

Projects developed in Can Serrat International Art Residency by Rafael Cañete Fernández

Project 1:

letters

Video, 2:03 min & 3:00 min. 2018

A letter from someone to someone else. An insight into a personal, ambiguous relationship between two lost unknown characters. A fake letter that doesn't pretend to look like a real one, being just an abstraction of what personal communication and emotion can be. A voice, not a character, is reading the letter for the first time, reading it to the receiver. And the audience is listening.

The voice is speaking, but it also has a message to the receiver in the form of text. A text with rhythm, with its own time, kind of synchronized with what is being spoken. And the audience is reading.

Links:

<https://vimeo.com/257518490>

<https://vimeo.com/257518562>

Project 2:

El Bruc Free Walking Tours

Performance in El Bruc, Spain. 2018

El Bruc Free Walking Tour is a Free Walking Tour executed in El Bruc, Spain. A Free Walking Tour is a tourist concept that have appeared during the last years in the main tourist cities all around the world. They are normally 1,5 – 3 hours tours, walking around the main tourist attractions with guides talking about the city's history and culture while being nice and entertaining. Their salaries depends on tips at the end of the tour, depending on how much the attendants enjoyed it. The idea of running a tour in El Bruc came after visiting the Monastery of Montserrat and after seeing its mass tourism, receiving more than 2 million visitors every year.

Why would someone visit Montserrat, when they visit Barcelona? Of course, Montserrat has its own interests: a 11th century monastery, La Moreneta (the Virgin of Montserrat, known for being black and for being one of the two Patron Saints of Catalonia) and l'Escolanía, one of the oldest boys' choir in Europe, dating from the 14th century. Montserrat is almost 40 Km away from Barcelona, and there are already so many cultural and tourist attractions in the city. So, again, why would someone visit Montserrat? Some, because of religious or historical and cultural interests. Others, will visit it because they are going to climb in Montserrat. But most of them, because they are told to. Because it is a must, when you visit the area. No matter if you haven't heard about it before stepping into Barcelona, you will go there. Because this is one of the ways mass tourism operates.

What if we create a point of tourist interest in El Bruc, a small town near Montserrat famous for the legend of El Timbaler del Bruc? During my stay in the International Art Residency Can Serrat, I created a free tour company called El Bruc Free Walking Tour. I designed a 45 minutes tour in the town that was promoted with flyers some days before, where the attendants were asked to book online. During the tour, the attendants received a map with information and points of tourist interest, very similar to the ones they would receive in another Free Walking Tour. The tour was executed on the 21st of February at 14:00 and followed by 16 assistants from Norway, United States, Australia, Colombia, England, Finland and France.

There was no point for this tour. Even though El Bruc has the legend of El Timbaler and a few modernists buildings, it is not an interesting place for a mass touristic tour. A group of "tourists" lead by a guide in an almost empty town and the nonsense of it. The nonsense of visiting without knowing why. During the tour, half of the information given to the assistants was fake, and they were never told about it. How much power does a guide, as a speaker, has? How critic is the audience towards the information and the facts they are hearing? How critic can they be, the tourists in these tours in big cities, if they are just visiting places and monuments without any good real reason, just because they are told to?

At the end of the tour, I received 5 € and a heart shaped stone as payment.

Link with pictures:

<http://cargocollective.com/rafaelcanete/El-Bruc-Free-Walking-Tour>

Project 3:

Montserrat

Two speakers installation, 32:37 min + text. 2018

On February 15 of 2018, I went to the Monastery of Montserrat for the first time. The Monastery is one of the most iconic places of the Catalan culture, both from a religious and from an identity approach. It contains the figure of La Moreneta, a black Madonna which is one of the two Patron Saints of Catalonia. The Monastery is also famous for L'Escolania de Montserrat, one of the oldest boys' choir in Europe, dating from the 14th century. It is also the main tourist attraction of the area: more than 2 million visitors every year, coming by car or by train. So, what is supposed to be a symbol of the Catalan culture and its identity has become kind of a theme park for mass tourism. How does this affect the symbolic and religious value of the place? How does tourism relate to it? How does my Catalan identity (if any) reflects on it?

I recorded my visit to Montserrat. It was the first time I was there, the first time I saw the place and the first time I knew about its massification. I went there with 4 other people, we came to hear the choir singing. The work that follows is a report of my experience while being there. The text can be read at any point during the audio track.

Link to text:

http://payload422.cargocollective.com/1/20/656030/10758807/Montserrat_english_web_2_1000.jpg

Link to audio:

<https://soundcloud.com/rafaelcafe/montserrat>