

(ENG)

# CLOE MASOTTA *WE WILL HAVE TO FIND A PLACE TO MEET*

## PUBLICATION PROJECT

A fine red felt-tip pen highlights: "Barcelona, 24 December 74. Paper from the ship. A beautiful tangle of narrow streets. I shall stay here. Write to me." The body of a daughter leans over a lightbox that illuminates and shines through the handwriting and the colour of the typed ink in letters from her father, not addressed to her and which she brought over years ago from the other side of the ocean. The light reveals the material nature of the sheets, of the folds, of the blots in the correspondence, while the daughter's body – with its own folds, marks and signs of the passing of time – curiously traces the letters and other details, and sweats. She sweats as you sweat on a humid summer night in Barcelona. She sweats as well because what she is trying to do is difficult to explain, perhaps there is no point to it and because everything she has had to do to get here has taken so long and has involved other people. But why all that? What is she looking for?

Svetlana Alexievich, well versed in

dealing with vital documents of every kind, states: "documents are living beings; they change and fluctuate together with us; there is no end of things to be gotten out of them. Something new and necessary for us precisely now. This very moment. What are we looking for?" So Cloe is looking for a place where she can meet her father who died when she was too young to retain any memory of him. "Tendremos que encontrar un lugar donde encontrarnos" (We Will Have to Find a Place to Meet) is the way she puts it, and she turns it into a title based on a quotation by Ricardo Piglia about how we will continue to communicate with each other now the times have changed and words are lost with ever greater ease.

To get here – in this corner of the letter, the body and the light – Cloe has needed the help of other people in exhibitions, <sup>1</sup> trips to Argentina <sup>2</sup> family visits, interviews to be held and texts to be written. <sup>3</sup> Perhaps because her father was first and foremost a notable

figure – a pioneering and heterodox intellectual, an authority on theory, Avant-garde art and psychoanalysis who, in Cloe's words, inhabited a space that swallowed her up when she tried to pass through it – she barely asked about him for years and when Oscar Masotta was mentioned in a class she was taking, she would rush out.

But now she is no longer in a hurry. She has found the time and space. That space of creation and consolation that is the page and which Anne Carson champions, saying, "However bad life is, what's important is to make something interesting out of it. And that has a lot to do with the physical world [...]. How consoling – that this stuff goes on and that you can keep thinking about it and making that into something on the page." The harshness of life in this story extends from the Argentinean dictatorship's reprisals and her father's departure from the country to his



illness and death in Barcelona; and the materiality of the world is not only the letters but also the photographs and books that her father marked as he read them.

Cloe's fascination with and prior work in experimental cinema and found footage become meaningful and especially important when we imagine her addressing this family material based on the experience she has acquired, delving into "an undisciplined archive of representations of the body, identity, and desire"<sup>IV</sup> like the CCCB's Xcèntric Archive. Because the letters that make up *Tendremos que encontrar un lugar donde encontrarnos* exist in an archive understood as an "affective map"<sup>V</sup> that is transformed into a spectral map with the help of the Argentinean artist Guille Mongan, who has designed the publication's dust jacket by expanding the notion of correspondences to bio-bibliographical approaches, textual choreographies and other apparitions. In this way, the publication comes close to the power of magical thinking extolled by one of our greatest living artists, Fina Miralles, when she reminds us that, as Novalis said, we are not

humans, we make ourselves human, that it is through pain and loss that we humanise ourselves and that it is the works that can serve others that are made with these losses and for oneself.

And the red underlines how the father describes to his mother what her granddaughter is about to do: "She is nearly ready to walk now. To leave on her own."

Mireia Sallarès

<sup>I</sup> *Oscar Masotta. Theory as Action*, opened at the MUAC in Mexico in 2017 and at the MACBA and the Parque de la Memoria de Buenos Aires in 2018.

<sup>II</sup> Following her meeting with the curator Ana Longoni, Cloe Masotta travelled to Argentina in 2016, where, with the help of Andrés Duque, she mounted the project *The Story of a Transmission*, which she describes as "a constellation of interviews" with people who lived and worked with her father.

<sup>III</sup> GARCÍA, Dora. *Oscar Masotta: Segunda Vez, Cahier No 2*. Oslo: Torpedo Books, 2018.

<sup>IV</sup> MASOTTA, Cloe. *Cuerpos exquisitos*, "Breus" collection. Barcelona: CCCB, 2020.

<sup>V</sup> Concept used by Ana Longoni.

## CLOE MASOTTA LIJTMAER

Born in 1977, Cloe Masotta holds a PhD in Communication, awarded by the Universitat Pompeu Fabra, where she also studied for BAs in the Humanities and Audiovisual Communication, as well as an MA in Contemporary Film and Audiovisual Studies. At the MACBA, she took an MA in Contemporary Art Theory and Criticism as part of the museum's Independent Studies Programme (PEI). She currently combines her teaching work as a university lecturer with her activity as a contemporary film and art critic and analyst. In addition, she collaborates with institutions such as the CCCB, the MACBA and the Fundació Brossa. She recently published her book *Cuerpos exquisitos. Identidades y deseo en el Arxiu Xcèntric* (Breus, CCCB).