

ELENA GARCÍA JIMÉNEZ

“CATOGRAFÍA NÓMADA”

Cartografía nómada (Nomadic Cartography) is the first individual exhibition of Elena García Jiménez (Madrid, 1980) in Sevilla. In recent years, her artistic work has been linked with the direct experience from a personal re-contextualization. The artist pursued a nomadic experience and later translated it into artistic work. Her previous experiences were developed through performances, photographs and installations, games of role inversion (to look through the eyes of another), and also analyzed the contraposition between the real and the expected.

Now, García presents a work based on three different axes: the linguistic fact, the assimilation of surroundings, and the bureaucratic route. All of the works that she presents revolves around the idea of the document, whether it is a linguistic treatise, a dictionary, a transcription, a map, or any other type of document. The artist is gradually transforming the document towards a more irregular form, both from a formal and significant point of view. Thus, the works in this exhibition can be grouped into several categories. One of the groups is constructed based off the idea of a map that represents places lived and experienced through composites made from photographs woven together. Another group presents the linguistic fact through intervened books and graphic.

OUT OF PLACE

Mercedes Replinger

The fiction concealed within the supposed stability of our visual or personal certainties has directed the projects of Elena García Jiménez toward simulation and camouflage, both of spaces and language. For example, the artist has projected idealised houses on empty rooms, opened a pond with brightly-coloured fish in the corridor of a shopping mall and presented an unintelligible jumble of signs and letters as a graphic poem. Her photographs, videos and texts are situated precisely on the margins, on the borders of places, the shores of language. This decentralisation has radicalised because the artist currently lives abroad where assurance about one's own identity is irremediably out of place.

Thus she falsifies her perfectly legal documents and transforms dictionaries, grammar books and old texts in German such as *Richtig Deutsch* (2009) into fabrics that are made and unmade through the words meaning them. It is not exactly a question of disorganising the text but of dismantling the mechanism of language to explore new expressive possibilities that literally unfold like a piece of cloth, overflowing the grid of the page on which a colourist, personal and totally subjective geometry is superimposed, a device that by cutting out photographic strips she also applies to places. This brings about a totally logical transition of typographical space to plastic space as in *Der Große Duden* (2010), a German spelling book of 1934 intervened from the word *da* (here or there) onward and interwoven with strips of maps to build a disperse cartography that was not previously established and is surely nomadic.

Like the words woven in the dictionaries, the intertwining of photographic strips in *Cartografías nómadas* (2010) forms the atlas of a new dismembered and reconstructed territory that really transforms the map into a puzzle. The author does not propose a unique and objective viewpoint on these spaces, but instead a personal construction that the observer, just like the artist, can combine many ways. If in *Naturalezas simultáneas* (2006) or the *Camaleón* series (2008), Elena García Jiménez embodied space upon inscribing by juxtaposition landscapes on the body like a tattoo, now in *Cartografías nómadas* this oblique vision creates the map of a new territory that only exists in those chequered images and where – only in them – it is possible to live.

This mosaic-shaped weave could extend indefinitely. There are no borders. This plaiting definitively breaks the arbitrary line that separates this from that: what remains within what was located outside the circle. It is interesting that such devices for displacing territories and languages occur precisely in a country that invented the tragically resonant word *heimat*, with no translation into other languages, as a hermetic country of birth, turned back upon itself.