

One photograph at MAMCO (part of a group called *Untitled [nouveaux horizons II]*, 2007) displays the legend PROGRAMM lost in an empty stretch of wall. Modernism might once have taken place in this blank space; or, in a version that is still unresolved, it might still be on its way. All that is overtly present is the gap, a latent state of art that might erupt at any moment. This stance reminds me of Stefan Brüggenmann's text-on-wall pieces, including one containing the phrase NO CONTENT in parentheses. The age of "post"-consciousness is past. All possibilities, including that which has never before been seen, are announced in our eager anticipation of these exemplars, these avant-images, these prototypes.

—Hans Rudolf Reust

Translated from German by Oliver E. Dryjuss.

MADRID

Paz Errázuriz

ESPACIO MÍNIMO

The exhibition "*Cuerpos*" (Bodies) brought together two series of Paz Errázuriz's photographs—"Tango," 1986, and "*Cuerpos*," 2002—with a nine-minute video piece, *El sacrificio*, 1989–2001, the only work she has produced in that medium thus far. The Chilean artist early in the 1980s and '90s focused on portraits of people on the margins of society (the insane, the homeless, transvestite prostitutes, boxers, circus people, and so on), and these origins have continued to influence her even as her practice has evolved to encompass subjects more fully integrated into society. "Tango," for instance, shows the faces and stances of couples performing this well-known dance, elegantly dressed figures who are aware of taking part in a ritual at once social and sensual. The closeness of the paired bodies and the undeniable harmony between partners give the images an erotic quality. The couples in the series have not posed for these portraits, but are unknowingly captured in improvised snapshots.

"*Cuerpos*" is a series of studio portraits of elderly men and women posing naked, individually or in pairs. These figures display their bodies openly, with a sense of satisfaction and even pride. Their bodies are not chiseled, but rather show the results of corporeal change over time; some of them have surgical scars. Whether distracted or clearly pleased—like one woman wearing just a pearl necklace and a benevolent smile—none of the subjects seem at all concerned about the fact that, though they are all long past the age when they could embody conventional beauty, they are posing nude. Some of the couples seem to share a sense of mutual understanding, like the man and woman who look at each other serenely or the two older women laughing in each others' arms. Here we witness the joy at being alive and taking pleasure in a body that, though aged, still provides sensual pleasure. In this way, both series evince the same basic intention: vindication of life and the desire to live it fully.

El sacrificio should be understood as complementary to these photographs. Filmed in 1989 but not edited until twelve years later, the piece shows a sheep being slaughtered, then skinned and gutted. In black-and-white, like most of Errázuriz's work, the video inevitably



Paz Errázuriz, *Untitled*, 2002, digital print, 32 1/4 x 24 1/4". From the series "*Cuerpos*" (Bodies), 2002.

brings to mind Georges Franju's documentary *Le sang des bêtes* (The Blood of the Beasts, 1949), filmed in a slaughterhouse in Paris. On the surface, "Tango" and "*Cuerpos*" celebrate life while *El sacrificio* viscerally depicts death, but the video also celebrates life, albeit indirectly. Its last frames show the animal's body as an inert mass, but if death reduces the body to its most material aspect—just lifeless flesh—life seems to do just the opposite by giving us a sentient body that experiences pleasure in its own vitality.

—Pablo Llorca

Translated from Spanish by Jane Brodie.

Fernando García

HEINRICH EHRHARDT

For more than a decade, the art of Madrid-born Fernando García was easily recognizable as part of the widespread trend of post-Conceptual painting sweeping Europe these days. Such work was marked by an ironic use of language, wry comments on art production, and witty allusions to the art market, all combined in a deliberately clumsy style of painting. And yet even when his paintings were at their most formulaic, his shows always contained something unexpected. Lately, something has radically changed, and the shift in García's work seems to coincide

with his recent move from the city to the countryside, marking what could be a major turning point in his career. His new position eschews the knowing sophistication of his previous work, and finds him turning instead to pits and pebbles, wood, branches of various sizes, and found objects of everyday use, from ropes to empty cans to bottles of wine. It would be easy to imagine that these materials reflect a move toward a neo-Povera aesthetic just as familiar as the neo-Conceptualism that preceded it, but this new work turns out to be a genuine poetic exercise that owes more to an anthropological reflection on time and place. And painting is no longer at stake.

This recent show included several vertical structures that resemble freestanding shelving units. These are called "*Alacenas*" (all works 2013), after the old pieces of furniture used in Spanish houses to hold plates, tablecloths, cutlery, and other domestic miscellany. But these *alacenas* hardly displayed any objects. Instead, they stood fragile and precarious, each supported by four vertical poles that, upon closer inspection, revealed themselves to be slim tree branches. The horizontal platforms are made of thousands of small pieces of wood tied together with thin strings. An avocado pit rests helplessly on one of them. It has been subtly carved by the artist to look somewhat odd. García thus informs us that his practice now stems not so much from intellectual disquisitions but from the organic experience of the everyday. This avocado pit—like the pistachio shells, branches, lemons, chickpeas, and so on that almost overflow another plate—evokes the apparently uneventful passing of time, and this extended temporality, along with the context in which it happens, seems essential to García's changed understanding of art.

In one of the corners of the gallery, three wooden pedestals were supported by as many empty bottles of wine. Wooden sticks emerged from their interiors, as if seeking to gain some anthropomorphic shape.



Fernando García, *Alacena* (detail), 2013, wood, string, mixed media, 10' 10" x 3' 3 3/4" x 11 1/4".