

Sinéad O'Donnell performed "Crossing Permissions" in Montevideo, Uruguay, at the SUBTE Exhibition Centre. Mobilizing her body as a site of conflict, Sinéad arrived in Montevideo and began with a work process that consisted of staying in artists' homes and visiting their workshops to internalise the context of the local performance art scene, to use later as input or discursive material in her actions. She made three actions in total. Her work led me to think of the body as territory. Matter and geography, immersed in the immaterial being, inseparable from each other. As a surface exposed to the environment and as a device that enunciates the message.

Almost intuitively and with a scene full of symbolism, Sinéad started her performance. In one section of the room there was the green fabric - part of a flag that the artist used in Belfast, during the celebration of the one hundred years of women's suffrage in the United Kingdom - placed as two strips that together with the rice paper served as a base. A brick, brought from Sinéad's house in Northern Ireland, became a symbol of the epistemology of the objects. Next, Sinéad added coal and ashes extracted from the wood stove of the house of a Montevidean artist that she had visited, a representation of ordinary daily life and of the a lived moment. Finally, Sinéad introduced two balloons smelling of baby powder, a familiar odour that, to my understanding, signified the social mandate imposed on women at the time they must decide whether or not to become mothers.

All of these materials were used to facilitate a set of actions that comprised the performance. Her naked torso and breasts formed an armour, revealing to the spectators various images, questioning their passive position and forcing them to move around. Sinéad finished the performance by inviting the public to share a can of beans, which became the social devise with which Sinéad interacted with visitors. At times the audience appeared stifled or uncomfortable before the naked - yet covered in ashes - face and torso of the artist. This suggested the feeling of suffocation followed by release, "as it happens to so many women", the artist told me.

The body as an affected territory placed the personal as political. Referring to Kate Millet's book "sexual policy" and understanding the "personal" as the physical body. How one relates to the body at an individual, social, or collective level. How one acts with respect to the body, if it is experienced as a threat or a weapon, if it is taken care of or mistreated, if it is placed in the public sphere or private, is a political decision. "Crossing Permissions", or Cruce de Permisos in Spanish, is a performance that refers to and questions how the women around the world created and create new landscapes of resilience as a form of empowerment and resistance within their contexts. Bodies capable of identifying and building other escape routes from the processes of demarcating territory established by those in power. Bodies capable of introducing themselves into collective spaces, and transforming them.

Valeria Piriz (artist and feminist activist based in Montevideo)

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