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 Dan Graham *Mirror-Window-Corner Piece* 1976

C A S E ■

03

AFTERALL

Afterall se estableció como revista académica, literalmente, en la medida en que fue subvencionada y tuvo su sede en una academia de arte londinense, el Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design. Nuestro ímpetu inicial se debió simplemente al creciente descontento ante la falta de lo que podríamos denominar literatura “seria” sobre la obra de artistas. Mediante esa expresión creo que, al principio, queríamos referirnos a la literatura que tomaba la obra de artistas como punto de partida para pensar de manera diferente sobre cuestiones sociales y políticas, y escritores que pensaban que el arte podía tratar cuestiones relativas a nuestro futuro colectivo. Hasta el punto de que tenemos una postura como revista, a saber, una postura, que sin ninguna vergüenza, da prioridad al trabajo creativo como desencadenante o como herramienta para investigar la vida contemporánea.

Queríamos ser amplios en nuestra definición de “lo creativo”, e incluir dentro de ese marco a directores de cine y arquitectos. Considerábamos también, que la permisividad del arte visual, como terreno abierto al que era bienvenida la gente que no encontraba un hogar en ningún otro sitio, era algo que había que celebrar e impulsar activamente.

Por esas razones, decidimos contar con un sistema bastante rígido de cuatro o cinco artistas por número, con dos textos para cada uno acerca de su obra y su perspectiva. Junto con eso, encargamos dos ensayos más largos y exhaustivos, que adoptan un enfoque más general o una

visión más amplia de hechos sociales, históricos o psicológicos dentro de la práctica del arte.

A medida que la revista avanzaba, nuestro interés se ha centrado cada vez más en las relaciones entre los artistas que seleccionamos y el modo en que cada número podría leerse tanto horizontal como verticalmente, con conversaciones imaginarias entre los artistas sugeridas por los textos o por ensayos más largos. Pero ese deseo se ve siempre atemperado por una resistencia fiera a la simplificación del “número monográfico” y por el énfasis puesto en que el lector encuentre sus propias conexiones entre los individuos.

En este momento, tras haber publicado seis números, estamos contentos con la dirección y la calidad literaria que hemos mantenido. No obstante, existen diversas ideas que no han podido encajar siempre en ese formato rígido, y por eso, hemos empezando una colecta de fondos para una versión de *Afterall*, en la que puedan analizarse colecciones más sueltas de escritos, o cuestiones específicas, en forma de libro. También podemos ver con mayor claridad que la revista tiene que madurar en cuanto a su propia postura política, en un momento en que una nueva inquietud por las estrategias emancipatorias y por formas de evitar una simple afirmación de capitalismo democrático es vital. En cuanto al contenido, con mucho gusto nos incluiríamos en el campo irónicamente idealista o en el “nihilismo de actitud positiva”, por citar a uno de nuestros colaboradores, Shep Steiner. Esto significa que nuestras esperanzas para con los contenidos de la revista son que dichos contenidos desencadenarán actividad y un cuestionamiento del status quo económico y político, a pesar de que sepamos cuán marginales o desesperados van a ser nuestros esfuerzos.

Queremos que la revista contribuya a un discurso intelectual y resista la trivialización de la cultura y el consumo acelerado de imágenes en el que están involucrados. No estamos tan interesados en un mercado de masas, y deseamos seguir dependiendo de subvenciones públicas, así como de ingresos por publicidad de galerías, en ese clásico compromiso contemporáneo que esperamos haber comprendido todos ya. Como no existe nada como la pureza (es de agradecer) y el mercado no es únicamente explotador, estaríamos contentos con estar en lugares de venta de revistas, así como en librerías especializadas en arte.

En general, nos interesa un público que esté interesado en los artistas que aparecen en la revista. Más allá de eso, espero que sea interesante para gente que, además de tener inquietudes artísticas, quisiera saber cómo podría tener impacto la expresión creativa actual en la sociedad. Desde luego, tenemos que mejorar nuestra distribución y marketing si queremos llegar a ese público, pero esas cosas llevan su tiempo, y así debe ser, y poco a poco estamos levantando una buena base de suscriptores. Parte de nuestro propósito es también ser una revista de referencia para los artistas y tener un valor a largo plazo para gente interesada en esas personas. Por esa razón, queremos estar en tantas bibliotecas y universidades como nos sea posible, e intentar concentrar nuestros limitados recursos de marketing en esas áreas. ■

Contribución enviada por CHARLES ESCHÉ, director junto con Mark Lewis de AFTERALL: revista de arte, contexto e investigación, editada en Londres por el Central Saint Martin College of Art & Design.

AFTERALL

Afterall errebista akademiko gisa abiatu zen, hitzez hitz; izan ere, Londresko arte akademia batean izan zuen egoitza, Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design delakoan, eta bertatik hartzen zituen diru laguntzak. Hasierako gure bulkadaren arrazoia artisten lanen inguruko literatura “serio” esan genezakeenaren faltaren aurrean sentitzen genuen kezka gero eta handiagoa izan zen. Esamolde horren bidez uste dut hasieran hauxe esan nahi genuela: artisten lana abiapuntuztat hartzen zuen literatura, auzi sozial eta politikoak beste modu batean hausnartzeko, eta arteak gure etorkizun kolektiboari dagozkion gaiak azter zitzakeela uste zuten idazleak. Halako neurrian, non jarrera bat baitauek aldizkaria garen aldetik, alegia, gaur egungo bizitza aztertze-ko abiarazle edo lanabes den sormen lanari inongo lotsarik gabe lehentasuna ematen dion jarrera.

Zabalak izan nahi genuen “sortzailea” zer den definitzeko orduan, eta esparru horren barruan zinema zuzendaria eta arkitektoak sartu. Uste genuen orobat, ikus artearen permisibitatea, hots, beste inon lekuri aurkitzen ez zuen jendea ongi etorria zen lurralde irekiaren ideia benetan ospatu eta bultzatu beharreko zerbait zela.

Arrazoi horiek zirela eta, ale bakoitzean lauzpabost artistaren sistema zurruna erabiltzea erabaki genuen, bakoitzari bi testu eskainiz beren lanaz eta ikuspuntuaz. Horrekin batera, bi saiakera luzeago eta osoagoak enkargatu genituen, arte praktikaren barruan gertakari sozial, historiko edo psikologikoen ikuspegi orokorrako bat edo ikuspen zabalago bat ematen dutenak.

Aldizkariak aurrera egin ahala, gure interesa gero eta gehiago bihurtu da aukeratzeko ditugun artisten arteko harremanak eta ale bakoitza horizontalean eta bertikalean irakurria izateko ahalmena, testuek edo saiakera luzeagoek sortutako artisten arteko elkarrizketa imajinario moduan. Baina desira hori beti moteltzen dute “ale monografikoa”ren sinplifikazioaren aurreko erresistentzia basatiak eta irakurleak gizabana-koen arteko loturak aurkitzeari ematen diogun garrantziak.

Une honetan, 6 ale argitaratu ondoren, pozik gaude zuzendaritzarekin eta izan dugun literatura kalitatearekin. Hala ere, zenbait ideia ezin izan dira beti egokitu formatu zurrin horretara, eta horregatik dirua biltzen hasiak gara Afterallen beste bertsio bat kaleratzeko, bertan idazki solteagoen bildumak edo zenbait kontu espezifiko liburu forman aztertze-ko. Argiago ikus dezakegu halaber aldizkariak umotu egin behar duela bere jarrera politikoari dagokionez; izan ere, estrategia emantzipatzaileekiko eta kapitalismo demokrati-koaren berrespen hutsa saihesteko formekiko kezka berria hil edo bizikoa da une honetan. Edukiari dagokionez, oso pozik sartuko genuke geure burua alor ironikoki idealistan edo, Shep Steiner gure kolaboratzaileak esan ohi duen bezala, “jarrera baiezkorreko nihilismoa”n. Horrek esan nahi du gure itxaropenak aldizkariaren edukiei dagokienez honako hauek direla: aipatu edukiek jarduera abiaraziko dutela, baita status quo ekonomiko eta politikoa kolokan jartzea ere, jakin ongi badakigu ere gure ahaleginak zain marjinal edo etsipenezkoak izango diren.

Guk nahi dugu aldizkaria diskurtso intelektual baterako ekarpena izatea eta medio asko eta asko sartuta dauden kultura eta kontsumo azeleratuaren hutsalderiari gogor egitea. Masa merkatua ez zaigu horrenbeste interesatzen, eta diru laguntza publikoan mendean egoten jarraitu nahi dugu, galerien publizitateetik etorritako diruarekin batera, honezkero denok ulertu dugula espero dugun gaur egungo konpromiso klasiko horri jarraiki. Purutasuna bezalakorik ez dagoenez (estimatzekoa da) eta merkatua esplotatzailea bakarrik ez denez, pozik geundeke aldizkariaren salmenta postuetan egongo bagina, baita artean espezializatutako liburu dendatan ere.

Oro har, erantzun nezake esanez aldizkariaren agertzen diren artistengan interesatuta dagoen jendea interesatzen zaigula. Hortik aurrera, nik espero dut interesgarria izatea zenbait jendarentzat, alegia, kezka artistikoak izateaz gain, egungo arte sormen adierazpenak gizartearen nola eragin lezakeen jakin nahiko lukeen jendearentzat. Banaketa eta merkaturatzea hobetu egin behar ditugu inondik ere irakurle horien-gana iritsi nahi baldin badugu, baina gauza horiek denbora eskatzen dute, hala behar du izan, eta pixkana-pixkana harpidedun oinarri eder bat altxatzen ari gara. Gure asmoen beste parte bat artistentzako erreferentzia aldizkaria izatea da, eta epe luze-ko balioa edukitzea pertsona horien-gan interesatutako jendearentzat. Horregatik, ahal beste liburutegi eta unibertsitatean egon nahi dugu, eta merkaturatze alorreko gure baliabide mugatuak eremu horietan kontzentratu. ■

and in shaping a (hazy) civil resistance zone. This is a role that, when the Utopian phase of its development has begun to get left behind, has nevertheless remained a long way from what it promised to be. The world has become more unequal, oppressive and violent since the internet came into being. Its use as a means for the flight and promotion of capital has ended up greatly overshadowing its responsible, critical use. Although we cannot blame the internet itself for the effects it has had, the confusion is no less, nor are its obvious effects any more evident. This is not the place to list the factors that have prevented this medium from fully developing its potential; it is enough to state that they are linked to the fact that it falls within an untenable economic system that the networks offer no response to, and that its possibilities will not be displayed without a transformation at another level.

Today the situation is less open and our perception of the medium is less naive. Our perspectives have also become more humble. Hakim Bey, the ideologue of "electronic resistance" has changed his "hit and run" discourse to one that proclaims the need to forge structures that aim to last. However, we are committed to structures that are neither materially or formally indebted to any manifestation of the political or commercial powers that be, where we can keep up our hopes and the possibility of free thinking and non-conditioned consumer habits.

The mutual support network created by small alternative publishing companies throughout the country that we are currently involved in (www.alte-diciones.com) aspires to coordinate this aim in difficult times. ■

Contribution by Luis Navarro, promoter of "Industrias Mikuerpo" and member of the editorial team of MAL DE OJO: Cuadernos de Crítica Social, published in Madrid by the Maldejojo Collective. <http://www.sindominio.net/maldejojo>.

AFTERALL

03

Afterall was established as an academic journal — literally in that it was funded and housed within a London art academy at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design. Our initial impetus was simply a growing unease at the lack of what we would call 'serious' writing about the work of artists. By that I think we initially meant writing that took the work of artists as a starting point to think differently about social or political questions, and writers who felt art could address questions about our collective future. To the extent that we have a position as a journal, it is one that unashamedly privileges creative work as a trigger or tool for investigating contemporary life.

We wanted to be broad in our definition of 'creative' and to include film makers and architects within the frame. We also felt the permissiveness of visual art as an open terrain in which people were welcomed who could not find a home elsewhere was something to be celebrated and actively encouraged.

For these reasons we decided to have a fairly rigid system of four-five artists per issue with two texts each on their work or their approach. Alongside that we commission two longer, expansive essays that take a more general approach or a longer view of social, historical or psychological developments in art practice.

As the journal has developed, we have become more interested in the relationships between the artists and the way each issue might be read horizontally as well as vertically, with imaginary conversations between the artists suggested by the texts or the longer essays. But this desire is always tempered by a fierce resistance to the simplification of the 'theme issue' and an emphasis on the reader finding their own connections between the individuals.

At this stage, after 6 issues, we are happy with the direction and the quality of writing we have maintained. However, various ideas have not always been able to fit into the rigid format and for this reason we are starting to fundraise for an Afterall imprint in

which looser collections of writings or specific questions can be addressed in book form.

We can also see more clearly that the journal has to mature in terms of its own political position, at a time when a new concern with emancipatory strategies and ways of avoiding a simple affirmation of democratic capitalism are vital. In terms of content, we would happily place ourselves in the ironically idealist camp or 'nihilism with a positive attitude' to quote one contributor, Shep Steiner. This means that our hopes for the journal's contents are that they will trigger activity and a questioning of the economic and political status quo, however marginal or forlorn we know our efforts to be.

We want to journal to contribute to an intellectual discourse and to resist the trivialisation of culture and the speedy consumption of images that much of the media are engaged in. We are less interested in a mass market and want to remain dependent on public funds as well as advertising income from galleries in that classic contemporary capitalist compromise that we hopefully all understand by now. As there is no such thing as purity (thankfully) and the market is not only exploitative, we would be happy to be on regular magazine shelves as well as in specialist art bookshops.

Glibly, I could say an audience that is interested in the artists we feature. Beyond that I hope it is interesting to people who are not only concerned with art but want to find out how current creative expression might impact on society. We certainly have to improve our distribution and marketing if we are to reach such an audience, but these things do and should take time and we are slowly building up a good subscription base. Part of our purpose also is to be a reference journal for the artists and to have a long term value for people interested in those individuals. For this reason, we want to be in as many libraries and universities as possible and try to concentrate our limited marketing resources on those areas. ■

Contribution by Charles Esche and Mark Lewis. AFTERALL Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry, is edited in London and published by Central Saint Martin College of Art & Design.

04 esculpiendo MILAGROS

The idea for esculpiendo Milagros (Carving Miracles) came out of a music workshop. It was a result of the fact that we were all annoyed and dissatisfied with the critics in the establishment papers and magazines. The aim of laying the foundations of a new way of thinking about music runs through all its pages. Of course, we were aware that there were traditions in rock, jazz and contemporary music criticism, and we wanted to bring them up to date in a country (Argentina) that knew nothing at all about them. To do this, we placed the emphasis on four main points. Firstly, improving the quality of the information. Producing a magazine about music written by people who knew what they were talking about. This would be a magazine which didn't contain the errors resulting from ignorance that were a characteristic feature of other magazines. Secondly, a critical magazine is exactly what we wanted it to be: a way of reflecting on everything to do with music from a viewpoint far removed from the dogmatism that so much of the discourse on jazz and rock betrays.

As a corollary to what we've just said, we decided to focus our proposal on two basic approaches: a serious conceptual work that would take advantage of the knowledge provided by various disciplines (musicology, philosophy, sociology, art criticism, etc.) without abandoning a style that was closer to journalism, and a detailed monitoring of the historical, social, political and economic contexts that determine cultural phenomena. In the end, this led us to expand our scope considerably. Esculpiendo Milagros provided coverage of experimental trends that receive little attention in our country or indeed the rest of the world. Rock from outside the English-speaking world, free jazz and improvisation, kinds of contemporary music that are far removed from mod-

ernist traditions, find a place here that nobody had provided them with before now. Other forms of cultural expression such as films, video, art, photography, and literature also formed part of the magazine's concerns. Recently we have once again been paying attention to the social movements, groups carrying out cultural sabotage and the new forms of protest that have emerged within the context of the so-called globalisation process.

Given the type of material that we provide coverage of, our magazine is aimed at open-minded readers who are keen to find out about what is happening on the modern cultural scene. All in all, we are aimed at people who are interested in social and cultural experiments that to a certain extent keep alive certain traditions which appeared in the counterculture of the sixties. Esculpiendo's stance is markedly internationalist. To mention but a few examples, Latin American psychedelia, Slovakian pop, Taiwanese cinema and German photography appear side-by-side in its pages without any problems. We are aware that a discourse like this is aiming at readers with a reasonable level of spending power, something that has become almost completely impossible in the context of the crisis in Argentina. Nevertheless, we vigorously reject any kind of elitism, snobbery or superior attitudes, which we have often been accused of by our critics. Indeed, our very activities show that the opposite is the case. Only a strong commitment to democracy and a high degree of enthusiasm have enabled a group of people to carry on with a project that has now been running for ten years without any kind of financial reward or any real power over the decisions taken by the mass media.

The Argentine context is too hostile for a magazine of this type. Esculpiendo Milagros has readers in places as varied as Europe, the United States and Latin America, and it is highly respected among experimental musicians. However the economic situation makes it impossible to attempt to export it on a more or less large-scale basis. The internet is one option that we are analysing. The situation of the graphic media in our country is exasperating, and it is even worse for a magazine that finances itself through its sales and a small amount of advertising. We think that working closely with record labels, magazines and other independent initiatives in various parts of the world could underpin the project, as would getting support from cultural institutions. Esculpiendo's survival depends on its ability to become internationalised. In this respect, we are seeing how the land lies as far as the possibilities of publishing the magazine in Spain are concerned. ■

Contribution by Norberto Cambiasso, editor of esculpiendo Milagros, magazine published in Buenos Aires.

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