

BCN PRODUCC- CIÓ '16

Espai Cub – 22.06 to 06.09

ANNA DOT *UNTIL I AM NO LONGER ABLE TO STAND*

The title chosen by Anna Dot – *Until I am no longer able to stand* – is a veritable statement of intent. It is a performative title that announces in a literal manner a working dynamic that is more sensitive to the processual time frame than the final formalisation within the exhibition space: the piece may be situated in the Espai Cub, but the period during which it is realised is more important than the exhibition room. Moreover, it is a period that is deliberately forced, expanded and unexpected: the time span of the practice of filibustering.

“Until I am no longer able to stand” was the announcement, or rather, the challenge, that Ted Cruz, the Senator from Texas, made to the American press on 24 September 2013 against the health reform that Barack Obama was seeking to implement. The following day, Cruz gave a speech lasting 21 hours that was regarded as a patent act of filibustering, a speech the length of which masked another aim, which was to paralyse parliamentary debate and thereby stop the approval of a new law. During the course of the hours that he spoke, the senator questioned Obama’s decisions but also covered other issues, such as Dr. Seuss’s stories and tales for children, and his relationship with his daughters.

Anna Dot’s project focuses on the physical and mental exercise of speaking for a long time, an intense action centred on talking in which accuracy, length and breadth are merged in order to explore the mechanisms of constructing a discourse by means of the simultaneous translation of what is thought into what is said. A meta-referential method in which the appropriation of the prac-

tice of filibustering enables her to address two fundamental premises in her work: firstly, to develop a line of thinking full of numerous referents and interests, notably the writings of Montaigne, the *horror vacui* of the Baroque, the *dérive* and blind texts (the *Lorem ipsum* dummy text common in graphic design and publishing); and secondly, to define a *mise-en-scène* based on the word. Whereas the first turns the Espai Cub into a stage, the second focuses on what Dot terms the ‘Last Speech’, a filibustering intervention that will strain the institution’s hours, the audience’s attention span and her own physical and mental capabilities as a speaker. The Last Speech will begin at 12.00 midday on the final day of the exhibition, Tuesday 6 September.

Until I am no longer able to stand detects a series of points of friction between filibustering and Montaigne’s method of writing in his *Essays* (1580). Montaigne would shut himself away in his library tower and would speak without interruption while a secretary wrote down his ideas. In both cases, the discourse is shaped by the enthusiastic and agile combination of various areas of knowledge and constant changes in subject; an unstable structure that blurs the usual hierarchies of the relevant and the anodyne. Dot takes a similar approach and, in order to train for the Final Speech, she posits a working process that transforms the Espai Cub into her private studio. This preparation involves the overlaying of various intellectual strata that will help her formally and conceptually: a lectern – a space that accords power to the public speaker – designed by Latrini Studio

in collaboration with the artist to meet specific needs; images on the walls as visual aids (Ted Cruz, Montaigne, Slavoj Žižek, Mark Clare, Cicero, etc.); a mural drawing; and a series of wooden beams with writing on them – like those Montaigne had in his library – which will gradually be carved and added to the ceiling of the Espai Cub while the exhibition is on. In short, a discursive evolution closely connected with the architectural construction of the space itself.

Over and above the configuration of the setting, the piece includes a regular programme of public rehearsals during the eleven weeks that the exhibition runs for. Every Tuesday from 5 July onwards (except 26 July), Dot will be rehearsing her speech in informal sessions open to the public that play with the expectation raised by the great Last Speech that brings the project to a close. The day when Dot will talk until she is no longer able to stand.

*Anna Dot (Vic, 1991) engages in an artistic and curatorial practice based on her interest in language and writing. She has shown work in a number of art spaces around Barcelona, such as the Sala d'Art Jove, the Antoni Tàpies Foundation, the Can Felipa Visual Arts centre and the Blueproject Foundation, and in other places such as the Chapel of Sant Roc in Valls and the NauEstruch in Sabadell. She has also shown her work internationally at the Galería Tiro al Blanco in Guadalajara (Mexico) and at the Kunsthalle Mainz (Germany). She combines her artistic production with research into theory, which she pursues in the Department of Translation, Interpreting and Applied Languages at the University of Vic. In addition, she writes art criticism for A*Desk and Encuentros, and teaches at the Plastic Arts School in Torelló and at La Farinera in Vic. She is a co-founder of the Morir de Frío and Supterranis (Plaga Festival) collectives and a member of the Visual Arts Committee of the Festus Festival in Torelló.*

David Armengol