



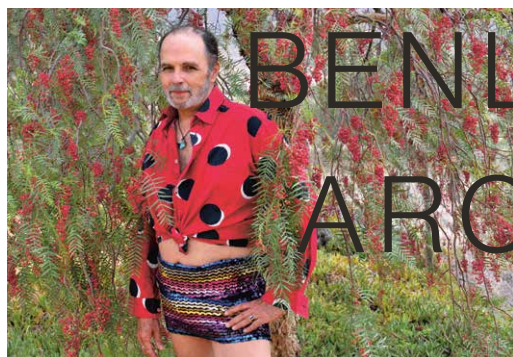
# ESSAYS ON SEEDINESS



READINGS  
OF THE



MIGUEL  
BENLLOCH  
ARCHIVE











Essays on Seediness  
Readings of the Miguel Benlloch Archive



ESSAYS  
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*Essays on Seediness. Readings of the Miguel Benlloch Archive* brings together works by the performance artist, poet and political and cultural activist Miguel Benlloch (Loja, 1954-Seville, 2018) that are displayed in relation to other pieces presented by the artists Equipo re, Julio Jara, Guillermina Mongan, Álvaro Romero, María Salgado and Fran MM Cabeza de Vaca.

Benlloch's actions, texts and political and aesthetic activities, which he produced under the collective umbrella and the vitality of the socio-political and artistic groups he was related to, coalesce into a singular space for reading and understanding the development of art and activism in turn-of-the-century Spain, which centred discourses on debating and questioning binary and heterocentric categories. His production represents an early critical view of identity, a thought issuing from the body and a writing that appears in the form of action, photograph, book, proclamation, speech or placard.

In the early 1980s, at the stall of the Movimiento Comunista in the Corpus Christi festivities in Granada, Benlloch took part in the organization of the Cutre Chou ("Seedy" or "Tacky Show"), a review of short performances that displayed some of the diverse feelings among this self-convened movement opposed to Franco's dictatorship. The title of this exhibition, *Essays on Seediness*, pays tribute to a moment of condensation when political militants started to find expression with the voice and body, and to turn the "seedy" and "tacky" into a tool for dissent from the norm and disrespect for form.

The exhibition has been opened up to the artists mentioned above, who are invited to read and study the [archivomiguelbenlloch.net](http://archivomiguelbenlloch.net) with a view to creating and displaying works whose interlocution, correspondence or response to those of Benlloch generate new links and principles favouring the advance of transgressive and political artistic proposals.





# DO, SAY, DISSENT: MIGUEL BENLLOCH

The institution's envy of the artist. That's it. Because the artist, if they are an artist, and that is the case here, can attempt a closeness that the museum cannot. Closeness and dissent that are proximate to life and art, which is the dream that art maintains, and that maintains art. The artist might be an artist even if they do not wish it or do not care about it or if they hide it, and they may be one while doing things with things that are not from art, that are almost valueless—even seedy (as Miguel Benlloch would put it)—but which are, then, from the day-to-day, from life. And they can engage in dissent from art and from its order, from society and its classifications that the institution cannot engage in. This despite the museum's dreams of being a rebel, its desire to be of the people and to see itself as house and hearth, home more than office, or perhaps even the street. And to belong to everybody. But it's not easy, because it is an institution, meaning it is social order, structure, the norm, almost the law, bureaucracy, which art no longer is. It has not been for a long time, when it is art. Critical, changing, vital... it thinks and it thinks about us precisely through its dissolution of the normative, as Miguel Benlloch did. But what the museum can do is to be a ventriloquist or a medium, to speak with the voice of others and give them a chance to talk, to listen to them and let them find each other. This museum, being an archive that stores and safeguards, conserves and thinks about what is archived, can turn an archive into a living thing, as we are doing today with *Archivo Miguel Benlloch*; emptying his pockets and sharing the coins out as they change hands, which is like earning income, but done the other way around, without saving or keeping but spending, wasting: sharing, giving it away.

Miguel Benlloch, maybe everything “bad”: communist, pacifist, ecologist, poet, carnival artist, disguise artist, queer before *queer*, crip before *crip*, (singing to the sick body—individual and social), master of ceremonies of his village, spokesperson for the popular and the modern, cabaret artist constantly embroiled in collective struggles, anti-conscription, embodiment of

so much utopia, transforming spirit, shindig organiser, the dream of revolution or rather of rebellion, incarnate and in card—it's been said before—incarnate as the performative body and in cards as a card carrying anti-capitalist, homosexual, post-feminist, anti-Francoist and anti-NATOist who'd tear up all the cards if it was necessary, when all they produced was hermetic, fixed identities that limit and put up borders, that classify, codify and sadden every idea and limit every life. Miguel, this and that at the same time, and neither this nor that completely. So it's back to the start, to disidentification (to de-wiring as Victor Jara sang), to overflowing; back to sacrilege and disorder, to transitionable, diverse identities—all done with such joy. And achieving this by inventing a new language, dancing with words, twisting and turning and playing with them, scattering the letters and reordering them. Because protest can also be a calligram. Because if there is no action without theory, and theory without action just dies, then for the good of everyone, we have to include poetry in this equation. That is what Miguel Benlloch created: culture as an (unarmed) arm, as a soul loaded with future. The most experimental culture and the voice of the street. Festive, transformative culture, and life itself in the artistic and political action: “dressed as others, I talk about myself” said Miguel, who, in what he did, what he said, decided, preferred, to be dissident: to dissent.

And now, out of all that shared dreaming, come others, to dress like him; Julio Jara, Guillermina Mongan, Equipo re, Álvaro Romero, María Salgado and Fran MM Cabeza de Vaca. Some who knew him personally and shared with him and others who didn't, who are far younger, and they listen to it all and see everything he did and how he moved the poetic impulse to the socio-political struggle, to collectivisation, and how he could go on doing, speaking, arguing, gesturing. First it was surrounded by risk and illegality, then in times of promises, and then among the ashes of every broken dream as society became docile, when the left wing (winging it) began to fold its revolutionary ideas away, and when those identities after so much recognition, after so much longing to be visible, to be equal, after so much demanding to belong, began to become complicit and to conform. So we have to go on speaking, militating and activating. That's why we are now seeing people who are caring for and spreading what Miguel Benlloch said or did or left to us, and they are bringing it here to the IVAM: *Ensayos sobre lo cutre. Lecturas del Archivo Miguel Benlloch* (Essays on Seediness. Readings of the Miguel Benlloch Archive). Mar Villaespesa, Joaquín Vázquez and Alejandro Simón, much more carer-curators, then, than traditional curators. All this accompanied by the writings of José Luis Ortiz Nuevo, María José Belbel and Paula Pérez Rodríguez. Thus Miguel Benlloch and his things enter this museum that is trying to be a collective home, a place of meetings and conversation, hoping to open the door to life and the street, to disordered life which is the life that does not follow an order (in the sense of a command and also a classification). Let critical thought in, let poetry and rebel action in, and let the Archive out so it can walk, and be with everyone, and among everyone.



*Si el arte es vida debe parecerse a ella..., 2011*



*Florida mayo. Alboroque a Cristina Pancorbo, 2013*

*Osmosis. Mi x ti = Zaje, 1997*



*Tengo tiempo, 1994*





*El detective, 2012*



*La diada. Alboroque a María José Belbel, 2008*

*Las bellas y el burro, 2008*





The founders of Planta Baja at carnival time, 1986

Miguel Benlloch in *La esfera de oro*, 1992



Planta Baja, 1985



# MY DEAR MIGUEL



La Gallarda, Loja

My dear Miguel, you know that Lucy Lippard was one of my reference points in the 1980s. When you and I met, her ideas on context and process were key to my starting work as a curator. And on top of her critical feminist discourse on the contemporary art world came your activism in the Communist Movement, the FLHA (Homosexual Liberation Front of Andalusia) and the Granada Women's Assembly, as we began to work together at BNV Productions.<sup>1</sup> We applied knowledge, discourse, experience, ways of doing and of weaving material, as we used to say, to those early projects<sup>2</sup> which carried us along new paths; in your case, it was a need to inhabit other spaces (after the disappointment in the foundational pacts of consensus of Spain's Transition to democracy) where you could invest or reactivate your activism. In that cultural ambience you could develop your "performancero" (performance-maker) movements, begun long before the queer paradigm and the "performative" change. We were feeding into each other for three decades and almost without our realising it you were creating as you stated at the presentation of *Acaeció en Granada*<sup>3</sup> at the Pósito de Loja: "I love looking for effects within experiences".

You embody statements, using the minimum without being minimal; as a bonfire rages you create a secular hagiography, *En la gloria en los Infiernos. Los santos niños mártires de Loja* (Gloriously in Hell. The Sacred Child Martyrs of Loja);<sup>4</sup> whether in the office itself, alongside the production work or interrupting all that with some transgression, you turn work into action, wine into water, for any reason at all (religious, festive, personal or political—which we know is the same thing) and with the tiniest prop or a slight rearrangement of clothes (always keeping it seedy), there's the photo, on the hard drive to one day become part of *Tipotopotropos* (although you had no idea at the time). In the semantic field that is Signs (Signs), you bring together digital photographs that break the codes which the heteropatriarchal system uses to dismantle any and all dissent, including





Miguel Benlloch and Pepe de Alfacar  
in the Cutre Chou, c. 1990

sexual. Now we are finding other photographic sequences kept on that hard drive taken on some random morning or day at the beach or an afternoon in the country—*Cabeza desmedusada* (Unjellyfished Head), *Reloj de arena* (Hourglass), *El escapado* (The Fugitive). The same methodology (which is too orthodox a word for your heretical artistic practices) produced the *Alboroques* (Welcomes), photos with the warmth of casual encounters with friends (Cristina, Pollo, Alicia, Feli, Isaías and so on), or even recuperating photos in which you are pictured with

some close friend (Willy or Nacho for example). By titling these photos, not only do you fill them with the idea of a gift in a transaction of affection, but you also give them the status of “works”. This act is characteristic of a practice in which there is no interest in the status of the work in itself, only in evoking the idea that *if art is life, it should look like it...*<sup>5</sup>

To start with it was more as if the actions emerged from the heat of the BNV productions and the links created because of them. *Tránsito* (Transit), *Canario* (Canary) and *Inmersión* (Immersion) came from the relationship with the collective Gratis;<sup>6</sup> *Desidentificate* (Disidentify Yourself) was at the closing-day party of the seminar at the UNIA arteypensamiento<sup>7</sup> programme *Movimiento en las bases: transfeminismos, feminismos queer, despatologización, discursos no binarios*, curated by you and other colleagues;<sup>8</sup> *DERERUMNATURA. Quien canta su mal espanta* (DERERUMNATURA. Laughter is the Best Medicine), resulted from your activity with Equipo re after their participation in another of the seminars *Agenciamientos contra-neoliberales: coaliciones micro-políticas desde el sida*. Works like the video-action *Serranillas de Lucainena*, in collaboration with Equipo Palomar,<sup>9</sup> came about through the enthusiasm caused by your “actioning” between the transfeminist discourses. Sure, producing works through social relationships is normal, but your way of doing it had the specific feature of creating (as well as being “outside the studio”—there was no studio) through the conviction of the collective and interaction with the sociopolitical and artistic groups which you were involved in; of originating in an emotional and political process, once they send you an invitation and you deal with the event’s subject, context and

*Serranillas de Lucainena. Gagá Go Go, 2015*





space. Your actions, while brief, are extensive and intense, feeding as they do from a journey of life: while carefree in form, they are meticulous in detail; while multilayered, their synthesis is absolute.

Of your first action on the contemporary art stage (having already performed and trained at the Planta Baja<sup>10</sup> and the Cutre Chou,<sup>11</sup> which you consider your biopolitical beginning) there remains no record. Although the transcendental experience that remained in your conscience of the creative act certainly lasted. Of *María de la O* inside *La esfera de oro* (The Sphere of Gold)<sup>12</sup> by James Lee Byars, at the opening ceremony, there only remain photos—in which you can be seen hanging in a harness from a truck crane, being lowered into the hole in the sphere—and your chronicle “Acaeció en Granada”<sup>13</sup> about how Byars began by being interested in the circular patio of the Carlos V Palace and ended up fascinated by the intersection of our narratives about Our Lady of the O and the popular song “María de la O” which you intoned. Byars, in an exercise of synthesis and maximum efficiency (a combination which made a great impression on you), linked his world view to the perfect circle of the letter O, a mental abstraction, at the same time as he appointed you a woman and instructed you to be inserted into the sphere (without being seen) so that you could sing “María de la O” like a mantra from the inside, or hollowness, of the spherical space. This “performative” act by Byars, this expert in silence and the physicality of sound, in the spiritual power of the repetition of phonemes and words, got woven into your action and we knew that the magic of that sound moment, repeated yet unrepeatable, reached the Alhambra.<sup>14</sup> There is a picture of Byars listening, through the plaster wall of the sphere, as your song resonates, during the rehearsal. The rest is left to the mercy of the mind and of enlightenment. The radiance of his universe, of the idea of art as a language of transformation and revelation of hidden realities continued to illuminate you in your examination of the norm, sometimes in ways that were not explicit—*O donde habite el olvido* (Or Where Oblivion Dwells),<sup>15</sup> and sometimes in ways that were—*De la O*.<sup>16</sup>

I told you something about this when I wrote “Querido Miguel,”<sup>17</sup> a joint remembrance and now a work in progress because of the need to carry the story on into the present time. Placing myself in this time produces the inevitable question of *What should I recount now?* followed by *How can I begin what I have to recount?*: the presentation of *Ensayos sobre lo cutre. Lecturas del Archivo Miguel Benlloch* (Essays on Seediness. Readings of the Miguel Benlloch Archive).

On top of worrying about blank pages, there came a need for some kind of sign to thread the cotton with which to sew us back together. By pure chance, the trigger came from something Lippard said: “if I ever wrote my autobiography, I’d do it through the description of objects, and I’d talk about



James Lee Byars, 1992

the place occupied by each thing in my life, which has contained things from rocks to paintings by unknown artists, objects from other cultures". As you can imagine, I thought about your relationship to objects: about quartzes, spheres. The strange thing about her comment is that it links or dovetails so nicely into this new exhibition.

Once we had the curatorial discourse straight (so very different from the one in Seville,<sup>18</sup>) one of the ideas for arranging the exhibition of your works was to focus on a few objects, suggested by Alejandro Simón (of whom more later); although it was hard for Joaquín and me to get near them (precisely because we felt so close to them) the distance that he brought with him convinced us. Three words—body/objects/writings—sealed the beginning of our three-way curatorship. We took various other paths while following the “cuerpo conjugado” (Conjugated Body) road, associated with the bodies that mattered to you: diverse, diffused, migrant, playful, disidentified, inappropriate, illegal and so on, all reclaimed in so many actions, like *Acuchillad+s* (Stabbed)<sup>19</sup> and *Mapuch ¡EH!* (Mapuch Hey!)<sup>20</sup> We were going to show the body of work that questioned the identities assigned to you: activist, producer, writer, “performancero” (performance-maker), man or gay or trans.

By objects, we mainly mean clothes used in the actions. You yourself establish the body/clothes/object relationship in the text for the action *Tengo tiempo* (I Have Time):<sup>21</sup> “The body as cultural object, using clothes as a ritual”. In that action you showed us their use value as you pointed at them: “María José’s red woollen waistcoat, Marino and Juan Antonio’s black blouse, Juan Carlos’ ant design white shirt”. In the ritual or silent mantra of undressing you explain who you have been, and you challenge the idea of being seen in terms of the binary sexuality paradigm that establishes nor-

mative identities, based on the clothes that have dressed and covered you. On the other hand, in *Inversión* (Reversal)<sup>22</sup> you arise from the warmth and affection of the pile of blankets lent by a hundred friends, by Mati, Manolo, Celi, Javier Willi, José Luis and so on.

Before going on, I must tell you... The Seville one was followed by the exhibition in Madrid. Soledad Gutiérrez phoned us to take it to



Miguel Benlloch. *Cuerpo conjugado*  
Sala Atín Aya, Seville, 2018

Miguel Benlloch. *Cuerpo conjugado*  
CentroCentro, Madrid, 2019



CentroCentro.<sup>23</sup> We thought you'd enjoy being in Madrid, and it would be a chance to present the Miguel Benlloch Archive.<sup>24</sup> We're redoing it at the moment... We keep posting documents that are waiting to be found, stored in that bottomless well of your hard drives that contain as many memories as terabytes and documents sent to us from conferences or research projects. Your work is becoming the object of various studies that you'd love to poke around in, like one recent one about *Caballero* (Gentleman Knight) and *El florete en la floresta* (The Foil in the Dell),<sup>25</sup> the action recorded on the terrace of your house in Loja, La Gallarda,<sup>26</sup> under the leafy pergola, fencing as you cry, "Liberals! Knaves!", forcing them back with the point of your rapier against the bars of a window, dressed in Tudor breeches of velvet and satin, the ones used in the last of your numbers for the Cutre Chou.<sup>27</sup> You loved to recycle, you were always austere and a little ascetic, but above all epicurean. It would also be a chance to present the video-document of your last action *El fantasma invidente* (The Blind Ghost)<sup>28</sup> and to publish the book *Mirar de frente*,<sup>29</sup> the title taken from the last essay you wrote, one of the ones published in this new anthology of your writings between 1983 and 2018, some previously unpublished or found in various publications.

We loved looking closely at the morphology of the space; its massive size meant that we could present your works in a different manner or show new documents from the collectives that your works were connected to or put on some works that we couldn't fit in Seville or come up with some variations on ones that we did show, using the links between them, comparable to the variations that you introduce into the actions. Paradigmatic would be the way to describe the variations you introduce from *51 géneros* (51 Genders)<sup>30</sup> onwards, motivated by various sociocultural situations. In *56 géneros* (56 Genders)<sup>31</sup> you incorporated two works gifted by Santi Ayán, to whom you pay homage for the similarity in your determination to expose yourselves in public, and to speak through your bodies in a permanent rebellion against the rules; in *58 géneros* (58 Genders)<sup>32</sup> you bring in new clothes (Berta's skirt, Pepa's rainbow cloth) with which to question all the regulations surrounding the institutionalisation of gAY! ("AY!" representing the sung flamenco moan) marriage, as the words on the cloth declare.

Antonio Collados also wanted to take the Seville exhibition to the transept of the Hospital Real of Granada.<sup>33</sup> Can you imagine? In that university space where you had meetings with your comrades during the anti-Franco struggle, as a friend from those days told me at the



Miguel Benlloch. *Cuerpo conjugado*  
Hospital Real, Granada, 2020



Urban tour action, anti-NATO campaign, 1986

titles. To Ósmosis (Osmosis) you added *Mi x ti = (zaje)* (My x t Your = [Mixture] ),<sup>35</sup> a dance to the rhythm of a remix, dressed in your mirrored costume—used so many times since—in which your body gives off flashes of light and reflections at every turn, about migrant movement, indicating that reality is the wake left behind by individuals' crossing.

At the Hospital Real, there were a lot of Granada-contextual documents added: from the Teatro Ilíbero that you were part of in your university years, from the Asamblea de Mujeres (Women's Assembly), from the magazine *Olvidos de Granada*,<sup>36</sup> and the publishing project *La carpeta*.<sup>37</sup> I'd heard you talk about this last, but I didn't actually know it. It took a third exhibition for me to find in its pages the origins of the little blurry photo, the one with you holding up the placard saying "OTAN NO!"; the one we'd shown for your pacifist activism, not as a document but as an artwork, because it had been established as such in another of your characteristic operations when you included it in *Signos* (Signs) –alongside *La revolución apagada* (The Extinguished Revolution), *Bandera transexual* (Transexual Flag), *La braga activista* (Activist Panties) and *La rosa de los vientos sin norte* (The Rose of the Winds with No North). We found out that this photo was taken during an act at the Bib Rambla square after an Anti-NATO campaign demo/action through the town, organised by Granada's Peace and Disarmament Assembly in 1986.

That was where you spent the lockdown, at the Hospital Real. In those sad times the wards were empty, at least. Nevertheless, I imagined you surrounded by all your friends, breaking the rules again, dancing to the

opening. You ruled there. Life is full of twists and turns. The ones you did in *ReversiblebisreveR*,<sup>34</sup> come to mind. You kept on scratching reality's surface, as you used to say, to the rhythm of the music and the sequence of slides in *Galindo Lindogal*; playing with images, with words, and beyond the satire of the sociopolitical reality of the time, examples of crossing the body with writing and electronic music or pop, all brought to the domain of the action. Writing flourishes on one side or the other, punchy and dynamic, in these same

Anti-NATO demonstration, Granada, 1986





rhythm of the Planta Baja music,<sup>38</sup> among *La Vision* fanzines, the FLHA's *Gay-Andalus* and *Guirigai* newsletters, MC materials lent by Maribel and José María,<sup>39</sup> the photos of demos by Gracia and Ferreras.<sup>40</sup>

Because of the lockdown, all programmed activities<sup>41</sup> moved online. It's not the same but we made the best of it, and proposals were transformed, like Tamara and Fernando, who instead of a round table composed a letter<sup>42</sup> which they wrote to you in the form of a video, "a way of bridging the gap imposed on us by the state of emergency". They asked Alejandro (you see, everything falls together) to write-record it. Infinite tenderness flows from the letter with criss-crossing references to an endless number of words, sounds, images, poems, projects, songs... to lives lived in order to "share these uncertain times" we live in. And references, of course to the *Granado a Miguel Benlloch* (Miguel Benlloch's Pomegranate),<sup>43</sup> an action/planting that they held at *El jardín de las mixturas*.

But I've got off the point; let me return to the thread of your Seville exhibition. You'll remember that at the meeting held for the opening Paul B. Preciado stated that he felt like the "he-, she- they-child of Miguel Benlloch and Pedro Lemebel", that beyond genetic parenthood, by which he was tied to other parents, there exists a queer parenthood, which he considered more important, with a basis at once linguistic, performative, political and emotional.



FLHA demonstration, Granada, c. 1982

[...] If we may consider that genetic parenthood builds a body, a nature, whereas the queer parenthood builds a culture, I shall try to argue here that queer parenthood also builds a body, a desire, whose materiality is as real as the genetic one.

Until I got round to reading Lemebel (later on you'll understand why I have read it now) I didn't get a full comprehension of the relationship that Paul established, more than just this once, between you two. I was so surprised by the political/poetical concerns you had in common in the 70s and 80s in the streets of Santiago de Chile and Granada, your love of the popular through activism, writing through transgression and sharp wit. And how similar one of Lemebel's AIDS-sufferer's chronicles "Los mil nombres de María Camaleón" (mid-1990s) to the poem/script for the action *SIDA DA*.<sup>44</sup> Your voice reciting "[...] Sida de Fürstenberg, Suma y Sida, Roma Sida Aperta, etc". merged with the list of Maria Camaleón's names: "[...] La Sui-Sida, La Ven-Sida, La Sida On The Rock, etc". But more will be said about

that by Alejandro, who we met through a research project <sup>45</sup> from which we have taken part of the title for this exhibition at the IVAM, and who we have asked to curate.

You probably think that Joaquín and I had agreed that we wouldn't do a fourth, the other shows having come one after another like travelling exhibitions with their corresponding variations. Nuria Enguita's invitation upset our plans to some extent. How could we say no, and how could we explain that we were not going to accompany you to this trip to Valencia, a city you have always had family ties to, and where you returned to every summer with your siblings on a pilgrimage around cousins' houses in the villages where your mother and father were born. Not forgetting to visit Pep, who you called cousin both because he had the same surname as you and—above all—because of your mutual affection.

An alternative curatorial approach was one of the prerequisites to avoid complete betrayal of our purpose, alongside that of looking for new viewpoints to bring in. We found one of these viewpoints in Alejandro Simón's research into your Archive—which is where his poem *PrEPDA DA* came from—and others in the artists that shared your way of experiencing the political from highly varied aesthetics, and who we have invited to read/activate the Archive: Julio Jara, Equipo re, María Salgado and Fran MM Cabeza de Vaca, Guillermina Mongan and Álvaro Romero. It's no longer a question of simply showing the Archive on computers as a research resource; now the archive itself is the original seed of the process of this exhibition and of the dialogues with these artists invited to formulate their projects of correspondence, response, reply or difference to your creations.

The performance *Sueño contigo* (I Dream of You) by Julio Jara, your great friend and kindred soul in heretical spiritualities (in *Tengo tiempo* (I Have Time) you write about the non-definition regarding sex and gender, and her relationship with the spiritual, and in *Reflexión* (Reflection) and *Ibn Farum* you understand the body as spirit and matter), holds a certain kinship with *El fantasma invidente* (The Blind Ghost) and with your action-conference *Tránsito de lo sagrado y lo profano* (Transition of the Sacred and the Profane),<sup>46</sup> in its transposition of those terms in relation to the museum and the world or the street (where you are, where you were and where you wish to be). At the same time, he contradicts you by continuing the end of your narrative of the same name: "The Censors reappear in the Main Church. But everything will be different, death walks in the streets, the body moves towards its resurrection. The narrative is complete". Julio completes the continuation of the story through a singular vision or mystical ecstasy, set out in

*El fantasma invidente*, 2018



the text “Miguel repeated”, obviously including flamenco and pop music, at the inaugural act.

The Equipo re<sup>47</sup> project looks at the same idea of correspondence, of the polysemy of words spoken, in a text-letter called “Las cartas vienen plegadas, al menos la mayoría de ellas” (Letters Arrive Folded, at Least Most of Them Do), to communicate with you via the *Tipotopotropos* and a particular “folding” of them. You took other paths together at the UNIA artepensamiento, around their research into the politics of the body and the politics of the archive. You’re taken to Barcelona by 51 52 53 54 56 58 *géneros conversa amb Equipo re i Miguel Benlloch/Catalasuñas/51 géneros*.<sup>48</sup> And to Chile, the obligatory variation, or reintrospection as you yourself called it, in the Mapuche culture because of *Mapuch ¡EH!* (Mapuch HEY!), created years before. In Donosti there was *Anarchivo sida* (Anarchive AIDS), the project that approaches HIV/AIDS as “a visual, emotional and financial paradigm shift right in the middle of life with the consolidation of neo-liberal politics”, in which you participated with *DERERUMNATURA. Quien canta su mal espanta* (DERERUMNATURA Laughter is the Best Medicine);<sup>49</sup> an action about “the sick body” and singing “as defiance towards the perfect healthy body conceived as commodity”. In Valencia they all come with you when you attempt to tackle the visual/spatial/temporal layers of your work, using the intimacy of voice/writing and of the connections created on your journeys.

María Salgado and Fran MM Cabeza de Vaca (who you coincided with in the double session of the performance programme *Círculo íntimo: Acciones en torno a Espaliú*,<sup>50</sup>) having done research over the last few years “into desire, repression, the norm, subjective rebellion and the joy shared by the subcultures of the night”, now present *NO FEM*, an autonomous audiotextual work, part of *Jinete Último Reino Frag. 2*, based on projects similar to yours in terms of proclaiming the existence of diverse bodies that allow penetration into processes of disidentification. In the final poems that flip the use of the NO, affirming the “difference, complexity, conflictivity, non-identity: movement”, there is some correspondence with the *NO to NATO* that you held up in that demonstration, or with some of your works and actions that question fixed identities, like *Bandera tranxesual* (Tranxesual Flag) and *58 géneros* (58 Genders), or with those where language and repetitive beats somehow run through that questioning, like *SIDA DA*, *ReversiblelbisreveR*, *Galindo LindoGal* and *ESTADO ROLDÁN, ESTADO LADRÓN. La Virgen del Pilar dice que no...*

Guillermina Mongan got to know you while researching in your Archive. She coordinates the Serigrafistas Queer’s Ask-Archive, as an integral part of the Serigrafistas Queer group. The guidelines for setting out the diagrams with which to map out your political/aesthetic activity have been complex, since almost all your works have this duality running through them. However, she found some explosive stuff to develop her work, titled *El cuerpo que es lengua hacia afuera* (The Body That Is a Tongue Sticking

Out), in your drawing *Cartografía de los géneros* (Mapping Genders) and in *La braga activista* (Activist Panties)<sup>51</sup> and in the idea of tracking down every slogan on every badge on the panties; messages by which to read history, and your history with others. You used those panties like a pincushion, pinning on all the badges from political struggles of the 1980s in Spain: anti-NATO, feminism, anti-conscription, ecology, internationalism, sexual liberation and so on. These are struggles that remained the backbone of so many of your actions and the panties were like a “safety helmet” for those actions. The graphic drifts in her drawings from these works seep into various areas, corresponding to the Cutre Chou and the actions in which you wore the panties: *Tránsito* (Transit), *Cerda* (Sow), *El ruido legal es la guerra* (Legal Noise is War); or in the one where you swap them with another pair from your head (the thought-space) onto your sex, to rethink both places *Desidentifícate* (Disidentify Yourself).

Álvaro Romero, a flamenco singer who you do not know, has recently put music to and sung the poem-chronicle “Manifiesto. Hablo por mi diferencia” by Pedro Lemebel (which is the reason why I finally got round to reading him). He did not know you either. Now he does, through your texts, in which he senses lyrics for songs and as many voices and bodies as there are cropping up in your stories. Using fragments of these he has composed/written “La yerra de las voces” (Branding Voices), and a sound/textual installation based on your essays, his own life experiences, the research into the Archive and questions, as he read your stuff, about what the vocal registers of the people you mention might be: Are there types of voices depending on whether you are a man, a woman, trans, faggot, dyke and so on? Questions that bear some resemblance to those of Terre Thaemlitz that you recite in *51 géneros* (51 Genders). The correspondences with your works are multiple, including, for example *De la O*, *Afuera del sexo* (Outside Sex), *El detective* (The Detective) and *Si el arte es vida debe parecerse a ella...* (If Art is Life it Should Look Like it...). Finally, I wanted to tell you, that Álvaro is going to sing at the opening, the party is already organised, just the way you’d like it...

*In memoriam.* Miguel Benlloch (1954-2018)

*Granado a Miguel Benlloch, 2019*





- 1 Founded by Miguel Benlloch with Joaquín Vázquez and Ignacio Sánchez Rico, in Granada, 1988; at the beginning of the 1990s the premises moved to Seville.
- 2 *El Sueño Imperativo* and *Plus Ultra*; for the production of this project in the eight Andalusian provinces, as part of Expo '92, BNV teamed up with Alicia Pinteño, partner of the producer, Esther Regueira, Simeón Saiz and Beatriz Poncela.
- 3 Benlloch, M.: *Acaeció en Granada*. ciengramos, Granada 2013.
- 4 In the Spanish, *Infiernos* has a double meaning, also referring to the waterfall with that name in the river Genil. *Los santos niños* refers to his friend Antonio Martínez de Tejada and himself. The photograph was taken by his friend María Luisa Martín.
- 5 Action-conference read at the round-table "Desmemoria e irreverencias en el arte actual", organised by the Instituto de Estudios Andaluces de Sevilla; and as part of the Taula Talk, Festival LP'11, Ex-Festival de Danza, CCCB (Centro de Cultura Contemporánea de Barcelona), in 2011. In 2012 it was put on at the MAC (Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Santiago de Chile).
- 6 Consisting of Victoria Gil, Kirby Gookin, Federico Guzmán and Robin Kahn: *Tránsito* was put on at *La isla del copyright*, a project by the collective as part of *punte... de pasaje*, Bilbao 1995; *Inmersión in Copiacabana* as part of *Álem da Água*, at the River Guadiana and the Museo Extremeño e Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Badajoz 1996; *Canario*, a sound action broadcast by telephone between Granada and New York for the presentation of the project *Promotional Copy* by Robin Kahn at the Guggenheim Museum SoHo, in 1994.
- 7 A Universidad Internacional de Andalucía programme produced by BNV from 2000 to 2015, and directed by the group made up of Miguel Benlloch, Alicia Pinteño, Joaquín Vázquez, Nuria Enguita, Santiago Eraso, Pedro G. Romero, Yolanda Romero, Mar Villaspesa and Alejandro del Pino as web editor. The seminars on post-identity feminism can be consulted at: <<http://ayp.unia.es>>.
- 8 Aitzol/Alira Araneta, María José Belbel, Josebe Iturrioz, Juana Ramos and Miriam Solá.
- 9 Consisting of Mariokissime and Rafa Marcos Mota.
- 10 Bar founded in Granada, in 1983, by Miguel with Juan Antonio Peinado and Marino Martín.
- 11 Political cabaret created by Miguel and other comrades from MCA-JAR, for the Meneillo stand in the festival grounds at Granada's Corpus festivities to offset party overheads.
- 12 Created for the *Plus Ultra* project; artisans worked on its productions under the technical direction of Juan Fernando Vázquez.
- 13 Published in Benlloch, M.: *Acaeció en Granada: op. cit.*
- 14 The Carlos V Palace was the first place Byars requested for the placement of *La esfera de oro*; permission was denied by the Alhambra board.
- 15 Under this title Miguel did an action and a video, in homage to Byars. The video images tell the story of the construction and destruction of *La esfera de oro*, as a response to the city of Granada's cultural policies. Although Byars offered the city his work, it was destroyed and the debris "was thrown into the Viznar ravine". Camera and editing: Carmen F. Sigler, Yvan Schreck, Ático Siete.
- 16 Series of action-photographs, in collaboration with Manuel Prados.
- 17 Letter-style text, published in Benlloch, M.: *Acaeció en Granada: op. cit.*
- 18 *Miguel Benlloch. Cuerpo conjugado*, Sala Atín Aya, Seville, 16 February - 8 April 2018. Contemporaray Visual Arts Programme of the ICAS (Instituto de la Cultura y las Artes de Sevilla); general coordination: María Genis; coordinators: Olivia Rodríguez and Misael Rodríguez.
- 19 Shown at the Planta Baja, Granada, 2013; Festival ZEMOS98: *Remapping Europe*, Seville, 2014; *La noche del apagón*, MACBA (Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona), 2014.
- 20 Created for the project *Puerto de las Artes*, Muelle de las Carabelas, La Rábida, 1999. *Mapuch ¡EH! 2*, produced for the project *Diálogo y Performance. Políticas del cuerpo*, Universidad de Concepción, Chile, 2012.

- 21 *Tengo tiempo*, created for a friend's birthday party, in a bar in Moyá, Barcelona, in 1994; this same year it was put on in The Kitchen, New York, for the presentation of the publication *Promotional Copy*, edited by Robin Kahn.
- 22 Created for the exhibition *Transgénico@s. Representaciones y experiencias sobre la sociedad, la sexualidad y los géneros en el arte español contemporáneo*, Koldo Mitxelena Kulturunea, San Sebastian, 1998.
- 23 Miguel Benlloch. *Cuerpo conjugado*, CentroCentro, 14 June -6 October 2019.
- 24 Start-up financed by CentroCentro, designed by Charo Romero Donaire and Inmaculada Salinas, coordinated by Joaquín Vázquez and Mar Villaespesa. Redesignated for technical reasons, the new web design and content management are the responsibility of Elena Romera with the collaboration of Daniel Villar Onrubia.
- 25 Alicia Navarro: "¿Cruising andaluz? Del barroco hispalense con Miguel Benlloch a los claveles de Ramón Cadenas". *Caballero*, digital photograph, 2007; *El florete en la floresta*, video-format action designed to be shown on a mobile phone in the project *Archivo F.X.: Las espadas*, àngels Barcelona gallery, 2017.
- 26 Name given to the house by your friend José Luis Ortiz Nuevo, because of the musical and sexual connotations of the term.
- 27 *ESTADO ROLDÁN, ESTADO LADRÓN. La Virgen del Pilar dice que no...*, the Meneillo stand at the Feria de Granada, in 1994.
- 28 Performed at the opening of Miguel Benlloch. *Cuerpo conjugado*, Seville.
- 29 Benlloch, M.: *Mirar de frente*, Mar Villaespesa and Joaquín Vázquez (eds.). CentroCentro, Madrid 2019. The essay "Mirar de frente" written in 2018, first published in *Fiestas, memorias y archivos. Política sexual y resistencias cotidianas en los años 70*, Gracia Trujillo and Alberto Berzosa (eds.), Brumaria, Madrid 2019.
- 30 Created for the seminar "Mutaciones del feminismo: Genealogías y prácticas artísticas", Arteleku, San Sebastian, 2005, directed by María José Belbel, Erreakzioa-Reacción and Paul B. Preciado.
- 31 Performed at the Centro José Guerrero, Granada, 2010.
- 32 Performed at the Ex Teresa Arte Actual, Mexico City, 2012.
- 33 Miguel Benlloch. *Cuerpo conjugado*, Hospital Real, Granada, 31 January-17 July 2020.
- 34 Exhibition and action with the same title, put on at Cavecanem gallery, Seville, 1996.
- 35 Ósmosis. *Mi x ti = Zaje*, action created as part of the project *Almadra* about immigration in the Strait of Gibraltar, and installation at the exhibition put on at the Museo Marítimo de Ceuta, in 1997, under the auspices of Local Cultura—a collective formed for the occasion by Miguel Benlloch, Raimond Chaves, Alonso Gil and Federico Guzmán. Other actions with the mirrored costume: *Reflexión I-II-III*, *Ibn Farum*, *Mapuch ¡EH!*, *O donde habite el olvido*, *Acuchillad+s* and *El ruido legal es la guerra*, among others.
- 36 Directed by Mariano Maresca and edited between 1984 and 1987 by the Regional Council of Granada; Miguel published it in nº 14 of 1986, under the title "Placeres prohibidos".
- 37 Cultural creation and agitprop collective consisting of Antonio Ramón, Rafael Villegas and Guillermo Busutil, active as a group between 1981 and 1992. The issue that compiles the activities of the early days, the projects from 1981 to 1986, contains the action cited and another in which Miguel also takes part: *Acción Urbana* (Street action), in the Peace and Disarmament Week, Granada, 1983.
- 38 Selected by Juan Antonio Peinado, from the music played at the bar in the 1980s. La Visión, collective frequently seen at the Planta Baja and pioneers in Granada in the production of concerts and music fanzines.
- 39 Maribel Guijarro and José María Sánchez, comrades from the MC; also, Pedro Sánchez, researcher into the student movement in Granada during the dictatorship and the transition to democracy, lent biographical material.
- 40 Gracia Gámez, as well as covering demonstrations that Miguel was on, took many of the photographs of his performances at the Planta Baja and in the Cutre Chou. Juan Ferreras is a graphic reporter.
- 41 The round table "Políticas (des) identitarias, corporalidades, géneros

- y sexualidades disidentes en Granada: prácticas, movimientos y escenas”, presented by Daniel J. García López, with the participation of Diego Mendoza Albalat and Amets Suess Schwend. And the conference “Sujeto brillante desidentificado. Una lectura cruzada entre Miguel Benlloch y José Esteban Muñoz”, presented by Caja Negra (Marta Echaves), directed by Jesús Alcaide. Organised by La Madraza-Centro de Cultura Contemporánea, Área de Artes Visuales y la Unidad de Igualdad y Conciliación del Vicerrectorado de Igualdad, Inclusión y Sostenibilidad at Granada University. All the activities have been posted at <<https://archivomiguelBenlloch.net>>.
- 42 Díaz Bringas, T., López, F. and Simón, A.: *Planta Baja (video-carta a Miguel Benlloch)*. Available at: <<https://archivomiguelBenlloch.net>>.
  - 43 A “homage” planted in February 2019 at the *Jardín de las mixturas*, wild herb gardens at the Patio Sabatini of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, in Madrid, as a result of a project by Alejandra Riera. Since then it has been a collective garden tended by various people.
  - 44 Action at the Planta Baja (Granada, 1985) by Las Pekinesas, an informal group made up of Miguel Benlloch, Juan Antonio Boix and Tomás Navarro, although *SIDA DA* was performed by Navarro, Benlloch and Rafa Villegas. There is a video recording by José Sánchez Montes/Ático Siete.
  - 45 Simón, A.: “Ensayos sobre lo cutre. Lecturas con el obrar del Archivo Miguel Benlloch”.
  - 46 *Tránsito de lo sagrado y lo profano. Los Incensarios de Loja en el Viernes Santo*, video-document of the action-conference or announcement given at the act of the Asociación Incensarios de Loja (The Loja Censers Association), at the Peña Cultural Flamenca Alcazaba de Loja, in 2017, accompanied by songs by the Censers and Verónica Fernández Campos, and fragments of conversations between “old” Censers at La Gallarda, in 2014.
  - 47 Consisting of Aimar Arriola, Nancy Garín and Linda Valdés.
  - 48 As part of *re.act.feminism#2*, Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona, 2012.
  - 49 Action performed at *Hedonismo crítico. Reinención y reivindicación*, marathon festival of performance and music, Sala Hiroshima, Barcelona, 2016, produced by El Palomar (Rafa Marcos Mota and Mariokissime). And at *Anarchivo sida*, Tabakalera, San Sebastian, 2017.
  - 50 As part of the exhibition *Círculo íntimo: el mundo de Pepe Espaliú*, C3A (Centro de Creación Contemporánea), Córdoba, 2017.
  - 51 2010 drawing and object work from 2005, respectively; both form part of *Signos*.

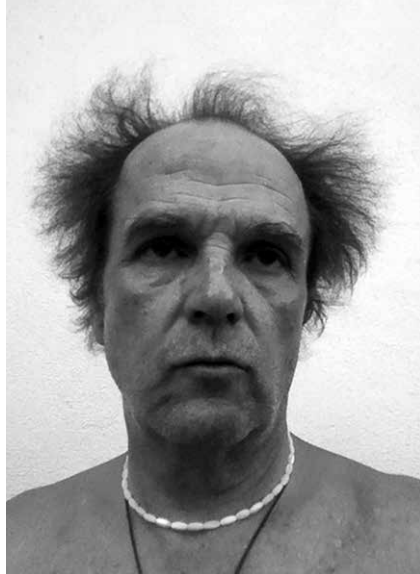


*Inversión, 1998*

*El escapado, 2015*







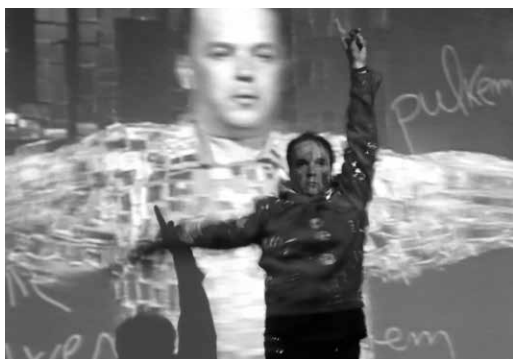
*Cabeza desmedusada, 2012*



*La esfera de heno, 2013*

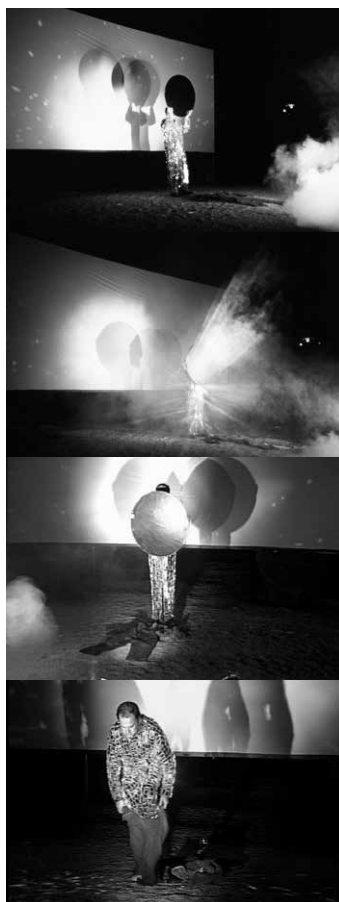
*El reloj de arena, 2006*





*Mapuch ¡EH!, 1999*

*En la gloria en los Infiernos.  
Los santos niños mártires de Loja, 2013*



*O donde habite el olvido, 2001*

# ESSAYS ON SEEDINESS



Miguel Benlloch presents  
the *Cutre Chou*, c. 1990

## The Cutre Chou (the Seedy “Show”)

It began in the early 1980s with the Corpus de Granada festivities at the Communist Movement stand. It was a show consisting of small acts featuring some of the range of feelings of the self-organised anti-Franco movement. These were the years of assimilation of all that had resulted from the Spanish Transition to democracy, and when the Cutre Chou made it possible to free the libidinousness of bodies that knew how to make the most of their disadvantage: they transferred the “Movement” to a stand known as the “Meneillo”, changed “Show” to “Chou” and thus created a space where collectives minoritized (even by the left) could take charge of the word, music and dance.

The combination of various forms of what was taken as popular culture in song, drama, comedies of manners, soap opera, wordplay, variety, trans shows in the first gay bars in the late 1970s and political concepts not drafted as pamphlets but as the juxtaposition of images that deal with the mixing of genders, of feminist discourses, of politics of spectacle, of life as action, and all woven together to create laughter through a kaleidoscope continuously producing images that lead the spectators to get involved with all that is happening through amazement: that is *el Cutre Chou*.<sup>1</sup>

That was how Miguel Benlloch (Loja, 1954-Seville, 2018), both one of Cutre Chou’s compères and part of the line-up, described the Cutre Chou in a text written much later yet still full of energy. *El Cutre*, its very poetics, acted on at least three different senses:

While critics and researchers may have tried (particularly since the 2000s) to recuperate the role of the feminisms and sexual dissidence of those times for posterity, *el Cutre* had already asserted through its methods, its appearances and its *Chous*, the existence of other bodies in their own backyard; its popular nature brought disorder to various festival marquees that were attempting to open up to new forms and sounds.

On the other hand, the “cutre” (seedy—“poor, uncared for, dirty or bad quality” is the Spanish dictionary definition) was the underside of the consensus of aspiration and confidence in entry into the “Common Market” (Europe and the world) as a way out of Spain’s cultural and financial stagnation. The fact that the line-up of artists made the aesthetics work by allowing them liberties taken from the *popular* reveals a design that (effectively) “deviates” from this concept of modernity.

And in yet another way, Cutre Chou brought onto the leftwing stage a new way of presenting, underlining the tones, gestures, languages and bodies that had so far dominated the scene. In Benlloch’s words, it was a racket that turned “the dogma of the Marxist-Leninist agitators” into “a carnivalesque agitprop show”, a “hullabaloo of sequins, veils, bulging crotches, false tits, impossible wigs, specially made clothes... Painted lips, switched genders, a cabaret happening, a photo-romance in laddered stockings”.

### My Silent Word

For the preceding decade Benlloch had been active in the Communist Movement, from his days as a history student. In those days he wrote a few poems about romantic, absent, strained love: “My friend poetry, my silent word”<sup>2</sup> and so on. Poetry contemporaneous with Miguel Benlloch was called “the other sentimentality”, an adapted title proposed by three poets, adopting a theory of Juan de Mairena:<sup>3</sup> This professor, a creation of Antonio Machado, believed in “a new sentimentality” which would appear in each new epoch when “currently fashionable values become tarnished”. The three poets changed “new” to “other”, perhaps because they didn’t have any new values to propose, but did have a programme based on “clarity” in the language and subjects inspired by their own “experience”.<sup>4</sup> In fact, they took on the task of reconnecting with the work of exiled republican poets. They became great friends with Rafael Alberti and received the highest awards the state had to give.<sup>5</sup>

This kind of poetry had such support from institutions and publishers that it would end up as a canon of national

«Dicen de la bellota», handwritten text  
for the action *Inmersión*, 1996

- Dicen de la bellota que flota  
sobre el río Juchiana que es  
enorme, una bellota madre  
alimentadora de cerdos, los  
cerdos han ido al Juchiana  
a ver la bellota que rueda  
sobre el agua, la que fluye  
y no se mineraliza, la que  
porta en sus entrañas un balón  
de oxígeno con forma de bellota  
la bellota que flota oxigena  
el río con su energía circular  
su pezon ilumina el agua y  
los cerdos no pueden comerla  
porque es la bellota que flota, ¡corcho!





Photographic record of the action *Inmersión*, 1996

importance. Read today, the otherness of the sentiment that gives them their name could be seen as fake publicity by the publishers. The poetry was not to show any substantial formal alternative to that which had gone before. Neither would it take on the social and political currents of the 1970s/early 1980s. The proposal of “clarity” could actually be seen more as a continuity where the poems left out politics and “other” relationships that Benlloch’s few contemporary poems could not “yet” speak of. While Benlloch was

writing “Ladillas” (Crabs) and “This Charming Man”, in which, in reference to the Smiths’ charming driver who happens to meet up with a young boy, he tells us about a search for still-forbidden relations, a love yet to be codified; García Montero wrote “Call me, and I’ll take a taxi”,<sup>6</sup> so as to waste no time in getting what we can imagine. Today we can “clearly” read, despite sharing a historical moment, very different ways of feeling.

Let’s say that in those times, reading had been superseded, new kinds of supports and context were needed. And Benlloch kept poetry with him, but not as a specialized practice. “Reagan lo que reagan, vota no. Bases fuera”. he wrote (“Whatever Reagan Says, Vote No. Bases Out”. A play on words with “Reagan” as a subjunctive verb—*whatever they may Reagan...*) to mobilise against staying in NATO, which had cost him a job in the culture department of Granada Council, in 1987. Putting it into speech and proclamation takes poetry out of the chattering circles and into the street, dissolving its category, converting it into something undetectable for the framework of reading of the time. Benlloch tried to make his poems (or his poetics, depending on what framework you are using to read) exist together, alive:

We make holes to produce movements in power structures. We create a gallery to interconnect our desires. We produce tension between the community and the hierarchy. Being in others, lowering our voices so that many voices might be heard in this commonality of disidentification.<sup>7</sup>

To stop speaking or writing correctly in order to speak or write from a shared uncertainty: that is how Benlloch’s language works. And this, as is clear, can be taken as *cutre* (seedy) in the academic and normative cultural logic.

## SIDA DA (1985)

SIDA LA FLECHA  
SUMA Y SIDA  
SIDA DEL VATICANO  
SIDA CALATAYUD  
SIDA PARIS PAPA, PREGUNTA POR LOS APACHES  
QUIEN VA A SEVILLA PERDIÓ SU SIDA  
SIDA Y DISEÑO  
JUAN SIDA  
PLANTA SIDA  
RONALD SIDA  
SIDA IRIBARNE  
SIDA SERRA  
SIDA HIWOCK  
SIDA DE FÜRSTENBERG  
ZARA SIDA  
HOMI SIDA  
PARRI SIDA  
REGI SIDA  
HIROSIDA MON AMOUR  
ROMA SIDA APERTA  
CON SIDA Y A LO LOCO  
CASIDA DE LAS PALOMAS OSCURAS  
CASIDA DEL AMOR Y LA MUERTE  
CASIDA DE LA MANO IMPOSIBLE  
SIDA  
SIDA

*SIDA DA* (1985) is a Miguel Benlloch action or performance with Las Pekinasas. However, it can also be a poem to be read aloud with three voices, in the form of a recital for places or situations that are outside those of ordinary poetry. The composition continues the tradition of avant-garde poetry, Cutre Chou's popular humour and the politicisation of the AIDS crisis. The speakers stand in a line about five feet apart, carnival masks half-covering their faces. Each one recites a verse and passes the microphone to the next. Ceremonial sounding electronic music can accompany the performance. In the original, "Keys of Life" by Klaus Nomi was played, among other tracks, with the addition of canned laughter.

The action is considered one of the first references to the AIDS crisis in the artistic world in Spain. In fact, the early date of the performance made me wonder about the poets' ability to read into this crisis. I thought about how difficult it was to understand Benlloch's intentions as he wrote this poem at a time when the magnitude of the pandemic was only beginning

to be realised. This difficulty led me not to try to clarify a viewpoint and position, the academic fiction *par excellence*, but to materially experience its writing by writing a poem so that I could imagine those conditions. How can *SIDA DA* be read in November 2021? How can the AIDS pandemic be viewed from the times of PrEP?

PrEPDA DA (2020)

PrEP ARADO  
PrEP ARATORIO  
PrEP UCIO  
PrEP JUICIO  
PrEP ARTO  
PrEP CONCEBIDO  
PrEP SUPUESTO DEL ESTADO  
QUIEN SE FUE A SEVILLA PrEPDIÓ SU SILLA  
PrEPI, LUCY Y BOM, Y OTRAS CHICAS DEL MONTÓN  
PrEPMIO PRINCESA DE ASTURIAS  
EL PrEPA FRANCISCO  
DONAL PrEP  
BORIS PrEP  
FELIPrEP GONZÁLEZ  
PrEP VILEGIO  
UN CHALET EN PrEP ÑÍSCOLA  
NADA ES PARA 100PrEP  
100PrEP VIVA  
PrEP FECTURA DE LA CASA PONTIFICIA  
PrEP FECTURA DE OSAKA  
PrEP FECTURA NAVAL ARGENTINA  
PrEP  
PrEP  
PrEP

PrEP (Pre-exposure Prophylaxis) is a medication strategy for people who could potentially be exposed to HIV. Medicines like Truvada, antiretrovirals that control HIV to the point that it is considered undetectable in the bodies it lives in, are currently being used to prevent it. While in the early 1990s La Radical Gai and LSD pointed at the homophobic character of the generalised use of the phrase “at-risk group”, in order to focus attention on the power of the media, society and doctors over a specific community, PrEP has now turned into daily dependence on medication for anybody worried about exposure, making them, though pharmacological consumption, the same as those living with the virus. Obviously the prevention strategy

is spreading, mainly in Western countries with rich health systems that are willing to absorb the costs of the antiretrovirals, at the same time as it becomes more highly valued on a global scale. As I rewrote the poem I came to understand that I didn't know about any of PrEP's after-effects, but at least I confirmed a couple of things: while those who live with HIV were previously labelled as sick, we are all now more likely to become drug-dependent.<sup>8</sup> The worst of it is, PrEP hides the word AIDS.

Rewriting towards the poem PrEPDA DA, exploring a subject I didn't know (not being a user of the medicine), I realise that it must have been complicated for Benlloch to have a clear position towards the word and the reality it names, AIDS, as he wrote and performed the poem in public in 1985. At that time of uncertainty it was hard to find any literature containing information. That same year saw the publication of collected translated texts that Alberto Cardín, diagnosed a year before, and Armand de Fluvia called *S.I.D.A.: ¿maldición bíblica o enfermedad letal?*. Two years later in the USA communities

responded to the crisis, politicising the illness. Remember that ACT UP was founded in 1987 in New York and La Radical Gai and LSD in Madrid in 1991. In Granada in 1985, feather boas, humour and cabaret were already being used to try to get AIDS into the conversation.

With the experience of rewriting and my still hesitant position regarding PrEP, I imagine that the “Benlloch strategy” would have consisted of facing an attack once more stigmatising his community, with any information and resources at his disposal, but not of accepting silence. Poetry and twisted recital were the method and place chosen to rehearse the writing to come about the HIV pandemic. “Poetry” and “recital” thus take on, as material practices, a political and artistic capacity that accompanies, creates or transforms the world that the power of the publishers with power is constantly limiting. I dare to wonder whether *SIDA DA* is one of the most interesting as well as one of the most committed poems of its time. Benlloch's seedy sophistication reminds us of Pedro Lemebel's beautiful chronicle of an AIDS sufferer in *Loco Afán*. For example in “Los mil nombres de María Camaleón”<sup>9</sup> in which the writer recounts, with razor-sharp tenderness and baroque stance, all the names given to effeminate gay men, compiling an extensive list including:

La Sui-Sida—*AIDS Suicide*  
 La Insecti-Sida—*AIDS insecticide*  
 La Depre-Sida—*AIDS Depressive*  
 La Ven-Sida—*AIDS Defeated*

...

Members of Las Pekinesas in the Spring Recital at Planta Baja, 1984



The baroque route coats its languages with solemnity and the feathers sharpen their poetics until they become unbearable for those who live off and in fear of the other.

Coming back to the three senses that Cutre Chou's poetics act on, in *SIDA DA* we see "forms that are resistant" to "the absolute majority syndrome"<sup>10</sup> which began to beset the art and cultural politics of the burgeoning Spanish democracy. Thus we can see this action as eloquent in cultural and artistic ways that constantly give of themselves, without having to organise or contribute to a modernizing leftwing programme. In his gestures and language use we can see the continuity of the popular political drive that is also present in the *Frentes de Liberación Homosexual* (Homosexual Liberation Fronts) of which Benlloch had been a founder" just as those organisations were jostling for institutional positions. We observe that the way in which Benlloch "carries it on" is by taking care of the openness of his methods and delighting in aesthetics that are seedy through not obsessing about formalisation.

We notice how when Benlloch writes and says "*SIDA DA*", holding himself in the vibration between the word and its echo, he is showing a liveable way of coexisting with the pandemic's threat of death. Outside this scene, the movements previously referred to as "liberating" are seen to be torn apart, with the winning faction silencing "AIDS" as a strategy for assimilation or a search for rights.

#### Otr+syyo (Othersandme)

At the beginning of the 1990s, work held a different position for Benlloch. He was a pioneer and an eternal apprentice: he had been a militant member of the Communist Movement when the Granada Committee was created in the early 1970s, an activist in the *Frente de Liberación Homosexual de Andalucía* (FLHA—Homosexual Liberation Front of Andalusia) in its beginnings, a self-taught poet, cultural manager in Granada Council when that post still had no specific profile, founder of the *Planta Baja*, a bar that was the cornerstone of Granada counterculture in the 1980s, and founding cultural producer of BNV Productions. His first work that could be termed artistic was *Tengo tiempo* (I Have Time), originally conceived as a birthday present for a friend in 1994. In it, Benlloch first appears covered in a multitude of



*Front eras*, 2004

clothes that he takes off until he is completely naked. These clothes contain his experiences, which are always experiences connected to them:

Red bathrobe, white djellaba, straw cap, Egyptian cap, red gloves, white gloves, black dress pants, Marino and Juan Antonio's black shirt, black gloves, corduroy pants, check flannel shirt, Maria José's red waistcoat, striped black pants, Juan Carlos' white shirt with ants, black *Plus Ultra* tee shirt, beige summer pants, orange gloves, short pullover with coloured stripes, sequinned miniskirt, white underpants. Naked.

As in the list, in *Tengo tiempo* a lot of relationships are brought up. Thus Benlloch's gesture pulls things together with friendship or affection, to singularise these garments, acknowledge their moment and call this wardrobe "shedding of clothes". This is how he executed his works and this is what his Archive is like,<sup>12</sup> acknowledging a time through a huge inexhaustible framework of people and things. To avoid having to choose between political concern and worrying about sustenance, aesthetic existence and artistic recognition, Benlloch stops caring about professional work and perseveres energetically with seedy work that tacks together his handiwork with a frayed, unravelling skill.

### 67 Genders<sup>13</sup> and Counting

In 2005 Benlloch resumed his performance research through the use of clothing that he had begun with *Tengo tiempo*. This time, the disrobing is concentrated into a simultaneous and unstoppable successive reduction-dissolution of various identities, highlighting body transformation on the building block of gender. To a background of his own voice reading a translation of Terre Thaemlitz's text "I Am Not A Lesbian!" Benlloch, in a sequinned skirt, shaves half his face and applies make-up to the newly freed half, and manicures his feet. He shows his body in scant underwear

before putting the plasterer's overalls and black balaclava that he had been wearing at the start of the act back on. The network of friends' clothing in *Tengo tiempo* is modified by an disidentifying vibe in *51 géneros*.<sup>14</sup> The number refers to Benlloch's age when he first performed it, becoming, with the passing years, different versions: *52 géneros*, *53 géneros*, *54 géneros*, *56 géneros* and *58 géneros*.

51 géneros, 2005





Each one adds elements and questions, emphasising the mutability of the piece itself. So, for example, 58 adds a video of the film *A volar joven* starring Mario Moreno Cantinflas and the song “La novia” by Antonio Prieto, and the document “*Guía de afectos y colores*” (Feeling and Colour Guide) indicates the connection that each garment or piece of material has.

The video recording of *51 géneros* begins with a text in which he advocates for the abolition of concepts that are repressive towards people’s freedom of behaviour, explicitly presenting an action that acts by undoing the social and cultural mechanisms that support the maintenance of hierarchies and sexual identities. The text explains what the action does: “the radical presence of the individual in another time of commonplace, unregulated practices”.<sup>15</sup> After the text, the video that precedes the performance shows a flock of sheep getting their ears clipped as a mark of identification and ownership, separating the males from the females. In response, if Benlloch argues from the viewpoint of one identity, he does it while simultaneously dissolving it: “I am trans in terms of my wanting to discover and being willing to question my own life”.

This series of actions works towards the return of a wild presence in this shared land: nature that cannot be tended into a French garden is seedy.

### I Carry in my Body the Memory of Existing for Others

In 1994, in a performance and video event organised by Robin Kahn, Benlloch presented *Canario* (Canary) in homage to the Haitian people at the time of the U.S. invasion. This piece, broadcast on the radio, is formally similar in exercise to most of his work: a political trigger, a choice of cheap or seedy materials, depending on who is looking, and a body-focused staging and detonation. While at first glance Benlloch’s pieces might look like disorder and complexity, they are actually always precise in terms of their aims. Benlloch’s works provide a challenge for the gaze, not viewed from the art world but from the real world as it is lived, because they ask us what kind of forms, ethics and aesthetics we are willing to put up with, knowing the kind of world they are bringing us.



54 escalones, 2008

“Arabs, come, we are tired of the Visigoths” goes the first line after the song of the canary. The elements that Benlloch brings together often allude to his homeland, Loja, and its Morisco, Muslim past: the Nasrid red and green, the colours of Granada’s flag (and those of the Basque Country

and Mexico, when he put his acts on in those places), which he uses for example in *Acuchillad+s* (Stabbed, 2013), an action against the placing of razor blades along the Melilla wall; the washing of his feet up to the ankles as an ablution before entering the vegetable patch in *Plantación* (Plantaction 2001); the use of the story of the Lead Books of Sacromonte in *Plúmbea* (Leaden, 2002) or acting as Master of Ceremonies in the festivities in his town in “Pregón de la Feria de Loja” (Announcing the Loja Festivities, 2005). In Benlloch’s work it is the relationship that is the origin of the pieces and, revisiting them through his open gaze, they remain in the centre. These relationships and their visual poorness for the normal gaze form part of his seedy-centred thought process, because to give them your attention you have to remove the privilege from categories like gender, sex, race, nationality, ability and class, categories conceived in a moral superiority that dispossesses and segregates certain bodies to the benefit of the maintenance of the status quo.

So Miguel outlines an evolution of the workman’s blue overalls, onto which he has stuck broken mirrors. It’s so usual to see him dressed in it in various actions that it has become a key piece in his imaginary. He turns it into a Matador style “suit of lights” in which the ‘lights’ are now not simply a metaphor, since when light falls onto the suit it shoots off from every piece of the mirror, filling the space and at the same time reflecting those present in every shard. Like a disco mirror-ball, there are pieces of us in every part, and parts of Miguel in every one of us.

### El ruido legal es la guerra (Legal Noise is War)

For the opening of the Planta Baja in 1983, Miguel and his partners had taken the name of a bar in Valencia that they really liked. Benlloch celebrated one of his re-openings in 2004 with an action in which he pointed out that the noise of war is simply legal, while the collective is criminalised, meaning that it had to close down several times. He pulls on a body stocking, puts a mat of hair on the crotch and *La braga activista* (the *Activist Panties*)<sup>16</sup> are tied to his head: thus dressed he goes on stage and graffiti’s the words “Legal Noise is War”, something that he would repeat in actions such as *¿Cuáles son...?* (What are...?) at Ladyfest Sur 2009. Benlloch never stops using make-do and re-use ideas, repeating works, using cheap materials and wordiness, based around popular writing that reads best within the framework of the reading of current poetics.<sup>17</sup> We might say that “seediness” is a permanent ingredient of his working.

*¿Cuáles son...?, 2009*



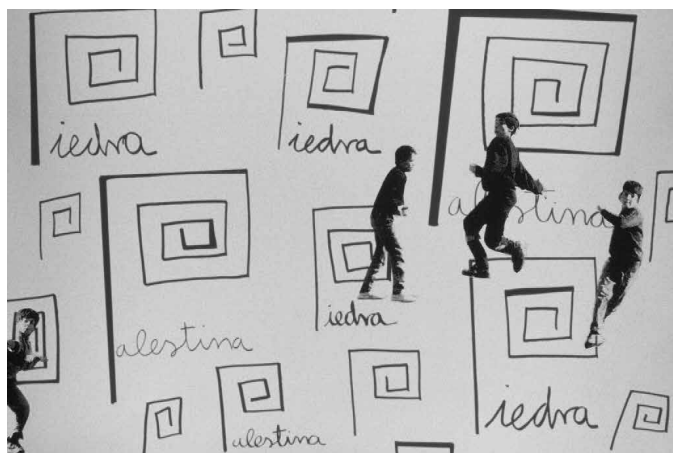


He called himself a “performancero” (“performance-maker”) rather than a performer, and his workings based on the body are part of a line where the history of performance veers off into seediness. His actions are built upon the power of a ritual in which the word contributes as much as the body, the clothes and the objects: his ‘performancing’ is writing that turns his actions into books. Opening them would fill more pages than there are in this catalogue, because of all the community that is evoked, all the time that has been lived. His work is as layered as the mountain of friends’ blankets in *Inversión* (Reversal),<sup>18</sup> blankets and cloaks to wrap him which he casts off successively in order to moderate identity and to be able to name it from the viewpoint of otr+syyo (othersandme). Compiling his works on [archivomiguelbenlloch.net](http://archivomiguelbenlloch.net) shows connections and signs accumulated in his actions, making us *thinkandfeel* that it is really one single action in constant transition: an action of living simply, so that life can give itself in a different way.

- 1 Benlloch, Miguel: “¡¡¡Larga vida al Cutre Chou!!!” (Long Live Cutre Chou!!!), written for *Dig me out. Discursos sobre la música popular, el género y la etnicidad* (Dig Me Out. Discourses on Popular Music, Gender and Ethnicity), a project by María José Belbel and Rosa Reitsamer. Arteleku, San Sebastian, 2009. Published in Benlloch, Miguel: *Acaeció en Granada*. ciengramos, Granada, 2013.
- 2 These poems would not be read in public until their publication in Benlloch Miguel: *Cuerpo conjugado*, Colección Juancaballos de Poesía, n.º 3, Fundación Huerta de san Antonio, Úbeda, 2018.
- 3 Machado, Antonio: *Juan de Mairena*, Losada, Buenos Aires, 1969, pp. 58-59.
- 4 As a programmatic manifesto, García Montero wrote a newspaper article, García Montero, Luis: “La otra sentimentalidad”, *El País*, 8-I-1983.
- 5 In 1982 these were the Adonáis award and the Juan Ramón Jiménez Spanish-American Poetry Award, for Luis García Montero and Javier Egea respectively.
- 6 Díaz de Castro, Francisco: *La otra sentimentalidad. Estudio y antología* Fundación José Manuel Lara.
- 7 Benlloch, Miguel: in the introduction to *Mirar de frente*, CentroCentro, Madrid, 2019, p.16.
- 8 The debate surrounding PrEP and the voluntary taking of the medication is ongoing. The ethical and political implications, and the pharmaceutical business behind it, have produced a range of diverse opinions. Texts like Paul B. Preciado’s “Condomes químicos” (2015) or Sejo Carrascosa’s “Nadie hablará del SIDA cuando estemos muertas” (2019) discussed it, failing to find projects regarding this new reality during the pandemic.
- 9 Lemebel, Pedro, “Los mil nombres de María Camaleón”, *Loco Afán*. LOM Ediciones, 1997, p.57.
- 10 Villaespasa, Mar, “Síndrome de mayoría absoluta”, *Arena*, n.º 1, Madrid, 1989. Villaespasa, alluding to the absolute majority achieved by the Felipe González’s socialist PSOE party in 1982, uses the text to present a critical review of the avant-garde up to the present, warning that art “cannot provide a framework for power”.
- 11 The creation of collectivity also helped to create *SIDA DA*. “Between 1984 and 1986 he participated in the informal group *Las Pekinesas*, alongside Rafa Villegas and Tomás Navarro, doing occasional carnivalesque agitprop actions, including *SIDA DA*, performed in 1985 at the Planta Baja”, from <<https://archivomiguelbenlloch.net>>
- 12 See <<https://archivomiguelbenlloch.net>>
- 13 Referring to the age Miguel would have been in 2021.
- 14 *51 géneros* (51 Genders) was premiered at the *Mutations of Feminism: Genealogies and Artistic Practices* seminar, UNIA arteypensamiento, Arteleku, San Sebastian, directed by María José Belbel, Erreakzioa-Reacción and Paul B. Preciado.
- 15 The initial text of the video release of the video recording of the action *51 géneros* (51 Genders), <<https://archivomiguelbenlloch.net>> researched on 23<sup>rd</sup> of June, 2021.
- 16 This is an item of women’s underwear onto which are pinned the badges of various collectives and social movements, which would be used in other actions such as *Tránsito* (1995).
- 17 I’m thinking of the careful reading of *Euraca* Seminar, <<https://seminarioeuraca.wordpress.com>>, researched on 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2021.
- 18 Action made for the exhibition *Transgénico@s. Representaciones y experiencias sobre la sociedad, la sexualidad y los géneros en el arte español contemporáneo*, Koldo Mitxelena Kulturunea, San Sebastian, 1998, curated by Juan Vicente Aliaga and Mar Villaespasa.

## References

- On poetical matters, it is impossible for me to think of them without being part of the conversations and care of the Seminario *Euraca* <<https://seminarioeuraca.wordpress.com>>
- Benlloch's body visual of work is archived carefully and generously in the Miguel Benlloch Archive: <<https://archivomiguelbenlloch.net>>. Anything to do with his images, I saw there.
- Benlloch body of textual work is published in Benlloch, Miguel: *Mirar de frente*. CentroCentro, Madrid 2019; Benlloch, Miguel: *Acaeció en Granada*. ciengramos, Granada, 2013. His poetic work is published in Benlloch, Miguel: *Cuerpo conjugado*. Colección Juancaballos de Poesía, n.º 3, Fundación Huerta de san Antonio, Úbeda, 2018.
- To understand Miguel Benlloch's activism in the FLHA (Homosexual Liberation Front of Andalusia), I was thrilled to find Diego Mendoza Albalat's research, and his lecture "Una historia (incompleta) del activismo disidente sexual y de género en Granada".
- To find out about the nights at the Planta Baja in Granada and understand the "Meneillos" beyond Spain's New Wave movement "La Movida": Various Authors: *Planta Baja 1983-1993*. ciengramos, Granada, 2015.
- To find out about the BNV Productions community and its curatorial resistance, I read the PDF document "BNV en movimiento" (2015), an unpublished text by Tamara Díaz Bringas and Fernando López, and the conversation published in *Concreta*, 2015, between those same authors and Mar Villaespesa, "Alianzas afectivas, efectos de excepción". Also, and absolutely fundamental as one of the driving forces behind this community, Mar Villaespesa's text, "Síndrome de Mayoría Absoluta", *Arena*, n.º 1, Madrid, 1989.
- To find out about Miguel Benlloch's connections over the last years, *Equipo re's* work has been of great importance, as has their publication *Anarchivo sida* (Anarchive AIDS) Tabakalera, 2017. Also his relationship and works based on his friendship with Mariokissme and Rafa Marcos Mota of Equipo Palomar, and with the curator Jesús Alcaide.
- For the poetic matters that affected his generation and in which Benlloch never lost interest, I read *La otra sentimentalidad. Estudio y antología*, Francisco Díaz de Castro edition, Vandalia, 2003.
- As an early local publication about the AIDS pandemic, my text quotes from Alberto Cardín and Armand de Fluvía's compilation *S.I.D.A.: ¿maldición bíblica o enfermedad letal?* Laertes, Barcelona, 1985.
- To understand the current situation regarding the AIDS pandemic and the development of PrEP, I referred to the text "Condomes químicos" by Paul B. Preciado in the blog *Parole de Queer* and "Nadie hablará del sida cuando estemos muertas" by Sejo Carrascosa in *El libro de buen amor. Sexualidades raras y políticas extrañas*, Fefa Vila Núñez and Javier Sáez del Álamo (editors), Madrid Council 2019.
- To understand and enjoy Miguel Benlloch, I was lucky enough to envisage and edit a video short with Tamara Díaz Bringas and Fernando López, *Planta Baja (video-carta a Miguel Benlloch)*, in April 2020, during the COVID-19 lockdown which resulted from an invitation to a roundtable as part of the programme of activities connected to the exhibition *Miguel Benlloch. Cuerpo conjugado* (Miguel Benlloch, Conjugated Body) at the Hospital Real, Granada.



*Piedra Palestina, 1993*



*Tránsito 1995*

*Acuchillad+s, 2014*



A black and white photograph of a man with glasses and a patterned shirt speaking at a podium. The man is looking down at a document on the podium. The background is plain and light-colored.

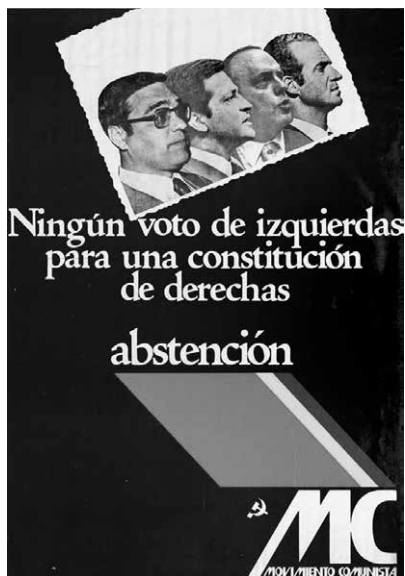


Miguel Benlloch, José Luis Serrano and Antonio Ramón,  
closing event of anti-NATO campaign, 1986





Poster for COFLHEE  
Slogan by Miguel Benlloch, 1982



Poster for the Communist Movement



Poster for Anti-NATO Committee  
Slogan by Miguel Benlloch, 1985



# BODIES ALIVE IN ACTION

In Granada in early 1979, my inseparable companion Miguel Benlloch, José Antonio Moreno (parish priest of San Idelfonso) and myself founded the FLGG (Gay Liberation Front of Granada), which would later become the FLHA (Homosexual Liberation Front of Andalusia).



First public appearance  
Gay Liberation Front of Granada, 1980

Considering the time that has passed, the limited documentation, memory lapses and the fact that this writer was a central part of what is contained in this narrative, I don't think it's a good idea to use the word "true" to describe what is written here. So I don't propose to set out the origins of the FLHA, the importance that it had or the importance that Miguel had within it, which is something that I believe has wrongly become central to his biography; neither do I intend to follow the thread of the LGBTI movements' birth, development and current role. Rather, taking my lead from Foucault, what I hope to do with this text is to:

[...] record the singularity of events [...]; seek them in the most unpromising places, in what we tend to feel is without history—in sentiments, love, conscience, instincts; it must be sensitive to their recurrence, (but) not in order to trace the gradual curve of their evolution.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps no text is more pertinent and genealogical, in the sense we mean it, than "El detective" (The Detective)<sup>2</sup> by Miguel Benlloch, if what we are trying to do is to understand the context of late Francoism and the so-called Transition to democracy, the existent power relations, the emergence of new

conditions and knowledge that made possible the existence of a proliferation of homosexual organisations. And equally to understand the way they expanded later, from the AIDS crisis to its normalisation and from there to current LGBTI movements becoming one of the major supports for the family unit. It is not only in conservatism or religious fundamentalism but also in family heterodoxy (gay marriage, single-parent families, surrogacy etc.) that you see the institution, which was in crisis, now reinvigorated, and getting stronger.

Miguel Benlloch died on September 12, 2018. From his active membership of the MCA (Communist Movement of Andalusia), JAR (Andalusian Revolutionary Youths), the FLHA and anti-NATO movements, up until his last performances, his aesthetic/political practice—whether as activist, artist or producer—was always characterised by constant opposition to the normative.

Talking of the FLHA, on the subject of the first homosexual organisation set up in Spain, Miguel said:

For the most part, these organisations called themselves “Front” or “Liberation Movement”, emulating the names of organisations fighting for independence and decolonisation in various parts of the world since the sixties. “Front” was an attempt to reflect the sum total of the political concepts existing in each organisation [...] representing the body as a body colonised by the capitalist patriarchal system which has to be freed from sexual oppression.<sup>3</sup>

So that is how we saw the FLHA experience; that is how we wanted it to be. Bit by bit we split apart because also bit by bit our demands were becoming more isolated and broken down, which was perhaps inevitable in those struggles which are born fragmented. Possibly, the fronts’ specific, identitarian, constitutive character was what put Miguel off; it is certainly true that his militant distancing from homosexual movements in general and the FLHA in particular came about very quickly.

The FLHA put out leaflets; stapled pages printed on pink paper, of which there are very few left. They went through different names: first *Somos* then *Gay-Andalus* and *Guirigai*. We had few references; almost exclusively some manifestos by the French group FHAR (Homosexual Revolutionary Action Front) which saw the struggle for homosexual liberation as inexorably linked to the destruction of the bourgeois state and to sexist and homophobic behaviour present in parties and organisations on the left and extreme left. As Miguel goes on to say in “Mirar de frente”: “[...] the theoretical body began to develop from basic premises in binarist blueprints, the trans concept was entirely absent from their discourse, still far beyond any understanding of its importance to gender deconstruction”.<sup>4</sup>



# SOMOS

Boletín del  
frente de liberación gay granada

Nº 1

## PRESENTACION

El nacimiento de este BOLETIN, portavoz del FLGG quiere informar y denunciar la discriminación y represión de las formas afectivas y sexuales fuera de las categorías establecidas - por el aparato ideológico dominante que coartan la libertad que toda persona tenemos a manifestarnos y a elegir.

Por eso nació también el FLGG que, junto a otros grupos, luchamos por una sexualidad libre, por una educación sexual encausada y en contra de las categorías sexuales establecidas.



16 JUNIO 1980

Bulletin Somos, 1980

Contrary to what has been said, almost all the organisations that made up the COFLHEE (Cooordinador of Homosexual Liberation Fronts of the Spanish State), which included the FLHA, were driven and in most cases led by activists from extreme left parties, autonomous groups, direct action or catholic organisations. At the beginning, those of us who were active in one or other of the organisations were neither dazzled by the promise offered by the end of Francoism nor (as yet) disappointed by the evident improbability of the future we had imagined coming to pass. At that time we still saw the anti-Franco and gay rights struggle as synonymous with revolutionary struggle.

Opposition to the growing military processes, the anti-colonial

wars whose Fronts we took our names from, the mobilisations by direct action groups against restructuring and lock-outs and, obviously, the fight for the right to abortion, divorce and other feminist demands formed part of a reality that we focused on and that we as activist homosexuals supported as strengths and struggles which, although happening in the present, held the possibility of aiming for and even catapulting us into something beyond.

In the mid-1980s, somewhat later than other countries and at a point when the fronts had only just started to take to the streets and engage in our first actions, "like a hurricane", AIDS hit. Neighbourhoods demanded that bars and clubs closed, as happened with many on Trastamara street in Seville. There was a return to dependence on the family, who became carers but in return demanded silence. Discrimination came back before it had really started to go away.

The AIDS pandemic, Miguel says, paralysed and decimated the Fronts, with the deaths of many active members. Including the FLHA. It reduced our visibility; we entered a crisis period, bewildered by the deaths of friends and comrades who were falling hopelessly sick with so many illnesses, sometimes alone, seeing yourself as culpable for carrying this curse and for not getting involved in the struggle and the pain of those around you. The pitilessness of their appearance, of the death that they carried with them, simply paralysed us. The FLHA had

been created to celebrate enjoyment, so we were theoretically and organisationally weak and totally incapable of beginning a fight against this invisible virus and its terrible consequences.<sup>5</sup>

In 1995, the Army case<sup>6</sup> culminated in a process of integration, assimilation and approach to power in a movement which (through distancing itself from the class struggle, the communities, spaces and subaltern ways of life that it had moved in and had been born in) managed to achieve a certain level of hegemony. New leaders emerged, some of them from parliamentary or governmental parties. A split appeared between tolerable demands that enjoyed protection and regulation, and others that could not, under any circumstances, in any shape or form, ever be considered for any kind of rights. A new economic, social and symbolic policy was brought in that separated what we could be from what we wanted to be. Basically, we might say that gay and lesbian bodies could be visible once they had shaken off their discourse, a discourse which the earliest struggles and revolutionary activist fronts had fought to build precisely because they were bodies and desires that were not being seen.



FLHA demonstration  
Granada, c. 1982

As we have said, Miguel saw the way the wind was blowing for the Fronts very early on, and so was very quick to distance himself from them and from their new demands. For him, as for José Esteban Muñoz, “being ordinary and being married are both antiutopian wishes”, but unlike that author, Miguel did not opt for the “then and there” of Cruising Utopia, as opposed to the pitiful “here and now” in which current LGTBI organisations have established themselves.

It’s possible that had he known the work (the Caja Negra edition didn’t come out until 2020), Miguel might have subscribed to many of the tactics that Muñoz used when facing the open nature of the hazardous and unpredictable present. However, I also believe that his commitment to disidentification set him apart from any identitarian demands, so he could move closer to other communities, to other less clear-cut, less centred, more stigmatised bodies that still held the possibility of being brought together (the word Miguel used was “conjugado”—*brought together, united as well as conjugated*).<sup>7</sup>

In a much earlier text, “Masculinidades excéntricas”, Miguel said something which explained very clearly his “position-taking”: “[...] I am not homosexual despite owing a great deal to the fact of recognising myself as such in my first break with the norm, but which once this had become

normativized and commoditised revealed the inability to exist in a place that was so partial, so limited, so unable to talk about the totality of life. A place of transformation of reality cannot be merely a place inhabited by a section that defends its own section".<sup>8</sup>

In the mid-80s, when the FLHA still existed, Miguel was already rolling out his political activism and distancing himself from the Fronts in order to focus mainly on the JAR (where Cutre Chou was born and which contained practically all of the Cutre Chou's participants: Juanma, Lola, Carmelo, Cristóbal, Estrella, Nico and so on) and on the struggles extending out from the anti-NATO movement.

The anti-NATO movement of which Miguel was one of the main organisers brought together a self-organised popular movement which astonishingly is almost totally forgotten these days, but which at the time roused millions of conscientious protestors.

The entrance into the military alliance and the failure of the referendum called by the PSOE, who were in favour of the "Yes" vote, meant giving up the last non-agreed resort of the political reform. The Transition to Democracy was taken as completed and became, according to Amador Fernández-Savater, "[...] a political, symbolic and aesthetic order in which

words, looks and actions [...] would henceforth be administrated and carried out exclusively by representative bodies: political parties, unions and the media".<sup>9</sup> The "No" vote losing the referendum did not only mean the dissolution of the anti-NATO movement, it also swept aside the parties on the revolutionary left, the forms of resistance inspired by the anti-capitalist practices that dominated the so-called "autonomous struggles", the anti-military organisations, the libertarian movements and so on.



Demonstration in solidarity with Chile  
Granada, c. 1985

Basically, that "Yes" vote wiped out all those who continued, from any critical position, be it economic, aesthetic or political, to defy the new system, doing so not because it was a "democratic" system but because we thought (and it turned out we were right) that it would not be enough. The triumph of the "Yes" vote inevitably consolidated the Transition for good. According to Fernández-Savater, it established "a real monopoly on common sense", which he defined as "[...] the framework of the possible, decreeing who could speak, and how and where from". This monopoly was so strong that it affected all of us in some way and nearly twenty years had to pass before it began to break up.

"Capitalism made the construction of the homosexual identity possible"<sup>10</sup> and its organisations' struggles enabled a numerous collective to

be seen, which began to organise and to fight battles to win certain rights which, to a certain extent, began to be granted in return for them being limited to the acceptable, rejecting conflict and accepting consensus. That is to say, agreeing to go without certain aspirations, certain behaviour, ways of being or doing, alliances and demands that had been political, and to substitute them for other behaviour and other demands that reduced and codified the figure of the homosexual.

And that's when Queer arrived. Although according to Gramsci, "no structure, group or society sets itself problems for whose solution the necessary or sufficient conditions do not already exist",<sup>11</sup> Miguel Benlloch had spent years wondering where he fitted in, where he should anchor his life plan and his artistic practice. He (or we) had questions, and some answers, for the work we carried out as producers at BNV alongside Alicia, Mar, Pedro, Nuria and Santi. And about what our position should be regarding certain specific cultural policies, as we did when dealing with the BIACS (International Biennial of Contemporary Art of Seville) at the PRPC (Cultural Policies Reflection Platform) with Inma, Fede, Loncho, Viky, José Luis, Pollo, Isaías, Berta, Sofía and Pepa. But what was happening with his learning about his life, his work, with "this *me*, standing in openness"<sup>12</sup> as Miguel put it?

Knowledge of queer theory—which he discovered through María José Belbel, who introduced us to Paul B. Preciado—enabled him to theoretically tie down what, almost since childhood, he had been feeling and believing to be a radical, profound and heartfelt rejection of binarism. On the other hand, it enabled many of us, myself included, to receive his works supported and protected by a proper theory. The life of Miguel Benlloch, the long and "eccentric" journey that his work and his artworks had travelled, found, at long last, a space and a theory where it could recognise itself, which it could relate to, and in which it could even see itself as a pioneer.

The questioning of the identity between sex and gender which queer theory introduced, and the fact that performance had become one of the main tools for denaturalising sexual difference and showing that "sex is a performative effect of modernity's discourses"<sup>13</sup> represented a discovery, a finding, almost a 'revelation' providing the answer to those problems for whose solution the necessary or sufficient conditions seemed, at last, to



Bulletin Gay-Andalus, 1981



exist. On the other hand, this was a post-identity theory and movement. As Paul B. Preciado pointed out in the seminar *Retóricas del género/Políticas de identidad: performance, performatividad y prótesis*, held in Seville as part of the UNIA arteypensamiento programme, “[...] From the works of Teresa de Lauretis, Judith Butler and Eve K. Sedgwick, queer theories question the idea of a female political subject (and a homosexual political subject) in order to accentuate the idea of ‘performative’ subjectivity”,<sup>14</sup> which also connects to that erstwhile permanent aspiration of Miguel’s for disidentification.

But having arrived at this point, and having shown the importance for Miguel and the understanding of his experiences of his encounter with queer politics, and for Benlloch, that his art should come to be considered not just queer art but even proto-queer art, it must be remembered that his training, his aesthetic and political activism had always, above and beyond anything else, been anti-patriarchal and anti-capitalist which is why, despite this very fruitful encounter with queer, Miguel never stopped questioning how to develop a kind of practice that could be seen as collective, non-fragmented action, capable of producing a profound transformation in the existent symbolic, political and economic order.

The significant advance that queer theory contributed by creating less reductionist and restrictive “hyper-identity strategies”, does not prevent one from seeing that these are new constructions that it will be necessary, as new realities emerge, to take down again. And on the other hand, everybody knows how flexible and impartial or how ruthless and violent capital can be with any kind of minority group, community or collective, depending on their capacity for consumerism. If we assume that neither of these realities escaped Miguel’s notice, we can see why, in his texts, performances and actions, there is a clear continuity uninterrupted by his acquisition of queer theories. We can see he incorporates them into, but never allows them to substitute, those other near-Marxist theories that guided him in his youth, inspiring his poetic and political practice. His deep commitment to disidentification and queer political positions, far from denying, actually affirmed his need to identify with both the dyke neighbour and the furthest being on the planet who suffered hardship and exploitation.

“HVC slipped into my life almost painlessly...”<sup>15</sup> he says in “DERERUMNATURA. Crónica de la enfermedad y la sanación”. For Miguel, somebody who had made his experiences and his body a battleground, a place to write, scrub out and rewrite “new writings which, transformed by knowledge, through his correction, were forming a new head, a new notion of the body and of its relationship with the others”, the appearance of the illness took him by surprise and forced him to “to face it with a multitude of reactions [...] anger, solace, affection, hope and hopelessness: a journey of life”.

Failure, to Miguel, did not seem shameful or humiliating. Neither did saying “I can’t”. His strength lay in his ability to absorb pleasure or hardship, let them develop and then see “how to fit this body change into

a new scenario from which to seek life". Within this new scenario where the illness had placed him, he continued to live, to experience, to stress his strengths and his body, looking after it while at the same time subjecting it—in his performances—to effort and tests that to those around him seemed impossible to bear. Miguel's body, even when it was sick and wasted, continued to be his political space *par excellence*, where his work continued to be seen in all its complexity and richness. Miguel's exhausted body was used to it, and he knew that to get inside others you had to expose yourself, take risks and go beyond your own limits.

I like to talk about how Miguel loved to dress up, but didn't like undressing. Showing himself naked in front of an audience was an act of bravery that was his way of fulfilling his commitment to those other bodies that he lists in the final paragraph of his monumental performance *El detective* (The Detective) when he says:

[...] trans body revealed and rebelled like a dissolution device, like a body in transition; decivilised body that speaks for the overpopulated minorities; dysfunctional bodies according to the norm that excludes those bodies that go beyond binarism, from perspectives not only of sex and gender but also of a concept of disability. Crippled, non-normative bodies, numbering millions on the margins, bodies in poverty, cast out of the neo-liberal system of consumerism, bodies without income, unprofitable bodies, bodies alive in action.

- 1 Foucault, M.: *Nietzsche, Genealogy, History*. Cornell University 1977.
- 2 «El detective» (The Detective) is a text 2012 by Miguel Benlloch from the oral action of the same name performed as part of the Pedro G. Romero project *Archivo F.X.: De economía cero: Intercambios*, Museu Picasso, Barcelona.
- 3 Benlloch, M.: “Mirar de frente” (Look Ahead), en *Mirar de frente*, Mar Villalpessa and Joaquín Vázquez (eds.). CentroCentro, Madrid 2019; and in *Fiestas, memorias y archivos. Política sexual y resistencias cotidianas en los años setenta*, Gracia Trujillo and Alberto Berzosa (eds.), Brumaria, Madrid 2019.
- 4 Benlloch, M.: *op. cit.*
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 The Army case is known as one of the most important scandals involving homosexual child prostitution in Spain. Famous people were charged and, for the most part, acquitted, the courts convicting only 16 of the 49 men put on trial. Sentences ranged from 18 months to 33 years for the bar owner—eighteen of those years were for setting up six sexual relations between clients and minors in the bar, and the remaining fifteen for five sexual encounters of his with boys under the age of majority. The position taken by the LGBTI groups, and by some of their leaders, with regard to the Army case, went from an initial distancing to complete denial, with Beatriz Gimeno claiming, “(...) the Army case was a demonstration of homophobia, since, at the end of the day, there were no minors and there was no corruption”. This statement was obviously untrue. The Army case was a case of homophobia, revenge, prostitution, corruption and property interests as well as being “the case” that caused the definitive and conclusive exclusion and rejection of any kind of homosexual that dared to support voluntary exile as opposed to “pride” and to keep exploring the slippery slopes of degradation, abuse and marginalisation.
- 7 Miguel Benlloch. *Cuerpo Conjugado* (Miguel Benlloch. Conjugated Body) is the title of the exhibition of his work that was put on for the first time in February 2018 in Seville at the Sala Atín Aya of the ICAS (Seville Institute of Culture and Arts). The exhibition was held in 2019 at CentroCentro in Madrid, and in 2021 at the Royal Hospital of Granada.
- 8 Benlloch, M.: “Masculinidades excéntricas”. Research project and unpublished text.
- 9 Fernández Savater, A.: “La cultura de la Transición y el nuevo sentido común”. *Cuadernos in elDiario.es*, n.º 1, 2013.
- 10 Benlloch, M.: “El detective” (The Detective), in *Acaeció en Granada*. ciengramos, Granada 2013.
- 11 Gramsci, A.: *Notas sobre Maquiavelo: sobre la política y sobre el Estado moderno*. Juan Pablos Editor, Mexico 1975.
- 12 Benlloch, M.: “Acción en el género”. *Mirar de frente*, *op. cit.*
- 13 Preciado, Paul B.: *Retóricas del género/ Políticas de identidad: performance, performatividad y prótesis*, 2003, in UNIA arteypensamiento/*Archivo Feminismos Post-identitarios*. Available at <<http://ayp.unia.es>>.
- 14 Preciado, Paul B.: *op. cit.*
- 15 Benlloch, M.: “DERERUMNATURA. Crónica de la enfermedad y la sanación”, in *Mirar de frente*, *op. cit.*





*El florete en la floresta, 2017*





# 51 GÉNEROS

*51 géneros* is what I call this break that I share with a great many other lives undefined by gender. It takes its name from a life lived; fifty-one represents my age when I performed the action, not a multiplicity of genders. *51 géneros* is expressed, using established gender binary codes, by a clean break with the masculine and the feminine, putting forward a reconstruction of the human as a being undivided, not split into two, onto which are moulded separate and distinct rituals of repetition, and which, on the basis of a biologicist concept, develop codes of binary behaviour expressed in the domination or supremacy of one masculine way of life over another feminine one.

*51 géneros* is open to the possibility that all lives deserve to be lived, and deals with diversity and identities insofar as there exist lives that socially find no space when confronted with the norm of gender duality, and as such are considered lesser lives, sick lives, lives which, in order to become such, have to be normativized, redirected and adjusted.

Overcoming split lives, rendered sects by sex, is not built on new readings of the masculine and the feminine, but rather over a long road of gender dissolution. Feminism, as Paul B. Preciado implies, is first and foremost a broadening of the democratic horizon, a matter not for women, but for humans.

The task undertaken by feminism is to reveal oppressions that throughout history cling to the original biologicist design that we call sex. Therefore, overcoming oppression comes through leaving the design behind, giving up the statuses that have always defined our lives as gendered and held down by sex.

The proposal behind *51 géneros* implies the abandonment of an identity based on gender and the reading of a whole shaped by lives yet to be lived. Not without acknowledging the rights of those individuals who may use gender reassignment surgery, it reveals a new place where it is our thought process and the concomitant action that reconstitutes our way of being, that goes beyond the predetermined and tries to accommodate not gender suffering but rather growth through respect for our own life, in the understanding that our life is unique.

The task it sets itself is that of taking back, grabbing hold again, of being a life from a different place, breaking free from the uses that come with the division of genders, breaking free from the oppressive obligations of a single masculinity which, even as it is full of privilege, is based

on obligatory responses to the predetermined role which restricts and prevents being with others. Masculinity misses out on the world by trying to dominate it, revealing its pathetic attachment to a form of power which by trying to subdue is itself subdued, preventing the possibility of a full life.

And it is from this other place, on the other side of gender, on the opposite side, that I identify with trans. I am not trans, but I am trying to act from that trans place insofar as it denatures genders, seeing them as constructs. Trans action is the will to be in another place, from which one can work on the blurring of the binary concept, a place that opens up the possibility changing the masculine and feminine paradigms. I do not define my life by what is known as sexual condition, I am not homosexual despite owing a great deal to the fact of recognising myself as such in my first break with the norm, but which once it had become normativized and commoditized revealed the inability to exist in a place that was so partial, so limited, so unable to talk about the totality of life. A place of reality transformation cannot be merely a place inhabited by a section that defends its own section.

I am trans in terms of my wanting to discover and being willing to question my own life as a total life.\*

An excerpt from "I Am Not A Lesbian!", a text by Terre Thaemlitz  
published in *Zehar* magazine n° 54, is read out

All titles refer to the author's age at the time of creating the action

*51 Genders*

Action performed at the seminar *Mutaciones del feminismo*  
on the UNIA arteypensamiento programme, Arteleku, San Sebastian, 2005

*54 Genders*

Action performed at *Sur Exprés a... : nuevos creadores andaluces*,  
CAS-Centro de las Artes de Sevilla, 2008

*56 Genders*

Action performed at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Centro José Guerrero, Granada, 2010

*58 Genders*

Action performed at the 15<sup>th</sup> Muestra Internacional de Performance,  
Ex Teresa Arte Actual, Mexico City, 2012

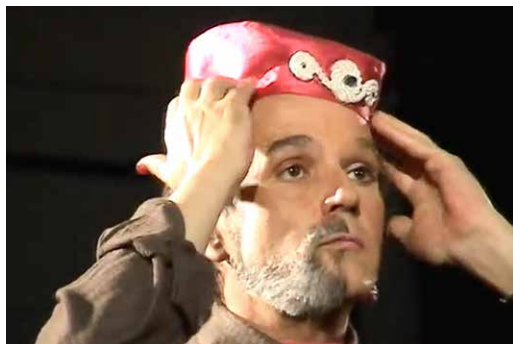
\*In the original, "willing" was in the feminine form













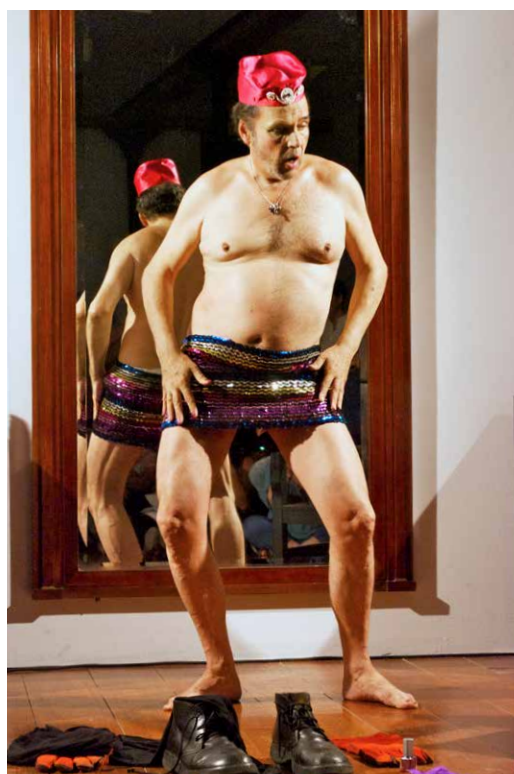




















## 58 GENDERS

### Battle of Keys. Guide to Affects and Colours

- 1 Video: *En el altar está sufriendo...* (On the Altar, Suffering) a Miguel Benlloch production: BNV productions. Editor: Isaías Griñolo
- 2 Work clothes: Joaquín Vázquez, Alicia Pinteño
- 3 Red and black square: Juan Carlos Rescalvo
- 4 Black balaclava\*
- 5 Red electricians' safety gloves\*
- 6 White gloves: Pepa Rescalvo
- 7 Rainbow banner cloth: Pepa Rubio
- 8 White petticoats: Berta Orellana
- 9 Red Bolivian skirt: Berta Orellana
- 10 Red gloves: Pepa Rescalvo
- 11 Black tights: Concha García Caro
- 12 Excerpts from *Serranillas VII*, Marqués de Santillana. Siglo XV.  
Freely set to music by Miguel Benlloch
- 13 White tulle veil and flower ribbon: Juan Carlos Rescalvo
- 14 Beige pigskin bathing suit: Pepa Rescalvo
- 15 Mauve tulle veil: Alicia Pinteño
- 16 Black swimming cap: Amparo Benlloch
- 17 Blue mask: Mar Villaespesa
- 18 Green panties: Felisa Romero
- 19 Mauve gloves: Matilde Córdoba
- 20 Lucky red "mouth panties": Cristina Pancorbo
- 21 Strippers' white pants: Juan Carlos Rescalvo
- 22 Elasticated bandage: Antonio Pavón
- 23 White flamenco shirt: José Rodríguez Ruiz
- 24 Black striped tie: Mariano Maresca
- 25 Black waistcoat 1942: Wedding suit of Victorino Benlloch
- 26 Black suit: Ex Teresa Arte Actual
- 27 Long black socks\*
- 28 False beard and moustache hair: Joaquín Vázquez
- 29 Nail varnish: Maribel Escobar
- 30 Cloth dick: Juan Carlos Rescalvo

\*Miguel Benlloch's garments









READINGS OF THE  
MIGUEL BENLLOCH ARCHIVE

MARÍA JOSÉ BELBEL  
PAULA PÉREZ-RODRÍGUEZ  
JOSÉ LUIS ORTIZ NUEVO



# FOREVER BEAUTIFUL

Gay men are kidding themselves if they think the deeper stigma of homosexuality can be eliminated while the antagonistic and asymmetrical relations between men and women persist.

—Esther Newton. *Mother Camp*

It is a rather amazing fact that, of the very many dimensions along which the genital activity of one person can be differentiated from that of another [...] precisely one, the gender of the object choice, emerged from the turn of the century, and has remained, as THE dimension denoted by the now ubiquitous category of “sexual orientation”.

—Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. *Epistemology of the closet*

It feels strange to be writing about a close friend who is no longer here. Because we lived in different cities, I keep thinking that that's the reason why we don't see each other. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Judith Butler have commented on various occasions about the infatuation that can arise from certain texts, authors and friends; Sedgwick mentions at one point that a friend is like a window which lets us see the world from a certain angle, and in a unique way. I think that's a good way of defining friendship and, obviously, it fits my relationship with Miguel Benlloch.

We became friends in the early 1970s, our closeness resulting from an affinity over political objectives in the anti-Franco struggle, which became even stronger when we later became part of the feminist and sexual dissent movement: feminist affects, affects connected to an anti-homophobia project, in order to create spaces of identification which made us culturally

understandable, that made it possible for us to explore and construct the lives we wanted to live.

### The Women's Active/Asset of the Communist Movement

At the beginning of our activism, feminism did not form any part of the political design of the party we were members of, the MC (Communist Movement). In fact, it did not have a place in the designs of any political organisation. But from the mid- to late-seventies the second wave of feminism with its main slogan "the personal is political", meaning you put the body front and centre, beyond political rights, had a massive impact on us all, creating slogans like "sexuality is not maternity", "my body is my own", "the streets and the night are ours too", "my body is a battleground", "I am a lesbian because I like it and I feel like it". The party began to open up to the fact that the liberation of women constituted a fundamental element for any plan for profound political change. So the subjugation of women by men stopped being seen as a secondary contradiction, and became part of a growing protagonism within revolutionary design. How could these changes be made within the party so that it didn't become a declaration of intent or merely a series of slogans and proclamations? The MC decided to have an internal revolution to build a feminist organisation. Only a party that was feminist could carry out a feminist policy. And that's how the Activo de mujeres (Women's Active/Asset) began. This initiative, unique among the communist organisations in Spain, came from analysis of the experiences of other leftwing groups in France and Italy, and following their example. What happened was that the women in the party organised as political subjects of feminism autonomously, in order to strengthen our feminist consciousness, and by doing so undertake an ideological battle of awareness-raising for the whole group. The Activo de Mujeres was at the head of this internal revolution. It operated at a national level and was led and coordinated by a group of women from various geographical locations across Spain.

The struggle against the patriarchy became essential within the theoretical and practical proposals of the organisation. The men in the party would have to accept that they would lose privileges, but they would also make huge gains in realising that they could be feminists and that a system that encouraged greater equality between men and women was good for everybody.

Obviously, these approaches would affect the membership in unequal ways, but the overall balance was undoubtedly very positive. One achievement of the organisation was to successfully move forward with the concept of making the party feminist while at the same time making it stronger. In other European countries feminist proposals within revolutionary organisations were shattering their unity, and break-offs and splits were happening. In some cases, a large proportion of the women gave up communist

activism to concentrate on building feminist organisations made up exclusively of women.

Later on, the party saw the formation of an Activo de gays y lesbianas (The Gay and Lesbian Active/Asset), which Miguel was part of. This group worked alongside the feminist “Active/Asset” understanding that, as Gayle Rubin pointed out in “The Traffic in Women”, the oppression of homosexuals was a product of the same system that oppressed women, and this constituted an interesting starting point for sidelining the homophobia that was so present in leftwing parties, where virility was seen as heroic. There needed to be a questioning of models of masculinity which seemed on the surface to be a natural state and not a construct.

The Instituto de la Mujer (Institute of Woman) was created in 1983. The 1980s were a decade marked by gaining the right to abortion (decriminalised in 1985) and the abolishment of the “Peligrosidad Social” (Social Danger) law, with Miguel taking an active role in all of these struggles. On a theoretical level, rows grew under the name of the “Battle of the Sexes” in the USA, pitting the approaches known as “pro-sex” in relation to pornography and prostitution against sectors of society that wanted them banned. There were also important texts written by African American and Latino feminist and lesbian authors. It was a time when the monolithic idea of “woman” began to be questioned, with more attention paid to the differences between women.

In the second half of the 1980s, we all witnessed the terrible havoc wreaked by the AIDS pandemic, labelled the “pink plague” by the reactionary. At the Planta Baja, Miguel (as part of the group Las Pekinesas) put on his performance *SIDA DA*, one of the first artistic actions we know of in Spain that dealt with the disease. The Planta Baja was a Granada bar which, according to Nancy Achilles’ analysis, had all the features of a cultural institution where groups that needed to know each other got together to network, establish solidarity and draw up policies of resistance. The Planta Baja made it possible to put on numerous subcultural and counter-cultural events supporting feminism, particularly with the “Asamblea de Mujeres de Granada” (Granada Women’s Assembly), or challenging homophobia.

### Drag and Camp

Miguel began his performative activism with Cutre Chou at the Meneillo stand at the Feria de Granada, the aim being to finance the MC. He left us a beautiful text entitled “¡¡¡Larga vida al Cutre Chou!!!” (Long live Cutre Chou!!!). Cutre Chou was a project combining cabaret and carnival in which feminism and the struggle against homophobia were interwoven with other subjects which they included simply because they wanted to or because they were current.

There are two key elements in Miguel's work related to gender that are worth looking at. Drag and camp are clearly present in a large number of his artistic proposals. In general, just like all language ends up being performative, all ways of presenting the body contain an element of drag: from how we see ourselves, with which social class or geographical provenance we identify, how we want to be seen by others. In the same way that men who cross-dress are putting on a gender performance with some feminine elements, women also construct femininity in a wide variety of ways.

Homosexuality has been and continues to be stigmatized particularly when it is visible; it is the non-hiding that shapes the stigma. It is the homosexual aura, the campness that lends visibility to homosexual people, so it is ridiculous that a single category and a single name can cover such a variety of subcultural richness. What has to be asked is why it produces such a level of rejection.

Is it because there is a sign of effeminacy in the tone of voice, in the way of dressing, in the gestures? It cannot be accepted that there is no straightforward equivalence between the male sex and the masculine gender. And so there arises an often violent persecution of camp people, which throughout history has caused a great deal of suffering, and continues to do so today. And from that comes the courage of vindicating camp and turning it into a political tool. Transformism was one of the Cutre Chou's guiding principles, through a theatricalisation connecting and bringing with it processes of identification between actors and audience.

In the last few years of Miguel's life, we used to write to each other, and at the end of our messages, we added; forever beautiful. What did we mean by this "forever beautiful"? I think that with the phrase we were alluding to, and reaffirming, the huge freedom of presenting our bodies any way we wanted to, of using colour joyously, of believing that we were winning a few of the battles we had undertaken and of the fact that humour was a large part of our lives. And that this was important.

Miguel had a reputation for being witty and fun because he was. Perhaps there hasn't been enough analysis of the fact that his humour was really camp. Camp is the homosexual humour *par excellence* and is adored by sexual dissent. To Esther Newton, "Camp is concerned with what might be called a philosophy of transformations and incongruity". It holds a primordial place in subcultural homosexual ideology. "Camp", Newton continues,

[...] is not a thing. Most broadly it signifies a *relationship between things*, people and activities or qualities, and homosexuality... (C)amp is in the eye of the beholder [...] and because of the spontaneity and individuality of camp, camp taste is always changing. This has the advantage [...] that a clear division can always be maintained between homosexual and "straight" taste.



The three most characteristic features of camp, Newton claims, are “incongruous juxtapositions” (the most common but by no means the only one being the juxtaposition of the masculine and the feminine), “theatricality”, (since the main thing is not in what a thing *is* but rather in what it *looks like*: camp, like drag, involves a performer and an audience and is steeped in the perception of “being as playing a role” and of “life as theatre”), and “humour” (camp performers have to be cheeky, to think more quickly than the people they encounter and to demonstrate real wit and verbal dexterity).

### Critical Feminism and Queer Theory and Politics

In the early 1990s two exhibitions were put on that were very important to feminism: *El Sueño Imperativo*<sup>1</sup> and *100%*.<sup>2</sup> Very little was known until then about the backgrounds of feminist artists in Spain. It was a time when in certain sectors feminism was seen as over and done with because some rights had been attained. On the other hand, the organisation of exhibitions featuring solely women was seen as a bit suspect, in case it was seen as evidence of an unwillingness on the part of women to put their works up against those of men. These points of view, we believed, were the result of the scarcity of feminist training in the area of visual arts, and of the massive disconnect between the active feminist collectives, the academic spaces where feminism was beginning to get some traction and woman artists. Miguel (alongside the cultural producer BNV which he had founded with Joaquín Vázquez, in 1988, and whose importance grew from 1991 thanks to the inestimable work of Alicia Pinteño and Esther Regueira, both from the generation before ours) took part in the production of *El Sueño Imperativo*, at which he discovered the work of the American feminist artist Nancy Spero. Later on, he also produced and coordinated the workshop given by the feminist African American artist Adrian Piper, as part of *Plus Ultra*, an exhibition project for the Andalusian Pavilion at the Expo '92. All these learning processes were taking root and from them there grew a need to put on an exhibition of women with a feminist stamp: *100%*. The exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue of texts by feminist art critics, as well as a round table in which university professors such as Estrella de Diego and feminist activists like Empar Pineda took part.

*100%* was also produced by BNV and was the first exhibition of feminist public art to be put on in Spain. It was very well attended and the catalogue sold out very quickly. It was a palpable demonstration of how the feminist factor could be used as a tool to analyse the difficulties encountered by women artists trying to work over an extended period. Difficulties that arose when it came to exhibiting, or in terms of the acquisition of their work for the collections of museums or art galleries, but mainly when it came to generating discussion and improving the outlook for the production and reception of feminist works.

To achieve this, it was essential that alliances were made with similar groups (both inside and outside the institutions) and that they opened up to other generations, to transmit some of what they had learned and to learn from what the younger people were working on, something we might term two-way translations. In many cases and contexts, these translations are hard to achieve. They are practices that are far removed from what for certain people involves maintaining authority based on experience accumulated over the years and for others, a need to “kill the father”. One might think that the most useful option would be to create modes of action that would make it possible for everyone to benefit from these encounters, and for that reason it is important to carry out listening exercises based on openness to inclusivity. In Miguel’s case, age was irrelevant when it came to forging new friendships. A very specific case is the friendship he formed and the works he did with James Lee Byars, during the production of *La esfera de oro* (The Sphere of Gold), despite the language problem. Or rather thanks to one single word in the language: the letter “O”. And there were his friendships with younger people, with whom he shared his life and his projects as a member of the JAR (Andalusian Revolutionary Youths), which grew over time; particularly those with Pollo, El Palomar and Equipo re. One of the abilities that Miguel had demonstrated long before, which it seems only fair to mention, was his great wisdom when it came to not falling into opposing aesthetic/political binaries, and we can cite examples that appear in his collaborations with Federico Guzmán, Alonso Gil, Victoria Gil and the collectives Gratis and Local Cultura, a group of which he was a member.

The way I see it, that was part of Miguel’s magic. I remember actions of his like *Inversión* (Reversal)<sup>3</sup> in which we see a series of blankets that his friends had given him as part of the performance. Similarly, I remember that a number of his actions featured him peeling off numerous layers of clothes, all of them lent to him by beloved friends: we were present with him in the form of a piece of clothing and that gave him strength, and it in turn gave us strength, it broke the boundary between the “performancero” (performance-maker) and the audience. On the other hand, the clothes were a way of representing his commitment to “disidentification”, as time went by, with the clothes that had been put on and taken off him. I look at my Drag King portrait by Hans Scheirl and I see Miguel’s polo shirt and his check shirt. And I think of Eve K. Sedgwick and of her beloved first person plural personal pronoun.

### UNIA arteypensamiento

From 2001 to 2015, Miguel was the coordinator and producer of the UNIA arteypensamiento research project, at the Universidad Internacional de Andalucía. In 2003 the seminar-workshop *Retóricas del género/Políticas de identidad: performance, performatividad y prótesis*, directed by Paul B. Preciado

was held. It's worth pausing here to think about the importance that this had in the context of knowledge about queer theory in Spain. Before the seminar, it was decided that the people attending would need reference materials and guidance in the subjects that were to be dealt with, so that they wouldn't just passively take in the seminar's contents. To do this, given the complete lack of any theoretical anthologies in Spanish, a compilation of feminist and queer texts was put together and distributed to a large number of people who gave classes at the university, artists and activist collectives, pursuing the idea of encouraging encounters and synergies between academic knowledge, artistic practice and feminist and LGTB activism. From the year before, meetings were held for reading groups so that these texts could be discussed.

I think that Miguel found certain concepts at this seminar that were already present in his work, such as the problematisation of heteronormativity, the multiplicity, mutability and fluidity of gender and the need to open up spaces for identification for varied body realities beyond any monolithic idea regarding sexual identity, gender as a performative construct, the deconstruction of the male/female, masculine/feminine, heterosexual/homosexual binaries.

*Retóricas del género/Políticas de identidad* included the first *drag king* workshop in Spain. It's been nearly twenty years since then but its impact still cannot be overstated. Among other matters, it attempted to incorporate the idea that masculinity is not natural, but a construct, as is its representation. So the idea was to recuperate the work of awareness-raising feminist groups of the 1970s, and to experience masculinity through one's own body, with its poses and gestures and the varied behaviours linked to social class, race, sexual preference and age. On the other hand, in its various sessions, the seminar-workshop focused on transgender identity, an escape route to other forms of body identity unmarked by the male/female binary. I believe that that concept is very present in Miguel's work, in his later performances, each named for the age he was when he put them on: *51/52/53/54/56/58 géneros* (51/52/53/54/56/58 Genders).

In 2009, the *Jornadas Feministas Estatales Granada, treinta años después. Aquí y ahora* took place in Granada, marking the thirtieth anniversary of those that took place in 1979, both called by the "Coordinadora Estatal de Organizaciones Feministas" (National Coordinator of Feminist Organisations) and organised by the "Asamblea de Mujeres de Granada" (Granada Women's Assembly). Miguel helped to support these conferences through UNIA arteypensamiento. Three to four thousand women attended, alongside a number of men, including Miguel himself. The opening up of a new field that incorporated methods of nurturing feminists in culture and the visual arts constituted a significant step, because it was the first time this camp had been included in activist National Conferences. Also, given the changing reality in Spain, there was a special relevance to the trans, anti-racist and post-colonial feminism contributions.

In 2010, Miguel coordinated the seminar *Movimiento en las bases: transfeminismos, feminismos queer, despatologización, discursos no binarios*, as part of the UNIA arteypensamiento programme. He also participated in the seminar *Agenciamientos contra-neoliberales: coaliciones micro-políticas desde el sida*, in 2013, directed by Equipo re: Aimar Arriola, Nancy Garín and Linda Valdés.

This text is an attempt to turn our eyes towards the feminist, drag, camp and queer questions that make up certain aspects of the life and work of Miguel Benlloch. Miguel's participation in the feminist and anti-homophobic struggle covers more than forty years, and represents a pioneering presence in the first attempts by leftwing political parties to take these struggles seriously. We can see it in his writing and in his artistic practices, as well as in his collaborations with a range of collectives and in all the various kinds of activism and political agency that he spearheaded wherever he was, wherever he could. Miguel helped us to think differently through the richness and complexity of his work, with his courage and his pioneer spirit. That's why we are so grateful, and that's why we love him so much.

## Notes

- 1 *El Sueño Imperativo*, Círculo de Bellas Artes, Madrid, 1991, curated by Mar Villaespesa.
- 2 *100%*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville, 1993, curated by Luisa López and Mar Villaespesa.
- 3 Performed at the exhibition *Transgenéric@s. Representaciones y experiencias sobre la sociedad, la sexualidad y los géneros en el arte español contemporáneo*, Koldo Mitxelena, San Sebastian, 1998, curated by Juan Vicente Aliaga and Mar Villaespesa.





# TONGUE STICKING OUT

Voice and Listening in Miguel Benlloch  
And the Musical Context of the Planta Baja

I'm not trying to claim that we are fantastically talented or wonderful, but—we've always had integrity of motive. And whether it has any value beyond that I don't know.

—Genesis P-Orridge (Throbbing Gristle)

Around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the progressive “material appearance” of the page and the book as artistic devices and surfaces gave way to projects which, no longer seeing books as “a bag of words” (Carrión), allowed themselves to pause critically at the fact that they were working with paper, typography, ink and lines. The consolidation of this viewpoint over the past century has given rise to artistic uses of the book and language (such as that which has become known as the “artist’s book”), which travel roads that are separate from those in the cultural field of literature. This process of writing’s “independence” from literature has also produced initiatives such as that of the Italian Piccolo Museo del Diario which, with a view to re-evaluating written rarities by non-professional non-writers, conserves pieces like a sheet on which the peasant Clelia Marchi embroidered and wrote her memories of her life with a since deceased partner. Miguel Benlloch and the melting pot of verbal uses of culture that was the Planta Baja could also all be viewed through an understanding and acceptance of the disintegration of the literary, which, through technology and the material 20<sup>th</sup> Century, spreads towards the page, the wall, the object, the cloth, the mouth and sound. *Speakers*. Placing Benlloch within the vocalic context of Planta Baja’s loudspeakers, particularly in that of the voices that made “non-singing” (previously the preserve of poetry) their own, could help as much to understand the movement of the forms of the linguistic as to comprehend, from a new angle, the coexistence of Planta Baja and Miguel Benlloch’s cultural projects.

The reterritorialization of artistic uses of language that came about in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was not limited, at that time, to written surfaces, but rather opened up a whole course of practices which, with no single specific niche, began to exist only after the invention and widespread use of devices that could record and reproduce sound. All this meant a drastic modification of the places in which linguistic art is imaginable. As Kittler was to explain in *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, the concept of sound as frequency was the condition that made possible the invention of the gramophone and the subsequent recording and sound amplification technology, which ultimately made it possible to discriminate between specific musical units and the noises they produce, and between specific phonetic units and their “errors”. Along the same lines, there also derived from sound recording and reproduction (on which our present listening culture is based) the whole theory that distinguishes between speaking and singing. Placing each of these at their polar extreme, they can be and usually are distinguished through a series of physical characteristics: where singing increases volume and opens vowels, breathing, range and tonal register, speaking offers preciseness of diction and efficiency of execution (referred to in linguistics as “linguistic economy”). And given that the result of the distinction between rough-sounding and the sound unit ultimately creates the incorporation of noise as the significant difference, compared to the norm of cleanliness at the core of contemporary popular music, it can be seen that moving and destabilising the formal and cultural distinction forms the basis on which so many conceptual and political works since the 1960s have been built.

Despite being discussed by numerous scholars in the Anglo-American sphere and the field of sound studies, the importance of the technological shift represented by recording and its mass availability has never really been incorporated into the historical or theoretical analysis of art as a whole in such a way that the convergence of the practices of vocal, musical or sound cut-ups (resignifying, reconceptualising and recuperating sounds and or snippets of existent sentences into a new context, something which Miguel Benlloch does) can make the leap out of the limitations of tags and into materiality and moments. Getting out of the artistic genre (tags) as an analytical framework and getting into material (sound, voice, language, speech) and situation (difference, group, space) presents an opportunity, for example, for a consonant understanding of a theoretically musical work such as “Paso Hambre” (I am Hungry) by Neo Zelanda or *SIDA DA* by Las Pekinesas. It’s no coincidence that both works were written for dissident uses of the voice, and conceived in the city of Granada in the cultural context of Planta Baja between 1983 and 1984. Although it is possible that the artistic practices that block the distinction between speech and singing have always existed, since the late 1970s the accessibility of recording, synthesis and distortion of voices has brought with it a massive wave of strange and classless non-singers onto the young counter-cultural music scenes. And with them they bring something that randomly mixes direction and the

search for popular appeal with the stylistic orientations of the avant-garde that immediately preceded them, redirecting this and that material through language, voice and body towards the mistake, the rough-sounding and the inefficiency that allowed Miguel Benlloch to imagine himself as belonging at once to himself and to all, “like that red-based plant (the “*Planta*” *Baja*) on which everything (everybody) could grow”.<sup>1</sup>

In 2014, Benlloch started work on “Pósito, Posá, Exposición”, reflecting on the capacity of words to reposition themselves and mutate semantically, which brought to mind Gómez de la Serna in *Palabras en la rueca* (1914), focusing on the importance of the fact that language, once pronounced and given voice, can belong to one and to all at the same time.

Words are alive, they come from far away, inhabited by those who pronounce them, and over time they become deformed, transformed, they achieve their present in transit, they are a commonality. With no master, they belong to everyone, they are free [...], they recombine to produce new effects that are expansive, varied, effects that translate thought, they communicate that thought, they take it from you and so on and on.<sup>2</sup>

Although he regularly wrote poems throughout his life, Miguel Benlloch never tried to establish his artistic identity around the figure of the “poet”. That said, in pieces like *SIDA DA* (1985), *El ruido legal es la guerra* (Legal Noise is War, 2004) and *Tengo tiempo* (I Have Time, 1994), among others, as well as a number of Cutre Chous, language is central as a performative activity, whether presented by mouth or hand. Elsewhere, at the time that *Planta Baja* was being set up (dealt with in Alejandro Simon’s text) Luis García Montero and Javier Egea went round writing poems and poetical manifestos in favor of what they called “the other sentimentality”. As did Neo Zelanda, in the same city. With the fundamental difference that, according to eye-witness Juan Planta, who selected the music, rather than working within the context of *Planta Baja*, they spent the evenings imagining this so-called “sentimentality” in a bar called *La Tertulia*. And it seems to be the case that, despite the one-off collaboration that Benlloch gave García Montero as part of the presentation of the book *Las flores del frío*, the *Planta Baja* was not really characterised by a “very literary” atmosphere, according to Fernando Carnicero, but rather, because of its “anti-progressive attitude”,<sup>3</sup> its literature as a cultural system and the associated values, it remained in general excluded from a project that aimed to help “bring together body spaces, interrelationship and mobile identity constructs” in the creation of “a territory without frontiers that shortened distances between its inhabitants”.<sup>4</sup> That is to say, a space where dominant meanings would be debated through the action of the body. Obviously, the voice is part of that body action, but it is not of “the literary” which, far from being a reference to artistic work with

language, within linguistic uses produced or heard by those who embraced the technological possibilities of sound recording and reproduction and the effects on bodies, seems instead to point towards a kind of dogmatic (or “progressive”, after the political failure of the Transition) and antiexperimental cultural current.

This interpretation can be corroborated by comparing Benlloch's theoretical-political freedom, as remembered in “Pósito, Posá, Exposición”, with Luis García Montero, who, having already established a poetic system that he would maintain throughout his “literary” career, was to write in 1983 in the magazine *“Olvidos de Granada”*: “words only need to be defined when they have been used wrongly”. While the linguistic work of the former is done through the possibilities of semantic recombination and participation, that of the latter is built on the division between the right or wrong semantic “use” of words. García Montero uses the word “wrongly”, as we understand it, “correctly”: according to the dictionary. Benlloch's intervention in this semantic pact was to be clear and sharp (quite apart from whether at the time he saw any opposing drive in García Montero or not): to Benlloch, both wrong and seedy could be flipped. They can be incorporated for one's good. Hence, one can do what the Cutre Chou does: box without knowing how to, sing without knowing how to, be a trapeze artist without knowing how to, put on “Swan Lake” without any dance training. Precisely because of this, the actions become a different spectacle from what would have happened in a literal reproduction. So one can make of this poor execution a virtue, and the “one”, in this case, does not mean an *other*, a guilty party, a user but rather the potentiality of a participating everybody that can be recognised.

So the use of noise in Benlloch's performance, taken materially, metonymically and metaphorically does not need any sophisticated technology relating to the difference, dissidence or recording, but is actually a matter of opting for the cheap (in both materials and in time: whatever is available) which claims that the connection between whoever does artwork (poem, performance, song) and the common, the others, does not come from a rule of simplicity or of right and wrong imposed from outside but from the confluence of bodies and their exchanges and material encounters. And the more the better, which is where the need to create using objects that are available to everybody comes from: badges, bits of cloth, lights, panties, blankets, songs, plants, phrases and so on. Materials that try to open doors to other senses of things, other transmissions. It's the same twist, really, that many of the composers and performers of the music that got played at the Planta Baja were doing. From the mid-1970s, particularly in the cultural niche later known as “industrial music”, groups like Cabaret Voltaire, Throbbing Gristle and Test Department set out to make music without instruments. Not only with synthesisers, but with hammers, bricks, drills or any other object that could be made to produce a sound that could be incorporated into the “song” or “concert” device (including all the possible modulations of the voice). They did not only use singing, but also

ranting, speaking, silence, distortion and the breaking of syllables. Is it coincidental that, among many other tunes of a more melodic type, these were the bands heard at the Planta Baja and discussed by many of those writing in the space's collective account?

Some—not all—projects get their value not from perfection of beauty or perfection of concept or from perfection of execution; formal innovation, already developed by academic music and conceptual art in the 1960s and 1970s (among others John Cage, La Monte Young, Joan La Barbara, Vito Acconci, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman, Alvin Lucier) had become disconnected from reality, isolated from ordinary life and far removed from anything that might be termed “popular”. Meaning it was without a political force needed to create lives alternative to order and control among those without class privilege. Moreover the forms of class politics had become devoid of any aesthetic force to engage with. Both the industrial scene and Miguel Benlloch's post-transitional art come from the achievements of the experimental turns of the previous decades, and they propose the incorporation of this kind of twist in the social fabric so that there can be dissident or revolutionary political effects at a time of massive desperation in the suburbs and the inner-city. What made COUM Transmissions become Throbbing Gristle is a reflection of the same objective of popularisation and communication, of the incorporation of the common into the artistic fabric which had become cut off from beauty and high art, resulting in the Communist Movement's festival stand becoming the Meneílo, or Benlloch mixing the presence of the “seedy” into the museum art system through the presence of “the weird”, or the fag into the system of religious celebrations. Benlloch insisted that, “(g)enerally my actions [...] are created for an audience that I feel close to, and who I want to communicate with”.<sup>5</sup> Genesis P-Orridge said,

When we shifted from COUM Transmissions to TG, we were also stating that we wanted to go into popular culture, away from the art gallery context, and show that the same techniques that had been made to operate in that system could work. We wanted to test it out in the real world, or nearer to the real world, at a more street level.<sup>6</sup>

One “me-communication” becomes another and, within its present in transit, creates new effects. In the present in transit of the 1960s' and 1980s' countercultural context, communicating attempts to represent an intervention and a distortion at the very centre of the system of domination of the media. This, in fact, is how musician and researcher Melle Kromhout sees Throbbing Gristle's war against the power regime: the media are rendered invalid precisely because of the excessive overload of information, distortion and recontextualisation that all go to show control and obedience. Although where the English collective might choose the violent and esoteric

(basically offering a bad trip which one can come back from having learnt, a theme also dealt with in Neo Zelanda's "Paso Hambre") Miguel Benlloch would choose the fun and popular (same thing, but a good trip), the objective in both cases is towards the common/communicable and exteriority, towards a collective encounter as an alternative to beautiful and docile reception. An experiential contrast that makes sense when one considers the brutal differences between the industrial context of Manchester and the eternally persistent Moorish memory ("the vacant Arab heart" as Benlloch put it) of Granada.

In both a Throbbing Gristle concert and a Miguel Benlloch performance the "live" use of language is central, just as it is crucial to understand that the notion of "live language" is articulated around the technological execution of the voice (or failing that, of writing) as a temporal experience accessible through the direct presence not of a way of doing something but of a way of listening and/or attending to something. The seedy displaces the weight of the value of the performer and the receiver. The Cutre Chou in which Benlloch and his companion perform parodically and critically as the conquistador and the "Indian" in front of a backdrop of a caravel called "La Niñata II", with a live recording of Concha Piquer doing "Tatuaje" (1941), articulates (through a lip sync far tackier than these times of TikTok) the rewriting of a scene for bodies in which the voice points to "the memory of a past/that must never return". It is also through crude parody that Throbbing Gristle rewrites the voice of power when they say, "I want some discipline in here/That's not good enough for me [...] /I rargh rargh rargh rargh rargh rargh/That's a good boy, that's a big boy". Laurie Anderson, another of the Planta Baja's background voices, would develop a variety of voices around power games and authority (and would later explain her work by saying, "I had become tired of my own voice but I loved the way spoken language could turn into music"). In none of these cases did the "live" present any correspondence between message, the voice-producing terminal and the movement-producing body. When Benlloch wrote, in real time, "LEGAL NOISE IS WAR", didn't we hear inside our heads the legal voice that used a normalisation of decibels to smash the cultural potential of the Planta Baja? The slowness of the execution and the "bad writing" should theoretically disembodify the sound in the text being read, but we should rather agree with Foucault that they discipline the body towards its repression: the "corporeal voice" does not disappear, since it is precisely this multi-sonorous and "textual voice" which, in post-literate realities, corresponds far more precisely to the locus of the authoritarian, which modulates the corporeal state and can be heard in the linguistic memory. An authority all the more terrifying for how much it is reproduced inside us, using our own imagined voice.

The hypothesis indicated by all these crossing of time frames is that the technology of voice synthesis and sound reproduction that first became available to poor young people in the 1980s, creates a new wave

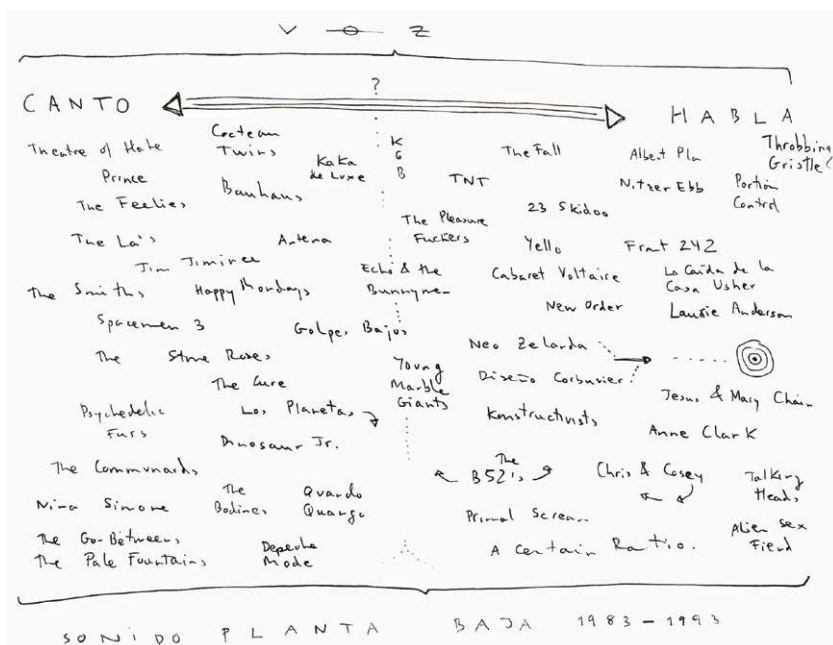


of verbal-type art works that do not need the devices or cultural domain of poetry and literature, preferring uses of live language backed by noise, mistakes, seediness, generally combining speech with either other sounds (within the system of “music”) or with other body movements (within the system of “performance”). It is taken as read that all this approaches an experience of art that looks more like life (according to Benlloch) or truth (according to Genesis P-Orridge), which are perhaps the same thing.

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I wrote down all or nearly all the musical projects mentioned in the collective account *Planta Baja 1983-1993*. Using my patchy listening skills (by which I mean untrained, for the moment, in either singing or musical theory) I tried to determine the inclination of each one towards the singing voice or the speaking voice. As happens with the subjects of sexuality and sexual identity, I personally believe that whether or not a deconstructive practice exists is more important than whether such a practice is permanent or unique (something which nobody has written that it should be, either from the utopian point of view, or the desirable: either for the voice or for sex).

Whether the band is “industrial” or from any related genre of the time like Post-Punk, it does not escape anyone’s notice that their articulatory uses of the voice seem to pull away from the “singing polarity” towards the





“speaking polarity”. In the south of Spain, projects such as Diseño Corbusier (with pieces like “Club del ruido” and “Golpe de amistad”) as well as the aforementioned Neo Zelanda, a member of that collective (with “Paso hambre”, and also the linguistic work “Curso de francés”), TNT (who made the literary work *Rimado de ciudad* into a vocal work outside the literary), La Caída de la Casa Usher (“Caballos”) and Javier Segura (“Contaminación”) are involved in processes that put the emphasis squarely on the modification of voice-use that was being developed in the field of music. In some cases these processes are based more heavily on speech remixes and cut-ups, and in others on an analogue simplicity whose main strength lies in confusing speech, singing and ranting, and paying scant attention to either the order of singing or singing “well”, such as is the case of A Certain Ratio or Nitzer Ebb. Similar initiatives existed both in other parts of Spain and in other Western lands, with a focus so clearly on speech that projects like Cabaret Voltaire could be described as “a sort of sinister Hip-Hop”, (a comment that Stephen Mallinder and Richard Kirk reacted to with a mixture of surprise and enthusiasm, saying, “that’s the best definition we have heard!”). It is no accident that Hip-Hop grew up at the same time; with less means, but also thanks to falling prices and increasing portability of mixing decks and radio-cassette players.

This whole universe exists in Miguel Benlloch’s performance. This is where it gestates, grows and is born. Juan Antonio Peinado collaborated with him on several occasions, not by being involved in the authorial logistics of the art world, but by providing songs and sounds and a number of his body actions. *SIDA DA* combines, like all the English and Central-European projects mentioned, the live musical sound of singing (via the playback of a borrowed song) and the spoken voice of the three performers. Added to this is the determined performative commitment of the bodies. In terms of what is heard, the piece in itself is a cut-up of adjectives or set phrases lifted from the rhetoric of order, popular heritage or mass culture, all modified analogically through consonant intervention (as in the case of replacing “Regan” with “SIDA” (AIDS) and “Hiroshima” with “HiroSIDA”), or lexical intervention (as in the case of “Con SIDA y a lo Loco” (“Going Wild with AIDS”—a pun on the Spanish title of “Some Like it Hot”). The procedure does not differ greatly from what Throbbing Gristle were doing with a piece like “Hamburger Lady”, in which a letter from Al Ackerman is rearranged, or “Very Friendly”, where the story of the Moors Murderers is told with a core of brutality and irony. If *SIDA DA* rejects the stigmatising discourse surrounding the HIV pandemic, using humorous touches to deal with something genuinely terrifying, “Very Friendly” rejects the domesticating discourse of social terror that grew up around Myra Hindley and Ian Brady, using deeply disturbing details. Throbbing Gristle could serve, for the purposes of a “tongue sticking out” of the time, as the name of an art movement which, by taking over the music stages managed to dethrone singing and replace it with speech and ranting, replace instruments with

the machine and the sound object, replace written originality with textual cut-ups—obviously none of this was done in a spirit of purity, but all of it with the aim of interfering with the regime of information control in favour of communication skewed with political incidence and subversiveness.

Alongside the romanticising of the Smiths and the rainbow of the Communards, Planta Baja bought heavily into this crude, subversive twist that democratised the technically good voice and ‘real’ singing towards noise and speech. Benlloch turned all this into hubs of hedonistic choices that, I believe, could stand alone, unaided, usually only existing where there is nothing to lose. With that difference in approach, however, the parallels between the artistic continuity of Planta Baja/Miguel Benlloch in the early 1980s until the 1990s and the artistic continuity of COUM Transmissions/Throbbing Gristle/Psychic TV/Genesis P-Orridge are obvious: trans, religiosity, ritual, seediness, populism, activism, practice and defence of the asystematic, and so on.

What place is held by musical listening in Benlloch’s performance? Might there exist, between one thing and another, a continuity through the voice that, using the verbal art of music and the performance, creates something different, away from the literary and its poetical system?

The Planta Baja was possibly the first space (before the “performativity” of Benlloch in Granada and of Granada in Benlloch became “performance” as such) where, while listening to voice and speech to the rhythm of dance or stupor under the auspices of DJ Juan Antonio Peinado, Benlloch managed by use of his material, beyond the rules of the tags/niches, to develop a complete artistic practice based on vocal and situational cutting up and recontextualisation, a constant disconnect from perception in which the search for a “communicating” with others would still be central. This may be pure speculative hypothesis, but would it not be more speculative to ignore the existence of this molten magma of listening, and suppose that someone’s art is not created from what one hears from others? Starting from this hypothesis, anyway, might help us to listen to the language of music with the attention it deserves, and to understand how it is possible, at this point in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, when the whole world is still, as always, listening to music, that the tags of performance and poetry have so few cultural ties and connections.

- 1 Various Artists: *Planta Baja 1983-1993*. ciengramos, Granada 2015, p. 25.
- 2 Benlloch, M.: *Mirar de frente*, Mar Villaespesa and Joaquín Vázquez (eds). CentroCentro, Madrid 2019, p. 47.
- 3 Various Artists: *op. cit.*, p. 113.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- 6 Vale V. and Juno, A. (eds.). "Industrial Culture Handbook". *Re/Search*, n.º 6/7. RE/Search Publications, San Francisco 1983, p. 15.
- 7 Richler, D., Mallinder, S. and Kirk, R.: "Cabaret Voltaire Interview 1985". YouTube. Available at: <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHzLiQzVrNk&t=58s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHzLiQzVrNk&t=58s)> (researched: 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2014).

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## Playlist: A Session for Voice-Listening

A Certain Ratio. "Do The Du".  
Albert Pla. "No quise hacerle daño".  
Anne Clark. "Our Darkness".  
Bauhaus. "She's In Parties".  
Cabaret Voltaire. "Kino".  
COUM Transmissions. "Nude Supper".  
Diseño Corbusier. "Club del ruido".  
Diseño Corbusier. "Golpe de amistad".  
Echo and the Bunnymen. "The Cutter".  
Javier Segura. "Contaminación".  
Las Pekinesas. *SIDA DA*.  
La Caída de la Casa Usher. "Caballos".  
Laurie Anderson. "O Superman".  
Liaisons Dangereuses. "Días cortos".  
Joy Division. "Transmission".  
Konstruktivits. "How You Say".  
Neo Zelanda. "Paso hambre".  
Neo Zelanda. "Curso de francés".  
Nitzer Ebb. "Join in the Chant".  
Portion Control. "Raise The Pulse".  
Talking Heads. "Psycho Killer".  
Test Dept. "Total State Machine".  
TNT. "Coplas a la muerte de su colega".  
The B52's. "Rock Lobster".  
Throbbing Gristle. "Discipline".  
Throbbing Gristle. "Hamburguer Lady".  
Throbbing Gristle. "Very Friendly".  
Front 242. "No Shuffle".  
Front 242. "Controversy Between".  
Yello. "Oh Yeah".

Fuentesicas de Granada  
Aguas corrientes de Loja  
Habéis perdío una mirada  
Que os amaba como pocas.

¡Qué Gallarda tu casa  
Qué nombre tiene  
Nombre de rompe y rasga  
De gusto en pene!

Esta noche no llamarme  
Ni desirme nadie na  
Porque boy a emborracharme.

Cuando pase por Loja  
Yendo a Granada  
Macordaré de ti  
Prenda dorada

Tú sabes que mientras viva  
Serás conmigo andarríos  
Arrecogiendo meriendas  
Pa los once de tu nío.

Sé que yo te amaba  
Y tú me querías  
Por eso hasta er día en que yo  
me vaya Serás en mi vía

Incensarios de Loja  
Cantar toa la noche  
Y que la aurora os pille  
cantando  
Saetas y Coplas.

# MIGUELITO OF MINE BENLLOCH OF THE TIME

Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time just think they've told me I've got to write about two thousand and a bit words on you by next 15 July and considering the deadline is not far off and for instance up to this point I've used up 44 you'll realise I'll have to go flat out to get there comfortably and on time with my homework done and so even if it's not necessary I promise you I'll do it with great pleasure because being near you has been a continual delight you know that as much as anyone whether it's a stone person tree animal jasmine or machine who's received even a fleeting flash of the generous and always open goodness of your impeccable smile the coquettish sway of your subtle walk to the rhythm of your gentle voice half serene and half playful as well as prudent and wise even if it's mischievous tremendously funny or very formal extremely formal but never bureaucratic though definitely useful in the course of some precise business conducted by you Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time and so I ask you to pay attention for a while to this old proletarian of our memory thankful for so many things so many favours so many complicities so many games and jobs that we two lived through together those that were and we had we celebrated we feasted or we suffered through their past days and nights in a perpetual state of mutual affection without friction without reproaches without a shadow of envy or mistrust of any kind which makes it possible to say on your part and mine that few creatures have been more cordial to each other than us and had fewer conflicts disagreements quarrels or erratic and turbulent arguments on motorways sidewalks footpaths and other out-of-the-way places we walked through side by side so that the spontaneous and delicious kiss we gave each other on the lips just the day before you left sealed our alliance with loving conviction in a final tender moist exemplary and lasting way as in that brush of thanksgiving in the throes of woeful parting we communicated and gave each other thousands and more thousands of hours with their minutes and seconds shared by landscapes stays

trips laughter sorrows and consolations traffic lights avenues streets cul-de-sacs alleyways pretty fountains with their holy waters Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time you wouldn't believe the time whose numerical cabbalas mark today as 30 June of Twenty Twenty-One at 38 past 12 in the afternoon while the word counter on the computer records with absolute precision and as such four hundred and a bit in other words still an insignificance and what's more having got into this tangle for you of writing it all without the aid of punctuation marks which forces you to establish yourself and I establish myself in a graphic but also a sonorous discourse so that reading it will be helpful pleasant and followable even enjoyable with its due pace and in the rhythm required to secure the complicity of so many men and women who might want to approach this patch of our memory Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time just think the other days I performed the blessed monologue rigorously blissful and absolutely hilarious of our Mister Juan Martínez "Pericón de Cádiz" in the course of which you accompanied me so often either as a friendly & enthusiastic spectator or as my manager or the driver of the van in which we went from Seville to Oviedo and Gijón remember as I remember you last Sunday in Benarmargosa telling the story of the private teacher who had eleven children and had to feed them by filching snacks from the children at the school whom the inventive Juan Martínez didn't name but I did and when I say it my soul fills my mouth as I hear myself say "He was called Don Miguel Benlloch and he was from Loja" and I breathe in satisfaction listening to the silent flight of the sound waves that take took that beautiful night in Benamargosa up to the clouds when I said Benlloch and I said Loja not because I believed or because I was ironically comparing you with the filching schoolteacher but because of the immense pleasure it gave me and gives me to remember you Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time because without being presumptuous or miserly you are a pillar of your Granadine people and of the ancient capital of the Nasrid kingdom lands of your cradle adolescence and youth discovering beauties and miseries in the vale of perpetual tears we received in our unspeakable perverse deceitful education so malign that for us there was nothing for it but to choose unarmed but firm rebellion and manage as best each of us could to hove into the shore of justice of peace of liberty of tolerance of fraternity of play and of laughter of sex of love of jubilation streaked with fears renunciations acts of cowardice nightmares and bold risks in those still oppressive hours when our chieftain franco franco franco was in power the general with the short body and unbounded spite so much so that while he lived he maintained a powerfully repressive establishment versus the reds in other words us students children of power at his stirrups or in his schools as on board you could just as easily find the son of a major general as the daughter of a Basque industrialist many or some of whom besides being dangerous reds added their intimate human condition without flaunting it but not hiding it either that they were homosexual like you queer deviant invert sick bender pansy faggot bugger effeminate sodomite needs



oiling as they said everywhere with obviously insulting contempt even though you and so many were like that you discreet austere and elegant whether in Loja or in Granada or in Serva la Bari since you very soon left the darkness of fear and were what you were irreproachably wittily naturally with no sign of bad blood and with style Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time the stuff of art as was gloriously shown that day emblazoned in the blessed annals of freedom and the liberation of joyful bodies when you and some twenty homosexual communist avant-garde Andalusian boys shortly after the foreseen succession had taken place in other words Franco had kicked the bucket frolicked madly around that altarpiece in the old Granadine church of San Ildefonso climbing up and down its interior scaffolding amidst songs guffaws and shouts that were redoubled when you peeped out at the balconies of saints michael and raphael and catherine and paul and peter and joseph and antony and agnes and next to them you were an exquisite red green and camp choir raucously intoning diatribes to the sound of a wheezy organ against all oppressions Miguelito of mine Benlloch of your own time which you generously and copiously distributed among family friends intimates neighbours companions clients merchants who in approaching you had the sensation of being fortunate eyewitnesses of how there was a marvellous person among us of flesh bone body and fantasy who gave all he had with no obtuse qualms of distant selfishness for who knows if because of the crystalline waters of Loja or its calm airs spread among the high mountain ranges you are a completely and utterly exceptional creature who caused the happiness of others wherever you were and never broke but were given to superlative delights when we met thanks to you at La Gallarda and it was heaven to be there among the trees in the country the whitewash the geraniums the old vine the jasmine the stream flowing in the living silence of the calm night the birds the branches and the laughter what can I say the laughter and the bliss that erupted on its stone paving before during and after the slap-up meals we treated ourselves to and we appreciated so much when you were the host of the farmhouse and the brisk cook and by who knows what convenient channels you remembered ancestors of yours in the fields of Valencia and made some exquisite rice with vegetables of the kind they call finger-licking good enough to leave the paella pan or whatever it's called without a trace of grease or vegetable and shining not from washing it but from wiping it clean with pieces of white bread and always toasting with you Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time to those happy moments and others that would be and were in different fields of affection mixed up with work or vice versa you understand me because now in 2007 you're the Director of Production of a concert called *For the Seven Sorrows or Ritual of Saetas and other Holy Week music in Andalusia* which takes place in Archidona my village next to yours and from which you have brought as an artistic embassy a non-uniformed but thoroughly authentic model example from Loja of a genuine Holy Week collective known as *Los Incensarios* who bear incense in the

processions and are moreover singers popular dancers likeable skilful committed to recalling the passion of the Nazarene in their own way and so they observe old rules of multiple town councils according to which they must first compete win the contest and afterwards perform their liturgical function in the street with great largesse for which with strenuous dedication they must train exercise and confirm themselves as a homogeneous group of eight men ready to spend many hours learning rehearsing even living together in a house in the village converted into a home of work and happiness for courtesy does not rule out exquisite living so that alternating between the two and all the rest they can study the tunes the turns and the genuflections at the same time as their stomachs are filled with elaborate stew and wine and beer and games and meetings with the women their companions accomplice incense bearers and also with a good friend like you who were one more among them and I saw it that Good Friday evening that you took me to Loja to meet them and when I did I was left with my mouth and my heart wide open in happy and grateful enthusiasm when I learned through you that so close to my bell ringers and saints in neighbouring Archidona to the east there were some extraordinary corporations of singers of primitive saetas there were four of them three in black and one in white formed by incense bearing members one of which you persuaded to give a public display of sequences of its skills and customs Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time which at your bidding they did twice with pleasure with us as intermediaries the first time in Seville during the Biennial of two thousand and four which was in the courtyard of the Sevillian Higher Conservatory of Music at a moment when your health was delicate but you made bold and you were the director and producer of the event and it made a very sad impression to see you perform intervene give orders and or smile with a voice that scarcely emerged from your body and a dog turd expression that appeared on your tremendously sad skeletal and very worrying face but lo three years later it went back to being as I said before and it was enormously cheering to see how your lithe body had reconstituted and improved from head to foot and in the function you were carrying out so beautifully the vigour of your energy could be fully felt organising and directing that complex entertainment until its happy ending and afterwards at the party that was held according to the old custom of the brotherhoods relive it with Reyes who came from Serva la Bari and the musicians the incense bearers the bell ringers the carriers of virgins and saints the men and women saeta singers toasting to the success and satisfaction of having done it as God ordains as something properly done used to be called years ago Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time what can I say if we were taught with a rod of iron by that malicious education which conceived us as insolent sinners in the vale of tears before purgatory where the blessed souls were burned alive who knows if waiting sorrowfully in the antechamber to paradise or perhaps to the horrible sinister and horrifying hell for centuries and centuries eternity from one end to the other without seeing without being

able to see the almighty in his infinite goodness and it is necessary to see Miguelito of mine looking back on it now that it is frightening to ascertain how malignant and disturbing the directors of human destinies have been and still are the bosses the masters the powerful the clerics the ministers the bishops the generals the commanders the captains the lieutenants the presidents the secretaries the preachers the spokesmen the ministers the director-generals of sections or departments the delegates the vice-secretaries the archbishops the rich the property owners the landowners the kings the marquesses the dukes the counts and the countesses the bankers the usurers who besiege our days and hours Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time but I don't want to end this conversation of ours with something as filthy and perverse as what I have just mentioned and well there's a coincidence they're going to give me arguments and words to repair bad vibes even in the land of dreams as it turns out that in one of my last recent ones I saw Malos Pelos yes our beloved Joaquín Vázquez returning home in the early hours of the night or already in daylight and of course from the way he was walking fabulously smashed when he went into his house in the half light he remained absorbed in front of a mirror that his husband had bought at El Jueves not knowing what it was and how subjugated he was by the image shown to him in the mercury and it was naturally that of a truly happy and carefree person beaming one hundred per cent without fissures before which he paused as though attracted by a magic magnet and he said to himself not inside but out loud what a nice and friendly man is welcoming me today yes Miguelito of mine Benlloch of the time and seeing him without recognising himself with his best immaculate rogue's face his little eyes flashing sparks of colour literally pissing himself with his own laughter passed on ipso facto contagiously to the spectre he decided to talk to him without any further ado and he asked him if he was perhaps a fallen angel sent to him by the great malign one as solace for his dawn recreation and it was then that as our beloved Joaquinito was waiting for a reply Manolo woken by the voices he heard got out of bed and with his characteristic prudence without anger but with tremendous sarcasm hit him with a blast of reality saying Darling you are one of a kind you take the caramel biscuit and the meringue you're even capable of chatting yourself up just so you can carry on partying you scoundrel shut up scoundrel and come to bed I've been waiting seven hours for your kisses.



READINGS OF THE  
MIGUEL BENLLOCH ARCHIVE

# DIALOGUES

JULIO JARA

GUILLERMINA MONGAN

MARÍA SALGADO AND FRAN MM CABEZA DE VACA

ÁLVARO ROMERO

EQUIPO RE



# MIGUEL REPEATED

I search and search for the text; the text that blows back into my mind unawares, out of order, like trash. What was written down and ordered now seems to me like a veil, gossamer, canvas, an altar of clouds. It's a text, written years back, that returned unbidden to my memory. And to be honest I was absolutely sure that I had it saved on my computer. Unsure, I throw myself into the search. Guided by a star of memory, I opened windows, files and documents but unable to find you, my fruitless endeavour once more ended in failure, and an awareness of my solitude. You do not appear, my text. I had all my attention, all my approaches and hopes, all my dreams set on you. You were to be the tool, the text that would breathe life into the Text. The key, now absent. Absent key that opens this sanctum where everybody's everything is kept. And when I say everything, I mean Everything. That's where all texts, written and unwritten, go; even those that have absolutely no intention of being written, or those that cannot yet be said to be finished (I am talking about our ending, death). Gathered up the wrong way around by sleep (a bridge of contradictions because of the uncertainty surrounding its stay) we are caught disobeying the knowledge that comes from reason, and we give priority to the night, to the detriment of the lights, and it becomes completely clear to us that consequences come before causes, work before planning, life after death. So does trash not need to be ordered to become a work? What is the order of a work? Is it that the higher the number of corrections, the further we get from the work? Or is there a primary order hidden within its own disorder? Could Order be the secret? We remain with that question, so the text should be extremely proud of getting lost.

From encounters we are called—between heaven and earth, between sacred and profane, between world and museum (and when I say *world* I am referring not only to the public side, but also beyond that, to the private, where it holds the sacred for us)—towards knowledge restored to resemblance,



not a shell, a mere significant, but an illuminated countenance, excessive in its meaning, resurrection. Where has the memory gone? It is lost. Better that way, because if there are no memories, there will be remembering. A memory, the philosopher warns us, is idealised, whereas remembering is life, the present celebrated, and needs no story to be *cante*. To be reminded is to be renewed, an act of contemporaneity, the instant, seen when reality and idealisation collide, the memory; between the instant and the idealised there is repetition. The lost text repeats. The living text, Miguel living at that very instant.

In the flamenco moan of “ay” life is repeated, eternally falling. The “ay” is, in its moaning *quejillo*, the guide, leading us towards a reality liberated from death. And that meeting sees the resurrection, in every celebration gifted to me in the Holy Week festival in Loja, of life, of the sacred, all because of the presence of the censers and saetas. An instant recovered without holding on to the infinite, something true because it makes us happy, classified as truth because it is humble, like them, illiterate. Happiness: a feeling recovered in the infinitude of the truth of the illiterate. A real party. And as they work on the ornamentation of the “ay”, intending to embrace the pain, they sweeten the ruination with liquor and cake, on those nights when there is dialogue with death, when once more that black saint grants them life. This is the work that the artist does, ornamenting, repeating that there is no sense in life without sense in death. You have to seek out remembrance so that the “ay” can open the door and pitch us into the intimacy of the world, through, inevitably, a memory, through this ordeal, lit by paradox, with the “ay” overhead, and Miguel travels on this “ay” of joy.

—Hi, Miguel! I’d like to interview you. Yes, that’s right, an interview.

—An interview with absence, you say? Well, an absence sensed on this very set.

—Yes, right here, you and me, we’ll be together for an audience that is desperate to see you perform again.

—How will it go... let’s see... I come out first into a space where there is nothing, it’s empty, limitless, there is no artwork. Like you now? Well, since the artwork is there before it materialises, I might venture to say that it is more artwork: prologues weigh nothing, because they are only lights and enthusiasm that announce the arrival of something yet to do, and Miguel, that’s something you know a lot about. I’ll tell you that being near the end, way up here, I am willing to come down and here I am, not yet arrived, beyond relaxed, without having relaxed, I am the relaxation that is more than satiated without having drunk anything, I am a fountain, relief, and where will I be now that I have still not arrived?

—Of course, this is part of one of my works, yes... you’ve got a good memory, Miguel. Because it’s been a long time, of course, since I said, “a civil death” and the audio added to the confusion with “a Seville death”, and there we were again, just like now, draped in laughter on this set that I drew in chalk as a circumference on the floor, saying “this is a stage set!” and

that song started, that goes, “*Ya no puedo sentirla a mi lado / Ni su cuerpo ya no podré tocar / Ella ya no está / Ella ya no está / Siempre que me acuerdo yo de ella / Mis ojos empiezan a inundar / De lágrimas de Amor / De lágrimas de Amor*” (*Lágrimas de Amor*, Camela, 1994).

—Laughter and awareness, because in you, the profane and the sacred can be tacked together perfectly, two threads to make a suit, the one we used so much in our work. Because, darling, your being is absolute trust in everything you take on and everything you allow to happen around you. Theatre of trust; what our Passolini called in *Orgia* the Theatre of Words and I say it here because you are of Words, Miguel, and in words you make us dress.

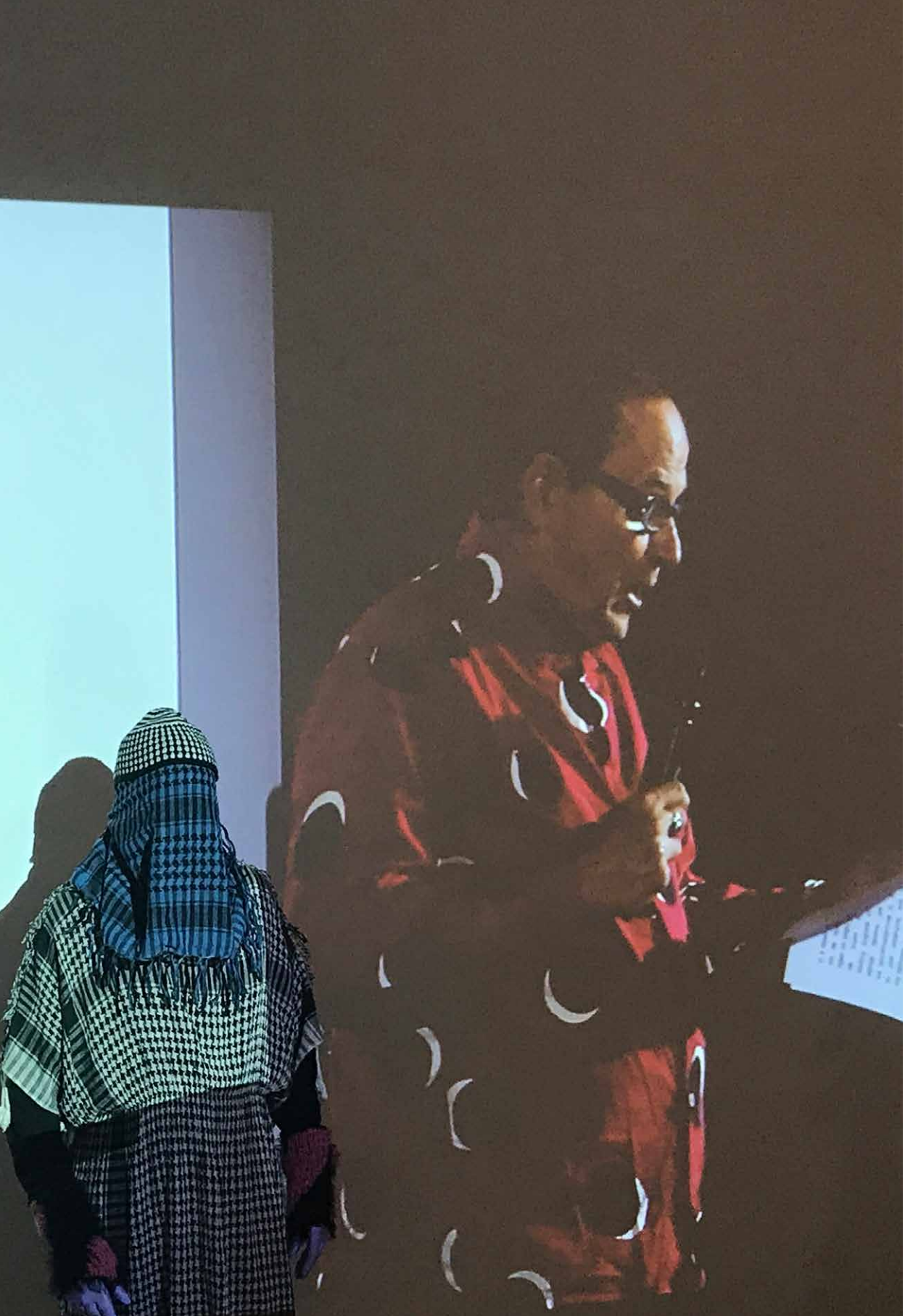
—We will show the work’s script on cardboard, which will go on the floor. Exactly, Miguel. We will cover up the circle. The circle of your presence, to raise you up.

—There is a scene in the film *Novecento* where a strike is called, and a peasant repeats the call while he gets his dick out and pisses. That gap in politics is where we are, in the most mundane, and that everyday gesture is what supports us. It’s a choice, which, logically, pulls us away from ideology and its orthodoxies. They are not in books, they fly away, they cannot stay between pages, the word. Is it coming back to you? There in front of your bookshelves: yes, what a night of conversation is coming back now! You say that we leave so many of them half-read, and there they are, as if asleep, because life calls us to action, to love, to encounters. The word is life, which is why our work is to take speaking and make it into an action in itself. There is something in the street calling us, and it is calling us by our name: Miguel, Julio, come on! And these people we are running to, who know no borders, live within us and we feel them to be our home.

—That’s where we’re going, to the street, but more than that, to the privacy of the world. We will embrace it as you taught us to. We will go, jumping the boundaries of the stage itself, because the artist is there to jump those red lines, to jump out of the shared circles and live on the edge, and so many will be with us, a whole family.

—Outside the museum? No, Miguel, but stretching the museum out into life, and calling life from there, taking it back, but not touching it. No, Miguel? Yes, obviously, reality is what rules, and our job is to take back, not to order, the trust in those tools which we will unjustifiably be given—the tools in the sanctum—so as to share the party of failure by mixing with those who, sadly, are the rejected, even hated, the ignorant, those who don’t count, the seedy, those of no interest, the reviled silhouettes, who having no profile will make us free, fed on their own poverty. When art loses, when it loses gravity, it stands and takes form, and it is of the word, the living word, and that is when we sing *AY*...

SUEÑO CONTIGO  
(I DREAM OF YOU)



# EL FANTASMA INVIDENTE

You walk backwards, blindfolded. You are a ghost. Not you, but a ghost that comes from you, a projected I that is never I; you all know well that there are many of you, a magma of ghosts and bodies that communicate the outpourings of brain, security and adventure.

I will rise, I will travel through space, I will rise like an endangered ghost forced upwards. Can't you see that I have dressed my body to make this transition! To turn it into a new, hollow I, containing those who are not me. To be part.

Going up, blindfolded, stairways that I mount imbued with the rights that welcome them in and which are then hijacked by our masters who try to organise life according to how the law dictates it. We should whip ourselves for allowing everything that happens in the well-mannered world. Continuing the effort to rise up and to find the bird of renewal, the sign that helps you be you.

The ghost smiles, a bird sings, light plays around their eyes and joy is unbounded, the body and the ghost continue on, they are nature interrelated.\*

## *The Blind Ghost*

Action performed at the opening of the exhibition  
*Miguel Benlloch. Cuerpo conjugado*, Sala Atín Aya,  
ICAS-Instituto de la Cultura y las Artes de Sevilla, 2018

\*In this piece, Benlloch uses both masculine and feminine adjectives for the same references

















**ASOCIACIÓN DE INCENSARIOS DE LOJA**

**TRÁNSITO DE LO SAGRADO Y LO PROFANO**  
**Los Incensarios de Loja en el Viernes Santo**  
 Una historia de **MIGUEL BENLLOCH**  
 01/04/2017 20:30 h PEÑA FLAMENCA ALCAZABA

Organiza: Patrocina: Colabora:



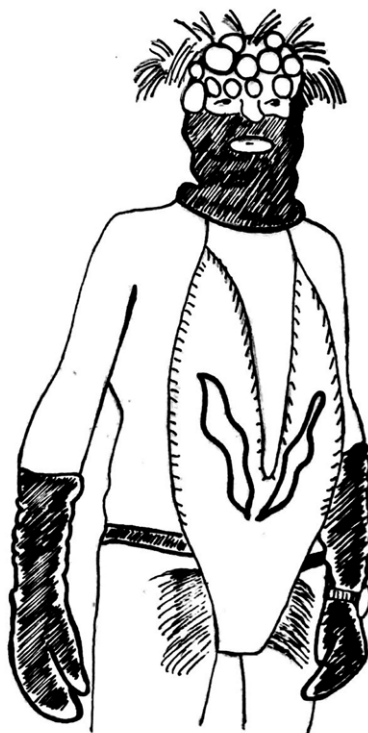






Mis acciones son apilamientos, condensaciones sumas de objetos que han sido vida, rastros de vida vivida que han hablado desde el cuerpo y que en su acumulación buscan nuevas combinaciones para volver a comprender. No son identidad sino desdibujamiento de ella, no tienen interés en fijar sino en desprenderse de lo que ha sido inscrito desde quien nos sujeta; son estrategias para ser más libre, ejercicios puestos en cornua para no ahogarse en la norma que nos marca, son formas de borrar esas marcas e interrogar en primer lugar a mí; a un yo que vive en medio, no en el centro sino junto a, y en ese sentido es en el que la acción se relaciona.

# THE BODY THAT IS A TONGUE STICKING OUT

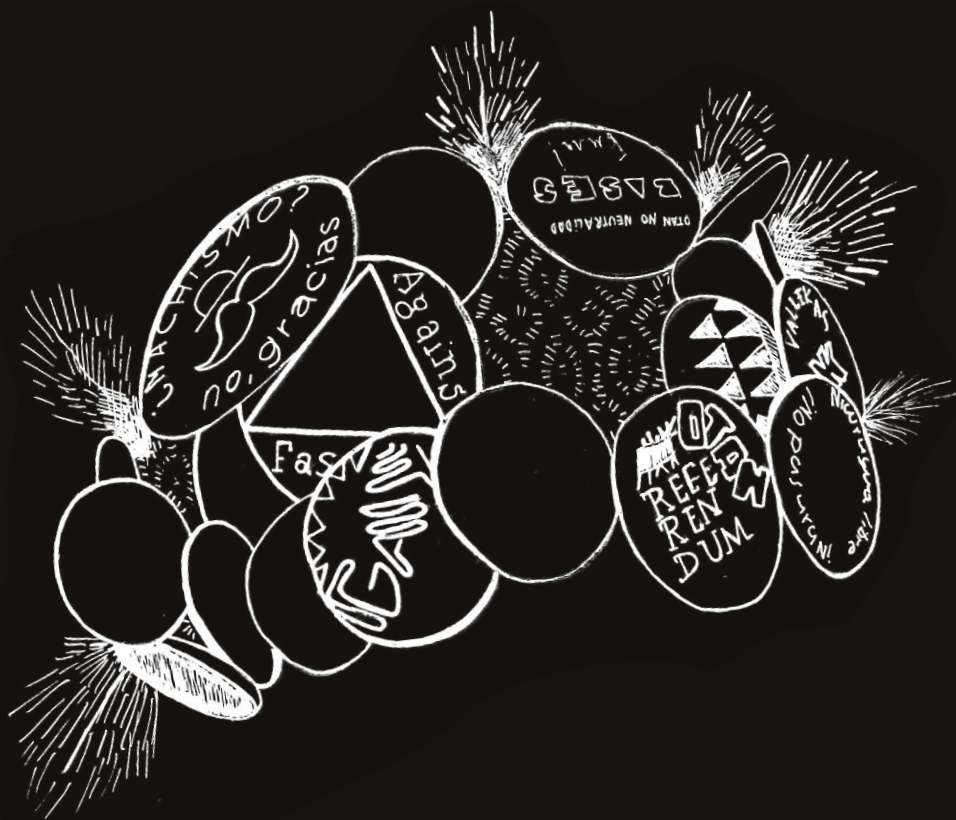


Approaching an Archive as prolific, wide-ranging and elusive as Miguel Benlloch's turns out to be an exercise that surpasses the imaginable, a readiness to be surprised. Going back over his tracks is, as Miguel himself paraphrases in one of his texts, "trailing what moves, what isn't fully secured", a plunge into the common space that both isolates and unites us. *The Body That Is a Tongue Sticking Out*, then, is an approach to Miguel's constant and prolific activism on the basis of certain indices found in objects, texts, actions, documents and memories that form his Archive.

The drawn texts reproduce fragments of "Acción en el género"  
(Action in Gender) by Miguel Benlloch.

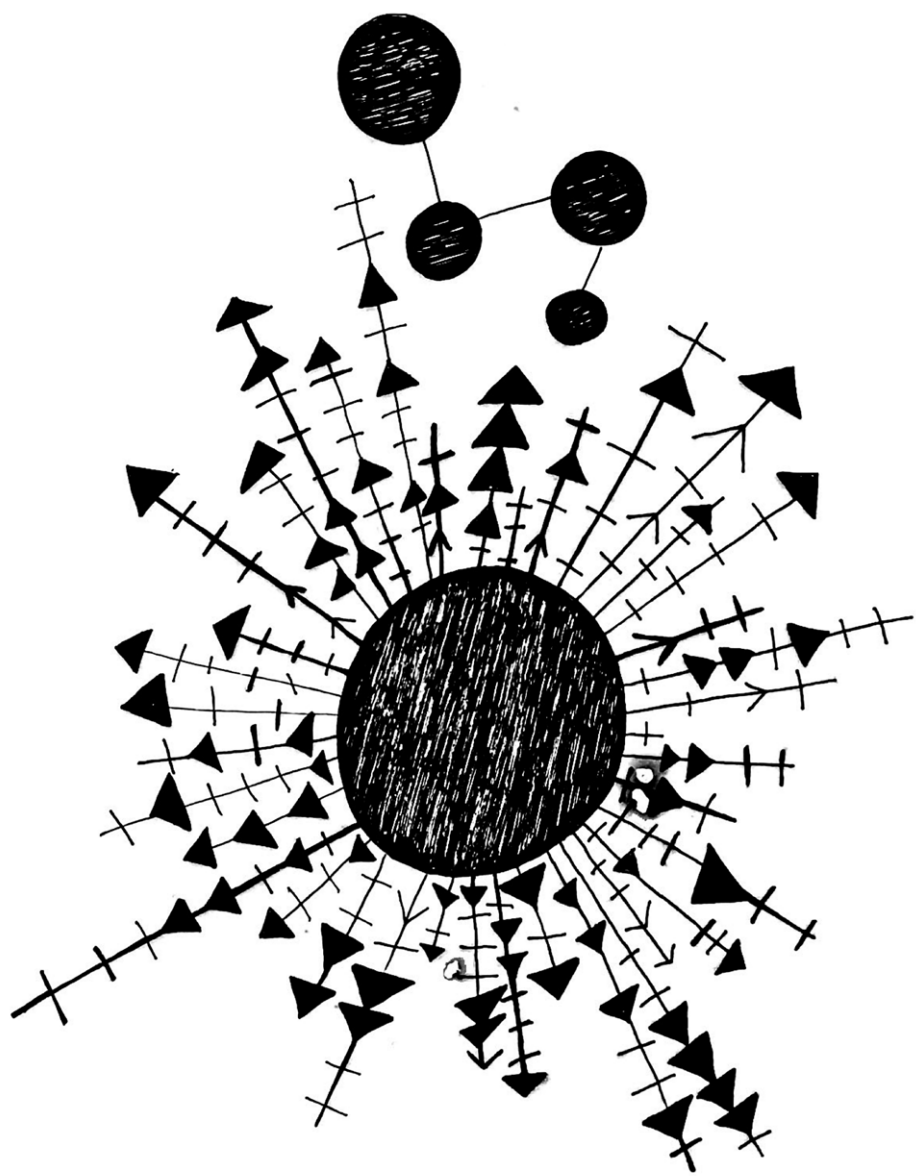






Si el arte es vida debe parecerse a ella, a la vida que nos ocupa la propia vida, es con esa vida, que unos momentos parece fuera y en otros está dentro, con quien convivimos y desde la que nos relacionamos con los otros, los otros que no soy yo pero que están ocupando el espacio común que nos aísla y une.

Las acciones me muestran y se sitúan políticamente como transformación y palanca para seguir viviendo, hablan de mí fundamentalmente pero de un yo situado en apertura, en disposición de sorprenderse, de rastrear sobre lo que se mueve, sobre lo que no está definitivamente agarrado, como un vegetal que crece y se sitúa en otro lugar donde no era.





"Meneillo" stand. Granada, *circa* 1990





"Meneillo" stand. Granada, circa 1990





"Meneillo" stand. Granada, *circa* 1990







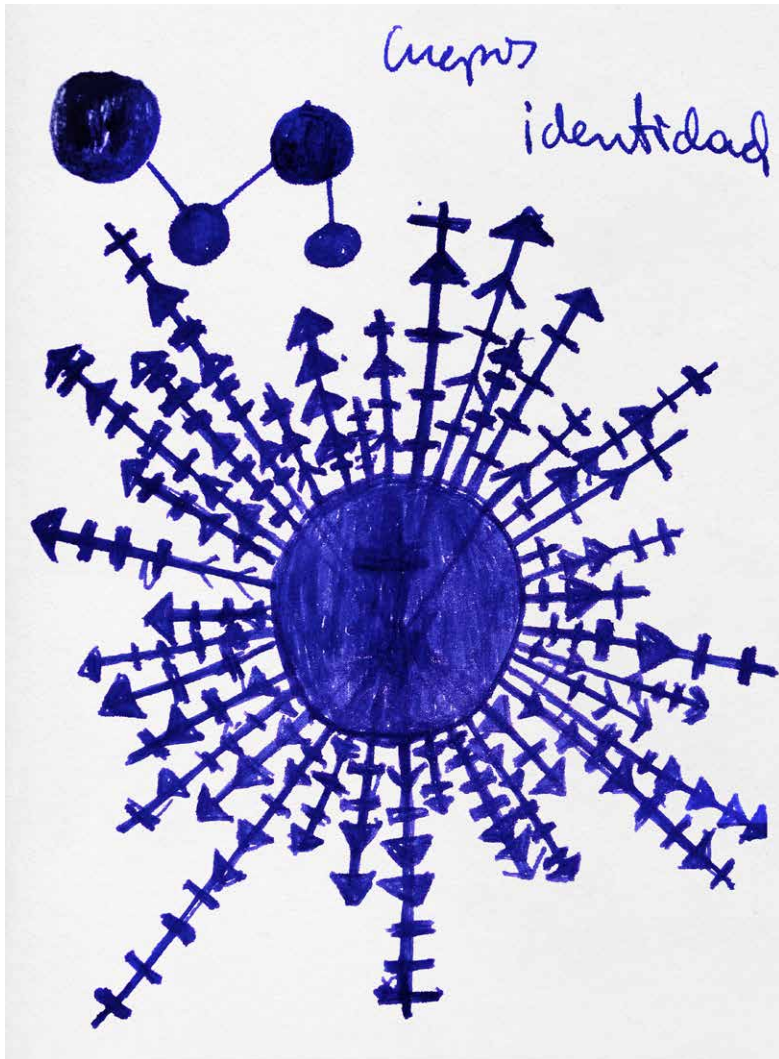
















# DESIDENTIFÍCATE

*Desidentifícate* is an unplanned, unannounced action, arising like a desire which could be sensed but could not be thought because I was coordinating the state conference of, let's say, transfeminist or queer-based organisations that we had been preparing for over a year as part of the *arteypensamiento* programme run by the UNIA (Universidad Internacional de Andalucía), in 2010, *Movimiento en las bases: transfeminismos, feminismos queer, despatologización, discursos no binarios*.

I use three pieces which have been used in other actions: a mirrored costume that reflects light in all directions as the body moves, a pair of panties with a number of badges from ecological, feminist and pacifist movements from the 1980s pinned to it, and a lucky pair of red panties with an embroidered mouth from which a tongue protrudes; a cloth dick. Three recycled pieces, which together produce new discourses and a new cycle. The action begins with my appearance, in the middle of the party, dressed in the mirrored costume. As I dance, I take it off and stand wearing only the panties with the mouth and the cloth tongue, my head covered with the badge-covered panties, as a sort of helmet. The dance leads to the transfer of the two panties, with the activist panties on my crotch and the panties/tongue/dick on my head. Thought, which is struggle, occupies the physical place that differentiates the sexes and the sex is detraumatized and put in the place where it has to be rethought: during the changeover, the body becomes naked.

*Desidentifícate* is a seedy action, devoid of any thought of forms. It is an action based around partying, set in the joy of liberation, able to laugh at itself with the body. It is done in the way James Lee Byars set up his actions, in a coming together of thinking beings; and in the way Cutre Chou agitated in the 1980s, in the middle of a local festival by means of a prejudice-free, gender-confounding cabaret.

*Disidentify Yourself*

Action performed at the closing of the seminar

*Movimiento en las bases: transfeminismos, feminismos queer, despatologización, discursos no binarios*, Sala El Cachorro, Seville, 2010









**NO FEM**

**FAT NO AS**

**NO GIRL**

# NO SIAN NO

## NO FEM

2019

Vídeo HD-1080p. Color. Estéreo.

8'55

NO FEM es una pieza audiotextual surgida en el contexto de una investigación más amplia en torno al nacimiento de la diferencia, la potencia de friccionar la normatividad y trascender el binarismo de género inherente a las disidencias (especialmente las sexuales) y el poder emancipador del deseo. Está compuesto a partir de los nombres que, en el presente y el pasado, han ido designando a las disidentes de género y sexuales, las racializadas, marginadas y minorizadas, sobre usos más o menos peyorativos, usos aparentemente neutrales o usos populares. Se trata de, por un lado, mostrar la fuerza de reapropiación del insulto en la que está basada toda la subcultura y resistencia vital de lxs cuerpos *queer* de cualquier tipo (ya fueran las «yo soy esa», «morenos» y «zarzamoras» de las coplas de la primera mitad del siglo XX en España, o los nombres de origen anglosajón de las identidades políticas que proliferan desde finales del mismo siglo por las ciudades de todo el mundo); y de, por otro lado, abordar el proceso de normalización con el que la fase neoliberal e identitarista del capitalismo puede volverlas categorías excluyentes, racistas y clasistas en algunas situaciones (como algunos usos de las apps de contactos, por ejemplo Grindr).

La pieza está construida a partir del omnipresente y violento «NO» que recorre las emisiones más reaccionarias del ciclo histórico posterior al de las revueltas de 2011-2014 y del sampleo de las frases sonoras y textuales que, o bien colaboran con su energía despotenciadora, o bien abren grietas de comprensión de esa misma violencia de época (riff de guitarras de «Standing in the way of control» de The Gossip, «Europe is lost», «This is America») hasta resignificar y reapropiarse de dicha negatividad (a la manera de las Delta 9, también sampleadas, cuando cantan «NO! NO! MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS»).

La mezcla radical de audio y texto del pasado y el presente escenifica una pelea en curso entre las fuerzas de homogeneización y estandarización («English spoken here») y las formas de vida que siguen abriendo diferencialidad entre las cosas, sujetos y lenguas del mundo. Compuesta también a partir del NO, la serie de poemas que cierra el vídeo viene a afirmar que lo vivo, la viveza de cualquier ser o forma sobre la tierra, necesariamente consiste en diferencia, complejidad, conflictividad, no identidad: movimiento. «NO AIR NO BOW NO RAINBOW».

**TRANS NO POOR  
NO ASIAN NO  
ROM NO GIRL**

**NO POOR NO  
STtUtTtERING  
NO FEMME NO**

**NO FAT NO  
FEM NO ASIAN  
NO GIRL NO**

**NO BUTCH NO  
BLACK NO FISH  
NO LATINO NO**

**MORENITO Y  
PROBE DE LA  
MORERÍA**

**NO POC NO  
NUTS NO LAME  
NO SPAZ NO**

**NO BLERT NO  
CHAV NO DOG  
NO DYKE NO**

**POOR NO TRANS  
NO ASIAN NO  
GIRL NO ROM**

**NO BLERT NO  
CHAV NO DOG  
NO DYKE NO**

**FEMME NO FEM  
NO FEMME NO  
FEM NO GIRL**

**NO NO UE  
NO NO UK  
NO NO US**

**YO NO SOY  
TÚ NO SOY  
YO NO SOY**

**NO NO US  
NO NO UK  
NO NO US**

**YO NO SOY  
TÚ NO SOY  
NO SOY YO**

**PEOPLE LIKE US  
EUROPE IS LOST  
THIS IS AMERICA**

**I NO LOVE  
PARIS I NO  
LOVE NYC**

**US LIKE PEOPLE  
YOU ARE NOT  
US IS NOT**

**YOU ARE NOT  
US IS NOT  
YOUR BUSINESS NO!**

**NO TÚ NO  
TÚ NO TÚ  
NO TÚ NO**

**ESA NO SOY  
YO SOY NO  
SOY YO ESA**

perro sin amo...  
esa oscura...  
volviendo atrás la cabeza...

turning her head back...

la que no tiene nombre...  
la perdición de...  
lirio la llaman por nombre...

they call her by name Lirio...

y ese nombre bien le está...  
con lo que quieran llamarme...  
me tengo que conformar...

me, I'll have to shape...

por un cariño cariño...  
color de lirio moreno una...  
niña tiene la ojera morá...

girl has violet rings...

y de Cádiz a Almería con voz  
ronca de aguardiente  
canta la marinería:

seamen are singing:

**NO AIR NO  
RAIN NO BOW  
NO RAINBOW**

**SIN LUZ NI  
POLVO NO SILUETA  
HAY MISTERIO NO**

**SIN AIRE NI  
LLUVIA NI ARCO  
ARCOIRIS HAY NO**

**NO LIGHT NO  
DUST NO SHAPES  
NO MYSTERY NO**

**NO BEAUTY NO  
NIGHT NO DESIRE  
NO LIFE NO**

**SIN ARGOT NO  
HAY LENGUAJE  
POESÍA HAY NO**

**SIN BELLEZA NI  
NOCHE NO DESEO  
HAY VIVEZA NO**

**NO ARGOT NO  
LANGUAGE NO  
POETRY AT ALL**





Sida la flecha.

Canida  
de calles.  
Abamidas

Sida lo mismo

Reida en Grama

Reidera de Estudiantes

Yukio mshida  
minida

Sambas canidas  
an nida y a lo lizo  
apareida

la nida y los jens

la nida de Dios

la Canida de los Dioses

~~la canid~~

inestrida

Anna y nida -

Sidonal.

Ronald Sida

Sida Bons

Sida en Sevilla.

Sida Haywort

Sida Champen el fuerte.

Para murire de sida

Pertinida.

Sidamologias

Sida a Paris paper  
unido con los apaches.

Federico Sida Muir

huminda

regisida

panisida

Pandra

fenenda

(denida)  
pernida  
~~per~~  
nidral

Mi pannelo de nido.

Sidacar

Sidofono

da muna nida

pernida ere coche.

polinida.

Hironida sur amor.

Hio nida Campeador.

Sida de Fustember.  
Fara hida.

El rey sida.

Juan sida.

Sida y dieno

Sida water limp.

Sida asturiana.

Sida dien que can

Sida a catalayud.

El rey que nido

Sidhanta.

~~Quien~~ Sida primero ~~if~~ dos veces.

Sidana

Sida del rey catolico

~~de~~ dios sida

Quien va Sevilla perdio su sida

Mario y sida

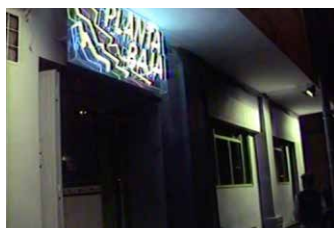
Martini sida

~~El~~ sida no es para mi.

Ruma sida apreta.

Tiro y sidón

4









- 1 CANARIO
- 2 Aranos entran en tantos cansados de los viciados
- 3 EL corazón de los finiles siguió latiendo ~~inutilmente~~
- 4 Oh deseo fin de todo anhelo
- 5 Haití
- 6 decapitación
- 7 No sabemos ni niembre habrá poetas
- 8 Siempreza étnica
- 9 niembre habrá policías
- 10 llevo en mi propio cuerpo la memoria de ser para otros
- 11 Diego, Julián
- 12 Vigilancia la fiera herida
- 13 Where is Bosnia
- 14 No pienso arrugarme con los años
- 15 Haití
- 16 CANARIO
- 17 Nada me turba nada me espanta
- 18 Somalia Kurdistan Azerbaijan.
- 19 Creo que ser inocentes es ser curiosos
- 20 Nadie conoce la magnitud de la tragedia
- 21 Violación, estado, isla, granada
- 22 Que seas bueno
- 23 Haití
- 24 Ha sido con armas convencionales
- 25 Oh mentira que me inventas
- 26 Gaza, cámara de gas, horca.
- 27 da esfera siempre ha estado imbuida de connotaciones espirituales
- 28 También la relación entre terrorismo y terrorismo de estado.
- 29 CANARIO
- 30 Xenophobia, extranjero, nación
- 31 Tan efusivo me siento de pronto para el amor y la alca
- 32 bonza como otro día para el desprecio y la enemistad.
- 33 HAITI
- 34 Tráfico de armas
- 35 Unir las islas

# CANARIO

*(Canary song)*

Arabs, come, we are tired of the Visigoths  
The heart of the rifles continued to beat  
Oh! I wish for an end to all longing  
Haiti  
Decapitation  
We do not know whether there will always be poets  
Ethnic cleansing  
There will always be police  
I carry in my own body the memory of being for others  
Diego Julián  
Watch over the wounded beast  
Where is Bosnia?  
I am not going to wrinkle as the years pass  
Haiti

*(Canary song)*

Nothing troubles me, nothing frightens me  
Somalia, Kurdistan, Azerbaijan  
I believe that being the innocents means being the curious  
Nobody knows the scale of the tragedy  
Rape, state, Grenada Island  
Be good!  
Haiti  
It was done with conventional arms  
Oh! The lies you tell me  
Gaza, gas chamber, gallows  
The sphere has always been imbued with spiritual connotations  
So has the relationship between terrorism and state terrorism

*(Canary song)*

Xenophobia, foreigner, nation  
Suddenly I feel as effusive about love and worship  
As I was at another time about contempt and enmity  
Haiti  
Gunrunning  
Unite the islands

You will worry more about them than yourself  
Earth, stone, Palestine  
Ethnic cleansing  
Mixed-race, America, Africa, Europe, Asia, Oceania  
The city actively consumes and produces geological and cultural deposits

*(Canary song)*

Haiti  
I always like to hear you say you love me  
A more suitable approach to the knowledge of the others  
Electric chair, garrotte  
Overpopulation  
The sorcerer walked round the tree trunk and asked me, "Do you see anything?"  
100%, Cuba  
Death penalty  
Is Yeltsin consolidating democracy in Russia?  
Haiti  
Muslim, Arab, Turk, Bosnian  
I recognise your scent on my roof  
So much suspicion about the future exists in the present  
Where is Sarajevo?  
Sudan, Angola  
I carry in my own body the memory of being for others  
Haiti  
The heart of the rifles continued to beat

*(Canary song)*

*Canary*

Poem written for the sound-action *Canario*, broadcast by telephone between Granada and New York, as part of the programmed activities of the presentation of the project *Promotional Copy* by Robin Kahn at the Guggenheim SoHo, November 1993, when the USA was already preparing for its invasion of Haiti in 1994

- 34 Te preocuparon ellos mas que tu mismo 4 5
- 35 Tierra, piedra, Palestina.
- 36 limpieza étnica.
- 37 Mestizo, America, Africa, Europa, Asia, Oceania.
- 38 la ciudad consume y produce activamente depositos geológicos y culturales
- 39 CANARIO
- 40 ~~Murphy~~ Haiti
- 41 Siempre me gusta oírte decir que me quieres
- 42 Una dirección más adecuada al conocimiento de los otros.
- 43 Silla eléctrica, <sup>electric chair.</sup> garrote vil
- 44 Superpoblación 5
- 45 El hechicero daba la vuelta al tronco del árbol y me preguntaba ¿ves algo?
- 46 100%. Cuba
- 47 Pena de muerte
- 48 ¿Consolida Veltrín la democracia en Rusia.
- 49 Haiti
- 50 ~~Arabes entrados entonces causados de los virreyes.~~
- 51 Muehlman, arabe, turco, bosnio.
- 52 reconozco tu olor en mi tejido. 4
- 53 Estanta sospecha de futuro hay en el presente.
- 54 Where is Sarajevo
- 55 Sudan, Angola
- 56 Llevo en mi propio cuerpo la memoria de ver para otros.
- 57 Haiti
- 58 El corazón de los juveniles sigue latiendo fiuntilmente.
- 59 CANARIO





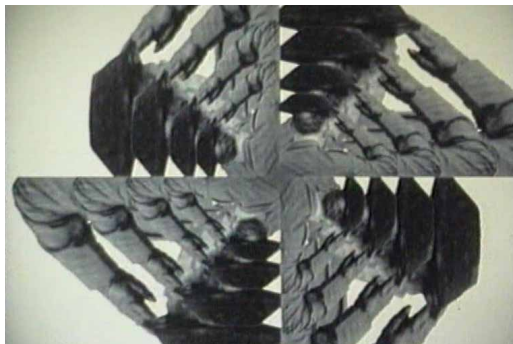
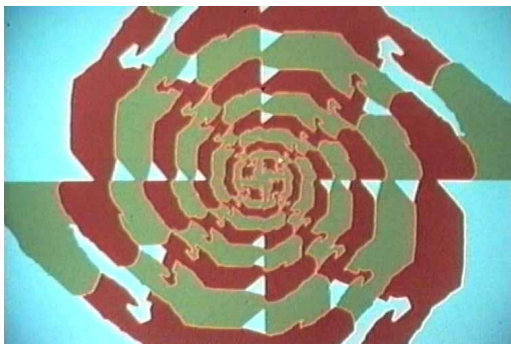


*ESTADO ROLDÁN, ESTADO LADRÓN.  
La Virgen del Pilar dice que no..., 1994*

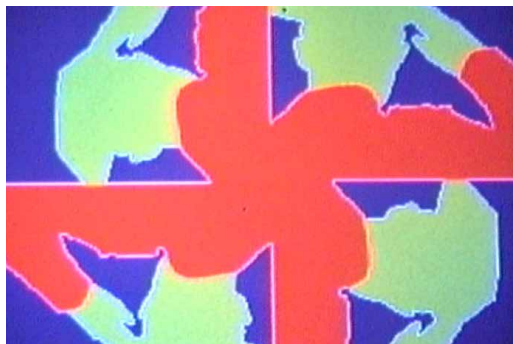




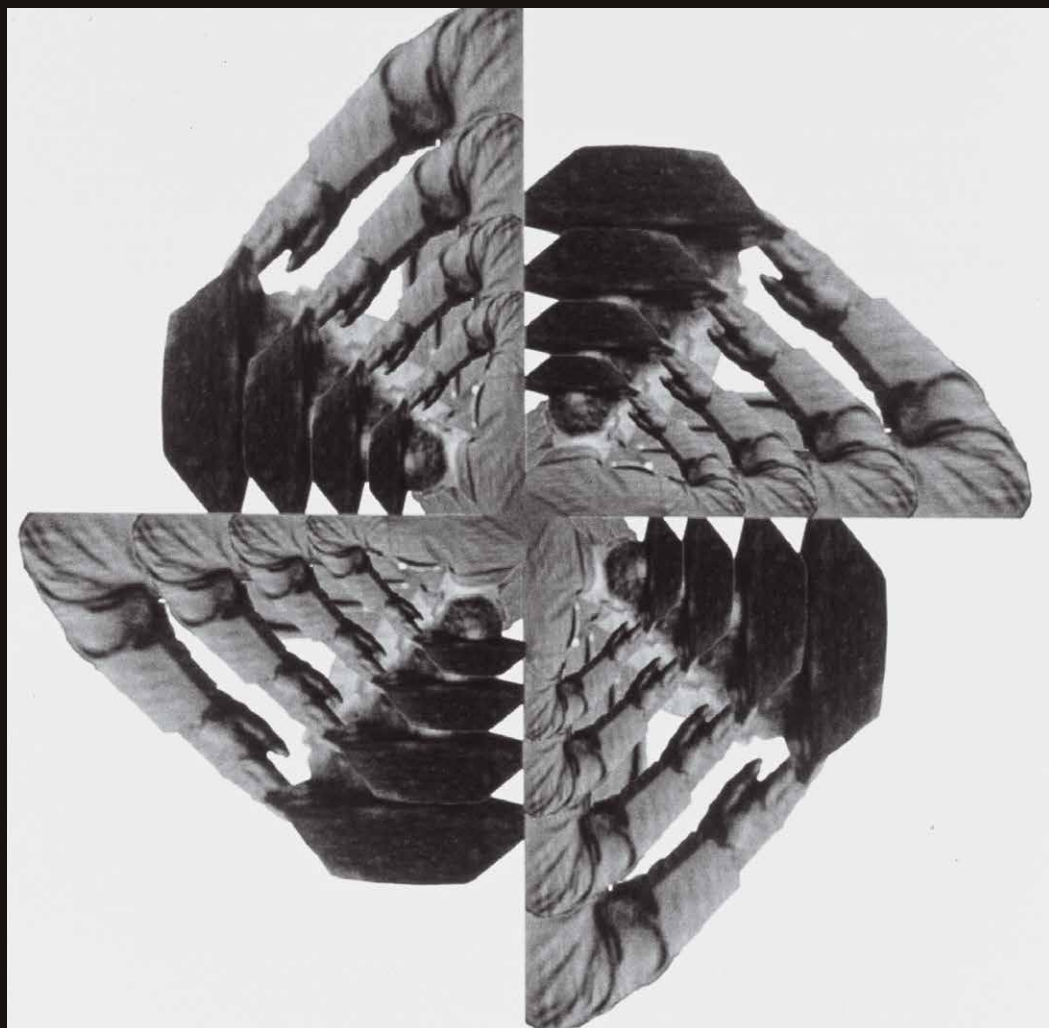




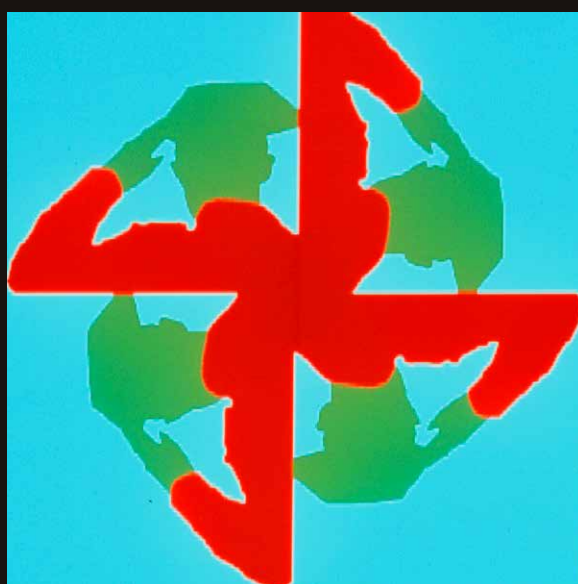
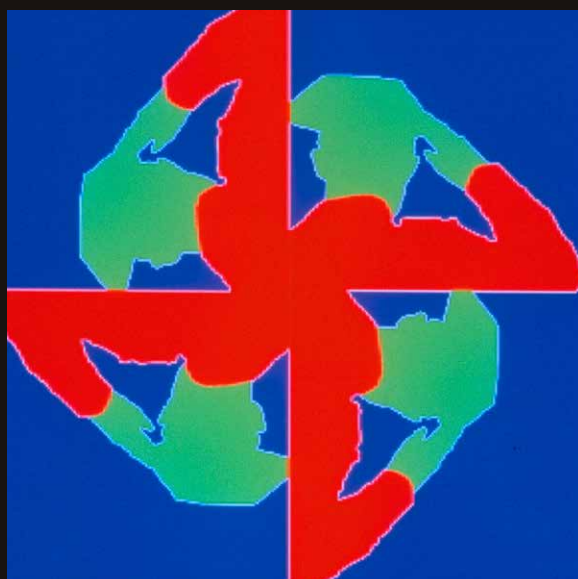


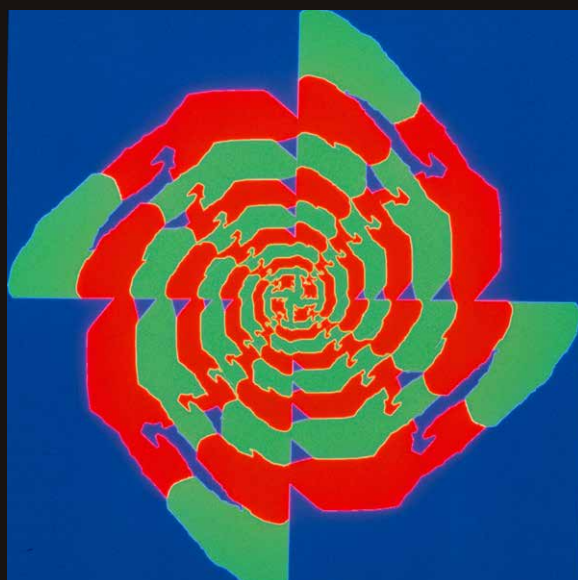
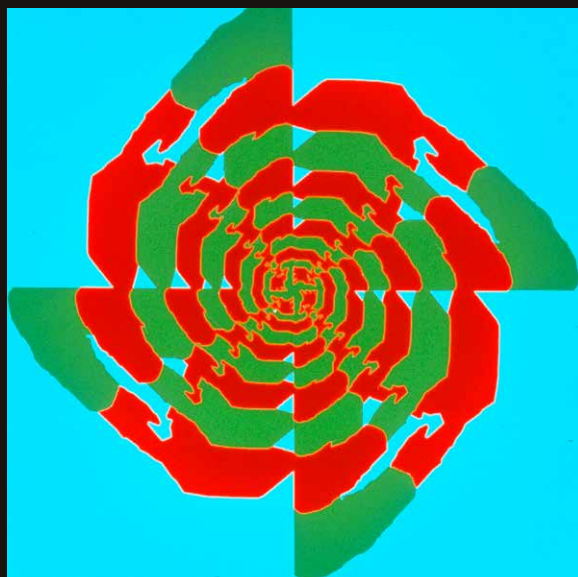


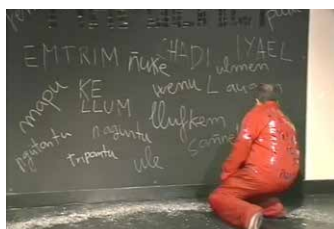












# MAPUCH ¡EH!

When I was invited to put on an action in the very place that Christopher Columbus' ships sailed from in La Rábida, I felt a kind of thrill inside urging me to specifically work on the living languages and speech of pre-Columbian origin. An act of getting in touch with languages which form part of the day-to-day lives of thousands of people, some of which are currently in the throes of becoming extinct while others are marginalised or left unprotected by the nation-states of the American continent, which in most cases use Spanish as their only official language.

This is certainly the case of the Mapuche culture (from *Mapu* meaning "earth" and *che* meaning "person") and its language Mapudungun, which in Pre-Columbian times covered an extensive territory on both sides of the Andes. Its area of influence now, in the wake of the relentless policies of the Spanish crown and the mass extermination expeditions following the independence of Argentina, has been reduced to a few regions in the South of Chile and Argentina and some areas of major Chilean cities where the Mapuche emigrate to, fleeing the attacks they suffer in their own lands.

*Mapuch ¡EH!* is an action using Mapudungun as oral and written expression.

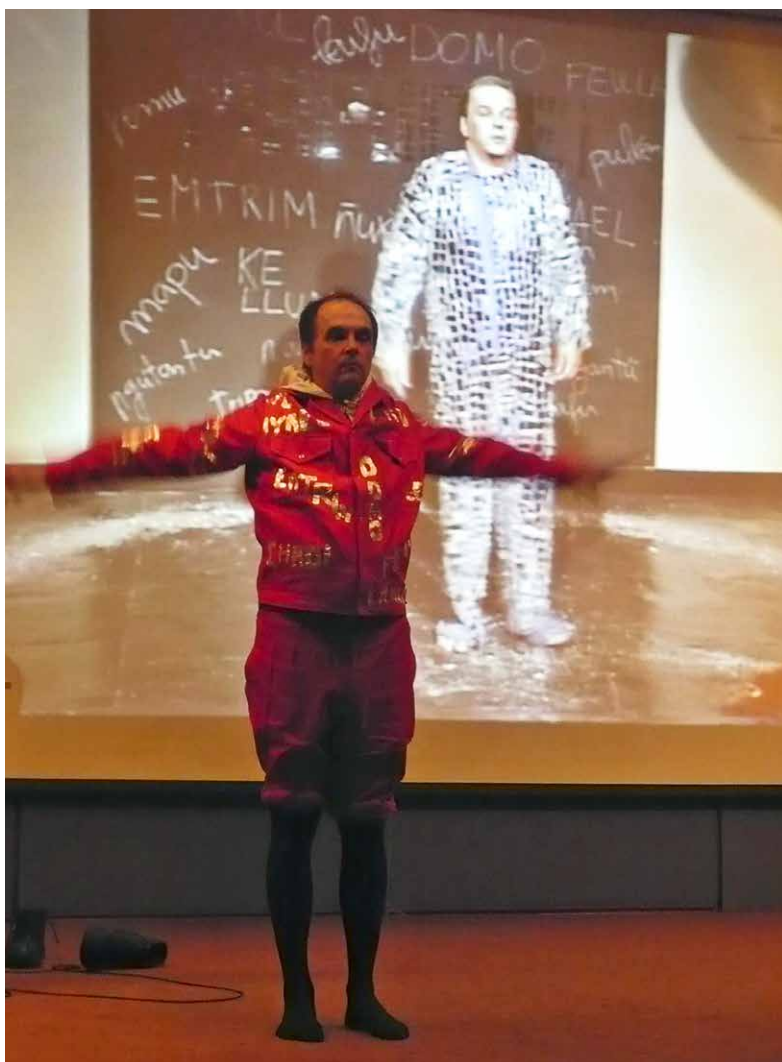
*Mapuch ¡EH!* is a call for recognition for the Mapuche culture, a homage to its long tradition of resistance, constituting an act of restitution.

*Mapuch ¡EH!* acts as an antidote in the face of homogenisation and the consequences of dominion, working to reactivate a memory that leans towards the development of safe spaces for tolerance in the face of uniformity, questioning the cultural substrata which are the foundations of political and ideological hegemony and the utilisation of language as an area for domination. Oral or written signs, used to erase the signs used by the others.

*Mapuch ¡EH!* is an eco-linguistic action that frames languages as the builders of identity, the vehicle of communication and the space for a polydiverse ancestral memory.

MAPUCH-HEY!

Action presented as part of the *Puerto de las Artes* project,  
Muelle de las Carabelas, La Rábida, 1999



# MAPUCH ¡EH! 2

My initial ideas about the existence of a living oppressed culture of the Mapuche people came from the faint echoes of their demands and relations with the Popular Unity Party government and the songs of Violeta Parra. Since then, I have heard, with intense clarity, the ancestral voice of their present.

*Mapuch ¡EH! 2* is a re-introspection of the Mapuche culture, overlaying new facts onto the writing of the action performed in 1999. The action builds from a soundtrack of words and music from Mapuche culture and a dance-ritual creating meanings about the notion of territory wherein work clothes are the tool for construction of new meanings. In this case, red overalls are re-signified by the printing of Mapuche words onto them.

MAPUCH-HEY!

Action presented as part of *Diálogo y Performance*.

*Políticas del cuerpo* project, Universidad de Concepción, Chile, 2012



**TRANX**



**TRANSEXUAL**



# BRANDING VOICES

As a child I once heard that all the words ever spoken through all time were suspended in space, and that at some other time it might be possible to hear them. Space would be a void for a confused Babel where the golden sparkle of the stars would be surrounded by the rumour of voices.

—Miguel Benlloch, “Acaeció en Granada”

Just like CATTLE bodies, VOICES are also BRANDED. Branded by disdain, by indifference, by violence, by skin colour, by homophobia, BY abuse, by despair, at the end of the day, by the BRANDING IRON of coercion and domination that the power structures exert upon us.

In my case, the first time I felt the branding iron that would mark me forever was in a square near my house that I used to play in when I was little. They called me “fag” before I even knew I was one.

I remember being in this square, playing, and I don’t know exactly what I said or did but they started to call me that name. I really didn’t know what the word meant but it didn’t take me long to realise that it was some kind of insult when my two girl cousins, who I was playing with, sprang to my defence. From that moment on, I realised that my voice would be branded forever, that it made people uncomfortable and would never have the same value as that of the other children in that square.

*51 géneros* (51 Genders) opens up the possibility that all lives deserve to be lived, and discusses identity diversity insofar as there are lives that socially can’t find a space when confronted with the norm of gender duality, and which are therefore valued

as lesser lives, sick lives, lives which, if they want to really be lives, have to be normativised, redirected and adjusted.

—Miguel Benlloch, “51 géneros”

Voices have a greater or lesser relevancy depending on the TERRITORY they are born into, the “GENDER” assigned to you at birth or the SOCIAL CLASS that you belong to. But I have to say that my voice as a fag is heard somewhat more than that of a Mata Street whore, because I am middle class/white/male (I think), and because being a fag in SPAIN is rather more acceptable than being a WHORE.

Campness makes people uncomfortable and provokes rejection in the people who hear it. It reveals you as an abnormal person. It is not within established lines, and is classified as an outlaw in exile, banished from sectors of society that consider it weak, wimpy and as having less projection.

We usually think of the identity that forms us as something static, yet it is born from the conflict of the way we think about ourselves, from the oppressions we feel for reasons of race, sex, gender, disability and so on; from the abuses of a power that is trying to subjugate us and against which we defend ourselves by creating collective identities. It emerges in an effort to protect our own individuality, which is why it is in this middle of what are the others and me, somewhere between confrontation and comradeship.

—Miguel Benlloch, “Acción en el género”

Within this hierarchy of voices, I wonder if those that are at the bottom of the pyramid are fit for public spaces. Do they deserve to be in a museum? Can they be heard in a space outside the one they were assigned to?

These are censured voices, pursued by bureaucracy, by religion and by machismo, outlawed voices, voices banned by the state/nation and forgotten by most.

To present these voices today is to present the uncertainty in our lives, the breaking of our bodies, politics as sexual politics and the eroticism of the voice. It means the summoning of voice-wisdom as a condition for DISSENT.

We make holes to produce movements in power structures. We make a gallery to interconnect our desires. We produce tension between the community and the hierarchy.

—Miguel Benlloch, in the introduction to *Mirar de frente*

These branded voices which I refer to do not only carry the weight of the branding iron, but also their voices do not correspond to the voice canon established by the “SYSTEM”. They don’t fit into bodies; they get displaced because of colour, because of tone, because of the polyps and nodules of the “gender” branding.

Is there a masculine vOice?

Is there a feminiNE voice?

Is there a fag voice?

Are there dissident voices? Are they heard?

Dykes? The gypsy’S voice? Active and passive?

The shy? The Trans? Natural VOICE? Simulated voice?

Does a man have to have a deep voice?

And a woman a high one? The rough “afillá” voice? The soft, high “laína” voice? What IS my voice like? Can a voice have a gender? Does the voice exist beyOND the sex?

Neutral voice? The HIV-carrying voice? I wonder what voicEs Elagabalus, Enrique el Mellizo or the Medieval fag would have, the sounds that arose from ancient Roman orgies. Would they sound different from the groans of the orgies in Ítaca’S dark room? Are there crippled voices? What would my voice be like if they cut off my flesh dildo? Would it sound like a *castrato*?

Why don’t they use a camp fag’s VOICE for mobile phone voice assistants? What if Siri was really a man?

Naming is creating, activating life in the momentum for change that comes about through the question. A questioning spiral open to infinity. The question is empty space, open to everything, and the answer to it is the limited material of certainty.

—Miguel Benlloch, “Acaeció en Granada”

In reality, I don’t know if all these voices exist, but what I do know is that in order to listen to them, to hear them, to be aware of the sonic vibration of your scream, it is necessary to “**lower our voices so that many voices might be heard in this commonality of disidentification**”, to quote MIGUEL BENLLOCH.



Reading that, I wondered what was behind the construction of the voices of some people that he had named in his texts, such as, for example, MANOLITA or LA NEGRA. What identity mechanisms would respond to HOW they were constructed, if feeling one way or another changes the voice with regard to the rest? I wondered how old they were when they realised that their voices were broken for the sad majority of society—those who kill voices through fear of change.

Manolita and la Negra would be about thirty, both were from Loja, both dressed like men in the streets, smart and affected in their body movements, which seemed to COME from a different nature, gestures that set them apart from other men, effeminate, as they said, faggots... or maybe homos, poofs, fairies, nancy boys, pansies, fruits, bum boys... the word trans-vestITe did not yet exISt in the small town vocabulary of the 1960s, at least I never heard it said among the crowd of kids that I spent my time WITH.

—Miguel Benlloch, “El detective”

When I was invited to collaborate on the exhibition ENSAYOS SOBRE LO CUTRE, it was very clear to me. I wanted my voice to be there, but accompanied by OTHERS; crippled and abused voices, out-of-tune voices carrying HIV, voices that are insulted and even murdered for the simple fact of having a different sound. Voices that do not belong to the norm, because that is how I feel, an abnormal perennial in a constant state of turmoil.

Being an abnormal fag leads me to position myself among the weak, the forgotten, the suffering, the helpless, those of us who are born and will be born with one wing broken, because perhaps we have shared things; ways of feeling, we have been in similar places, resisting in hostile spaces, in a place where the different is pushed aside and relegated to misery, to asking permission, to the seedy.

I wanted the presence of the voices of whores, of Afro-Gypsy fags, of the fat dykes from my neighbourhood who always walk around with their heads down because they feel ashamed to not belong to the female canon established by the norm, of the trans who have no choice except to prostitute themselves, of we who have different genitals for whatever reason, and tremble in fear moments before we undress in front of a person we fancy. I feel like all those women abused and murdered by their misnamed husbands (murderers).

**I cannot understand my voice without the voice of others**

**UnItE aLI ThEsE vOiCeS aNd CrEaTe OuR oWn LaNgUaGe**

Metaphorical voices united by their rebellion. Voices that sustain us. Voices destroyed by a paroxysm lived through and dragged around for years, not to say centuries. Voices with nodules and polyps forever. Thyroid cartilage that will never manage to fulfil its function because of the contempt of the ruling elites and of colonialism and of the sick society itself which we all live in. The scarcity that exists forever in our vocal cords, the abundance that exists in theirs. Voices subjugated by a power outside us but interiorised, that brands what it wants us to be: peripheral voices. BRANDED voices. The Voices of IRSU.

My aim in this action is to shine the spotlight onto the construction of the voice from the viewpoint of socialisation, and onto the way these voice acts contribute to the formation of the social hierarchy.













# AFUERA DEL SEXO

La Paz, 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2011

Dear friends.

Today I am putting on an action for all of you and for me, called *Afuera Del Sexo* (Outside Sex). It is an action created for the situation I find myself in here in Bolivia for the exhibition *Principio Potosí*, which deals with the primitive accumulation of capital generated in this part of the world, currently called Bolivia, carried out through the colonial policies of the Spanish empire, and involving an excruciating transformation in the customs and ways of life of the original peoples, as well as the destruction of the political structures and belief systems with which they had been endowed.

Generally, my actions arise from times of affect, created for an audience that feels close to me, and with whom I try to communicate. In the actions I deal with matters that concern me, and are, in a way, thoughts said out loud, with no aspirations to becoming truth. They are exercises based on conflicts in me, which, because they are all typically human, can form connections with the conflicts of others, to try to create more favourable environments.

Normally, they reflect upon a mobile identity that adapts to a life which is, among many other things, movement in time.

We tend to think of the identity that shapes us as something static, yet it comes from the conflict in the way we think of ourselves, of the oppressions that we feel because of race, sex, gender, disability and so on, of the abuses by a power that is trying to hold us down, against which our defence is the creation of collective identities. It arises from an effort to protect our own individuality, which is why it is located in that middle ground that is the others and me, in a place between confrontation and comradeship.

Identity taken as an eternal whole anchors, isolates and separates us, making it impossible to find new ways of confronting our own lives. I work on identity in those tiny gaps within its own development, the spaces where other knowledge is left, knowledge constructed from the wisdom of others, from the lives of others, from the experience of others. Gaps where identity opens up to new ways of being conceived, of approaching the collective from the individuality that belongs to us.

*Afuera del sexo* is a dance full of signs within a thought process that aims to confront the appropriation of our lives, breaking away from the idea that we are subjects, and reading the subject as the very etymology of the word dictates: beings subjected by an interiorized exterior power that sets down what it wants us to be.

In its origins, sex means separation, and heteropatriarchal ideology has been shaped on that separation and written into our knowledge as something belonging to our nature, built on biological separations that we need to transcend if we want to create a new reality, beyond that established as masculine and feminine.

*Afuera del sexo* means situating yourself in a territory that precedes the separation in order to rethink ourselves as humans, to attempt to obtain tools that do not enable subjugation of certain beings by others, but break the bonds that tie a subject to a power that speaks from a perspective of separation.

*Afuera del sexo* is based on signs and signals such as geographical territories, binary ideas on gender and so on, and opens up the possibility of the appearance of new individuals who set themselves apart from gender duality in order to open up to a non-binary formation of sex and gender identity.

I have introduced into *Afuera del sexo* some fragments of a song by an anti-Franco singer-songwriter, who provided the soundtrack for our rebellion against that dictator. The song refers to events that took place in Bolivia and is one of the sounds that have remained in my political memory: times when Bolivia was also under the cruel dictatorship of the first Banzer government. I have taken the liberty of using other signs of Bolivian identity to show how our life is always steeped in political structures that are not made by us but that are still so deeply embedded that it is as if they are actually part of our very essence. I deal with them in the same way that I could have done with Spanish signs of identity, with the same love towards what could be termed our own, and with the same disidentification with the concept of a fatherland, any fatherland: a word closely connected to the father, to the unquestionable authority of the one who sets himself above the rest, and who I am questioning.

These signals are dressing me, covering me, used on a body—an always naked body—the metaphor for the unwritten body, the memory of a body not covered by any layers of identity to mask and obscure it.

Disentangling the primitive accumulation on which the definition of our desires is based places me in an outside that reveals new ways of being, which help us to bring to life an I who smashes the normativity of our life, and opens up to a pleasant questioning state of being in harmony with a life experience considered in relation, not subjugation, to the desire established by the norm.

And whatever else you want.  
Love.

*Outside of Sex*

This text was distributed in Virgen de los Deseos  
(La casa de Mujeres Creando) when the action took place

Miguel Benlloch represented the PRPC (Plataforma de Reflexión de Políticas Culturales) that was taking part in the *Principio Potosí* exhibition







# EL DETECTIVE

[Excerpt]

That afternoon I had decided to ignore the family rule about not watching any films classified “4” (“Extremely dangerous. Should not be seen”) by the Church morality classification board. The Aliatar cinema in my town of Loja was showing *The Detective* starring Frank Sinatra, a film featuring homosexuality as a crime. It was 1968. I was 14 years old.

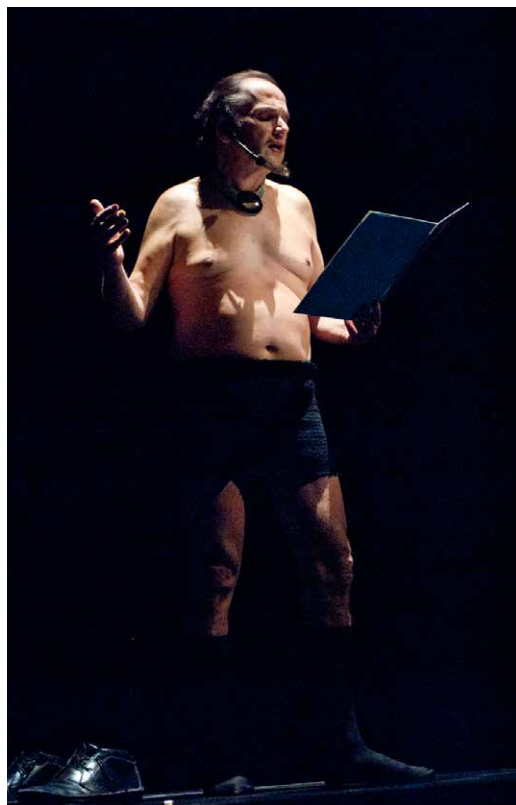
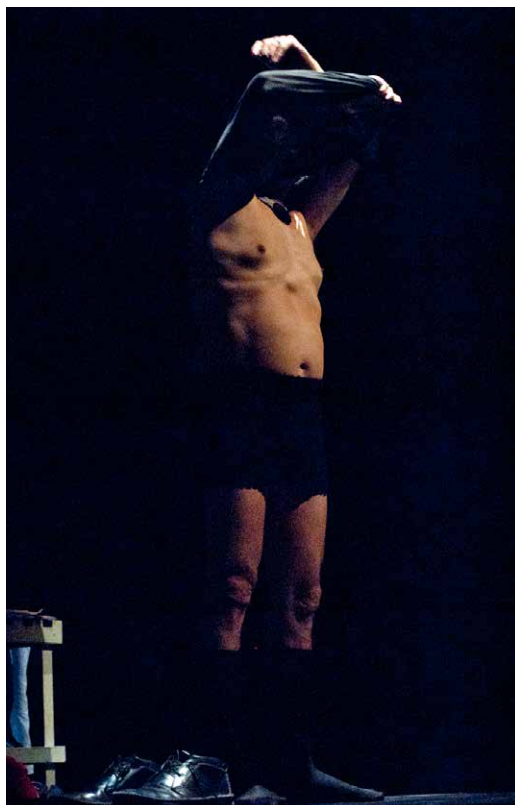
I was alone, the way you’d go to the scene of a crime. This was my business and I had to go through it alone, with no danger that my family, who were very strict about all church matters, would quickly find out about it from someone else. I went in when the film had already started and left before the end, increasing both the secrecy of the act and my safety. I don’t remember much else, not even whether it cleared anything up for me; I guess not much—only that there were far more people who were as I thought I was, and that they were surrounded by police and mass-arrests of queers, loaded like cattle into trucks that they then got out of to be rounded up at the precinct; a range of bodies who lived between individual thrills and external punishment. Pleasure and pain. The body.

*The Detective*

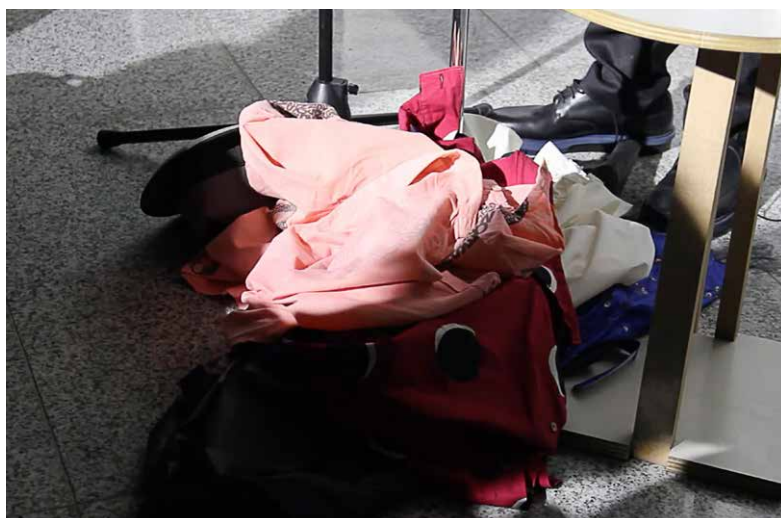
Action conference presented at: *Archivo F.X.: De economía cero: Intercambios*, Museu Picasso, Barcelona, 2012; Centro Cultural de España, Mexico City, 2012; *Diálogo y Performance. Políticas del cuerpo*, HQ of the MUMS (Movimiento para la diversidad sexual), Santiago de Chile, 2012; *El porvenir de la revuelta. Memoria y deseo LGBTIQ*, CentroCentro, Madrid, 2017















# LETTERS ARRIVE FOLDED. AT LEAST MOST OF THEM DO

- Correspondence allows for both a different temporality and the overlaying of those who are corresponding. A possible voyage to the past, the present, the future... A ghostly past that comes with us into the present, in view of multiple possible futures. Possible futures, and a gap—perhaps a fold—for fictionalising, imagining and dreaming. A new spatiality, revolving around the domestic, the private, giving it a political place that links to the outside and what we call nature. Correspondence as if overflowing itself, and its own identity.
- The fold has the potential of affectation. At least in a piece of paper its ability to affect is palpable. If we fold it and then flatten it out again, we can give the paper back most of its previous characteristics, but we could touch the impression, the mark, the scar of the fold. What mark is left by the folds that we make in our own identities? Could they be scars? And by the act of disidentifying ourselves? A life lived is one that recognises its folds.
- Letters arrive folded. At least most of them do. Sometimes the folding conceals secrets, and they ask of us the action of unfolding. And almost always, a letter tells us something before it is unfolded.
- An envelope is also made up of folds; they are what make it a container. They take it from being a two-sided surface to a multi-sided unit; they take it from being pure surface to something with an outside, an inside and spaces between; they make it something that can be half-opened; they allow it to have a public part and a private part. The fold transforms and becomes part of the correspondence; how can we hear it?
- We watch you fold your body, make folds in your body and play with its politics, we watch you add external folds and become others, weaving layers











of senses. How can these layers be arranged, folded and unfolded into sounds? Machines, objects in motion, breeze, water, branches in the wind, fire, flowers, turning pages as background music. The private, the personal, the collective, the political and the poetic all transformed into sound. How does it address which part of the machine it is?

- In the (your) continuous acts of folding, unfolding and refolding, there is a critique of identity models which is operative; a new gushing representation that runs like water through the fingers of your hands. And they then hold a celebration of difference, empathy increases, there is a chance of coexistence, of living together and finding ourselves in “otr+syyo”(othersandme).
- Because it is not so much a question of explicating (oneself) as of implicating (oneself). It is also a question of replicating (oneself). We move in “plicate” circles. “Plicate”, which comes etymologically from “plicare”: to fold, to make folds. And we hear you “plicate” yourself, “plicate” us.
- And then there are the layers, which are colours, too. Colour not only as a visual component but also as political statement: red, green, white, violet, sometimes a yellow, metal grey, silver, earth and clay brown, blue, pink, gold and golden. As flags, as discourse, as individual and collective memory, as an effort to join those struggles that must not be abandoned, and which do not always seem to be yours or ours, but they are. Of course they are.
- What is it that shapes us? We talk from a need to answer this question by joining micro-politics to macro-politics; from a place that acknowledges interdependence and interlocking with other human and non-human realities. Once more “otr+syyo” (othersandme), which means recognising ourselves in relation to, and in conjunction with, what surrounds us, including that which we do not perceive.
- We cannot fold ourselves without plasticity. With rigidity, we would snap, it would be impossible to achieve these new shapes. We would split apart. We have to be sure of this ability to bend and unbend, which allows us to flow and escape all attempts to codify us. There is an endless path out there of bends and folds that never close, generating openings and refuges. We can play the exquisite corpse, and give ourselves time to listen.





*Almanaque camionero. In il giardino, 2010*





*Los dos colores, 2012*





Baco en la tumba de Virgilio, 2004



*La Venus sin cabeza, 2012*



*Sexo yacente*, 2011



*La desaparición del hombre, 2011*



*La selva interior, 2012*



*Touché, 2015*





*La foto, 2016*



*Miguel en el huerto de los naranjos, 2013*





*Miguelinka, 2013*



*Atrapada en la selva interior, 2012*



*Beduina. Inmaculate chrysalis, 2012*



*Alboroque a Miguel de Molina, 2007*

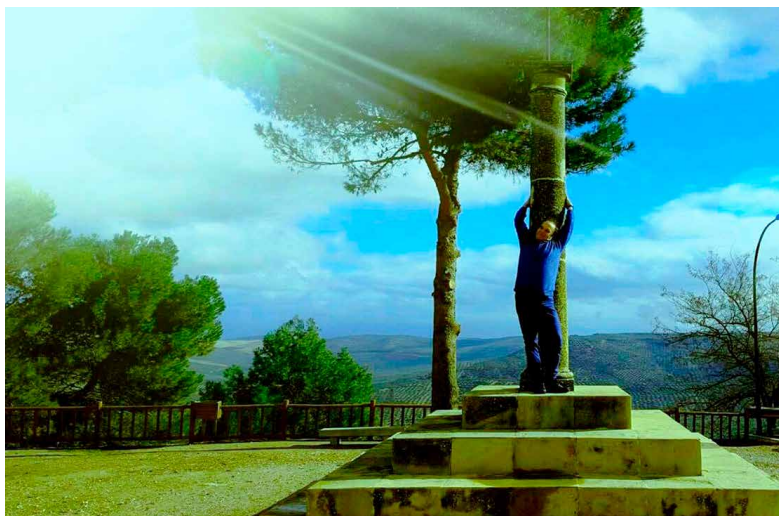


*Falsa pimienta, 2015*



*S/T, 2012*





*San Sebastián, 2014*



*Hendido por un rayo, 1998*



*El droguero, 2012*

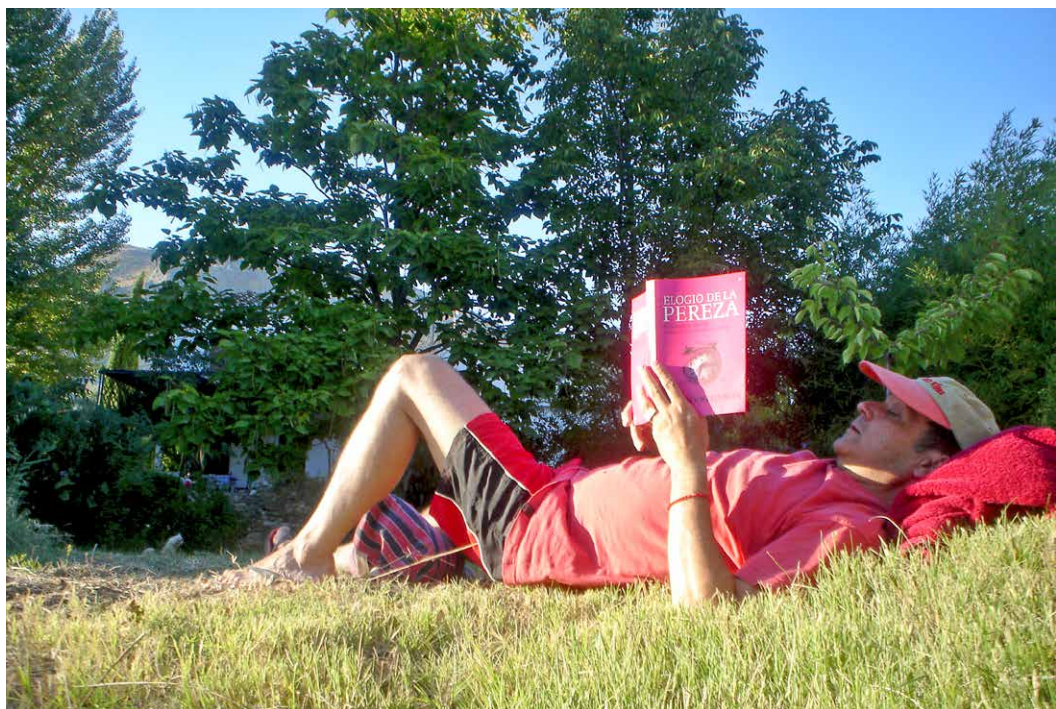


*BNV manos a la obra, 2010*





*Los narcisos, 2008*



*Elogio de la pereza, 2006*



*Palestina amada, 2008*



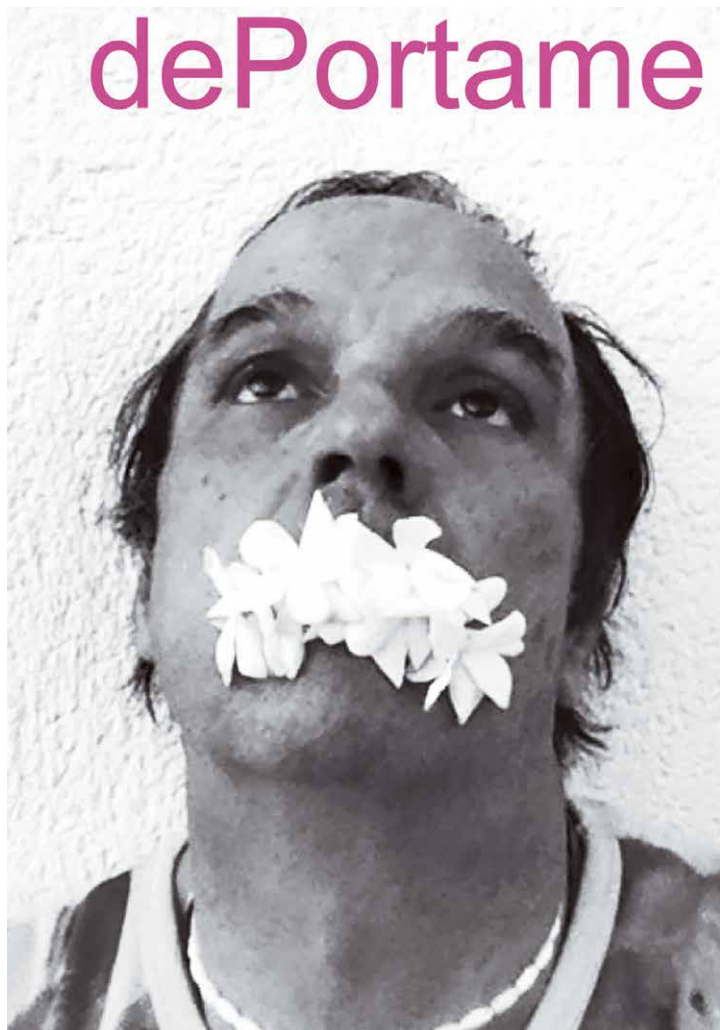
*En casa, 2008*





*Una luz oscura (díptico), 2006*

# dePortame



*dePortame, 2015*





*De la O, 2004*



# DERERUMNATURA

*DERERUMNATURA. Quien canta su mal espanta* is a report about the sick report, an action on the reversibility of pain, the sick body as a synecdoche for a world in pain because of poisonous capital, singing as communication, as a state of mind, as a challenge to the perfection of the healthy body conceived as commodity.

The sick body is, like all bodies, a body in transition, contradictory, open to new self-recognition, of the limits of life's order and disorder that is both stigmatising and comforting.

*DERERUMNATURA. Quien canta su mal espanta* is also an action of gratitude to the essential public health system that makes it possible to create spaces of hope in the face of the shady business of big pharma.

Sickness as a life lived.

*Laughter Is the Best Medicine*

Action performed as part of *Hedonismo crítico. Reinención y reivindicación*,  
Sala Hiroshima, Barcelona, 2016

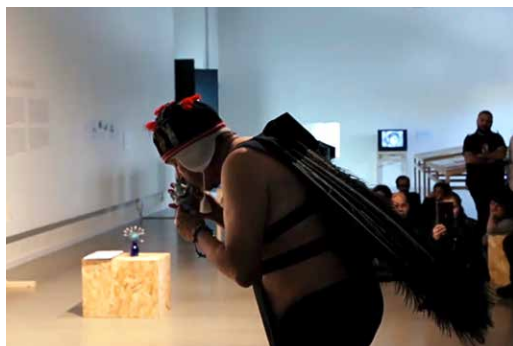
*DERERUMNATURA. Laughter Is the Best Medicine*

Action presented at the programme of performances  
*Cuerpos en la brecha* as part of the exhibition *Anarchivo sida*,  
Tabakalera, San Sebastian, 2016

*DERERUMNATURA. Laughter Is the Best Medicine*

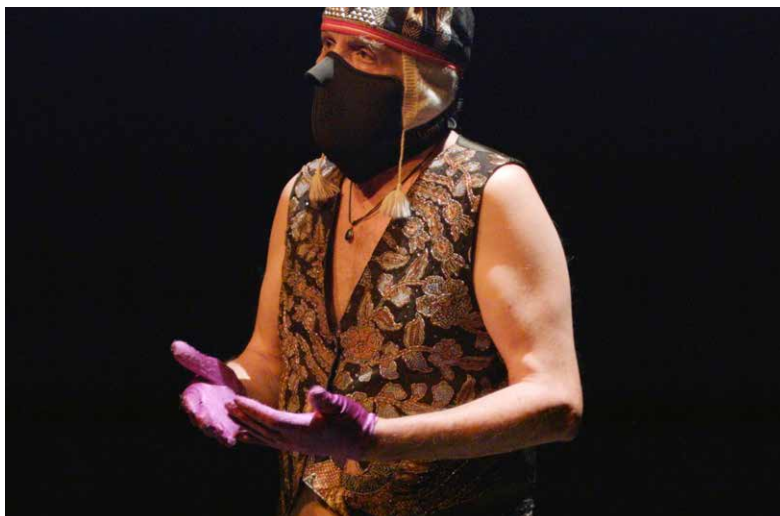
Action presented at the programme of performances  
of the exhibition *Círculo íntimo: el mundo de Pepe Espaliú*,  
C3A-Centro de Creación Contemporánea de Andalucía, Córdoba, 2017



























Loja

From 1974 to 1975 Benlloch was part of Granada's independent Teatro Ilíbero which, under the auspices of José Monleón, put on the shows *Neruda-Casals* (in its own production following the Chilean coup d'état in 1973) and a version of Peter Weiss' play *How Mister Mockinpott Was Cured of His Sufferings*, both banned by the Franco regime.

From the mid-1970s until the end of the 1980s he was a member of the MCA (Communist Movement of Andalusia) and the JAR (Andalusian Revolutionary Youths), the driving force behind the anti-NATO movement and the COPA (Coordinator of Pacifist Organisations of Andalusia) and a supporter of the creation of the FLHA (Homosexual Liberation Front of Andalusia).

In the 1980s he occasionally contributed to the since closed *Diario de Granada*.

In 1983 he co-founded the Planta Baja in Granada.

In 1985 he formed part of the group that made up the Culture Area of Granada Provincial Council.

From 1984 to 1986 he was part of the informal group Las Pekinesas, doing occasional carnivalesque agitprop actions, including *SIDA DA*, performed in 1985 at the Planta Baja, the first action to deal with AIDS through artistic creativity in Spain.

From 1986 to 1994 he was part of the Cutre Chou group, participating in their occasional cabaret shows.

He was a member of BNV Productions from its inception in 1988, and was co-founder of the cultural association CARTA DE AJUSTE.

In 2006 he became a founder member of the PRPC (Cultural Policies Reflection Platform) in Seville.

From 2001 to 2015 he coordinated and produced the UNIA arteypensamiento programme at the International University of Andalusia, and coordinated the seminars for the Post-Identity Feminisms Archive.

- 2021  
**TIPOTOPOTROPOS**. Photographs-Action, THE RYDER gallery, Madrid.
- 2020  
**Miguel Benlloch**. *Cuerpo conjugado* (Miguel Benlloch. Conjugated Body), the transept of the Hospital Real, Granada, curated by Mar Villaespesa and Joaquín Vázquez.  
**DE LA O**. Photographs-Action in *Romper el aire*, Galería Alarcón Criado, Seville, curated by pie.fmc (Independent Platform for Modern and Contemporary Flamenco Studies)  
**TENGO TIEMPO** (I Have Time). Video-document of the action in *Acción. Una historia provisional de los 90*, MACBA, Barcelona, curated by Ferrán Barenblit.
- 2019  
**Miguel Benlloch**. *Cuerpo conjugado*, CentroCentro, Madrid, curated by Mar Villaespesa and Joaquín Vázquez.
- 2018  
**Miguel Benlloch**. *Cuerpo conjugado*, Sala Atin Aya, ICAS (Instituto de la Cultura y las Artes de Sevilla), curated by Mar Villaespesa and Joaquín Vázquez.  
**EL FANTASMA INVIDENTE** (The Blind Ghost). Action for the opening of the exhibition *Miguel Benlloch. Cuerpo conjugado*  
**Miguel Benlloch** (Act of Remembrance). Palacio de los Condes de Gabia, Granada Provincial Council.  
**EL DETECTIVE** (The Detective). Video-document of the action-conference in *Aplicación Murillo. Materialismo, charitas, populismo*, Espacio Santa Clara, ICAS (Instituto de la Cultura y las Artes de Sevilla), curated by Pedro G. Romero, Luis Martínez Montiel and Joaquín Vázquez.
- 2017  
**EL DETECTIVE** (The Detective). Action-conference in *El porvenir de la revuelta. Memoria y deseo* LGTBIQ, CentroCentro, Madrid, artistic direction by Fefa Vila.  
**DERERUMNATURA**. *Quien canta su mal espanta* (DERERUMNATURA. Laughter is the Best Medicine). Action in the programme of performances directed by Jesús Alcaide, as part of the exhibition *Círculo íntimo: el mundo de Pepe Espaliú*, C3A-Centro de Creación Contemporánea de Andalucía, Córdoba, curated by José Miguel Cortés.
- SIDA DA**. Video-document of the action in *El porvenir de la revuelta. Memoria y deseo* LGTBIQ, Conde Duque, Madrid, artistic direction by Fefa Vila.  
**11 DE MEDIA** (Average 11). Video of the video-action at the presentation of *Apología/Antología*, La Virreina, Centre de la Imatge, Barcelona.  
**ACUCHILLAD+S** (Slashed). Video-document of the action at *El borde de una herida*, CentroCentro, Madrid, curated by Juan Guardiola.
- 2016  
**SIDA DA** and **CUTRE CHOU**. Video-documents of the actions in *Gelatina dura. Los 80's, historias escamoteadas*, MACBA, Barcelona, curated by Teresa Grandas.  
**TENGO TIEMPO** (I Have Time). Video-document of the action proposed by Equipo re for *Visceral Blue*, La Capella, Barcelona, curated by Anna Manubens.  
**DERERUMNATURA**. *Quien canta su mal espanta* (DERERUMNATURA. Laughter is the Best Medicine). Action in the performance programme *Cuerpos en la brecha* of the project *Anarchivo sida* (Anarchive AIDS), Tabakalera, San Sebastian, curated by Equipo re.  
**SIDA DA**. Video-document of the action in *Anarchivo sida*.  
**QUIEN CANTA SU MAL ESPANTA** (Laughter Is the Best Medicine). Action in *Hedonismo crítico. Reinención y reivindicación*, Sala Hiroshima, Barcelona, produced by Equipo Palomar (Mariokissme and Rafa Marcos Mota).  
**CÚMULO**. Collaboration for issue 8 of the magazine *Concreta*, Valencia, 2016.  
Participation in the audiovisual publication *Apología Antología: Recorrido por el vídeo en el contexto español*, produced by Hamaca, Tabakalera and the University of the Basque Country.
- 2015  
**SERRANILLAS DE LUCAINENA**. Video-action in collaboration with Mariokissme and Rafa Marcos Mota, based on fragments of *Serranilla VII* by the Marqués de Santillana.  
**ESPEJO JEPSE** (Mirro R Orrim). Action in *Val del Omar = 1+1+1*, at the Cave/Museum

- of Curro Albaicín, Sacromonte, Granada, coordinated by Ángel Arias.
- BIENVENID+S REFUGIAD+S** (Refugees Welcome). Tee shirt made for *Iconica*, Swab Art Fair, Barcelona, curated by Equipo Palomar (Mariokissme and Rafa Marcos Mota).
- 2014
- ACUCHILLAD+S** (Slashed). Action at the 16<sup>th</sup> ZEMOS98 Festival, CAS (Centro de las Artes de Sevilla); in *La noche del apagón*, MACBA, Barcelona, curated by Paul B. Preciado and Valentín Roma.
- ACUCHILLAD+S** (Slashed). Video-document of the action at *Colonia apócrifa. Imágenes de la colonialidad en España*, MUSAC, León, curated by Juan Guardiola; in *Crítica de la razón migrante*, La Casa Encendida, Madrid, curated by Carolina Bustamante and Francisco Godoy.
- 51 GÉNEROS** (51 Genders). Video-document of the action in *Múltiplo de 100. Archivo feminismo post-identitarios*, CAS (Centro de las Artes de Sevilla), curated by Mar Villaspesa and Joaquín Vázquez.
- ALGO FLOTA**. Silkscreen edition, Christian M. Walter silkscreen studio, Granada.
- PÓSITO, POSÁ, EXPOSICIÓN**. Action at the presentation of the book *Miguel Benlloch. Acaeció en Granada*, ciengramos, at the Pósito de Loja, Granada.
- Presentation of the book *Miguel Benlloch. Acaeció en Granada* at La Fuga bookstore, and La Canibal bookstore.
- Participation at the *Art Dating* Seminars, organised by AVVAC (Visual Artists of Valencia), Alacant i Castelló, Valencia.
- 2013
- ROSA DE LOS VIENTOS SIN NORTE** (A Wind Rose with No North). Tee shirt produced for *T-Festa, Open Art T-shirt Festival*, Bilbao, invited by Aimar Arriola.
- ACUCHILLAD+S** (Slashed). Action, Planta Baja, Granada.
- ¿N-OTAN QUE NO LES QUEREMOS?** (Do They N-OTICE That We Don't Want Them?—a play on the words *notan*, 'they notice', and OTAN, NATO). Action at the presentation of the book *Miguel Benlloch. Acaeció en Granada*, Palacio de los Condes de Gabia, Granada.
- DESIDENTIFÍCATE** (Disidentify Yourself). Video-document of the action at *Screen Festival*, as part of *Amplificación de señal: videos y prácticas contra-biopólicas* (II), Loop Fair, Barcelona, curated by Equipo re.
- 2012
- DESIDENTIFÍCATE** (Disidentify Yourself). Video-document of the action at *Genealogías feministas en el arte español. 1960-2010*, MUSAC, León, curated by Patricia Mayayo and Juan Vicente Aliaga.
- 58 GÉNEROS** (58 Genders). Action at *Muestra Internacional de Performance*, Ex Teresa Arte Actual, Mexico City.
- EL DETECTIVE** (The Detective). Action-conference at the Centro Cultural de España, Mexico City; at *Archivo F.X.: De economía cero: Intercambios*, Museu Picasso, Barcelona, curated by Pedro G. Romero and Valentín Roma.
- SI EL ARTE ES VIDA DEBE PARECERSE A ELLA...** (If Art Is Life It Should Look Like It...). Action for the project *Diálogo y Performance. Políticas del cuerpo*, MAC, Santiago de Chile, curated by Equipo re.
- EL DETECTIVE** (The Detective). Action for the project *Diálogo y Performance. Políticas del cuerpo*, at the headquarters of MUMS (Sexual Diversity Movement), Santiago de Chile, curated by Equipo re.
- MAPUCH ¡EH!** (Mapuch Hey!). Action for the project *Diálogo y Performance. Políticas del cuerpo*, Universidad de Concepción, Concepción, curated by Equipo re.
- 51 52 53 54 56 58 GÉNEROS. CONVERSA AMB EQUIPO RE I MIGUEL BENLLOCH/ CATALASUÑAS/51 GÉNEROS** (51 52 53 54 56 58 Genders. In Conversation with Equipo Re and Miguel Benlloch/ CatalasuñAs/51 Genders). Action, conversation and video as part of the *re.act.feminism#2*, Fundació Antoni Tapiès, Barcelona.
- 2011
- Coordination of the seminar *Cuerpo Impropio. Guía de modelos somatopolíticos y de sus posibles usos desviados*, UNIA arteypensamiento, directed by Paul B. Preciado.
- L+S MAÑ+S**. Performed at the Cutre Chou's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary party, with Juanma Sánchez, Alfacar, Granada.
- SI EL ARTE ES VIDA DEBE PARECERSE A ELLA...** (If Art Is Life It Should Look Like It...). Action-conference at *Taula Talk*, Festival LP'11, Ex-Festival de Danza, CCCB, Barcelona; at *Desmemoria e irreverencias en el arte actual*, round table

- organised by the Instituto de Estudios Andaluces.
- AFUERA DEL SEXO** (Outside Sex). Action at Virgen de los Deseos (la casa de Mujeres Creando), La Paz.
- GRANADA APLOMO** (Granada Aplomb—pun on “plomo”, lead). “La Verdad de la Ficción”, conference about the *Lead Books* of Sacromonte in the *RED11*. [Gair Sahiih] Seminar, UNIA arteypensamiento, Sala del Laboratorio de Acción Escénica Vladimir Tzekov, Granada.
- 2010
- 56 GÉNEROS** (56 Genders). Action at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Centro José Guerrero, Granada.
- Direction of the seminar *Movimiento en las bases: transfeminismos, feminismos queer, despatologización, discursos no binarios*, UNIA arteypensamiento, Seville.
- DESIDENTIFÍCATE** (Disidentify Yourself). Action at the closing of the seminar *Movimiento en las bases*, UNIA arteypensamiento, Sala El Cachorro, Seville; at *The Studio: Regard: Subversive Actions in Normative Space*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, curated by Aimar Arriola, Marina Noronha, Maija Rudowska and Alexa Griffith Winton; at *Formas de lo político en Andalucía de los 70 y 80*, headed by Aimar Arriola, Maribel Escobar, Emma Herbín, Nancy Garín and Pilar Muñoz, Research workshop of PEI (Independent Studies Programme), MACBA, directed by Paul B. Preciado.
- 2009
- BANDA SOLO DE CHICAS** (All Girl Band). Collage-intervention at *Ladyfest Sur*, Bar Rayuela, Seville.
- ¿CUÁLES SON...?** (Which Ones Are They...). Action at *Ladyfest Sur*, Sala El Cachorro/ Fábrica de Sombreros, Seville.
- 54 GÉNEROS** (54 Genders). Action at the Nits d'Aielo Festival, Instituto Francés, Valencia.
- Presentation of works at *El arte después de los feminismos. Absorción y resistencia: retóricas identitarias y marcos de visibilidad*, PEI (Programa de Estudios Independientes), MACBA, Barcelona.
- 2008
- SAHARA**. Action during the Week of Solidarity with the Sahara, organised by the collective Nana, Artifariti and Co-laboratorio PRPC, Fábrica de Sombreros, Seville.
- 54 GÉNEROS** (54 Genders). Action at *Sur Expres a...: nuevos creadores andaluces*, CAS (Centro de las Artes de Sevilla), curated by Margarita Aizpuru.
- 11 DE MEDIA** (Average 11). Action-video at *Sur Expres a...: nuevos creadores andaluces*, CAS (Centro de las Artes de Sevilla), curated by Margarita Aizpuru. In front of the camera, Miguel Benlloch; behind the camera, Manuel Prados.
- DE LA O**. Photographs-action. In front of the camera, Miguel Benlloch; behind the camera, Manuel Prados.
- 2007
- 53 GÉNEROS** (53 Genders). Action at the 4<sup>th</sup> Congreso Estatal Isonomía “Identidad de género vs Identidad sexual”, Fundación Isonomía, Universidad Jaume I, Castellón.
- 2006
- 52 GÉNEROS** (52 Genders). Action at *Sur Expres a...: nuevos creadores andaluces*, La Casa Encendida, Madrid, curated by Margarita Aizpuru.
- 51 GÉNEROS** (51 Genders). Video-document of the action at the Espantapitas Festival, Vera (Almería), curated by Juan Carlos Rescalvo.
- 2005
- 51 GÉNEROS** (51 Genders). Action at the *Mutaciones del feminismo* seminar, Arteleku, directed by Paul B. Preciado, María José Belbel and Erreakzioa.
- 2004
- FRONT ERAS** (Pun on “fronteras”—frontiers, and “eras”—you were). Action at *Transacciones/Fadaiat. Libertad de conocimiento/Libertad de movimiento*, UNIA arteypensamiento, Castillo de Guzmán, Tarifa.
- MICROACCIONES REPUBLICANAS** (Republican Microactions). Actions in various media, unplanned with respect to the time and space, performed in front of small audiences and aimed at the dedramatisation of the Republic.
- EL RUIDO LEGAL ES LA GUERRA** (Legal Noise Is War). Action performed for the reopening of the Planta Baja, Planta Baja, Granada.
- TENGO TIEMPO** (I Have Time). Video-document of the action for

- the video programme, Casa de América/ARCO, Madrid, curated by Margarita Aizpuru.
- 2003  
 Coordination of the seminar *REUNIÓN 03. Ceci n'est pas un congrés*, UNIA arteypensamiento, La Rábida, Huelva.  
*VOLVED A MULTITUD* (Come Back to the Crowd). Action at the closing of *REUNIÓN 03*, La Rábida.
- 2002  
*PLÚMBEA* (Leaden). Action at the Big Torino Biennial, Turin, curated by Michelangelo Pistoletto.  
*ACCIÓN PAELLA-RISOTTO* (Paella-Risotto Action). Action at the community centre on Via Bligny, Turin.  
 Participation as actor in the video *Peatón Bonzo* directed by ZEMOS98.
- 2001  
*TALAMEDA* (Pun on "tala"—cut down, and Alameda—the venue). Action in civic workshops against the cutting down of trees in the Alameda de Hércules, Seville.  
*PLANTACIÓN* (Plantaction). Action in *Matitas Divinas*, a project by Federico Guzmán, the gardens of the Cartuja Monastery, Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville, curated by Esther Regueira.  
*O DONDE HABITE EL OLVIDO* (Or Where Oblivion Dwells). Action at the Granada Performance Festival, Palacio de los Córdoba, Granada, curated by Margarita Aizpuru.  
*O DONDE HABITE EL OLVIDO* (Or Where Oblivion Dwells). Video.
- 2000  
*TI@VIV@* (Merry Go Round, in Spanish Living Uncle/Aunt). Action at the installation *Paralelo 36* by José Luis Tirado, Paseo de la Alameda, Tarifa.  
*VIENEN POR EL CAMINO ESTRECHO* (They Came by the Narrow Road). Action as part of the exhibition *Veladura* by Maura Sheehan, Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville.
- 1999  
*MAPUCH ¡EH!* (Mapuch Hey!). Action for the project *Puerto de las Artes*, Muelle de las Carabelas, La Rábida, Huelva, curated by Jorge Arévalo.
- K.O. sovos O.K.* Action at *X KOSOVO*, Reales Atarazanas, Seville, curated by Juan Ramón Barbancho.
- REFLEXIÓN III* (Reflection III). Action at the 1<sup>st</sup> Festival Mediterráneo de Alejandría, Palace of Art Appreciation – Sidi Gaber, Alejandría, curated by Ecumei.
- REFLEXIÓN II. K.O. sovos O.K.* (REFLECTION II. K.O. sovos O.K.). Action in *Iluminaciones*, Casa de la Moneda, Seville, curated by Margarita Aizpuru.
- REFLEXIÓN* (Reflection). Action on the programme *IMAGINARIA* on Canal Sur 2 TV.
- IBN FARUM*. Action at the Bienal de Faro Arte Contemporáneo, Algarve-Andaluzia.
- ILUMINO LA TIERRA QUE ABANDONO* (I Light Up the Land I Am Leaving). Action at the installation *Paralelo 36* by José Luis Tirado, Plaza Fragela, Festival de Teatro Iberoamericano, Cadiz.
- 1998  
*INVERSIÓN* (Reversal). Action in *Transgénico@s. Representaciones y experiencias sobre la sociedad, la sexualidad y los géneros en el arte español contemporáneo*, Koldo Mitxelena Kulturunea, San Sebastian, curated by Mar Villaespesa and Juan Vicente Aliaga.  
*CEAR-SUR* (Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid-South). Action at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Human Rights, Culture Delegation, Regional Government of Andalusia, Seville.
- 1997  
*REFLEXIÓN* (Reflection). Action in *Juntos pero no revueltos*, Fundación Ludwig and streets of Havana, curated by Meira Marrero and José Ángel Toirac.  
*ÓSMOSIS*. Curator of an exhibition of 20 artists with works related to migratory phenomena, Centro de Ayuda al Refugiado, Seville.  
*ÓSMOSIS. MI x TI = ZAJE* (My X T Your = [Mixture]). Action and installation in the project *Almadraba*, exhibition put on by Local Cultura (Miguel Benlloch, Raimond Chaves, Alonso Gil and Federico Guzmán), Museo Marítimo del Puerto de Ceuta, curated by Corinne Diserens and Mar Villaespesa.
- 1996  
*INMERSIÓN* (Immersion). Action at the launching of *Copiacabana*, Ponte Ajuda,



- the Portuguese side of the Guadiana river, in the project *Além da Água: Copiacabana* by the collective Gratis (Federico Guzmán, Victoria Gil, Robin Kahn and Kirby Gookin), MEIAC, Badajoz, curated by Mar Villaespasa.
- REVERSIBLELBISREVER.** Action in *Movimiento e inercia*, Facultad de Bellas Artes/Sala Parpalló, Valencia; in *Abanico*, programme of performances produced by CARTA DE AJUSTE, Pont Rouge, Festival de La Batie, Geneva.
- REVERSIBLELBISREVER.** Action and one-man exhibition at the Galería Cavecanem, Seville.
- 1995
- TRÁNSITO** (Transit). Action at the closing of *La isla del ©opyright*, exhibition by the collective GRATIS (Federico Guzmán, Victoria Gil, Robin Kahn, Kirby Gookin), in the project *punte... de pasaje*, Ría del Nervión, Portugalete, Bilbao, curated by CARTA BLANCA/Corinne Diserens.
- 1994
- ESTADO ROLDÁN, ESTADO LADRÓN. LA VIRGEN DEL PILAR DICE QUE NO...** (Roldán State, Robber State. Our Lady of Pilar Says No...—"Roldán", (former chief of the Spanish Civil Guard imprisoned for corruption) is an anagram of "ladrón", robber). Cutre Chou action, Caseta el Meneillo, Recinto Ferial, Granada.
- CANARIO** (Canary). Sound action, Granada-New York telephone broadcast in the presentation of the project *Promotional Copy* by Robin Kahn, Guggenheim Museum SoHo, New York.
- TENGO TIEMPO** (I Have Time). Action at a bar, Moyá, Barcelona; The Kitchen, New York; Planta Baja, Granada; BNV Productions, Seville.
- 12 ESFERAS** (12 Spheres). Action in remembrance of *La esfera de oro* by James Lee Byars, *Plus Ultra* project, Palacio de los Córdoba, Granada, curated by Mar Villaespasa.
- 1993
- TIERRA PALESTINA** (Palestinian Land). "Interior" exhibition, gifting of 75 silkscreen prints to 75 people. Edition, Christian M. Walter silkscreen studio, Granada.
- CUARZOS** (Quartz). Inter-spatial action, distribution of 782 quartzes in a non-specified time frame and to non-specified people, communicated through writing at the LA SITUACIÓN meetings, Facultad de Bellas Artes, Cuenca.
- 1992
- MARÍA DE LA O.** Tantric action-song from inside James Lee Byars' *La esfera de oro* (The Sphere of Gold) at the opening ceremony.
- 1991
- ALGO FLOTA.** "Interior" exhibition, 75 silkscreens given out to friends. Edition, Christian M. Walter silkscreen studio, Granada.
- LAS FLORES DEL FRÍO** (Flowers from the Cold). Installation with ice, flowers and texts from the book *Las flores del frío* by the poet Luis García Montero, Planta Baja, Granada.
- 1990
- CLÍNICAMENTE VIVOS** (Clinically Alive). Installation with doctor's furniture from my father's clinic, Planta Baja, Granada.

## Biografies

MARÍA JOSÉ BELBEL (Granada, 1954) was awarded a BA in English Philology and a Master's from London University. She was an anti-Franco activist in the 1970s, and has been a feminist activist since the beginning of second-wave feminism (1975). Since the 2010s she has carried out her work as queer feminist academic by translating and publishing books, particularly those of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. She edited *Conocimiento feminista y políticas de traducción I and II* published by Arteleku (2013, 2014), and translated *Mother Camp* by Esther Newton (1972) as *Mother Camp. Una historia de los transformistas femeninos en los Estados Unidos* (2016), and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (2003) and *A Dialogue on Love* (1999) as *Tocar la fibra. Afecto, pedagogía, performatividad* (2018) and *Un diálogo sobre el amor* (2019). Her latest work, the editing and translating of *Reading Sedgwick*, published in English by Lauren Berlant, will be out at the beginning of 2022.

EQUIPO RE. A research and production platform at the intersection of body politics and archive. It came into being at the end of 2010, the initiative of a group of people participating in the second edition of the PEI (Independent Studies Programme) at the MACBA. Since 2012 the collective has consisted of Aimar Arriola, Nancy Garín and Linda Valdés. They have undertaken projects of research, exhibition and organisation of public activities in the MAC (Contemporary Art Museum) in Santiago de Chile, the Universidad de Concepción in Concepción, Chile, the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía and the Centro de Cultura Contemporánea Conde Duque in Madrid, UNIA arteypensamiento in Seville, Tabakalera. Centro Internacional de Cultura Contemporánea in San Sebastian, MACBA (Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona) and CAC (Contemporary Art Centre), in Quito. In 2012/2013 they ran the *Anarchivo sida* project, an open investigation into the cultural and social side of the ongoing HIV/AIDS crisis in Spain and in Chile, alongside case studies in other contexts in Latin America, which, over the years the work was being done, produced various specific production projects.

The relationship between the members of Equipo re and Miguel Benlloch goes back to a collective research project called Peligrosidad Social (PEI-MACBA, 2008-2010), and it soon grew into friendship. With Miguel's help, they have been able to show his work in various contexts in Chile, as well as at the Fundació Antoni Tàpies in Barcelona, and the Tabakalera, San Sebastian.

NURIA ENGUITA (Madrid, 1967). Director of the IVAM (Institut Valencià d'Art Modern) since 2020. From 2015 to 2020 she was director of Bombas Gens Centre d'Art, Valencia. From 2001 to 2015 she was on the management team of the arteypensamiento programme at la UNIA (Universidad Internacional de Andalucía); She co-edited *Afterall Journal* from 2007 until 2014 and *Concreta* from 2012 until 2020. Enguita co-curated *Manifesta 4* in Frankfurt in 2002, the *Encuentro Internacional de Medellín* in 2011 and the 31<sup>st</sup> Bienal de São Paulo in 2014. Enguita graduated in History and Theory of Art from Madrid's Universidad Autónoma (1989). From 1998 until 2008 she was the artistic director of the Fundació Antoni Tàpies in Barcelona. From 1994 until 1998 she was curator at IVAM, Valencia. She has curated a range of exhibitions, has lectured on the history of art in many centres and universities, as well as publishing numerous articles in catalogues and contemporary art magazines such as *Parkett*, *Afterall Journal* and *Concreta*.

JOAQUÍN GÁÑEZ (Barcelona, 1969) lives and works in San Sebastian. He graduated in fine arts from the Universitat de Barcelona. Since the late 1990s he has been a professional graphic designer specialising in editorial design, working mainly for public cultural institutions including: Arteleku-Diputación Foral de Gipuzkoa, Tabakalera, Koldo Mitxelena Kulturunea, San Sebastian 2016 Capital Europea de la Cultura (San Sebastian); Cristóbal Balenciaga Museoa (Getaria); Artium (Vitoria); Azkuna Zentroa, Guggenheim Bilbao (Bilbao); Marco (Vigo); Museu Picasso (Barcelona); Witte de With (Rotterdam) and Sternberg Press (Berlin).

JULIO JARA. Recollecting what happened, recalling not remembering, seems somewhat theatrical to me, like art with its determination to aestheticise life, to theatricalise politics. Memories and other stories make for an

ordered life. Executed to the letter (to the letter, not to the word), arguments for the implementation of common ground reified as statues, pillars and columns reminding us of the disobedience of Lot's wife when she turned her head. By looking back, we record the experience, we idealise life. Perspective sums us up, closes us in and uses us; we are a tool, an obedience to history to the detriment of the myth, as the only rational knowledge for a true interpretation of reality. But this really is a studio-set, the image of a pipe, the epitaph of life, the mausoleum; and how can we jump over it? From memory to life, getting past all perspectives, all red lines. A jump trusting that we will be gathered, without censorship, without judgment, into the arms of blessed scattering; what we commonly call disorder, trash, the things that don't count, that hold no interest, the leftovers.

I remember my failures, which I tried to order into a CV for a workshop on the immeasurable. They come back to me now, ringing out high up in the bell tower, the summit of the trash on which there sits an "I" of resistance. Because that's what happens when we try to order things, recalling yet not remembering, systemising that which refuses to be ordered. The trash.

The wretched destabilise memory through the scandal of their failures, in the way that death enthrones life. Art carries with its failure, its own ending, as it tries (by turning its head, through the artist) to order the flash of light the artist felt so intimately, which inevitably gives rise (as is coming to my mind right now) to an unfaithful reply.

GUILLERMINA MONGAN (La Plata, Argentina, 1979). Artist, art historian, curator, art teacher and manager. She works as contemporary art professor in the Arts Faculty of the National University of La Plata, and independently on curatorial and research arts projects. She is a member of Red Conceptualismos del Sur (RedCSur), a research, discussion and collectivist platform in Latin America, and of the Contemporary Artistic Research/Procedures Centre of the Mauricio Kagel Arts Institute, at the National University of San Martín. She is part of the research and action collective Frente Sudaka (Spain, Colombia, Chile and Argentina), and of the artistic activism collectives Serigrafistas Queer and Cromoactivismo. Her areas of research and production revolve around

artístico-political practices, methodologies, narrations and performativities of artistic research, and the archive as a space for experiencing stories and memories. Her individual and collective works include the sound archive *El afecto como política contra el olvido*, CAEV (Centro de Arte Experimental Antonio Vigo), La Plata, Buenos Aires (2012), *Derivas*, MUAC (Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo), Mexico City (2017) and *Mapa espectral de las huellas masottianas*, in collaboration with participants in the PEI (Independent Studies Programme) at the MACBA (Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Barcelona) (2018).

JOSÉ LUIS ORTIZ NUEVO (Archidona, 1948). Writer, journalist, flamencologist. Ortiz Nuevo studied Political Science in Madrid, where he became interested in the world of flamenco. Through Enrique Morente he got to meet major cantaores including Pepe de la Matrona and Pericón de Cádiz, and the recordings he made with these musicians resulted in two books that gave rise to a new genre in flamenco literature. Other books followed, dedicated to other artists, such as Tío Gregorio el Borrigo, Tía Anica la Piriñaca and Enrique el Cojo. His professional work is closely linked to Seville's world of flamenco, and in 1980, alongside other enthusiasts, he founded the major festival known as Bienal de Flamenco, of which he was the director for five years.

PAULA PÉREZ-RODRÍGUEZ (Madrid, 1989). Cultural critic, researcher, editor and oral artist. Companion of art-making in *tacoderaya* and companion of thought in the Seminar Euraca. She wrote her Princeton University doctoral thesis on linguistic-performative practices and theories developed in Spain between 1909 and 1939. Her investigative work focuses on interdisciplinary analysis of language-body dis/order mechanisms and combines approaches to studies of performance, sound, sociolinguistics, glottopolitics, poetics and literary and critical theory. She has written for publications including *Concreta*, *Re-visiones*, *Kamchatka*, *L/E/N/G/U/A/J/E/o*, *Anuario de Glotopolítica*, *1616*, *Anuario de Literatura Comparada*, *BeatBurger*, *Frontera D* and *Diagonal*. With *tacoderaya*, the voice and sound selection collective consisting of herself and Jonás de Murias, she has put on performances and sets in various art spaces

in Madrid (CA2M-Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, Centro de Cultura Contemporánea Conde Duque, Sala de Arte Joven and the Matadero Madrid) including *HAY UNA PELEA E IMPORTA QUE PASE* (2015, PhotoEspaña), *Titula este truste ánimo yop uwu* (2020, PoemRoom) and *1 ola majestik en mi balconee* (2021, L'Internationale).

ÁLVARO RAMÍREZ ROMERO (Puerto de Santa María, 1983) got rid of his first surname to celebrate the legacy of his mother. Rechristened as Álvaro Romero, he has transposed this search for identity to his own voice thus beginning a path that breaks with the traditional concept of *cante jondo*, remaking it as a tool for activism. He trained in Seville in the classic flamenco school, later breaking away to start collaborating with the main flamenco companies of Andalusia, both as a soloist and accompanying major figures of the flamenco scene. Both in their company and solo he toured Spain and performed in Greece, Germany, the Czech Republic, England, Scotland, Italy, Norway, Russia, Mexico, Canada and Japan. From 2014 to 2019, he worked as an accompanying flamenco singer at the Centro Andaluz de Danza. Offstage, in 2012 he collaborated with Granada's FAAQ collective on a work based on José Val del Omar, alongside bulos.net and Zemos98. In 2016 he appeared in José Luis Tirado's film *NO, un cuento flamenco*, for which he co-wrote the soundtrack. His involvement in queer activism includes participation in the performance *Animals* (Teatro de la Maestranza, 2018, and Teatro Fernán Gómez, 2019) with Cristina Hall, and *Pensaor* by Fernando López Parra. In 2018 Angélica Liddell invited Romero to participate in the creation of *Una costilla sobre la mesa: madre*, in which he performed various styles of saeta. Currently, alongside Toni Martín, he is involved in a recording project, based on electronic music and texts by homosexual poets, including Pedro Lemebel.

MARÍA SALGADO (Madrid, 1984) and FRANK CABEZA DE VACA (Córdoba, 1976) have worked together since 2012. Their shared work is based on the idea of audiotext as a convergence of poetry, language, music, sound art and performance. Together they have built up an impressive body of work, primarily in two areas of research: Firstly *Hacia un ruido* (2012-2016), which explores the cycle of global political disobedience of

2011 and took the form of a book (*Frases para un film político*, 2016), a record, an instrumental piece for an ensemble, a sound installation and live performance which toured spaces as disparate as the Centro Dramático Nacional Valle Inclán and the Espacio Naranjo, and secondly *Jinete Último Reino* (2017-present), which explores the subjective disobedience of sexual and gender dissent, and which has produced instrumental pieces for ensembles, posters, sheet music, a sound art piece for Radio Reina Sofía, an octophonic installation at the Tabakalera (*Komunikazio-Inkomunikazioa*, 2021), the audio-video *Nana de esta pequeña era* (Bergen Assembly, 2020) and its installation version (*Politics of life*, WKV Stuttgart, 2020), as well as two sixty-minute stage works, *Frag. 3 y Frag. 2*, performed at spaces including the Mercat de les Flors in Barcelona, the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid and the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona. *Frag. 1* will premiere in November 2021 at Teatros del Canal as part of the Autumn Festival.

ALEJANDRO SIMÓN (Huércal-Overa, 1984). Researcher, artist and professor in the fine arts faculty of the University of Salamanca. He was part of Spain's Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness research groups "Critical visualities: Cultural Ecologies and Common Research" and "Critical Visualities: The Rewriting of Narratives through Images" based at Madrid's Complutense University. His published works include "Imágenes sin Facultades Aparentes" in *Exterioridades críticas. Comunidades de aprendizaje universitarias en arte y arquitectura y su incorporación a los relatos de la modernidad y del presente*, Brumaria, Madrid 2019; "Cómo recordar lo que nunca has vivido", in *Fiesta, memoria y archivos. Política sexual disidente y resistencias cotidianas en España en los años setenta*, Brumaria, Madrid 2019; "Notas para un imaginario del sureste peninsular. Turismo, ficción, migraciones y frente agrario", in *Visualidades críticas y ecologías culturales*, Brumaria, Madrid 2018; "Nuestra excepción era muy común. Las cosas de Emilio García Carmona", in *Reimaginar la disidencia sexual en la España de los 70. Redes, vidas, archivos*, Bellaterra 2019. He was the editor of *Universidad sin créditos*, published by Ediciones asimétricas, Madrid 2017. He did research into the "performancero" Miguel Benlloch, at the study

centre of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.

JOAQUÍN VÁZQUEZ RUIZ DE CASTRO-VIEJO (Loja, 1955). In the 1970s and 1980s he was an active member of the Communist Movement, and driving force behind the creation of the FLHA (Homosexual Liberation Front of Andalusia). He has been a member of BNV productions since cofounding it in 1988. From 2001 to 2015 he coordinated and produced the UNIA arteypensamiento programme at Andalusia's International University. In 2006, he helped form the PRPC (Cultural Policies Reflection Programme) in Seville. As part of BNV productions he has organised, coordinated and produced exhibitions, projects, film and video programmes of films such as *El Sueño Imperativo*; *Plus Ultra*; *100%*; *Vagamundo. Reflexiones sobre el exilio*; *Almadraba*; *E. F. El fantasma y el esqueleto*; *Ir y venir de Valcárcel Medina*; *Desacuerdos. Sobre arte, política y esfera pública en el Estado español*; *On Translation. Miedo-Jauf*; *Arquitectura: Lenguajes filmicos*; *Tratado de Paz* and *Nueve Sevilleas*. He was co-curator, alongside Pedro G. Romero and Luis Martínez Montiel, of the exhibition *Aplicación Murillo. Materialismo, charitas, populismo* and curator of *Memorias del presente. Isaías Griñolo e Inmaculada Salinas. Un proyecto expositivo sobre arte y política*. With Mar Villaespesa he curated *Miguel Benlloch. Cuerpo Conjugado*. Since 2020 he has been part of the new research, exhibition and archive space pie.fmc (Independent Platform for Modern and Contemporary Flamenco Studies).

MAR VILLAESPESA (Almería, 1953) has worked in art criticism and independent curatorship since the 1980s. She is cofounder and director of the magazine *Arena*. From 2001 until 2015 she was part of the UNIA arteypensamiento group. In 2006 she participated in the formation and activities of the PRPC (Cultural Policies Reflection Platform). She has curated numerous projects, including *El Sueño Imperativo*; *Plus Ultra*; *100%*; *Word & Word & Word*; *Além da Água-Copiacabana*; *El paraíso es de los extraños*; *Muntadas. La construcción del miedo y la pérdida de lo público*; *Encuentros Regreso al futuro-Festival Zemos 9*; *Múltiplo de 100. Salomé del Campo, Victoria Gil, Pepa Rubio*. With Rosa Queralta she curated *Soledad Sevilla. Memoria*; with Corinne

Diserens, *Almadraba*; with Juan Vicente Aliaga, *Transgénico@s. Representaciones y experiencias sobre la sociedad, la sexualidad y los géneros en el arte español contemporáneo*; with the UNIA arteypensamiento group, *Transacciones/Fadaiat, Sobre capital y territorio, Múltiplo de 100. Archivos feminismos post-identitarios* and *Atravesando fronteras: realidad y representación en el Mediterráneo*; with Laurence Rassel, *Esther Ferrer. Todas las variaciones son válidas, incluida esta*; con Joaquín Vázquez, *Estancias. Prácticas restituyentes sobre la Colección Artium* and *Miguel Benlloch. Cuerpo conjugado*.



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Essays on Seediness.  
Readings of the Miguel Benlloch Archive

11.11.2021-01.05.2022

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Joaquín Vázquez  
Mar Villaespesa

Coordination  
Sandra Moros

Exhibition Design  
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Joaquín Gáñez

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