

# ART

Encuba



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*Juan Francisco Elso · Esterio Segura · Felipe Dulzaides  
The Miami Generation, Revisited*

*Drawing and Modernity, on Influences and Debts · Lezama Collection · Marcelo Pogolotti · Raúl Milián*

04



# TALKING FROM THE DEVICE AND BREAKING THE FORM A Possible Appraisal

LUCÍA PIEDRA

*We are not looking for new forms; we are looking for new relationships. This first consists in destroying former relationships although it might be only in the formal level and, then, in noticing that, if we have destroyed them in a formal level, it is because this form came with some given social conditions of existence and of common work implying the struggle of opponents and, therefore, a political work.*

GODARD, 1969

Barcelona now... a city in which changes from its basic structures, those composed by citizens, are taking place. Social movements shake the historic account since 15M, since the neighbor associations, passing through the tides of the education and health sectors, the campaigns against the closing of CIES, the movement of those affected by mortgages (PAH), until reaching the most recent appeal of an initiative, like that of "Guanyem Barcelona" (Let us win Barcelona!), because of the municipal management of the city. From here we are witnessing the rewriting of the history of this city, from below. The return to the experience of vulnerability and deprivation, the destruction of the welfare state, has turned the look to the false question of self-sufficiency, to refer us to think on interdependence: the form in which we relate with the other and how we build ourselves (from our individuality), as a possible way out of this epidemic and structural crisis. As a possibility of breaking the machine and rewriting the model.

Rewriting, speeches, appeals, calls, collective movements, micropolitics are the terms that, as a contrast, come to my mind when crossing the threshold of Galería Senda to wander about the device headed *Hacia el silencio* (Towards Silence). The exhibition by Cuban artist Glenda León (Havana, 1976) may be visited until July 25 in Ciudad Condal.

Broadly speaking I can say the show is perceived as a scenography for a museum, or simulates a museum "scenographed" in a private gallery, rebuilding visualization similar to the typical archeological research, because of the sanitized and aseptic nature of the distribution of the small *objets trouvés*, drawings, pedestals and a space for video showing. The first impression is already odd. Among the questions it gives rise to are the correspondence between the discipline the cohesion in the presentation of objects in the exhibition space may have and that implied in touching topics like temporality, and the rituality entailing groups having to do with how, where from and what for are our individuality and our identity built. All of them (time, ritual, group, body, race, gender) are structures based on a fiction or a political pact.

Minimalism and literality to question these pacts, these fictions. Austerity and selection of resources, as in the case of drawings and objects: metal dust, the sound of heartbeats, a pacifier, a blade, false eyelashes and nails surrounding crystal bells or glasses, hourglasses, all resulting from a minimalism erected as an act of resistance to showiness and technological

**El silencio es oro.** 2014  
Gold dust on heavypaper.  
27 1/2 x 19 1/2 inches  
Courtesy Senda Gallery, Barcelona







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**Ritual, 2013**

Object

2 ¾ x 2 ½ x 2 ¾ inches

Courtesy Senda Gallery, Barcelona

**La silla del poder, 2014**

Installation / Antique chair, digital printing, photography

Photography by Roberto Salas, 1970: 14 x 9 inches

Chair: 39 x 27 ½ x 19 ½ inches

Courtesy Senda Gallery, Barcelona





gadgets frequently used in the discourse of contemporary art, whether of a social nature or of any other type: it's all the same. Scores are drawings "empty" of sound which, contradictorily, emit the noisy characteristic of a negative drive. This drive is a declaration of principles talking and questioning how, what for and from where we use the language. This language that makes us belong, disobey, have filiations or phobias, beliefs.

In the midst of silence, the word and the speech. But approached from literality. And I would say that this is the other element to take into account when understanding Glenda's work. Formally, "direct quote is a textual reproduction of the words by the other." What may this mean? That "form" here implies a gesture that turns off our own voice to leave the space for an "other" language spoken from silence and, as Godard says, reveals new relationships. There is a clear intention of erasing the use of this "literary" resource, or linguistic if you want, and the attempt at speaking from silence. What is being fostered? From and Towards Silence (*Hacia el silencio*), there is a proposal of reconstructing our fragmented edification as individuals. And an effective form to make way to "another type of voice", to another relationship. Is silence a political weapon? Sometimes it has been, in effect, and this depends very closely on the peculiarities of the social, economic, political circumstances of the context in which you are thinking. But it is very clear that it is a positioning from which we can recompose our identity. The critical focusing on this aspect in Glenda's work is crystal-clear.

And rethinking all this, because of the unavoidable circumstance of this hyperactive context in which I am, I return once and again to the fragments of a text questioning, as Glenda's work does, the issue of individuality and the origin of its identity: ... "From there,

emancipation does not pass through the conquest of individual sovereignty, but through the capacity of co-implicating in a common world. The question then is not how or why we coexist, according to what universal values, but rather what separates us. Religions separate us, birth communities separate us, fear separates us, capitalist production separates us from ourselves... Fighting against what separates us has been the motor of the other emancipating tradition of modernity, what up to now we have been able to call the revolutionary tradition."<sup>1</sup>

THE WAY TO QUESTION and the questioning. Inquiring is also fundamental in Glenda's story. What type of political subject are we when the story is imposed on us as a unidirectional speech? Two pieces commented on this question: one is *Silla del Poder* (Chair of Power) and the other is the video *Canalización* (Chanelling). In both projects the artist shows, in a differentiated form, the behavior of "groups" or masses of individuals whose need is more to unleash and liberate a flow of deaf, cathartic energy than an empowered collective voice. A political speech, an act of religious faith, a morning salute to our country's symbols, the consecration to a cause. These amorphous masses, without a story of their own, appear contributing to the development of a monstrous, distorted capitalism or socialism, with no other purpose but to liberate energy. The contextualization of these visual references could be rejected because of the importance of their identification with a model of society which has shaped itself over and above political trends or positions.

THE CONTRADICTION is in the question travelling from what is collective to what is individual, from militancy to the cancellation of the subject-individual for a cause or a principle. And it is that there is no emancipated and empowered collectivity without a subject able to build his own speech, away from the Lancanian logics of the discourse of the "master" and the "slave." In short, a political subject activating changes in his reality.

The strategy: breaking the form to modify the story. Displacing *Towards Silence* to reconstruct ourselves and do away with the banality of the stories we have been told.

THE MAIN QUESTION perhaps has been breaking the form, finding new relationships. The introspection in face of the politically pornographic mise-en-scene of our lives, of our speeches; the alternative of living in the city in view of the perverse mobility of our fragile work lives; the daily actions of micropolitics, of the day by day, more from silence than from the spectacular nature of the cry. It is not common, but it is becoming a necessary resource as way of life, as expression and means for the new space of dialogue we must be able to build. It could be said and questioned from very different approaches if, from the space of dialogue, it is licit to consider a trip to silence. Everything can be questioned, infinitely. I only recommend stopping to see which of the things built here offers us an at least different perspective. I believe that in exceptional moments as those we are living, apart from political affiliations, it is now time for radicalism on the way to understand and perceive our role as subjects. ◀

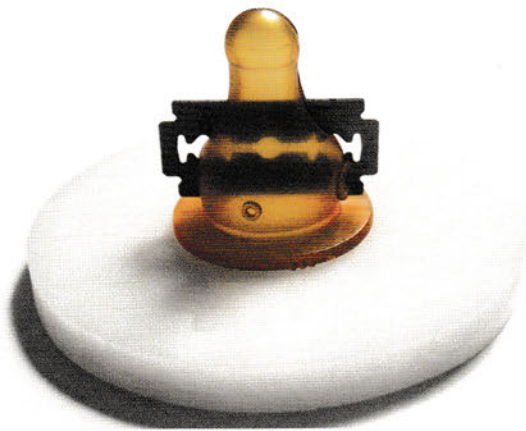
1. From philosopher Marina Garcés (Barcelona, 1973), *Un mundo común* (A Common World), 2013.



## HABLAR DESDE EL DISPOSITIVO Y ROMPER LA FORMA

### Una posible lectura

Lucía Piedra



Creciendo. 2012  
Tetina. cuchilla de afeitarse / 5 x 4 x 4 cm  
Cortesía Galería Senda. Barcelona

Barcelona ahora... una ciudad en la que se están sucediendo cambios desde sus estructuras de base, las que componen los ciudadanos. Los movimientos sociales sacuden el relato histórico desde el 15M, desde las asociaciones de vecinos, pasando por las mareas de los sectores de la educación y la sanidad, las campañas por el cierre de los CIES, el movimiento de afectados por la hipoteca (PAH), hasta llegar a la más reciente apelación de una iniciativa, como la de "Guanyem Barcelona" (¡Ganemos Barcelona!, en castellano), por la gestión municipal de la ciudad. Estamos asistiendo a la reescritura de la historia de esta ciudad, desde abajo. El regreso a la experiencia de vulnerabilidad y la precariedad, la destrucción del estado de bienestar, nos ha devuelto la mirada hacia la falsa cuestión de la autosuficiencia, para remitirnos a pensar la interdependencia, la forma en que nos relacionamos con el otro y como nos construimos (desde nuestra individualidad), como una posible salida a esta crisis, epidémica y estructural. Como una posibilidad de romper la máquina y reescribir el modelo.

Reescritura, discursos, apelaciones, llamados, movimientos colectivos, micropolíticas, son los términos que por contraste me vienen a la mente en el momento de cruzar el umbral de la Galería Senda, para deambular por el dispositivo encaminado *Hacia el silencio*. La exposición de la artista cubana Glenda León (*La Habana*, 1976) estuvo abierta al público hasta el 25 de julio en la Ciudad Condal.

A grandes rasgos puedo decir que el show se percibe como una escenografía para un museo, o simula un museo escenografiado dentro de una galería privada, reconstruyendo una visualidad similar a la típica investigación arqueológica, por lo higienizado y aséptico de la distribución de los pequeños *objets trouvés*, dibujos, pedestales y un espacio para la proyección de un video. Ya la primera impresión es rara. Entre las cuestiones que aparecen están la correspondencia entre lo disciplinario que puede tener la ilación en la presentación de objetos en el espacio expositivo, y aquello que implica tocar temáticas como la temporalidad, lo ritualístico que conlleva lo grupal con respecto a

cómo, desde dónde y para qué está construida nuestra individualidad y nuestra identidad. Todas ellas estructuras (tiempo, ritual, grupo, colectivo, raza, género) que parten de una ficción o un pacto político.

Minimalismo y literalidad para cuestionar esos pactos, esas ficciones. La austeridad y selección de los recursos, como en el caso de los dibujos y objetos: polvos de metales, el sonido de los latidos del corazón, un chupete, una cuchilla, pestañas y uñas postizas rodeando campanas de cristal o un vaso de vidrio, relojes de arena, resultan de un minimalismo que se erige como un acto de resistencia a la espectacularidad y los *gadgets* tecnológicos usados con frecuencia en el discurso del arte contemporáneo, de corte social o de cualquier otro tipo, da igual. Las partituras son dibujos "vacíos" de sonido, que contradictoriamente emiten la ruidosidad característica de una pulsión negativa. Esta pulsión es una declaración de principios que habla y se cuestiona cómo, para qué y desde dónde usamos el lenguaje. Ese lenguaje que nos hace pertenecer, desobedecer, tener filias y fobias, creencias. (...)

## ARMANDO MARIÑO: NEW PAINTINGS AFTER THE LONG WINTER

Mayo 6 - Junio 20, 2014

532 Thomas Jaeckel Gallery Nueva York

I. L-P.

A través de los siglos los cambios que se suceden con las estaciones del año han servido de inspiración a pintores, escultores, escritores y poetas. La última exhibición personal de Armando Mariño (Santiago de Cuba, 1968), *New Paintings after the Long Winter* (Pinturas nuevas después del largo invierno), es un buen ejemplo de cómo estos han sido ilustrados en la pintura. (...) Mariño vive actualmente en Nueva York, un lugar donde las estaciones son bien marcadas y determinan el ciclo de vida y el de trabajo. La secuela de su paso puede ser mayor en alguien como él, que viene de una isla tropical donde el clima es prácticamente el mismo todo el tiempo, y el sol es parte permanente del paisaje. Para él el invierno puede resultar casi eterno.

Mirando su carrera retrospectivamente, vemos que Mariño ha recorrido un largo camino desde su primera muestra personal en La Habana, 1993. Ha participado en numerosas exhibiciones en importantes galerías y museos de varias ciudades del mundo, pasando de ser un artista local a un plano internacional. Temáticamente su obra también ha registrado esta evolución. Sus piezas anteriores comentaban sobre espinosos problemas sociales en Cuba como el racismo, que no es reconocido oficialmente pero está arraigado en la psiquis del cubano. Trató el tema con un humor muy refinado, y creó un personaje que se convirtió en su *alter ego*: el negro en shorts y sin camisa que iba experimentando diversas situaciones en secuencias casi cinematográficas. Mariño incluía además referencias iconográficas del arte universal que devenían en escenarios en los que insertaba a su personaje, y desde esta perspectiva dialogaba con su espectador al comentar sobre el tema. La conexión se establecía a partir de una complicidad entre ambos, espectador y artista, al descubrir que podían compartir los mismos códigos como en un mensaje cifrado. Este acercamiento respondía a una actitud generalizada en las artes visuales del periodo, en las que se reflejaba la crítica a la situación social del país