



Inoperative Memories

* Jesus Segura Cabanero

* Universidad de Murcia, Facultad Bellas Artes, Campus Espinardo, 30100 Murcia, Spain

ABSTRACT

*This paper investigates the recreated installations by Pierre Huyghe that make up the subject and the viewer in them and become the most important of the work. The elements at play in his works embody memory and temporality in a free configuration through the gap between fiction and reality and the public record we have of the events symbolized by the artist. So the artist's work forms an open and altered state in its space-time dimensions where the "alienation" and "self-questioning" flows. Time, memory and experience are the basis of which he makes his work, along with the strategies of the real and fictionalized. I discuss in this text two works to expose these elements, the first: *The third memory* is a work that introduces temporal and narrative processes of appropriation. A second work analysed: *Without cultivating*, the artist proposes a bio-semiotic process and montage.*

Keywords : memory, temporality, installation, process, Pierre Huyghe

INTRODUCTION

When the ordinary becomes extraordinary and the everyday becomes an event, a space-time alteration takes place in which flows estrangement and self-questioning. Time, memory and experience become activated in a critical dimension where the interpretation of the given situation convokes a polyphonic system of possible eventualities.

Pierre Huyghe's work takes care of the exponential temporization of these elements to conform a work where the spotted multiplicity by sight and the present heterochronies in the projects, appear in the immediacy of the events. There is a discursive frequency that holds that reality is constructed with a structure of fiction. Huyghe, outlines reality diversifying it, in order to make to emerge this polyphonic system of possible eventualities, in which fiction and reality find his place in representation. In this way, his works conform landscapes of temporal experiences, certifying that fine gap between reality and fiction, which Huyghe calls "constructions" and "accidents".

One of the strategies incorporated in these developments of reality and fiction is the deleuzian term of the "fabulation" (Deleuze, 1987); Where by means of folds and cyclic and intermittent strategies of temporary apprehension of the imaginary becomes active an elliptical procedure and a diversity of focuses of a same theme that proposes alternative levels of reality.

The transformation of existing worlds, enlarging and reconfiguring the found narratives, takes place by means of the construction of stages where new ways and formats of production and exhibition, materialize as places of exhibition; when fracturing the conventions about the form of presentation. This generates invented realities based in narratives contrasting with other given parallel narratives, in order to indicate the existence of multiple realities produced in different strata of perception and interpretation that were mentioned by Koselleck (2001). Basically, the strategies display equivalencies that dialogue with our perception of time and reality by means of the creation of parallel worlds that places in a space-time differences process in which we observe and forge our realities.

Huyghe has circumscribed the exhibition as: "The exhibition

is not an end but a process, a passage, a state" (2012). From this perspective technological time, biological time and time acquired through experience in life shade into a string of events within a transient and aleatory narrative that is executed in the constant vicissitude of the work, to articulate relationships between natural and cultural phenomena that discuss social themes; Like the aspiration to utopia, the seduction of the spectacle in the media, the impact of the modernism in the system of beliefs or relationships between art, history and nature. Materializing in "bio-topos" that deploys associations between the subject contemporary's identity and its rituals. However, Huyghe, like a lot of artists, discuss social political and economic themes from a perspective where these ideals do not self-proclaim, but they are inserted in the process, in the way that these relations are done and thought. Somehow, there is a reversibility of the constructivist agit-prop, present in so-called political art, in order to implode these elements in the own representation.

MULTIPLE MEMORIES AND SUSPENDED TEMPORALITIES

De-realization of the world obeys to a cyclic temporality, circular, very close to forms of time which do not occur, or are taken; those that expressed Derrida (1995) which manifest themselves in "the meanwhile". A non-given time, but inhabited, found in its discontinuities and fractures. In this sense, *The third memory* (1999), (fig. 1), a paradigmatic work that brings us closer to the way that temporary and narrative processes deployed to a great extent of the artistic production of Huyghe. This work confronts, relates, juxtaposes and displays three versions of a literal fact from different perspectives that develops divergent and parallel spaces of interlocution. In *The third memory* it is articulated: The real fact, the fictional movie and its consistent "public record" that reinterprets the real fact and the popular media coverage of the event. The game of interpretative possibilities on behalf of the viewer is involved in different cultural formats that act as catalysts of information and emergent narrative forms. In that way, dissects reality and its representation from different spaces: the real document, the fiction, the information and popular culture to articulate and to indicate a tectonic displacement of reality and their contaminations with fictional strata. Distortions of memory and adherences of popular imaginary acquire a statute of reality and deploy discontinuous temporalities in

constant encounter with narrated "story".



Figure 1: Pierre Huyghe, *The third memory*, 1999.
Sources: <http://www.guggenheim.org/>

The fact itself refers to a bank robbery by John Wojtowicz that it happened in 1972; the representation by Sidney Lumet in the acclaimed movie *Dog Day Afternoon*, interpreted by Al Pacino and the first live television broadcast in history of a crime. From these three perspectives, from these three memories Huyghe constructs a global imaginary, in which with a double video projection on two correlative screens, he combines during nine minutes and forty six seconds a memory description about the robbery of Wojtowicz. Actors perform it as it happened, alternating scenes of the movie of Lumet, and with live images of television broadcast of theft (from the media).

In *The third memory* (1999), detects temporal structure based on what Amelia Barikin (2012) has called "topological historicity" that deprogram and reprogram temporary formats and introduce an "emancipated time" and an "open present" where everything can happen at any time. In this sense, the critical and dynamic potential of the works of Huyghe resides in moments of temporal suspension where he convokes negotiation with the viewer and the consistent evolution of the work toward subjective processes. In the works of Huyghe things are not created, but displayed under a plot, a script that lets that something could happen. Evidently, this deploys another order of temporality that is ascribed to the grip of experience, of experiment, of experimentation as such. However, the mapping of different strata of information or scrutinizing of "parallel presents" to say it in words of Barikin (2012) developed in *The third memory* (1999) incorporate a duration that gestates through the difference. That is, in differed, delaying and expanding time of the event to rephrase and to construct the fact again.

RECREATION OF NARRATIVES AND EMERGENCY OF NON-TEMPORAL CONTEXTS

Simon Critchley's reflection (2010) in relation to the work of Philip Parreno exposes a renewed attention of things through processes of singularization that get constituted in its mineral attribute, in its pure materiality to make emerge an autonomy of happening that it gets unconnected of our will and gets into anarchic and no authoritative parameters. However, as he points out an ataraxia away from mysticism that updates observation of material details to give back the author's authority to the contingent materiality of nature.

This axiom is applicable to a great part of the last production of Pierre Huyghe. His challenge consists in applying a bio-semiotic process to a natural context to come up with a narrative that conforms, that recreates by means of connective and intermittent processes that articulate a temporality in suspension where quietness and chance establish a system of duration of the immutable event that answer to a scientific truth.

In many of the works of Huyghe it is performed a deletion, a breakup of space and social function obliging the visitor to map and giving significance to a different space-time dimension. In this way, takes place a displacement between a given reality and the subjectivity of the viewer. The invention and search by the viewer of space-time contexts inside an organism under transformation, acquires the statute of creative process and it configures as the exhibition itself. This displacement reconfigures completely the spectator's role and develops variables of the own spectacle in its wandering around. Therefore, and due to the transfiguration of spectator into spectacle we find an immanence in which the viewer (transformed now in spectacle) produces its spatial and temporal context on uncertain, mysterious parameters. In this respect Boris Groys's reflections (2008) about the search of mystery in the present-day work of art, become in constant suspicion for unravel the semiotic surface of what we see and in this way invite to formulate new prerogatives.

This, evidently generate a configuration of the space-time as a testing ground where once is pulled off the shell, the camouflage, space-time dimension is revealed to us unexpectedly, uncertainly. Perhaps the most accurate work in this sense is *Uncultivated* (2011-12), (fig. 2). This work presented in the last Documenta 13 of Kassel discusses masterfully this concern about the drift of events and makes to emerge "the metaphysics of place", challenging every subjacent temporality. Narratives turn pale and times dwell on the pure materiality of place.



Fig. 2. Pierre Huyghe, *Uncultivated*, 2011-12.
Sources: <http://josejimenezcuerpoytiempo.blogspot.com/es/>

Basically *Uncultivated* (2011-12), is an installation in Karlsruhe park, where a pile of organic fertilizer rises up in a mountain in which rests some stone slabs of marble perfectly piled up and where a dog so-called "human" (with a pink painted leg) walks around a classical figure reclined on a pedestal, whose head is replaced by a full beehive of bees. All this is surrounded by vegetation fixed by poisonous fruits, marijuana plants and Afghan poppies amongst other natural resources. The guard of the landscape finally wanders around with his bicycle. This strange ambient however, active in an addictive way the sen-

sitive perception towards disconcerting and unpredictable parameters that recreates a dialog between different elements of natural and artificial order, animate and inanimate, humanistic and post-humanistic.

CONCLUSION

Temporalities, object of this exploration in the work of Pierre Huyghe, constitute an obvious referent of this new historiographical frequency that tries to establish global concerns given by new means and for new formats of exhibition. Hybridization and confrontation of art, science and technology configures itself as an optimal proposal for analysis and dissection of new temporalities that define and amplify a system of global relations that configure a temporary cosmology, registering issues repressed or in the forgotten, where it is designed identity strategies on the basis of collective intelligences operating on flexible contexts. In this sense, the narrative notion and temporality is restructured and diversified

for different contexts submitted to multiple interpretations. As a result of that, we meet in front of a system of symbiotic equivalencies that are structured around the occurrence. For Badiou (1999), truth belongs to the register of the event. And, this is based on the disruption (conflict), of the state of the situation. The importance of the event is the subjectivities that get organized around, and its consequences. According to Badiou, the event is related to chance, it is something that cannot be calculated and is not foreseeable. Therefore, separating every will and every authorship, involves rendering up all happening to the contingent elements present in the representation and the creation of every sense. These utopian proposals in the works of Huyghe, are configured as experiments, as real experiences that generate new potentialities to try to explore and to understand new dimensions of space-time.

REFERENCES

- [1] Badiou, A. (1999). *El ser y el acontecimiento*. Buenos Aires: Ed. Manantial. | [2] Bal, M. (2009). *Conceptos viajeros en las humanidades*. Murcia: Cendeac. | [3] Barikin, A. (2012). *Parallel Presents: The Art of Pierre Huyghe*. Cambridge: MIT Press. | [4] Bourriaud, N. (2009). *Radicante*. Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo Editora. | [5] Critchley, S. (2010). "The infinity demand of art". *Art & Research A Journal for ideas, Contexts and Methods*, Vol. 3, summer. In <http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v3n2/critchley.php>. Retrieved 22 november 2012. | [6] Debord, G. (1999). *La sociedad del espectáculo*. Valencia: Ed-Pre-textos. | [7] Deleuze, G. (1987). *Imagen-Tiempo. Estudios sobre cine 2*. Barcelona: Paidós Comunicación. | [8] Derrida, J. (1995). *Dar (el) tiempo. I. La moneda falsa*. Barcelona: Paidós. | [9] Godfrey, M. (2007). "The Artist as Historian". *October*, No. 120, spring. | [10] Groys, B. (2008). *Bajo Sospecha: Una fenomenología de los medios*. Valencia: Ed. Pretextos. | [11] Huyghe, P. (2012). <http://www.revistacodigo.com/entrevista-pierre-huyghe/-2012>. Retrieved 14 de November 2012. | [12] Koselleck, R. (2001). *Los estratos del tiempo: estudios sobre historia*. Barcelona: Paidós. | [13] Mouffe, C. (1999). *El retorno de lo Político*. Barcelona: Paidós. | [14] Nancy, J. L. (2006). *Ser singular plural*. Madrid: Ed. Arena Libros. | [15] Nancy, J. L. (2007). *La Comunidad desobrada*. Madrid: Ed. Arena Libros. | [16] Rancière, J. (2010). *El espectador emancipado*. Buenos Aires: Ed. El Lago |