the museum, we had to decide to soften the importance of the historical building as the

skeleton, with a certain loss of the outsides and insides of the street and the path of the display, having to focus mainly on the pieces and the confrontations that were established by the works of the Archivo F. X.

This transition from a museographic project that were interpellating the architecture of the museum to a proposal that was focused on the presentation of a very varied reunion of objects, permitted that the constructive displays – false walls, support structures, signalization carpets, different lightening, etc. – gain an importance and a notoriety that previously was not considered, and that what in first place was going to be angulations, curves and *narrowings* become a very detailed work of modulation of furniture, where the carpentry was achieving all the significance of construction and visual.

6.4 - INTERVIEW 4 - Santiago de León - Architect and author of the museographic proposal

1) Which were the most difficult aspects to assume from your museographic proposal, taking in consideration what the project was demanding and the particular conditions of a museum such is Museu Picasso, with such an affluence of visitors and with such display codes, so distant from the contemporary spaces?

I think that we should distinguish two different situations.

The first would be the development process and formalization of the project. In this phase of the process, the most difficult part to assume was most probably the complexity, the disparity and the extension of the information and of the contents that were required to incorporate to the museographic proposal, from the curatorial point of view.

A very long and intense process of conceptualization, synthesis and concretion was needed, to reach a clean proposal and understandable for the public, especially when the exhibition was destined to a space like the Museu Picasso, with a very high affluence of visitors, but that habitually is looking for a different kind of presentations or displays.

Contrarily, in this phase, from the museum was not considered any

economical or formal condition, nor any security or functioning protocol, neither any criterion of standard displaying, summing up, nothing that a priori would be against what is usually done in normal conditions, what the project was being developed quietly in a long “dialogue”, face to face with the curators.

The second phase would be the process of execution and construction of the project. Here the roles reversed. The long process of synthesis and conceptualization developed with the curators and the works management closely shared with them, permitted that the project could be adapted to each step that was given during its execution and mainly in front of each setback, cutback or imposition that was produced during the process. A very defined conceptualization (inside-outside) and a very hard process of synthesis that was sub-dividing the exhibition in “thematic” sections, gave us the chance that every modification that we were obliged to make, was not going to invalidate the project, always respecting these two frameworks created by ourselves. Simply the simplified, or maybe they even improved it.

Already from the previous phase could be deduced that the attitude of the museum had changed radical and surprisingly. Sudden some formal and economical conditionings appeared, the security protocols, functioning, even about the display. Everything that did not come during

the previous process came out then, even with some conceptual criteria and, the worse, aesthetical. This phase simply evidenced the difficulty of dealing with a proposal with a very strong critical content, or even, self-critical with the system and with the institution that was representing at that moment. Principally, when the only thing that was expected from us was to do something for the uncountable public that enters the museum in such uncritical manner, could go through the different spaces of the museum to find “hanged pictures of Picasso”, and better if the pictures were famous, which, of course, we did not do.

2) How could you explain and evaluate the working methods with the curators?

I think that part this question I have already answered in the previous one, but I would like to insist particularly in the part that is the most interesting one of the process and that most certainly has more affect on other people that have to realize a similar process.

The starting was a situation in which one of the curators had very clear what he wanted and the other one how he wanted, due to that previously, they have had already collaborated in another exhibition “quite resembling”. On top of that fact, we had to add as well, the complexity

and the extension of the contents and subjects to treat, as we have had already explained.

These conditionings demanded from us a long process of comprehension of everything that had to be narrated and how it must be done. A process during which the curators were conceptualizing and synthesizing the information while we were trying to absorb it. At the end of this, without having finished already a real formal proposal and in front of the difficulty of trying to cover everything and to include in the future every possible change those inevitably were going to happen, we chose to do a proposal that uniquely generated a system or “a physical support” on top of which the curators could freely move, on condition that they would respect the inside/outside concept and the “thematic” zones defined by themselves.

The freedom that this “system” created allowed us, from that moment, to move forward safe and clean, because we all had a well defined limitations and margins to be able to move comfortably. This freedom that we had established between the parts was, at the same time, the one that allowed us to adapt the project to the different steps of the constructive process, without losing its coherence and significance. In this phase, the limits were not between the curators and designers, instead they were going to be a general frame regarding the project, that

during the assembling process of the exhibition gave us the chance, to the curators as well as to ourselves, to take decisions freely, in each of the fields that belong to each one of us. This fact, avoided intern contradictions and mainly helped us to defend together the coherence and the quality of the proposal.

Part III: Some critical recaps

Chapter 7 – General conclusions and analyse about reception published
in the press

From certain point of view we could say that some of the principal critical tensions created by Economy: Picasso came to certify, as well as, those areas of the proposal that from a conceptual and theoretical point of view were more controversial.

From one side, we have already pointed out until to which extend the project was though as an answer to a very direct commission, that we could qualify as nominal and that was coming from the proper direction of the museum, who was delegating in it certain future aspects of institutionalized activity.

Even though, in a first moment this excessive interrelation guaranteed and fixed the objectives of work, when an unexpected turn in the leadership occurred in the nucleus of the Museu Picasso, the project entered in a sort of limbo, since somehow it was responding to some requirements already passed and, even, opposites to the new institutional approaches.

In the same sense, the proportion of “authorship” that the former

director, Pepe Serra, had assumed inside the proposal, and that consisted, as it has been already said, on bracing, translating and creating operative structures inside the symbolic and technical frame of the museum, suffered a truly misfortune when the new director, Bernardo Laniado-Romero, replaced his predecessor and, with him, obtained an unexpected responsibility in *Economy: Picasso*.

Moreover the appreciations extra-professionals, it must be posed, as a self-criticism to all these aspects, in which ways a project that was created under a design of radical questioning, with a direct prominence of those institutional interlocutors, who were contributing with their own roles of mediation, its fastened to that which it is precisely its main worth, which is, the particular and specific mediation. Then, we would say that paradoxically, more direct and more personal are the strategies of interlocution, the more unstable and more fragile are in the end, since they create unidirectional boundaries, understood perfectly and incompatible methodologies that, as it happened to *Economy: Picasso*, when these same interlocutors disappeared seems that those vanished with them.

From another side, and without leaving the conflict zone between commission and project, we could say that the moment when the leadership in the museum changed some sort of excision in the scale of the

same occurred, something that obliged a hastily recapitulation and having to adapt to a new series of precepts and methodologies of work that did not exist until then.

Indeed a true collapse happened inside the rhythms of production, considering that not even the new director's office, that had just arrived to the institution, had already a dynamic, for which a project in the moment of its public expression demanded a certain implementation in the operative rhythms, and therefore was affected by what could be considered an inertia.

Besides, a part of the consequences that this transfer of interlocutors, we must underline how the general communication of the proposal, internal and externally, was stepping aside while this was getting more and more complex.

Perhaps the productive urgencies, together with the volume of the parallel activities, provoked a change of attention on the different agent involved – curators, institution and the divers producers and authors–, however, reducing the argumentative, pedagogical and didactical strength of a project that was demanding it like no other one, undoubtedly not only weakened its public narration, but also affected to the way in which the contents of the same were going through and penetrating in the diverse contexts.

Finally, the absence of a key figure for the project, a raconteur that was “narrating” the project to the visitors, that would include them in the different narrations of it, turned an exhibition that was supposed to be, as well, a verbal staging, into a display powerfully theatrical but until to some extent stiff, and lifeless, losing with it the wanted impact since the very beginning, so it is, that the museographic unfolding, the conceptual torsions, the associations within the pieces and the very different proposals, could be able to act as something more than a collection of works organized under an eccentric criterion.

In general the whole project was interrupted and in to certain point was fractured by a change in the institutional implication when the most important this was. Anyhow, and to share responsibilities, we could say that *Economy: Picasso* was a project which theoretical firmness, which antagonistic intentionality and which belligerence were making it not very adaptable to reform, especially inside an institutional circumstance so radically opposite to the one that had originated it, and mostly in a moment so close to the public showing, when it was truly difficult to slow down.

In this sense, all the excesses brought up by the project, theoretical overloads, the number of works or even the volumes of testimonies that could not be “profitable” as necessary overflows of the institutional frame,

getting reduced to rhetoric that, perhaps excessively, seeing in perspective, not only was going through the institution, like it was entailed at the beginning, but it made it uncomfortable maybe taking it to starting positions much more conservatives.

For all these reasons, *Economy: Picasso* invites us to wonder what is the meaning of working in the institutional interlocution, until which extend this hypothetical dialogue is not happening between stages with a determinate scale, but between individuals with some objectives or others, that are leading or being absent from the tensions that are going above their patrimonial or symbolic duties.

Unlikely other projects invested with the institutional criticism label, even if in some occasions suppose, only, a simple gap in the usual dynamics of the institution, *Economy: Picasso* indeed generated an explicit and opened tension with the institution not only in the symbolic field of the respective languages, but especially in the actual field of the objectives and the ways of giving audience to the developed materials. Might be that, suddenly, hostility of the institution came across the project, but at the same time with the impossibility of re-scaling, had to generate hostile reactions that in any case were by consensus, but a sort of an immediate methodology of friction, if it can be named this way, that from the distance, and despite of the consequent fatigues, resulted much

more “operative” or, at least, more penetrant.

From another side, being *Economy: Picasso* a project of incisive signalization about certain topics in the world of historiography and commercialization of art and the antagonist practices, it is not strange that the confrontations were getting more radical at the same time that it was going more deeply into these tensions, mainly just before the time to show the project to the public, with the following levels of attention and the demands from the media.

Regardless, what it is true is that *Economy: Picasso* eroded, not always in a neat and tidy way, as it was predictable, the image of an entity as rigid as it is the Museu Picasso in Barcelona, even we should ask in which way the institution had reacted in front of what could consider an “anomalous” project, under which formats had recovered afterwards its “normality”.

It is possible that from the perspective of the contemporary art field *Economy: Picasso* is considered as an author’s project, a mega-installation of the Archivo F.X. and its instigator, Pedro G. Romero. However, the fact that the proposal ended up as some kind of signifying machine –tragic machine and comic at the same time– it is still one of the main aspirations of the project, and a clear example of that the ideological tensions in the artistic and cultural field are not much different from those that are

produced in the field of “reality”, or at least, that we can not pay a decorous visit to tension, but that, effectively, any kind of intent of symbolic forcing has its response and its cauterization intent outside of this purely verbal area, so it is, that the depth of a conflict in the way of understanding the cultural policies expresses, equally, which is the role of the consensus and the order in the dissolution of resistance.

This last aspect invites us to think, as well, which is the lifetime of a project, in which way *Economy: Picasso*, that was conceived as a resume and a compilation of different investigations of the Archivo F. X., has a perspective of expansion beyond the particular logics of the cultural product that undoubtedly, with its expiring dates, its moments of maximum visibility and its index of acceptance or rejection.

In the end, if we observe the divers work lines that were activated at the moment – including this present research–, it does not seem odd to point out that the presentation that took place in the Museu Picasso was an important cut, an image that was framing certain state of the question and certain depth in the tension but that, in conclusion, before and after of this parenthesis the project had gone acquiring other rhythms and other interlocutions, and who know if new conflicts.

Finally, it is convenient to make a special mention to the media

attention of the project¹⁸, that unusually to what usually happens with artistic contemporary artistic projects, provoked a great quantity of news in written press, radio and television.

Somehow, this critical volume is the best example to the public attention that the proposal generated around, perhaps because of that anomaly of a kind of a work with these characteristics so unstable and with this numerous group of participants.

Nevertheless, the majority of interpretations was deepened in the eccentric character of Economy: Picasso, appreciating in a very singular and positive way – considering the multiple adjectives used to talk about it –, the “radicality” of its expositions, the “originality” of its discussions, the “edginess” of its goals.

Except for some experienced journalists, it was prevailing a language of analysis that was moving into the exhibition the same kind of legendary language that usually is used to talk about the figure of Picasso, ignoring that the painter from Málaga was, principally the touchstone with which explore the situations that were overwhelming the hagiography and that were trying to get into a wider spectrum than the simple historical-artistic debate.

Obviously the complexity in the execution and development of a

¹⁸ In the section Appendix (5.4- Final press file) can be checked out the exhaustive compilation of the Museu Picasso, and all the allusions in press, radio and television that were generated by the proposal.

project never can be reconstructed from an interpretative point of view, and less in such a connoted space, however, the polemic dimension and the ideological panorama that was posing *Economy: Picasso*, certainly were, perhaps, excessively radicals or partially visible for its abundant annotators.

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<http://www.archimuse.com/mw97/speak/glasser.htm>

Chapter 9 – Appendices

9.1 – General credits

EXHIBITION

PRODUCTION

Museu Picasso, Barcelona
(en base a un proyecto de Pepe Serra,
director del Museu Picasso, 2006-2011)

Curators

Pedro G. Romero y Valentín Roma

Curator assistant and coordination

Carlota Gómez

Coordination

Isabel Cendoya
Mariona Tió

Documentation

Margarida Cortadella

Conservation

Reyes Jiménez
Anna Vélez

Register

Isabel Cendoya
Mariona Tió
Anna Fàbregas
Jesús San José

Production

Anna Lingua

Exhibition design

Roure/de León arquitectos

Graphic design
Ricardo Alavedra

Montage
Artpercent

Graphical production
Rotulavinils

Lighting
N.S.T. Nous Serveis Teatrals

Audiovisual
Baf

Carpentry
Poblenou Carpintería

PUBLICATION

Edition and production
Ajuntament de Barcelona.
Institut de Cultura/Museu Picasso, Barcelona

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Keith Patrick (inglés)

Photomechanical and print
Index

www.museupicasso.bcn.cat

www.bcn.cat/publicacions

DEALERS

GERMANY

APRA Foundation Berlin
Simon Waschmuth Collection
Krings-Ernst Galerie, Colonia
Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Múnich

ARGENTINA

Colección Leticia El Halli Obeid

DENMARK

Museum Jorn, Silkeborg

SPAIN

Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid
Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República – CRAI (Universitat de Barcelona)
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla
Colección Isidoro Valcárcel-Medina
Colección Luís Cátedra
Col·lecció Gili Amorós
Col·lecció MACBA. Fundació MACBA, Barcelona
Es Baluard. Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma
Estela Laffón Álvarez
Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí
Fundació Palau, Caldes d'Estrac
Fundación Picasso. Museo Casa Natal, Málaga
Galería Casa sin Fin, Cáceres
Galería La Caja Negra, Madrid
IVAM, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat. Depósito
Fundación Renau
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
Museu de Badalona
Museu de l'Hospitalet
Oriol Galeria d'Art

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Hans Haacke Collection
Gagosian Gallery, Nueva York

Marc Jancou Contemporary, Nueva York y Ginebra
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nueva York
New Orleans Museum of Art
The Pace Gallery, Nueva York

GREECE

National Museum of Contemporary Art.
Costakis Collection, Thessalonica

HUNGARY

Heirs of the artist, on deposit in the Ludwig Múzeum.
Kortárs Művészeti Múzeum, Budapest

ISRAEL

Israel Museum, Jerusalem

NORWAY

Gavin Jantjes Colection

CZECH REPUBLIC

Zybněk Baladrán

SWITZERLAND

Marina Picasso Collection. Cortesy Galerie Krugier & Cie,
Ginebra

9.2 - List of works

I. *ORO MOLIDO*

Carta de Picasso a Joaquim Bas
Madrid, 3 de noviembre de 1897
Tinta azul sobre papel (manuscrito)
27 x 41,5 cm
Fundació Palau, Caldes d'Estrac

Pablo Picasso
Botella y violín sobre una mesa
1912
Papiers collés y carboncillo sobre papel
63 x 48 cm
New Orleans Museum of Art. The Muriel Bultman
Francos Collection

Pablo Picasso
Estudio de cartel para la Caja de Previsión
y Socorro
Barcelona, 1900
Lápiz Conté sobre papel verjurado con filigrana
48 x 31,3 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Estudio de cartel para la Caja de Previsión
y Socorro
Barcelona, 1900
Lápiz Conté sobre papel verjurado con filigrana
48 x 31,3 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Estudio de cartel para la Caja de Previsión
y Socorro
Barcelona, 1900
Lápiz Conté sobre papel con filigrana
32,2 x 22,2 cm

Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso

Croquis diversos

Barcelona, 1898-1899

Lápiz Conté sobre papel impreso del Círculo
Conservador-Liberal

22,8 x 18,1 cm

Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso

Croquis diversos

Barcelona, 1899-1900

Tinta a pluma sobre papel con filigrana SOL J

16,5 x 22,4 cm

Pablo Picasso

Croquis diversos

Horta de Sant Joan, c. 1898

Lápiz Conté sobre papel mecánico

15,9 x 10,9 cm

Portada de Arte Joven

Madrid, nº 1 (31 de marzo de 1901)

Centre de Coneixement i Recerca. Museu Picasso,
Barcelona

Portada de Arte Joven

Madrid, nº 2 (15 de abril de 1901)

Centre de Coneixement i Recerca. Museu Picasso,
Barcelona

Rafael Barradas

Barcelona 1918

1918

Gouache sobre papel

48,5 x 44,5 cm

Museu de l'Hospitalet

Felipe Aláiz

Cubierta de El aparecido
Toulouse, Ediciones Universo, 1946
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Felipe Aláiz
Cubierta de Hacia una federación de autonomías
ibéricas (Arte accesible, cuaderno 12)
Burdeos, Ediciones Tierra y Libertad, 1947
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Felipe Aláiz
Cubierta de Arte de escribir sin arte
Toulouse. Editorial F.I.J.L., 1946
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla
Joaquín Torres-García
Fiesole
1923
Óleo sobre lienzo
22 x 28 cm
Oriol Galeria d'Art

Helios Gómez
Ilustración para la novela Oro molido
de Felipe Aláiz
Sevilla, 1923
16,6 x 12,3 cm
Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid

Felipe Aláiz
Portada de Oro molido. La novela de actualidad
Sevilla, Editorial Barral, 1923
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla

Helios Gómez
Tres ilustraciones para El sol desaparecido
1924
Tinta china sobre papel
42 x 32 cm (cada una)
Estela Laffón Alvarez

Nuestro Culpable, 1938

dirección: Fernando Mignoni
84 min
Cortesía Galería Casa sin Fin

Mel Bochner
36 fotografías y 12 diagramas
1966
20,5 x 20,5 cm (cada una)
Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus

2. THE NEW CANTO

ENTRE/ACTE, Imágenes de frontera I
Archivos de maquettes-sans-qualité de 1997
actualizados en 2004 por Alejandra Riera y Fulvia
Carnevale. Textos y vistas parciales, inspirados en ocho
minutos filmados en súper-8 en noviembre de 1997
en la frontera entre La Quiaca (Argentina) y Villazón
(Bolivia)
Película 8 mm transferida a vídeo (8 min), color, sonido,
tinta impresa sobre papel DIN A3 y fotocopias
Dimensiones variables
1997-2004
Col·lecció MACBA. Fundació MACBA

Pablo Picasso
Mujer en un sillón
Barcelona, 1917
Óleo sobre lienzo
92,5 x 64,4 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Louise Lawler
Mujer con Picasso
1986
Fotografía
66 x 96,5 cm
Colección particular. Cortesía Marc Jancou
Contemporary, Nueva York y Ginebra

Pablo Picasso
Boceto para ART
Barcelona, 1899-1900
Lápiz Conté sobre papel
33,7 x 23,2 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
La Pintura (parodia de La alegoría de la Poesía
de Santiago Rusiñol)
Barcelona, c. 1896-1900
Lápiz Conté sobre papel
33,4 x 23,5 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Le Chef-d'œuvre inconnu
1931
Doce aguafuertes, sobre matriz de cobre, tirados sobre
papel vitela con filigrana
27,5 x 19,6 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Cubierta de Plural. Revista Mensual de Literatura
Madrid, año I, nº 1 (enero de 1925)
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla
p. 72 (a)
Cubierta de Cervantes. Revista Hispano-americana
Madrid (mayo de 1919)
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla.

Lucía Sánchez Saornil
«El canto nuevo»
(reproducido en Cervantes. Revista Hispano-americana,
Madrid, abril de 1920)
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla

Cubierta de Grecia. Revista Decenal de Literatura
Sevilla, año II, nº XVI (20 de mayo de 1919)
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla

Cubierta de Gran Guignol. Revista quincenal
Sevilla, año I, nº 3 (24 de abril de 1920)
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla
Portada y página interior de El Parapeto.
Semanario Confederal del Frente
Valencia, año I, nº 26 (16 de octubre de 1937)
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla

«¡Mujeres!, ¡trabajadoras de Iberia!»

[1936]

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República - CRAI (Universitat
de Barcelona)

«¡Mujeres! Vuestra familia la constituyen
todos los luchadores de la libertad»

[1937]

Unión Poligráfica, Madrid

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República - CRAI (Universitat
de Barcelona)

Manuel Monleón

Cubierta de La Calipedia

1936

Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Josep Renau

Cubierta de Breviario del amor experimental

1936

Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Barcelona trabaja para el frente, 1936

dirección: Mateo Santos

producción: Comité Central de Abastos de Barcelona

23 min

(parte del Programa de cine, actividad pedagógica
de Mujeres Libres, Valencia, 1938)

Colección de Cine Anarquista. CNT/Filmoteca Española

La última, 1937

dirección: Pedro Puche

producción: SIE Films

15 min

(parte del Programa de cine, actividad pedagógica
de Mujeres Libres, Valencia, 1938)
Colección de Cine Anarquista. CNT/Filmoteca Española

«Prostitución»

[1937]

Confederación Nacional del Trabajo - Federación
Anarquista Ibérica. Mujeres libres
Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República - CRAI (Universitat
de Barcelona)

Serrano

Virgen de la Macarena

Sevilla, 1936

1970

Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Autor no identificado

Santa Faustina

Olot, 1936

Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Autor no identificado

Virgen de los Dolores

Estepa, 1936

Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Keystone

Virgen de la Iniesta, quemada

Sevilla, 1934

Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Autor desconocido

Virgen de los Desamparados

Valencia, 1939

Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Entrada: Pablo Picasso

Hoja de libre circulación nº 1

Archivo F.X.: Antagonismos. Casos de estudio

MACBA, Barcelona, 2001

Leticia El Halli Obeid
Scratching
2007
2 min 30 s
Cortesía de la artista

3. THE RETURN TO PRIMITIVE ART

Rafael Agredano
Sin título
s/d
Papel acrílico
50 x 35 cm
Colección Luís Cátedra

Pablo Picasso
La ofrenda
París, 1908
Gouache sobre cartón con imprimación blanca
30,6 x 30,6 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Academia del natural. Personaje de pie
Barcelona, 1895-1897
Carboncillo y lápiz Conté sobre papel verjurado
con filigrana
47,3 x 31,8 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Cabeza de indio abigarrado
1907-1908
Óleo sobre madera
15 x 15 cm
Colección particular

Pablo Picasso
Estudio para la señorita de los brazos
levantados: desnudo de pie con los brazos

cruzados
Cuaderno de Les Demoiselles d'Avignon(7)
Lápiz grafito sobre papel
22,5 x 33,8 cm
Fundación Picasso. Museo Casa Natal, Málaga

Pablo Picasso
Estudio para la señorita de los brazos
levantados: desnudo con los brazos cruzados
Cuaderno de Les Demoiselles d'Avignon(7)
Plumilla y tinta china sobre papel
22,5 x 33,8 cm
Fundación Picasso. Museo Casa Natal, Málaga

Pablo Picasso
Estudio para Desnudo con pañería: desnudo
de perfil con brazo levantado
Cuaderno de Les Demoiselles d'Avignon(7)
Plumilla y tinta china sobre papel
22,5 x 33,8 cm
Fundación Picasso. Museo Casa Natal, Málaga

L. G. Damas
Cubierta de Pigments(prefacio de Robert Desnos
y grabado de Franz Masereel)
París, GLM, 1937
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Frantz Fanon
Cubierta de Les Damnés de la terre
(prefacio de Jean-Paul Sartre)
París, F. Maspéro, 1961
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Léopold Sédar Senghor
Cubierta de Négritude et humanisme.
Liberté I
París, Seuil, 1964
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

René Maran

Cubierta de Batouala: véritable roman nègre
París, A. Michel, 1921
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Mlle. Nadal
Portada de Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guyane,
Saint-Pierre-Miquelon (Guides des Colonies
françaises)
París, Société d'éditions géographiques, maritimes
et coloniales, 1931
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Pablo Picasso
Portada y cuatro aguafuertes del libro Corps
perdude Aimé Césaire:
Cabeza de negro, de perfil, con corona de flores
(Aimé Césaire Lauré)
Nueve figuras estilizadas (Présence)
Flor (Naissances)
Cabeza (Mot)
Punta seca y rascador, sobre matriz de cobre, tirada
sobre papel
Aguatinta al azúcar, sobre matriz de cobre, tirada sobre
papel
Aguatinta al azúcar, sobre matriz de cobre, tirada sobre
papel
Aguatinta al azúcar y punta seca, sobre matriz de cobre,
tirada sobre papel
38,5 x 28,5 cm (cada una)
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Francis Picabia
Portada y páginas interiores 291 (edición facsímil)
París, n° 12 (1916)
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Marius de Zayas
Cubism
1950
16 mm, color, sin sonido, 14 min 10 s
Filmoteca Nacional Mexicana

Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Raymond Roussel

Cubierta de Pages choisies d'«Impressions
d'Afrique» et de «Locus solus»

París, Librairie Alphonse Lemerre, 1918

Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Carl Einstein

Cubierta y páginas interiores de Negerplastik

Múnich, K. Wolff, 1920

Colección Gili-Amorós

Michel Leiris

Cubierta de L'Afrique fantôme

París, Gallimard, 1988

Colección Gili-Amorós

Songye. Fetiche

República Democrática del Congo

c. 1900

alt. 15,5 cm

Colección Gili-Amorós

Songye. Fetiche

República Democrática del Congo

siglo XIX

alt. 22,8 cm

Colección Gili-Amorós

Songye-Luba. Fetiche

República Democrática del Congo

c. 1900

alt. 10 cm

Colección Gili-Amorós

Autor no identificado

La masacre colonial, 1931-1932

Imágenes de la exposición «La Vérité sur les colonies»

Fotografía a las sales de plata

The Getty Research Institute, Los Ángeles

Autor no identificado
Fetiches europeos, 1931-1932
Imágenes de la exposición «La Vérité sur les colonies»
Fotografía a las sales de plata
The Getty Research Institute, Los Ángeles

Autor no identificado
Imágenes de la exposición «La Vérité sur
les colonies»
Fotografía a las sales de plata
The Getty Research Institute, Los Ángeles

Autor no identificado
Imágenes de la exposición «La Vérité sur
les colonies»
Fotografía a las sales de plata
The Getty Research Institute, Los Ángeles

Autor no identificado
La juventud leninista 1931-1932
Imágenes de la exposición «La Vérité sur les colonies»
Fotografía a las sales de plata
The Getty Research Institute, Los Ángeles

Richard Hamilton
Just what it made yesterday's homes so
different, so appealing? Upgrade
2004
Impresión láser a color
26 x 25,1 cm
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nueva York. Donación
del artista, 2004 (2004.527)

Eduardo Paolozzi
Páginas del catálogo de exposición Lost Magic
Kingdoms and Six paper Moons from Nahuatl
Londres, British Museum, 1985
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Frédéric Bruly Bouabré

Alphabete Bété
1989-1990
Bolígrafo, lápices de colores sobre cartón
9,5 x 15 cm (cada una)
MNCARS. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina
Sofía, Madrid

Gavin Jantjes
«Un libro coloreado de Sudáfrica»
1974-1975
Grabados con collage
60 x 45 cm (cada uno)
Colección del artista

Fred Wilson
Broadsides
1992
Láminas
A. 52,7 x 42,5; B. 42,8 x 52,07; C. 37,5 x 30,48;
D. 42,8 x 52,38
Pace Gallery Collection

Adrian Piper
Funk Lessons. Shiva dances with
the Art Institute of Chicago
1983
15 min 17 s
APRA Foundation, Berlín

4. GREEN NOTEBOOK

Octavio Paz/Vicente Rojo
Marcel Duchamp(libro-maleta)
México, Editorial Era, 1968
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Pablo Picasso
Estudio quiromántico de Picasso
con texto de Max Jacob
París, 1902
Lápiz grafito (dibujo) y tinta sepia a pluma (texto)

sobre papel
29 x 18,9 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Cabeza de Max Jacob y estudio de quiromancia
con las claves para su interpretación
París, 1902
Lápiz grafito (dibujo) y tinta sepia a pluma (texto)
sobre papel
19 x 29,9 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Naturaleza muerta con cráneo (ilustración para
el libro de Max Jacob, *Le Siège de Jérusalem. Grande Tentation Céleste de Saint Matorel*)
París, 1913
Punta seca sobre cobre
20,5 x 14,8 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Mujer
(ilustración para el libro de Max Jacob,
Le Siège de Jérusalem. Grande Tentation Céleste de Saint Matorel)
París, 1913
Aguafuerte, rascador y punta seca, sobre cobre, tirado
sobre papel (IV estado)
21,9 x 14,8 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Mujer desnuda con guitarra
(ilustración para el libro de Max Jacob, *Le Siège de Jérusalem. Grande Tentation Céleste de Saint Matorel*)
París, 1913
Aguafuerte, rascador y punta seca, sobre cobre, tirado
sobre papel (V estado)

21,9 x 15,1 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Construcción y papiers collés en la pared
París (taller del bulevar Raspail), noviembre- diciembre
de 1912
Fotografía a las sales de plata
Musée national Picasso, París

Joan Vidal-Ventosa
Fernande Olivier, Picasso y Ramon Reventós
en El Guayaba
Barcelona, 1906
Fotografía a las sales de plata
Centre de Coneixement i Recerca. Museu Picasso,
Barcelona

Josep Renau Berenguer
Jusep Torres Campalans
1958
Fotomontaje sobre papel pegado al paspartú
20,1 x 23,5 cm
IVAM - Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat
Valenciana. Depósito Fundación Renau

Max Aub
Trama persa
1913
Tinta sobre papel
24 x 16 cm
Colección particular

Max Aub
La cabeza de Juan Gris
1913
Tinta sobre papel
24 x 16 cm
Colección particular

Max Aub

Cubierta de Jusep Torres Campalans
México, Tezontle Ediciones, 1958
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla

Max Aub
Juego de cartas
México, Alejandro Finisterre Editor
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla

Salvador Dalí
El reloj de caja
1923
Lápiz sobre papel
31,5 x 23,9 cm
Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Figueres

Bohumil Kubista
Autorretrato
1918
Linóleo para el catálogo razonado, 1984 (Odeón, Praga)
22,7 x 15,2 cm
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Mark Tansey
Tres estudios-collage para Picasso y Braque
1992
Toner y acrílico sobre papel acetato y dibujo manual
21,6 x 27,9 cm; 15,9 x 21,6 cm; 21,6 x 27,9 cm
Cortesía Gagosian Gallery

Mark Tansey
Estudio-collage para El triunfo
de la escuela de Nueva York
1984
Fotocopia sobre papel
27,9 x 40,6 cm
Cortesía Gagosian Gallery

D. A. Prigov
Korrupsia
1987

Tinta sobre papel de periódico
60 x 42 cm
Colección particular/Krings-Ernst Galerie

Hans Haacke
Vaquero con un cigarrillo
2012
Fotografía del collage enmarcada
94 x 80 cm
Colección particular

Ayreen Anastas + Rene Gabri
Freedom (A-D of)
2009
Impresión digital sobre papel
Cortesía de los artistas

Ricardo Bassbaum
Superpronoun
2003
Impresión digital sobre papel vinílico
Cortesía del artista

Mark Lombardi
Nugan Hand Bank Sidney Australia
1996 (sexta versión)
Lápiz de grafito, lápiz de color sobre papel
130 x 275 cm
MNCARS. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía,
Madrid

Zbyněk Baladrán
Clasificación de emociones (según Karl Jaspers)
2009
Papel, bolsa, bolígrafo
12 x 12 cm
Cortesía del artista

5. AN ABSTRACT ART

Adolfo Bioy Casares y Jorge Luis Borges

Crónicas de Bustos Domecq
Buenos Aires, Losada, 1967
Centre de Coneixement i Recerca. Museu Picasso,
Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Se quebró el cántaro (copia del Capricho
nº 25 de Goya)
Madrid, 1897-1898
Sanguina sobre papel
19,6 x 12 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Bien tirada está (copia del Capricho
nº 17 de Goya)
Madrid, 1898
Sanguina sobre papel
17,5 x 10,5 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Cabeza
París, 1913
Carboncillo y collage sobre papel
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Ivan Kliun
Copia de Estudiante con pipa (1913-1914)
de Pablo Picasso
s/d
17 x 22,5 cm
Museo Estatal de Arte Contemporáneo, Tesalónica

Ivan Kliun
Sin título / Copia a partir de Picasso
s/d
18,4 x 15,8 cm
Museo Estatal de Arte Contemporáneo, Tesalónica

Ivan Kliun

Sin título / Copia a partir de Picasso
s/d
16,3 x 13,5 cm
Museo Estatal de Arte Contemporáneo, Tesalónica

Ivan Kliun
Sin título / Copia a partir de Picasso
s/d
12,2 x 19,8 cm
Museo Estatal de Arte Contemporáneo, Tesalónica

Yves Klein
Maquette, souche et chèque pour les zones
de sensibilité picturale immatérielle
1959
(publicada por el Centre Georges Pompidou-Musée
Nationale d'Art Moderne, París, 1983)
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Marcel Duchamp
Tzanck Check
1919
Tinta sobre papel
21 x 38,2 cm
Museo de Israel, Jerusalem. Colección de arte dada
y surrealista de Vera y Arturo Schwarz

Marcel Broodthaers
Cubierta y páginas interiores de Musée d'Art
Moderne, Département des Aigles, Section
Financière
Düsseldorf, Galería Konrad Fischer, 1971
Colección particular, Liébana, Cantabria

Cildo Meireles
Cero dólar
1978-1984
Impresión offset sobre papel
6,7 x 15,7 cm
Colección MACBA. Consorci MACBA

Tibor Hajas
Dinero reintegrado
1976
Collage
45 x 33 cm
Ludwig Múzeum. Kortárs Művészeti Múzeum, Budapest

Colección de billetes originales, 1936-1939
FAZ (Financial Autonomie Zone), 2009
Tesouro: La comunidad inconfesable
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Zachary Formwalt
Páginas de la edición en castellano de Reading
The Economist
Barcelona, Museu Picasso, 2012
(edición original en inglés: CASCO/Fundação Serralves,
Utrecht/Oporto, 2010)

César Aira
Páginas de Picasso(dibujo de la cubierta:
D. Rosales)
Buenos Aires, Ediciones Belleza y Felicidad, 2007
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

6. MAGIC

Nacho Criado
«Bésale el culo al mono»
1980-1985
Fotografía
52 x 62 cm
Colección particular

Pablo Picasso
Frutero
Barcelona, 1917
Óleo sobre lienzo
40 x 28,1 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Naturaleza muerta
París, 1901
Óleo sobre lienzo
61 X 82 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
La copa azul
Barcelona, 1902-1903
Óleo sobre lienzo
66,1 x 28,5 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Florero
22 de abril de 1943
Gouache sobre papel
65,8 x 50,6 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Copa y paquete de tabaco
París, 1924
Óleo sobre lienzo y moldura policromada
16 x 22 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Orson Welles
F for Fake
1975
producción: François de Reichenbach
85 min

Elmyr d'Ory
Homenaje a Braque
s/d
Óleo sobre lienzo
81 x 11,6 cm
Es Baluard. Museu d'art modern i contemporani de Palma

Pablo Picasso
Cuatro composiciones para La Barre d'appui
de Paul Éluard
París, 1936
Grabado
41,8 x 31,6 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Composición de dos litografías y dos textos para
el libro Poèmes et lithographies (editado en 1954)
París, mayo de 1949
Litografía con tinta, lápiz litográfico, pluma, acuarela
y gouachetirada sobre papel Arches
66 x 50,2 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Composición de tres litografías y un texto para
el libro Poèmes et lithographies (editado en 1954)
París, mayo de 1949
Litografía con tinta, lápiz litográfico, pluma, acuarela
y gouachetirada sobre papel Arches
65,6 x 50,4 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Composición de una litografía, un pictograma
y dos textos para el libro Poèmes et lithographies
(editado en 1954)
París, mayo de 1949
Litografía con tinta, lápiz litográfico, pluma, acuarela
y gouachetirada sobre papel Arches
66,1 x 50,4 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Ramon Casas
Cartel para Anís del Mono
c. 1898
Tinta sobre papel
48,7 x 24,5 cm

Museu d'Història de Badalona

Juan Gris

La botella de anís, 1914

Google Art Projects/MNCARS

<http://www.googleartproject.com/es/collection/museo-reina-sofia/artwork/the-bottle-of-anis-del-mono-juan-gris/331488/>

«Anís del Doys»

¡Cu-Cut!, Barcelona, nº 26 (26 de junio de 1902)

Museu de Badalona

7. *UR*, THE MAGAZINE

Simon Wachsmuth

Barricada

2008

Dos vallas, metal, pintura en polvo

300 x 200 x 50 cm

Cortesía del artista

Pablo Picasso

Composición cubista (Tejados de París)

1914-1915

Óleo, lápiz y restos de serrín sobre lienzo

16 x 71 cm

Colección Marina Picasso. Cortesía Gallerie Jan Krugier et Cie., Ginebra

Pablo Picasso

Paisaje urbano

Barcelona, 1896

Óleo sobre madera

13,7 x 22,2 cm

Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso

Rayas y rombos

París, 1900

Lápiz grafito sobre papel

10,5 x 6 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Hermen Anglada y otros croquis
Barcelona, 1899-1900
Tinta sepia a pluma sobre papel
13,5 x 9,3 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Manuel Pallarès, sentado, con un cántaro
a los pies
Horta de Sant Joan, 1898
Lápiz negro sobre papel
24,7 x 16,3 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Decoración de un marco
Barcelona, c. 1900
Óleo sobre madera
122,8 x 82 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Pablo Picasso
Proyecto o copia de un marco rectangular,
ornamentado con hojas
La Coruña, 1894-1895
Lápiz grafito, sobre papel, repasado parcialmente
con tinta sepia a pluma
19,5 x 13,5 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Isidoro Valcárcel Medina
La celosía
1972
16 mm, b/n
115 min
Cortesía del artista

Art & Language
Estudio para el Guernica al estilo de Jackson
Pollock
1980
Lápiz y lápiz de color y tinta tamponada sobre papel
62 x 128,1 x 3,5 cm
Col·lecció MACBA. Consorci MACBA. Depósito Philippe
Méaille

Aleksandr Ródchenko
Ritmo expresivo
1940
Óleo sobre lienzo
17,2 x 64 cm
Museo Estatal de Arte Contemporáneo, Tesalónica

Ad Reinhardt
Láminas de la serie de cómics Una página
de chistes
México, Editorial Alias, 2010
(version original en inglés: A page of jokes, 1946-1961)
Colección particular

Sigmar Polke
Galería de los ancestros
1995
Litografía
55 x 75 cm
Galería La Caja Negra

Carta de Guy Debord y Hervé Falcou a Pablo Picasso
Primavera de 1951
Archives Musée Picasso, París
[reproducida en Archives & Documents Situationnistes,
París, n°4 (otoño de 2004)]
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Guy Debord / Asger Jorn
Mémoires
1958 (edición numerada 1793)
París, Jean-Jacques Pauvert aux Belles Lettres, 1993

Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Carta de Picasso a Asger Jorn

12 de diciembre de 1960

Museum Jorn, Silkeborg

Guy Debord

Le marquis de Sade a des yeux de fille...

1949-1951

Archives Hervé Falcou (Ivan Chtcheglov) (Gilles Ivain)

Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec, Canadá

París, Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2004

Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Asger Jorn

Cuatro pósters

1968

Litografía

101,7 x 65,8 cm

Museum Jorn, Silkeborg

Asger Jorn

Carpeta para alguno de los borradores para

La Langue verte et la cuite

1968

31,5 x 23 cm

Museum Jorn, Silkeborg

Asger Jorn

Manuscrito/maqueta para La Langue verte

et la cuite

1968

31 x 241 cm

Museum Jorn, Silkeborg

Asger Jorn

Recorte mecanografiado sobre el Disturbio
de Okinawa (reverso Marcel Duchamp, Buda)

1968

26,8 x 19 cm

Museum Jorn, Silkeborg

Asger Jorn
Manuscrito/maqueta para Signes gravés sur
les églises de l'Eure et du Calvados
1964
31 x 241 cm
Museum Jorn, Silkeborg

Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero
Entradas: Asger Jorn/Modifications
Hojas de libre circulación. Edición original: Fundació
Antoni Tàpies, Asger Jorn, catàlogo, 2002
Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Autor no identificado
Los alumnos de la Escuela de Bellas Artes
de Madrid fijan por las calles los carteles
pintados por ellos mismos durante las primeras
semanas del movimiento sedicioso
Protección del Tesoro Artístico Nacional. Propaganda
Cultural
Valencia, 1937
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero
Entrada: Posmodernismo
2009
Acuarela facsimilar de cartel anónimo de 1936
Edición de libre circulación
Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla
Cortesía Galería Casa sin Fin

Comisaría General de Defensa del Patrimonio
Artístico Nacional
Páginas de Un documento de la destrucción
de arte en la zona roja
Vitoria/Bilbao, Jefatura Nacional de Bellllas Artes,
Ministerio de Educación/Jefatura Nacional
de Propaganda, 1939
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Junta Delegada de Incautación, Protección
y Conservación del Tesoro Artístico Nacional
Páginas de Organización y trabajo de la Junta
del Tesoro Artístico de Madrid
Madrid, Dirección General de Bellas Artes. Ministerio
de Instrucción Pública, 1938
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

Protección del Tesoro Artístico Nacional
Páginas de Propaganda cultural
Valencia, 1937
Biblioteca Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

La protección del Tesoro Artístico de España
durante la Guerra
Nuestra España, París, nº extraordinario (abril de 1938)
Colección Abelardo Linares, Sevilla

Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero
Entrada: Posmodernismo
2009
(distribución: Sevilla, primavera de 2009)
Archivo F.X./Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla

9.3 – Descriptive texts

Economy: Picasso is at once an open exhibition –display, circulation, publication– and the conclusion of an experiment, the dramatisation of a series of operations carried out on Picasso’s work from the F.X. Archive as the basis of the present economy of art: firstly, in connection with commercial exchanges and their market; secondly, visibilising the division of sensitive experience into different spheres; and thirdly, making the friendly or hostile qualities between the visual arts and our immediate present explicit.

Likewise, the proposal informs of an obvious diagnosis: the development of the economy of art from the early twentieth century to date is structured around Picasso’s works and the operations concerning the Picasso brand. We may grasp this modern turn in the economy through the influence of Duchamp, his most important commentator, or through its most immediate counterpoint, the extended field of Russian Productivism. Both economies, however, are indiscernible from the one articulated around Picasso. This is the scenario. This is the landscape on to which our windows open.

In this sense, an effort has been made to identify those parts of Picasso’s work that are more in need of our attention, distancing ourselves from the legendary figure of the artist. The writings by Ángel González García, Rosalind E. Krauss and Georges Didi-Huberman help us define this framework in the present publication.

Furthermore, an extensive graphic selection brings us into contact with the different indexes marking the evolution of the *Economy: Picasso*. It’s a question of refreshing the various historical events, market quotas and movements of art capital that have gradually shaped the functioning of

artistic works to the present on the support of the distorted pages of *La Semaine Économique et Financière*, a publication that served Picasso as an argument for his collages of 1912, particularly those entitled *Bottle on a Table*. It's also a question of discarding these levels of value from our horizon of action, of clearing the landscape of its polluting elements, of seeking new and not dominant signs in the region.

On the other hand, we focus our attention on eccentric readings of Picasso's production, that enable us to return to some of his works and use them as toolboxes to begin to dismantle the Picasso enterprise and what it covers in today's art economy.

Starting from various readings of Felipe Aláiz, Luciano de San-Saor, Marius de Zayas, Jusep Torres Campalans, Honorio Bustos Domecq, Orson Welles and Guy Debord it is a question of observing the continuities and discontinuities of Picasso's works in the artistic economy, with a retrospective glance back to the early twentieth century.

Conceived as a dramatic composition (rather than as a libretto, our publication is presented as a continuation of this staging), the dramatisation and *mise en scène* of all these stories, presented as fugues and counterpoints, may perhaps help us discover a series of options, traces and resources that will enable us to find keys to the monstrous construction that *Economy: Picasso* has generated. It is precisely by tracing the origins of this model of art economy that we shall encounter its twists, relations and uses. No doubt we should be willing to take the risk of burning our fingers in a fire that is still our best known source of warmth.

SECTOR I – Oro Molido

Oro Molido, the leading character in the novel of the same title published by Felipe Aláiz in 1923, visits a Cubist exhibition. The works she contemplates – the image is a pedagogical explanation Aláiz gives young Helios Gómez on the 1912 exhibition at Galerías Dalmau – will resolve the shortcomings of a whole life, and place the girl on the path of emancipation. The novel is a moralist newspaper serial that hopes to remove from the life of Oro Molido – a young worker marked by the fact of being a single mother – the sentimental newspaper serials that alienate her. However, what is most interesting is the role played by the Cubist pieces as works of art. According to Aláiz, artistic work serves a biological purpose that triangulates our relationship with others and with society. Hence, Cubism's abstraction enables us to rearrange the remaining social connections and, unlike the newspaper serial, produce reciprocal relations in terms of equality, liberty and fraternity. In spite of a certain naïveté in Aláiz's appraisals, the new status he confers upon the fetishistic object, modelled by its abstract capacity, would enable us to distinguish between value and price in the manner of Juan de Mairena.

Picasso in the Pawnshop

Almost the only presence of money in Picasso's oeuvre dates back to this early letter in which he tells some friends about his first impressions after visiting the Prado. The drawing of a coin refers to Rosita de Oro, a star of variety shows and a circus horsewoman who had been his mistress. This innocent hieroglyph, like a living coin, announces a constant resource in which form and sentimentalism – as early as *Ciencia y Caridad* [Science and Charity] and the sketches for the poster of Caja de Previsión y Socorro – would engage in a fruitful conflict.

Chronicle of a Suicide

The newspaper fragments used by Picasso in his collages tell meaningful stories about the picture. Their compressed denseness perfectly explains the limits between abstraction and narrative in the work. Not without a touch of black humour, this generic *still life* presents the novelistic chronicle of a suicide. Beyond a psychological reading – prompted by the suicides of his friends Güell and Casagemas – what interests us is the recurring oxymoron, which is at once the story and the abolition of the story.

Cubism Is A Gag. Mel Bochner

Picasso probably felt the need to abandon Cubism upon realising the number of caricatural evocations the term had. He always felt that to reduce his work with form to merely making *cubes* was just witty, and therefore made a lot of jokes about it while working in the style. Even so, the idea of the work of art as a gag, halfway between the humorous and the transcendental, was consolidated in his oeuvre. 'A cube is simply the support of an idea, a unity of thought, its exact measurement,' recalls Mel Bochner.

***Arte Joven* and the Market of Artistic Values**

Precedents of the extended reception of Picasso can be found in the theoretical dithyrambs by Silverio Lanza, with whom he coincided during the years of *Arte Joven*. These ideas, developed through relevant financial calculations, could include the interpretation of collage as a fourth dimension, heralding the Surrealist *objet trouvé*; the transformation of nihilism into deconstruction for, like wheat grain, it must be broken in order to germinate; or, finally, the comparison between the reception of an original work and that of its copy, for instance, Velázquez's *Las Meninas*.

Felipe Aláiz and *Arte accesible*: Barradas, Torres-García and Helios Gómez

One of the numerous controversies of the libertarian movement was the discussion between Federica Montseny and Felipe Aláiz on the new art. Montseny's academic and naturalist stances were questioned by Aláiz, who emphasised above all the democratising qualities of modern artistic practice. It is in his economy of means that Aláiz embodies an anarchist and popular spirit that defends artists such as Helios Gómez, Rafael Barradas and Joaquín Torres-García or Pablo Picasso himself.

'El arte de escribir sin arte'

We could highlight a couple of observations from this literary pamphlet against literary preciousness, elaborate sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literary style and bourgeois modernism: while in the past ornament was the result of the capitalist accumulation that characterised the first industrial societies, today it depends directly on the masses that listen to you, on the irresponsibility of addressing your discourse at squares or stadiums. We should ask ourselves when Aláiz decided that this art without art was the best definition of Picasso.

F.X. Archive/Entry: Capital

This excerpt from the film *Nuestro culpable*, produced by the CNT trade union in 1938, is classified in the F.X. Archive under the heading *Capital*. *The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof*, starting from the different attempts to turn this text by Karl Marx into a film – from Sergei Eisenstein to Alexander Kluge, from Guy Debord to Marcello Mercado. The example contains all the elements of a paradoxical tradition in the libertarian interpretation of modern art, from Silverio Lanza to Juan de Mairena, not to mention the comments of Felipe Aláiz.

SECTOR 2 – The New Canto

In January 1929 Lucía Sánchez Saornil was involved in her first public controversy concerning avant-garde art. The pages of the *Heraldo de Madrid* newspaper reproduced her war of words with Santiago Lorenzo and Victoriano Fernández de Asís. Saornil's knowledge of Cubism ('and to speak of Cubism in Spain was to speak of Picasso') contained a kernel of energy that would lead her to avant-garde aesthetic positions and would subsequently characterise her vital and ideological drift. A Fine Arts student, Saornil would soon become a poet publishing in *Ultra* under the pen name Luciano de San-Saor, a pseudonym that her future homosexual activism would make more meaningful. While her subsequent artistic ventures would lead her away from the Ultraist ranks, her affiliation to the CNT trade union, the important role she played in the Mujeres Libres, her social and militant poetry, her activism in favour of sexual liberation and her fight for the equality and independence of women were vital sources of inspiration that derived from her early avant-garde alliances, as announced in her poem 'El canto nuevo': 'Those of us who created this time / shall achieve all audacious feats, / WE SHALL CONSTRUCT / THE INVERTED PYRAMIDS.'

Picasso and the Rape of Painting. Louise Lawer

Seizing art from whom? Picasso's early urge to steal art from its material owners is no doubt the most radical gesture in favour of the absolute independence of the work of art. Faced with the voracity of the bourgeoisie that was swallowing up all sorts of isms, the operation became increasingly complicated, an exhausting task of opening and

closing doors. After Picasso the path has broadened, and the art object has also rebelled – a journey from the muses to the museum. What is the woman in the photograph showing us?

The Unknown Masterpiece: The Point of View of the Sitter

There were precedents in nineteenth-century painting, such as Raimundo de Madrazo's *Travesuras de la modelo* [Model Making Mischief], in which the model herself doodles on the portrait the master is painting. The story of Frenhofer, the painter who is the main character in Balzac's *Le Chef-d'œuvre inconnu* [The Unknown Masterpiece], undergoes a radical change if we adopt the model's point of view. The switches from rhetoric to terror suggested by the philosopher are intensified if we think of who the subject looking at us is. Woman and art work are simultaneously emancipated.

Lucía Sánchez Saornil and *Seated Woman*. Leticia El Halli Obeid

Creationism, Vicente Huidobro's version of literary Cubism, is the greatest influence on San-Saor's poetry: 'I make poems to be seen, not to be read.' The cliché of the *reading woman* is one of the female emblems of the age, and this is the light in which we should interpret San-Saor's avant-garde lyricism. This is how she moves from reading to writing, from the living room to the street, from Art Nouveau to modernism. It's a question of having a steady hand. That's how Leticia El Halli Obeid also writes.

Blessed Virgins. F.X. Archive: Pablo Picasso

Manuel Delgado has written the following words: ‘The anti-clericals perceived the Church as a place of anti-male conspiracy and the last refuge of the old dangers associated with uncontrolled femininity. In this way, the project to modernise and secularise society demanded an inescapable sacrifice: the destruction of the symbols of unreformed Christianity that would mark the advent of a definitive and desired virilisation of the world, emancipated at last from the former feminine power of blood and roots.’

Domestic Wars

Anarchists and Dadaists, Futurists and Bolsheviks appeared in modern Spanish magazines as agents belonging to the same category. It is no wonder that Sánchez Saornil found it essential to become proficient in these matters. Her attacks against the sexual differentiation of women as a biological reductionism, as opposed to the bourgeois conception of Gregorio de Marañón and the libertarian ideas of Federica Montseny, are greatly indebted to the poetic Creationism that likened the nature of the poem to the construction of an object or to the gestation of a living being.

Mujeres Libres: *Prostitución; Barcelona trabaja para el frente; La última* [Prostitution; Barcelona Works for the Front; The Last One]

Free Women, the association of anarcho-syndicalist women founded by Lucía Sánchez Saornil, Amparo Poch y Gascón and Mercedes Comaposada, was active between 1936 and 1939. This film programme, a common feature in the association’s pedagogical work, sums up the contradictions of their advanced Feminism at the height of the Spanish Civil War: sexual freedom and moralism; working-class emancipation and

military obedience; gender violence and Regenerationism. In exile, Mercedes Comaposada worked as Picasso's secretary until 1959.

***maquettes-sans-qualité.* Alejandra Riera/Fulvia Carnevale**

In the abstract of *ENTRE/ACTE, Images of the Border* ring the words of Abel Paz: 'Some wanted to transform the prison into new premises, the Mujeres Libres wanted to raze the place to the ground and turn it into a garden. Today it's a square open to everyone, but nobody knows that there was a prison on the original site, the walls of which echoed with tragedy, the anguish that a human being can experience during the years spent in prison. Those who haven't been imprisoned cannot understand it'.

SECTOR 3 – The Return to Primitive Art

The controversy surrounding the influence of Black African art on Cubism has proved fruitful. The accounts of the direct transfer of masks and statues to the paintings by Picasso and Braque are obviously anecdotal. In 1928 Marius de Zayas suggested that the study of the influence of primitive art had to focus on the works by Cézanne, even on those by El Greco, for this was not a superficial appropriation but a structural change. As a Mexican, de Zayas also pointed out another development: the archaeological investigation that the ethnographic turn had given to modernism had favoured the immediate integration of subaltern artists and ways of making art into the movements prevalent in Paris and New York, ‘Mexican natives and African blacks and Cubist painters and modern photographers.’ The analysis made by de Zayas, a permanent exile, begins with Picasso himself, who forms a part of this colonial market on account of being Spanish. For de Zayas, a caricaturist, the motorcar symbolised the synthesis between modern and primitive. According to this uniquely controversial geopolitical vision, the plundering of the colonies also provided some of the tools for their emancipation.

Picasso on Black

Each word in Picasso's remarks to André Malraux on African Negro sculpture is precise; *intercesseurs*, mediators, they even stress the use of the term in French. Moreover, the 'fetishes' were 'weapons', defensive weapons: 'I too believe that everything is unknown to us, that everything is our enemy!' Picasso, who had so often denied the exotic introduction of African art in his painting, wanted to assimilate its practice. It wasn't a question of style but of considering its workings as a mediation.

Corps perdu

Aimé Césaire's anti-colonial discourse seeks, above all, a conceptual tool of its own that is no longer dependent on the influence of the European metropolis, and it often finds the same poetic workings in radical art.

Lautréamont may well be the greatest testimony of colonial violence, born of anthropocentric humanist rationalism. This communion of interests prompted the collaboration between Césaire and Picasso in the politically active framework of the Communist Party, a use of language that Césaire called *the miraculous weapons*.

Marius de Zayas and How To Make a Cubist Painting

In 1915 deZayas, the first to display Picasso's works in New York, was aware of the new developments in the economy of art. The Modern Gallery was created for two reasons: to show the likeness between modern and primitive art and to establish a price policy in terms of mutual fairness. The art market was being set up in America in the shadow of the two world wars. Decolonisation extends its map after 1945. Retired from the art world, in 1953 de Zayas prepares the draft of *Cubism*, a genealogy that aspires to that synthesis.

Black Sculpture; Impressions of Africa; Phantom Africa

Soit's not a question of alterity. It isn't the other primitive at all, nor even the other. The tool provided by *the African black*, so to speak, is an area of experimentation in which we may criticise ourselves. Carl Einstein's anachronism, Raymond Roussel's linguistic divisions and Michel Leiris's autobiographical mirror – we must point out that the three authors had mutual ties – are radical examples of the independence attained by *the African black* in modernism.

La vérité sur les colonies

In the arts, the visions of the *alternate other* are the sign that modernism had been conquered. Its clearest precedent could be the 1931 Surrealist exhibition held in Paris, in response to the official celebrations of French colonialism. In a showcase, the exhibition displayed rosaries of flowers, cards bearing pictures of the Sacred Heart and statuettes of Lourdes under the legend *European fetishes*. The statement in which the Surrealists accused themselves of being fetishists and primitive made critical stances even more complex.

Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?:

Richard Hamilton; Eduardo Paolozzi; Rafael Agredano

The avant-garde domesticated the *other* through symbolic procedures and the recognition of *otherness*, while postmodernism is based on *difference*, critical attitudes, the relationship between the subject and the other that can be perceived in a range of fields: post-colonialism, Feminism, sexual identity. Hamilton's picture card is to his age what *Les Femmes d'Alger* was for the age of Picasso.

What modernities are opening up and coming to a close in today's homes?

***Funk Lessons:* Gavin Jantjes, Frédéric Bruly Bouabré, Fred Wilson**

Adrian Piper says: 'Without recourse to the prestige of high culture, funk has been largely inaccessible to white culture, in part because of the different roles of social dance in white as opposed to black culture. For example, whereas social dance in white culture is often viewed in terms of achievement, social grace or competence, or spectator-oriented entertainment, it is a collective and participatory means of self-transcendence and social union in black culture along many dimensions, and so is often much more fully integrated into daily life. Thus it is based on a system of symbols, cultural meanings, attitudes and patterns of movement that one must directly experience in order to understand fully.'

SECTOR 4 – *Green Notebook*

Amidst the Mexican jungles of Chiapas, Max Aub reveals this *Green Notebook* to us, the author of which, Jusep Torres Campalans (JTC), was a painter, a friend and a contemporary of Picasso's. The comments by Silverio Lanza on Cubism – 'My coevals made art to be understood and admired by the ignorant while you, modern artists, make art to be admired and understood by artists. That is the way to hell' – had led Aub to try and gut modern art by means of an unusual journey to the heart of darkness. The novel was presented together with an exhibition of works by JTC the artist, a catalogue and a series of considerations on his work by Octavio Paz, Carlos Fuentes, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Olga Tamayo and Elena Poniatowska, among others. In fact, as insinuated by Jean Cassou who is very present in the novel, JTC is none other than Picasso without André Level or Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler; in other words, a Picasso defeated in all senses of the word, even politically. He is his biographical opposite and, at the same time, his counter-figure, various stories against History with a capital H. Max Aub proclaims this on the first page: How can there be truth without lies?

The Hands of Max Jacob

Max Jacob's esotericism had a gift. Picking up an object – a gold watch or a set of dice – he was able to view its history, to situate it in time and space. The examination of Picasso's palms presents no surprises as to the means, but his definitions – independent, passionate, sarcastic – could also be applied to JTC, his double. In his Mexican exile, JTC abandoned art and devoted himself to magic, fungus and shamanism as subversive forms against capitalism.

Photographs and Cubism

The photographic images of these Cubist compositions and collages taken by Picasso reveal their *trompe l'œil* quality, implying something that is often emphasised in the formalist sense of technical display. However, in the Spanish tradition of conceitism, *trompe l'œil* is related to Realism and not with the imagination or fantasy. For JTC, this materialist vocation, linked to a culture of poverty, has political meaning, the same brand of heterodoxy against the official church.

Bohumil Kubista, Cubist Picabia and Dalí

'A painting measuring sixty-five metres in which my signature is the only story,' another of the ideas expressed by JTC. His drawing *El sabio* [The

Wise Man] supports the theory according to which only when money disappears will the work of art cease to be its equal and go back to having magical properties. For JTC, Cubism and its anagrams lie at this crossroads, on the path where faith and financial issues, trust and credit intersect. JTC, Bohumil Kubista, Picabia's portraits and Dalí's *Avida Dollars* are the biological embodiment of this crossroads.

Conjuring Tricks. Jusep Torres Campalans and History

Max Aub was the administrator appointed by the Republican government to deal with the ownership of and payments for Picasso's *Guernica*. In all other respects their biographies are absolutely at odds with each other. Just like conjuring tricks, history lessons are the applied definition Aub offers us in JTC or in *Life and Works of Luis Álvarez Petreña*, a writer and another of his heteronyms. *Card Game* could be a novel by Petreña illustrated by Campalans, literally an epistolary novel to be read at random, as dictated by the throw of a card.

Mark Tansey and the Cold War

The new history painting. In *Triumph of the New York School* we see a well-known group of Abstract Expressionists, headed by Clement Greenberg and wearing clothes from the Second World War, signing an

armistice with a Parisian delegation, dressed in the fashion of the Great War, headed by André Breton, behind whom at almost equal distance are Picasso attired in a fur coat, and Marcel Duchamp, dressed as a gendarme, ironic. The composition evokes Velázquez's *La rendición de Breda* [The Surrender of Breda] and a group of Surrealists carries spears to reinforce the idea.

Hans Haacke/Prigov

There is often great confusion between display and device, both on the theoretical and the instrumental plane. We could take the link between a piece of information and its support as an example. Both Haacke and Prigov make use of a display that they relate to what Picasso operated as devices, in his newspaper collages. The historical tale is merely a specific concatenation of bodies and signs, a catalogue of devices. The repetition of the display maintains historical order despite disrupting it as a political gesture.

Diagrams: Ricardo Basbaum, Anastas & Gabri, Zbyněk Baladrán, Mark Lombardi

In 1968 Octavio Paz and Vicente Rojo, two close collaborators of the JTC operation, were preparing the edition of a book/suitcase on the work

of Marcel Duchamp when the latter suddenly passed away. The biographical fictions, the *Boîte-en-Valise*, the diagrams... are but different ways of facing up to history's taxonomic needs, of gutting them and displaying their monstrosity. The last works by JTC are just *scenarios*. That's what the series – the blank maps awaiting their captions – were called.

SECTOR 5 – An Abstract Art

Jorge Luis Borges' eccentric condition granted him an excellent vantage point from which he could perfectly understand the functioning of the different *centres* – London, Paris, New York, but also avant-gardism, *return to order*, anachronism – and their areas of influence. As a result of a certain acceleration of time, quite often, when news reached the periphery from the metropolises, the news item had already turned into the place from which it was broadcast. The centre was a critical space, the echoes of which could be perceived in its surrounding areas as classical and stabilised. Abstraction became a narrative as soon as it began to be explained and vice versa, for only a good narrative was truly able to generate abstract notions. 'Abstract and concrete: the two words are obviously synonyms.' This understanding of his age led him, somewhat pragmatically, to cultivate paradoxes. He solved the poetic debates on metaphor and metonymy like Mallarmé, by giving words the value of coins. In *Crónicas de Bustos Domecq* [Chronicles of Bustos Domecq], with Adolfo Bioy Casares, he applied this procedure to modern art. The book is dedicated 'To those three great forgotten figures: Picasso, Joyce, Le Corbusier.'

Caprices and Follies

Copying works by great masters becomes tautological when what is copied is in itself a copy, unlike the action of copying an etching by returning it to its original drawing. The diffusion of Goya's *Los Caprichos* [Caprices] took place at the same time as paper money was popularised in Spain. Goya distributed them from a chemist's and the monarchy from the Bank of San Carlos. But only chance has given us the two themes: the living coin, the whore in *Bien tirada está* [It is Nicely Stretched], the future coin, the educated child in *Se quebró el cántaro* [Yes, He Broke the Pot].

After Picasso

Tatlin and Malevich became familiar with Picasso's works thanks to the Shchukin collection and the French reviews that arrived in Moscow. In the ideological debate between Productivists, Constructivists and Suprematists, the theoretical evolution of influences through 'copies' underwent a significant increase. Ivan Kliun based his methodological approach on versions taken from artists such as Picasso, Braque or Gris and reproduced in *L'Esprit Nouveau* and *Cahiers d'Art*. As an exercise in appropriation, what was emphasised were the cosmopolitanism and independence of the new Russian art.

Jorge Luis Borges/Adolfo Bioy Casares: H. Bustos Domecq

Bustos Domecq presents us with a great many artists: Paladión signs masterpieces of the past as his own; Urbas sends a rose and wins the poetry competition on this floral theme; Ginsberg expands literature with its phonetic nonsense; Tafas covers his paintings with uniform black shoe polish; Bonavena devotes himself to precisely describing all that is on his table; Vilaseco repeats the same work over and over; by means of a small poster Garay makes any square his own; Darracq has his conceptual gastronomy; in exchange for their audiovisual information, Abasto declares the events abolished.

Financial Operations: Duchamp and Klein; Hajas and Meireles,

Broodthaers and Beuys

The evolution of the economy of art in pursuit of a greater independence has prompted artists to develop concepts in which the work of art and paper money fulfil the same function. This financial aspiration is based on the precise understanding of the mechanisms surrounding what we call 'art' today, which share the history of concepts such as 'love' and 'capital'. This mimetic identification clearly reveals how the economic regime affects our language and our lives, and how we can learn it.

F.X. Archive: Thesaurus: The Unavowable Community /FAZ

The FAZ, Financial Autonomous Zones, constitute a physical and virtual space of legal, economic and social relationships aimed at building an economy devoid of financial accrual, founded on the existence of a paper currency that is minted and circulated according to autonomous social control. The F.X. Archive explores its archaeology and presents those found in the anarchist capitals that during the Spanish Civil War also decided to demystify the names of their towns.

Reading *The Economist*

Even though academic knowledge has placed the economy and aesthetics in different spheres, the truth is – as Giorgio Agamben has reminded us – that the two have a common origin. The texts by Pseudo-Dionysus the Areopagite reintroduce both forms of knowledge in the early Christian age. Occultism, the magical and mystical equally constitute artistic and pecuniary activity. We could take as an example this genealogical work by Zachary Formwalt in relation to today's financial crises that are repeated cyclically in capitalism as they have been since the nineteenth century.

Book of Letters. César Aira

Picasso, César Aira's overwhelming story, is a collaboration between the author and Ediciones Belleza y Felicidad, an Argentinean publishing house linked to the Eloísa Cartonera project that has a markedly autonomous and social, political and popular nature. The novel was printed as original photocopies. The title page reproduces Picasso's name by means of the enlarged script of his signature, and a drawing by Rosales that recreates the painter's graphic world. 'How can we leave the Picasso Museum with a Picasso under our arm?' are the last words of the novel.

SECTOR 6 – Magic

Giorgio Agamben has defined the gag as the answer to the impossibility of images being circumscribed by language. He recalls how the gag, literally, means something placed in the mouth of an actor to prevent him from speaking, thereby favouring gestures and improvisations in attempts to overcome this impossibility of speech. Furthermore, the philosopher relates this definition to that of mysticism, in the sense of Wittgenstein; in other words, that of showing what cannot be said, the unreal estrangement we find in some of Buñuel's films. The gag always makes us laugh even if the actor tries to express serious or tragic events. The gag appears as a gesture in the sense of painting or the cinematographic image. The documentary *F for Fake* by Orson Welles deals with the idea of genius through its counter-figure, fraud. Despite its autobiographical nature, the narrative motif is Picasso and his mirror, the forger Elmyr d'Ory. The film focuses on *trompe l'œil*, the essential gag about all that is related to sight. The fate of the work of art is to become a *trompe l'œil* and the artist is simply the officiating actor. The magician is merely an actor.

Kiss the Monkey's Arse

Picasso's numerous references to the bottle of Anís del Mono anisette are a kind of gag. The traditional 'harlequin' design of the bottle allows for an ironic comment on Cubism: the anachronistic relationship with Spanishness; the monkey hiding a portrait of Darwin; the art of the posters cultivated by his friend Ramon Casas. This is one of many examples – the guitar, the fruit bowl, the newspaper – but it is important to emphasise the evolution of these gestures in Picasso's painting. *Kiss the monkey's arse*, as Nacho Criado exclaimed.

Re-writing Picasso

The operation by means of which writing, Picasso's script, ends up becoming painting, an artistic gesture, obviously proves we should not conceal the monetary form of his thinking. Compared to the usual attempts to separate matter and intellect, this monetary quantification implies a materialistic turn. It is the Faustian document that guarantees his connection with poetry, with making, with *poiesis*, the disproportionate enlargement of his signature. So here graphology is a form of deconstruction, as Derrida wanted.

Góngora

If the functioning of 'gold' in Mallarmé's poetry enables us to understand the restrictive nature of certain transactions in Cubist painting, in order to understand the subsequent development of Picasso's painting and sculpture we may perhaps turn to the symbol of 'gold' in the poetry of Góngora, to which the painter would return in the thirties – not so much the alchemical gold, the treasure, the banking secret, as gold as an offering, a gallant gift, the currency in circulation. Midas' punishment stems precisely from his having mistaken one type of 'gold' for another.

Style: Form and Firm

The etymological connection between 'form' and 'firm' [from the Latin, to confirm by signature] evinces the function of style – a specific form of writing that contemplates documents from the point of view of a specific person. The caricatural fate of style reveals it to be a gag. Only by assuming this effect/defect is style able to avoid succumbing to a paralysing mannerism. Style is a brand, and as such is somewhat alienating. There is an echo of *Fake* – 'what is fake is the signature' – in this belonging to a prefixed script, playing a role, surrendering to a device.

Vanitas

The *still life* genre leads inevitably to *vanitas*. The eccentric nature of its origin, the *parergon*, a detail which is subsidiary to the main theme that becomes the centre of the work will end up making it a tautological theme, a painting that talks to painting, hence the identification with the gag. The step from cornucopia to *vanitas* characterises Picasso's oeuvre: it is not only an evolution in time but also an immediate operation on the work of art. 'A painting about a painting about a painting', as reflected in the script of *F for Fake*.

Picasso and his Double

This explains why the figure of the double, in the sense of evolution and opposition, can help us understand better the functioning of art work and artist. It is suggested that Elmyr d'Ory is Picasso's double. His effects and defects appear enlarged before us. Thanks to a signature, a hidden mark – for instance, the fact that some bad paintings are cushioned by the Picasso rubric – a specific work can also be depersonalised. We realise that the personal stamp is a contrivance, providing at once distinction and non-entity.

F for Fake/Elmyr d'Ory

The Orson Welles film is really about money, as we learn from the first scene with the coin trick and the little boy. The farcical quality resulting from King Midas being the jester instead of the true king, i.e., Elmyr d'Ory instead of Picasso, is a feature of Shakespearean writing. Instead of the pomposity of a grandiloquent accusation, a farce. At the heart of the tragedy, a comedy reveals the crux of the issue. The function of art, its magic, is conditioned by money, which is of course its innermost driving force.

SECTOR 7 – *UR*, the magazine

‘We are taking the liberty of sending you this magazine in order to make our activity known to you. We respect you as one of the great masters of painting, and would like to interview you on the subject of Lettrism. Please accept, Sir, our respectful tribute.’ The conciseness of this note sent by Hervé Falcou and Guy Debord to Picasso, together with *UR* magazine, to request his collaboration, allows us to reconsider the taxonomical notions that the clichéd historiography and its classifications establish in the construction of an independent economy of art. It turns out that Guy Debord, author of *La Société du spectacle* [The Society of the Spectacle], and other Situationists – Jorn and Constant began to paint under the direct influence of Picasso’s *Guernica* – had been educated under Picasso’s Communist affiliation, and preferred to maintain this contradiction rather than those of their Neo-Dadaist, Fluxus or Conceptual contemporaries, ‘pale reflections of the complete consolidation of financial capitalism’. In other words, the Duchamp galaxy or the Productivist constellations are only a part of the aura surrounding Picasso. If the history of men was written in the skies, since the invention of the telescope only its reflection in puddles is of any use to us.

***Jealousy*/Isidoro Valcárcel Medina**

Everything he had to say about film, about the book, about the window.

The objectification with which Alain Robbe-Grillet's novel *La Jalousie* [Jealousy] is treated here, the zeal with which it is regarded, the revelation of its architectural structure, expose its own traps. It is no longer a question of highlighting its inertia: the colonial vision of the world, the clichés of romantic love, the possessive desire of the bourgeoisie. Neither is there any suspicion regarding the gaze's ability to capture reality. The eye you see isn't an eye because you can see it; it's an eye because it's looking at you.

Windows

Vision framed by windows, Noam Chomsky reminds us, is the technology on which modernity is based. The space of the picture, the space of the book, the space of the screen are all equivalent. The avant-garde movements failed because, when trying to dynamite this space, they only managed to fragment, exchange and disperse that space in further windows. Frame, perspective and proportion are ideologies and it is on this structure that the early painters we describe as Cubist operated.

Cubist Composition

It is also known as *The Roofs of Paris*, and from this point of view it could be a realistic sketch with not a shadow of Cubist distortion in its composition. This remark throws into relief the precise point of view of Cubist Picasso's looking machine. The eye is positioned on a vertex: on the one hand, the aerial stability of man's gaze in the West, since modernity; on the other, its crisis, the start of its decomposition, even at the expense of colonising the world with its kaleidoscope.

Picasso and Taxonomy

By introducing gazes, different degrees of gazes into his compositions, we could say that Picasso's vision is taxonomical. Indeed, it would appear that he introduces pictures, windows and even more windows inside objects and figures; that time and again he opens the pictorial composition to more and more gazes. The accident we call Cubism is the logical development of the picture since its invention. Sometimes these gazes are hierarchical; at other times they are likened, appearing equal, the same. Taxonomy, in that order.

Ad Reinhardt: Save Modern Art!

We know that Marius de Zayas showed Alfred H. Barr several comical diagrams, jokes on avant-garde art and its evolution that Barr took very seriously. Taking that seriousness as his basis, Ad Reinhardt began to dismantle modern art with the honourable intention of saving it. Only one who officially demanded silence – ultimately, his black pictures – as opposed to history could, in turn, spread such verbiage against history itself. Each window is a parody; each building, a farce: *What does art represent, you ask? What about you? What do you represent?*

Overcoming Art: Guy Debord/Asger Jorn

Debord's interest in Communist Picasso can only raise suspicion. But what about Asger Jorn? He worked on the pavilion of the Spanish Republic in Paris, where *Guernica* was displayed for the first time. His personal summing up of the history of art since the times of magic and vandalism positions Picasso as a pinnacle of Gothic art. As a result, 'like a Picasso between Duchamp and May '68', he made the Situationist aspiration of overcoming art his own. So this time, the exception can bypass the rule. There is no correspondence between form and history.

The Canon Upside Down: Art and Language/Rodchenko

It is not a question of creating an alternative canon. It is more that the story, at the same time as it makes history, brings crisis to dominant histories. We could take Simon Wachsmuth's *Barricade* as a reticle for our sight, a gaze, given that all gazes are filtered. If we consider, for instance, the opposition between the Lenins or *Guernica* and Jackson Pollock's drippings as merely an analytical game by Art and Language, with what identity is Rodchenko's painting responding? History lies in its anachronisms.

Epilogue: F.X. Archive: Capital of the Republic: Library

In April 1938 *Nuestra España* magazine, published by the Spanish-American Committee for the Defence of the Spanish Republic, dedicated a special issue to 'The Protection of Spain's Artistic Treasure during the War' that contained a special contribution by Pablo Picasso, Director of the Prado Museum. The magazine reproduced images and documents that testify to the destruction of cultural and religious heritage perpetrated by Fascism. 'A religious object can simultaneously be a work of art; protect it for the National Treasure.'

EXCURSUS I

El arte de escribir sin arte by Felipe Aláiz contains an inscrutable sentence, a thought that seems to conspicuously slam the door on the whole of history. It reads as follows: 'It is not man who should speak like an open book, but the open book that should speak like a man.' Indeed, some individuals are transparent, translucent rather than lucid, and some texts are governed by style, in the belief that the best antidote against human imperfection is, perhaps, the accuracy of grammar.

Be that as it may, in Aláiz's sentence the most pressing question isn't that of defining how either men or books speak, but the nature of openness. Giorgio Agamben has explored this very issue in a text that seems to respond to the libertarian writer. It is entitled *The Open: Man and Animal*, and begins with Alexandre Kojève's famous idea that at the end of historical time, men will go back to being animals coexisting peacefully, in the absence of wars, revolutions and philosophy. To return to the beginning, or to arrive at the absence of words through words, like a piece of writing that gradually becomes unnamed, like a picture that loses its soundness and becomes unfamiliar, abstract.

George Bataille also made a reference to this subsequent state in which religion would exert an intense and constituent effect on individuals, a

state in which death would be viewed passively and indifferently. All values would then disappear and only money would preserve its symbolic nature, its structural function.

We can accurately imagine that world inhabited by squandering animals, living coins or beings given over to the lust of spending, lacking any urgency to conquer space, time and language, perhaps only spurred on by laughter. This is how Kafka and Quevedo saw us, for instance: the former from a somewhat stunned tenderness; the latter, looking out of the window of morality.

Looking towards the same place, in his film *Money* Robert Bresson tried to capture the circulation of a forged banknote in real life, exposing ethical spells, just as the citizen of La Mancha (in another falsified version) who travelled the world to enquire about the possible effects of goodness, under the pretext of having been alienated by a few stories of chivalry.

Even though it may seem ridiculous, the truth is that Alonso Quijano's road movie isn't that different to that other pecuniary *bildungsroman* recorded by Bresson. Both the madman and the forged banknote navigate the absence of values and the lack of courage; both the disturbed subject and the bewitched object unsuccessfully strive to acquire a certain condition of their own.

I spoke earlier of laughter, of its emancipating quality. In this sense, the

extreme gravity of Don Quixote and the circumspect gestures of all the characters in *Money* come as no surprise, for it seems difficult to abandon oneself to hilarity when there is so much 'at stake'. In any event, laughing is an exercise that some people relate exclusively to youth and old age and, especially, to art. Well not some people, perhaps only Friedrich Nietzsche and Michel Foucault who, paradoxically, have been taken too seriously, incomprehensibly seriously, quite the opposite to Cervantes' *Quixote*.

Laughter has accompanied artists from the beginning of time, and art entered into modernity with a hilarious background sound, like the bursts of canned guffaws that can be heard at the end of a poor television gag. So things have changed very little: laughter continues to be the chief hermeneutic tool to assess aesthetics, which explains why many consider the laughter provoked by art to be vulgar and insulting, and why very few celebrate jocularity as a form of political resistance.

However, an artistic genealogy of the hilarious still remains to be established, a sort of dialectical segregation that will discriminate the way in which artists join forces in front of laughter, how laughing has been an objective or, on the contrary, an accident, a mistake of interpretation.

As I wanted to discuss the emancipation of all that which alienates us, I find it appropriate to recall a famous painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, titled *The Fall of Icarus*. This picture was painted in 1558, two

years before the polyglot Emperor Charles V abdicated in favour of his son Philip II, a cruel, paranoid and illiterate monarch. This eventually triggered the Eighty Years' War, or Dutch War of Independence, that concluded with the independence of what is now known as the Low Countries and was then a part of the Spanish Empire.

Once the news of the death of Charles V was made public in 1558, barely a few miles from Bruegel's workshop a group of Calvinists and local nobles began to hatch the insurrection against the king of Spain. Bruegel, however, seems little concerned by this event; in fact, we could even say that not even Icarus appears to be interested in the matter, for while he is gasping for breath the world follows its course: a farmer works the land, a shepherd gazes up at the sky, a fisherman dozes on the shore and a vessel unhurriedly cuts through the peaceful bay of a nameless sea.

So couldn't we accuse Bruegel of being disrespectful to history, of disregarding the atmosphere of military tension that was brewing all around him? Couldn't we say that by trying to distort the representation of traditional themes this incomprehensible picture, inscrutable to its contemporaries and to us, that prefers the anecdote of language to the depth of the story, adopts a superficially conceptual standpoint?

In spite of the opinion of many hypochondriacs, art is unable to solve the anxieties of our day and age and those of all previous ages. Indeed, artists

have never solved any kind of anxiety, and whenever they have tried to do so they soon experienced great unease, or else they became conspicuous spokesmen of banality, or they would get involved in embodying ridiculously heroic values.

Only those who conceive art in a pious way, like an evangelising exercise, can believe that its tasks included emancipating individuals and protecting them from alienation. Only those who played a stoical and modest part in the various public and private orders took up the standard of disappointment against artists, as if 'aesthetic disappointments' were less acceptable than those that grant us an experience of reality, as if reality itself were not a set of disappointing expectations, as if we didn't exclusively learn through disappointment.

On the other hand, art offers us a record, a mirage that reflects the way in which individuals and the world ignore one another, contradict one another and, in short, waste their time exploring possible gaps in knowledge, hypothetical places from which we can *perform* differently. Some will consider this a defence of eccentricity, others will believe it to be a narcissistic idealisation or else will think that I ignore the transformative role of aesthetics; all of them will probably feel deeply disappointed. Nevertheless, I am referring to politics, to the political gestures agitated by art, to the flights of identity promoted by artists, to

the place where alienation is countered by acts – not ideas but *facts* – that are also alienating or that at least bring us beside ourselves, inconveniencing the place of consensus where our language lives, where we ourselves live.

But let's return to Bruegel.

In the picture of Icarus two different poets, William Carlos Williams and W. H. Auden, noticed the ataraxy of the world regarding the terrible thing I pointed out earlier, personified by the boat that cuts through the painting and that, seeing a boy falling from the sky, 'had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on', as Auden tells us in his poem 'Musée des Beaux Arts'.

The epic tragedy of a mythological hero and the disaster of war about to take place, Bruegel outlining the calm sea foam with a paintbrush with three hairs and, at the same time, close by, William of Orange's hungry soldiers speculating on who would die first. And amidst all this the rabble, a fisherman, a shepherd and a farmer remain intent on their productive tasks. Isn't alienation a way of slowing down the grinder of history, of making the age of allegories feasible, of alienating even that which alienates us?

EXCURSUS 2

In her book *King Kong Theory*, Virginie Despentes suggests that no man has yet written, without resorting to epics or to nihilism, the definitive book that documents the vicissitudes of the rude, impotent male who shows off his complexes by avoiding dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, this is only partly true. Witold Gombrowicz did, and so, occasionally, did César Aira. The cinema has also given us numerous examples of works that point in a similar direction, as proven by R. W. Fassbinder in *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*, a film that expresses a certain loss of direction regarding masculinity, in spite of narrating the desire and cruelty experienced by two women.

An engraving made by Louis-Léopold Boilly in 1823 can help us understand such identity issues. Entitled *Les Amateurs de Tableaux* [The Art Connoisseurs], it depicts five male figures who symbolise knowledge, or rather erudition, closely examining a series of pictures.

Despite the fact that Boilly does not let us see the content of these pictures, from the startled and even angry gestures of the gentlemen we can deduce that they are 'modern' paintings, perhaps obscene canvases. Beside the group, and slightly concealed by the frame of one of the canvases, stands a young girl who is like an apparition, as if the artist had added her after having completed the print to contradict the first ironical meaning of the work.

A hurried interpretation would perhaps consider the girl to be the leading figure, a dressed muse who now approaches those who contemplate her nudity and are startled by it. A more insightful reading would perhaps declare that the young girl personifies embarrassment, her downcast eyes expressing her modesty. However, I believe that Boilly's print simply records the moment of ignorance that precedes opinion and that can only emerge through an instance of excess, the excess of knowledge. The fact is that the six characters in this work know too much – the old crocks on account of what they have seen before, and the blushing girl on account of what she has just seen.

I was saying earlier that *Les Amateurs de Tableaux* is an approximation to the subject as a theme because it doesn't only present a moralistic parody of the consequences of curiosity but also, and above all, because it shows how the unknown affects those who come into contact with it, revealing the transformative effects and even the names it is given by those individuals who are on occasion disarmed, shattered by something that stems from outside their respective identities.

In her book *Giving an Account of Oneself: A Critique of Ethical Violence*, Judith Butler poses the need to place the self at risk, casting a continuous doubt upon it in order to distance ourselves from the narcissistic, violent and prefigured subjectivity that characterises

heterosexual thought. At first it seems as if Butler is speaking directly to the young girl in Boilly's print, encouraging her to release herself from her own embarrassment, prompting her to appear nude in the picture and at once dressed in real life; a girl caught up in astonishment or rather the 'long' shadow of young girls in bloom, as Marcel Proust would have said. Tiqqun has also referred to these issues in *Raw Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl*, which doesn't describe a man or a woman but an ideal, an archetype, a process of 'young-girlisation' that alludes to autistic desire, to the body converted into a mere receptacle, disconnected from its own intimacy and from intimation with others.

This entire essay is like a fabulous war report that thoroughly covers the main areas in which capitalism has been eroded, taking the personal as an epicentre: surrendering the 'management' of subjectivities, mutilating different physical and moral organs, shock treatment that unsuccessfully tries to cure new pathologies and old anxieties. I insist on the catastrophic quality of the text and on a certain nostalgia for a kind of love that is no longer true but hopefully controversial. It is worthwhile mentioning, however, the formal appearance of the book, based on quotes and commented images – a sort of cross between Dadaist journals and *The Medium is the Massage* by Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore. Paradoxically, on the cover of the Penguin paperback edition that shows

a girl wearing a Constructivist dress we read the word LOVE, the O strategically devoid of material and thereby revealing her navel.

According to Tiqqun, the traumas suffered by young girls and the imperfection that leads to their suffering betray a subversive power, a possibility of resistance that should be channelled. Along these lines, in the poem entitled 'This Happened' in C. K. Williams's *The Singing* a young girl *precipitates* events perhaps in order to slice them open, to leave them permanently in a state of significance. In the same strain as Boilly, C. K. Williams doesn't tell us the name of the city in which his girl leapt into space, so we can imagine her falling out of the window of a state-run school in the town of Aubervilliers during the uprisings that set fire to Paris, the city of light.

Éric Hazan has described this process in a 'dazzling' book entitled *Paris sous tension*, where he reminds us that behind the metropolitan props of large European cities, behind the scenes of the theme parks of contemporary architecture, lays a crude reality in a permanent state of combustion. We thought that these pictures of burnt cars and gendarmes chasing Moroccan immigrants were taking place somewhere else, that this was not Paris but the symbolic, peripheral space of violence. However, insurrection is also the opposite of town planning, its less photogenic side. The film *Perros callejeros* by José Antonio de la Loma is

a genuine manifesto of urban cinema and an accurate X-ray of late Francoist town planning that in the Spanish context shaped the imaginary of youths in outlying urban districts, whose experiences of territory were discontinuous, made up of a series of jolted escapes and pursuits: the hand of the town planner tracing imaginary avenues refuted by the frenzied car of the young delinquent, the arm of the law as opposed to that of the expert bag-snatcher. In their own way, De la Loma's street dogs, like the young rebels in the neighbourhoods of Saint-Denis and Clichy, put the street back at the heart of political discourse, transforming it into a place of expression *par excellence*, a place devoid of protection protocols where all gestures must be negotiated or, as Beatriz Preciado points out, 'where all rules seem to suggest a possible transgressive gap'.

There was a time, as established by Jean Siméon Chardin in *Domestic Pleasures*, when women devoted themselves to reading, perhaps in order to defy the corner of domestic time in which they lived. So we see how losing one's bearings continues to be an effective way of pursuing our essence – a young woman journeys from atop an apartment and *exists* as long as her fall lasts; a girl returns from the interior of a picture and *wants to become* the astonishment she is causing; a stray dog puts his foot on the accelerator of his stolen vehicle and simply leaves something *in his wake*.

EXCURSUS 3

'Wall Street is Wall Street' proclaimed the Black Masks on 10 February 1967, while a few sleepy New Yorkers passed them along the famous avenue in uptown Manhattan, which on that winter morning appeared snow covered.

In actual fact they didn't really 'proclaim' it, but merely transported the slogan on a minimalist banner carried by twenty-one hooded figures walking along in a procession as if they were showing off a Bruce Nauman vinyl or a terrible idol, one of those that announce the imminent destruction of the world.

Charles Baudelaire would also walk in silence along the Quai de Voltaire or the Rue de la Femme-sans-Tête in the company of Jeanne Duval, the well known mulatto dancer whose exoticism enhanced the grotesque variety shows of the Parthenon Theatre.

They say that the Black Venus – as she is still remembered in vintage society pages – was almost six and a half feet tall and that when they looked her in the eyes most Parisian bohemians felt an acute shiver down their spine. One example of this is found in Théodore de Banville, who wrote that Duval possessed 'a copper-coloured complexion with large dark eyes, full lips, beautiful wavy bluish-black hair and something divine

and animal-like in her bearing'. Édouard Manet immortalised her in a very strange portrait made in 1862, in which the actress appears resting on a velvet settee also bluish black, caressing the lace curtains with a sizeable hand, a sea of petticoats falling to the ground.

Very few people saw Jeanne Duval perform live, and yet that privileged handful assured in astonishment that her legs rose above the stage when she did the splits and that with her high heels she delicately brought down the bowler hats protruding from the stall seats in the first rows 'almost without touching them'. So, for nine years, between 1844 and 1853, it was quite usual to see Baudelaire and Duval arm-in-arm down the streets of Paris, pulling a tortoise along by a diamond collar. Perhaps this was a way of laughing at the speed of the new times, or a way of mocking the words subsequently written by Joris-Karl Huysmans in *Against the Grain*.

Baudelaire declared that 'among all the possible forms of escaping the persecution of history, the most effective is no doubt to walk clutching a thousand-year-old animal', something which was probably borne in mind by Julio Cortázar when he wrote his famous story *The Pursuer*. Some have stated that the Argentinean narrator attempted to adapt the syncopated rhythm of bebop to literature and that the anxiety of Charlie Parker – here Johnny Carter – could be a metaphor for artists' dreams of

perfection.

Nevertheless, perhaps without intending to do so, in *The Pursuer* Cortázar managed to create one of the shrewdest texts on the differences between individuals regarding what philosophy terms Otherness. To illustrate this, to observe how men are attracted to one another and yet do not recognise one another, it is important to remember the moment in the story when a musical reporter looks condescendingly at Bird covered in a blanket, naked and laughing, like ‘a gorilla that repeats, over and over, “I already experienced this tomorrow, I will handle this tomorrow”’.

Emmanuel Lévinas remembered that in the face of the Other looking at us we read – we hear – an obligation on which we may base an entire project of justice that could be summed up in the sentence, ‘You shall not kill me!’ However, what does a face that has unread and unheard and therefore replies, ‘I’m going to kill you,’ ‘I have killed you,’ say? To speak of the Other also often means to certify a form of submission that primarily needs to isolate all that which shapes difference, to indicate what is distinct in order to discriminate it.

Similarly, a few years ago Néstor García Canclini declared that cultural hybridisation cannot, should not, be understood as a consummate act but rather as a process to be negotiated, as the blend of languages, traditions and identities contains huge areas of reality that resist mixtures, that

protect themselves from these forms of colonisation that the hybrid composes.

We could therefore say, paraphrasing Vladimir Jankélévitch, that Otherness is expressed in an 'imprescriptible' form, or that the Others are the place where the unspeakable meets the testimony, where the face seeks refuge in disfigurement.

The fact is that an excess of knowledge, especially in the field of art, acts like a kind of filter that may perhaps pursue understanding and yet, in this attempt to make aesthetics intelligible, distances us from other formulations of experience, including the hypothesis that a lie holds more interest than the quest for truth.

Giorgio Agamben tells us that the ways in which we ignore something are equally important as the ways in which we know it, or perhaps even more so. Here the Italian philosopher distinguishes two ways of 'not knowing': one of them moved by stupidity, carelessness or lack of attention, and the other originated by a slight indifference that proves fascinating and that we cannot but admire.

It is quite likely that when we acquire a certain degree of ignorance we are also gauging to what extent we know. In other words, not knowing may be the ideal place from which to launch new knowledge or knowledge of our own that is neither inherited nor imposed. In this sense, lack of

knowledge, specifically in regard to art, shouldn't be understood as a lack or deficiency but quite the opposite, i.e., an invitation to reconsider all that escapes us and make it meaningful.

Everyone understands that life, the art of living, is an unstable balance between that which we can explain in words and that which resists words; between a series of actions that pursue an objective and a set of gestures that lack purpose. Given that we accept this for life we can – we could – also accept it for art, where silence is sometimes a clear-cut response above words and ignorance is almost invariably a conquest, a corrective that delimits dogmas and precepts. I am not, of course, extolling darkness as the mystic of aesthetics did, nor am I praising simple mystery, as liturgy lovers do.

Agamben reminds us to what extent men have reflected for centuries on how to preserve, increase and certify their knowledge even if we are lacking the most elementary principles for a science of ignorance. In any case, the main issue lies in the way of articulating non-knowledge, in the way of granting productivity to the pressure for knowledge that besieges us. There may perhaps be numerous disciplines, territories of meaning on which it is difficult to base an experience made up of all that which escapes us, or at least this is what economics, methodical science, history and a uniquely visible part of politics tell us. And yet, over thousands of

years, from the Chauvet Cave to Ghirlandaio's paintings, from a Puvis de Chavannes drawing to a picture by Martin Kippenberger, art has borne a sort of plan to fundamentally approach the ungraspable.

Art has been broken down and analysed, made ethereal and ridiculed. One day it welcomed beauty, which is a way of ignoring what the body expresses clearly, and the beautiful disappeared to enable languages and signs to indicate other ways of relating the unprecedented, i.e., all that which lacks soundness. Why don't we take this ignorance and give it new meaning? Why don't we remain in it and establish a way of confronting art, ignoring museum rituals, the theories that trap us and the ecstatic ideas of silence and purity?

The path of knowledge is also, and above all, a journey between two incomprehensible moments that we must, however, decipher immediately. We are already familiar with the first incomprehensible moment, which is the flash that eliminates discourses before they appear, like when someone short-sighted gets up in the morning and objects are still not quite clear, not quite visible. We also recognise with the last incomprehensible moment, that is announced by a certain sensation of tedium regarding all the words that pressurise us from without; at the same time it emerges amidst a sort of demand, concern or urgency, a vague intuition that what we know may perhaps mean something

different, or may not be what it appears to be. This is how the sleeping face of someone we love appears before us, when its essence changes as we take a close look at it and, by the minute, appears as a face that keeps unutterable secrets. This is the case when we repeat our own name out loud a number of times, and are suddenly left without identity, without knowing who and what we are.

But we are not only pressurised by art, by others and by the understanding of the world. What truly gnaws away at us, I would even say that what consumes us is the piece of reality we inhabit – the people, the objects, the languages and the signs that we revealingly bring into play.

In her resounding, epistolary novel *Dear Michael*, Natalia Ginzburg describes in detail the strangulation that comes from within, that is passed on between the members of a middleclass family gripped by guilt and ideology. Telegrams that relate a feeling of unease, missives that bring improbable news or futile events: the mother, Michael, Angelica and Mara writing letters that none of them seem to receive, that none of them finish reading.

Film and drama have profusely described ‘domestic stories’, the verbosity that characterises individuals when they share a reduced space. On the other hand, I would go so far as to say that in *Dear Michael* the setting

itself speaks – the architecture, the interior of the people and the places are reluctant to remain silent.

I previously made reference to the face of others, to ignorance and urgencies, trying to believe that they could encourage us to *start afresh*, to restart our discourse. However, if we ‘listen’ carefully to Natalia Ginzburg’s characters, this therapeutic and hypochondriacal fantasy is defused. Indeed, politics is also born out of exerting pressure, even if it is subsequently expressed by means of a sort of parsimony as regards all that which surrounds us, as when we decide to send someone a letter but as soon as we start writing it we know we’ll never send it and will in fact end up destroying it.

EXCURSUS 4

Those in the know tell us that taumachy is not performed by bullfighters but by fear; that writing is not produced by authors but by silence; that in boxing, blows are exchanged between resistances not pugilists; that painting emerges thanks to the empty space of pictures rather than artists.

No doubt this reasoning contains great poetic potential although, surprisingly, the four abovementioned disciplines only have one thing in common – they are all *performed* manually.

So, turning the experts' theories inside out, could we say that a quick and reliable way of measuring the effectiveness of these territories is simply observing at which point the hands of the bullfighter, those of the writer, the boxer and the painter withdraw, in other words, when all these hands remain still? Yes, we probably could, at least from the evanescent sphere of lyricism, although I have my doubts when imagining what would happen if we set this parable in the sphere of the real. In any event, who worries about annoying and complicated reality, especially after having realised how peacefully concepts live within the placebo of the indemonstrable until someone inopportune arrives, appealing to common sense, and insists on certifying, we never know why, the slightly ethereal

nature of these same ideas and what they *really* tell us?

Be that as it may, this is not the place in which to right such wrongs. Let everybody take whatever suits them best – for some it will be poetry, for others preciseness, although neither of the two offers complete satisfaction or pacification. Thinking, not to mention feeling, entails such compensations, which is why, instead of exploring the things that hands no longer do, it would perhaps be better to examine what they actually do carry out and even, more interestingly, how the hand sees itself.

I shall provide a few examples.

After visiting the Chauvet Cave, John Berger wrote that art probably originated in an indeterminate mixture of extravagance and affliction. This, of course, is another intangible idea, although in this case Berger didn't come up with it in the loneliness of his studio scanning an endless library of books, or beside one of those windows that filter the morning light that writers like so much and that makes them say solemn, extraordinary and irrefutable things. The fact is that Berger sensed the absurd origin of art as he was crouching and crawling along the famous Chauvet Cave with a paraffin lamp, admiring the maroon impression of a hand painted on the living rock 32,000 years ago.

At least this is what the English writer tells us in his book *Berger on Drawing*, in which he also speaks of Vincent van Gogh, Antoine Watteau

and Martin Noël, among others. Nevertheless, as this was an essay that recreated the delicacy of a fair number of hands intent on the arduous and difficult art of draughtsmanship, and one of John Berger's characteristic texts that doesn't really convey anything specific and where everything *flows* (to put it in a gassy way) towards the search for a volatile environmental tone, I think that paradoxically the best *document* on this idea of the hand that draws – and on the power of the hand in general – is a photograph, a somewhat prosaic image in which we see artist Juan Muñoz, also crouching, though not in front of a painting of the Aurignacian era but in front of three cups such as those used in the thimblorig game, the one in the middle containing a small white ball.

Seeing this photo some would say that its punctum are the cups, indeed, the paradox of their transparency. Others, however, would suggest that the naïve absurdity of the revelation of deceit is accompanied by extravagance and affliction, as is the birth of art. Only a few will remember the artful legend that always accompanied Juan Muñoz, but I prefer to observe the artist's open hands, slightly out of focus, framing the three cups as if to say 'This is it', maybe suggesting that as in the case of the bullfighter, the boxer and the painter, what proves deceitful in the thimblorig game is not the thimblorigger but the actual transparency, for we all know that if there is anything really false it is clarity.

Quoting Eudald Serra, Antoni Tàpies, a painter who often used his hands in his works, said that the first self-portrait made by man was the footprint of an australopithecine on dry mud, which he contemplated two days after having *made it*.

It could seem that we are dealing with another insubstantial idea, although basically I think that Tàpies and Eudald Serra referred to something more complex than a hand or a foot, a mire or terra firma. I think they were both referring to the fortuitous quality of all self-portraits, to the sense of strangeness they inspire.

There are few things more difficult to explain in art than the impulse that drives artists to ignore their surroundings and look only at themselves. Faced with a self-portrait, we never quite understand, we never know if the artist considered his face an easy and immediate subject or, on the contrary, if he intended to transcend vanity and modesty in search of something different.

Leaving concrete examples to one side, there is a disproportion between the condescension with which we contemplate self-portraits and the emotional spirit, the brutality even, we presume in the artist just because he is portraying himself. This could perhaps explain why, when we behold the face of an artist, we hardly ever mention the quality of the skin, the arrangement of the teeth or the moustache. Instead of describing the

physical matter depicted we usually refer to a metaphysical depth, to the passing of time, to guilt or arrogance – all of which are ethereal ideas, concepts that could be explained by any face and any personality, notions as generic as the predictions of the horoscope.

To return to the hand, I would like to recall two examples that broaden all that we have said so far: one is Polyclitus's *Diadumenos*, which, according to José Emilio Burucúa, thoroughly fulfils the criteria that identify a masterpiece, in spite of the fact that in its present state the statue has no hands; the other is Hans Haacke's *The Invisible Hand of the Market*, a poster that doesn't show a hand but a glove, one of those insignificant white gloves, not very posh, that remind us of the characters in cartoons or provincial magicians, a glove such as could be worn by Juan Muñoz in the photograph I mentioned previously of the transparent thimblery cups.

For approximately two hundred years – to be precise, since Hegel wrote *Phenomenology of Mind* and Adam Smith published *The Wealth of Nations* – the question of what factors make a work of art eternal was set in a framework that had eluded the contribution of the economy. Now, the invisible hand of the market, the well-known term coined by the Scottish philosopher, is also the arm that executes aesthetics; pointing fingers that protect against the clutches of time, fingers that travel across

value and its poetic density – fingers, in short, that count money.

And here we come to another unfathomable theme that, however, has very precise chronological roots; a theme that is the opposite of progress, of the appearance of rules, regulations and taxonomies that begin to order the narratives of art and economy, and the parameters governing the lives of individuals. Allow me to bring up an event that could appear bizarre from a historiographical point of view, although I think is telling of the legislative enthusiasm of the late eighteenth century: the birth of football, that appeared in the same English public schools that promulgated the liberal doctrine of common sense promoted by Adam Smith, in the same classrooms in which Hegel's classical beauty was venerated.

The fact is that football emerged a little like capitalism, i.e., as an attempt to standardise different sports regimes that had their own specific rules. Thus, the three key concepts in the origin of football were the actual design of the field, that delimited the physical space of the game, facilitating passive contemplation; the development time, that organised the rhythms of the competition and enabled regulation of the degrees of suspense; and the appearance of the referee, who segregated those who infringed any previously established code.

A defined territory, a strict duration and a well-informed lookout: isn't this the description of a museum, a precise X-ray of public space? Don't these

three categories contain a self-portrait of Capital, as Agustín García Calvo likes to say?

The story goes that a legendary football match was held between participants in the film *Salò* and the actors and film technicians of *Novecento*. The result of the game was 5 to 2 for the hordes of Bernardo Bertolucci who, like Robert de Niro and Gérard Depardieu, watched the match from the grandstand. Pier Paolo Pasolini, on the other hand, took part in the game, abandoning the pitch before time, blaspheming against his fellow players.

Art appeared like a combination of extravagance and affliction whereas football, according to Pasolini, condenses man's sentimentality, his innermost epic needs and significant doses of rage. This is a wonderful definition for a discipline that is *performed* with the feet, and in which hands can play no part.

EXCURSUS 5

Seen from the distance of history, the biography of Charles Maurice de Talleyrand could now be considered a sort of parable on the metaphysical and political dimension of the document, on the incontrovertibly spectral nature of bureaucracy.

In this sense, the fortunes and misfortunes of *le Diable boiteux*, as he was called by those who had read *The Devil upon Two Sticks*, the satire by Alain-René Lesage inspired by Luis Vélez de Guevara's *El diablo cojuelo*, transcend mere ideological travesty to shape a possible regime that will enable us to understand the functioning of the various public and private institutions – the State, law, family or personality. The fact is that Talleyrand spent a great part of his life devoted to intrigue, lechery and writing, three activities that literally absorbed his existence. He intrigued with the Catholic Church, with the French National Assembly, with the Napoleonic Empire and with Louis Philip I, managing to collect a number of relevant positions and public honours during five different regimes. His lecherous disposition rescued him from a secure yet bland ecclesiastical career, which would probably only have afforded him a certain degree of local fame. Thanks to his excessive fondness for writing he produced hundreds of treaties, alliances and diplomatic agreements,

not to mention countless legislative comments and amendments that transformed the famous *égalité* into something like an immense experimental poem, a huge administrative epic.

All statesmen have a tiny Talleyrand inside them and all those smug individuals who proclaim themselves liberal continue the indelible trace of this great conspirer. The Europe without borders that administrates lapidation so well was founded by the most sibylline priest, politician and statesman ever born in France, even though for reasons of decorum the country that produced the Encyclopaedia prevented him from becoming one of her illustrious men, one of her most venerated subjects.

However, I mentioned earlier that Talleyrand's biography contradicts the ethereal quality of that which Franz Kafka called 'the invisible pillars of the system'. Proof of this, for example, is the fact that during his long political career, the lame devil had up to five different passports, the first three issued by Danton, Napoleon and Louis XVIII, respectively, and the other two forgeries of his own making. It is not surprising, therefore, that in exquisite Parisian milieux he was known as *l'évêque de la copie*, the bishop of copies, a nickname that certified his outstanding creativity for documentary falsification and that made him, in advance, the exact prototype of the contemporary citizen, an individual who is a slave to sobriquets, tax numbers, passwords, aliases and other forms of identity.

A short time ago Roberto Esposito published a book entitled *El dispositivo de la persona* [The Dispositif of the Person], in which from an ideological, pessimistic and global point of view he rereads Talleyrand's tendency to be a succession of bureaucratic layers rather than a subject.

This brief text, written as if it were a dialogue between the author and a slightly shy companion, ends with a quotation by Simone Weil that could well be a catastrophic epilogue, a sort of biblical warning, that reads as follows: 'So far from its being his person, what is sacred in a human being is the impersonal in him. Everything that is impersonal in man is sacred, and nothing else.'

Indeed, we find ourselves before the spectacle of the dissolution of the individual from any of the several theatre boxes of reality. Nevertheless, although Esposito upholds that the show must go on, it is strange to think that the performance will continue off stage and, furthermore, that it will continue *up there*, in the sacramental domains. No doubt, in response to the Italian philosopher and to Simone Weil, a true Catholic such as José Bergamín, for instance, would have said that man is God's greatest stupidity.

But let's return to *El dispositivo de la persona* and to the idea of the impersonal, that is dealt with here as a second nature, an opposite or a shadow that surfaces as a result of the construction of politics. We should

point out that for ideological thought, this rereading of the impositions of fatalism has become a genre in itself, which seems to take a run-up after the appearance of No, in other words, placidly adjusting to the rearguard. However, we could understand Weil's phrase from a different point of view, one in which the impersonal is not so much the *coincidentia oppositorum* [unity of opposites] of the subject, a caricature or an exact copy (though still a copy, after all) of the person. We could perhaps believe that the subject is not the original and that his version *on the other side* is not a nostalgia for the former; that what is settled in this game of identifications, in these toings and froings of identity emptying out and filling up again in other places is merely a mechanics of reproduction – even more, the development of individuals.

Let's take a common example to explain these things a little more. One of the key moments in people's acquisition of social identity appears when they create their own signature. This is a rite that lacks any connection with initiation, i.e., it isn't acquired *after* processing that which the world offers us or that which is shaped by experience, but *before* any contact, from a sort of isolation, like a permanent prospect.

In this sense, the signature constructs an identity we could call supplementary, to the extent that we could point out, perhaps somewhat ecstatically, that the signature shapes what Simone Weil called the

impersonal and that it contains something of what she calls the sacred.

Likewise and contrarily, one of the essential moments in the subject's rebellion against himself, in the 'personal' insurrection against successive colonising orders and against the very idea of belonging, emerges when someone decides to change his signature. This is a gesture – a first act – of disappropriation that, being basically ideological, has nothing to do with the political but with the display of this game of identities, copies and originals I referred to earlier.

Roberto Esposito himself, alongside thinkers such as Santiago López Petit and Marina Garcés, among others, have explored the challenge implied by being 'disappropriated, exposed, upset and beside oneself, individually and collectively', for beside ourselves, as well as unease and non-recognition of the world, lies anonymity, a meeting place from which to reformulate the question about ourselves.

But I insist on pointing out that the issue of anonymity and the consequent progress of what is common, at least as it expressed by these philosophers, unfolds following a logic that still isn't completely free of the dialectic impulse after an essential dichotomy that opposes authenticity and inauthenticity, original and copy, genuine and adulterated. And this is precisely where it is most difficult to distinguish the degree of moralisation of this set of theoretical approximations, to what extent to

prefer the authentic implies an act of faith or, on the contrary, to embrace the fraudulent means to remain boxed inside cynicism.

Wouldn't the fact of not having a signature be a radically literal way of being unoccupied, of politicising life? Wouldn't changing one's signature necessarily imply opening a gap in identity, reintroducing the management of the impersonal precisely into that which we consider to be most personal? And lastly, what does the signature, that accompanies us during our entire social, economic and creative lives as a specific trait, actually name?

These issues bring to mind William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* – to be precise, the scene that triggers the plot of the story in which Antonio, Shylock and Bassanio are walking through one of the city's public squares before visiting the house of a local notary to formalise a loan of three thousand ducats. The dialogue is vertiginous in its financial offers and counter-offers, almost as if it were the chatter of overexcited brokers. Amidst the differences of opinion, Shylock the moneylender suggests drawing up a promissory note that, 'like a merry sport' and in the event of breach of contract, will oblige Antonio to give him a pound of his own flesh 'to be cut off and taken in what part of your body pleaseth me'.

The crazy penalisation that the Jewish usurer proposes to the rich

Venetian merchant and his friend, the bankrupt nobleman Bassanio, leads to one of the first signs of anti-Semitism in history. However, one of the most disturbing aspects of Shakespeare's text is that, in spite of the overwhelming protagonism of the signed promissory note – perhaps the play's main 'character' – its content is never read, even though the drama has a judicial tone worthy of the law films made by Billy Wilder and Sydney Lumet.

In 1972 Chilean Nicanor Parra published a series of postcards entitled *Artefactos* that contained a set of poetic sentences, drawings and thoughts offering a histrionic and lucid vision of the 'state' of man and of ideologies. I remember him now because besides Clément Rosset, Parra is one of the great readers of Shakespeare in our age and because I dare say that his entire poetic oeuvre constitutes a wonderful, radical and exhaustive conversation with the father of Hamlet and Lady Macbeth.

We have already written about copies and originals, signatures and finance, Talleyrand and Simone Weil. In connection with all these cases, these ethos as Homer would say, it is worthwhile to recall one of Nicanor Parra's 'artefacts': the drawing of a flowery border, similar to those that edge family portraits or the faces of illustrious characters. Instead of containing an individual, these present a 'simple' sum, a financial transaction that could read ' $2 + 2 = 4$ '. So far, nothing strange, just

another derisory joke by the anti-poet. I have already said, however, that the *Artefactos* speak of how men struggle with ideas, which probably explains why the place that should bear a name, a title or perchance a signature, we read the following three words: 'ACT OF FAITH.'

EXCURSUS 6

In his essay 'Liquid Art in Liquid Time' Zygmunt Bauman depicts a bleak prospect for artistic practice. Nevertheless, under this catastrophic diagnosis lie a number of crucial aspects that should be studied closely. Paraphrasing the philosopher, we live in a world saturated by aesthetics, and yet it is a world devoid of art objects, of works of art. Perhaps there are still some out there, but they're in museums, so maybe we could say that museums represent for the life of art the same as cemeteries represent for human beings. Museums are special places visited by special people on special occasions. This explains why they are removed from the commotion of everyday life. In museums, as in cemeteries, voices aren't raised; people don't eat or drink, rush around or touch the objects on show. On the contrary, they assume the same tranquillity as the displays. Daily life is different: unlike cemeteries, the commonplace is a stage on which people rush around and shout; unlike museums, the commonplace is a setting for aesthetics, not for works of art.

Before analysing these ideas we should say that Bauman personifies the type of thinker who once launched a term – in his case 'the liquid' – and has been applying it for some twenty years to all sorts of paradigms: to modernity, to fear, to politics and, of course, to art. Furthermore,

Bauman is also very well known for being the favourite essayist of certain illustrious representatives of Neo-liberalism, revealing a sort of critical and innocuous awareness that reality is in danger but it could perhaps be saved, and that it was 'society', 'progress', 'civilisation' or 'Europe' that were unable to meet some of the challenges they faced at certain points.

The 'Bauman style', if it exists as such, is usually expressed by means of sweeping concepts, launching linguistic accusations starting from the meaning - and the unreality - of a fair number of terms, the disquiet of which acquires immediate public returns and numerous media distinctions. This frame of mind is shared by other authors, from Mario Vargas Llosa to Paul Virilio, from Jean Baudrillard to Nicolas Bourriaud, whose intellectual careers paradoxically culminated in their approximation to artistic practices in which they discovered, at this stage of the game, that they are not only lacking in consistency but that, over and above any form of expression, they are a reflection and a symptom of all the trivialities that lie in wait for us.

But I was saying, that starting from the paraphrased citation of Bauman with which I started this text we can rescue a few interesting ideas, in particular the notion of the extraordinary, the nostalgia provoked by the presumed inability to dazzle us and, consequently, the demand on art and artists that they should liberate us from our self-absorption.

A first question inconveniently arises before the disenchanted words of the Polish philosopher: has art truly lost its ability to sound out the marvellous, or is it just that the expressions of astonishment and even the persuasion to be astonished have changed?

In order to answer this question we must move to the opposite extreme, to the pictures by Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, perhaps the artist who has best and more persistently depicted the effects of boredom.

Let us think, for instance, of *The Child with a Teetotum*, *Portrait of Auguste-Gabrie Godefroy*. The sitter was the son of a wealthy Parisian jeweller who was a regular client of Chardin's for almost a decade. The portrait was painted approximately in 1738 the same year that Jacques de Vaucanson presented the first acknowledged automaton, *The Flute Player*, a life-size shepherd whose repertoire on the flute and drum included up to twelve different melodies. Comparing both expressions of the extraordinary – in the case of Chardin, a spinning teetotum, and in that of Vaucanson, an articulated doll – reveals at least two things. The first, of course, is that around the year 1738 in Paris, tedium and surprise were communicating doors. The second, revengefully, is that while bourgeois children had all the time in the world to confirm that wonders lie in simple objects, the afflicted ordinary people had to seek out slightly more extreme emotions.

In any case, I would like to raise another issue that is, however, impossible to demonstrate: when Bauman wrote his text he was probably thinking of an artist like Chardin, who totally adapts to his demand that the commonplace merge into the aesthetic. Nevertheless, in order to answer the question on dazzle, who can guarantee that rather than a certain delicacy, Chardin's pictures do not express a harsh moral criticism against the idleness of the affluent classes? Who affirms that the artist was a stubborn aesthete instead of a skilful translator, a caustic but faithful interpreter of a world powdered with snuff, as precise and boring as a house of cards? Furthermore, isn't Bauman worshipping as the truth the essence and basis of art a series of themes, modes and plastic solutions that simply document the skill of a single artist, of the historical evolution of pictorial material, of the state of something as important as the technical paradigm of painting in the first half of the nineteenth century?

Following this last line of reasoning, we could reply that the hypothetical (or true) insubstantiality of contemporary artists also contains the reflection of an aesthetic regime, even if it is not edifying; that the astonishment felt by many in the museum is, at the same time, a way of breaking the apathetic circle of meekness; that the lack of technical skill of numerous artistic creations also reflects a specific point in time – that of the simple lack of formal competence.

To put it in other photographic terms, when people think of the idea of immortality, some imagine a young sexless girl with pearly cheeks, looking into the distance and seeing an indelible trace of past centuries. For others, however, including Anders Petersen, Boris Mikhailov and Paz Errázuriz, the image of an immortal individual is that of a drug addict, an alcoholic or a toothless whore, whose bright eyes seem to warn us that in actual fact nobody has a future.

But this isn't what I wanted to refer to either. I intended to discuss the way in which the extraordinary is shaped, where it is deposited and, above all, whether there is still room for magic – magic thought – in the sphere of art. In other words, whether the exasperating secretiveness practiced by certain artists contains an alphabet of prestidigitator gestures, the machinery that hides meaning and yet reveals the game.

Astonishment is not the ultimate aim of magic; in fact, it is not even its objective. Similarly, the purpose of the game is not winning, but getting others to play. Therefore magic and playfulness lack all liberating, cathartic and therapeutic meaning for they are both closed places where only a few rules – and I repeat, only a few – are activated over and over again.

One of the aspects that could perhaps make the most reactionary theoretician see eye to eye with the most inexpressive artist is that art

establishes limits that define and colonise the space of the unknown. There is nothing extraordinary, nothing that is not too enlightening about this. However, this demarcation of that which has yet *to be conceived*, rather than presenting a portrait of the extraordinary, implies a drawing of the places through which those who order, those who establish the parameters of the common, the structure of consensus, can gain access. Jacques Rancière calls these the police, reserving for artists the possibility and the appeal of devoting themselves to politics, of disrupting any form of consent or approval. Yet just as art doesn't only create a map of elusions in its attempt, perhaps mistaken, to establish all that which escapes, the effects of the noisy agitation of a certain number of rules on the part of artists are too dissuasive within the diversity of consents, inside the systems that organise any of the many police regimes.

Thus, an ontology of the extraordinary – and a yearning for astonishment – entails rethinking how control operates and, in particular, the nature of fraud.

Hegel distinguished in his *Logic* the ways in which the Self abandons its essence and acquires an existence of its own, independent and meditated. The trace of this journey 'from nothing through nothing' is the *schein*, a shine or glitter, the falseness of which evokes from inside truth the distance covered and what remains *out there*. To paraphrase the German

philosopher, we could say that astonishment is also a sort of radiance, the same shine in the eyes of Chardin's little boy entering a new place, arriving at his own boredom.

I said earlier that magic thinking is expressed in contemporary aesthetics in different ways, among which we should emphasise that of conjuring, which of course has nothing to do with the purely optical.

Jean Baudrillard has dedicated many pages to the radical disillusionment offered by art. However, I think that perhaps it would be more appropriate to revise the capacity for illusion suggested by artists – that blend of joy, fraud, unmentionability and secretiveness.

In this sense, taking advantage of the image of Vaucanson's *The Flute Player*, I think it's appropriate to refer to Hugo Ball reciting his well-known phonetic poem 'Karawane' in Zurich's Cabaret Voltaire in 1916, similarly dressed as an automaton, standing rigidly before two lecterns, his hands replaced by what look like crab pincers made of cardboard.

Everyone laughs as Ball declaims 'hollaka hollala / anlogo bung / blago bung'. Everyone thinks that these incomprehensible words possess a meaning that has yet to be deciphered. For reasons diametrically opposed to the articulated doll that had astounded Parisians in 1738, Hugo Ball is also a fraud, a dismantled fraud, a man who plays at being a sound machine and leaves behind the metallic shine or *schein* of an essence

invoked by meaningless terms: ‘...ej tata gôrem / eschige zunbada / wulubu ssubudu ulum ssubudu.’

Emmy Hennings, whom Ball would marry four years later, watched the performance of ‘Karawane’ seated on a stool. She is the only one whose expression is as serious as that of her future husband, and to her we owe the best definition of the objectives of Cabaret Voltaire, which were merely ‘to discover how the wonder and illusion of being angels, abandoning the world and flying very high and very straight, are fulfilled in laughter’.

Sometime after this scene, twelve years later to be precise, Herman Hesse travelled to Zurich and visited the old cabaret. Given the fact that only common popular musicals were then performed, while he was there he wrote to Emmy Hennings, describing his puzzlement. The letter ends with a somewhat alarming sentence in response, perhaps, to Hennings’s previous remark and even to Zygmunt Bauman’s plea. It read as follows: ‘Don’t fly away with the angels as we still have a great need of you.’

EXCURSUS 7

We owe to historiography, and to historians from different territories and periods, the widespread superstition that tells us that the best place to describe what is happening is from a distance, particularly as some authors take this argument to surprising limits and the mere circumstantial and sometimes unforeseeable fact of us being inside events automatically bars us from being able to relate to them. In order to prove countless conjectures, it is quite usual to have to turn to that impulsive goddess called objectivity, or to that apodictic gentleman who goes by the name rigour, or else to that small-footed virgin we call truth: the Truth.

So, here we have a sophism that would no doubt have fascinated Zeno of Elea himself, who strolled through marshlands in his undone sandals posing logical paradoxes his pupils found difficult to solve, absurd aporias as he himself called them, with the intention of confusing and ‘hindering the progress’ of the young disciples. In short, Zeno tried to make sure they never transcended, never distanced themselves from that which simply occurs.

From what we have said so far, it could appear that history is the art of distance and that teaching is the science of proximity, although nothing is further removed from their respective intentions.

While playing an active part in the distancing suggested by historiography has less educational objectives, one of these is to situate the tales of memory similarly removed from the sphere of testimonies, safe from contradictions and even from the actual individuals who took part in the former and partake of the latter.

Likewise, the identification between the teacher and teaching, i.e., the supplanting of what should be learnt by he who merely teaches, implies that knowledge is something we must attain, a conquest that from the very beginning rejects other possible forms of knowledge such as the ability of ignorance to exploit a vision of the world, as Jacques Rancière suggests, or the gap that opens up when we enter into the real without attempting to thoroughly understand it, preserving a harmonious relationship with all those aspects that elude us.

A corporate distance and a selfish proximity: history that establishes the place in which things occur and teaching that points out how they should be understood. We could ask ourselves where do those artists who contemplate from without (to be precise, from above) fit in? Those artists who question the type of history that establishes no distance, those who explore teaching without a method? Where does the solid lose consistency? Above all, when can we declare that we have observed this opening up of reality or indeed are actually experiencing it?

To answer these questions we should imagine an unreal scene in which all this business of demands and active participation are very much up in the air, making history lose its distance, making teaching transform its substance and become passionately ignorant and making art abandon what lies outside to devote itself to blindly representing what lies nearby, obscenely nearby.

We can certainly not specify what images will be seen as a result of such a wonderful *disaster*. We cannot even sense if we would be able to bear this landscape of disciplines completely abandoning themselves.

There are discourses that conceive revelation as a historical enclave, an acquisition that must be passed on to those who didn't receive it, a parameter from which art unfolds and to where artists point. However, if we tried to imagine how knowledge would operate after this flight of discourses, we would probably realise that the moment of revelation is also - would then be - an eschatological moment.

Pier Paolo Pasolini, plagued by history, teaching and art, suggested that eschatology always has a political dimension and that, in the absence of this confrontational horizon, it is nothing. Indeed, any form of antagonism willing to refute the different established orders and attempting to prescribe them should find two complementary semantic spaces: an erotica for exposing the body, and at the same time an

eschatology that is not apocalyptic and where new revelations will be left.

An *eros* and an *anéskhatos*, in other words, what is primordial and what is final according to the etymological meaning of the two terms.

But the question concerning the place of art that observes from above remains unanswered.

In his book *Snapshots* Alain Robbe-Grillet unfolds a series of narrative instants that shape a sort of still and verbal life – i.e., actions, objects and individuals drawn out of physical time and reinserted in a fictitious time, that of the becoming of the story. This transmutation, this exercise in exchange has been considered superficial, perhaps without understanding that what the writer was actually suggesting was not so much a certain vision – a different vision – of things and people, but a structure from which to note that he has already avoided the critical imperative of analysis, the urgency of knowledge. In this sense, nobody could have been further removed from above than Robbe-Grillet, although neither could anyone have been more devoted to proving how distance and opinion are lost; in what way, at what moment and in what place does the visible *disconnect*, abandoning the logic granted to it by the one telling the story, translating it and thereby unfolding his own universe of relations, his personal objective eschatology. The fact is that in the area covered by the eschatological, Pasolini and Robbe-Grillet constitute two extremes that

are not so different from one another: the former is characterised by intensity and the latter by omission, although in both cases the proximity is unbearably abrasive.

Here we touch upon an important theme, that of the frame and its consequences or objectives. Georges Didi-Huberman has put forward a number of arguments that point out the extent to which the frame is a crucial and ideological issue, revealing how images betray unique frames that document and explain them. In other words, images are not the result of specific frames; on the contrary, frames tell us the most significant things about images, for they are the only elements that resist manipulation.

So, following the reflections of the French thinker, we could say that the political dimension of most visual discourses is measured by their ability to move out of frame and, at the same time, that a fair number of prevalent optical narratives are so because of their elasticity when it comes to moving inside predetermined frames designed to be merely persuasive.

Controlling the frame isn't an easy task, and what is also very complicated is to frame without this trapping us and ending up diluting our intention.

On the subject of the panoramic gaze of artists, of history and teaching we should not forget a work by the F.X. Archive entitled *La Setmana Tràgica* [The Tragic Week] in which Pedro G. Romero reissues a

collection of vintage postcards that illustrate the effect of the anticlerical fires that raged in several buildings in Barcelona. Written on the back of each postcard is a short text 'sent' to addressees living in Barcelona that transcribes several thoughts on a hundred artists, movements and episodes from the history of art, from Joaquín Torres-García to Gordon Matta-Clark, from Le Corbusier to Rayonism.

The F.X. Archive works on a vast archive of images of the anti-sacramental political iconoclasm in Spain between 1845 and 1945, arranging the material that forms it – photographs, film sequences and other documents – according to an index of terms that stem from the visual constructions and the critical theory within the broad sphere of the modern project. However, apart from this literal description, the F.X. Archive deals with the meaning of the frame and, as an 'institution', with the hiatuses – the gaps and the gags – that are produced when an instituting paradigm frames in a problematic way.

But returning to the images of *La Setmana Tràgica* that impartially document destruction as if it were a tourist and often aerial promenade, I would like to rescue the postcard entitled 'James Lee Byars' where an anonymous hand has written to J. Ponsi, 'We are living in times in which to speak of perfection is a crime, and James Lee Byars is aware of this; his masked face gives him away. He's a criminal, even if nobody wants him to

pay for it. In the eyes of those who are still waiting, the only punishment his crime deserves is that of being forgotten. We must forget Byars; above all, we must avoid the scandal that results from proposing that both a kiss and death, a question and an epitaph are equally perfect...'

Indeed, from the imperfections of history, teaching and art we learn all that which obviously interests and affects us. Similarly, when the real looks us straight in the eye we cannot possibly adorn ourselves with discourse. We could call this eschatology, we could say that it is revealing, we could even defend ourselves by retiring to a corner of the frame. The truth is, as in the case of James Lee Byars, we never see the face beneath the mask of any beginning or any end, which is why we can't bring ourselves to stop looking at it, why we can't consign it to oblivion.

9.3 – General and detailed plans of the museographic proposal implementation

see document send by we transfer

9.4 - Press compilation

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