

Jorge Ribalta

1888

30.01.16 > 11.03.16

Opening: 30 January at 12 h

àngels barcelona is pleased to present the second solo exhibition by Jorge Ribalta by which he meets the tradition of reinvented documentary photography in order to articulate a project that functions against homogeneous memory processes.

This project encapsulates the fieldwork executed by Ribalta which involves a self-critical process of observation and denaturation. Ribalta manages to internalize the mechanisms of research as an artistic method through a collection of 150 analog images by which he puts together a kind of *work archive* allowing the viewer to reflect and relativize on the historical memory of the city of Barcelona and the concept of modernity associated with that precise date.



The first World Expo was held in Barcelona in 1888, which symbolically culminated the urban modernization processes developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, whilst in that same year, Kodak was born, marking the rise of the industrialization of photography. Therefore, 1888 is symbolically an opening date for both the future of photography and the future of Barcelona and this project runs between the junction of both.

1888 gathers a group of B/W photographs, taken between May 2012 and September 2013, of some of the places, locations, architecture and original street furniture that still remain in the city after the event. The project questions the architectural and urban heritage and its preservation through photography as a means to secure urban memory: the monument, the document, the city and photography are inseparable from modernity.

This inventory, placed between the recognizable and the enigmatic in an anonymous and discreet micro-monumentality, made for the everyday life, stands as a reflection on urban memory and preservation. The set of images are organized in several itineraries through the some of the most relevant locations affected by the changes experienced in Barcelona due to the 1888 Universal Exhibition. These itineraries are articulated in a series of images, as a journey that starts in the area of Montjuic and Barcelona's harbour and follows roughly from south to north line the waterfront of the city ending at Wellington street on the east-side of the city.

This new project becomes part of the critical review of photographic tradition that characterizes Jorge Ribalta's work, allowing us to question once again the different mechanisms used in the construction of collective imaginaries and cultural identity through the use of images.

After studying at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Barcelona, Jorge Ribalta (Barcelona, 1963) began a career studying abroad, first at the Villa Arson in Nice, and later in New York, London (at the Slade School of Art), and in 1996 at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Between 1997 and 1998 he participated in the International Studio Program in New York.

His work has been included in numerous national and international solo and group exhibitions. Amongst his most recent solo shows we find *Monument Maschine*, Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart (2016), *Renaissance*, CRP Douchy les Mines, France (2015-16), *Monumento Máquina* at the José Guerrero Centre, Granada (2015) and at the Centre Helga de Alvear Foundation, Cáceres (2015), *Trabajos de campo*, àngels barcelona (2013), *Casa sin Fin*, Cáceres (2012) y *Laocoonte Salvaje*, Casa sin Fin, Madrid (2012). Amongst his selected group shows we find *La Bestia y el Soberano y Desires and Necessities- New incorporations to the MACBA collection*, MACBA, Barcelona, (2015), *The Beast and is the Sovereign*, Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart (2015), *Playgrounds.Reinventing the square*, Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid (2014), *Human Capital in Industry*, Fondazione MAST, Bologna (2014), *Relato de Bellas Cosas Falsas*, Arts Santa Mònica, Barcelona (2014), *Face Contact*, PhotoEspaña, Madrid (2011), *F/Stop 2. Internationales Fotografiefestival*, Leipzig (2008). His work has also been exhibited at the Zabriskie Gallery in New York, the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, MOMA, NY, the Palais de Tokyo, Paris, the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut and the IVAM, Valencia among others.

Ribalta has also curated exhibitions such as *Barcelona.The Metropolis in the age of photography, 1860-2004* (La Virreina Centre de la Imatge, Barcelona, 2016), *Not yet. On the reinvention of documentary and the Critique of Modernism* (Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid, 2015), *International Centre of Photography 1978-1983 Barcelona* (MACBA, Barcelona, 2012), *The Worker Photography Movement, 1926-1939. Essays and documents* (Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid, 2011), *Helen Levitt. Urban poetry. Photographs, 1936-1993* (MUICO-Photoespaña, Madrid, 2010), *Beyond the perfect image. Photography, subjectivity, antagonism* (MACBA, Barcelona, 2005), *Joan Colom. Photographs of Barcelona, 1958-1964* (Ministry of Culture-Fundación Telefónica, Madrid, 2004) or *Documentary Processes. Testimonial image, Subalterity and the Public Sphere* (La Capella, Barcelona, 2001).

He is the co-editor of the book *Indiferencia y singularidad. La fotografía en el pensamiento artístico contemporáneo* (MACBA, Barcelona, 1997, reissued by Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, 2003). He is editor of the book *Public Service. Conversations on public funding and contemporary art* (JAAV-Universidad de Salamanca, 1998) and *Efecto real. Debates posmodernos sobre la fotografía* (Gustavo Gili, 2004). He has been a regular contributor to the newspaper La Vanguardia. He regularly publishes articles and essays in various print media and catalogs. He has been the Director of Public Programs at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) between 1999 and 2009.