

LOOP FAIR | Hotel Catalonia Ramblas | Room 3**Esther Ferrer*****Extrañeza, desprecio, dolor y un largo etc, 2013***

Video, color, silent

17 min.

Ed. 5 + 1 AP



This film in colour from 2013 could have well been a classic B/W performance register from the seventies. It's mute, it's bare and it explores the possibilities of the artist's body as a tool for transgressing cultural paradigms in and by itself. This anthropomorphic stage prop is as recurrent in Ferrer's work as it is in Bruce Nauman's. These two artists share common interests in repetition, in senselessness (which repetition brings about), in gestures that are profoundly banal and, at the same time, reveal the existential hardship of social interaction. Esther Ferrer's interest in time and repetition has been one of the constants of her career ever since the 1960s, when she became part of the transgressive artistic collective known as ZAJ

alongside Juan Hidalgo, Ramón Barce and Walter Marchetti.

Esther Ferrer is an artist from the 1970s and, in a way, this is also an artwork from the seventies. When first watching *Extrañeza, desprecio, dolor y un largo etc*, (Strangeness, disregard, sorrow and a long etc) one finds it comical; the facial expressions reverberate with silent cinema. The gestures, which as we know draw the human face further and further away from an idealized depiction, are exaggerated and clownish but, we gradually realize, real as life. This is a repertoire of gestures defined as pertaining to a specific feeling, but soon they start to drift into a nebulous ambiguity in which the simulacra becomes devoid of meaning. In the repertoires of gestures of the renaissance the "others" (the elderly, the ethnic) were always the ones disfigured by radical facial expressions; otherness was the perfect platform for us to recognize the extremity of existence. By performing this clownish repetition of extreme social gestures, Ferrer assumes this role, bringing us face to face (literally) with the extreme mechanisms of communication. After all, this is an artist who for half a century has worked with time, space and presence, and for whom nothing else (nothing less) will do.

Claudia Rodríguez- Ponga Linares

Esther Ferrer (San Sebastián, 1937). Throughout her career, Esther Ferrer has developed her work going from the action to the object and vice versa, inscribing her own body as a starting point. Her work is an act of resistance against the spectacular, inscribing herself within the political sphere as a place of affirmation and construction of the self. Many of the works the artist has produced (such as *Self-portrait in Time*, *Euroself-portrait*, *Random Self-portrait*, etc.) are self-portraits which unmask the structure of the gaze over the conception of the work itself. As Jean-Michel Ribettes states in his book, *Wounded Narcissus* (2000): "every self-portrait eventually becomes the portrait of he who observes it". She is considered first female performer in Spain and member of the disappeared collective ZAJ, she has presented her work in numerous public and private institutions, among which we find Museo Reina Sofía (Madrid), CGAC (Coruña), CEART, Fuenlabrada, Artium (Vitoria), Circulo de Bellas Artes (Madrid), Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, (Sevilla), Museet for Samtidskunst (Denmark), Statsgalerie, (Stuttgart), Museo Universitario de Ciencia y Arte, MUCA Roma, México DF; Museu Nacional de Belas Artes (Rio de Janeiro), FRAC Lorraine. In 2014 MAC VAL in Paris dedicated an extensive solo exhibition of her work and Museo Reina Sofía in Madrid will dedicate her a solo exhibition in October 2017. In her long artistic career she has performed in numerous Spanish and international festivals. In 2009 she received the National Arts Prize and in 2014 the Velázquez Prize of Fine Art.