

BCN PRODUC- CIÓ '16

Sala Gran – 22.06 to 06.09

EQUIPO PALOMAR NO ES HOMOSEXUAL SIMPLEMENTE EL HOMÓFILO, SINO EL CEGADO POR EL FALO PERDIDO

“How the body itches! How little the word rests! Who could stop and look puzzled at the world! Or shut up and die!” Lines written by Alberto Cardín that appear in his collection of poems entitled *Mi más hermoso texto* (My Most Beautiful Text), which I was reading a few weeks ago while lying on a beauty parlour bed as the assistant was giving me a Brazilian wax and she asked me to recite them to her because she didn't know the author. I am recounting this anecdote because I suspect that an unconventional character like Cardín would have liked his writings to be read in such an unorthodox manner, and also to contradict those who would think that the assistant did not know Cardín because she was a beautician lacking literary culture, when the fact is that most of us would not even know who Alberto Cardín was (except those who were lucky enough to be his students at the University of Barcelona) if it were not for Equipo Palomar and this exhibition.

The show being presented here by this duo of MarioKissme and R. Marcos Mota, *No es homosexual simplemente el homófilo sino el cegado por el falo perdido* (The homophile is not just homosexual, but the man blinded by the lost phallus), bears the title of a film script that Cardín wrote in 1976, unpublished and unknown even to his closest friends, that the pair of artists have rescued from the author's personal library. The recovery and interpretation of the figure of Cardín is the

main focus of this exhibition, an action that combines documentation, research, experimentation and artistic production, and is part of a goal that Equipo Palomar set when it was formed in 2013: to recover our historical queer memory. This is the reason they are here and now recovering the figure of Alberto Cardín and claiming him as the (*non*) father or (*non*) paradigm of this lost intergenerational queer history. And they are doing so by using the archive as “a regenerative formula of discourse” and assuming, as stated by Francisco Godoy,¹ “the implicit fictional dimension in any recovery of the past”, knowing that any interpretation “whether it is textual, visual or performative, is finally a process traversed by the ideologies and subjectivities of those giving this interpretation”.

The core of the exhibition is a film made from the script by Equipo Palomar and projected on a wall at La Capella in the form of a religious altarpiece, thus linking to the gallery's past as a former chapel. Its desecrating value is important for the artists because “it provides a similar scenario to the mystical movement that emerges from Cardín's theoretical and literary corpus” and does justice to “the admiration and blasphemy that the sacred inspired in the author”. Also displayed in one of the side chapels is a series of posters made in collaboration with various artists (Nazario, Dora García, Lucía Egaña, Francesc Ruiz, Cabello/Carceller, Georges Jacotey and Jeleton) as the backbone

¹ Francisco Godoy. “Revivir la memoria marica para el presente”, *El Cuaderno*, núm. 77, 2016.



of the script that seeks to translate “a traditionally philosophical language into an audiovisual work without betraying the tension of doing philosophy”.

In addition to directing the film and *performatising* some of its characters, the artists have completed unfinished parts of the script. They are presenting it as “a true challenge of libertarian expression. In today’s Barcelona, the challenge takes on new approaches to projecting the ‘ghosts’ that the supposed democracy made invisible and that, in some way, we hope return to embody a certain spirit of the collective struggles of the 1970s.” Cardín wrote this script – the only time he dabbled in film language – when the first project for a political reform bill and the first democratic election of a president following the Franco dictatorship was occurring in Spain. So its activation and completion in the present again impacts national macro-politics right at a time of paradigm shift, or what is being called the ‘Second Transition’.

The uncomfortable figure of Cardín – “who always said what nobody wanted to hear,” according to Biel Mesquida and who, according to David Vilaseca, “he stood for what stirred and ultimately unravelled any idea of ‘community’ or any form of social order. He steered clear of his supposed ‘natural allies’ (particularly the cliquy intelligentsia of *El País* and the well-meaning but disappointingly puritanical activists of the early gay liberation movement)”² – serves Equipo Palomar to recover the fighting spirit of the original Transition that insisted on commenting from the margins to avoid falling into the trap of a democracy that retained the homophobia, racism, classism and misogyny of the dictatorship or, by appropriating one of Francisco Godoy’s concepts, knows that “all nationality is a transvestism”. Cardín explained it like this: “Social systems are ideologically constituted by rejecting and pushing towards the margins the foreign bodies that they themselves constitute as such [...], a rejection through which the social fabric acquires a surface consistency.”³

Finally, in the second side chapel, a documentation table – which the artists have defined as “false consultation” – seals their intimate quest

into Cardín’s writings: a number of materials showing how the work of this prolific author had such a specific and unorthodox impact on LGTB theory (and practice). Notable among these writings are some essays on AIDS, which are of great value considering that the author was among the first few intellectuals to address this issue and make public his disease. Alberto Cardín died of AIDS in January 1992, aged 44, at a time when the Olympics implied a geopolitical transformation of Barcelona that would hamper the reconciliation of certain work that did not fit into the city’s new international image. An image that has been increasing its ability to exclude any dissent and proves what was being noted in 1976 and noticed by the artists: “What has been destroyed today are meeting points for dissidence and this has disconnected us generationally and typecast us in absolute compartments.”

The work presented by Equipo Palomar combines mourning and seduction in order to recover a hitherto ill-fated author who once said goodbye like this: “This final mercy is what I intend for myself, without the slightest intention of epoch: to be as implacable with others as I am with myself, to the extent that I cannot abstain myself from them, nor them from me. And so I guess this is a fine farewell.”

Comprising Mario Kissme and R. Marcos Mota, Equipo Palomar is a project with its own workspace, El Palomar, located in the neighbourhood of Poble-sec (Barcelona), from which hidden history is reviewed in relation to identity and gender. El Palomar is a space, a working context, a political stance and an institutional rethink. It is shaped by artists, but they are also programmers, act as curators and generate critical discourses. This queer-based laboratory sets its own pace, combining a multitude of flexible identities in order to change the ways of working with art. Desire is a driving force to rethink everything in El Palomar (www.elpalomar.sexy).

² David Vilaseca. “Saint Cardín: Sacredness, ‘Sinthomosexuality’ and the (Non-) Place of the Queer in the Spain of the Transition”, *Queer Events: Post-deconstructive Subjectivities in Spanish Writing and Film, 1960s to 1990s*, Ch. V, Liverpool University Press, 2010.

³ Alberto Cardín. “Apología de Anita Bryant”, *Un cierto psicoanálisis*. Madrid: Libertarias/Prodhufi, 1993.

