

LOS TORREZNOS

6 FEB — 18 MAY 2014



Los Torreznos, 2014

CA2M

Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo
www.ca2m.org

Furthermore, several interventions will be carried out on certain days, such as *Las Posiciones* (The Positions), which will greet each one of the persons that enters the building on the day of the opening; *El Desplazamiento* (The Displacement), which enters into a dialogue with the context of the Contemporary Art Fair in Madrid; *La Economía* (The Economy), to close the exhibition; and *La Cultura* (Culture), which will take place during the Popular University course organised by the museum and that meditates on the construction of the individual.

At the same time, among the works exploring areas normally inaccessible to the public, the celebrated performance *De Perejil a Diwaniya* (From Perejil to Diwaniya) will be performed. During the phases of take down and set up of the exhibits in the museum, Los Torreznos will invade the space under construction, which is normally closed to the public, with a work that, under the title *La visita guiada* (The Guided Tour), presents a compilation of their video works: *ABC de la performance* (ABC of Performance), *Siete cuentos para la cárcel de Carabanchel* (Seven Tales for Carabanchel Prison), *35 minutos* (35 Minutes), *De Perejil a Diwaniya* (From Perejil to Diwaniya), *Election Night*, *Ejercicios para cruzar fronteras* (Border Crossing Exercises), *Las Fronteras* (The Borders), and *Los Suicidas* (The Victims).

In a certain way, this exhibition adopts its main strategy from the artists themselves: define their field of action and establish their own rules in it. The main source of inspiration for Los Torreznos is Los Torreznos themselves – at a general level this is something similar to a large part of performance art, whose principle meaning is performance art itself, and, why not, of art as well, which largely does the same thing.

Simplicity is one of their weapons: let us say that they are of a incisive simplicity. Describing Los Torreznos is a very easy task that is only done once: they are two men on a stage. Devoid of any superfluous mechanism, they direct the audience's attention, instead of to the language, to themselves and to what they say. The invariable starting point lies in the two bodies on stage. Two presences without an individual personality, almost always dressed in black suits, in reference to one

Four hundred seventy three million three hundred fifty three thousand eight hundred and ninety seconds, title of this exhibition, is the amount of time that Los Torreznos have been working together. In a certain way it presents Los Torreznos as though over these fifteen years they had produced one single work, counting from 1 to 473,353,890. As if they had begun to count in February 1999 and had continued non-stop, day and night, until now, in a performance of fifteen years duration.

This is one of the solo exhibitions that CA2M has been organizing over the last five years. They usually occupy one floor of the museum building and display a series of works by the same artist arranged in the space, along with texts or any other material necessary to supplement the experience of the visitor. In addition, each exhibition has been accompanied by a catalogue. In short, everything that fulfils the expectations of a solo exhibition.

However, *Four hundred seventy three million three hundred fifty three thousand eight hundred and ninety seconds* does not use any of the museum's exhibition rooms. It is an exhibition that, rather than occupy a space, expands over a period of time: the approximately fifteen weeks that the show lasts.

A series of recently produced works are installed in the building and will be displayed there the entire duration of the project. Some of them are sound pieces with the voice of Los Torreznos. *El Teléfono* (The Phone) consists of an apparatus installed in the lobby of the building and put at the public's disposal, which the artists will call periodically with the intention of making contact with the visitors to the museum. In addition, they will intervene in the phone lines of the museum through the work called *Llamada en espera* (Call on Hold), where a recording «makes more pleasant» everyday calls to the museum. Other sound works will be played without pause: *Los Recuerdos* (The Memories), in the building's toilets; *Megafonía* (Public Address System), in its lobby; and *El Reloj* (The Clock), which will provide visitors with the exact time during their trips in the lifts.

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of the uniformities commonly accepted in performance art. They don't have names – although they sometimes pronounce one – and have none of the elements that transform that body into a character. There is no construction of a personality and there are no expectations about their behavior. There is an «illusion of being human» because they possess the most human of attributes: the word. Above all, Los Torreznos are artists who speak and who exploit to the maximum all of the possibilities within the speech act, making maximum use of phonation and articulation.

Their pieces always follow a script. In this they are perhaps the most theatrical of Spanish performance artists. They leave little space for improvisation and when it appears its insertion in the performance is meticulously planned – as is the case of *Las Posiciones* (The Positions) with the integration of the names of the members of the audience experiencing the piece. In the mode of the tradition of the most classic performance art, repetition is insistent. The same words, recited together again and again, shift the focus from what is said to how it is said. Sometimes they speak in unison – the spectator hears two voices declaiming exactly the same text. More often, the majority of times, they alternate phrases, but do not dialogue with one another. That is, in their conversation – if we can use that term – Los Torreznos travel from A to B by the longest possible path.

Their work is intense. As they like to say, Los Torreznos are artists who sweat and, moreover, are proud of their perspiration. Their behaviour, their tone, is temperamental and distant at the same time. Ardent because of that sweat, but cold because emotions are excluded: they are not bodies that feel, they are bodies that move and speak. Who speak and say things that, by the mere fact of being mentioned, become certain, or at least possible. As each one of their works advances, the meanings outlined at the beginning begin to take shape and are transformed into reality – at least, within the space defined by the very work. And, eventually, that is what the work itself is transformed into: a system of meanings that grow and intersect while the spectator moves forward with them in the time that the action lasts.

Complicity with the audience is essential. A complicity that is located at a crossroads between the intellectual and the emotional, to which is added a conspiracy to share a broad code of references with their audience. Thus, in each one of their works Los Torreznos act in a small field, that of direct contact. Their aspiration is to exert an impact on a small circle, to act in the microsphere, in what is proximate, in the controllable. The voluntary renunciation of reaching a large audience, of becoming known and famous beyond their narrow field of operation, form part of the *Torreznos* strategy to take over the world. It starts with breaking the internal logic of one of their works and causing contagious laughter among the dozens of people present in the room; it ends with defeating armies: only the appropriate multiplication factors are necessary, as in the butterfly effect. They define themselves as «a tool of communication on the social, the political, and the most deeply-rooted traditions».

One of their greatest accomplishments is to bring performance art to the territory of what is «Spanish», or more precisely, to the imagination of what is Spanish. A form of citing tradition does not exempt it from a certain critique of social inertia and the generalised attitude that all is well because «we've always done it that way». As Isidoro Valcárcel Medina points out in his text in the catalogue they give a new meaning to the term *costumbrismo*, weaving an unusual connection between the rational and the absurd. A large part of the power of their work lies here, in the tension generated by the opposition between sense and nonsense or, even more, by questioning the notion of «common sense» as an element that guides individual and collective decisions.

The work of Los Torreznos is situated there, between what is said and not said, in what is hinted, in the intellectually whispered, in the probable but not sure. It is not humour. For them, the comical does not have the slightest interest if it does not query the dominant way of thinking, if it does not exert a certain violence on the ways in which we see things or in the way we are forced to see them under the paradigm that embraces us.

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Works in Exhibition

Permanent works:

- Telephone**, 2014
Installation with telephone
- Call on Hold**, 2014
Intervention in CA2M's telephones
- The Memories**, 2014
Sound installation at the toilet
- P.A. system**, 2014
Sound installation in the lobby
- The Clock**, 2007
Sound installation in the lift
- The Future**, 2014
Photonovel in CA2M's newspaper
- We Were Very Well / We Will Be Very Well**, 2014
Intervention in CA2M's newspaper
- One-time performances
- The Positions**, 2012
Performance. 5 feb
- The Displacement**, 2014
Intervention in a bus. 21 feb
- Guided Tour**, 2014
Performance. 6 - 9 mar
- Culture**, 2007
Performance. 9 apr
- Economy**, 2014
Performance. 18 may
- From Perejil to Diwaniya**, 2003
Performance

Recorded performances on view from 6th to 9th of March

- The Victims**, 2013
Video, 7 min
- The Borders**, 2010
Video
- Border Crossing Exercises**, 2008
Video, 12 min
- 35 minutes**, 2007
Video, 35 min
- 7 Tales for Carabanchel Prison**, 1995
Video, 30 min
- ABC of Performance**, 1995
Video, 35 min
- From Perejil to Diwaniya**, 2003
Video, 35 min
- Election Night**, 2007
Video

Detailed information at www.ca2m.org

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How to present Los Torreznos in a museum such as the CA2M? One of the paradoxes permeating avantgarde art is that it would seem as if the objective of art throughout the twentieth century was to create an art work conceived as impossible of being collected and displayed. In the meantime, the history of curatorial work and of museums seems to be precisely the opposite: collecting and exhibiting the work that has been conceived as impossible of being collected and displayed. A will that is Cartesian as well as Fordist. Find the object, or its substitute, in whatever form. A graphic document. A photo. A video recording... Anything, as long as it is collectible and exhibitible, something that can be framed or displayed in an urn. Presenting an individual exhibition like this, as well as the edition of this catalogue, belong to this search: to try to frame or to put on a pedestal *Four hundred seventy three million three hundred fifty three thousand eight hundred and ninety seconds* of work by Los Torreznos.

Ferran Barenblit, exhibition curator



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Los Torreznos, 2014

Los Torreznos. Four hundred seventy three million three hundred fifty three thousand eight hundred and ninety seconds

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Publication

Catalogue with essays and contributions by: Oscar Abril Ascaso, Julie Andrée T. Tomas Aragay, Ferran Barenblit, Black Tulip, Fernando Cembranos, Miguel Copón, Juan Domínguez Rojo, Bartolomé Ferrando, Alejandro Gándara, Kurt Johannessen, Rafael Lamata,

Richard Martel, Alejandro Martínez Parra, Andrés Mengs, Helge Meyer, Nikki Milican, José Manuel Mourifo, Luis Naranjo, Eduardo Navarro, Alberto Ruiz de Samaniego, José Antonio Sánchez, Isidoro Valcárcel Medina, Jaime Vallauré Nelo Vilar y Joaquín Villa

Other exhibitions

Collection VIII
Until 2 mar

Otto Karvonen
21 feb — 20 apr

Teresa Margolles. The Witness
18 feb — 25 may

PER/FORM. How To Do Things With (Out) Words
23 mar — 21 sep

Activities

Adult Learning
But... Is this Art? VI
Wednesday 19 feb — 9 apr
18:30 h.

Acting, Dance and Performance
Black Box/White Cube
Thursdays 20:00 h.
Sundays 18:30 h.
27 mar — 13 apr

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