

Carlos Gallardo

Y punto I-VI

Finale

To look at the work of Carlos Gallardo is to witness memories of the past, questioning of the present, and a glimpse into the future. His works embody a history that is at once personal and versal. There are questions that reappear throughout his career who, what, when, where, why – as though the asking of them only reaffirms the impossibility of an answer. Eternity, identity, loss and reunion, all of these themes are present in each piece. Through the use of non traditional materials such as wooden pallets, bolts, mailboxes, bits and pieces of long forgotten machinery Gallardo becomes a post modern archaeologist, unearthing meanings in contemporary culture Carlos Gallardo began his creative life as a set designer for the Teatro San Martin in the heart of Buenos Aires. An avid collector, he began working with his letters and correspondence and then moved to antiquated objects such as old typewriters, clocks, and calendars. Time became his focus, as well as the distortion of it through the physical manipulation of these clocks and calendar dars; Carlos transformed time through surreal assemblages in his series Kronos.

Gallardo then moved on to photographs, taking snapshots with an old, small, automatic camera. He created polyptics and collages from seemingly distant images of broken ships, empty docks, images of silence, the kind of silence that draws the viewer in to fill it with questions; this creates a starkness that is complemented ironically with a staccato poetry which does not seek to explain the image, but rather expands the possibilities of interpretation.

In the work "Desde Lejos VI (From Afar)" we see the crumpled images of friends, family, and strangers arranged in acrylic cubes sandwiched between groups of letters saved from years of correspondence that Carlos perpetuated as he migrated from his homeland of Argentina, to Brussels, to Canada and back again. All are journeys through which the artist recreated himself through the exploration of each country's material culture. Through it all, Carlos Gallardo incorporates memory of a homeland still recovering from the Dirty War that claimed so many protesting against the military regime and fighting for democracy. This sordid past that will not be forgotten, a present context for those memories, and the questioning of our future who, what, when, where, why? Carlos Gallardo seeks, explores, manipulates, expanding the field of photography and the visual arts in general. Whatever the future may hold, we can be sure that Carlos Gallardo will be there to address it.

"The main axes of meaning of his work were time and memory, articulated in subtopics generally gathered by contrasting relationship, such as transience and permanence, for example. As the artist himself said a few years ago to whom he sings these lines: "I am always attentive to the appearance of opposing elements; to the energy of something that was or is about to go. " There, in that swing, is the effect of his work, in the movement of what is about to leave but has not yet left. Communication and lack of communication. This movement (as a move, as a journey, as nomadism, as an errant, as a sign of life) is also the subject of his work. Gallardo always themed his life, knowledge, and convictions in his work.

His status as a permanent traveler, together with his life partner, the choreographer and ballet director Mauricio Wainrot, with whom he worked in nearly forty contemporary ballet works as set designer and costume designer for more than twenty years, is also the subject of his own work : the movement and the continuous trips were seen by him as a flow of interrelations, sometimes evident, sometimes poetic, sometimes accidental and capricious. The real physical movement, the metaphorical movement and also the vital movement."

(..) From the exhibition in homage to Carlos Gallardo (1944-2008), at MALBA. *Entre el tiempo y la memoria* (Between Time and Memory). By Fabián Lebenglik.

About the artist

Carlos Gallardo (1944-2008) was an Argentinean artist, painter, photographer, graphic designer, set designer and costume designer of local and international projection. Born in Buenos Aires, in 1984 he received the Silver Pencil of the Argentine Design Biennial of the San Martín Theater where he later worked as a set designer for Carmina Burana, El Mesías, The Consecration of Spring and A Streetcar Named Desire.

His main samples were Kronos, Erratum, A Blow to the Books and Close-Up and the series Vestigios, Theatrum Mundi and Destiempos. He exhibited at the Art-Basel, Paris, Brussels, New York, Chicago, Miami, Montreal, Berlin, Brussels, etc. In 2010 an exhibition was held in tribute at the MALBA. His death was caused by a car accident.

His work is in museums and public and private collections in Europe and America. In 2012 he received a Postmortem Merit Diploma from the Konex Awards for his career in the Visual Arts.