

Mireia c. Saladrigues

Welcome. We're on the same time.

13.09.12 > 28.09.12

Opening: Thursday, September 13th, 20 h.

We are the institution. It's a question of what kind of institution we are, what kind of values we institutionalize, what forms of practice we reward, and what kinds of rewards we aspire to. Because the institution of art is internalized, embodied, and performed by individuals, these are the questions that institutional critique demands we ask, above all, of ourselves.

Andrea Fraser

From the Critiques of Institutions to an Institution of Critique
Artforum 44 (1): 278–283

Welcome. You mostly likely took care when coming in, entering calmly, and relatively quietly. Now you're keeping your voice rather low, moving slowly about, with elegance. You refrain from touching. Mainly observing. Some of you speak to the people working in this space, others are interested in the work on display. You leave just as you came. But, what are you doing here? Who are you? Where do you come from?

Some hands; gestures tracing patterns; internalized rules; behavioral habits. Learned rituals determine our movements in art spaces. Spaces or *ritual structures* – to use Carol Duncan's words – incite visitors, consciously or unconsciously, to interpret the specific representation they house.

These are the mechanisms which **Mireia c. Saladrigues** invites us to reflect on during her first solo exhibition at àngels barcelona. Her proposal, which will conclude at the end of the season, in June, 2013, explores the characteristics of the gallery's visitors: what filters them, what prior knowledge they bring, and how discipline and authority influence their bodies and behavior.

Under the title **Welcome. We're on the same time**, the artists brings us to the gallery, a space where as visitors – united, surely, by a similar formation or by common interests – we respond to the same tacit rules, the same behavior patterns. Unlike some art spaces (such as museums or cultural centers, spaces that are symbolically more open to the general public) that employ security guards or other surveillance measures, commercial art spaces don't use these mechanisms to enforce rules. As gallery visitors we carry these premises with us.

Recognizing the process of internalization can only lead to us questioning who we are. On one hand, we must consider what our *capital* is, what Bourdieu referred to as our acquired values (cultural, social, symbolic, economic, etc.). On the other hand, we are led to question whether we are modeled, programmed, or educated to act in a determined way. In other words, to what extent are we subjects in the Foucauldian notion of *biopolitics*?

The exhibition presents two pieces (produced expressly for this show) that questions the role and behavior of its spectators. At the entrance of the exhibition is **He esdevingut (I've become)**, an audio installation of a male voice interpreting a text by Peter Handke (author, playwright, Austrian director, and exponent of the *neoavanguardia*). The fragment is taken from *Self-Accusation*, a piece where the interlocutor explains how he had to learn a series of behavior patterns and rules in order to become a social being. Supporting this idea is a photograph present in the same space, from Saladrigues' project *Her Museum*, that was shown in Espai 13 of the Joan Miró Foundation, Barcelona. This work functions as an icon of prohibition, an image of the rules. In this way, the artist invites us to become more aware of who we are, the path we have followed and what we are doing here.

In an adjacent space is **Benvinguts. Tenim la mateixa hora (Welcome. We're on the same time)**, a series of photographs that show Nico Baixas (a performer who specializes in hand gestures) moving an orthopedic glove, manipulating it into different expressions, as if he was trying to teach it. The photographs are distributed casually in a glass vitrine, inaccessible. On top of the vitrine is the glove that appears in the photographs, challenging us to reproduce the same, or similar, gestures. Inviting us to think about the dichotomy between what is biological and what is learned; between the natural and the representation. Thus, the work allows the artist to tempt us with a key question: are we, as spectators – and as social beings – capable of unlearning?

With this proposal (the first exhibit will be shown at the gallery until September 28th, 2012, with a second one scheduled for June 2013), Mireia c. Saladrigues continues to build on her line of work, reflecting on art, the spaces where it circulates, its audiences and, in particular, the mechanisms that articulate it. The questions are also central for the work she is developing for her upcoming exhibits in the Museu Abelló de Mollet and Artium, the Contemporary Art Museum of Victoria, Spain.

Text by Cristina Garrido

Mireia c. Saladrigues' (Terrassa, 1978) arts practice has focused on the study of audiences, channels of reception, and the conditions that spectators encounter, entering fully into the analysis of the institution as a space of social production, and the way as societies of control are reflected in the artistic framework. She has recently held solo shows at Espai 13 in Joan Miró Foundation, Espai Cultural Caja Madrid (Barcelona) and at Espai Guinovart (Agramunt). Her work has been shown in solo and group shows at Centre d'Art La Panera, the Videonale 13, Loop, the National Museum of Photography in Copenhagen, DIA Art Foundation, Capella de Sant Roc de Valls, Homesession, EspaiDos at Sala Muncunill, Sala d'Art Jove, Porin Museum and Kiasma.