

MEMORIAL MOVEMENT

2015

Barcelona, Spain

Stella Flatten

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together with

Carolina Astudillo, Ricard Conesa Sanchez, Jordi Guixé, Fernando Hernández Holgado, Liane Lang, Núria Ricart, Fernanda Zanuzzi (in alphabetical order).

AIM/ MOTIVATION

The photographic work is called 'Memorial Movement'. It is the result of an intervention, which explores the topic of action in public space, through the scope of building a temporary memorial sculpture together with a group of participants at three different places in Barcelona. It questions the need for permanent monumental installations in public space before the topic of commemoration in contemporary societies. The intervention uses techniques of performance art as well as architecture as practice and it is documented through film and photography. The intention is to form a structure in the tradition of sculptural aesthetics that clearly use the human torso as centerpiece, but without the need to install a permanent object in public space.

In our work we see an urge for new ideas and usages within the field of public display of memories and forms of commemoration.

We believe that through interdisciplinary approaches the public space can be used as a platform upon which societal participation and new ideas of community are being constructed and tested. All at once, these newly arisen approaches and perspectives offer a wider opening for the discussion about urban and spatial production of memorials as well as allowing a greater diversity of actors to take part.

OUTLINE / HISTORICAL BACKGROUND/ PLACE/

Memorial Movement was documented through photographs (Stella Flatten, Liane Lang,) and film (Carolina Astudillo) at three places within the cityscape of Barcelona during 3:00 and 8:00a.m. in summer 2015. The places are marked through their historical relevance during the Franco regime: (1) the disappeared women prison of Les Corts; (2) the Camp de la Bota site, where 11 female prisoners were shot to death and (3) the Fossar de la Pedrera, where they were buried in a mass grave (for more information, refer to <http://blocs.lescorts.cc/presodedones/>). These three sites are fairly different in their public documentation of their history. The Fossar de la Pedrera is a well-documented memorial site, whereas the Camp de la Bota simply has an information panel. The women prison of Les Corts is currently undergoing a process of developing a future monument.

For the intervention at each of the three places up to 8 performers entered a 5 meter long elastic fabric and formed a temporary monument by the movement of their own bodies. The fabric, which is used in acrobatic as well as therapeutical contexts, allows due to its texture to stretch and form in various ways. For this specific work it functioned as the connecting substance between the performers to form a sculpture for a short moment in time.

PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS

The human body is of great importance in three ways for the idea of the intervention. Firstly it is understood as archive of personal - as well as memories of a wider national background. The body is seen as storage in all its physical presence to preserve and forget information that is gathered during your lifetime. Secondly we didn't want to show the story of an individual person as representative to connect to a certain historical moment. Rather more it is the notion about historical circumstances that affected a wider group of people, that we intended to show. For this aim the fabric is used to symbolise how people within societies are connected through their personal as well as cultural knowledge about a certain event in time and the memories that are kept or forgot about it, without explicitly revealing the identity of a single person. Therefore face of the performer is hidden through the fabric, but visual within the entity of the temporary sculpture.

And thirdly it is the idea of memories as something dynamic and antagonistic within your personal life in contrast to the often less dynamic way they are displayed in public space. While the performers are moving creases and lines emerge in the fabric and are able to show the working forces between the bodies, without losing their connection within the sculpture.

'Memorial Movement' is curated by Stella Flatten.

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