

Lectura de una realidad

ROBERT BARRY (Nueva York, 1936)
STEFAN BRÜGGEMANN (Mexico D.F, 1975)
DAVID LAMELAS (Buenos Aires, 1946)

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ROBERT BARRY, STEFAN BRÜGGEMANN AND DAVID LAMELAS are united by an artistic approach. Their individual handling of time and space, as well as their essential artistic statement operating between perception and idea, the non-material and materialization, have been the motives of this group exhibition. Combining between text and film, **Lectura de una Realidad** which translation from Spanish means *Reading Reality*, interrogates Time and Meaning in order to reflect what reality is. The entire artists' work in this exhibition are exercises designed to test how meaning is constructed. All of them use especially cinema and text because those are the most practical mediums to communicate ideas.

David Lamelas is best known as one of the pioneers of the Conceptual Art practice that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. Over the last thirty years, he has produced an extraordinary body of films and videos which consistently challenge our conventional understanding of how meaning is made and information is imparted. Two of the most key works are *To Pour Milk into a Glass* and *The Desert People*, both exhibited in this exhibition.

Desert People, 1974. 50 minutes, colour and sound. Filmed in 16mm: David Lamelas describes this movie as "a study about American film production". The stage is completely familiar: a car crossing the desert with a group of people on board. But as soon as the story begins, it is interrupted by documentary-style interviews, going from one gender to another and blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality. The characters comments, alternating the dialogue between English, Spanish and Pápago, try to show that American influence over the natives has made them lose their own culture. Because of this, the meaning of what they are trying to communicate gets lost in translation. For the viewer, these changes are confusing and show the difficulties of knowing other cultures from the outside.

To pour Milk into a Glass, 1972. 8 color prints (32 x 29cm) + 16mm film (8min), focuses on the relationship between a container (a glass) and its content (milk). It is a metaphor for the way the frame of the camera attempts to contain a subject. It concludes with spilt milk and a shattered glass, which implies the failure of the frame as a device.

"I wanted to find symbols for "content" and "continent" and I decided to use a glass and some milk. The results are eight sequences... the glass got broken and the milk spattered on the table, what implies there is no way to contain information". David Lamelas - *A New Refutation of Time*, Kunstverein Munchen, Witte de With Rotterdam, 1997.

Robert Barry is also one of the pioneers of Conceptualism and Minimalism. His work has always been focused on space: the space between objects, between time, between artist and viewer. To him, the "idea" of an artwork is as important as the own art object. Words are essential elements in Barry's work. They evoke mental states of flux or contemplation and declare to the viewer a temporal and psychic intangibility. The pieces in this show, two canvases and a vinyl, are the perfect example of word-based works, where we can see the artist playing with proportion and scale, both real and metaphorical.

The works of Mexican artist **Stefan Brüggemann** are devised to create a polemic. Not a polemic about language, as might be expected, but about pictures. Brüggemann is interested in 'Words That Become Pictures' and 'Pictures That Become Words'. In this way he questions the idea of transferring or mirroring information. Language becomes a way of remembering and reflecting events. His laconic picture-signs act as memorials to 'language that must be reactivated'. They create imaginary spaces or experiences for the audience invoked by words. These spaces are produced through the individual act of looking, and each look is always new, notwithstanding the familiarity of the statement. Indeed, it is precisely the intelligibility of the text what allows the viewer to formulate an experience, since the artist intends no ambiguity, as we can see in his four works for this exhibition, three canvases and a vinyl. Brüggemann's words are created by himself, though the resulting images are not controlled by the artist, but by the viewer in the act of perceiving, remembering and creating anew for themselves.

David Lamelas (Buenos Aires, 1946) was one of the protagonists of the avant-garde movement concentrated in Torcuato di Tella Institute. In 1967 he received the IX São Paulo Biennale prize with an installation. He participated in the XXXIV Venice Biennale and Kassel Documenta 5. In 1997 the Witte de With of Róterdam and at the Kunstverein of Munich dedicated him a retrospective exhibition. In 1993 he was given the Guggenheim scholarship and in 1998 the DAAD (Germany) grant. Over the last decade he held exhibitions at St. Gallen Neue Kunst Halle, Netherlands; Malba, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Argentina; Centre d'Art Contemporain, Freiburg, Switzerland; Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid or Kunsthalle Basel. Nowadays he lives and works in Los Angeles, París and Buenos Aires.

Robert Barry (New York, 1936) has a long institutional career with exhibitions: at Tate Gallery (London), Kunstraum (Viena), Le consortium (Dijon); Centre National d'Art Contemporain (Grenoble, Musée St. Pierre, Art Contemporain (Lyon); VII Kassel Documenta and individual shows at such important galleries as Leo Castelli (New Cork) or Yvon Lambert (Paris) among others. His work belongs to permanent collections at MOMA New York, Whitney Museum of American Art or Centre Georges Pompidou.

Stefan Brüggemann (Mexico D.F, 1975) is one of the Mexican artists who aroused international attention. Recently his works were exhibited at De Appel Foundation (Ámsterdam); Serralves Foundation (Porto); FRAC Bourgogne, France; Kunsthalle Bern or Jumex collection (Mexico); Villa du Parc Centre d'Art Contemporain, Annemasse, Francia; o HKA, Amberes, Belgium. Nowadays he lives and works between London and Mexico D.F.