

Act 28: Muntadas/Franch, *exhibition devices*



Antoni Muntadas and Enric Franch.
Between the Frames: The Forum at
MACBA, 2011

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The *Exhibition Devices* show at the Nivell Zero at the Fundació Suñol is designed and laid out to give a clearly structured vision of the work carried out by Antoni Muntadas (art) and Enric Franch (design), on and off, since 1985.

The exhibition presents eleven projects by Antoni Muntadas that were produced in whole or in part with Enric Franch. It aims to stress the dialectic relationship of creator/designer and artist/museographer over the course of almost thirty years and reveal the mechanisms and factors that lie behind putting these exhibitions on.

It also shows a kind of overlap, a flowing together of lines of force, an example of shared work shaped by the features of different projects where these two creators worked together on tasks and processes in a dynamic, integrated fashion. This wide range of actions can help us:

- Think about the difficulties of showing contemporary work and, in turn, reflect on the complex nature of the procedures involved and the need for greater dialogue between artistic work and the way it is received by the public.
- Look at the idea of technical and conceptual collaboration in the process of putting on an exhibition from an analytical, critical perspective and analyse the changes in production procedures in contemporary artistic practice.
- Make exhibition and mediation processes more transparent.

Exhibition Devices analyses the following exhibitions:

01. *Exposición* (Galería Fernando Vijande, Madrid, 1985)
02. *Muntadas a la Virreina. Instal·lacions/passatges/intervencions* (Palau de la Virreina, Barcelona, 1988)
03. *Puerta/ventana. Luz/sombra. Movimiento/información* (Expo 92, Isla de la Cartuja, Seville)
04. *Sala de control (per a la ciutat de Barcelona)* (CCCB, Barcelona, 1996)
05. *On Translation: La mesa de negociación* (Fundación Arte y Tecnología, Madrid, 1998)
06. *On Translation: Museum* (MACBA, Barcelona, 2002)
07. *On Translation: I Giardini* (Spanish Pavilion, 51st Venice Biennale, 2005)
08. *Proyectos urbanos (2002-2005)... hacia Sevilla 2008* (Centro de las Artes de Sevilla, 2006)
09. *Aqua Quo Vadis?* (Expo 2008, Zaragoza)
10. *Muntadas. Entre/Between* (MNCARS, Madrid, 2011)
11. *Aller-Retour. Citoyenneté et déplacements* (MuCEM, Marseille, 2013)

These eleven cases clearly show the discussion processes behind them and reveal different forms of involvement and problem solving: from a one-off collaboration in response to a given exhibition space, such as *Exposición* (Galería Fernando Vijande, Madrid, 1985), to a general approach within a wider project, such as *On Translation: I Giardini* (Spanish Pavilion, 51st Venice Biennale, 2005), as well as contributing a systemic solution to the complex process of signage in the exhibition space at the 1988 exhibition at the Palau de la Virreina and creating a new idea under the umbrella of a wide-ranging exhibition of previous work in *On Translation: La mesa de negociación* (Fundación Arte y Tecnología, Madrid, 1998).

The solutions agreed by the two creators make it easier to read the work artistically (the intervention at the Palau de la Virreina, 1988), to communicate the piece (*On Translation: La mesa de negociación*, 1998) and to present the production of a series of works (MACBA, 2002). The show also analyses the way some of the projects are shaped by certain factors: an institutional space (*Muntadas. Entre/Between*, Madrid, 2011), context (*On Translation: La mesa de negociación*, 1998) or other specific

features (*Puerta/ventana. Luz/sombra. Movimiento/información*, Expo 92, Seville, and *Aqua Quo Vadis*, Expo 2008, Zaragoza).

Although two of the projects presented, *Proyectos urbanos (2002-2005)... hacia Sevilla 2008* and *Puerta/ventana. Luz/sombra. Movimiento/información*, were never actually put on, they still make a valuable contribution to our analysis.

A series of factsheets gives details of the works on display, including their starting point and the process by which they took shape. The accompanying photographs, videos, documents and ad hoc publications help clarify the results and offer some preliminary information.

Two of the eleven projects (Palau de la Virreina, 1988, and MACBA, 2002) are presented descriptively. Working documents and examples of the communication paths used in each case are set out to help get across the range and complexity of the contributions this artist/designer duo made and give a visual impression of the dynamic nature of the discussion processes and synchronised way of working that were particularly important in these two cases.

Photographs, project timetables, tracings, models and folders, written correspondence, slides, drafts, sketches, pictures from Google Earth and videos are the vehicles for transferring knowledge of cultural and artistic heritage, carefully overseen by the documentation centre and private archives behind this show.

This exhibition offers a good opportunity to analyse eleven examples of ties forged between art and design and reveals the necessary stages in the process of researching, producing and making *exhibition devices*.

Antoni Mercader

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