



Fondation pour l'art contemporain
Foundation for Contemporary Art

Movements:
Learning through the work of art
at DHC/ART

Works of art can be interpreted in a number of ways: we can look at them, consider them, and listen to them. We can interact with them in a spatial sense by moving around them and appreciate them from various angles. But how do we really see them, listen to them, and interact with them? Images are concocted as our imagination is stimulated. Sound is also evoked and provokes us to be present in another way. Our physical movements in the gallery space arouse our senses. Being in motion allows us to learn *through* the work of art, and to consider the ways in which we interact with art.

context

intimate/spectacular

The works in the exhibition, whether referring to specific historical events (Parreno's aesthetic reimagining of Robert Kennedy's coffin travelling from New York to Washington), to the quasi-mythological aura surrounding political leaders (Fidel Castro's figure in Toirac's work) or to the collective unconscious of a nation (Simon's treatment of the hidden in American society), are situated at the junction of public and private space. Located as such, they blur the distinction between personal and political, suggesting that art is a space where the two concepts are intertwined more than ever.

In Toirac's work, Castro's voice is the dominant entity. How is the idea of the powerful voice of a leader employed by the artist? Does Toirac's intervention alter your understanding of a leader like Castro? If so, in what ways?

What challenges, constraints, or ethical issues do you think could arise in an artistic practice such as Simon's, that requires privileged access to people, locations, and information?





composition

still/moving

The use of photography and film in most of the works presented in this exhibition implies the dichotomy between a fixed representation and an image constantly in flux. These concepts are explored in all of the works, which move away from the notion that artistic mediums should be used in a specific and enclosed manner, thereby suggesting very personal ways of using them. Parreno, for example, uses film, a medium associated with movement by its very definition, to create a story based on still images, while Fast uses cinematic techniques to reflect on the cyclical nature of storytelling.

In Margolles' conceptual offering, movement and stillness permeate the work. The dripping of the water contrasting with the heaviness of the metal plates placed underneath it. Do you consider Margolles' work to be primarily still or in motion? What constitutes movement for you? What signs or signals do you look for in order to determine if something is motion?

Some of the works directly reference images from visual culture – for example, Parreno's film draws from a series of photographs by Paul Fusco. Can you name some of the direct (and indirect) formal citations made by the artists in their works? Of what nature are they – other works of art, photography, cinema, images from popular culture?

content

fact/fiction

For this exhibition, the selected artists explore the ways in which objectivity and truth are created in visual culture: for example, Omer Fast borrows from the aesthetics of documentary films while Taryn Simon plays with the formal and ethical principles of photojournalism. They work on documenting the ephemeral or the invisible, on creating a fictional narrative out of precisely chosen facts. In doing so they succeed in rendering the familiar strange (and vice versa), while also suggesting - as Heidegger famously noted - that there is no absolute truth.

How do the factual and fictional aspects of Fast's film interact with one another? How do the other artists employ narrative tools typically used in works of fiction (reenactment, staging, scripting) to suggest the multiplicity of meanings attached to a specific event or fact?

Can you name other examples in art, media, popular culture or daily life, where you notice the blurring of fact and fiction?





considerations

How are the following themes considered in the works of art?

Minimalism/maximalism

Private/public

Familiar/strange

Revealed hidden

