

Adriana Lara Let's not jump into concrete

Curated by Eva Svennung

February 21th – April 15th 2014

Indipendenza is pleased to announce the first solo show in Italy of Mexican artist Adriana Lara. The project is a new commission curated by Eva Svennung. It gathers existing works as well as a series of new pieces, specifically conceived for this venue by the artist. Comprising a variety of media—painting, video, sculpture, installation—the show focuses on the artist's ongoing research on the relation between form and surface, language and meaning.

Playing with artistic conventions, manipulating the formal and conceptual materials that form the tectonic layers of meaning and of interpretation, and generating visible tensions between surface and form, Lara's work reroutes attention and questions from the actual object to the larger context art inhabits and stands for.

Standard installation views, out of the blue are views of a temporary exhibition constructed by Lara at Standard gallery (Oslo) in 2009 and installed only for the duration of being in photographed and filmed. Documenting artworks as mere props produced for the occasion, it also contained a chroma-key blue wall painting, the surface of which is cut so as to make the current exhibition context visible, and bleed in. In the resulting photos, it is the format of the exhibition itself that is posed as readymade. Referencing the mass circulation of these interchangeable views on the Internet, the show posed questions and criticisms about the way exhibitions in general have become mere virtual experiences.

Standing vertically are **Corner Tubes**, a group of three tall construction pipes of the kind normally used to pour concrete, onto which large paintings have been stretched. The paintings are basic representations of room corners: a three-dimensional space made flat, reduced to three color fields. The cylinder, in turn, is a basic form that exists in nature (trees, rivers, ...), as opposed to the plane, bi-dimensional man-made surface of a canvas. By forcing the painted image to curve and to look 360°—permanently delaying the conclusive apprehension of one image—the cylindrical form comes to bear on the idea of a physical state of time. In **Cave of Hands (Cueva de las manos)**, a concave grotto reproduced on the same convex volume, we find another representation of space gone wrong in the process of its transfer, though here, unlike the abstraction encountered in *Corner Tubes*, the immediacy of the prehistorical collective painterly experiment remains intact.

Spaghetti. Zooming out from these sculptures in a drastic change of scale, the viewer finds himself looking at meters of thin cable tubing gathered on the floor, posing as a blown-up bundle of spaghetti. Other bits and pieces have landed on the walls. The tubing, a material which normally protects the wires that circulate the information and exchange upon which we constantly feed in today's networked world, hints at the potency of art as a vehicle.

In another part of the exhibition, the perpetually changing patterns generated on blank canvases by laser beams, usually used in night clubs, convey the fluidity of contents that the reified adjacent tubing are deprived of. Here too we find a challenge to the limitations of pictorial space. At the same time, the artistic gesture is handed off to a programmable light machine, and some of art's tendency towards spectacle spoofed.

The idea that looking at art is looking at a fragment of something bigger, is considered in the fabric pieces **Scribble, scratch, scrawl, doodle, textile** and **Sheet, glass, metal, plastic, textile**, in which patterns repeat forms encountered three-dimensionally elsewhere in the exhibition. The fabrics, of a kind normally stored on rolls and sold by the meter in different colors, but now stretched and promoted to the status of pictures (all the while keeping the rough-cut shape they were sold with), continue to bear their ready-made quality: industrial garment manufacturing appropriating art styles (from constructivism, action painting, etc.) that have themselves become ready-mades with time.

In the same room, another reflection on how the production of meaning itself takes place in the manufacturing of things, are wooden hand chairs, a crafty Indonesian version of the iconic Pedro Friedeberg '60s Pop design. Facing one another and pulling a tight thread between their fingers like a game, **The Thinkers** is a magnified version of the practice of weaving, of the hand as primary technological tool.

The video **Art Film 2, Unpurposely with purpose** places the viewer at the center of a cyclorama—that is, literally inside a tube, as well as inside another «show». Before our eyes, around the loop, a compilation of artistic materials and references pass: pieces of carpeting, of bark and cork, footage of a carpet filmed with a microscopic camera. They appear as windows on a constantly changing background composed of abruptly transitioning film footage: images of Mars, of an infinite Photoshop canvas, a street filmed at cat-eye level, Aborigines preparing bark on which to paint... In this *collage* of layers of converging practices, what comes forth is how our understanding depends on surface and form.

The shape of the rough-cut carpet pieces hanging on the walls, become readable as being borrowed from the aborigines' bark paintings, like the windows appearing in the film. Fragments of a larger wall tapestry (a work produced for Documenta 13), all elements evoke a bigger picture—one that is missing.

Il mainstream is a frenetic mind's attempt to map the contamination of influence between spheres of culture and economy. To engrave this subjective, spontaneous diagram on marble was just a last-minute idea.

Adriana Lara is born in Mexico City, where she lives and works.

After brief studies in the Netherlands and a year in Paris at the post-graduate program of the Palais de Tokyo, Lara cofounded the nonprofit production bureau Perros Negros in Mexico City, curating exhibitions and publishing a 'zine called *Pazmaker*, parallel to her own artistic practice. In the past few years, Lara has exhibited at Kunsthalle Basel, Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Albus Greenspon Gallery, Air de Paris Gallery, House of Gaga, Mexico (solo shows), and at Documenta 13, New Jersey Basel, MOCA Miami, and Wattis institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco, among others.

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