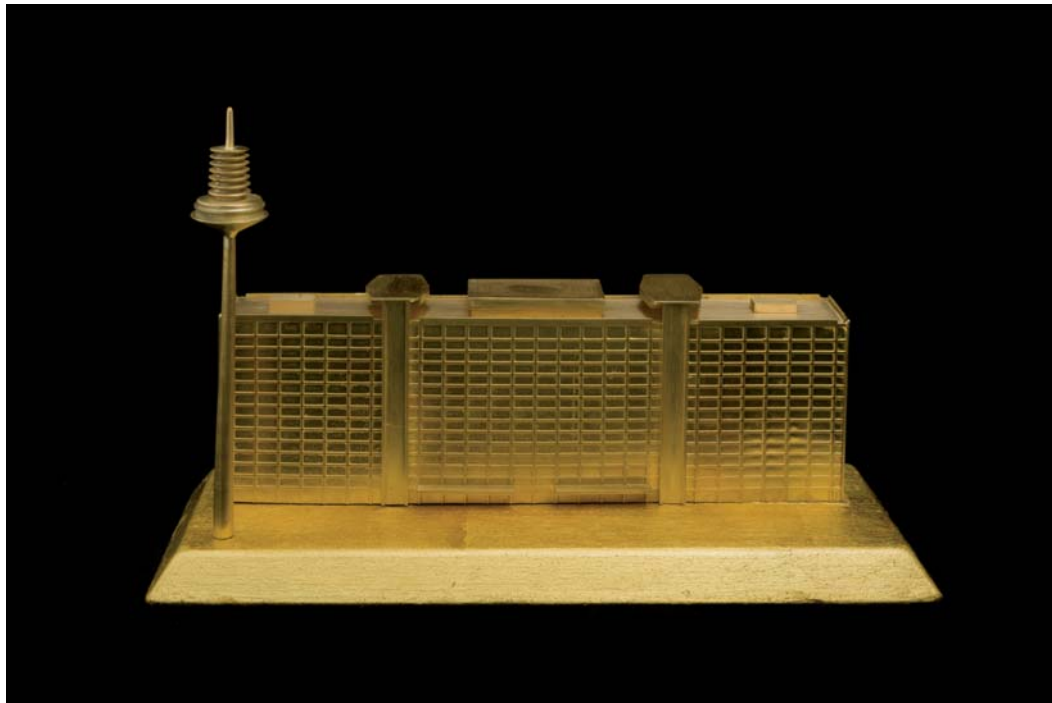


CARLOS GARAICOA

ORDEN INCONCLUSO (UNFINISHED ORDER)

22 NOV — 8 MAR 2015



Saving The Safe (Bundesbank), 2013. Photo Oak Taylor-Smith. © Carlos Garaicoa, VEGAP, Madrid, 2014

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In this sense, the project recovers the word Order, polluted by its many meanings: political, religious, architectonic and economic. In this walk through *Orden Inconcluso* several series carried out by the artist since the nineties are displayed. A bridge between Castro's Cuba and architectonic utopias is built, going through economic value, to reach a Europe damaged by the economic crisis where power is based on a fake European identity that puts individual power in the hands of macro-finance structures. In this sense, the project is aware of Michel Foucault -*The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1969 - *Discipline and Punish*, 1975; among others-, and tries to establish the link between the great social projects of Cuban architecture in the last decades and new macro-economic architectures and citizen micro-realities. Thus, the project plays in parallel with global economic structures and the city's, citizens' and therefore personal, local claims.

The project's presentation uses the street as its main device: a walk, a *flânerie*, a tour for citizens to go through their city as main actors of an urban play and as the main focus of all kinds of consequences. The beginning of this journey shows us a few research projects carried out by the artist in the first years of the 21st century, when he opened his Studio in La Habana in order to develop the project *Continuidad de una arquitectura ajena* (Continuity of an Alien Architecture, documenta 11, Kassel, 2002). The work *¿Es el cuerpo humano igual al cuerpo social?* (Is the Human Body The Same as The Social Body?), 2002, was part of this project and starts the tour. The relationship between the human body and architecture is introduced; historiography and art criticism have not dealt with this aspect much yet. The dimension of the social body as the foundations for Marxism and historical materialism, which was specially developed in Gramsci's texts, has been a constant worry in Garaicoa's work together with his vision of architecture as a reflection of the tension on the role culture plays in capitalist and socialist systems. Architecture is part of his work as one of the modern tools to discipline the social body. Other models included in the exhibition like *Edificio Público como Ágora Griega* (Public Building As a Greek Agora, 2002) and *Campus o la Babel del Conocimiento* (Campus or the Knowledge Tower of Babel, 2002-04) also show the same idea.

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This exhibition project has deep roots in Carlos Garaicoa own personal experience. Garaicoa, who was born La Habana in 1967, is one of the most influential figures of Cuban art from the last decades. Together with other important Cuban artists, he emerged on the international scene through La Habana's Biennale and other events aiming at opening up to the art world through an international and social outlook that was present in many of their works.

From that point and since then, Carlos Garaicoa has shown continuous interest in social, economic and political changes resulting from the History of the 20th and the 21st centuries, which are codified in the urban territory as a fieldwork. In this sense, he focuses on architecture and urbanism as we can see in *Orden Inconcluso* (Unfinished order).

We now approach Carlos Garaicoa's work from the perspective of his origins and experiences. Garaicoa, who is Cuban but has been living in Spain for a few years now, carries out his first contextual project where he refers to both realities that he has been living in. On the one hand, there is his artistic development stage in a country such as Cuba marked by contradictions among social movements and utopic values which have affected some of the hopes in the system; and on the other hand, there is his current confrontation with a Southern European country like Spain, and in particular with a city like Madrid, which reflects the ending of utopia from the opposite point of view: that of late-capitalist societies and the wish of social welfare. These two opposite poles get together within architectural practices and are reflected in a city that works as a background: a theatrical play where all the action choreographies cry for the loss of a project among demonstrations, graffiti, words and actions that vindicate citizens' emotions.

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If we keep walking, we find a piece that takes us to 2006, *Retrato (Europa)*, (Portrait, (Europe) 2006), where finances reflect what Garaicoa was already predicting as the great economic crisis that started in 2007-08, whose main axis would be European macro-corporations and macro-policies, and which we are still suffering. This idea is opposed to that of wandering instead of through stock and financial markets, through the city streets, in this case through Madrid streets. Garaicoa, who lives in Madrid, becomes a Benjamin character that observes the reality of the walls and what the city wants to say. The eight great diptychs of *Cerámicas porno-indignadas* (Porn-Outraged Ceramics), 2012-14, aim at overthrowing the tiles advertisement of the beginning of the 20th century that were found on old chemists, haberdasheries, ironmonger's and warehouses so that they now reflect the city's current and real emotions: protest, irony and social and political jokes that Spanish people use to refer to political and economic events and realities in a grotesque manner similar to that of Valle-Inclán plays.



Cerámicas porno-indignadas (Provocación) (Porn-Outraged Ceramics [Provocation]), 2012. Photo Oak Taylor-Smith. © Carlos Garaicoa, VEGAP, Madrid, 2014

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We keep going and we find a new room where Order and Power are codified in a high-security chamber where and pieces of jewellery are kept in two safe boxes. Two miniature copies in solid gold represent the German Bundesbank and the Bank of Spain, under the watch of a security guard who is always present in the entrance. A bit far from this power, but also in solid gold, eight golden plaques hung on the walls as if commandments. They state and stage sentences, positions and events regarding citizen's feelings towards this Order and how it represses individuals who tired of suffering now rise up. Similarly, the following installation reproduces a city street through its gutters and claims that rebellion and protest should come from below, from the ground and the road. This atmosphere makes the city talk and reveal itself from within its deeper self, from the underground where phone, electrical and telecom wires lie with electrical networks, glass fibre, water and gas pipes; moreover, we witness how their slogans and logotypes change their meaning to represent people's claims. Corporate signs have become economic drawings and diagrams where citizens' exploitation by these companies becomes clear; their only wish is that of making money for them and their stockholders; with their policies, citizens have been left in a situation of great instability. Garaicoa talks about that in *Entr'acte (après René Clair)*, 2014, which is no less than a leap into the void: that feeling of being high in a state of wellbeing when suddenly everything collapses. Many of us have experimented this leap: citizens who have been evicted, employees who have been fired, economists ruined by their greed, and old people whose savings have been robbed by toxic assets. Garaicoa has oscillated in that instability, from a magnificent Cuba of brilliant architecture and the ruins of today's Habana; from that Cuba of culture and leisure from the old times, to a Cuba where international blockade prevents the arrival of basic supplies to the country. Similarly, in Spain Europe's interests and politicians' conformity make citizens part of this instability as they wait for the economy to recover in order to get out of a hole that has been there for years.

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But, when we believe that the circle is closed, Garaicoa takes us to an impossibility of ending and a continuous instability where, just before leaving the exhibition, we face a blunt and distant photographic installation made by two images shaped as a corner that represent two corporate buildings in Madrid's Castellana Street: *Noticias Recientes (España II)*, (Recent News, [SpainII]), 2007. A 9 mm gun has shot these two laminated photos, and although the work dates from 2007, reality imposes itself since a collective effort and fight to alter that Order and de facto powers is still standing thanks to citizens' politics and poetics, where each individual contributes with their work.

Agustín Pérez Rubio
Exhibition curator



Entr'acte (après René Clair), 2014.
© Carlos Garaicoa, VEGAP, Madrid, 2014

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These ups and downs are reflected in the city's body and its architecture. A long corridor displays a series of bone printed photographs, 2014: the body's DNA, the smallest glimmer on which the human being exists and which remains of us when we are no longer here. These x-ray films are a photographic album with printed images both of bodies -x-rays- and landscapes -ruins- that oppose each other: the body that is no longer here versus architecture; nostalgia stemming from faded La Habana now in ruins and the undertakings and residential areas that Spain's real estate bubble left behind as real contemporary archaeology. Again, Garaicoa transfers the reality of the economic and political crisis to the human being where it becomes codified in minimal body remains: the person's skeleton and also those architectural skeletons that we can almost recognize around us.

By the end of the walk, the last room takes us back to the beginning, to those utopic model research projects he worked on at the beginning of the century like *Edificio Público como Ágora Griega* and *Campus o la Babel del Conocimiento*. Opposites and counterpoints will be one of the keys to understand dichotomies between the pieces from both references. Here, architecture presented as a model talks about a two-fold utopic project: biblical and political, knowledge and religion, languages and practice; a statement that the order the exhibition refers to has been questioned.

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Carlos Garaicoa. <i>Orden Inconcluso</i> (Unfinished order)	22 nov 2014 — 8 mar 2015	Exhibition tours Wednesday and Saturdays 18:30 h. Sundays 12:30 h.
Curator	Agustín Pérez Rubio	
Publication	It will be publish a Catalogue with essays by Agustín Pérez Rubio, Iván de la Nuez and a interview with Carlos Garaicoa	
Otras exposiciones	Colección Fundación ARCO Until 1 feb 2015 Jeremy Deller. <i>El ideal infinitamente variable de lo popular</i> 13 feb — 7 jun 2015	Naturaleza nominal. ARCO Colombia 2015 28 feb — 21 apr 2015 (Alberto Baraya, Milena Bonilla, Adriana Salazar and Carlos Bonil)
Activities	Families and Primary School <i>The Disorder of Words</i> Guided tours to Carlos Garaicoa exhibition Jan — Mar 2015 Vegetable Garden on the Roof Workshop of vegetable gardening on the roof Friday 11:30— 13:00 h	Popular education <i>But Is this art? VII</i> Wednesday 18 feb — 15 abr 18:30 h. Sundays at the Cinema <i>Quieto todo el mundo</i> Spanish Cinema of the 80's Sundays 18 Jan — 22 Feb 18:30 h.
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