

## **The Other, the Same. Some notes on the poetic power in the work of Dolores Zinny and Juan Maidagan**

Leire Vergara

“The roots of language are irrational and of a magical nature”, Jorge Luis Borges writes of poetry, in the prologue to the 1964 compilation of poems *El otro, el mismo* (The other, the same), with which he demonstrates his ability to return to the ancient magic that words encapsulate. Borges explains it like this:

The Dane who uttered the name Thor, or the Saxon who uttered the name Thunor, knew not whether those words meant the god of thunder or the crash that follows the flash of lightning<sup>1</sup>.

Bearing in mind these doubts Borges harboured about the impossibility of language transcending its condition of mediator before reality, that is, his suspicions as to whether language becomes a simple echo of reality or, on the contrary, establishes itself as a metaphysical construction of it, a conspiratorial dimension is surely evident in his literature when it actively sets out to strip down its immediate surroundings. In other words, the literary universe of Borges derives its strength from the consolidation of an open critique of the social and political context from which it springs but from which it also attempts to gain independence, through a process of abstraction. In this sense the metaphysical capacity of his literary work, both narrative and poetic, reveals to us an autonomy that is proper to abstraction, which turns into a dialectical operation when exercised as a reflection of another possible fiction, namely, the paranoid machinery of politics likewise exercised as an interpretation of reality.

For Dolores Zinny and Juan Maidagan the fantastic literary production of Argentina has, over the years, become a constant referential source. The work of both Borges and of his friend and collaborator Adolfo Bioy Casares, or even the publications of other authors such as Héctor Germán Oesterheld<sup>2</sup>, aesthetically feed their spatial proposals. This approach by the artists to architectural or sculptural space from the perspective of fantastic narrative has sometimes involved a possible obsession to alter conventional figures of exhibition time and space in order to create alternative proposals of great symbolic content. This is how Zinny and Maidagan combine the specific with the metaphysical as a way, perhaps, of reproducing the constructive potentiality in fiction. The poetry of Borges, particularly in the structural analysis its language possesses, takes us towards a better understanding of the artists' concern to pose a new perspective in relation to spaces of artistic intervention, this time not so much as a situation or context but rather as a semantic field or text.

Although the narrative of fiction is Borges' great contribution to modern literature, there are some questions of relevance in the work of Dolores Zinny and Juan Maidagan, especially in their latest installation entitled *La costa, el ataque, lo mismo* (The coast, the attack, the same), conceived specifically for the Sala Rekalde, which can be analysed or, rather, which we can speculate about, via the poetics of Borges. One of the possible keys for situating our interpretation of this writer's art in the production of Zinny Maidagan is once again to be found in the above-mentioned prologue, when Borges refers to monotonies and the repetition of words and even entire lines in the book. In fact, in the prologue the author remembers a critical comment made by another Argentine poet, Alberto Hidalgo, about his own habit of writing the same page twice, with minimal variations. This is something that Borges inherited from his narrative work, or, as he well remarks:

In Lubbock, on the edge of the desert, a tall girl asked me whether, when I wrote *El Golem*, I had not attempted a variation on *Las ruinas circulares* [The circular ruins]; I

replied that I had had to cross the whole continent to receive this revelation, which was true<sup>3</sup>.

### **The coast, the attack. The same**

We can read the possible repetition in the stories, characters or poems of Borges as a methodology set to reinforce the autonomy of his literature as a space for mediating reality. This space is not necessarily marked out within a specific geography, but is shaped instead through a series of imprecise edges. It is a world charged with self-referencing effects that compete with the supposed authenticity of an exterior parallel reality.

The work entitled *Lo mismo* (The same)<sup>4</sup> in the Rekalde exhibition is an invitation to analyse this exercise in repetition and its consequent conceptual repercussion within the installation as a whole. This series of tubular structures built from cardboard and fabrics of different colours and qualities gives us reiteration in a specific form, in this case an ellipse, as a constructive strategy that will stretch as a pattern through out the entire installation. That original form is reproduced, therefore, in its most diverse variations running through the loom piece, but also in the sculptures, collages and drawings. In its expansion, the repetition is, however, perceived in a way as fractured, and we are again provided with the key to this rupture by the piece *Lo mismo*.

This great tubular canvas of architectural proportions is offered as binary psycho-geography, in the sense that it can, on the one hand, be interpreted, with its combination of various fabrics, as a possible cartography of the city of Berlin –since this is an investigation into the chosen material that leads the artists to reproduce it throughout various localities in this city– and, on the other, as a symbolic map of the domestic, not so much in the fabric's condition as material, but because of the shape and place in which the work is produced, since the proportions of the whole exactly coincide with the measurements of one of the walls of the artists' house-cum-studio. In this case the work plays on a literary constant that we recognise as Borgesian: the fact that all writing involves *translation*. In relation to these ideas we can say that *Lo mismo* is transformed into a possible heterotopia in the exhibition space, understanding that from its abstract condition this work makes us aware of a phenomenological constant: artistic experience as a process of translation that combines an exterior origin with its transformation within the show space. The piece *Lo mismo* activates our perception of this temporary space of transit transitoriness, even of the precariousness of the transformation and, at times, of its vulnerability.

In a journey through the productions of Dolores Zinny and Juan Maidagan one can easily recognise Borges' desire to construct a possible autonomy using fiction in the face of reality. Indeed, the imagining of a scene or a circumstance is what triggers the condition of each work and its link with the space. So, in each of their proposals, the combination of this logic of direct assimilation of the concrete conditions of a space with a capacity for abstraction bonded to imagination and to the very need to transcend precisely what is specific, stimulates the ability to understand the concept of space in a different way; perhaps from a more expansive perspective, from the symbolic. One of their early works helps us to understand this possibility. This was a production created in Rosario in 1993, shortly before they left Argentina to go and live in New York. *27 de Marzo* (27 March) is the title of a public sculpture the artists made for the inauguration of the Bernardino Rivadavia Cultural centre in Rosario. To be specific, the building was originally designed as a World Cup football press centre during the dictatorship, and immediately after the end of the championship it was transformed into a cultural centre. The intervention consisted of a set of empty rubble skips placed in front of the building during the opening of the new access to it, intentionally creating confusion by hinting at its imminent demolition. The action pointed to the need for cultural content to be mobile and, in counterposition to the recently opened space of representation, suggested the liberation of all emblematic reduction.

The creations of Dolores Zinny and Juan Maidagan have been interpreted in relation to various critical aesthetic lines based on appropriation and spatial intervention of the *white cube*. Such a reading of their work can be argued for, above all, in that there is an artistic trajectory that feeds or even answers a specific discourse around the exhibition space as situation and context. This is why their work is sometimes recognised and interpreted as a possible activity that continues *post-minimal* aesthetics, but is also *site-specific*<sup>5</sup> and is even a successor to *institutional criticism*, though with a peculiar transitory feel. Nevertheless, this idea of transition throughout the practice of these artists does not correspond to a concept of provisionality in time, in the form of temporary structures that are built to later be destroyed; the constructions are experienced instead as proposals in the space of evolution or transformation, as devices that are situated more as steps or guides between various spaces or contexts, between various aesthetics or styles.

This transitory experience is crucial in installations such as *Curtain Call* (*Structure of Survival*, 50<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennial, 2003) or *Deviation* (*Unhomely. Phantom Scenes in Global Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Seville Biennial, 2006), and even *Wien 17er* (*Exile of the Imaginary: poetics, aesthetics, love*, Vienna, Generali Foundation, 2007). If we analyse the physiognomy of all these pieces we observe that each of them reproduces an unstable site, anticipating on occasion a new phenomenological encounter that is, in the end, thwarted. Their morphologies, sometimes ephemeral and undefined, likewise prevent us from calling a definitive halt to our interpretation. This is the case of the installations they built from looms that separate, whilst also reinforcing, spaces of passage as channels of transition from one exhibition space to another, or the construction of structures impossible to be lived in or hard to assimilate, which end up creating some confusion and frustration in the spectator, or curved wooden and rubber panels taking up the corners of an exhibition space and transforming its geometry and, in consequence, its supposed neutrality. This idea of provisionality in the structural and organic sense sustains the idea that Zinny and Maidagan's works do not expect to receive an interpretative reading, but rather demand of spectators that they stay their step a while. This is perhaps no more than the way in which the work of art lobs back into the spectator's court the unresolved task of interpretation. The work ricochets back at the viewer in its condition of observed object and it is thus the latter who must observe him or herself, but to ask, more than anything else: How do I see? How do I read? Dan Cameron, in a text entitled "Site unseen", concerning an installation by the same artists, *Movement in Art*, within the Moderna Museet Projekt programme, curated by Maria Lind in 2000, describes this question like this:

We are all there to experience the art, but also to experience each other experiencing the art, and in this way to reinforce the parameters of social interaction in a way that suits our increasingly self-imposed isolation from one another.<sup>6</sup>

### **Site, Non-Site. Site unseen**

*Movement in Art*, the project developed by Zinny and Maidagan in the Moderna Museet Projekt 2000 in Stockholm, consisted of three architectural intervention operations within and outside the museum, designed by Rafael Moneo. First of all the artists constructed three sliding structures at three corners of the rooms where the collection was presented; secondly, they proposed a time interruption by closing off the grilles around two of the windows of the museum, twenty-four hours a day, and, lastly, they set up a dialogue with the first of the two replicas of the work *Le grand verre* (The Great Glass), by Marcel Duchamp, built by Ulf Linde for the Moderna Museet on the occasion of the *Movement in Art* exhibition in 1961.

In all its complex operations the project put forward a critical and interpretative analysis of institutional architecture, in this case within a modern art museum as a public site where certain social values are implemented through the

exhibitional experience of the work of art. The three sliding structures set around the various collection rooms in the museum could be manipulated by the audience. They could be opened or closed and spectators were even invited to go inside them. The space they housed inside, however, frustrated any attempt at contemplation: the free cavity was finally too small for anyone to remain within it. If anything, these mobile panels in fact turned into structures that marked out the space outside them, that is, the actual collection rooms. So the lack of definition as to whether they were architecture or furnishings produced an interesting segmentation, as it interrupted the interpretative experience of the collection, temporarily transforming the space of each room. These added structures in themselves contributed no more than a blocked view, or an opening onto a site that was immediately denied.

The decision to close off the grilles of two of the museum windows 24 hours a day during the months the project lasted created an optical effect of enclosure similar to that set off by the two structures. The museum, you see, became closed in on itself and was, therefore, experienced as an isolated inner space counterposed to the image of the city that could be observed outside. But the outer area too, the view of the city of Stockholm through the bars, likewise remained in captivity, in a interruption of time rather than of space.

These two exercises of enclosing the exhibition space signified for the artists a *delay*, an idea taken from Marcel Duchamp and a key element for analysing the experience of a work of art. The last part of their intervention derives from just this concept, and consisted in placing the replica of the *Great Glass*, produced by the museum in the 1960s, in a space called the Old Vicarage, next to the museum, where curator Maria Lind was working on a programme of contemporary art projects produced by young artists. Placing a Duchamp piece in a place reserved for contemporary art demanded a questioning of what we understand today by 'contemporary', and offered at the same time an interesting insight into the idea of copy and original, since, when the artists asked permission to install the work they were refused by the museum and, instead of the replica, consequently placed another work there, *Boîte en valise*, containing another version of the *Great Glass* in miniature, which was presumably "original", since Duchamp supervised the installation<sup>7</sup>.

This series of interventions carefully analyses the necessary or supposedly necessary conditions for experiencing art works, whether they be a museum site or a space set aside for contemporary art. Rather than offering a negatively critical approach, the artists recover the readymade condition to make the architecture of the exhibition space visible, not as a container that the work fills and invests with meaning, but as a place full of conditions and rules that set in motion a mediation of the works exhibited there. The installation *Movement in Art*, therefore, created in the year 2000, demanded constant revision of the conditions, not only physical but social and even political, that in the last analysis affect the experience of a work of art and its subsequent interpretation. The actual title of the project, borrowed as a reference to the initial exhibition of Duchamp's work in the 1960s, already implied an appropriation of the past in order to extend the analysis of museum space beyond its contemporary condition.

The negation of a site as a strategy to show another inversely opposite site is something that Robert Smithson developed with his Non-Site concept. For Smithson this notion would be transformed into a series of conceptual cartographies pointing precisely at locations outside the gallery or exhibition area. Non-Site for this artist came to be a dialectical exercise in relation to the *white cube*.

In the text "A provisional theory of non-sites", written by the artist in 1968, we find some keys for understanding the Non-Site concept.

The Non-Site (an indoor earthwork) is a three dimensional logical picture that is abstract, yet it represents an actual site in N.J. (The Pine Barrens Plains).<sup>8</sup>

And later he adds:

Between the actual site in the Pine Barrens and the Non-Site itself exists a space of metaphoric significance. It could be that "travel" in this space is a vast metaphor. Everything between the two sites could become physical metaphorical material devoid of natural meanings and realistic assumptions. Let us say that one goes to on a fictitious trip if one decides to go to the site of the Non-Site. The "trip" becomes invented, devised, artificial; therefore, one might call it a non-trip to a site from a Non-site. Once one arrives at the "artfield" one discovers that it is man-made in the shape of a hexagon, and that I mapped this site in terms of aesthetic boundaries rather than political or economic boundaries.<sup>9</sup>

For Zinny Maidagan this space of transition between a site and its displacement within the museum or contemporary art space becomes a field of analysis in a number of their early installations, as is the case with *Offside*, an intervention in the architecture of the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York. On this occasion, the artists decided to constructionally affect the stairs communicating the mezzanine with the second floor of the building. The idea was to include within the hollow under the stairs a narrow structure, made of wood, which was approximately one metre wide but very high indeed, for it travelled the whole height of the building and reached the ceiling. This added structure, however, rather than monumentally occupying the space, could almost pass unnoticed as its effect was more of an architectural replica or visual echo of the actual space within and under the stairs. However, its function in visual terms proved somewhat frustrating, because many of the museum's visitors did not manage to find it. But through its supposed invisibility it actually succeeded in having a critical effect on the spaces of transit that structure the movements of the public around the museum area, and through which the audience passed without being aware of the control they exerted on their visit. The title of the installation, *Offside*, certainly was suggestive of the concept of limit or, at least, of limit as a structural imposition of control that triggers pressure for demarcation in order to be experienced as such.

### **Text, context. The crest**

The idea of journey between site and non-site mentioned by Smithson in his notes and writings and its metaphorical implication is useful for establishing some parallelism with the strategies Zinny and Maidagan reproduce in relation to site and its ensuing investigation and artistic procedure. This idea may be observed in projects like *A Façade that Considers no Interior Contains an Illusory Garden*, an installation specifically designed for the Bibliothèque Royale in Brussels as part of the collective exhibition *ForwArt*, curated by Lynne Cooke in 2002, or *Semantic Gap*, an exhibition conceived for the Konsthall of Lund, Sweden, in 2004 and curated by Åsa Nacking. Both proposals are structured through a specific investigation into two models of modern utopian architectural construction: a library designed by Victor Horta in 1936, which was to be sited on the old Brussels observatory, though it never did get built; and the fountain designed in 1969 by Klas Anshelm and Arne Jones in the Lund Technological Institute, an ambitious idea that was realised in the gardens of the Institute and consisted of a platform for educational encounter, independent of the institution itself, and which turned out to be structurally flawed.

The discovery of some of Horta's drawings in which one can appreciate his ideas for a universal library, a project that would never be included in any municipal competition, triggered the artists' project for the royal library building in Brussels. The accursed nature of Horta's architecture is in fact what fascinated and encouraged them to take another look at the site they were acting on, as an architectural model which was imposed against other rejected proposals. There is another interesting aspect to be added to the specificity of the building and which affected the installation concept Zinny and Madigan finally designed for this space. This was the big time delay produced between the holding of the competition for this building in the 1930s and the completion of its construction in 1969. For the collective exhibition *ForwArt* the artists eventually decided to dwell on that time lag

as a key concept for the installation. So along the hall of the library they extended an ambiguous curved wooden structure that reinforced architectural specificity through its dysfunctional design as possible furnishings. In *A Façade* the construction re-frames a circuit through which the spectator contemplates other elements that the artists add to their installation, such as a series of glass panels on hand-painted wooden frames divided into 78 sections of different ranges of green.

In the *Semantic Gap* installation the history of the Konsthall de Lund building likewise provides the structure for the artistic intervention, except this time the building designed by Swedish architect Klas Anshelm in 1957 is the immediate referent for another exterior site: the fountain that the same architect designed with Arne Jones years later in the city's technological institute. So this was a superimposition of both sites intended in some way to suspend the specific experience of the Konsthall; an operation, in fact, to cause demarcation rather than enframing. Indeed, the title *Semantic Gap* highlights a vacuum of meaning, an empty space that is perhaps necessary not only between the work and the spectator, the aim being once more to stress the need for an exercise of translation of the piece, but in the sense that a similar distance is required between the work and its specific siting in the exhibition space. The central work in this show, an immense wooden panel lined on one of its sides with a fabric of intense red, contains a large perforated hollow on its upper section. This panel, however, certainly delimits an even larger gap, the empty architectural space (or abyss) that takes up the central space of the Konsthall. Spectators only have access to the best view of the sculpture when they go up to the balcony running along one of the lateral walls of this central space.

Rather than launching into in-depth interpretation and an exhaustive description of both installations, we would point to the way Zinny and Maidagan dwell on the ruins or marks left by certain utopian projects in modern architecture that either failed, were torn down, or were simply never constructed. It is also instructive to notice the way the artists introduce these references into the installation, for their presence is sometimes ephemeral and even circumstantial. In the Brussels example, Horta's drawing will only be recovered at a later date, as an element that documents the installation in publications like *Such a Good Cover*, published by the DAAD in 2004<sup>10</sup>. In Lund the fountain reference finds its way into the installation via three digital impressions that have visibly been manipulated using photoshop. The artists call this work *Stretched Photograph / Things, very often people, aim for the same place, at the same time*.

Within the exhibition set comprising *The Coast, the Attack, the Same* the authors once again include a photographic impression of an old emblem, designed in mosaic, which they discovered in their visit to Bilbao, on the front of one of the buildings likely to be demolished in the industrial area of Zorrotzaurre<sup>11</sup>. It is the crest of Mefesa, a Bilbao company that, during the great boom in the heavy steel industry in the 1950s, specialised in metallurgy and hard iron operations. The image Zinny and Maidagan bring to the exhibition, though, eludes all strategies of contextualisation, as what can be appreciated in the photograph is only the detail of the rhomboid design from this logo. This decision to strip a reference —so close to its local audience— of any context, constitutes a mark of honesty on the part of the artists with regard to the way they normally structure their investigations; rather than staying true to the archive documents they generally work with, their approach to the past is related to a process of identification that helps them to establish a personal relationship with a place, a location which they quite definitely do not belong to and where, therefore, it is problematic for them to impose any kind of proposition. So this is "a necessary exercise of identification with *the other*, a way of coming to an agreement with the place they are working on but which they do not belong to. Ruins, therefore, become the ideal terrain from which to critically deactivate amnesia or oblivion<sup>12</sup>".

Joseba Zulaika, in *Las ruinas de la teoría y la teoría de las ruinas: sobre la conversión* (The ruins of theory and a theory of ruins: on conversion),<sup>13</sup> mentions something relating to this idea of ruins and their impact on the biographical:

After all is said and done, there is a point at which explanation of oneself and that of others become interwoven and the explanation of what we are "now" as ethnographical witnesses could be intimately linked to the experience of what we were "before".

Joseba Zulaika takes ruins as a critical allegory from which to ponder on the nature of current transformations of cities and mentalities. His questioning delves into the kinds of theories that must be employed today to explain other types of ruin and processes of conversion/deconversion brought about by such transformations. The Mefesa crest as a digital impression, taken out of its specifically industrial context, then becomes the image of an imprint or fossil and through its representational force it gets us thinking about different processes of conversion and deconversion that it takes on: as an emblem, a ruin, a fossil or a fetish image. Indeed, "for Benjamin, in the image of the fossil is also captured the natural process of decay that indicates the survival of past history within the present, expressing with palpable clarity that the discarded fetish is so void of life that only the imprint of its material shell remains"<sup>14</sup>.

### **Circular ruins, stretch out your tongue. Fiction**

The central piece in *The Coast, the Attack, the Same*, entitled *Alarga la lengua* (Stick your Tongue Out), is configured from the drawn profile of two lines or currents that seem to successively encounter one another. So the structure is originally no more than a drawing that might remind us of an unspecific calligraphic stroke. Once built, this armature of wood and polyester deploys itself over the length of the exhibition space in formal dialectical play, where both materials constantly embrace and separate from one another. It is, therefore, a split structure: two currents that stretch out and meet and in whose movement both are caught in an incessant process of collision and embrace. The final result does not reach a point of definition between the architectural, the sculptural or even the pictorial; this is due above all to the height of the piece, which rises no higher than 1.50 metros. The spectator is thus able to scan out the contours and details of the upper part of the sculpture and the complexity of the two intertwined materials but never actually has access to a complete panoramic view of the sculptural outline in its entirety. Once more the labyrinthine form of this sculptural-architectural piece confounds and frustrates our perception or experience. Its shapes invite us to enter within it, only to be immediately expelled; its height encourages us to understand the whole from a higher perspective, but only allows us to make a gesture of intent. The armature is still too high for us to be offered that panoramic picture; we would need a ladder to be able to obtain such a view.

From a conceptual perspective this capricious form suggests itself as a metaphor for the movement of language: of a language, dragged by the force of History, that reaches out towards another and paralyses it. This final disquieting image is, in fact, where the artists intend us to pause: in a moment that freezes the idea of the untranslatability of text or a work of art, the same idea that Walter Benjamin developed in "The task of the translator"<sup>15</sup>, proposing to liberate interpretation from all established preconceptions. And it is also precisely the notion of loss of origin, which Benjamin makes us aware of in his essay, from whence it is possible to recover a constant in the artistic practice of Dolores and Juan. The semantic field that delimits the piece *Alarga la lengua* is finally a heterotopic space where fiction dismantles the syntax. Michel Foucault, in the preface to *Les mots et les choses* (Words and things), explains the difference between utopia and heterotopia, and to do so bases himself on the fiction of Borges:

Utopias console: because, though they have no real place, they unfold in a smooth marvellous space; they display broad-avenued cities, well-arranged gardens, easy

regions, even if access to them is chimerical. Heterotopias disturb, undoubtedly because they secretly undermine language, because they stand in the way of this and that being named, because they break up or tangle common nouns, because they ruin "syntax" in advance, and not only that which constructs phrases – but the less evident syntax that makes words and things (some on the other side or in front of others) "stay together". This is why utopias permit fables and discourses: they are on the straight blade of language, in the fundamental dimension of the fable; heterotopias (like those so often found in Borges) dry up intention, stop words in their tracks, defy, from its roots, any possibility of grammar; untie myths from their moorings and envelop the lyricism of sentences in sterility<sup>16</sup>.

This is, perhaps, the permanent phenomenological fracture that confronts a work of art, the unfulfilled promise of an absolute experience, and surely the space that the work of Dolores Zinny and Juan Maidagan investigates.

Leire Vergara, 2007

1. J.L. Borges, "El otro, el mismo", in *Obras Completas*. Barcelona: Círculo de Lectores/Emecé, 1995, p. 5.
2. Héctor Germán Oesterheld, with the cartoonist Francisco Solano López, published fantastic comics during the 1950s. One of the most well-known productions is *El Eternauta*, from 1957, published in the journal *Hora Cero*. In 1962 it was republished as a three-volume saga by Editorial Frontera, and in 1976 appeared again as a single volume. This comic inspired the artists in the design of their work for Rekalde, in particular the drawings that document and accompany the sculptural piece *Alarga la lengua* (Stick Your Tongue Out).
3. J.L. Borges, "El otro, el mismo", *op. cit.*, p. 6.
4. The artists produced this work, under the denomination *Untitled*, within the individual exhibition entitled *I have no revelations* in the Sabine Knust Gallery, Munich, 2005. Actually, the operation that surrounds this work when installed in Rekalde points in other directions. This time, for example, the title is changed and it is assigned a new name: *The same (Lo mismo)*. The piece is also structurally adapted to the space, where it is architecturally demarcated within a thick wooden mould.
5. The tendency to respond directly to given conditions has been determined *site-specific*, and we can in fact observe a close relationship between this concept and the way that Minimalism, at the start, set out to occupy the exhibition site. Nevertheless, the derivatives of this manner of confronting the physiology of space have diversified, opening up new routes of approach towards the undefined term *site*. Robert Smithson would very soon be showing us how to empty it, through his *non-site* projects.
6. Dan Cameron, "Site Unseen", in *Dolores Zinny Juan Maidagan*. Moderna Museet Projekt 2000. Stockholm: Moderna Museet (exhibition catalogue no. 311), 2001, p. 9.
7. Dan Cameron, *ibid.*, pp. 7-8.
8. Robert Smithson, *The Collected Writings*, edited by Jack Flam, Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996, p. 364.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Dolores Zinny Juan Maidagan, *Such a Good Cover*, Berlin: DAAD Berliner Künstlerprogramm, 2004.
11. During research into the building and its crest the artists discovered that architect Zaha Hadid, commissioned to design the regeneration and the new urban plan for the area, had originally proposed to preserve some of the most architecturally outstanding industrial buildings, among which was one of the warehouses of the company Mefesa. Seemingly, however, for various reasons this building will not finally be kept.
12. In conversation with the artists.
13. Joseba Zulaika, "Las ruinas de la teoría y la teoría de las ruinas: sobre la conversión" [The ruins of theory and a theory of ruins: on conversion], *Revista de Antropología Social*, 15, 2006, pp. 173-192.



14. In Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. Spanish translation: *Dialéctica de la mirada: Walter Benjamin y el proyecto de los Pasajes*. Madrid: La balsa de la medusa, 2001, p. 182.
15. Walter Benjamin, "The task of the translator" [1923], in *Illuminations*. Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co Ltd, 1979, pp. 69-82.
16. Michel Foucault, *Les Mots et les choses*, Paris: Gallimard 1966. Our translation. [First translated into English as *Words and things* and later as *The order of things: an archaeology of human sciences*.] Spanish translation: *Las palabras y las cosas: una arqueología de las ciencias humanas*. Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno editores, 1998, p. 3.