

Valentín Roma, An approximation to Stuffed Silence,

in: Andreas M. Kaufmann, Stuffed Silence, Espai ZERO1, OLOT (Girona) 2005/6

As Andreas M. Kaufmann himself has written, Stuffed Silence is a work that is framed within a much more far-reaching project and one that is under progress, called Values on demand, which questions from different perspectives the influences, ambiguities and contradictions of the various treaties and regulations which, over time and in the most diverse contexts, have tried to legislate human rights. This position as a kind of episode within an open proposal is important, not just from the point of view of the scale and format, but also as limiting a territory of reflection which in some way, relocates and specifies the work on a subject as far-reaching as that of the freedom of mankind.

One of the first aspects that catches the attention of Stuffed Silence is the simplicity with which it has been constructed. It is an audiovisual installation in which four video projectors project words in the most diverse languages taken from the declaration of human rights onto the walls of a museographic space. These words, or maybe even better, these concepts travel over the architecture of the exhibition hall following the syncopated choreography marked by a sound of progressive, enveloping rhythms, composed by the German musician, Gabriel Ananda.

In this sense, the apparent simplicity of the piece from the display point of view, should be considered as a true declaration of principles, a kind of replica with regard to certain populism of many apparently political speeches or which, from the art area, adopt the role of antagonism and social denunciation. Stuffed Silence is a work that is placed, in a voluntary way, outside what is dogmatic, in the territory of what is paradoxical, in the place of the dislocation of meanings. The presentation device and the music that envelops the spectator use aesthetic influences characteristic of the techno universe and the atmosphere of video jockey sessions using projections. However, the subject of the proposal, the positioning of the artist and the concepts selected refer to paradigms usually linked to artistic proposals of an ideological nature. However, here, in this rupture of the usual formal codes of interpretation and reading, one can already make out an initial, not at all subtle paradox from which to get closer to the piece, enter into it with "a changed foot" in a metaphorical and conceptual sense. In a way that is diametrically opposed to the works that aim to impress, denounce or suggest. Stuffed Silence offers, from the very beginning, a reshaping of certain codes and their respective rhetoric, as if the languages used were being used for the first time and were being read in the same way from this absence of connotations. Although it may seem extravagant, in this work there are as many touches of irony as of ingenuity, obviously an ingenuity administered in a totally precise way, but which, in some way, provides the proposal with a different way that cannot be captured, oxygenated with regard to the stereotypes produced by the art of trends, with regard to the rhetoric gestures of political minimalism and the demagogic nature of certain documented instructions.

We should also mention the methodology of work used, in other words, the particular process of the collaboration between Andreas M. Kaufmann and the musician, Gabriel Ananda, which surpasses, in some way, the usual channels that are suggested in this kind of interdisciplinary project. In this sense, it is relatively frequent to find that numerous proposals made from the start as a crossing of languages do not end up managing to recover from the inevitable semantic collisions caused during their development, which should constitute their main organisational element and which, however, are understood

as failures or impossibilities. On the other hand, in the very nature of the dialogue between disciplines which are perceived and interpreted in a different way, there are some consolidated roles and hierarchies that reproduce the predominance of some discourses over others, and which cause there to be one language responsible for emitting contents and another that simply takes care of illustrating them. However, maybe one of the main differences that Stuffed Silence offers with regard to the collaboration work is this kind of reply and counter-reply that are found at the base of the proposal. Thus, Ananda's music is not "accompanying" Kaufmann's visual proposal but it constitutes it, or rather, it constructs an auditory space simultaneous to the choreography of concepts that make up the installation. Therefore, we could talk about two different architectural spaces: one of them being the exhibition hall, pre-shaped and interchangeable, that serves as a topographical structure, as a "place" with which the intervention dialogues and, at the same time, as a limit or border that circumscribes the elements of the entire setting; and the other, the sonorous space that appears simultaneously to the words projected on the wall. In some way, Ananda's music constitutes an "echo" that not only reinforces the movements of acceleration and amplification, but also expands the meaning of the various concepts beyond their initial two-dimensionality, integrating the spectator into its meaning, in the interior of an architecture made of rhythms and ideas that jointly appear and disappear at the beginning and the end of the installation.

In this direction, the very title of the work, Stuffed Silence, is a new paradox -semantic, in this case- behind which some guidelines of meaningful reading are hidden. Among them, and apart from the previously mentioned sonorous nature, this name refers to a certain intangibility of the proposal, which momentarily "fills" or "populates" or "occupies" both the physical silence of the real space -through music and projections- as well as the metaphoric silence of intellectual passiveness -based on the concepts that they hope to incite to be reflected on.

However, and despite its scenographic dimension, Stuffed Silence also works as a kind of hypertext or animated visual poem, in which the visual choreography of the names sends us to a universe of ideas that goes beyond the exhibition space. From Apollinaire to Mallarmé, with his well-known text *Un coup de dès jamais n'abolira le hasard* (A Throw of the Dice Never Will Abolish Chance), poetry has tried to go beyond the limitations of the page and to expand, not only through the meaning of the word but also through the exploration of the physical support of the book. In the same way, this work travels around the place in which it is projected, it limits it and converts it into a meeting point, a parenthesis between two silences, an island of meaning.