

## ***Exhibition view* unpublished press review (May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016)**

Enar de Dios Rodríguez's practice intrinsically combines and questions artistic and curatorial positions by modes of deconstruction, subtraction and rearranging of extant content. Highly influenced by the written word from art theory and conceptual writing, this artist/curator/translator from Spain functions as a filter of cultural products that states how nowadays, overwhelmed by information, in order to confront and disarray the power of the archive, we must forget to write and start learning to read differently. Her obsessive concern and investigation of the context where culture is located lead her to an artistic practice that prioritizes context over content and proposes *pointing at* as the unique force that challenge us to make visible, and thus overcome, the structures that constrain our understanding of what-has-been.

*Exhibition view* is the result of a four month research project that investigated the different elements that construct exhibitions and shape how these were, are and will be viewed. Taking as its starting point photographic images of historical exhibitions, more specifically exhibition view photographs from the MoMA New York spanning more than 50 years, de Dios Rodríguez's installation invites us to reflect upon a history of art that nowadays corresponds to the history of exhibitions rather than of individual artistic statements. The use of the museum as a medium, a contemporary trend that acts as a critique of the display and institutionalization of art, is materialized here in form of videos, sculptures, photographs and text that make use of different time frames through which the flow of time is both (re)viewed and performed.

Dios Rodríguez's activation of the temporal flow starts with a wall label displayed on a tablet, the first artwork to be encountered in the exhibition. This element of written information that usually accompanies artworks in a static form is reshaped to become dynamic and produce a state of presentness, continuation and actuality. The text that appears in this dynamic label is traditional in its content: it informs us about the name of the artist, the title of the exhibition and the year where it was created; however, at the end of the materials listed (photographs, monitors, wood, paint...) we can also read the number of visitors that are contained within the space. Through a hidden webcam in the exhibition that streams live feed of what is happening there, de Dios Rodríguez is able to view the space and to write on the label, in real time, how many viewers are present in the exhibition. The viewer, the most important element for the existence of any art show, though completely removed from traditional photographic proofs of exhibition views, becomes now an essential part of the exhibition. This continuously changing wall label emphasizes the act of looking as primordial and present, therefore reevaluating the spectator as bearer and producer of aesthetic experience.

Nevertheless, exhibitions have been and still are documented in a very specific and constrained manner. How can they be read differently? De Dios Rodríguez answers this question by creating two slide-show videos made out of a selection of photographs from the thousands of photographic exhibition views that conform the MoMA NY archive. In the first video, windows from the MoMA are the protagonists; one after the next, the window behaves as an artwork by itself, a work of art that points at the outside of the institution and conveys the frame that situates reality, the passing of time, outside the static white cube museum. For the second video, the artist has selected MoMA exhibition view photographs where texts can be read, mostly texts on walls (e.g. titles of exhibitions). It is through the editing process of these photographs, their rearrangement, where a new meaning is produced: an exhibition catalogue in the form of visual poetry where the act of curation overlooks the act of writing.

The central sculptural and photographic panel of *Exhibition view* relates both mediums not just temporally but also spatially. The photograph carefully dictates an exact shape, size and color for each one of the sculptures and thus frames emptied of content can be seen as the punctuation of the exhibition space, seemingly evacuated from any other trace of artistic visual text. De Dios Rodríguez mastery at managing emptiness comments with irony on the limits of an artwork, the hidden mechanisms of display and the despotic force embedded in contextual information. Once

again, different temporal perspectives coexist here, the past historical technical image, whose caption satirically read “Recent acquisitions – and a new installation of Photography from the Collection”, and the newly produced sculptural objects framing the present wall.

In the last work of de Dios Rodríguez installation, the present moment and space is accentuated by the scrupulously framing of the exhibition area, to be viewed through a monitor that live streams a video of the corners of the space. Aware of positioning her works in the same white walls that she silently critiques, de Dios Rodríguez shows us simultaneously two opposite aspects, on the one hand the existence of new possibilities for viewing and, on the other hand, the irremediable impossibility of escaping the institution.

De Dios Rodríguez's second solo exhibition in the USA lets us wonder how strong the official frame of institutional validation is, and how this power eclipses the artwork it so forcefully aims to exalt. By willingly mimicking the standard devices for the official presentation and representation of modern and contemporary art, *Exhibition view* succeeds in demonstrating that here the medium really is the message.