

Institutional pathos

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The fundamental characteristic of the current world is that it can only be experimented as representation. As a consequence, the construction of subjectivity stopped being a problem of ethics to become merely a problem of aesthetics: the one of getting oneself provided with an adequate representation.

Science, the knowledge that deals with the explanation of the world, cannot be blind to this manoeuvre. The decisions that marked the practical limits reachable for the scientific reason were taken, in the past, by the ethics. Nowadays the beauty of formulation is valued: the method itself, an almost mechanical procedure by which we know the results in advance, is a manoeuvre of perfect appearance, transparent in its sophistication.

Art has never been considered a scientific discipline, despite being the closest equivalent to what could be a science of representation. Artists are experts in developing methodologies for its control. In the last decades, a precise strategy allows the public exhibition of results to be equal to a plastic formulation of the method itself, including all its states and its work processes as they have been developed: an aesthetics that adopts the scientific reason and discovers, at the same time, the fragility of its own conventions.

In this exhibition Mariona Moncunill points at an intermediate science, the statistics, which is based on data interpretation. She is interested in its capacity of representing a social collective. Once the relation from one to one - in which citizenship is based on - is lost, the statistics refers to the individual as multitude, as the representative of a group, an archival scale in relation to a specific profile. Statistics regulate personal opinion to create public opinion, but it keeps the individual decision and its relation to a specific context, the one of data itself, and not to the material context that in fact provokes them. It only talks about an amorphous mass with an appearance that has been calculated and modified in advance; precisely classified by those variables that never define the individual as such.

The fiction of an Institute of Alternative Statistics substitutes the exhibition itself; its approach is a careful setting of a lie. The clarity of a representation in a scientific appearance, the resource of the aesthetics of the administration, serves the artist to question the sense of the number; that is to say, the economical quantification. She closes the power itself of the statistics, affirming herself on a community work by the means of a relational technique. She relies on a context to elaborate a didactic scheme that will be represented in a set, which uses an evident narrative which is a defence of the communicability and the public as an actor in the resultant meaning. Here it is where the decision of carefully elaborating a lie becomes an act of responsibility: Mariona Moncunill doesn't talk about statistics, but about art; and more than to art, she refers to the art system itself.

The invention of an institution reveals the discomfort of the young artist towards the artistic institution. Its critical capacity is parallel to the difficulty of access to the art system. The excess of the statistical results, the imagination and fantasy of the data, the poetry of the archive fever...is the recuperation of a sensibility, the one of institutional criticism of the 70's that doesn't fit anymore inside the institutions that today revalidate it through its frozen museification. The artistic field that the artist designs - which saves the distances through legitimated tools of social identification, as a corporative image or a communication classroom - has the intention of serving as a real tool to affect the community of reception; or at least this alternative organism daydreams about its possibility.

This fantastic wondering of commonness by the means of art, which treats popular culture through references of high culture and which doesn't renounce to a poetical vision that could be affected if it wasn't because of its biting humour, is a shared vision by a whole generation. They are pathetic, in the sense that their *pathos* – the passion or the experience that modifies in every point what is given – modulates their *ethos* – what the individual had as a starting point.–

The Institute that Mariona Moncunill has founded, which is almost a tribute to the Jarry's pataphysics, discovers how the selfrepresentation that she casts in her works is exactly the one of a scene in which the spectator could find him/herself with his or her own pathos: with the fluency of his/her identity in relation to a scene in which to be aware that one position is not much more than a slimy movement in relation to all the rest.