



GALERÍA ESPACIO MÍNIMO

# MANU ARREGUI

## *Chelsea; amanecer*

From May 27<sup>th</sup> 2017 to July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017.

Opening: **Saturday, May 27<sup>th</sup>**, from 12 pm onwards.

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The current exhibition, the fourth solo project of **MANU ARREGUI** in **Espacio Mínimo** gallery, brings together the latest productions of the artist: *Ejercicios de medición sobre el movimiento amanerado* (2014-17) shown as installation for the first time, the public presentation of *Chelsea; amanecer* (2017) videoinstallation and the sculpture *Dating App* (2017). These three works, conceived independently, generate a dialogue around the identity constructions on a hypercapitalist society in which misogyny and homophobia continue to condition the ways of coexistence and representation.

*Ejercicios de medición sobre el movimiento amanerado* (Measuring exercises about the mannered movement) is an installation with two videos and a serie of graphs with which the codes and connotations related to the gesture are investigated, taking as a base the movements of the body. This kind of gestures, executed by a man, are censurable from the heteropatriarcal hegemony, but also, in other presumably conscientious environments such as gay communities. For that reason, the artist turns these "improper" and "useless" gestures into activators of the right to dissent, pointing to the marginalization of some individuals from the society because of their sexist imperatives of masculinization.

With the help of graphic rules, grid lines and position trackers on different joints of the body, **ARREGUI** seems to want to constitute a scientific system in order to clarify exactly what these movements are, which, being socially reprehensible, do not have an adequate formal description. The artist ironically captures and catalogs a typology of gestures, in order to establish a fair regulation, where citizens can know the inappropriate body behavior of their sex which their community rejects. The graphics subtitled *Nelly*, *Swish*, *Blasé* and *Camp* present waveform measurements to illustrate the four types of movement according to the categories of effeminacy established in his forerunner and controversial book *The Homosexual Matrix* (1975) by the psychotherapist C. A. Tripp. In some analyzes about the gesturality was affirmed that, traditionally, the masculine inhibit the impulse. The male attitude is restrained, while most of the movement and the emotion arise outside the subject. A masculine movement is straight, energetic and contains large and cut displacements that oppose the undulating, soft, hesitant and small ones. The flexibility and animation are not in line with the idea of masculinity. The principle guiding the maintenance of a masculine image is that a man must remain fixed. Within this structuring position of the order of genres, feminine movements would be curved and flexible, implying a nule predisposition to aggressiveness or resistance and communicating approximation, sweetness or submission, conditions that guarantee the continuity of the man's hegemony within the areas power.

Another of the pieces that take part of the exhibition is *Chelsea; amanecer*, a two-channel video installation that features a fiction around Chelsea Manning's real character, recently pardoned for a 35-year sentence in a military prison in Kansas (USA), accused of sending classified documents to the Web site *Wikileaks*. A day after her sentence was known, the soldier previously known as Bradley Manning, announced that she wanted to undergo a sex reassignment. From this historical beginning, **MANU ARREGUI** creates a scene where the soldier goes to a deserted beach at dawn, undresses, performs a dance and delves into the water to submerge. The sound develops, with a voice-over attributed to the character, philosophical and political references from the artist's composition that, in addition, have some quotes with literary origins such those of Clarice Lispector. Supported by the interpretation of the actress who gives voice to the soldier, the artist treats ideas such as freedom,



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war, civilization or existence in a poetic and transcendent way. While on a screen we contemplate the scene in a conventional audiovisual record, in parallel the narrative is developed from visual infographic resources: 3D preview, deep sensor capture, metadata visualization, terrain mapping, etc. referring to the audiovisual language used in legal simulations.

Chelsea Manning leaked thousands of documents that were very valuable to argue the unconstitutionality of the military operations carried out in Iraq and Afghanistan, to tell the truth about what was happening there, that was not the same information that was being provided to the citizens. Deeply shocked by what she was witnessing as an analyst in Iraq, she decided to share it through *Wikileaks* just after watching a video in which an Apache helicopter from the United States opened fire on a group of people in Iraq, pilots mistakenly identified Civilians as armed insurgents. Manning was confined and tortured after her arrest. Her imprisonment would have been probably lifelong. One of the paradoxes was that the soldier disobeyed her commitment of confidentiality but, at the same time, the army did not comply with international law. Her reassignment of sex aggravated this condemnation because the patriarchal public sphere requires the ability of individuals to maneuver and monitor the performative aspects of their own behavior in public. The actions, words, gestures and corporal movements of the military are the aesthetic expression of the ideology of the armies. Manning's determination in her sex reassignment offers a new point of view on the character, and forces us to think about the importance of audacity and individual sacrifice to promote social justice.

Lastly, *Dating App* is a sculpture executed from 3D machining and printing technology that shows a large three-dimensional version of a device that could be a Smartphone or a Tablet. Such as grid of a computer photo gallery application here it becomes a cell construction, some of them occupied by anthropomorphic hybridized constructions with scraps of technological materials, anatomical forms sectioned in its three dimensions to fit in the assigned boxes. The emotional volatility characteristic of personal relationships in Post-Internet society contrasts with the properties of solidity and statism of the sculpture, which seems to want to exist as an analogue residue of this Digital Age for an archaeological expedition in a dystopian future. This piece not only refers to the changes in affective consumption favored by the appearance of these applications, but also problematizes the ways of adapting to the "pattern" propitiated by the same technology used in the military fields, geolocation, but still constrained by the same patriarchal society that conditions all the works of the show.

**MANU ARREGUI** (Santander, 1970), studied Fine Arts at the University of the Basque Country. His works have been included in important international collective shows such as *Trans-sexual Express* curated by Xavier Araquistain and Rosa Martínez, *Bad Boys* a project by Agustín Pérez Rubio for the 50th edition of the Venice Biennale, *Monocanal Video: 1996-2002* curated by Juan Antonio Álvarez - Reyes and Berta Sichel for the Reina Sofía Museum in Madrid, or *Sesiones Animadas* a project by Juan Antonio Álvarez-Reyes that was shown recently at the Atlantic Center of Modern Art of Las Palmas, *Chacun à son Goût* curated by Rosa Martínez for the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, or *Spain. Spanish Art 1957-2007* in the Palazzo Sant'Elia of Palermo. He has participated in important international Contemporary Art fairs such as ARCO (Madrid), ART BASEL MIAMI BEACH (Miami), or FRIEZE (London). In 2002 he was awarded with the Plastic Arts Scholarship from the Marcelino Botín Foundation with which he completed his training at ISCP in New York. In 2004 he won the First Prize for Videocreation and Digital Formats Caixa Galicia, in 2007 the Altadis Prize of Plastic Arts, and in 2014 the Electronic ARCO Prize / Beep. His work is represented, among others, in the collections of the ARTIUM museums in Vitoria, Guggenheim in Bilbao, MUSAC in León and Reina Sofía in Madrid.