

Carlos Amorales Work Documentation

1996-2015

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Represented by
Galeria Kurimanzutto in Mexico City

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Geometric Splendor
2015

Geometric Splendor is a series of twelve collages that incorporate color for the first time into the work of Amorales. Based on smaller compositions made with color paper samples, these large-format works present collage as an action or as a verb. Beyond its definition as pictorial technique, collage is introduced as a tool to

construct meaning. Despite their apparent abstraction, the works on view recall landscapes; different shades suggesting the passage of time and seasonal changes of light. In the exhibition, Amorales proposes a discussion about temporality through the use of form and color.



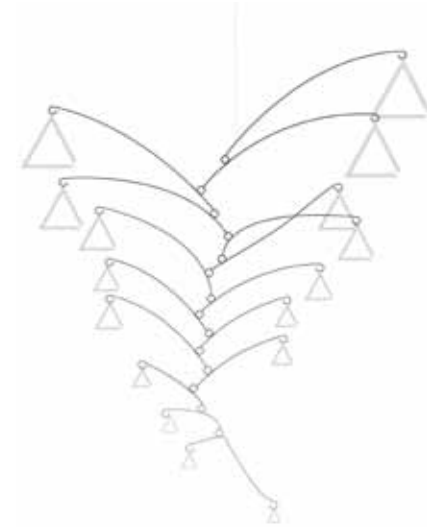
The Eye Me Not

2015

HD Film, color, with sound,
40 min, Screening size 5 x 3 m approx.

Through the dream of an opium addict, the film revisits an Inuit myth where the protagonist has become invisible to European traders with whom he tries to trade goods. This narrative is intermixed with a rich variety of sources: paintings, costumes and set designs by Russian

Suprematist artist Kazimir Malevich, strains of pedagogical and political theory articulated by Joseph Beuys, as well as the controversial texts by Chilean writer Manuel Serrano. The idea of collage permeates the entire project; opening new associative and narrative possibilities.



Triangle Constellation

2015

Mobile Sculpture

Painted steel, chrome-plated steel, and rope.

Comissioned by the Harvard Museums

The mobile sculpture consists of 16 chrome-plated steel triangles of graduated shape and scale attached to a spine of 15 interconnected matte-black painted steel bars. The triangles decrease in size progressively, from top to bottom. At the tip is a playable triangle, suspended 10 feet above the courtyard floor. The work

creates a visual idea of sound, but it can also be physically activated: on special occasions, the sculpture will be played by using a stick. Amorales conceived the sculpture as a means of creating a collective experience for visitors to the museums. Through the work's suspended forms, the museums' interior spaces are tied together.

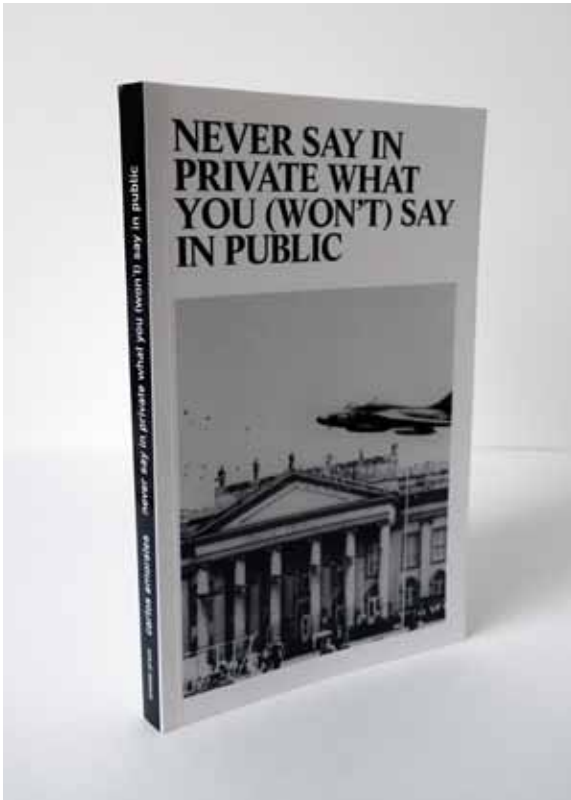


The Man who Did All Things Forbidden
2014

HD Film, black and white, with sound,
40 min, Screening size 5 x 3 m approx.

The film departs from an historical research about how Chilean poetry became radicalised by politics after the 1973 Coup D'Etat, with the posterior introduction of a neo-liberal economy in that country. In the first part of the film we see the main actor discussing with a Chilean television anchorman the reasons of his stay in Chile and

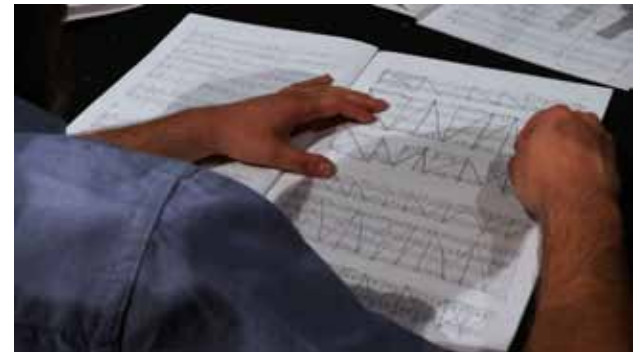
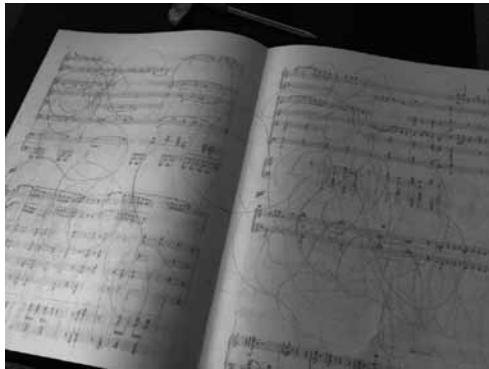
of his interest on starting a new form of artistic avant-garde that would transcend all political sides by combining them. The film then enters a story that develops on a mythological level, where we follow a man breaking different social taboos inside the micro community where he lives.



Never Say in Private what you (won't) say in Public
 2014
 Book, screenplay

The book is about the intellectual procedure to achieve Carlos Amorales' film "The Man Who Did All Things Forbidden". It is structured in eight chapters. They include drawn sketches, emails, conversations during the

rehearsals, the Ideological Cubism manifesto and documents on interventions in mass media. Edited by Carlos Amorales and Isaac Muñoz Olvera, designed by Ivan Martinez & Laura Pappa, published by One Star Press.



Erased Symphony

2013

Performance at Klangforum Wien
Color Video Documentation

“Erased Symphony” is based on the idea that existing cultural narratives are subject to erasure, whereby the focus is not only on evident extinction but also processes of disappearance, revaluation, densification, corrosion, etc.

Emperor Waltz by Strauss undergoes a gradual process of erasure, albeit not the original version is modified but Arnold Schönberg’s transcription of the waltz from 1925 for flute, clarinet, string quartet, and piano.

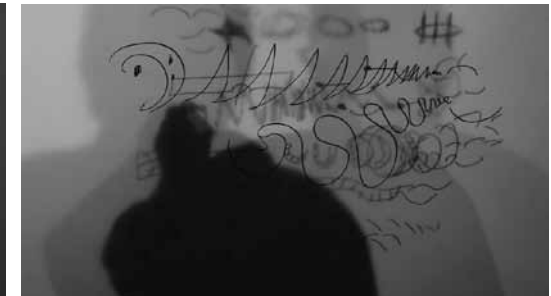


Typographical Pattern for Mass Reproduction

2013

Oil on canvas

180 x 180 cm



Orellana's Fantasia

2013

Made in collaboration with Julian Lede

Digital film projected on a 3 x 1.7 m screen

With sound

“Orellana’s Fantasia” is a short film that registers the shadows of a performance by Guatemalan contemporary music composer Joaquin Orellana, who built a set of instruments that are analogue models made to perform as if they were electronic instruments. Each instrument has to be performed by following a score written out of

a set of symbols and notations that he invented to do so. Carlos Amoraes and musician Julian Léde commissioned him in 2012 to create his own version of the score for a segment of the classic animation film “Fantasia” by Walt Disney, which we hear in this video.



The Sorcerer's apprentice

2013

synchronized double screen,
video projection on wall without sound

This film was realized following the experience that Amorales had by working with Joaquin Orellana. The process of this animation required to work frame by frame from the original animation of Walt Disney. Each frame has been extracted and reproduced several times

through a black and white photocopier machine, diluting the original image.

Later, each photocopy was manually torn in two pieces, before being digitalized again and reordered through a post-production process.



Animated Type

2013
Proyección Blanco y negro sin sonido. 4:3.
Dos serigrafías de 120 x 180 cm c/u



Amsterdam

2013

Digital film projected on a 3 x 1.7 m screen.

Black and white, with sound.

21 min.

“Amsterdam” is a fictional film made from a screenplay written in collaboration with author Reinaldo Laddaga. The obstruction of understandable language allowed for the actors and the director to improvise when shooting the scenes. As spoken language and text became abstract-

ed through the filming process, the actors physical expressions became the predominant form of communication, allowing to experience an “state of exception” comparable to a moment of social anarchy. Ultimately “Amsterdam” could be considered a love story gone strange.



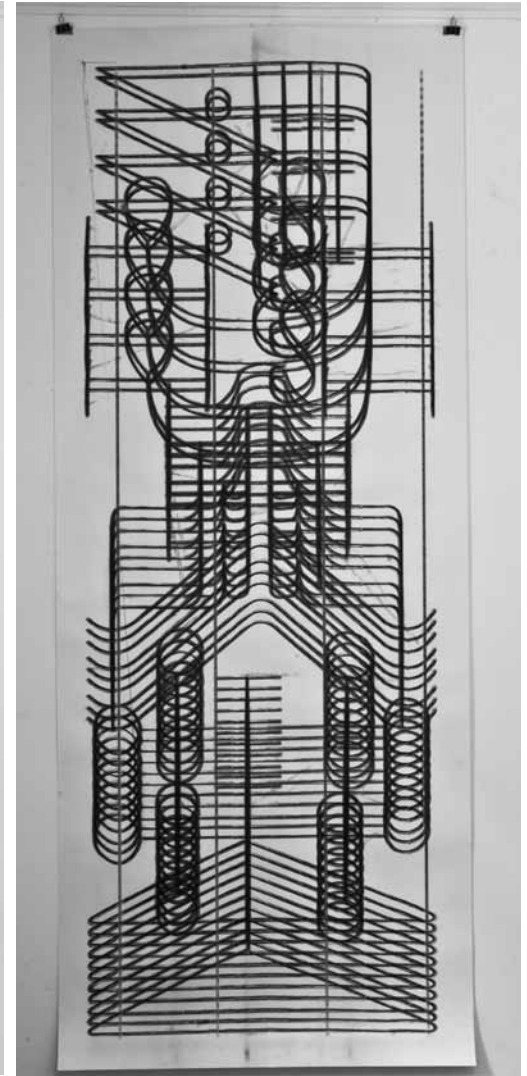
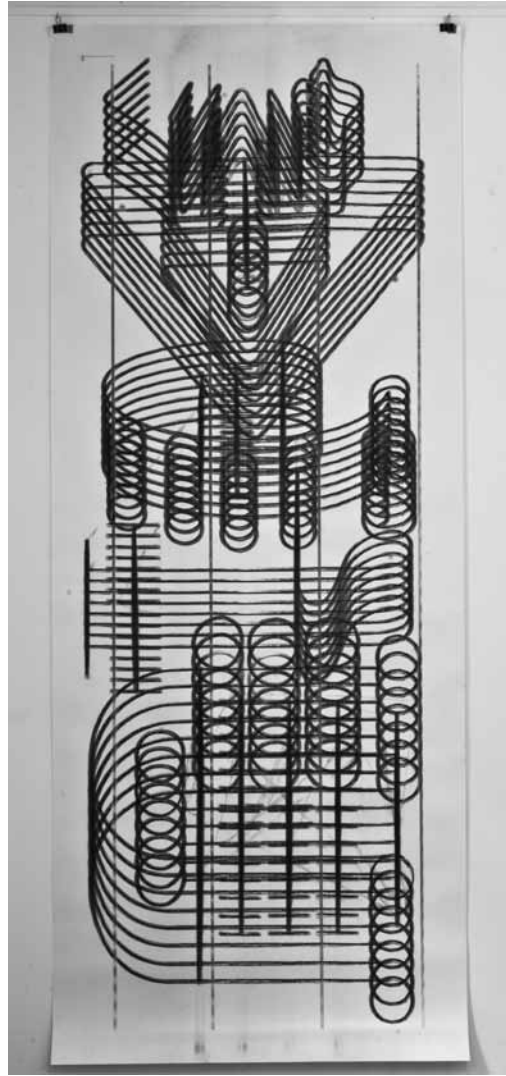
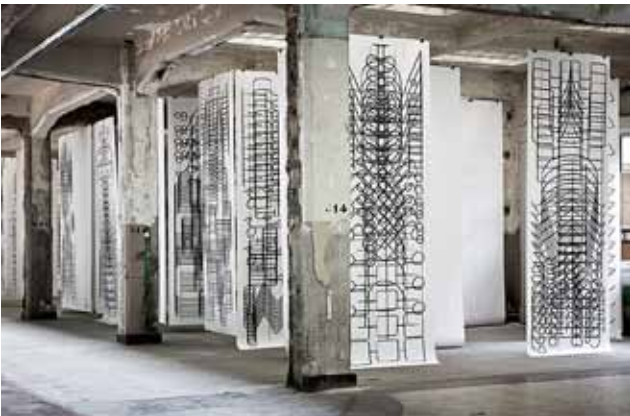
Screenplay for *Amsterdam*

2013

100 photocopies in black and white

21.5 x 28 cm each

The script for the film was made by cutting, mixing, and superimposing images of the actors, the texts, the signs and the symbols in a photocopier. The immediacy of the photocopy allowed a method of free association to develop, which was useful for the conception of the film.



Coal Printing Machine

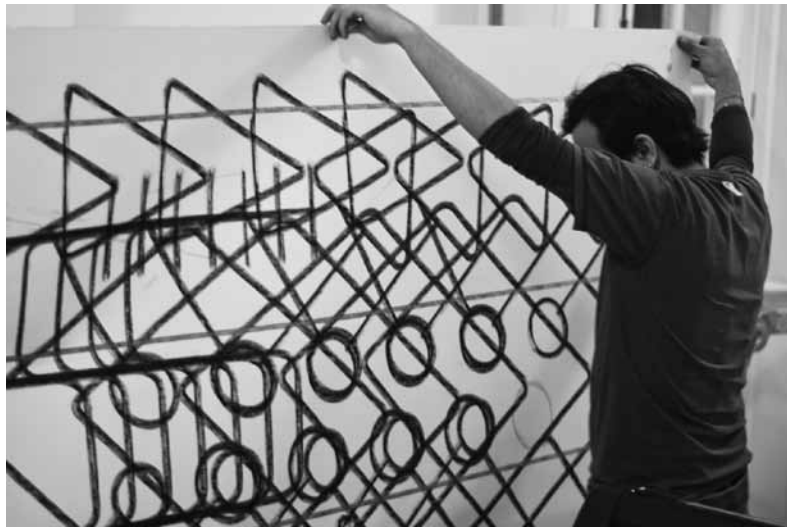
2012

Installation: machine, coal, steel, epoxy paint and paper banners

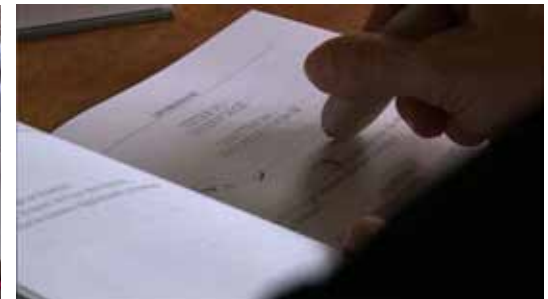
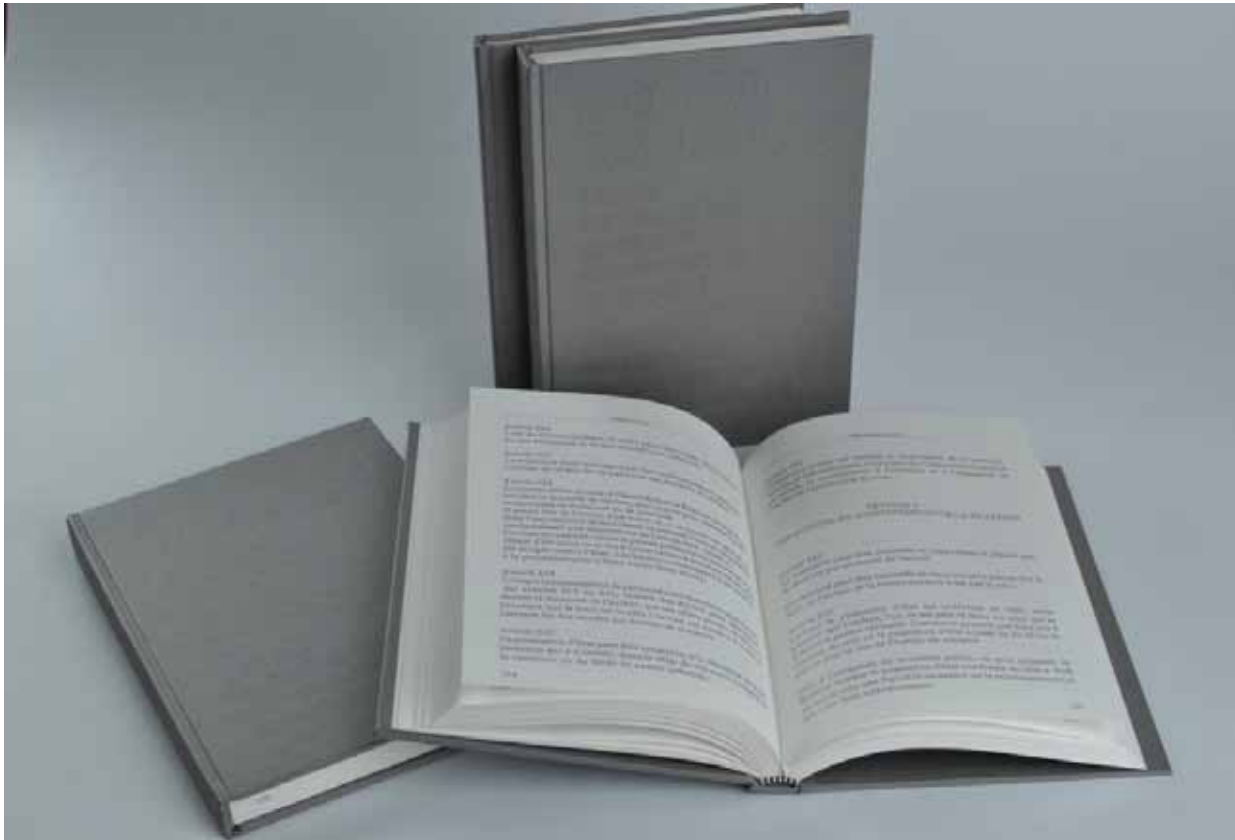
Variable dimensions

Exhibited for the first time in a former coal mine in Belgium, this paper labyrinth generates from the output by a machine which draws with coal. By making an analogy between the mine's excavated underground and the Hades, the drawings are repetitive patterns of magic

symbols that supposedly can invoke demons but which also are considered to be the predecessors of the electronic circuits that are in use today. The machine functions through the span of the exhibition, changing the structure of the labyrinth day by day.



Coal Printing Machine
2012
Views from the working process.



Supprimer, Modifier et Preserver

2011

Books made with graphite, paper and cardboard.

Video projection on wall with sound.

Duration: 28'42"

An updated version of the French civil code was printed with graphite and then given to different lawyers to erase, modify or preserve the laws that each one considered fundamental for its own practice or for the law in general. By encouraging a discussion with the lawyers through this

process, the erasable books became a tool to question the meaning of social rules that were written centuries ago but which are still in use: by erasing some rules a moment of suspension was created.



We Will See How Everything Reverberates

2012

Steel, cooper and epoxy paint

Installation with variable dimensions

A group of mobiles were installed in an art space by rendering the hanging structures that Alexander Calder used for his mobiles but substituting the colorful abstract shapes with cooper cymbals. Beyond the act of contemplation the public was given access to drum sticks for let-

ting the mobiles sound as musical instruments. The piece became a registration of the visitor's attitudes and moods; whereas some people are shy and subtle when hitting the cymbals, others tend to be aggressive and loud.



Vertical Earthquake

2010

Steel rulers, graphite on wall

Dimensions according to space

Crooked metal rulers were made by following the cracked lines that appeared in the buildings that collapsed in Mexico City's earthquake in 1985. The rulers hung from a nail on the wall and then pencil lines were traced to form semi-circles made by the repetition of the zigzag

patterns. A work that in one hand is a formal study about how a chaotic form becomes organized by its constant appliance, it is as well a reflection about how a moment of social anarchy can be used to become a newer order.



Germinal

2010

Serigraphed journal on paper, graphite and paint.

53 x 37,5 cm

Newspaper juxtaposing images from Mexico City's 1985 earthquake and anarchist texts from the last century. This work proposes a reflection on how a two week lapse of spontaneous anarchy was a profoundly influential aftermath for challenging the then official party government in Mexico. The citizen movement that was generated from

the catastrophe layered the first steps for a change that took fifteen years to happen, in 2000. Based on pictures of the broken buildings, the newspaper copies where drawn with chaotic pencil lines, as to stain the reader's fingers.



Apple Juice Can

2012

Graphic intervention on a commercial juice can.
Comissioned by a jus company in Mexico.

The Tounge of the Death

2012

photo roman, silkscreen on paper.
75 x 57 cm (29.53 x 22.44 in)

Experiments in placing the pictographic language into popular media; one is a commission to intervene a jus can which will be massively distributed, the other takes a popular form like a *photo roman* which was edited with gruesome media images from those killed in the last six years war against the Narco in Mexico.



Fructidor (from the French revolutionary calendar series)

2011

Laquer paint and wax varnish on canvas
240 x 180 cm (94.49 x 70.87 in) each

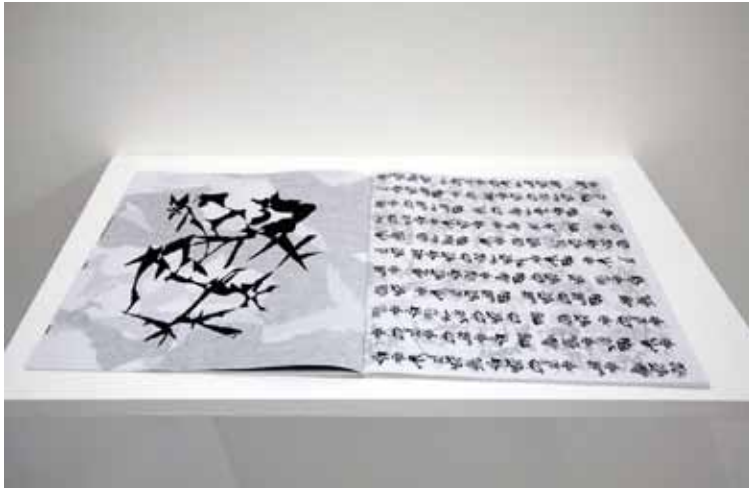
Playing Between the Lines (musical score series)

2011

Ink on offset printed paper
27.5 x 40 cm (10.83 x 15.75 in) each



The pictograms used as abstract motifs to, first, compose a series of twelve paintings symbolizing the French revolutionary calendar and then an intervened page from a musical score by Dvorak (Slavic Dances) where the pictograms interfere with the reading of the music.



Vagabond in France and Belgium

2011

6 posters and silk screened book on paper

Posters: 120 x 180 cm each

Book: 30 x 42 cm

The abstract forms that were previously condensed from the Liquid Archive are explored as typefaces in a series of posters that turn into a booklet. By downscaling the forms into the size of a printable type, the forms began to play ambiguously as they can be perceived like text or

image. The forms being alphabetic pictograms, the text is in fact a short story by writer Roberto Bolaño in which he describes his searching for an artist and poet who worked with this sort of asemic writing in Belgium.



Throwing the Studio Out of the Window 2010

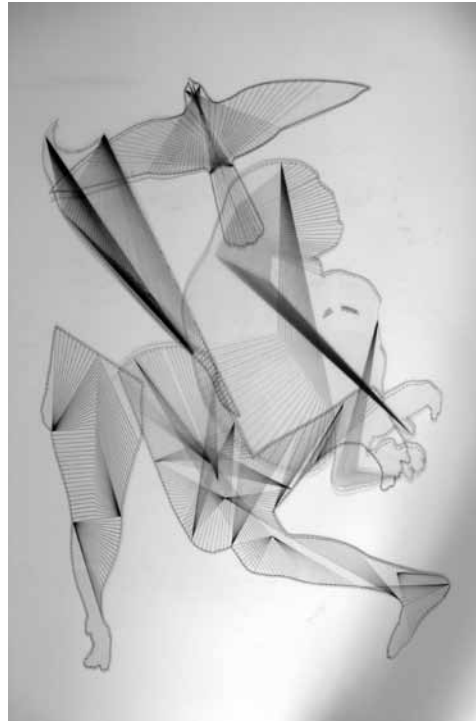
Installation

Pencil on wall, wood, paint.

Dimensions:

This installation implies the artists studio space as a reproducible form in itself, rebuilt in 1:1 scale inside a gallery, that contains the visual language that defines it. By transforming the digital information into actual objects and inviting 20 artists to overdraw the studio walls, a fragmentation of the figurative visual language was

archived into what resulted as a series of abstract shapes containing bits of those former renderings. The collaborative working process annihilated the Liquid Archive as an artistic resource, transforming it into a source with open meaning.



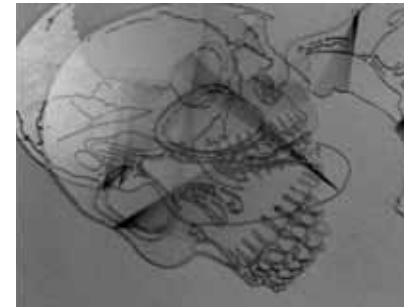
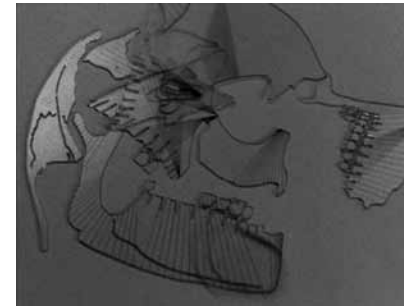
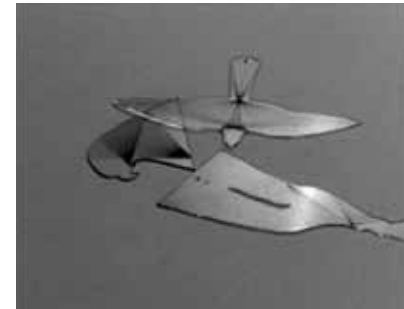
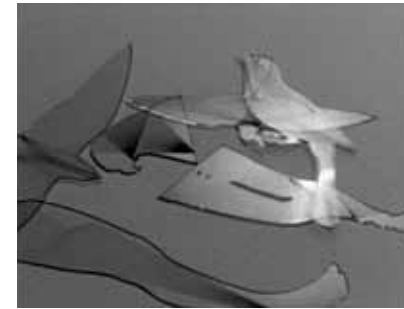
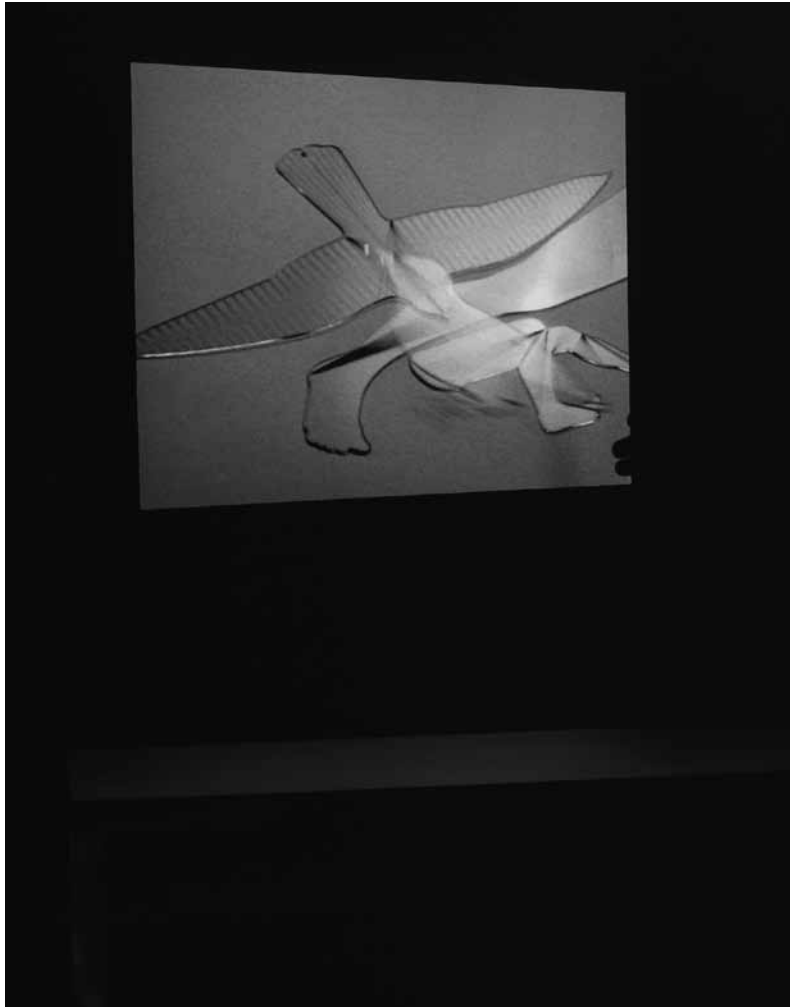
Throwing the Studio Out of the Window 2010

Views from the working process.

1. Principal elements of the digital archive of images turned into drawing tools.
2. Appliance of the drawing tools by draing on the tool's borders..
3. Composition made by overlapping the drawing stencils

by chance.

4. Tracing the forms with a pencil on the wall's surface.
5. Images resulting from filling up the gaps in between the pencil lines.



Herramientas de Trabajo

2010

16 mm B/W film transferred to digital video,
without sound

One channel video projection, 12' 15"

In this film different figures are tossed over a white surface to create chance compositions. This work was conceived after a research invitation from the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich to explore Hans Arp's oeuvre and personal archives in different museums and foundations.

It is in Arp's last studio where a collection of hand thorn papers are kept. Those papers were tossed over blank surfaces for making chance compositions in a similar manner as how, now with digital means, the Liquid Archive was used.



La Hora Nacional

2010

16 mm color film transferred to digital video, with sound

One channel video projection, 5' 59"

A stop motion like animation film resulted from a two year research into the Pre-Colombian collection of a private museum in the state of Puebla, Mexico. After noticing that the collection wasn't scientifically ordered but arranged by nationalistic ideological conventions, the artist decided to make replicas, rearrange them according

to the order of his own archive of images and propose an alternative reading of the national cultural heritage. To overcome the dramatic representation of this historical art crafts in museums (zenith light on colorless terra-cotta) the figures were immersed in color paint, radically transforming them and opening their interpretation.

1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



La Hora Nacional

2008-10

Views from the working process.

1. Display of a Pre-Columbian piece at the museum.

2. Institutional documentation of the piece.

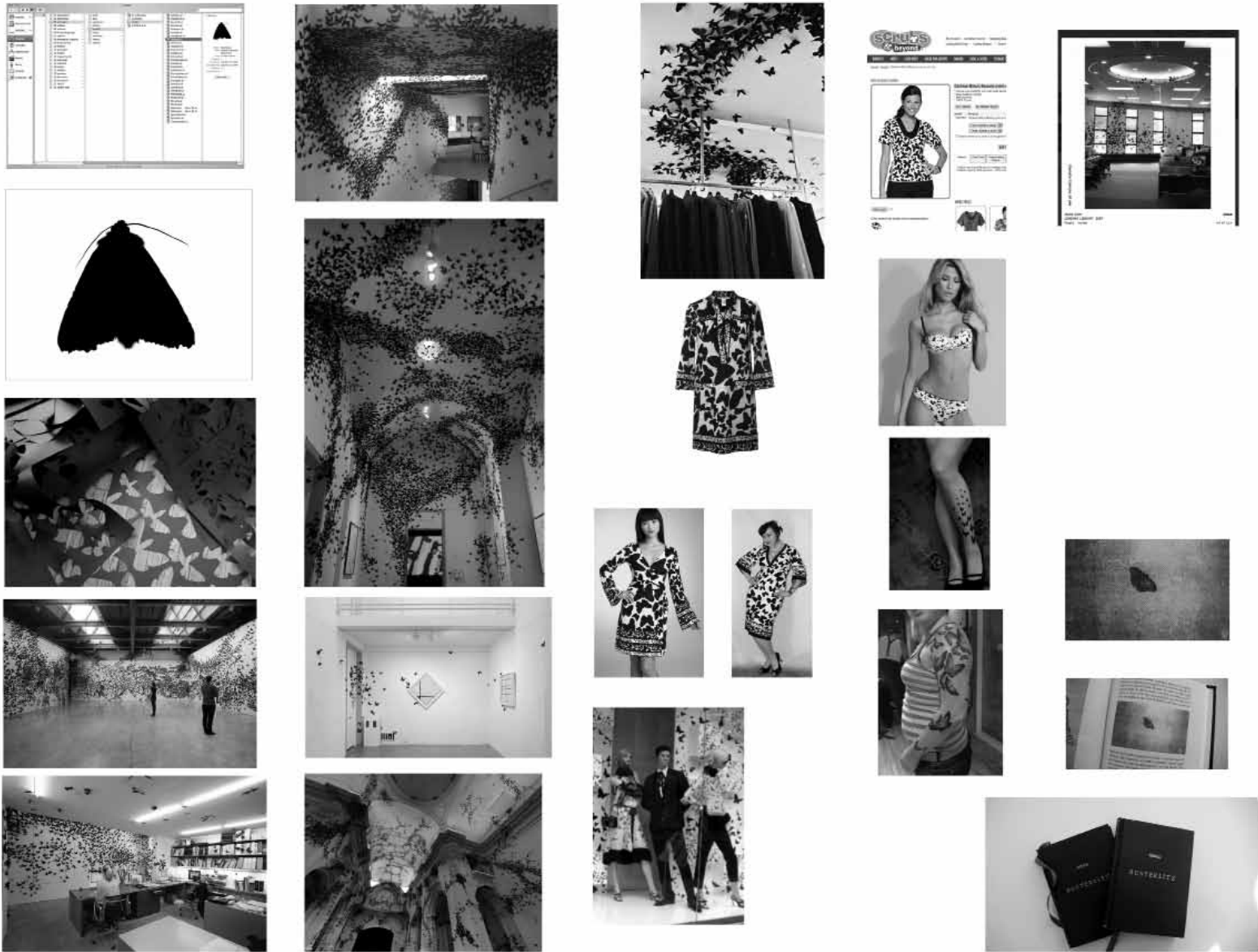
3. Comparison between both the artist and the museum archives.

4. Reclassification of the museum collection according to the artist's archive classification.

5. Replicas of Pre-Columbian pieces made by copying the archive photographs.

6. Immersion of the replicas in paint.

7. Filming of the pieces to imply a narrative alternative to the institutional.



Black Cloud Aftermath

2007- 2011

PowerPoint lecture by the artist.

Images at the lecture where the migration of a plague of moths is narrated: from a mental image followed by its materialization as an art installation, to its exhibition and -by crossing through the art world system- how it was appropriated by a fashion brand that used it as a shop

display which generated a series of dresses and further copies by other companies. Notions of authorship, piracy, free market, memory and anonymity are discussed in a lecture that has been presented as an ongoing research.



Black Cloud

2007

30,000 paper moths glued on the walls and ceiling.
Dimensions variable according to space.

The dream like image of a vaulted space filled with a swarm of moths motivated its materialization in paper and installation by occupying the entirety of the artist's studio. From this initial moment the piece was packaged and send to be exhibited in an art gallery, then in the

context of an art fair, a museum, the house of a collector and finally in a former church. The piece was installed by using the entirety of the rooms, both in the public and private areas, without making distinctions, adjusting to the architectural conditions.



Drifting Star

2010

Installation

Hanging acrylic plates

Dimensions according to space

Large scale three-dimensional rendering of the initial scene of the animation film *Dark Mirror*, where the shape of a bird splinters in an explosion, thus becoming an abstract motif. The spatial position of each piece was first calculated in a 3D virtual environment and then hanged

in the space of the museum. The installation, when seen in motion, causes the same visual illusion of 3D animation films. This piece was presented for the first time in a show in Israel, where it referenced to the historical process of that country, in an abstract way.

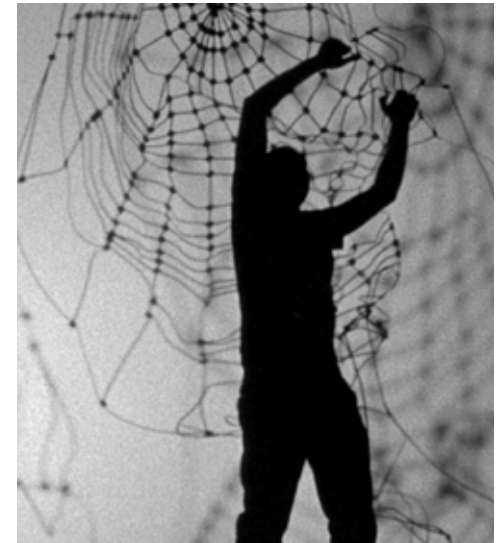
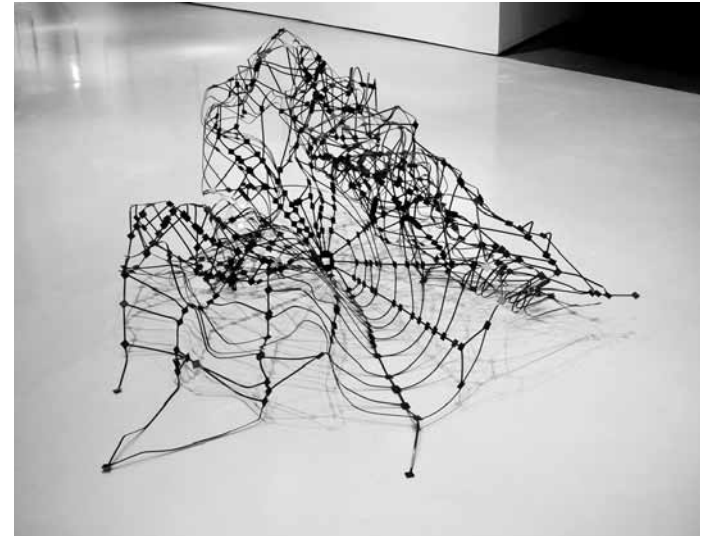


Dark Mirror (sculpture)

2008

Painted resin

Dimensions



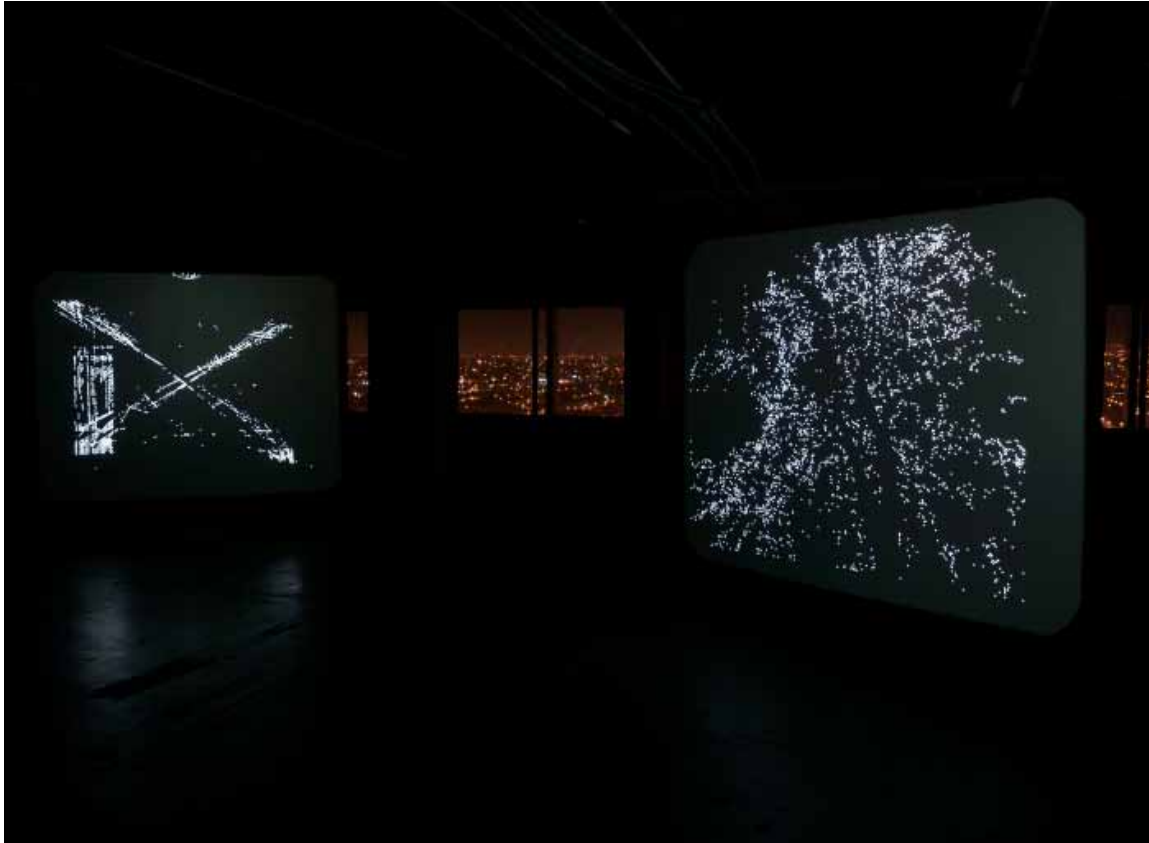
Transformable Spider Webs

2008

Aluminum, paint and black and white film

Dimensions variable

Both pieces are three-dimensional renderings modeled from recurrent images belonging to the Liquid Archive. The bird shape was sectioned with the pattern of the spider web, the web lines used as a cutting tool, fragmenting it and giving the impression of being broken when subjected to the gravity of the real space.



Psicofonias

2008

Installation of two channel black and white video connected to a MIDI system, two floating screens and sound system. Dimensions variable

Double screen projection displaying images from a computer program that interprets the structure of digital drawings as music. Psicofonias is based in the player piano music composed by Conlon Nancarrow in which he punched pianola rolls that were read by the machine

and mechanically performed music. The program functions as a translating device where images are converted to music or vice versa, it's the first abstraction of the visual language contained in the Liquid Archive and the last from the animation series that were made with it.



Useless Wonder

2006

Two channel video animation projected on a floating screen.

8min, 35 sec

This work was made after assembling a small animation studio that contributed and resourced from the Liquid Archive. The narrative suggested in the film is freely based on "The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket" by Edgar Allan Poe whereas a fantastic 18th century

travel was replaced by the image of a wondering world map that becomes chaotic and then rearranges itself. The music was composed to be synchronic with the different moments of the film, as in classic animation.

1.



2.



Dark mirror
2005

Two-channel video projection on floating screen, color with sound, 15 minutes loop. Animation by Andre Pahl; music by Jose Maria Serralde.

An experiment to delegate the artistic authorship to others, this animation was commissioned to a motion graphics artist who was asked to use freely the vector images from the Liquid Archive and generate the film's visual narrative (1). For the back view (2) a musician specialized

in accompanying silent films composed and played the score by looking at the same visual elements available. Both sides (sound and image) were confronted together when the work was shown publicly for the first time, placing the artist as spectator of its own work.



Why Fear the Future?

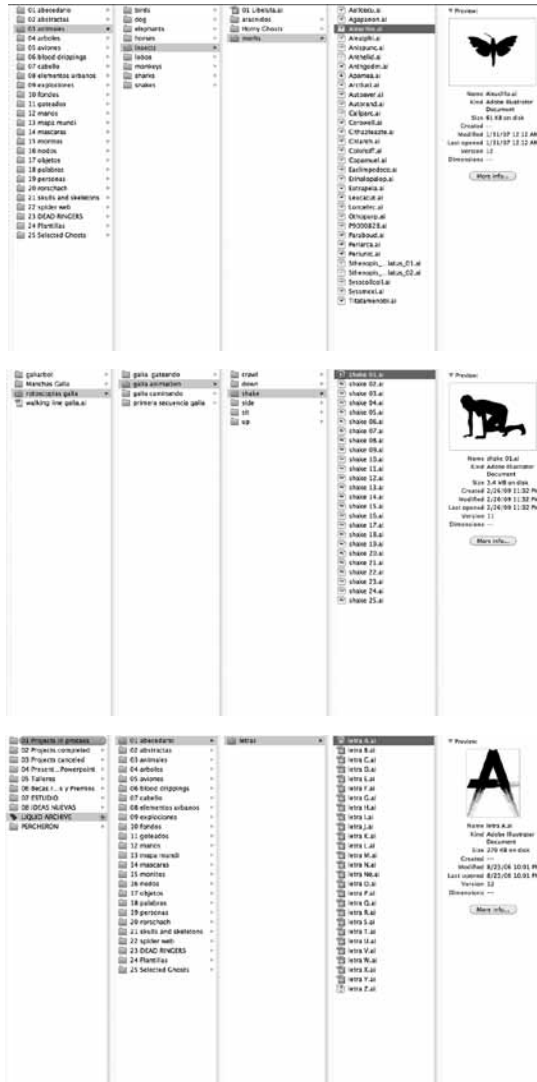
2005

Two-channel video projection on wall,
color with sound, 25 minutes, loop.

A deck of Tarot-like cards was printed with esoteric compositions made with images taken from the Liquid Archive. The cards were given to different Tarot readers and asked to propose the rules for displaying them and to give an interpretation. Although each person's approach

to the cards was different -some were rational, some intuitive- many common points of interpretation were reached. The filming of this process is a basic form of animation, suggesting that card reading, by telling stories through images, could be a primitive form of cinema.

1.



3.



Liquid Archive

2000-10

Vector Drawing paper cutouts, vitrines

Variable dimensions

Views from the computer interface where the actual files of the archive are organized in several categories and sub-categories (1.). The files are vector graphics therefore they exist only as data that can be used for means such as animation works, collages, printing or paintings. To visu-

alize the archive it was cutted out as black paper forms that were displayed on 15 vitrines (2.). Forms like birds, animals, Rorschach spots, human figures, typefaces and textures, were arranged by grouping them by mirroring the computer archives (3.)



NUEVOS RICOS

In September 2003, Juan Lede and Carlos Amorales met in Mexico City and decided to radically change their social and economic situation. They founded the record label NUEVOS RICOS, a new concept in the record business. They used artwork and valuable art paintings, inspired by the director "Soy pobre" (I am poor), who wants to be happy? They quickly started their activities around the old customs, the small middle age town of Loma, in both between Havana and Pico, to train their knowledge for the future market.

Questions and answers:

But why the company of the label is called Nuevo Rico?
 NUEVOS RICOS are convinced that they want to bring back that otherwise you will never hear about them. A major label won't release this kind of music, the so-called local independent scene is too small.

But why are you searching for art paintings from Havana?
 NUEVOS RICOS are convinced that they want to bring young back to find the Mexican scene with something more stimulating than the scene of the 1980s for the younger ones.

But why putting out vinyl in the age of CD?
 NUEVOS RICOS are convinced that a gift should not be too small.

But why releasing only a 500 records edition?
 NUEVOS RICOS are convinced that for the record label, there must be a limit. A gift is a gift, but they are not a charity organization.

But why using a limited edition box?
 NUEVOS RICOS are convinced that the artist is not only about the music, but to give equal importance to what remains in the art, the illustrations and the paintings. This creative class with the documentation, therefore the box.

But why to be so arty?
 NUEVOS RICOS are convinced that NUEVOS RICOS has an...

But why to be so arty?
 NUEVOS RICOS are convinced that through the use of every free can play a local scene with the boundaries of the art and the music industries to expand again an attitude where the artists are offered solely by the needs of the market and the institutions. An attitude that confuses the scene of participation in a game where to be critical they have to play as paid position. In this regard, by creating their own scene as a company, NUEVOS RICOS has to play in a way that is not critical, neither happy.

25 January 2004
 Loma



Nuevos Ricos

'Never Mind the Botox', aquí están los millonarios POR URIEL WAIZEL

GANAR DINERO NO TE lleva a ser feliz, pero a quién le importa la felicidad? En términos sociológicos se conoce a los nuevos ricos como la clase social voraz, trepadora, mediatizada, consumista (con mal gusto) y conservadora.

Si en 1977 los Sex Pistols se rebelaban contra la inútil marquieta, no es extraño que en tiempos de Rolex y Botox, un proyecto postpunk le tire al patetismo de los nuevos ricos: con la herencia de Malcolm McLaren y la visión de Luis de Llano, nace Nuevos Ricos: un híbrido que habita con alta ironía dentro del bajo mundo de la música independiente y convive al mismo tiempo con las narices respingadas del arte contemporáneo en un juego de

cross-over tramado en 2003 por Julián Lede, músico y Carlos Amorales, artista. Visualmente estridentes —gracias a los tremendos diseños de Amorales— y escénicamente decadentes, el cartel de Nuevos Ricos cuenta en sus filas con nueve diferentes actos: una serie de personajes perdidos y grotescos como Silverio (una suerte de stripper imitador de Rigo en tacha) o Miki (un andrógino suburbano ochentero), que proponen en la panorámica del

sello una rica gama de géneros que no por profesar el mal gusto del nuevo rico, ofrecen baja calidad, al contrario, marcan la tendencia snob del presente con la electrocumbia de María Daniela y su Sonido Lasser, el rockabilly editando nuevas rolas de los memorables Títán o retomando el género del *havaaly* con Miki; el Nuevo Rico autor del éxito "Soy pobre", que paradójicamente en su número de *havaaly* viste con casco, bóxers y playera de barras y estrellas en un comentario fíctico acerca de la vacuidad, inmediatez y confusión de las figuras pop. "El rock se ha vuelto un anuncio de jeans", comenta Amorales.



Nuevos Ricos

2003-2009

Record label, in collaboration with Julian Lede and Andre Pahl. Music publishing, website, visual products and performances.

Music label initiated with a musician and a designer as a platform to publish music and popularize anarchistic attitudes within the Mexican youth. Through the years that the label existed and because a series of anti capitalism rules stated in a manifesto published in its website (music

and images distributed for free, no acceptance of sponsor logos and experimenting with show business rituals) the label gained global recognition. It was an attempt for stimulating an historical moment when the country was opening up for democracy.



Devil Dance
2000-2003
Performance

A jester costume with a faceless devil's mask was used for performing within the audience of a concert or an art show, by inviting them to dance. The mask frustrated the possibility for eye contact and alienated the dancing character from the public and simultaneously this one

from the performer, creating an impersonal distance that although sympathetic it was nevertheless uncanny. The dance was performed in several places as a travelling show with musician Julian Léde, becoming the prelude for the record label in which both collaborated later.



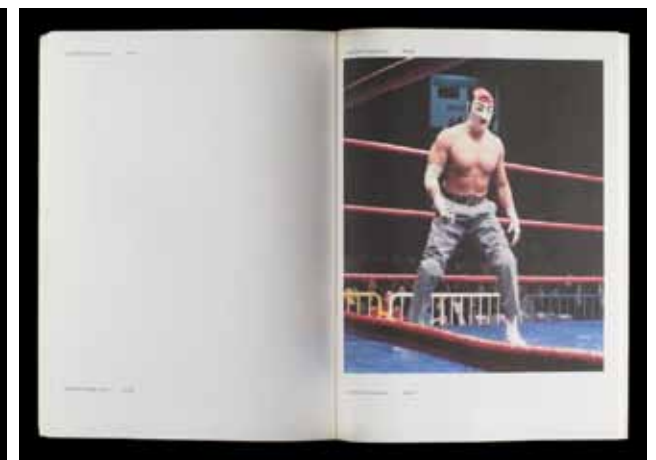
Flames Maquiladora

2001-2003

Installation,
variable dimensions

Departing conceptually from the production of garments by craftsman associated to the wrestling world (masks, disguise and shoes makers) this travelling installation functioned as a temporary sweatshop that ideally produced sport shoes. The production scheme functioned under the principle that it was the exhibition's audience

who contributed with labor for free in exchange of being entertained by making parts in a manual process. Not one shoe was completed in the three year existence of the project, which was the aim, as the production was to be utopic.



Amorales vs Amorales

1999-2003

8 channels video in monitors

With sound

Various time lengths

Los Amorales (book)

Published in 2001 by Artimo

Page selections

Edited by Linda Van Deursen and

Carlos Amorales

The final outcome of the Amorales masked character was, first, a series of wrestling matches that happen both in wrestling arenas and in museums, and second, the edition of a book containing images, conversations and sentences that form the narration of the entire project.



In Conversation With Ray Rosas 51'27"

Amorales Interim 9'45"

Arena 2 de mayo 14' 24"

2007,
each is a one-channel video with sound
Presented in two monitors and one projector

Making a double of oneself -Amorales- as a portable character, was a seven years long experimental project and sociological research about the meaning and use of masks. To mirror the wrestling world with the art world became an idea where the artist and the wrestler's role

where equated; the gallerist with the promoter's and the art museum with the arena. Three seminal videos mark the first steps into the development of this concept: the making of the mask as a portrait as seen by others, the confrontation with oneself and then with the other.

For Amoraes Interim
by **Philippe Vergne**

When we look at the work of Carlos Amoraes, it is easy, obvious and doubtless legitimate to refer to the world of wrestling. It is legitimate to the extent that it is somehow reassuring to watch an artist who responds critically (one hopes) to a phenomenon which is invading the media and even the political arena. Within the space of a few years, American wrestling has taken over transatlantic television screens, populating viewers' imaginations with masked models who are as inflated as they are violent, as macho as they are vicious. This is a genuine culture with codes of clothing, language, body language and music, and it is attracting an increasingly younger audience – so young that the magazine *New World Order*, which is dedicated to these new gods and their Olympus, is sold quite innocently at Toys 'R US without anybody taking offence. The codes are clear and they are doubtless the key to success: bodies with proportions which owe more to hormones than harmony, loud costumes which leave no detail to the anatomy to the imagination, distorted expressions...

The factor that seems to bring together the various protagonist of what has become an enormous, lucrative and flashy industry is undoubtedly its simplicity and simplism: good/bad, loser/winner, black/white, moral/inmoral. And this simplistic approach is equaled only by the pseudonyms of these new gods of the arena: Hollywood Hogan, Chris Jericho, Macho Man, The Dog-Faced Gremlin, The Total Package...

It is difficult to refrain from judgment, to suppress a cry of "bread and circuses" and to avoid making accusations of populism. But the temptation is even greater when, offstage, outside the ring, certain participants are elected to government office, manipulating the ambiguous nature of their past, no longer knowing whether they are gladiators or senators, or gladiators who have become senators. 1

Even if the world seems to have transformed into an amusement park, which is certainly healthy to question, Carlos Amoraes is not Andy Kaufman. 2 His work is critical but it does not target the phenomenon described here. At most, he borrows its structure as well as its value as a culture and a cult. These two words seem almost contradictory when talking about World Championship Wrestling, which, incidentally, is entirely American. But this is undoubtedly a view of the World that is becoming increasingly common.

The reality which circumscribes the work of Carlos Amoraes is that of the Other, of the dominated rather than the dominating, of a bias of modesty. It refers to a real popular culture which is the domain of a group more than of the masses. The structure which he borrows is not that of the World Championship Wrestling but that of Lucha Libre, the professional wrestling circuit in Mexico.

As can be seen in Ralph Rugoff's excellent description 3, Lucha Libre is not a sport but a journey to the hearth of a mysterious universe where we witness the collision of approximately 2000 fictitious, mythological and masked characters: Ulises, El Angel Azteca, Vampiro Casanova, Hannibal, Kung Fu...

Lucha Libre has been a genuine national pastime since the thirties: approximately 80 million tickets are sold every year nationwide – 80 million tickets for a drama whose outcome is determined beforehand and in which the concepts of moral/inmoral/amoral crumble in the face of the charisma of the protagonists and the quality of the show.

The coupling of the enormous popularity of Lucha Libre and the political situation in Mexico gave birth almost a decade ago to the phenomenon of "social worker" wrestlers, of whom the most prominent exponent is undoubtedly Superbarrio. Superbarrio, a

superhero with a beer belly, agitates against corrupt politicians and illegal evictions. He fights to assert the rights of the *tecnicos* (those who respect the rules) in the face of the attacks of the *rudos* (those who do not respect the rules). His strength is his mask and the difference between him and the superhero is that he is real, that he actually exists.

Carlos Amoraes imbibes this reality, using it as the basis for work which varies in form from video to performance and real-life documentaries. The last of these seems to have been the justification for inviting Superbarrio to come to Amsterdam in 1998: interview in local television, “full-dress” walkabout in rundown areas, and meetings with local associations who did not speak his language. The process verged on cruelty. Having been stripped of his local context, Superbarrio lost his credibility, reminding us more of Christopher Reeves than Clark Kent. In return, the project itself acquired the flavor of a bitter critique of well-meaning multiculturalism without any real meaning: no more than an unmasked human comedy. Paradoxically, it is precisely this bathos which gives Carlos Amoraes’ Project its real critical significance.

In this way *Lucha Libre* and its rites become critical tools of revelation. Carlos Amoraes, as an artist with Mexican roots living in Amsterdam, has established the necessary

distance between himself and an element of his cultural identity, *Lucha Libre*, to allow himself to use it as a mirror of the human condition. His approach means that he ends up questioning the validity of this tool as a model for describing the ways of the world. From this point onwards, we find ourselves far away from the world of wrestling. Here, *Lucha Libre* would seem to be, for Amoraes, no more than a prop, a mask which emphasizes the ambiguity of his approach. He plays at removing play for its primary function: “rehearsing the seriousness of life on the stage of unreality while relieving it to all burdens...”.⁴ He returns play to reality of the world, while undermining a mimetic and playful view of play.

Behind a light-hearted image – the artist who has worked with Superbarrio – Carlos Amoraes seems to locate his thinking at the heart of a wider and more complex analysis of play and of its relationship with the world. This process of reflection modifies the structure of play piece by piece, setting the stage for ontological questions.

The video *Amoraes Interim* (1997) therefore presents a wrestling match in which the two opponents, with their heads together in a slow-motion choreographed movement, push each other backwards and forwards inside and outside the confines of the screen. The two opponents wear the same mask: Amoraes, the effigy and

the alter ego of the artist. In addition to its obvious message – the confrontation of self and other, the confusion of the principles of good and evil, of morality and amorality (*Amorales*) within a single character – this work is the echo of a tradition of ambiguity, the tradition of the mask, which has its roots not only in Mexico with El Santo, Zorro, and the Aztec and Olmec civilizations but also in pre-Colombian civilization or in the masks of ancient Greek tragedy.

Traditionally, the mask is a primitive cult form and one of the ageless props of human play. Even in its making, the mask is a cult act which must be located in the context of respect for esoteric knowledge transmitted by tradition.⁵ The process of manufacturing cult props is also a full part of the essence of the cult.

It should be pointed out that whether or not he is aware of these concepts developed by Eugene Fink, Carlos Amoraes has made detailed records of the production of his mask by a former wrestler who had been initiated in the tradition.

If the fundamental intention of the human mask is not to fool others, not to seem to be something one is not, but to present a multiple appearance of oneself, then what is the significance of a simplified mask with an effigy of oneself? Under these circumstances, when

does a prop like this become ambiguous or equivocal? There is the loss of the self in the self, the forgetting of the ability to lose oneself in play in all innocence. There is the “serious” awareness, or the fear that the person who is playing is not thinking and that the person who is thinking is not playing, the fear of being unable to reconcile oneself with the world beyond all moral judgements.

Perhaps we are seeing the awareness that “self-representation is the true nature of play”? 6

In that case, Amoraless is questioning concepts of representation, of mimesis. He is what he plays, and what he represents merges with reality. In the space between the game, its rules (wrestlin/Lucha Libre), its subject, its content (symbolic or moral value) and the transformation to which they are subjected by the imperfect imitation of Carlos Amoraless, the world emerges and play become the genuine agent of revelation for the tragedy and the comedy of human existence. However, at an even deeper level, Amoraless puts forward questions about the possibility of creating a critical form or of returning to reality a form of production which is perhaps becoming exhausted in the closed field of art.

In making the attempt, he also tries to break down the distinction between play and ordinary life, working as children do without shame or

a guilty conscience. The identical masks of Amoraless devastate the distinction between the serious things of life on the one hand and and play as the theater of inauthenticity on the other. In doing so, the artist encourages us to adopt an aesthetic approach to life as much as he suggest a critical attitude towards contemporary, alienating forms of spectacle. Amoraless’ work produces a different dimension of time, an ambiguous space which is difficult to pinpoint. He creates a form for an interim in which the subject can rediscover freedom.

NOTES:

1 – In 1998, Jesse Ventura, a former wrestler known as Jesse

“The Body” Ventura, was elected governor of Minnesota, being transformed in the process into Jesse “The Mind” Ventura. For further details, see www.jesseventura.com.

2 – See Milos Forman’s film, *Man on the Moon*.

3 – Ralf Rugoff, *Circus Americanus*, Verso, 1995.

4 – Eugen Fink, *Le jeu comme symbole du monde*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1966, p. 81.

5 - Eugen Fink, *Le jeu comme symbole du monde*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1966, p. 165.

6 – Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method: Play as the clue to ontological explanation*. New York: Continuum, 1999.

7 – In this respect, see Jean-Charles Masséra, “La leçon de Stains”, in the catalogue Pierre Huyghe . *The third memory*, Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou; Chicago: Renaissance Society, Chicago.

‘-los Amoraless’, artist book by Carlos Amoraless and Linda van Deursen (editors), 2001 Amsterdam, NL. Published by Artimo and the Migros Museum, Zurich.

Gallery Exploits by Cuauhtémoc Medina

Flames Maquiladora (2001-2002) by Carlos Amorales is a practical parody of the utopian ideologies of participatory aesthetics which, still today, are perceived as the ultimate artistic libertarian gesture; the overcoming of all the alienation that goes with the idea of art as a purely aesthetic and speculative activity. Rather than inviting the audience to test a simulacrum of freedom, Flames Maquiladora is a twisted representation of contemporary labour of exploitation.

The work is in fact an economic image that takes its cue from the myriad manufacturing sweatshops (known as maquiladoras) that were established during the 1990's along the Mexico/US border to take advantage of cheap Mexican labour. Although maquiladoras are not peculiar to Mexico, they embody the neo-colonial infrastructure that is essential to the management of profit under the so-called 'new economy'. Maquiladoras are factories located south of the border where low-paid workers are employed to assemble commodities produced by the almighty American industry. In that sense, they are the perfect neo-liberal dream: they allow corporations to take advantage of global inequality without the disadvantages of emigration and cultural integration. They serve to integrate the most heavily automated sectors of the First World economy to

the lowest denominator of workforces in the periphery, while also disempowering unions and labour movements in the developed world. Finally, they represent the ultimate in dependable economic systems. These duty-free sweatshops, normally operating under extremely advantageous customs and taxation rules, are in fact extremely easy to transfer between countries and continents. Once salaries or workers' rights start becoming less attractive in places like Mexico, due, in part, to the very same process of economic integration, maquiladoras can be easily dismantled and sent to other capitalist heavens like China and Indonesia, where a mixture of authoritarian regimes and crony capitalism keeps on ensuring the First World consumer the lowest possible labour costs.

Amorales' work invites the audience to take part in the production of wrestling boots which will later be exhibited and sold as art objects. Whilst seeming to provide the audience with the release from the passivity of artistic consumption, in fact the artist is exploiting the audience as labourers. The gallery is turned into a workshop where one is compelled to contribute to the dissemination of a transcultural fantasy: creating the performance tool for an action based on Mexican popular free wrestling, by which a performer can impersonate a devil of desire, dance and pleasure.

This time, First World art cognoscenti are put to work for the profit of a Third World artist.

'We are the World', exhibition catalogue for the Dutch Pavillion, 50th Biennale di Venezia, Italy. 2003 Amsterdam, NL. Published by Artimo.

Pleased To Meet You by Lisette Smitts

In 1969 the Brazilian artist Hélio Oiticica talked about the ‘impossibility of experiences in galleries and museums.’ * Oiticica had the romantic idea of becoming one with music and the universo through the medium of something like dance (‘the samba is the biggest public improvisation in the whole world’), something in which he saw even the possibility of eradicating class, hierarchic and intellectual differences, even if just in the moment of ecstasy. The Brazil of the mid-1960s is the social and cultural reality in which Oiticica’s ‘anti-bourgeois aesthetic’, his ‘poetry of the street’ is set.

The mexican artist Carlos Amoraes first danced his Devils’ Dance with visitors to the Berlin Biennale in 2001. Further performances followed in Zurich, New York, London and Rotterdam. It is always the artist himself who dances –dressed in his devil’s costume of a shiny black tracksuit, red leather boxing shoes, red gloves and mask- and who challenges his audience, swept up and carried along by the raw electrobeats of Silverio: ‘This time you are safe with us.’ The dawn of the 21st century: Amoraes’ ‘poetry of the street’ is a spectacle that walks the thin line between passion and aggression, a vulgar surrender that perplexes and embarrasses the art audience – to what extent

varies per country, city and situation. The Devils’ Dance is not meant to be understood from the perspective of current artistic practices concerning participation – even though the work *Flames Maquiladora*, in which the audience is invited to sew together shoe components into a product, incorporates a somewhat cynical commentary on the contemporary ‘participation art’ of his Dutch colleagues. Nor is it about participation with a socio-critical intention. Amoraes no longer needs to attack class difference between high and low, from the assumption that (the culture of) the general public in Western ‘experience’ economy has been emancipated already.

The Devils’ Dance: no intellectual argumentation, no critique, not even controlled beauty. What this teaser primarily challenges is ‘respectability’, and especially the ‘high’ respectability of the art world. This is the repetitive, uncontrolled ecstasy of the dance floor; this is anonymous reduction to a number of beats per minute. Forget the good intentions, sham or not.

*Guy Brett in the catalogue for the traveling retrospective Hélio Oiticica, published by Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis and Witte de With center for contemporary art, Rotterdam, 1992.

‘We are the World’, exhibition catalogue for the Dutch Pavillion, 50th Biennale di Venezia, Italy. 2003 Amsterdam, NL. Published by Artimo.

Liquid Archive by Raphaela Platow

For the past decade, Carlos Amorales has generated vector line drawings by tracing existing images onto his computer. The technique is comparable to rotoscoping in early animation, in which the changing positions of live-action figures in film are drawn as they appear frame-by-frame. The artist fluidly records and reinterprets imagery and patterns he extracts from his own photographs, in magazines, publications on art and cultural history, and on the Internet. Dissecting the compositions of the found imagery, he transforms selected shapes into black silhouettes, saving each element as a file in a graphic computer program.

Amorales has established a number of categories for his growing digital archive. The *árbol* (tree) works that run numerically from 01 *árbol.ai* (01 tree.ai) to 06 *árbol.ai* (06 tree.ai) show the silhouettes of sturdy trunks and intricate, reaching branches. *árboles humanos* 01.ai (human trees 01.ai) to *árboles humanos* 05.ai (human trees 05.ai) depict human figures, dressed in pants and clunky shoes, morphing into trees.

Their legs appear in various stabilizing positions to support the weight of the branches. Another category, *létera* (letter), includes the letters of the alphabet. The lines of each letter look as though they were created by a wide brush that runs out of black paint, the strokes shifting from crisp into tenuous traces (*létera A.ai* [letter A.ai] through *létera L.ai* [letter L.ai]). The archive also contains numerous versions of skulls, spider webs, airplanes, wolves, monkeys, splashes, geometric patterns, birds, and innumerable human-animal hybrids catalogued as monsters, as well as a single pregnant woman. Collecting and redrawing images from a broad range of sources within a single category allows the artist to study their differences and assess their potential. Amorales's taxonomy encompasses animals and humans engaged with each other and images informed by familiar animal behavior studies, such as those examining the postures wolves assume while attacking, playing, threatening, or pinning each other down in a fight (*lobos pelea* 01.ai [wolves fight 01.ai] to *lobos pelea* 07.ai [wolves fight 07.ai–07.ai]).

In a visual language related to the fantastic and to horror, Amorales treats themes that pertain to experiences shared by disparate cultures. His culturally broad approach is reminiscent of that of early-twentieth-century German art historian Aby Warburg, who departed from the code of his academic field by comparing “high” and “low” art spanning epochs and

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cultures. Warburg proposed a view of artistic creativity as a single, uninterrupted stream. Early in his career, he formulated ideas on the conjunction of aesthetic and symbolic images in apparently unrelated cultures. From 1924 until his death in 1929, he used 1,300 pictures to create the *Mnemosyne Atlas* (atlases being a kind of archive themselves), a history of creative production without words. In this “atlas of memory,” Warburg painstakingly arranged and rearranged visual documents from multiple realms of imagery—reproductions of works of art or their details, advertisements, newspaper clippings, and personal photographs—to visually describe how expressive forms have appeared in different cultural regions at the same time and have been passed on within the history of representation. *Mnemosyne* does not present works as individual examples of an artist's or cultural region's aspirations or style, but as expressive facts that sustain their validity through time. With the relationships Warburg established among the images, he traced the energy of current imagery back to archaic figures, showing the survival of the ancient world in the contemporary.¹ For example, he overlaid the image of an ecstatic maenad on the shadow of a woman golfer who has just completed a swing in order to show their matching postures and shapes; a zeppelin hovering over Hamburg is a modern emblem of ancient themes of harnessed energy and spanned distances.² Amorales presents a contemporary counterpart

to Warburg's open-ended investigation into images that have long-forgotten meanings. The artist's fantastic, terror-filled visual language too has reverberations across cultures and centuries. The Liquid Archive provides the source material for most of his works since the late 1990s—drawing collages, record covers, stickers, video animations and other projection-based works, installations, sculptures, and, recently, performances. His twofold interest in the archive is in “creating the language and afterwards creating the possibilities for this language to express itself.”³ While Amoraes is the creator of his archive, he invites others to play an integral role in its creation, use, and interpretation. In so doing, he acknowledges that any language is a collective tool, and shows his desire that the items in his archive be recognized and understood by others.

Amoraes's studio in the middle of Mexico City is a bright space bustling with young designers working on computers or handling a laser-cutting machine. Under Amoraes's direction, they consult the archive to produce computer animations or collages that combine two-dimensional elements digitally manipulated and entered into open, haunting narratives that unfold over time. Images of skull-headed monkeys, racing wolves, fields filled with blackbirds stirred up by an enigmatic red female figure, and crawling furred humans are juxtaposed with undulating bands of stripes, splashes, and geometric zigzag pat-

terns. Using cutting-edge computer technology, the artist and his animation team pay tribute to the history of traditional animation. Not only does their working method parallel that of early animation, with one person creating the characters and others animating them, but the artist's aesthetic is informed by animation's ancestor, the backlit shadow puppet show, and early practitioners, such as Lotte Reiniger, whose exquisite storytelling involved the animation of intricate cut-out paper silhouettes.

In Amoraes's black silhouettes, expression is derived entirely from the contours of the body, whether human, animal, natural, technological, or symbolic. By eliminating the tactility of texture, the psychological power of facial expressions, and the emotional resonance of color, the artist focuses on the instant legibility of shape. Not only does he create icons, but he captures figures in a particular movement, gesture, or posture that we recognize from our own life experiences—how we are in our own bodies and what we see in others. Amoraes thus reintroduces the emotional and psychological content that his technique might appear to have eliminated. Crouching on all fours, a naked female is caught in an intermediate state, getting ready for a sprint while submissively drawing back. Her back slightly rounded, toes tucked under, legs bent, arms tentatively planted, and head hesitantly lifted, the figure expresses the tension of preparing to energetically push

forward and at the same time bowing down, pulling away from action. Elsewhere airplanes, deprived of their glistening volumetric surfaces and branding marks, are symbols of both technological invention and the horror of our time, as they crash into trees, penetrate a body from every direction like arrows (an updated Saint Sebastian), and swarm in the skies to form an opaque black cloud.

From the beginnings of animation, an important issue has been its questioning of “the received knowledges which govern the physical laws and normative socio cultural orthodoxies of the ‘real world [resulting in] an ontological equivalence in the animation text which recognizes the co-existent parity of perceived orthodoxies in representing the literal world and the expression of dream states, memory and thus fragmentary practice of ‘thought’ itself.”⁴ Drawn motion pictures support Amoraes's endeavor to “create stories that [do not] refer to the real world, that [are not] tangible as live arts are.” The Liquid Archive and the works created from it are informed by, and toy with, the clichés of gothic culture or what has been called “art-horror,”⁵ a genre that germinated around the time of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). As in the horror genre, the artist's monsters conflate the animate and the inanimate, or different species, and place the quality of liminality—in the form of a creature between human and machine or animal and human—as

the prime referent for fear. The artist extends the dissolution of boundaries in the horror story to the themes of nature and culture, the complete and the incomplete (formless), the known and the amorphous. His environments are often ambiguous fence-lined suburbs, swamps, parking lots, and woods. Yet, while he employs what we are used to being horrified by—the figures and locations that naturally lie outside of or are displaced by cultural categories—he neutralizes the mechanisms of horror with abstract patterns that bring to mind the so-called visual music of early-twentieth-century artists Viking Eggeling and Hans Richter.

Amorales upholds the premise of German philosopher Walter Benjamin that “half the art of storytelling is that of keeping it free from all explanations during the telling.”⁶ The artist’s narratives do not have clearly defined beginnings and ends, and gain their associative power by the assembly of elements from diverse sources. His storytelling impulse is rooted in his upbringing in Mexico City: “There’s something that I experienced, as a child and adolescent in Mexico. We lived in a working class district, so in the afternoon we used to meet to play football and when we’d finished, all of us kids were there and the brothers came from work. Instead of going straight home they used to stay with us for a while to chat and tell us stories ranging from sex, fantasies, rumors, and ambushes. It was a very important world for me, which made me

visualize a lot of stories of mythical, unknown things, and I feel it became a treasure in my imagination.”⁷ Amorales bases his narratives on the oral histories of his cultural environment, in which information is immediately subjectivized, has many permutations, and undergoes continual reinterpretation. The artist later realized that “many of the stories the older guys told us were really stories from the media,” stories that were swiftly and successfully subsumed into a Mexican framework of understanding.

For his drawing collages of laser-cut black paper, the artist uses his archive to generate a vast number of image arrangements that can be infinitely reorganized. A skull, for example, combines with the body of a spider looming over her prey of three crashed airplanes in a space delineated by stripes that gradually become less dense toward the top of the picture to give the impression of a landscape (From The Bad Sleep Well 02, 2007). The same skull, multiplied, is shown from different angles in From The Bad Sleep Well 11 (2004). With the sockets of the eyes colored bright red, they are suspended from the branches of a tree like gloomy lanterns around a black raven with its head turned alertly to the left. In his decision to invite others to freely access the Liquid Archive, Amorales subverts the notion of authorship. By recombining his elements—and hence questioning the solidity of their contingencies—he provides for ongoing shifts in meaning.

The openness of Amorales’s archive is not reserved for people who use its elements as is. Items from the archive have been turned into three-dimensional sculptures and costumes. Amorales takes the premise of reinterpretation further by engaging people from fields other than visual art. He has invited musicians to compose scores and improvisations for his animations, dancers to interact with his sculptures through performative movements (Spider Galaxy, 2007), and fortune tellers to interpret the archive imagery printed onto tarot cards (Why Fear the Future?, 2005). For the CDs that music publisher EMI produces and distributes for the subcultural record label Nuevo Ricos—which Amorales founded with Julian Lede in 2003—the artist uses covers that were pirated by others from the originals he first put into circulation.

In his most recent drawings, Amorales eliminates the black interior of the silhouette to focus on the outlines, making visible the nature of his vector graphics drawing program. The small, dotted rectangles in the digital renderings indicate the changes in direction that create the intricate contours of Amorales’s figures, symbols, patterns, and letters. In some cases, the outline of fur or the meandering branches of an opulent tree is nothing more than a dense amalgamation of dots produced by the rapid movement of the cursor back and forth. In others, the image almost disappears, its fine

lines and the few dots limning the skulls or the birds fading into the background. It is the dots of the computer program that, ultimately, give Amorales's elements their shapes and speak to how—that is, through which language—they are created. This step in the artist's process could be considered one that, like the interpretive approach discussed earlier, underscores the translation of one language into another. Through a binary calculation, the movement of the cursor creates a digital image. In his latest projection piece, *Psicofonias* (Player Piano), Amorales brings the notion of translation even more explicitly to the fore by asking what his drawings would sound like if they were transformed into musical scores. Since music resembles film in transpiring over time, Amorales pursued this inquiry through moving images. In *Psicofonias*, illuminated dot markers define the archive forms, which enter from the top of a dark projection screen and slowly descend to reveal their identities. When the dots hit the bottom of the screen, they trigger sounds. In the case of the player piano, notes are represented by tiny perforations on rolls of paper that are activated and moved along by a suction system. In Amorales's piece, the computer-generated music program and the descending images are synchronized in real time through a mathematical process that translates each dot into a musical note as it hits the bottom of the projection screen at a particular point and time. The computer turns visual images into musical composi-

tions that are complex and often disharmonic. *Psicofonias* is a tacit homage to Conlon Nancarrow (1912–1997), a highly original U.S.-born composer who spent most of his life in Mexico, best known for his compositions for the player piano. Nancarrow turned to the mechanical instrument so that he could compose tempo relationships and polyrhythms that were too complex for a human to play, just as Amorales relies on the computer to produce drawings that can be musically interpreted by a pianist but not precisely rendered.

Wikipedia's entry for "liquid" begins: "A liquid's shape is confined to, not determined by, the container it fills. That is to say, liquid particles (normally molecules or clusters of molecules) are free to move about the volume."⁸ Amorales's *Liquid Archive* has a similar modus, in which the system itself and all its categories are defined, but the elements of the digital images are open to change and can be integrated into various contexts and channels of distribution; they can be interpreted by different people, used in varying media, and translated into languages other than the visual. The artist's inventory goes beyond the conventional understanding of an archive as a systematic collection of historical records or other information concerning particular areas of life and knowledge. Amorales turns a rigid system of collecting items and assigning them a fixed place within a larger frame of reference and understanding into a

fluid working method that results in a malleable entity that creates meaning in myriad and unforeseen ways.

Carlos Amorales: Discarded Spider?, exhibition catalogue. Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, USA. 2008. Published by Veenman Publishers (NL).

Black Cloud Aftermath por Graciela Speranza

En el principio hay una polilla. La silueta negra de una polilla, en realidad, clasificada como *apamea.ai* versión número 12 en la carpeta *moths*, incluida a su vez en la carpeta *insects* que, junto con las carpetas *birds*, *dog*, *elephants*, *horses*, *lobos*, *monkeys*, *sharks* y *snakes*, conforma el rubro 03. *Animales*. Los otros rubros del archivo son: *abecedario*, *abstractas*, *arboles*, *aviones*, *blood drippings*, *cabello*, *elementos urbanos*, *explosiones*, *fondos*, *goteados*, *manos*, *mapamundi*, *máscaras*, *monitos*, *nodos*, *objetos*, *palabras*, *personas*, *rorschach*, *skulls*, y *spider web*. La clasificación disparatada no corresponde al idioma analítico de John Wilkins, ni a la enciclopedia china *Emporio celestial* de conocimientos benévolos, ni al Instituto Bibliográfico de Bruselas, ni a ninguna de las invenciones *estrafalarias* con las que Borges demostró que no hay clasificación del universo que no sea arbitraria y conjetural, sino al archivo líquido del artista mexicano Carlos Amoraes, que desde fines de los 90 clasifica el universo en un repertorio de cientos de figuras virtuales, creadas

a partir de fotografías del entorno urbano, la iconografía popular, el comic, los video-juegos, el graffiti o Internet, y después rotoscopiadas, reinterpretadas y archivadas como vocabulario lábil de un lenguaje personal. Con ese repertorio expandible, Amoraes recompuso el mundo en paisajes sombríos, en los que las figuras del archivo se recrean en nuevas formas, se hibridan, se combinan, y cobran vida migrando de un medio a otro, de la imagen virtual al óleo, el dibujo, la animación, la escultura o la instalación. Aviones y lobos feroces se recortan bajo la luz de la luna llena en ciudades desiertas, calaveras con lentes rojos penden de árboles desnudos, figuras inciertas mitad-humanas mitad-animales y bandadas de pájaros negros pueblan paisajes postapocalípticos: un espejo negro, a veces negrísimo, de las ciudades de hoy (*Dark Mirror* se llamó una muestra de 2007), que sin embargo vibra con la potencia seductora de las siluetas compactas y los colores netos. En la fluidez proverbial del archivo, el arte de Amoraes encontró un lenguaje maleable con el que dinamizar las tensiones de la pertenencia cultural (Amoraes se crió en una familia de artistas mexicanos, pero se instaló desde muy joven en Ámsterdam y hasta representó a Holanda en la Bienal de Venecia antes de volver a México) y un modelo topológico, inmaterial y apropiable, capaz de desplegarse con la imaginación pero también con las intervenciones y traducciones de otros artistas, y atravesar incluso los límites del arte. En su estudio del DF, diseñadores gráficos y músicos colaboran en la construc-

ción del archivo, lo traducen y lo expanden en nuevos formatos, o en proyectos inclasificables como el sello *Nuevos ricos*, una pequeña empresa discográfica que durante años se dedicó a la producción, difusión y consumo de música independiente en la web.

Basta seguir la cadena vertiginosa de copias, versiones y perversiones que puso en marcha la discográfica para comprobar la potencialidad expansiva del archivo en las redes virtuales y reales del mundo globalizado. *Nuevos Ricos* empezó por ofrecer descargas gratuitas de discos de nuevas bandas latinoamericanas y europeas ilustrados con imágenes surgidas del archivo líquido, un arco musical inclasificable y transcultural que va del neogótico infantil a la “cumbia lunática y experimental”. La gigantesca industria pirata de México se encargó muy pronto de reproducirlos con sus correspondientes versiones pirateadas de las gráficas originales, difundirlos entre un público sin acceso a medios digitales, y convertirlos en hits en muchos casos, al punto de despertar el interés de importantes sellos como EMI, que produjeron algunos de los discos en ediciones legales. Después, invirtiendo la dirección de los flujos económicos y culturales del mercado por medio de una ingeniosa “piratería de la piratería”, *Nuevos Ricos* usó las gráficas piratas (“las nuevas portadas tenían modificaciones que me atrevo a calificar como mejoras a mis propios originales”, asegura Amoraes), y capitalizó el toque “cool” de las copias pirateadas para

introducirlas en el sofisticado mercado progresista europeo, comprándolas al por mayor y exportándolas, resarciéndose así de las pérdidas económicas resultantes del saqueo pirata. Las distinciones cada vez más difusas entre originales y copias, autoridad y apropiación, creación y post-producción, copycontrol y copyleft estaban en el centro mismo del circuito abierto por Nuevos ricos, utopía virtual de un arte de la dispersión y la distribución, el uso y la traducción, sin localización geográfica precisa ni marcas identitarias nacionales, que sin embargo reunía indiscriminadamente música de aquí y de allá, se nutría de las peculiaridades estéticas, culturales y económicas de una empresa local, y hasta conseguía invertir la dirección clásica de los intercambios entre la periferia y los centros. Pero conviene volver a la polilla, punto de partida de un periplo más sinuoso por las redes de la cultura global, una verdadera plaga negra con la que el arte de Amorales atravesó todo tipo de fronteras, hasta convertirse en una entidad flotante, proteica, espectral. La obra en cuestión, *Black Cloud Aftermath*, escapa a cualquier definición convencional del arte para convertirse en un puro trayecto, el recorrido fortuito de una obra, la historia de su errancia y su dispersión; una obra sin género y, en términos literales, sin autor.

En el recuento de Amorales, la historia empieza a fines de 2006, durante un viaje al norte de México para despedirse de su abuela o, más precisamente, una noche en la casa de la abue-

la, en la que el insomnio o la inminencia de una muerte próxima dispararon la imagen de una nube de mariposas nocturnas que cubrían el techo del cuarto. De vuelta en el DF, la imagen prosperó en las figuras líquidas del archivo. La visión fugaz de la duermevela se tradujo en miles de mariposas que desde la silueta virtual de la polilla se desplegaron en un abanico de formas variadas, se materializaron en decenas de cartulinas negras recortadas y plegadas, y se multiplicaron durante ocho meses hasta cubrir las paredes blancas del estudio. Fue la primera metamorfosis de la nube –su momento clásico en la ontología de la creación- y el primer desplazamiento de sentidos múltiples: de la imagen mental disparada por una experiencia íntima a la liquidez gráfica del archivo, del ámbito privado de la casa familiar en el norte de México al taller del artista en el DF, de la imagen virtual plana a la materialidad tridimensional de la instalación en el estudio, de la metáfora arraigada en la cercanía de la muerte al imán de referencias y la deriva del sentido en la obra consumada. Una amenaza sombría vibra en el avance obstinado de las polillas (un video de banda sonora ominosa registra la invasión), pero el significado cierto se escurre en la marcha. ¿Aleteo fúnebre? ¿Belleza terminal? ¿Espejismos del apocalipsis? Vienen a la mente las diez plagas de Egipto con sus ecos bíblicos de advertencia y castigo, pero estamos en México a comienzos del siglo XXI, y al devaneo fugaz del sentido más le sientan otras plagas contemporáneas, como el desempleo masivo o las redes

del narcotráfico.ⁱ Antes de que el sentido las fije en un tiempo y un espacio, sin embargo, las mariposas se sacuden el polvo de las metáforas y siguen su marcha.

Volátil por naturaleza, la nube no tardó en abandonar el estudio, atravesar una de las fronteras más candentes de la geografía americana, y entrar a la escena del arte contemporáneo en la muestra *Black Cloud*, montada en Nueva York en el otoño de 2007. Amorales cubrió el cubo blanco de la galería Yvon Lambert con 25.000 mariposas nocturnas de 36 formatos distintos, y hasta invadió las oficinas, ignorando las distinciones institucionales entre espacio administrativo y salas de exhibición, burlando incluso la jactancia con que los galeristas exhiben un par de obras elegidas de sus artistas más cotizados como trofeos privados fuera de las salas. En vistas al recorrido futuro de la nube, fue una transgresión menor. Ese mismo año *Black Cloud* viajó hacia el sur, al Moore Space de Miami, justo a tiempo para los fastos mercantiles de la feria Art Basel, y en la primavera del año siguiente volvió al norte, para invadir el Philadelphia Museum of Art, donde no solo cubrió pasillos centrales y áreas de acceso, sino que se coló en algunas salas y entabló imprevistos diálogos con los Mondrians y Duchamps que el museo atesora en Filadelfia. Se diría por las fotos que con Mondrian el diálogo fue breve pero intenso y versó sobre el color, la geometría, y la contundencia de las formas netas; con Duchamp en cambio, el intercambio fue más nutrido, una conversación animada sobre la reproduc-

ción, las copias, la agonía lenta pero firme del autor que, por algún motivo, quedó aleteando en el aire. Fue una especie de desvío voluntario de la nube, un remanso, como si algunas obras del siglo XX la hubiesen arrestado por un momento de la marcha ciega hacia un futuro sombrío, y la invitaran al diálogo con el arte del pasado, en una suerte de intercambio gratuito o de homenaje, antes de que la ley del mercado la condenara a reclusión forzada en un espacio privado suntuoso, la casa de un coleccionista, destino previsible de cualquier obra que brilla en el arte de hoy. Black Cloud se permitió sin embargo un último trayecto voluntario, un viaje transoceánico, antes de recluirse en la colección privada. En 2009 sobrevoló el Atlántico y fue a parar a Murcia, España, a la Sala de Verónicas, un espacio de arte contemporáneo alojado en una iglesia conventual del siglo XVIII, en donde las mariposas nocturnas cubrieron las naves barrocas, desde las capillas laterales y los balconcitos a las altas bóvedas. De México a la “madre patria”, tiente pensar mirando las imágenes de la instalación, la plaga negra invirtió el recorrido de Hernán Cortés con un eco de las extrañas apariciones en el cielo en las que los aztecas vieron presagios de la llegada del conquistador español y, con justicia poética centenaria, hizo llegar a la iglesia reciclada un avatar oscuro del oro de Moctezuma, cuyo paradero, a pesar de las matanzas, sitios y torturas, Cortés nunca descubrió. La Sala de Verónicas, en cualquier caso, fue el último destino de las mariposas en el itinerario consentido por el

autor. Con la invasión apoteótica de Murcia, la nube negra completó el circuito áureo de la obra en la era del arte global: de la imaginación del artista al estudio, de ahí a la galería prestigiosa, luego a la feria, más tarde al museo y por fin a la colección privada. O, en estrictos términos geográficos: del norte de México al DF, del DF a los Estados Unidos, de Estados Unidos a Europa. La coincidencia feliz de tema y forma, se diría, amplió el arco del recorrido: la volatilidad de las mariposas y la potencialidad invasora de la plaga encontraron su traducción perfecta en una instalación liviana y portátil, adaptable a cualquier espacio. Pero, ¿cómo leer la marcha sostenida de la nube negra por los espacios blanquísimos del arte contemporáneo? ¿Qué final podría estar presagiando, que el arte del siglo XX, profuso en fines y relatos terminales, no hubiese anticipado ya?

A modo de respuesta provisoria o clave, Amoraless recibió una imagen curiosa enviada por un curador amigo, sorprendido por la aparición de la nube en un espacio insospechado: la casa matriz de Dior Homme de París cubierta de mariposas negras casi idénticas a las suyas, motivo promocional de la presentación de la colección de invierno de 2008, “Dior chasse les papillons”. De la migración de las mariposas a la meca de la alta costura parisina, por supuesto, Amoraless no tenía ni noticias. Fue solo el comienzo de una serie imparable de copias, versiones y traducciones de Black Cloud a los espacios y formatos más impensados,

que extendió la marcha de la nube y la llevó a atravesar todo tipo de fronteras, geográficas, disciplinarias y materiales, con total independencia del consentimiento del autor: vestidos con estampados de mariposas negras de Diane Von Furstenberg, modelos exclusivos con mariposas negras de Dolce & Gabbana, empapelados con mariposas negras à la Warhol en las vidrieras de la tienda, modelos populares con mariposas negras para los más diversos públicos -para jovencitas y señoras, para el mercado asiático y para “gorditas”- y hasta una remera en la popularísima versión de Dickies a doce dólares. De Diane Von Furstenberg a Dickies, las mariposas negras cubrieron el arco completo del mercado de la moda en versiones para todos los gustos y bolsillos. Y más: agotado el circuito de la prenda exterior, la nube se ciñó al cuerpo femenino y reapareció en exclusivos sets de ropa interior de Dolce & Gabbana y Victoria’s Secret, en corpiños, tangas, medias de seda y, por fin, eternizándose en la piel, en una galería variada de tatuajes de piernas y brazos. De Dior a Dickies y de Dolce & Gabbana a la piel, la nube se aplanó literalmente en el mundo del pret-à-porter y el consumo: la sombra ominosa de la plaga se esfumó entre las maripositas inofensivas del animal print o en el inconformismo dark light de los tatuajes.

Hasta aquí, los avatares conocidos de la nube o al menos los que el artista, convertido en sabueso virtual, alcanzó a rastrear en Internet. En el inesperado aftermath de Black Cloud, el

arte de Amorales entró en su dimensión más paradójica. La obra, surgida del archivo líquido, acabó por independizarse por completo del artista y, como por un efecto boomerang, fue saqueada espectacularmente por la piratería del diseño internacional. ¿Plagio? ¿Robo? ¿Apropiación? Que la cultura y el arte contemporáneos tienden a abolir la propiedad en un nuevo “comunismo de las formas” no es novedad.ⁱⁱ El mismo Amorales creó su archivo con imágenes apropiadas y hasta incorporó la copia pirata en la cadena productiva de la disquera Nuevos Ricos. Pero, ¿cabe equiparar la apropiación del arte que redirecciona viejas formas en nuevos usos y la piratería discográfica mexicana que se apropia de bienes culturales y los redirecciona a los consumidores informales, a la piratería industrial de grandes firmas del diseño que se apropia de una obra artística y la redirecciona a la esfera del lucro y el consumo? En el reino sin ley de la piratería, ¿existen el bien y el mal? ¿Hay héroes y villanos? ¿Hay crimen y castigo? ¿Quién arbitra el comunismo de las formas? Antes de que alcanzara a formularse estas preguntas, Amorales encontró una imagen todavía más perturbadora en el aleph de la web: una nube de mariposas negras casi idéntica a la suya instalada en una biblioteca, obra de una artista australiana, Jayne Dyer, exhibida en la Universidad Lingnan de Hong Kong en 2007, casi en la misma fecha de la primera versión de Black Cloud. La simultaneidad de las instalaciones no solo descartaba el plagio sino que volvía a poner en entredicho la noción misma de origi-

nalidad, y disparaba una vez más las preguntas que trastornaron el arte del siglo XX: ¿Dónde está el original y dónde las copias? ¿Dónde está el autor?

El Aftermath de Black Cloud, sin embargo, invita a pensar otras respuestas en la economía inmaterial de la red. La obra de la era de la reproductibilidad técnica enloquece en la era de la ontología clónica y se abisma en el site (in) specificity de la reproductibilidad electrónica.ⁱⁱⁱ La diferencia infinitesimal entre copias aparentemente idénticas que Duchamp investigó en la noción de “infrave” y Borges ilustró en su “Pierre Menard, autor del Quijote” se complica en el tiempo sin tiempo de la web, puro flujo espectral de e-imágenes, por definición efímeras, ubicuas, desindividuas, infinitas, que se suceden sin ninguna secuencia lineal. El intervalo entre las copias, crucial en el relato de Borges y en la noción de Duchamp, se evapora en el espacio sin espacio y sin tiempo de la comunidad virtual, como se evaporan los protocolos de la propiedad y la autoridad. El mundo, como en el cuento borgiano, es fatalmente Tlön, un universo en el que “no existe el concepto de plagio” y “todas las obras son de un solo autor, que es intemporal y es anónimo.”^{iv} El archivo líquido del que surgió la mariposa es apenas una sinécdoque artesanal de un archivo inconmensurable más arbitrario y más conjetural. Y más: Amorales, que entró en la escena del arte oculto tras las máscaras de los luchadores de su Amorales vs. Amorales, que clasificó el universo en un archivo de imágenes

apropiadas y apropiables, que hizo “piratería de la piratería” y que incluso cambió su nombre por un seudónimo (fraguado con la inicial del apellido paterno, Aguirre, y el apellido materno, Morales), acabó por perder cualquier rastro de identidad local, perder su nombre original y hasta su nombre fraguado, en la cadena desautorizada de copias de Black Cloud dispersa en la red global.^v Del Amorales-autor-de-la-nube solo quedó un relato, una secuencia lineal de imágenes arrestadas de la red según la lógica ya vencida de la lectura del texto, una road movie en los caminos laberínticos del hipertexto. Es su memento mori del relato y del autor en la era digital, su meditación celebratoria y a la vez nostálgica de la nueva economía global del arte y las e-imágenes. Burlador burlado, él mismo va contando la historia por el mundo con un power point de imágenes, como una reencarnación del siglo XXI del narrador popular. No sorprende por lo tanto que la historia que empieza en el norte de México termine o vuelva a empezar en un libro, o más precisamente en la imagen impresa en un libro, que Amorales recuperó por azar dos años más tarde. Cuando el Aftermath parecía haber quedado duchampianamente inacabado en la abundancia inconsumible de Internet, su mujer descubrió una foto y un fragmento dedicado a las polillas leyendo Austerlitz, la última y gran novela de W. G. Sebald, que Amorales recordó haber leído poco antes de que la imagen apareciera en el techo de la casa familiar. En la página 96 de la edición de Austerlitz en español, junto a la foto

de una polilla que parece un close-up de Black Cloud, se lee:

A pesar de no haberme dedicado luego a la historia natural, dijo Austerlitz, muchas de las observaciones botánicas y zoológicas del tío abuelo Alphonso se me han quedado en la memoria. Hace sólo unos días consulté el pasaje de Darwin, que me mostró una vez, donde se describe una bandada de mariposas volando sin interrupción durante varias horas a diez millas de la costa suramericana, en la que era imposible, incluso con el catalejo, encontrar un trozo de cielo vacío entre las tambaleantes mariposas.

vi

El azar del reencuentro con un origen posible de la nube le regaló a Amorales un final para la historia, e inspiró un objeto capaz de aunar el hallazgo y la creación, como los hrönires del Tlön de Borges, “hijos casuales de la distracción y el olvido”. Él mismo fabricó dos ejemplares de Austerlitz, un libro de artista convenientemente clonado, un atlas de imágenes que cuenta el Aftermath de su (?) Black Cloud. En el libro de tapas negras con el nombre de otro en letras plateadas, su relato de la nube negra se cierra y, como en las Mil y una noches, vuelve a empezar. Si cabe la paradoja, es su obra más autobiográfica y más personal.

‘Atlas portátil de América Latina’

By Graciela Speranza.

2012, published by Ed.Anagrama.

Barcelona, Spain.

Amorales' claim by Adrian Notz

Carlos Amorales' first artistic act was to claim his identity as an artist. Carlos Amorales did so at the beginning of his career by calling himself Carlos Amorales and creating the artist of this name. Carlos Amorales the citizen created Carlos Amorales the artist, and, in doing so, attained a first level of self-assertion by establishing his own interests or identifying traits vis-à-vis a greater whole – the greater whole of art. Amorales self-assertion as an artist therefore corresponds to the self-denial of Amorales the citizen. Within the system of art, the citizen stopped existing. When we say that Carlos Amorales' first act was to claim to be an artist, we refer to more than a mere change from citizen to artist; we refer, first and foremost, to the artist's first step in the system of art, when in a speech act he proclaimed "I am Carlos Amorales" and thus said that he was an artist.

In order to clarify this first stage of self-as-

sertion, of being the artist Carlos Amorales, Amorales asserted himself as someone who turns himself into an artwork: He asked a tailor of Lucha Libre masks to manufacture him a portrait of himself in leather. That way, Amorales turned the term Amorales into the object Amorales, an object that is able to exist as a work of art separate from the artist Amorales. He thus illustrated his speech act in an object, instrumentalising Amorales so that other people wearing the mask could also be Amorales. After subjecting Amorales the citizen to a form of self-denial, he did the same to the artist, that is, Amorales the subject and author. In its function as a tool for hiding and deceiving the mask managed to keep the artist's self-denial in the background. The artist then played with this uncertainty quite consciously, asking people to take part in discussions and lectures as Amorales. He kept doing so until there was considerable confusion as to Amorales' identity, whereafter he would pursue this even further. First, he had Amorales perform as a Lucha Libre wrestler, then he had several Amorales masks made so that Amorales could fight against Amorales. In this form of self-assertion, Amorales always performed in his suit, as a dandy wrestler, for also the dandy has to claim his own identity. The dandy asserts himself in society, and society asserts the dandy. George Brummel, the first dandy as we know him, never called himself a dandy, and no word or term apart from his name and his attitude would describe him as what he was. If anything, his contemporaries

called him a "beau" and it was only in retrospect that he came to be called a dandy. People did so by relying on anecdotes, which had become myths in the course of time.

It is only the dandy's assertion that creates him as a person creating himself in society. Amorales worked in the same way. By presenting himself as a dandy wrestler with mask and suit he drew on this secret history of the dandy and evoked the desire for dandies in contemporary society. It is also a feature of Lucha Libre fights that the audience determines the wrestlers, as well as the outcome of the fight by their degree of support. When Amorales had Amorales fight Amorales he produced a paradox situation, in which the audience could only side for Amorales and confirm him as a winner and hero, one way or the other. The usual dialectic between *Technicos* and *Rudos*, that is good and evil, was abolished, as Amorales combined both sides in a single person. The audience was brought into some sort of feedback loop and kept producing Amorales, again and again, raising insistent expectations that craved for the satisfaction of the dandy-like feeling of ultimate and excessive intoxication in an absolute decadence.

The Mexican prejudice, the cultural context into which Amorales had placed himself with his mask and the fights, trying to write his own text, absorbed him and Amorales became part of it. In the same way as Amorales brought Lucha Libre fights to the level of art Amorales

in turn was brought to the level of Lucha Libre and thus Mexican prejudices. So, Amorales satisfied both “l’art bourgeois”, which panders to the pressures of bourgeois society, and “l’art social”, whose realistic depictions address social issues. Or, in other words, Amorales was devoured by the demons he had created.

With Amorales’ dandy wrestlers cancelling each other out self-abandonment had reached a third level. As a true dandy, also this very dandy could only draw the consequences and assert himself as the personification of what society had created: the devil. Amorales became the devil personified, and let him dance.

In a very consequent manner he went through the various stages from citizen to artist and became, as Hugo Ball described in his text “Der Künstler und die Zeitkrankheit“, an exorcist. Ball, too, builds up three parallel stages: Soma, Psyche and Pneuma. That is, the body, the medium he thinks appropriate for the citizen, then psyche, the artist’s medium, and spirit, the exorcist’s medium. The exorcist is not only someone who eliminates demons but also someone who can move between the here and the beyond, between psyche and spirit. Amorales became an exorcist and brought the devil himself onto the stage.

With this, Amorales established himself in the dimension of spiritual facts and created a blind spot, an autonomous field of “l’art pour l’art”, which eschews all social functions. Furthermore,

Amorales also created his own discourse in the form of his so-called “Liquid Archive”. As many dandies before him, such as Lord Byron or Oscar Wilde, he became an *ecrivain-dandy* – a “writer-dandy” – although the context of Amorales’ text was not literature. The counter-story of the *ecrivain-dandy* Amorales was written with symbols collected as “Liquid Archive”. There must be about 4000 symbols in Liquid Archive by now. They are symbols from an everyday, global and, in this sense, middle class and social cultural context, predicated on Amorales’ claims. Lucha Libre masks, dandy Amorales, women, playboy bunnies and pre-Hispanic masks have all found entry into the archive, as have window stickers shaped like birds, wolves, moths and abstract patterns. All these elementary images of myths, collective symbols, word plays, distinct forms and anecdotes, which Amorales called source images, were brought onto the same level with each other, that is, reduced to black outlines or so-called skeleton images. From these skeleton images sprang new, discrete artworks and thus images. This change from vocabulary to expression corresponds to the constellation described above where the artist postulated himself as Amorales, the art work. Here, too, we can observe how one claim leads to another when the assertion “Liquid Archive” asserts another work, and an independent element is integrated into the context of a greater whole. Amorales goes one step further still when he claims the reproductions of his works to be part of a work’s life cycle, describing them

as ghost images, thus giving up his control as author to some extent. Particularly interesting in this context are the works that were not deliberately reproduced but pirated.

Amorales clarified this phenomenon by launching the label *Nuevos Ricos* with musician Silverio. *Nuevos Ricos* was a label for contemporary electronic music from South America, whose CDs, concerts and merchandising products instigated a new movement drawing thousands of fans to concerts, especially in South America but Mexico in particular, imparting to the audience the feeling of being “*Nuevos Ricos*”. Here Amorales applied a different sort of assertion. He observed a trend in society and used *Nuevos Ricos* to make a precise statement at the right time in order to suggest a whole movement. Amorales took up a trend in music and used his label to give the musicians of this subculture a fan community. At the same time he equipped all products of the label with the signs of Liquid Archive, thereby publishing parts of his claim via mass media, as CDs, pins, T-shirts, stickers, posters, banners and so on. The distribution of these products, however, was not large enough to satisfy demand so that pirated copies appeared on the black market. Amorales collected these copies and distributed them as official products of the label. Ghost images became source images and were reborn as actual and official works or, to put it differently, the text became the context that asserted the contextualised text as independent text again.

A further manifestation of these ghost images is that some fans dressed themselves as *nouveau riches*, complete with suit, tie and bowler hat, evoking the image of the dandy.

The example of the *Nuevos Ricos* demonstrated how the cycle of source image, skeleton image, image and ghost image comes full circle and ghost images become source images again. Sometimes Amorales lets other subjects, authors and musicians use the *Liquid Archive*; musicians compose pieces for it, video artists produce videos, psychologists, anthroposophists, gallery owners and curators use it economically or art theoretically. *Liquid Archive*'s discourse is consistent and, as a closed system, has its own rules. This is why all subjects that want to be in it adopt the rules of *Liquid Archive* according to the principles of system theory. Here we find a further dimension of Amorales' claim, a system created by Amorales. In order to illustrate the function of these systems we can again take the dandy as a point of reference. In the literature about the dandy the people describing dandies usually become dandies themselves, because they cannot resist claiming to be dandies, even if only indirectly in their absolute empathy for the object to be described. This object to be described becomes a strong subject and takes over the actual subject. The subjects wanting to look into Amorales' claim and use his vocabulary become objects of Amorales. Even Carlos Amorales is an object of Amorales, as we saw previously. But even from this point of view of

Amorales' claim, in which the text clearly materialises as *Liquid Archive* on different levels, Carlos Amorales becomes the object of the work. In description and presentation his work is undecidable, just as with real historical dandies. With them, it remains unclear whether it was social reality that created their formulations or whether historical persons imitated literary or artistic concepts. In other words, whether dandies did indeed exist or whether people copied them after reading about them. Instead of a clear causal and chronological relationship there is mutual, elusive interference. It is in exactly this mutual but elusive interference that Amorales moves, purporting Amorales' existence.

In order to better understand this let us look at how Amorales asserts his work *Moths* in presentations. He presents it as an anecdote, formulating it in the original sense of anecdotes as a counter-story or a "secret histoire". Today we understand anecdotes also to be entertaining plays on words, fascinating stories, everyday events that can be told in only a few sentences following a clear narrative structure. In this sense Amorales tells the anecdote of the moths as follows: In a dream he saw the image of a room full of moths. This image was so strong that he felt the urge to turn it into art. From black paper he created tens of thousands of moths and stuck them onto the walls, ceilings, windows and doors of his studio until they had completely invaded the room so that Amorales and his team were forced to leave. The object

of the moths had become a strong subject. The moths then moved to the gallery where they took over exhibition spaces and offices alike. From the gallery the swarm of moth moved to the art fair and from there to the museum, to the institutional space, where it occupied the spaces between the rooms and the stairwell, but also the collection rooms with works from the Modernist period as if trying to settle in this era. The swarm then moved on to the collectors, where it took over their private rooms, and finally occupied the church, the highest level within the life cycle of an art work. Parallel to this, a ghost swarm started to form right after the swarm of moths had materialised in the gallery and was occupying the space of a luxury fashion boutique. The moths became decorative elements on clothes and thus reached the international cat walks. They determined the designs of fashion labels and moved from being mere decorations and accessories to being emblazoned on fabrics. The moths invaded the fabrics of the *Haute Couture* and were presented on cocktail dresses worn by stars parading on the red carpet. From there they entered mass production so that people could buy them as patterns on inexpensive shirts on the Internet. The moths even got under the clothes, invaded lingerie, underwear and tights and did not even stop short of claiming people's skin in the form of tattoos. It appeared as if the moths were trying to enter people's consciousness via the skin. This caused Amorales to look again and try and find the source of his dream.

He realised that at the time when his first swarm of moths invaded the gallery, a female artist was sending out a second swarm of moths at the other end of the world. This realisation brought Amorales to the above mentioned point where clear causal and chronological relationships give way to mutual but elusive interferences. Describing the phenomenon of the moths, Amorales pinpoints the origin of the image in a sort of collective unconscious and argues that also the image of his moths did not appear out of nothing but originated from an old photograph in a book he had been reading at the time of his dream. It was from this book, apparently, that the moth fluttered into his visual memory. The moth awakened in him a consciousness of a subconscious cultural context, which, as a subject, he had created, or which might have used him as an object. With this knowledge – that the moths satisfied a widespread unconscious desire – he turned it into an object again, bringing it into a controllable framework and creating numerous pictures he was able to sell at an art fair within a few hours.

Hearing such a fantastic anecdote one cannot help but wonder about the nature of the relation between reality and fiction, about what is true and what is false. This is the wrong question, however, as Amorales does not lay claim to the story being true. Instead, he puts great store in the presentation as such, in the talking about the work, what happens to it, how it changed from being an object to being a subject. Here Amorales addresses a further field of tension

with respect to asserting something. Each time someone talks about an object they also postulate the object's identity. As the description of the object also shapes the object, this means that everything we understand to belong to the historical canon, to be part of our cultural identity or to be the truth is in fact a construct. Here, the function of the anecdote, a small and unofficial story, is to question the big story. With the moths Amorales entered a world of images that confronted him with the question of how these images assert themselves. In order to follow this up he turned to his own world of images and analysed the function archives. He came to the conclusion that they had a similar function as his Liquid Archive. Archives consist of more or less arbitrary source images that make up a collection of skeleton images. Their function is to write history with these skeleton images, that is, to create the image and the ghost images of a story or, to put it more simply, archives determine and assert history. From here it is only a small step to argue that historiography postulates history and therefore a society's identity.

Amorales worked with a cultural historical archive to put this insight into practice. In 2010 Mexico celebrated its one hundred year anniversary of the revolution and two hundred years of independence. In this cultural context, which also nourished Liquid Archive's vocabulary of fear, Amorales staged an exhibition in a cultural historical museum owning one of the biggest archives and collections of pre-Hispanic

art. Because of the museum's context and the anniversary celebrating Mexican identity, he studied the museum's collection of pre-Hispanic art and its archive and realised that the collection followed no clearly recognisable order. Although the individual pieces of the collection did have titles and numbers, there was no discernible causal and chronological relationship between them. As a matter of fact, the structure of the collection was but a claim, a conjecture. This is arguably true for all collections but becomes especially clear in the Mexican collections of pre-Hispanic objects due to their relatively young history. For this reason Amorales used short texts – thoughts, observations and instructions that deconstructed the collection's claim by enabling completely new ways of looking at things – in order to have the visitors of the exhibition think about this. The sentences erased the meaning of the text written by the collection so that one could start afresh. Amorales demonstrated this in two adjacent rooms, where he had placed one of Mexico's national symbols, an eagle's head, but in a large quantity, one draped neatly on top of the other. This image was reminiscent of two things: a site of fossils and a graveyard of old statues haunted by the shadows of history (rendered obsolete by the sentences in the previous room) drawn on its walls with faint pencil. As if this was not clear enough, Amorales put a bird, shattered into a multitude of black, glossy pieces, in a dark room following the two graveyard rooms, which positively disillusioned and crushed the visitor

on a psychological level. There was a ray of hope in this dark room, however. Although the collection had been deconstructed and taken apart, the hope emanating from the sentences in the first room was realised in a video. Amorales took the figures out of the collection, dipped them in paint thus demythologising them in a sort of primitive founding myth, and returned to them their active function as subjects. In the video the archaeological stone objects turned into the colourful subjects of a potential mythology claiming a new Mexican identity.

Shortly before this exhibition Amorales applied the same process to his own archive for a gallery exhibition. Liquid Archive was recreated from perspex templates so as to assert itself as objects and to enable a new way of dealing with the archive. At the same time, studio Amorales was rebuilt in the gallery in its original size. The templates served as tools to cover the walls of the ghost studio with pencil drawings, giving them a texture consisting of numerous interweaving and overlapping contours of the symbols of Liquid Archive. The symbols of Liquid Archive, or the letters of the vocabulary, created a text that manifested itself as texture. The spaces of this texture – what is said between the lines – were transferred as shadows onto the walls of the gallery, where they asserted themselves as new forms and figurations, as a next generation of Liquid Archive vis-à-vis the old studio shell. Created from Liquid Archive's grey areas and side rooms, one could describe

their origin as an eccentric space of Liquid Archive. They were waste products, scorned shadows, hybrid figurations and shapeless mutants that had no meaning yet, apart from being eccentric rebirths of Liquid Archive. Also in the gallery exhibition they occupied an eccentric space, a fact that was emphasised by their strong black contours that set them apart from the faint graphite lines of the texture on the walls of the ghost studio and the transparent perspex templates of Liquid Archive.

In order to transfer the self-assertion of this new generation of Liquid Archive to the consequence of Amorales' claim the shadows were liberated from their eccentric position on the walls of the gallery and integrated into Liquid Archive in a new studio. Here, they were digitalised so as to be better able to handle and control them. They, too, were anecdotes of Liquid Archive, a hidden text in between the symbols, which tried to assert itself as an independent "small" abstract text in the face of Liquid Archive's "big" formal text. Amorales' claim reached a point where it became independent of obvious systems of reference and could exist on an absolute level. Comparable to the development of language and writing, where sounds and gestures were followed by images and symbols before being turned into abstract signs, Amorales found an abstract sign language for his self-assertion. As it is only rarely possible to figure out what symbols from Liquid Archive were involved in the formulation of new signs,

the degree of abstraction is very high. The signs became letters to be filled with meaning that did not result from their forms. Amorales, therefore, predicated it as a cryptoscript, a code. He started to transfer and translate existing texts into this alphabet and he had the signs in the form of texts assert themselves as texture. This texture, finally, is the script of Amorales' claim, which, as a strong subject, has started to assert its own language.

Amorales vs. Amorales by Jens Hoffmann

The figure of the hybrid is a fairly constant feature in the work of Carlos Amorales. Interestingly, however, unlike the frequent over-use of this idea or term in contemporary culture, Amorales' use of the hybrid is not one that simply reflects his own personal history (a Mexican who has spent almost a decade living in Europe), nor does it refer to the banality of our current cultural condition that is fuelled by the fusion of a variety of cultures and traditions. Rather, Amorales' attraction to this concept emerges from a significantly darker trajectory. He has referred frequently to his interest in the violent clash that occurred during the process of industrialisation: as a predominantly peasant society was forced into the new routine of urbanism and a variant of exploitation that this new economy entailed. The phantoms, monsters and terrors of European nineteenth century literature and popular art—arguably a result of this drastic transformation—appeals to the artist through its language of integrating (or rather the forced coming together) of man, animal

and machine. These graphically (in both sense of the word) disturbing images perhaps better explain our contemporary condition than the media-friendly notion of a multiplicity of races, times, lives, and societies. More importantly, this process of industrialisation is one that has been late in coming to Amorales' native Mexico, a country, like many of its Latin American neighbours, that sits uncomfortably in a process of becoming and simultaneously undoing, a partially realised industrialisation that is all the more painful for its protracted process.

The violent hybrid has been in evidence in Amorales work since his best-known series of works emerged into an international context: the wrestling-themed project known as *Amorales y Amorales* or *Invisible Man (My Way)*. *Lucha Libre*, the professional Mexican wrestling association where this work first emerged, consists (like most wrestling traditions) in professionals who assume different personas for their performance. This process of identification or transformation appears to have been what attracted Amorales. He comments on the *Lucha Libre* fights, "I realized that the conflict that was mainly represented is the one between the agrarian and the urban world, the spectacle as the representation of the drama of the country immigrant to the city. Its transformation from peasant to industrial worker, it is a form of sublimation. Therefore half of the characters were defined as "Rudos" (the rough ones) against "Tecnicos" (the technicians), the rudos were of

course beast-like." The process of contemporary industrialisation in Mexico is played out in the contemporary drama of wrestling much as it had been through both high and popular drama in the nineteenth century Gothic tradition in Europe.

Amorales project of course further complicates this trajectory by introducing his own persona into the fray as well intermingling the otherwise quite separate zones of *Lucha Libre* and the contemporary art performance circuit. Amorales produced masks based on his own face, which fighters in *Lucha Libre* would wear taking on the moniker 'Amorales' to wrestle. Further confusing this identity is the appearance of *Amorales y Amorales*, a duo wearing the Amorales masks dressed in business suits that wrestle (in a semi-staged fight) *Lucha Libre* fighters while 'managed' by a third Amorales character (this time played by Amorales himself) who remains off-side. The multiple role-playing (what does Amorales stand for, which is the 'original' Amorales, and to what extent is this an examination of self?) is reinterpreted when Amorales transfers this scenario to the art world setting as he has done in Tijuana and San Diego, as part of *InSite 2000*, and at Tate Modern, London, 2003 among many other museum venues. Within this context the relative 'authenticity' of the wrestling world of *Lucha Libre* is then abandoned for a further process of fiction or staging: that of the art world performance and the event's status as art.

Without wishing to over-psychologize this scenario of self-displacement effected by Amorales' piece it is interesting to review Amorales' own comments on his process of alienation through immigration. When he moved to Europe it was necessary to adapt himself to a more "civilized" environment, he states, "not that I felt myself as a beast, but in some way the expression of this culture shock became an interesting issue for me. Animal-like humans and humanized animals become logical subjects for creating my characters. It interests me the moment of transformation, the mutation of the self into the other and the way back, when the psychological 'damage' is done and there is no way back to the "original" state of mind." Amorales' comments suggest that Amorales y Amorales can almost be viewed as some coming to terms (or staged battle perhaps) with his own transformation. An alienation from self that is inherently part of the process of industrialised society.

Another well-documented form of hybridity in Amorales work is his constant use of collaboration and experimentation with different genres and realms of cultural production. His studio is one fashioned to accommodate not only an artistic practice for an artist, Carlos Amorales, but also to incorporate the workings of Nuevos Ricos, an independent record label founded in 2003 with musician Julian Lede and designer Andre Pahl and a fairly elaborate animation studio. While the rock label emerged out of Amorales' desire to further involve himself with

the music that he enjoyed (as well as allowing for anti-industry activity of free-downloading of the artists they represent and the development of an artistically-led design for their products), the animation project developed into a central part of his recent artistic oeuvre.

He has stated that part of his curiosity for this digitised realm emerged as reaction to his involvement in live performance. He has said, "I became interested in animation after working with performance. I wanted to create stories that didn't refer to the real world, that weren't tangible as live arts are. Performance to me was becoming something mental, something derived from a conceptual point of view that mostly referred to the social level of existence. I got tired of wanting to create a situation through performance, document it and finally try to structure it as a film. I began to lose interest in a one to one relationship with the public; I wanted to do my work in a more personal realm, more private."

The result has been a series of projects that utilise digital imagery (taken first from a drawn source and then altered through a computer programme into a three-dimensional form) with a fantastical if not near-mythical sensibility. In what appears to be a striking break from the confrontational live events of Amorales y Amorales, the starkly graphic images that characterise the artist's work from the last four years are culled from contemporary life as well as his-

torical and popular imagination and stored in what he refers to as an "image archive." Ranging from numerous images of airplanes (flying, falling, crashing), animals (wolves, birds) and human figures (a pregnant woman) Amorales' treatment of this stock of material frequently involves the morphing of one form into another—animal human hybrids and so forth—such that his archive becomes entirely fluid, no one image retaining any integrity but rather merging ceaselessly with others in the artist's lexicon. Broken Animals (2006) for example consists of a double screen projection. To the left there is a constant shot of a classical pianist in performance. To the right the screen is occupied by Amorales' relentlessly changing graphics. The figure of the airplane, an image that Amorales has identified as signifying more than any other image our current time, is seen in a variety of formations. In flight it suggests that global mobility of our early twenty-first century condition while in the process of falling (and ultimately crashing in a tree) it obviously recalls major events of the last decade and the consequences that continue to dramatically affect our political climate. The plane in its variety of appearances stands as a fluid metaphor for many of the qualities and issues of our current global condition. Outside of the flight path, on the outskirts of the airfield, appears a wolf, a manifestation perhaps of the threatening promise that the airplane holds. Amorales has stated that the pregnant female figure who features prominently was a direct result of his wife's own expect-

ant body but within this context it also suggests the process of flux and transformation of one image to the next, one figure becoming two. The piano strains that accompany this graphic imagery remain oddly calm though somewhat melancholic, as if the piano player, oblivious to the disasters taking place on the adjacent screen, represents the order in comparison to the chaos in the next screen.

Just as his earlier work involved the participation of others, these digital animations have called for a radical change in Amorales manner of working including a new form of joint effort. The artist has stated how the lengthy and labour-intensive activity of animation was in part what appealed to him, he has stated, “it interested me the amount of time animation requires; to make an eight minute animation it took me about eight months of intensive work, I had to build a team, do a lot of research. I thought it was very important to slow things up for myself, to engage an intense process of work, paradoxically in a more simple way, by drawing.” Shifting away from the immediate response of a live audience towards this drawn out process, Amorales was also interested in creating a new form of studio environment, perhaps one more closely related to the school rather than the factory, that involved a group of people with whom he not only worked on the image and animation process but also read books, screened films, invited speakers, and in general formed an intensive discussion group. Amorales has also

suggested that this kind of professionalism and technical capacity that was built in the studio context was in part a reaction to the tactics of a relational art of the 90s and perhaps also a response to the more politically direct actions of other Mexican artists and the type of cultural questioning that their work entailed. His ambition through the group effort of the animation and image archive was to create a technical and meaningful complexity in his work that would resonate beyond the limitations of a local conversation. Hence also the selection of imagery that would speak across cultural boundaries and reference a contemporary as well as historical consciousness. Animation, arguably one of the most pervasive non-linguistic forms of contemporary communication, presumably offered an ideal visual language with which communicate on this wider level.

The archive has now been used to generate a variety of two dimensional and moving images variously combining and isolating the graphics he has accumulated. For *Dark Mirror* (2006) Amorales even handed over this archive of images to an animation expert and a musician who makes scores for silent films to make a film from the given elements. In the same exhibition that this collaborative animation was shown, *Why Fear the Future?* (2006) Amorales also included a DVD in which he asked three fortune-tellers in Madrid to interpret the images on the tarot cards he had designed using the archive of imagery from his studio. An absurd process of

identification takes place (in which the images themselves are shown to change and morph) and Amorales at once points to the absurdity of our desire for fixity of meaning while making apparent the constantly changing nature of interpretation dependent on time, place and context. Hybridity in Amorales work here refers once again to the capacity for fluid images, states of flux and contamination resulting in a highly suggestive state.

In a recent work, *Useless Wonder* (2006) Amorales has taken the earth, or rather individual continents and land masses, as the starting point for his animation. These countries are at times recognisable forms but gradually break apart, reform and merge in a constant state of unbecoming. Regarding this piece the artist has stated, “The map of the earth and its countries drifting away in the ocean and getting mixed seemed a perfect catastrophe in graphic terms...it reminded me of old stories I have read about sailors, of them trying to cross the Cape Horn...it was very influential to read “The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym” by Edgar Allen Poe, a fantastic travel from Nantucket to the Antarctica that leads to an uncertain ending full of hallucinatory characters and situations. The map in motion seems to summarize this for me.” It seems that in the work of Amorales there can be no fixity, whether in terms of meaning or reality. Even the ground beneath our feet threatens to become something else, if viewed from the right angle.

Carlos Amorales: Discarded Spider?, exhibition catalogue. Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, USA. 2008. Published by Veenman Publishers (NL).

A Conversation With Carlos Amorales by Hadas Maor

The following conversation unfolds the underlying principles of the visual language and themes addressed by Amorales's work over the years and on the ways these have evolved through the use of two dimensional images and three dimensional installations subsequently. It was held between October and December 2011 following our collaboration on occasion of Amorales's solo show at the Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art in 2010.

- Let's begin by talking about the relation between your two dimensional archive of visual images created and collected since 1999, titled Liquid Archive, and the ways in which these forms reappear and manifest themselves in your three dimensional installations over the years. I

recall that while working with you toward the show this was the aspect which fascinated me most.

I trained as a painter in Amsterdam at the Rietveld Academy but as I grew unsatisfied with my relation with that practice I stopped it and began working with masks as I thought they where means to make art that would allow me to brake the isolated relation that at the moment painting demanded of me, I wanted to find a portable image with which I could relate directly to my reality and not only towards painting history. In my view masks could function as an "Interface" between myself and the world so I started to experiment with social situations in which I used them. This research, that I began when at the Rijksakademie in 1996, lead me gradually to create a fictional character, a persona like a doppelganger, and then work with professional wrestlers. This fictional character, which I named "Amorales", was a portrait of me made by a maker of wrestling masks, a mask that I assambled together with a bureaucrat like gray suit that I bought, as a dandy of sorts. The character had no history or attributes to himself but what I understand was a container; a form that could be wearable by others for impersonating it, a surface that could wrap different persons bodies. The record of this impersonations, the public and private events, is what became the piece, an history of a form of void that through the seven years that I worked with it became the beginning of my own professional career as an artist. Let's say that I became known

as an artist through a paradox: my invented surname became known through concealing my real person in a game where I used anonymity as my playing card, like a sort of joker.

Once I understood that I finished that research to continue developing my practice I returned to drawing and making images. At the time I had no working space since I had refused one because I worked as a performance artist so it became natural to began drawing in the computer. As it is very hard and pointless to draw freely in the computer (at least it was then) what I did in fact was to draw over digital photographs that I had taken myself or found in the Internet. Gradually I realized that these digital drawings where "masking" the original images, that these digital silhouettes where in fact a sort of mask form, in conceptual terms, similar to the one I had worked before with. From this realization I began to make a series of animation films and other graphic works. Through developing the animated sequences I began to collect the resulting images and classify them in a digital archive which I figured that by being virtual it had malleable properties. For materializing these figures as works I realized that they could change form and be adapted to different conditions as for instance an element as water does, therefor I called it "Liquid Archive".

Beyond the fact of masking, I understood as well another important similarity between these new treatment of digital images and the former

Amorales mask: more than being signifying images, allegories, symbols or signs, first of all are tools that could be used to intervene in reality. I became aware of this because the wrestlers themselves referred to their mask as part of the work tools, for them it is much more than an attractive image. In fact it is only an image for the public, the one that sees the mask from the outside, not for the one that looks through it from within. In this sense, as a tool is a device that can be used to produce an item or archive a task and can be reused many times, I realized that the digital graphics that I was creating and organizing in a series of folders in the computer where tools for composing images (and thoughts) that later I could make public as art works.

My tridimensional work is made around the idea of the body as formed by fragmented particles, a body that can change its shape when placed in space. For instance the work with the paper moths (Black Cloud) is based in something I once read about ants where it said that one could consider them as a mass of thousands or millions of tiny animals cooperating together or instead as one large amorphous animal made of loose particles that adapts its shape to the terrain where it is, just as water adopts the shape of the vessel where it is stored in. In "Dark Mirror" the broken bird sculpture's shape is in fact cut by using a spider web's grid as a slicing tool, so it is also a fragmented figure. This sculpture plays with the physical rules of real space and

the virtual one where it was originally generated. Whereas in virtual space there is no gravity and the figure stands as perfect and emotionless, in reality it falls to the ground, imperfect but emotional.

- Could you elaborate a little more on the recurring tension between the arbitrary and the premeditated dimensions in your work process?

I find that in general using a computer language demands a very rational approach to making art where most of the steps have to be determined towards archiving a result: the step from the virtual model to the real object can be controlled in extreme. The problem with this is not so much in the rationality of the process but in the output or the result, which in my opinion has become standardized by the democratization of the technology that happened in the last decades. To me it has been important to establish a critique of these output media as I first figured out as a student at the Rijksakademie (which was coincidental to the arrival of the first computers in the institution) that everyone was using the same media to make photographs, videos and prints; It all was contained in the same screen and paper formats, made with the same machines, and the output was therefore decided by the manufacturer and not by the artists.

One could argue that this systematization of the formal qualities of the support could allow the artists to concentrate more into the meaning of

their art, but a decade later, now as an advisor⁶⁷ at the Rijksakademie, I had the chance to be involved in the process of selection of the new applicants and it was shocking to review all these works and realize that for most the content was standardized into what can be called the correct institutional language of contemporary art: a bit political, a bit documentary, a bit research, a bit about identity and so on.

To me it is evident that not only the media and the formats what has been standardized but the content and the meaning of the practice of making art. The individuality of the artist's thought and expression has become a rarity: innovation and research onto what is visual language has been gradually underrated, taken as just formalist. In this way the specificity of the visual arts has lost its uniqueness in relation to other art forms. I don't want to make here an apology for the traditional techniques and subjects for painting and sculpture but I think that it is important to look towards the future and try to build an artistic language into that direction, even if that the results aren't safe and one may be proven mistaken. I find interesting to look at the practice of some artists from the past which incorporated rules in their works that allowed the use of chance and arbitrariness, or what can also be understood as the cruelty of the process' fragility, where its result is unexpected. I am interested in the working process of artists like Hans Arp with Dada, William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin's collaboration "The Third Mind",

Asger Jorn's collaborations with Guy Debord like in their publication "Fin de Copenhagen", artists and writers who messed up the rational process although acknowledge its existence.

I try to use the element of chance through involving the participation of others with their thoughts and sensibilities; I establish a working structure where I give some tools for allowing the participation of these persons hoping that their input will influence the result so it ends up escaping my control. I believe that the art work becomes alive in the moment it reaches beyond the control of the artists who made it public. By working in collective situations I try to accelerate this as much as I possibly can. My studio functions in that way.

- Your work often employs familiar images and symbols but creates various states of alienation, of uncertainty, of threat; a post-apocalyptic world of sorts. How do you work your way between the familiar and the unknown when constructing your works?

I often need to start from recognizable points, like hooks that function as to give a first feeling of understanding. Then I twist these images as to create a void of meaning and an uncertainty on the viewer. My work follows a graphic tradition with roots in Dadaism. Although as I said before I studied painting I had to acknowledge that the logic of the work isn't painting related but graphic related. With the use of media the normal logic is to communicate, I try to collapse

this communication and I guess as result the post-apocalyptic world is what surfaces. Personally I feel satisfied with an image I make once I reach the point where I can't really understand it. That spins my mind and keeps me wondering. Some images I made I haven't been able to decipher their meaning, so they are still intriguing to me, other images have become obvious so I don't look at them anymore and they just become part of the body of my work, a necessary step maybe, like a sediment for the rest to happen.

As for what you mention as states of alienation, of uncertainty, of threat; a post-apocalyptic world of sorts, It is something that I can't avoid doing as it is how I perceive today's world. It was only until last year that I managed to understand a way to move out onto a more positive way of thinking as I realized that much of that apocalyptic feeling was rooted in the experience I had as a teenager when the earthquake happened in Mexico City in 1985. I realized that experience had formed not only an ethical idea but an aesthetical one on me. I understood that beyond the earthquake's destruction a situation of anarchy resulted that made possible a new relation between the different sectors of my society. The aftermath of the earthquake meant the fall from power of that political establishment that had dominated my country for almost a century, and the layering up of the civil society that became the motor for change. This energy of change has been forgotten today

and we are living in the worst moment since the revolution that happened a century ago. More than 50,000 murders in the last five years due to an undeclared war resulting from social unease are the clearest evidence that we are not going towards building a better place. I believe that those who have the chance should work on imagining what comes after this cataclysm. In my older works one can feel how this world could look right after the fall, now I am trying to understand and propose how we can rebuild it after that initial shock. I love how the French revolutionaries declared the year zero after they succeeded dethroning the King. Next they renamed the months as Vendémiaire, Brumaire, Frimaire, Nivôse, Pluviôse and so on. Allegories for a fresh start!

Maybe we need to acknowledge that we are living something like a new revolution, but that is one without ideologies in the classical sense, one that its hard to recognize as it escapes the division between the right and the left. I think that the study of anarchism can become the key to understand what is going on, and I don't only mean the anarchism that is usually associated to the left as an ideology -that one from the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twenty century or that contemporary one from the anti globalization movements- but anarchism in the radical sense of a society without State, which compromises the former types but also the free market libertarian ones. I think that the catastrophe that we are living now for instance in my

country, but as also in many others, is the result of that form of neoliberal radicalism.

- A dominant feature recurring in your work throughout the years is the dimension of excess: from the ongoing culling of images for the Liquid Archive at the beginning of your career to the multiplicity of elements in later works such as Black Cloud (2007) or Drifting Star (2010). How does this dimension of excess amplify the conceptual aspects at the core of your work?

I am interested in excess in relation to the amount of work that a piece made of multiple elements can imply. Although I involve industrial process in making my works and mostly they aren't hand made, the making of them implies a big effort on those assistants who are involved, it is never just a question of pressing a button and getting out the result. Quantity brings to my mind the notion of the amount labor one can put into something, labor in the sense of the repetition of one single small gesture as means to archive a larger one. Multiplicity, quantity, excess bring to me the feeling of collective effort. I work in collectives, I never do it just alone and that is why I often tend to talk about my work as We; We thought this, We made this, We installed this. It sounds odd, but I consider my work to be the product of a collective which I stimulate, like the record label or my studio. For me the level of the effort we put into a piece is what brings meaning in what we do, it is a very matter of fact level, but is where we connect as people coming from different backgrounds.

In a conceptual level it is as well it is as if through involving excess that the images of my digital archive can reach the public world. Sometimes they leak virally through the Internet and start their own "life" as they are appropriated by others for their own means. The cases of the pirated record covers that I made originally for the music label and what happened later when the fashion industry appropriated the motif of the black butterflies are two examples of how my images hooked with the mechanism of today's global economy.

Beyond the use of excess as a tactic, for the images to exist in the dimension of a Pop system it is evident that in my case a process of anonymity is necessary to happen. It is an ironical process, a sort of unspoken exchange, where the images had to continue their existence without my artist signature. This process could be considered as a form of potlatch that I have to accept because it is coherent with what I had originally proposed when I started working with the wrestling masks and playing with identity and anonymity. It is because of this coherence in the proposition that finally I lost interest on the authorship of my images, anonymity is the consequence for existing outside the art world. I am fascinated by this form of silent exchange, of give and take, when the images acquire a life of their own, beyond my control. At this point is when my work becomes more interesting to me as I turn myself into an image detective and a story teller.

- In his essay "The Spirit of Terrorism" Jean Baudrillard maintains that "the spectacle of terrorism forces the terrorism of spectacle upon us" (in The Spirit of Terrorism and Other Essays, trans. Chris Burden, Verso, 2002, p. 30). According to Baudrillard, the fourth world war, whose beginning was marked by 9/11, is no longer a violent conflict between people, states or ideologies, but rather a battle of humanity against itself; no longer a clash between civilizations, but an implosion of the system known as Western civilization. How do you feel your work regards these ideas?

Baudrillard's statement may be proven right when we think in the Oslo killings that happened last July. The idea of individual fighting cells which the killer wrote about in his manifesto "2083: A European Declaration of Independence", which he put on practice, is an example of a battle of humanity against itself. In my opinion the killer's ideas about saving the traditional European values (God and The Church) from Islam, multiculturalism and Cultural Marxism are a shallow sign of how some European individuals (the killer wrote that he is not alone in his thoughts and actions) look at their own not anymore as members of the hegemonic Western civilization but as citizens in a decadent civilization that is threatened from within by the foreign element that was acknowledged in after the colonial period. In this view Europe is not any longer a mighty power but a weakened culture that has to be defended by the force of what he calls The Knights Templar.

This stance is scary because reveals a deep inferiority complex and it is extremely violent when the text is put on practice.

Both texts “The Spirit of Terrorism” and “2083: A European Declaration of Independence” seem to crystalize the paranoid thoughts that, when are put on action like in the last one, have devastating consequences on actual people. In this respect I consider the visual arts and its performative practices to be substantially different from the written word as normally they don’t inspire direct action as texts do. My work distances itself from such readings about society as it has never been my pretention to define what is our social reality with my art. Still I acknowledge that in works as “Manimal” where a pack of wolves take over a city and provoke it’s human population to flee away can convey the apocalyptic feelings written by Baudrillard, but my animation intends to propose historic associations on its viewer, not to tell him or her what its life like in our world. My work is about how atavisms can survive in our contemporary mentality and I find resources in something older as are folk tales and mythology.

- How did you come up with the proposal for the new installation for the show at Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art? In what way was it informed by the political situation in Israel? by your preliminary visit to Tel Aviv?

It was very interesting for me to come to Israel for the first time as it is a place that I have always heard from the news. Since childhood

I remember the conflict between the PLO and the Israeli State and I recall feeling touched by the images that appeared year after year. Although of course Israel’s and Palestine’s war is a regional problem for us outsiders we can also consider it as part of our own history since for many generations it has always being present in conversations and discussions and most people has chosen favor for one of either sides.

At my arrival I was confronted to realize how beautiful and cool Tel Aviv and it’s people are, like a bubble where nothing wrong is happening. Of course through meeting with people it turned evident that life outside the bubble is something else, something dark. It was interesting to understand how the darkness of the worlds I touch with my animations, worlds that relate mostly to classical fiction, could correspond to the real life in Israel. You already had selected “Manimal” which has many readings compared to Israel’s history, and “Dark Mirror” which is a broken bird but also looks like a fighter airplane that has been shot down. When reviewing my previous animation films I found in the image of an explosion the idea to propose you “Drifting Star”, the explosion has obvious references to terrorism, but in the case of the exhibition it is an abstract explosion, an abstract art piece and to me that is the point I wanted to touch in the show, of how Israeli and Palestinian history have become an abstraction for us outside, once again, like a mythical story.

- The show at the Herzliya Museum of Contemporary

Art included three works: Manimal (2005), Dark Mirror (2008) and Drifting Star (2010). For me, these three works unfold the underlying principles of the visual language and themes addressed in your work over the years. They also reflect the development of your oeuvre as it manifests the way frequently-changing, sharp, broken images in the 2005 video ultimately transform into fragments devoid of formal identity, a state of rupture rather than a narrative description thereof, in the 2010 installation. It seems the current phase reached in your work is, thus, more principled and abstract. Would you agree with this reading? Could you perhaps explain a little more about the process of abstraction your work has went through in recent years? ⁷⁰

I do agree with your reading. Once I started using images again I began to explore the worlds that interested me the most: gothic literature and film, mythology, folk tales, Tarot, Rock music, XX Century history and so on, a combination of Fantasy worlds and human history that I related to my private life and began combining the images into what became a series of animation films. The resulting elements of this exploration is what gradually formed the Liquid Archive, a collection of all the figures that I had created for making such pieces. With the archive I began to generate more and more images and use them in many different media. The point is that once I explored the narrative form and it’s possible interpretations I became more interested in the formal and structural qualities of the images and it’s possible uses. I think I just went through a tautological phase

in my work where I needed to understand what is the Archive in itself as ultimately I consider it a visual language made of digital images, of vectors. This phase, as it meant looking inwards that particular visual language, directed me towards a process of abstraction.

First I explored them as sculptures so to see the images as something more than two-dimensional images, with the sculptures I entered in to a phase of fragmentation of which “Drifting Star” is the most abstract of all. Later I used the wire frame vectorial structures of the archive to translate them as music as happens with the rolls in a pianola. After bringing the visual language into a musical one I finally transformed the images of the archive into drawing tools, that is in physical objects, work tools, and used them to cover up the walls of my studio by overlying the lines on top of each other until they became abstract patterns. I took pictures of those abstractions and filled up some of the spaces between the lines in black and then I came to another level of forms that looked like organic abstractions that, if seen from far, reminded me of a pictographic language.

It took me about a year to understand that if I ordered the forms as typography I had reached a whole new level in my work where the elements that until then were purely visual suddenly could function as text. In my studio we replaced the regular alphabetic and numeric types with these abstract images and programmed

them in the computer to function as typographies so they could be used for actual writing. So far I made a book where an existing text by Roberto Bolaño is printed in this incomprehensible language, it is not a translation but a cryptic codification. Then I have been invited by the Jumex Collection to use half of the space of a juice tin can to make an art work. I proposed them to write down in my half of the can their usual text but with my own cryptic signs. One side reads as usual while the other one looks as written in a foreign language. To me the interesting aspect of this project is the popularization of the typographic forms as the company produces about one million cans a day and after a month there will be millions distributed through the whole continent. Then the signs will be displayed in little shops, in houses, in the hand and mouth of many people who will be put in the situation of trying to understand what the fuck means that strange language. Once people had drunk the Juice my next step is the publication included here as an artist’s contribution insert: I am proposing that the signs are the language used by those 50,000 who have been murdered in my country during the last five years and a half, the language, or the tongue, of the death.

Although the process from figuration towards abstraction is classic in art, I consider my own path towards it to only be a transition but not an end. My intuition is that it will lead me to another level for engaging reality with my work, and I am very interested in that possibility. There is a short story by Jorge Luis Borges

called “The Garden of Forking Paths” which I like to consider as a parable for my own work as an artist: on the run one always has to choose the right path, right or left, to keep on going. I can’t stop in just one form of making art because I feel I will be reaching an end and the one who is following me will catch me.

- Last year you began working on books written in pencil. Apart from creating a sign language of sorts, similar in a way to the process of accumulating the images for the Liquid Archive at the time, this process stresses even more the recurrent notion of temporality as these books may be erased, altered. Can you perhaps discuss the personal as well as political aspects of this stance?

Through using written language in my work I have become more and more interested in books. At my studio we figured out a way to print with pencil, first with the intention to make drawings, but as soon as we tested the printer with text we found something wonderful. It is normal to see pencil drawings but to see a written page with a typeface as sharp as the one you are reading now made with graphite is fascinating and it became evident that the machine was made for printing books.

So far I have chosen to print texts that have a concrete use, text with a direct consequence in reality, like theatre plays and law books. Recently I made a residency at the MAC/ Val in Vitry-Sur-Seine for which I printed the whole French Civil Code, took it to different lawyers

and asked them to choose a law, erase it and reflect on the consequences of the disappearance such. In this experience I collaborated with Philippe Eustachón, a theatre director and actor and with Julien Devaux behind the camera and together we made a short film which is called “Supprimer, Modifier et Préserver”.

I am very happy with the experience. For me it was important to understand in a sharper way how a European democracy functions as opposite to the simulation of democracy that exists in my own country. As well I loved the fact that the Code Civil is “written by the French People”, that the author of the book is The People, a sort of anonymous situation once again. But the experience was also confronting. There was one intelligent and experienced lawyer who actually refused to take part in the project because he didn't believe in political art. His refusal touched me because no matter if I am critical myself towards the political correctness of most institutionalized political art, I think and deeply believe that even if one is just a numb artist one has the right to make questions, that making questions about how we are living is something very important and necessary. The erasable books are not political propositions for changing the world or denouncing an injustice, what would be hypocrite or naïve in today's world, they are tools to understand the meaning of what was written long ago but is still in use, by erasing and creating a moment of suspension.

**Joan Jonas and Carlos Amoraes:
A Conversation**

June 2007, New York

Joan Jonas: When I met you in Holland in the early '90s, I noticed that you and other students at the Rijksakademie were working with ideas of performance that were very familiar to me. I was interested in your involvement with the persona and masks, and fascinated by the subject of wrestling. You were bringing Mexican culture to Holland, where it looked — I have to use the word — exotic.

Carlos Amoraes: I was intrigued by how you created stories and I liked the way you used repetition and the elaboration of a concept rather than a script. I noticed that you tended to deal with performances over a period of years. I also felt that your work had a tendency toward complexity, like a labyrinth. In my training prior to the Rijksakademie, people wanted me to start with a simple and straightforward concept, explore it, and then make things difficult. So it was new for me to see an artist working the way you did.

JJ: Now, for many, research is the process. Although this was always important for me, my

early work wasn't as layered in relation to form and content. The mirror works involved perception, the outdoor works the effects of deep landscape, and my early piece *Organic Honey* was an exploration of the medium of video in relation to my own persona. What developed from the beginning were performances that related to other cultures, which is what linked my work with what you were doing. Throughout its history, Mexico has had a culture of the fantastic, in the pre-Columbian period as well as the present and the recent past. It's very, very rich in images. And it's a world in itself. In developing a narrative you couldn't avoid this complexity.

CA: I used the mask organically, as you might a camera. I wasn't thinking of a particular image or wanting to portray a superhero or a puppet, but rather learning how to work with a medium. The performance is an expression of the effort to understand the material and define its possibilities...something as simple as considering the difference between your and my, or our, wearing the mask, and a group wearing it. It was difficult for me because in the early and mid-'90s, I was aware of being a foreigner. At that time, five hundred years after the discovery of America, the issue constantly arose about what it was to be Mexican or Latin American. It was difficult for me to know how much to assimilate and how much to remain Mexican in my work. The mask helped me refer to both identities. Later, when I went back to Mexico, I was criticized by colleagues who thought my work was neo-Mexican or pro-Mexico or something.

JJ: I thought it was just a stage, a look. And now your work has changed, and doesn't have a look that is specifically related to one culture.

CA: At that time, Guillermo Gómez Peña was a prominent figure in performance and represented a kind of Mexicana, reinforced by his use of pop culture. When I made the Wrestling Matches, people asked if I knew him.

JJ: I think your work was quite different from his.

CA: My work ultimately is more existential.

JJ: The metaphor of wrestling is really interesting. I had a Tibetan friend who loved wrestling and boxing, which is even more violent. He thought boxing was a perfect metaphor for human relationships. Did you think of wrestling that way?

CA: Yes. It also has to do with Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde as well — the formation of identity. It was as if I were an adolescent trying to break free of my character and form my own persona. I was having problems expressing that in painting or sculpture. I found sometimes that my objective self could not build this character. The work is about a certain problematic. I tried to make it metaphoric and general, and only later understood that it had associations with Frankenstein and other horror stories.

JJ: How did that happen? I notice the gothic horror sensibility in the work that you're doing now, and wondered about the transition.

CA: I think it is related to the openness of the signifiers in the Wrestlers, which do not represent specific words or struggles or people, but are more like a game, which led critics to widely differing interpretations. One prevailing view saw them as an expression of the Mexican struggle. The work is in fact sort of political, but the problem is that people tended to see it only in those terms. This was not very satisfying because I felt the piece was reduced to representation, which is what I had always wanted to avoid. And that's when I had to start to look for new ways and directions. I had to be honest with myself, as what I'm doing is very personal. I'm not talking about the world, but about my own world. I connect with those stories, which may have more to do with Mary Shelley.

JJ: I remember when a person who was playing you got mixed up with it and wanted to be you. That was very interesting to me.

CA: That was Gabriel Lester. At that time, we were determined to keep the person who interpreted the character [of "Amorales"] anonymous. But over time, people began to recognize him, and they would approach him in bars, at openings, or in the street, and say, "Oh, you're Amorales!" He started to enjoy it, and then he

began to identify with it. We saw that the mask wasn't necessary anymore, since he was embodying the personality. This became a powerful, adventurous idea.

JJ: I really like the photographs in this project, and notice you aren't doing this kind of photography anymore.

CA: Photography was a useful element for a certain period of time, but then its identity and intensity got lost, about two years ago, when my life changed completely.

JJ: You've said that you really enjoy making an image that takes months to complete. For instance, an eight-minute piece might take eight months. Could you tell me about that and how it relates to performance?

CA: I saw a lot of performance artists who became essentially hired actors, which gave performance a fast-food flavor. The artists became formulaic, flying to some very public exhibition and thinking what to do en route. Work became very quick and kind of cheap. How can you have react to a situation in another country when you have never been there, or have known it only superficially? In the case of Mexico, there was an expectation that we would make something violent, provocative, critical, and political. I felt my approach losing power. I wanted to change that, to make artwork that would require extended periods of time, concentration,

and solitude. This refusal to make two hours of work into a social process allowed me to make a big move. In 2002, I saw that I had to study technique and begin growing again as an artist. During this period I made animations, which take a lot of time and collaboration. The idea of the studio as a place to work is again becoming important to me. With Amorales, I felt that the world was my studio, I just needed a laptop and could travel. Now I've gone back to the more old-fashioned idea of having a studio and working with assistants.

JJ: I don't think it's old-fashioned. I think that the problem you're reacting to still exists. So many people are working with the idea of the documentary, which relates to the recording device and a questioning of the real.

CA: And no one is analyzing the role of the documentary in relation to the work. In performance, it's very evident, which is problematic. There is the performer, there is the audience, and in between there is a group of people filming and taping, commenting on the events in sophisticated ways. But they're supposed to not be there, you're not supposed to see them.

JJ: Performance is immediately trimmed into a product, which is taking away from the experience. But transformed, hopefully, into something else.

CA: Yesterday I was doing a performance with



Galia Eibenschutz in which she was dancing and I was filming. I had the real performance in front of me and was watching it on a small screen. I felt frustrated.

JJ: On the other hand, I like to look through the camera and see the performance. It's different, of course, but it's nice that you can look at it both through the camera and live. When you see it through the lens it is framed, and this changes it. I'm sure you had the same experience. And it's good to have a record of Galia's dance.

CA: Of course. But then I wonder, why not make it really good, using real film?

JJ: Film is more beautiful than video because it's so crisp and clear. It has depth in a different way.

CA: Do you think it's closer to reality?

JJ: No.

CA: Farther?

JJ: It's another reality. It's very poetic what you do. I wanted to ask you about the shapes in your current films — the birds and wolves. There's something foreboding about images such as the birds that look like planes. People may have said that your work was political, and I think that if not political then it still refers to our

experience. How do you see that?

CA: This goes to your question about photography. When I stopped using film and began making digital pictures, they were inadequate in expression and in the way they described depth and color, but they allowed me to better document and record reality. Before, I could take a picture and two weeks later develop a beautiful or strong image. Now, making the picture feels like relating to the world. I started by picturing my surroundings: the street on which I live, the neighborhood, my house. And then I began to find its gothic elements. I started rotoscoping to isolate, process, and collage images together. The bird-plane comes from the silhouette stickers that prevent birds from flying into windows, which I saw at the Central Station in Amsterdam when I was there. Then I started to look for images on the Internet. The wolf came from an old encyclopedia. I scanned it, and with rotoscoping moved it into drawing through a process of filtering. After a while the meaning of the original source is lost. By putting a skull on top of a banal image of a crow, or using it in different works, I make it part of my vocabulary.

JJ: Can you talk about your involvement with music?

CA: I first experimented with sound in a couple of videos. By now I have perfected the use of music. In my animations, for example, it creates an atmosphere that makes the whole thing

cohere and run smoothly. It also provokes a very strong feeling. When the music is scary it tells you to be scared.⁷⁵

JJ: Do you consciously refer to a particular genre?

CA: Not consciously. Because I'm not much of a musician, I have to find rather than produce selections. I once worked with a musician who plays the piano for silent films. He breathes in the images and gives them a musical counterpart. He contributes to the intensity of the film. We were able to work together in an experimental way. I've also known Julián Léde for many years. When we were teenagers we used to listen to music together, which stimulated our imaginations, and we fantasized about nonmusical issues like what rock stars wore (at that time we didn't have rock concerts in Mexico). He follows my work, and we have conversations at his concerts. We work together in a loose way.

JJ: You like to perform yourself. You like to dance?

CA: I used to do the Devil's Dance. It was not exactly dancing, but resembled rock-concert movement, with a lot of drinking and intense living. During the period when Julián and I were sharing a house, he would perform and shout at people, provoking and jumping on them. When Galia became pregnant, I felt it had to stop or change. In any case, from the beginning, I pre-

ferred directing to performing. It's really what interests me. I like to organize the shape of the work and encourage acting in others, but not do it myself.

JJ: I think that having the experience yourself makes you a better director.

CA: In a sense I direct my animation films, though when I'm drawing, I don't have to ask other people to act. My strongest connection to performance might be when I'm not performing but function as a representative for a performance artist. The bands we use are musicians, but the main thing is that they are performers whose shows we can work with. I like the idea of being more of a manager to them.

JJ: I noticed that you made a spider web stage.

CA: That's one way I'm trying to return to the three dimensions of performance after the animation experience. It's been a bit slow and clumsy, but it's getting there. Recently I've been working with Galia on her performance where she dresses as a wolf. We have done it in a very simple way. I felt that the second time we did it, it was more fluent and had power.

JJ: How do you work with Galia as a dancer?

CA: I set the conditions, but then I give her a lot of freedom to do what she wants. I'm not a choreographer, and I think it's important not

to direct her, but to provide an opportunity for her to create something new. And then I start to relate to it and we find a way.

JJ: Do you develop the persona together?

CA: Yes. I first come up with a graphic image, and we say, it's going to be a wolf and we're going to make a suit; we discuss how the outfit will look — the gloves, the sash, and so forth. Then we ask, how are we going to deal with it? At this point, Galia starts to create movement that suggests a persona or an animal.

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CA: Could we discuss what you think makes performance different from theatrical acting or dance?

JJ: Performance is a word that is too general. I think of performance, in its pure form, as being conceived and made by one person. Or by more than one, as well, and more than likely in the context of the art community. I'm a visual artist and so the concerns are visual and structural while being about perception. On a sliding scale, there's conceptual performance at one end and theater at the other, and performance exists along that scale. I would call performance kind of behavioral, the carrying out of actions, but Martin Scorsese says the same thing about acting. All these things overlap. When I stepped into performance in the '60s, dance — under

the influence of Alan Kaprow and the dancers and John Cage — was being redefined as everyday movement. Performance comes from several different sources: Dada and the Surrealists, ritual, Eastern theater, and then, in the '60s, happenings and dance. It's something real, related to one's own abilities and desires. For me it also relates to film and literature — storytelling. Dance is more about invented movement, which can be, and is, significant. The mind conceives abstract movements, based on — and maybe for Yvonne Rainer it came out of — something real. Performance can overlap dance, it can refer to theater. But for me performance art, which is something I didn't call it, is usually energized by one person at the center who is directing, making choices and decisions.

CA: Could you relate practice or performance to some aspect of your childhood? To certain memories? Or particular ways of doing things?

JJ: Most children like to put on little theatrical shows, or performances. I would stage events with an old friend on a lawn (once in a thunderstorm) using objects and a trunk full of old clothes, for our parents, and I loved doing that. That's why I'm interested in amateur theater and the tradition of people doing summer productions in their backyards, expressing the desire to perform, to act out narratives, stories. We're in a period of turmoil now when, historically and politically, performance is an important way of representing thoughts or ideas that

cannot be expressed verbally.

CA: When you choose to work in performance, you find that there is no training for it. Most performance artists go to a regular arts school, where they might have been painting and then one day decide not to paint anymore, but to put themselves in front of an audience. Maybe some schools have a performance art department?

JJ: There are people who teach performance, but I don't think there are any departments. I teach, say, architecture students at MIT who are doing performance for the first and last time. I really enjoy seeing their attempt to say something in movement, using drawing, video projection, or their bodies. Having no training gives them a fresh energy, and they learn how to think creatively. This discussion is not about defining one medium. It's about making art. Or poetry. Performance is just another medium, another channel. The process is very similar. I consider my class to be a poetry workshop in a way.

CA: There is something I've noticed about the period of performances by Chris Burden or, especially Marina Abramovic and Ulay — they work with one-liners. They take one concept and represent it clearly to the public. You, on the other hand, took performance in a different direction, which seemed more complex to me, perhaps because I identified with it much more. How do you feel about it?

JJ: The reason I was attracted to performance in the '60s was because at that time there wasn't so-called installation art. I was making sculpture, and I couldn't say everything I wanted with an object. In a performance I could add all these other dimensions — sound, movement. I didn't use many words in the beginning. But I worked with literature, film, and poetry as sources. I could turn the structure of poetry into a three-dimensional movement situation, which allowed me to make more complex structures, which is what I wanted. I'm not a writer, and couldn't write it down. I had to do it in a non-verbal way by constructing images.

CA: I feel the same way. I can't write a script. Because I don't write, I find substitutes for it. Do you think this way of proceeding slows the understanding of your work on the part of the audience?

JJ: I don't think of it as slowing anything down. Something to be learned from conceptual work is that sometimes you don't have to see a piece in order to understand it. Somebody could simply tell you about it, or you could see a picture of it, and you would be able to grasp it. But with the kind of work that you and I do, that's not possible. A picture is only a little fragment of the piece. You have to experience it. The same goes for Marina and Ulay, or for the work Marina's doing now. Their work is about duration, about doing something so long that they collapse. The experience of time is Chris's

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too, though being a visual artist he also makes objects. A lot of people have done some performance but then simply go on to other forms. When I first started out, the audience would occasionally be only a dozen people, but it's amazing how they spread the story of the performance. It was then forgotten for a time, but now we're remembering a lot. Everybody's looking back and reconstructing that period.

CA: Often people think of the '60s in terms of conceptual art and happenings.

JJ: There were a lot of things going on then — there was the whole film world and Jack Smith doing very baroque performances in his fantastic space at midnight on Saturdays. Sometimes when people look back at one person's practice, they think that it was going on by itself, isolated from everything that was going on around it. And that's not the way it was.

CA: You all had interactions.

JJ: Yes. For example, Nam June Paik wasn't a giant alone. I'm not saying he wasn't a wonderful artist. Important, really important. But there was a context, a world.

CA: Do you think conceptual art has become the new academy?

JJ: Maybe. Spaces like the Orchard are in part about looking back. Recently Jutta Koether did

recreations of Martha Graham and Isadora Duncan. It was strange, awkward, and fascinating. What do you think about this?

CA: I feel ambivalent about it. There is something very strong in the work of that period, which has its own aesthetic. It's beautiful. Hans-Peter Feldmann made books I love. Same with Marina's work. Very powerful, very strong. But there is also idealization of that period — as if it were a lost paradise.

JJ: Partly, it was a time when there were fewer artists in the art world, and there was a dominant aesthetic. Whether you went to art school or not, you didn't come out with a million choices. Now we've entered a mannerist period, looking back, repeating and reusing and recycling ideas. I found Italian mannerism a very interesting intellectual period when I was studying art history.

CA: I think that the conflicts in my work have made it more difficult for people to understand or follow. Digging for your subject is a step toward not knowing. You need years in order to know. You can know what you're moving toward, as if on a map, before you can develop and express it. It's an unclear road.

JJ: One of the shows I liked the best in last two years was at the Japan Society, curated by Takashi Murakami and called *Little Boy: The Arts of Japan's Exploding Subculture*. My work has

been influenced by Japanese Noh theater, for instance, and I happen to love manga. In working with animation, do you have a relationship to what's coming out of Japan?

CA: Though I sometimes find it too bold, I do not find it uninteresting. What I especially love is Japanese cinema. Recently I was watching *Hanabi / Love Fireworks* by Takeshi Kitano. At one point a cop who's been crippled on the job is looking at a huge display of flowers, and starts to imagine painting. There is a really wonderful moment where you see only painting after painting, like a slide show of icons, something I hadn't seen since the work of the Russian director Andrei Tarkovsky at the end of his film *Andrei Rublev*. How could you make a commercial movie these days and have the audience watch still images for five minutes? It's a very, very powerful statement. At the same time, it's subtle, absolutely unimportant to the content of the film and simply the expression of the director's personal desire. It's contradictory to watch still images in a film, and harder than going to a museum, where you walk around and through art, or choose to stare at an object for half an hour. These situations are common in Japanese cinema. Mexican art shares something with Japanese art, certain ideas of beauty.

JJ: In what way?

CA: Beauty in the prehispanic arts of Mexico can be so strong that it is almost cruel. When

I see Aztec Art, for instance, I feel a strange inaccessibility that is extremely beautiful. In old Japanese drawings, I respond to the intensity of the colors, and sometimes try to bring it to my own drawings, making them really detailed but at the same time rough. I mix brutality and refinement, making a bridge between the two cultures, and creating another aesthetic.

JJ: The Japanese have different styles themselves. You know the movie *Ugetsu*, where everyone speaks gutturally? This was the first foreign art film I saw and it impressed me greatly. This style of acting is quite different from the more elegant style of Kabuki.

CA: This richness is beautiful, unexpected, and unexplored. It seems to grow naturally out of a collective unconsciousness, erupting suddenly like a new monster. The monster gets bigger and eventually becomes popular.

Carlos Amorales: Discarded Spider?, exhibition catalogue. Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, USA. 2008. Published by Veenman Publishers (NL).

Carlos Amoraes

1970 Mexico City

Lives and works in Mexico City

Education, Residencies and Distinctions

1992- 95 Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam (Netherlands)

1996-97 Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam (Netherlands)

2010 SARF, Smithsonian Artists Research Fellowship, Washington, USA.

2011 Production Residency at Mac/Val, Val-De-Marne, France.

2012 Production Residency at the Atelier Calder, Saché, France.

Since 2008 he is advisor of the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten (Amsterdam), and from 2008 until 2011 a member of the National System of Art Creators (Mexico).

Solo Exhibitions

2015

“Triangle Constellation”, Harvard Art Museum’s Calderwood Courtyard
 “El Esplendor Geométrico”, Galería kurimanzutto, Ciudad de México

2014

2013

“Germinal”, Tamayo museum, Mexico city, Mexico.

2012

“La Langue des Morts”, Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris, France.

2011

“Dirty Songs” Song Eun Art Center, Seoul, Korea.

“Supprimer, modifier et preserver” Mac/Val, Val-De-Marne, France.

“Los Guerreros”, Cineteca Nacional, Mexico City, Mexico.

2010

“Vivir por fuera de la casa de uno”, Museo Amparo, Puebla and MARCO, Monterrey, Mexico.

“Remix” Palazzo Delle Esposizioni, Rome, Italy.

“Aftermath”, Yvon Lambert Gallery, New York, United States.

“Skeleton Images Tossed by Chance” Highpoint Center for Printmaking, Minneapolis, United States.

“Vertical Earthquake”, Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

“Manimal”, Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, Herzliya, Israel.

“El estudio por la ventana”, Galería Kurimanzutto, Mexico City, Mexico.

“Discarded Spider”, Cornerhouse, Manchester, United Kingdom.

2009

“Working Class Today... Tomorrow Nuevos Ricos!”, Kunsthalle Fredericianum, Kassel, Germany.

“Black Cloud”, Espacio de Arte Veronicas, Murcia, Spain.

“Discarded Spider”, Orange County Museum, Orange County, United States.

“Broken Animals: Revisited Animations by Carlos Amoraes”, Meet Factory, Prague, Czech Republic.

“Skeleton Image Constellation”, Cabaret Votaire, Zurich, Switzerland.

2008

“Bird in Hand”, with Praneet Soi, Project 88, Mumbai, India.

“Subconscious City” Yvon Lambert, London, United Kingdom.

“Discarded Spider”, Cincinnati Art Center, Cincinnati, United States.

“Psicofonias”, with Julian Lede, OPA, Guadalajara, Mexico.

“Four Animations, Five Drawings and a Plague”, Live Cinema, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, United States.

“Dark Mirror”, Irish Museum of Art, Dublin, Ireland.

2007

“FACES” The Moore Space, Miami, United States.

“Black Cloud” Yvon Lambert Gallery, New York, United States.

“Dark Mirror” Daros Exhibitions, Zurich, Switzerland.

2006

“Carlos Amoraes”, MALBA, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

“Spider Web Negative” MK Gallery, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom.

“Broken Animals”, Galerie Yvon Lambert Paris, France.

“¿Por qué temer al futuro?” MUCA Campus, Mexico City, Mexico.

“Useless Wonder”, Power Plant, Toronto, Canada.

2005

“¿Por qué temer al futuro?” Casa de America, Madrid, Artium, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain.

“Nuevos Ricos Franchise” Galería Kurimanzutto/ Annet Gelink Gallery, ARCO, Madrid, Spain.

2004

“The Forest” The 59th minute, Creative Time, Times Square, New York, United States.

“The Nightlife of a Shadow”, Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

“Nuevos Ricos”, in collaboration with Julian Lede, Chiesa di San Matteo, Associazione Prometeo, Lucca, Italy.

2003

“Carlos Amoraless” Festival international de nouvelle danse (FIND), Montreal, Canada.

“The Bad sleep well” Galerie Yvon Lambert, New York, United States.

“Turbulencias” Galeria Enrique Guerrero, Mexico.

“Stage for an Imaginary Friend” Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris, France.

2002

“Sympathy”, Serge Ziegler Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland

“Simpatia por el Diablo”, SKUC, Ljubana, Slovenia

“Solitario” Le Studio, Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris, France.

“Fighting Evil (with style)”, SFU Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa, United States.

2001

“Open”, Galerie Serge Ziegler, Zurich, Switzerland.

“Cabaret Amoraless”, Migros Museum, Zurich, Switzerland.

“Cuerpo sin alma”, Galeria Nina Menocal, Mexico City, Mexico.

2000

“Funny 13”, Galerie Micheline Szwajcer, Antwerpen, Belgium

“A World All Too Familiar, new projects by Carlos Amoraless and Christine Hill”,

CCS Museum, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, United States.

1999

“Stoplight Pastimes”, Marres Centrum, Maastricht, Netherlands.

“Carlos Amoraless” Project room, Museo Carrillo Gil, Mexico City, Mexico.

“As Amoraless” Galerie Fons Welters, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

1998

“Amoraless Interim” Galerie Micheline Szwajcer, Antwerpen, Belgium.

Film projections

2015

Trilogy: “Amsterdam”, “The Man who did all things Forbidden” and “The Eye Me Not” and talk with Josh Kun at The Mistake Room, Los Angeles, USA

“The Man who did all things Forbidden” in FICUNAM, Festival Internacional de Cine UNAM, Ciudad de México, México.

“The Man who did all things Forbidden”, in Art Exchange, Universidad de Essex, EUA.

2014

“The Man who did all things Forbidden” y lecture in the Philadelphia museum of art, USA

“Amsterdam” in FICUNAM, Festival Internacional de Cine UNAM, Ciudad de México, México.

Performance Projects

2010

VIII SITAC “Blind Spots / Puntos Ciegos”, Teatro Julio Prieto, Mexico City, Mexico.

2009

“Felix Kubin en Concierto”, Pasaje America y Museo de Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City, Mexico.

2008

“Discarded spider webs”, Performance with Cincinnati Ballet, organized by Cincinnati Art Center, Cincinnati, United States.

“Nuevos Ricos presenta Damo Suzuki”, Pasaje America, Mexico City, Mexico.

2007

“Spider Galaxy”, Museo Rufino Tamayo (MX), Performa Biennial, New York, United States.

“Escultura Social: A New Generation of Art from Mexico City” Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, United States.

“Presentation of records by Dick el Demasiado, Silverio and Jessy Bulbo”, Nuevos Ricos at La Burbuja, Mexico City, Mexico.

“Mugre en Concierto”, Residencias Local, Torres Tequendama, Bogota, Colombia.

“Noche Blanca”, Presentacion de Nuevos Ricos en colaboracion con Carlos Amoraless, Matadero, Madrid, Spain.

2006

“Art Perform” Art Basel Miami Beach, Miami, United States.

“Nuevos Ricos vs. New Moldavians” In collaboration with Pavel Braila, Schauspiel Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany.

“Nuevos Ricos” Appetite, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

“Explootando Gueros Tour”, various cities, Mexico.

“Hiperpop” Processos Oberts Festival, Terraza, Spain.

“Transit”, Performance program, Frankfurt Fine Art Fair, Frankfurt, Germany.

2005

“In Gold We Trust” Nuevos Ricos wintertour 2005, New York, Madrid, Barcelona, Geneva, Mexico City, Mexico.

including: “Nuevos Ricos = USA” organised by Creative Time, Gavin Brown’s Passerby, New York, United States. and “Nuevos Ricos en Concierto” Casa Encendida, Madrid, Spain.

“Titan” NR label presentation, Nacional Financiera, Mexico City, Mexico.

“Aux Raus in Mexico” Nuevos Ricos, various venues,

Mexico City, Mexico.

“Capitalismo Barato”, Nuevos Ricos at Lunario, Mexico City, Mexico.

2004

“Localismos” Mexico City Downtown Area, Mexico.

“Working Class Today... Mañana Nuevos Ricos!”, KBB, Barcelona, Spain.

“Nuevos Ricos Franchise” Musik Total III, De Appel, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

“Carlos Amorales and Julian Lede play Nuevos Ricos” SonarLab, Sonar, Barcelona, Spain.

2003

“Amorales vs Amorales, Challenge 2003” Tate and Egg Live, Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom.

“Amorales vs Amorales, Challenge 2003” SF MOMA, San Francisco, United Kingdom.

“Amorales vs Amorales, Challenge 2003” Hebbel Theatre, Berlin, Germany.

“UK is almost OK”, 24-7 Gallery, London, United Kingdom.

“Devil Dance” Museum Boijmans van Beunigen, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

2002

“Living like a lover with a radar phone”, Project, Dublin, Ireland.

2001

Amorales vs Amorales, “The Overexcited Body”, Sesc Pompei, Sao Paolo, Brasil.

Amorales vs Amorales “Insite 2000”, Tijuana, Mexico.

Amorales vs Amorales, “Insite 200” San Diego, United States.

2000

Amorales vs Amorales, “Au dela du spectacle”, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France.

“Los Mutantes / 2”, in collaboration with Michael Blum, Mexico City streets and El Caracol, Mexico.

1999

Amorales vs Amorales, “Peace”, Migros Museum, Zurich, Switzerland.

“Los Mutantes / 1”, in collaboration with Joan Jonas, Mexico City streets and El Caracol, Mexico.

1997

“Amorales in conversation with... Superbarrio”, performance/lecture, De Balie, W139, RABK, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

“Amorales Table dance”, W139, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

“Niet de kustvlaai”, Interim Performance, Westergas Fabriek, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Group Exhibitions

2015

“Can You Hear Me? Music Labels by Visual Artists”, en Onomatopee, Eindhoven, Holanda.

“Concierto para Güiro” 12va. Bial de La Habana, Cuba.

“Las Variaciones de Sebald”, Centro de Cultura Contemporánea de Barcelona.

“Fatamorgana”, Galería Enrico Astuni, Bologna, Italia.

“Papermania”, Museum der Kunst der Westküste, Alker-sum/Foehr, Alemania.

2014

“Transcripciones”, Museo Universitario del Chopo, Ciudad de México.

“MoMA Studio: Beyond the Cut-Out”, Nueva York, EUA.

10ma. Bial de Shanghai, China.

8va. Bial de Arte Contemporáneo de Berlín, Alemania. Highpoint Editions, Ascend Capital Management, Minneapolis, EUA.

“Narrativas culturales”, Galería Paula Alonso, Madrid, España. 81

“Epicentre: Conversations and Discussions Between Artists”, Galería Parra & Romero, Ibiza, España.

“The pursuit of public happiness?”, Galería Arratia Beer, Berlín, Alemania.

“Fantasía”, Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala.

“Idiorrhythmie – an Experiment”, Frappant e.V., Hamburgo, Alemania

“Under the same Sun”, Guggenheim, NY, USA Highpoint Editions. Ascend Capital Management, Minneapolis, USA

2013

“The Marvellous Real”, Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

“The Tolerant Home”, Chambres des Canaux, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

“Solitudes. Multiple isolations”, Centro Cultural de España, Mexico City, Mexico.

“Horrorizados. Sentimientos extremos del miedo en el arte contemporáneo”, Exhibition room city hall Huesca, Spain.

“Notas contra Notas”, Art Museum Carrillo Gil, Mexico City, Mexico.

“Order, Chaos, the Space Between”, Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, USA.

“Re:emerge, Towards a New Cultural Cartography”, Sharjah Biennial 11, Sharjah, United Emirates.

“Migraciones, Territorios y Fronteras”, Universitat Politècnica de Valencia, Valencia, Spain.

“Jose Guadalupe Posada: Trasmisor”, MUNAL, Mexico City, Mexico.

2012

“The Deep of the Modern”, Manifesta 9, Genk (BE)

“Extrangerias”, MUAC, Mexico City, Mexico.

“Tour d’Horizon- Werke aus der Sammlung” Migros Museum für Gegenwarts Kunst, Zurich (CH)

“Highpoint Editions- Decade One”, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis (USA)
 “Posada bis Alys- Mexikanische Kunst von 1900 bis Heute”, Kunsthaus Zürich (CH)

2011

“Mexico: Expected/Unexpected”, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego - MCASD La Jolla, La Jolla, CA
 “Of Bridges and Borders”, CCBA, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
 “Two Versions of the Imaginary”, Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam, Netherlands.
 “Distant Star”, Regen Projects, Los Angeles, USA.
 “Estrella Distante” Kurimanzutto, Mexico City, Mexico.

“Cartografías de arte contemporáneo”, Instituto Coahuilense de Cultura, Saltillo, Mexico.
 “Proyecto Juarez”, Matadero, Madrid, Spain.
 “DADA in Moscow”, Moscow Biennial, Moscow, Russia.
 “Nuit Blanche”, Lycée Jacques Decour, Paris, France.
 “Tiempos Violentos”, Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, Mexico City, Mexico.
 “Lovecraft”, with Rosana Schoijet, Centro Fotografico Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Oaxaca, Mexico.

2010

“The Metamorphosis-International Contemporary Art Exhibition”, Other Gallery Shanghai Space, Shanghai, China.
 “[re]wind 4.0 : Contemporary Video Art, 2000-2009”, DePauw University Campus, Greencastle, United States.
 “Twilight Of The Idols”, Galería Casado Santapau, Madrid, Spain.
 “Still/Moving”, The Israel Museum, Tel Aviv, Israel.
 “Al calor del pensamiento” Daros Latinamerica Collection at Sala de Arte Ciudad Grupo Santander, Spain.
 “Repeat All”, Centro Cultural Chacao de El Rosal, Venezuela.
 “La Trama se Complica”, MARCO, Monterrey, Mexico.
 “Modelos para armar. Pensar Latinoamerica desde la

Coleccion MUSAC”, MUSAC, León, Spain.
 “El Efecto Dracula”, Museo Universitario del Chopo, Mexico City, Mexico.
 “These Gifts Must Always Move”, Sutton Gallery Project Space, Melbourne, Australia.
 “Touched: Liverpool Biennial”, special project graphic intervention, Liverpool, United Kingdom.
 ”Historias en Movimiento > video. cine. animación. Sonido”, Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes de Santiago del Estero, Argentina.
 “¡Afuera!Arte en Espacios Públicos”, different spaces, Cordoba, Argentina.
 “¡Sin Techo está pelón!”, Festival Internacional Cervantino, Guanajuato, Mexico.
 “Hareng Saur: Ensor and Contemporary Art”, MSK and SMAK, Ghent, Belgium.
 “Cauce Crítico”, Casa Metropolitana, Mexico City, Mexico.

2009

“Mythologies”, Haunch of Venison, London, United Kingdom.
 “Un Certain Etat du Monde?” Garage, Moscow, Russia.
 “10 Bienal de la Habana”, Havana, Cuba.
 “Trienal Poligráfica de San Juan”, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
 “Repeat All”, Museu da Imagem e do Som, São Paulo, Brasil.
 “El Ser y La Nada”, La Coleccion Jumex, Mexico City, Mexico.
 ”This is Sculpture” Tate Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom.
 “Extranjeros en la Cultura”, Fundación Telefónica, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
 “Acciones Disolventes”, Centro Cultural Cachao, Caracas, Venezuela.
 “Slash: Paper under the Knife” Museum of Art and Design, New York, United States.
 “Eerie & languid- explorations about responsibilities and values” Artisterium, Tbilisi, Georgia.

2008

“Locked in”, Casino Luxembourg, Luxembourg.
 “Martian Museum of Terrestrial Art”, Barbican Art Gallery, London, United Kingdom.
 “The Rocky Mountain People Show”, Galleria Civica di Arte Contemporanea, Trento, Italy.
 “La Era de la Discrepancia”, MALBA, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
 “El Norte del Sur”, Galeria Baró Cruz, São Paulo, Brasil.
 “Turn and Widen”, 5th Seoul International Media Art Biennial, Seul, Korea.
 “Distopía”, Museo de Arte, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogota, Colombia.
 “Mexico Expected Unexpected”, La Maison Rouge, Paris, France.
 “Viva La Muerte!”, Centro Atlantico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas de la Gran Canaria, Spain.
 “Pasiones Privadas, Visiones Publicas”, MARCO, Vigo, Spain.
 “The Promised Land”, Chelsea Art Museum, New York, United States.
 “Escultura Social: A New Generation of Art from Mexico City”, Alameda Art Museum, San Antonio, United States.
 “Apertura de la Nueva Galeria”, Kurimanzutto, Mexico City, Mexico.
 “RISK Cinema”, Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, Florida, United States.
 “In Transitions: Drift”, National Center for Contemporary Art, Ekaterinburg and Moscow, Russia.
 “Psychedelic”, Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, United States.
 “41 Salon Nacional de Artistas”, Cali, Colombia.
 “Animales Rotos”, Museo de Arte Moderno, Ciudad de México, Mexico.
 “In Transition Russia 2008”, National Center For Contemporary Art, Moscow, Russia.
 “Zonas de Riesgo”, Caixa Forum, Barcelona, Spain.

2007

“Star Power, Museum as Body Electric”, Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, United States.
 “All About Laughter” Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan.
 “Escultura Social: A New Generation of Art from Mexico City” Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, United States.
 “La Era de la Discrepancia”, MUCA, Mexico City, Mexico.
 “Wherever We Are”, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, United States.
 “We Are Your Future”, Moscow Biennial, Moscow, Russia.
 “Viva Mexico!” Zacheta Art Gallery, Warsaw, Poland.
 “Reconstructions II”, Sudeley Castle, United Kingdom.
 “Repeat All II”, Matucana 100, Santiago de Chile, Chile.
 “Proyecto Juarez” Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.
 “Dark Mirror” Montevideo/ TBA, Amsterdam, Netherlands.
 “Viva La Muerte!”, Kunsthalle Wien, Wien, Austria.
 “Geopolíticas de la Animación”, Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Sevilla, Spain.
 “Theatre of Cruelty”, White Box, New York, United States.
 “New Perspectives in Latin American Art, 1930–2006: Selections from a Decade of Acquisitions”, Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States.
 “Existencias”, Musac-Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, León, Spain.
 “Paperback. Ediciones baratas”, Fundación Luis Seoane, Coruna, Spain.

2006

“Hot Spots”, International Film Festival Rotterdam, Netherlands.
 “Speed”, Gallery Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany.
 “Image Bank for an Everyday Revolutionary Life”, Red Cat, Los Angeles, United States.
 “Anagramme” MAC’s Grand Hornu - Musée des Arts Contemporains, Hornu, Belgium.
 “Melancholie. Genie und Wahnsinn in der Kunst”, Neue

Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Neues Museum Weimar, Germany
 “Video installations by Carlos Amorales & Javier Viver”, Location One, New York, United States.
 “Videopulsiones. Tecnologías do sentimento”, Galeria da ESAD, Caldas da Rainha-Portugal, Portugal.
 “Los Angeles-Mexico Complejidades y Heterogeneidad”, Fundacion / Coleccion Jumex, Mexico City, Mexico.
 “Historias Animadas”, Caixa Forum, Barcelona, Sala Rekalde, Bilbao, Spain; Le Fresnoy, Tourcoing, France.
 “Art Unlimited”, Basel Art Fair, Basel, Switzerland.
 “Human Game” Fondazione Pitti Immagine, Stazione Leopolda, Florence, Italy.
 “Propia Vision (Our Vision)” The Queens Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States.
 “Distor” Museo Carrillo Gil, Mexico City, Mexico.
 “Cruce de miradas. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros” Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City, Mexico.
 “Esquiador en el fondo de un pozo”, La Coleccion Jumex, Mexico City, Mexico.
 “Repeat All”, Totti du Monde, Vevey, Switzerland.
 “Wherever we go” Spazio Oberdan, Milan, Italy.
 “SF International Animation Showcase”, SF MOMA, San Francisco, United States.
 “The Exotic Journey Ends”, Foksal Foundation, Warsaw, Poland.
 “Version Animée”, Centre pour l’image contemporaine, Saint-Gervais Genève, Switzerland.
 “Danke Schön”, Museum voor Moderne Kunst Arnhem, Arnhem, Netherlands.
 “Heterotopias” Plataforma 2006, varias sedes, Puebla, Mexico.

2005

“Zero Interest /Interessi Zero”, Galleria civica de Arte Contemporanea, Trento, Italy.
 “Identità e nomadismo” Palazzo delle Papesse-Centro Arte Contemporanea, Siena, Italy.
 “Exhibicion de Reapertura” Museo Experimental el

ECO, Mexico City, Mexico.

“Nuevos Ricos”, V Bienal de Mercosur, Puerto Alegre, Brasil.
 “The Pantagruel Syndrome”, T3 – Torinotriennale tre-musei, Torino, Italy.
 “Threat Zone”, Triange Project Space, San Antonio, Texas, United States.

2004

“Origami Bomb”, Project Room, Annet Gelink Gallery, ARCO, Madrid, Spain.
 “A Fripon, Fripon et demi”, Collection Lambert, Avignon, France.
 “Imagine Limerick” EV+A, Limerick, Ireland.
 “Moving Outlines” Contemporary Museum, Baltimore, United States.
 “We Are the World”, Museum Boijmans van Beunigen, Rotterdam, Netherlands.
 “Don’t call it performance” Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporaneo, Sevilla, Spain; Museo de Barrio, New York, United States.
 “Netherlands Film Festival” Central Museum Utrecht, Utrecht, Netherlands.
 “Dicen que finjo o miento. La ficcion revisada” Central de Arte Guadalajara, Mexico.
 “Amsterdammned” Kunsthallen Braanderigarden, Denmark
 “Contested Fields” Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, United States.

2003

“We Are the World”, Dutch Pavillion, Venice Biennial, Venice, Italy.
 “Armour” Fort van Asperen, Netherlands.
 “Mexico Attack!” Chiesa di San Matteo, Associazione Prometeo, Lucca, Italy.
 “M_ARS” Graz Kunstverein, Garz, Austria.
 “Independence”, South London Gallery, London, United Kingdom.
 “Mexico Iluminado” Freedman Gallery, Albright College,

Philadelphia, United States.

2002

“Coartadas/ Alibis” Witte de Wit, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

“Telepathic Journeys”, MIT List Art Center, Cambridge, Mass, United States.

“Mexico City : An Exhibition about the Exchange Rates of Bodies and Values” PS1, NY (US), Knustwerke, Berlin, Germany.

“20 Million Mexicans can’t be wrong”, South London Gallery, London, United Kingdom.

“Fuora di Uso”, Pescara, Italy.

“Busan Bienial”, Busan, South Korea.

2001

“Kunst macht Spass” Wolfsburg Museum, Wolfsburg, Germany.

“The Overexcited Body” Palazzo dell’Arenario, Piazza del Duomo, Milan, Italy.

Sesc Pompei, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

“We in FLAMES” Berlin Biennial 2, Berlin, Germany.

“House of Games”, Festival a/d Werf, Utrecht, Netherlands.

“Sportcult” Apex Art, New York City, United States.

Tiranna Biennial, National Gallery, Albania.

2000

“Makeshift”, ArtPace, San Antonio Texas, United States.

“Unlimited NL-3” De Appel, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

“Territorios ausentes”, Casa de America, Madrid, Spain.

“Let’s Entertain”, itinerant exhibition: Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, United States.

“Ideas for Living”, De Paviljoens, Almere, Netherlands.

“Au dela du spectacle” Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France.

“Insite 2000”, San Diego / Tijuana (United States / Mexico).

1999
