



El teatro de la desaparición

The Theatre of Disappearance

Adrián Villar Rojas

Producer Benjamin Domenech, Santiago Gallelli, Matías Roveda, Noelia Ferretti, Guillermina Borgognone, Hyejin Kim, Sunjung Kim. **Production companies** Rei Cine (Buenos Aires, Argentina), AVR (Rosario, Argentina), Real DMZ Project Committee, Korea (Seoul, Republic of Korea). **Written and directed by** Adrián Villar Rojas. **Director of photography** Adrián Villar Rojas, Mario Caporali. **Editor** Andrea Kleinman, Iara Rodríguez Vilardebó, Julia Straface. **Sound design** Lena Esquenazi. **Production design** Vanina Scolavino.

Colour. 120 min. Spanish, Korean.

Premiere February 11, 2017, Berlinale Forum

The first part is like a postcard from a realm almost too surreal to be true, a study of daily life in the demilitarised zone between North and South Korea flecked with such unusual details that not all of them can be real. The second part manipulates time, a wordless portrait of clay vessels being produced in Morocco that slows down and speeds up without warning, imbuing unspectacular actions with detachment and wonder. The third part distorts space, a hand camera tour that moves through apparently connected locations as if carrying out a single movement, although these industrial facilities, cityscapes, meadows and exhibition spaces are not side by side but scattered across the globe. Each part looks different from the others, but the interests are the same: to probe the earth and bring its riches to the surface, to catalogue the fragments of beauty and tension carried up with the soil, to show that how and what you see are one and the same. If all the world's a stage, then these are its actors: spiders, falling rocks, massage appliances, digging machines, exposed concrete, pigs snout to snout; there's no leading role in the theatre of disappearance.

James Lattimer

The silent corners of the planet

El teatro de la desaparición is a trilogy that attempts to depict a current state of latent war that seems to be throbbing underneath the entire human landscape, with its multiple environments and specific conditions of existence. From Mexico City to Beirut, from Shanghai to Kabul, from New York to Jerusalem, going through Qatar, Paris, Palestine, Yangji-ri or Athens, Villar Rojas tries to take samples of these ominous signs out of small actions, daily gestures and silent corners of a planet that seems to be moving – slower or faster, more obviously or imperceptibly, always depending on where we are standing, what day and even at what time – toward its virtual disappearance, at least as we know it today.

Rei Cine, Buenos Aires

On the peripheries of artistic practice

One of my main concerns since the beginning of my practice has been to document the working processes that I – together with my team of collaborators – develop around the world. This quite obsessive exercise of recording in still and moving images is intended to grasp everyday life inside and outside of the projects, giving special attention to seemingly minor details and making detours that sooner or later get completely lost from the 'centre'. An increasingly relevant line of research emerges from the exploration of the peripheries of my own artistic practice. This obsession for documenting what is going on inside as well as outside the borders of my projects gradually turned into a silent – even unconscious – project in itself, with its own ethos and pathos triggered by the commitment to the places I visit and to the people I meet.

My ever-deeper immersion into the territories to which my condition as an 'artist' has granted me access – from Shanghai to Kabul, from the border between both Koreas to the Alice Springs desert in Australia, from Palestine to New York, from Istanbul to Paris – suggested to me a new leitmotif for all of these materials accumulated in my personal records. The natural and urban environments as well as the social, political, cultural and human contexts in which my projects are born, live and eventually die, have become – with the territorial expansion of my practice – a source of critical interpellation to and from that practice. This interpellation is nowadays urgent.

It is on the basis of this growing centrality of contexts and of the intention to capture what's elusive behind each project, what melts into air after each process, that these 'documents' are now asserting their autonomy, and even claiming their emancipation from any subordinate role as 'documents'.

From residual materials made in the margins of a practice – as we can easily witness in the first piece of the trilogy – we pass on – in the remaining two – to the deliberate construction of a self-sufficient, formal event, no longer a document or a documentary but rather a 'thing' with a life – and a death – of its own. As any other living thing in this world, this one will also struggle to come into being, leave a trace in the air, and disappear.

Adrián Villar Rojas



Adrián Villar Rojas was born in 1980 in Rosario, Argentina. He studied Fine Arts at the Universidad Nacional de Rosario from 1998 to 2002. In 2001, he began attending Film Studies classes at Escuela Provincial de Artes Visuales General Manuel Belgrano in Rosario. Adrián Villar Rojas is an artist and filmmaker. He also works as a curator.

Films

2013: *Lo que el fuego me trajo / What Fire Brought to Me* (43 min.).

2017: *El teatro de la desaparición / The Theatre of Disappearance*.