



NO YET ON THE REINVENTION OF DOCUMENTARY AND THE CRITIQUE OF MODERNISM JORGE RIBALTA

THIS TALK



will be a presentation of the homonymous exhibition (Not yet. On the Reinvention of Documentary and the Critique of Modernism, Museum Reina Sofia, Madrid, March-July, 2015) expands and deepens Ribalta's earlier research on the Worker Photography Movement in the inter-war period that was presented in the exhibition A Hard, Merciless Light: The Worker Photography Movement 1926-1939 (Museo Reina Sofia, 2011). As such, it proposes a narrative for a political history of the 'documentary idea' in twentieth century photographic culture.

As in the earlier project on the Worker Photography Movement, this is a contribution to a photographic historiography "against the grain," an attempt to chart a genealogy that accounts for the dark areas of Modernism and that also reinterprets and provides historical consistency to today's aesthetic-political struggles. In a period like ours, dominated by post-media discourses, documentary practices and poetics seem to have gained a new and somewhat paradoxical actuality. This research project offers an account of the context of the documentary paradigm shift in the 'long seventies', a period of expansion followed by contraction, that had its origins in 1968. It is tempting to insist on the historical parallels between the thirties and the seventies, both in terms of documentary culture and of economic history. It seems no accident that the two periods corresponding to the two major economic crises of capitalism in the twentieth century (1929 and 1972) also correspond to the time of invention and reinvention of documentary, respectively. This is the grounding for the historical interpretation proposed here: documentary as an artistic response to these crises, as a means of self-representation and empowerment of their corresponding emergent political subjectivities.

JORGE RIBALTA

is an artist, researcher, editor and independent curator, who has had solo shows at, among other art spaces, Zabriskie Gallery (New York and Paris), Casa sin Fin (Madrid) and angelsbarcelona (Barcelona). His recent solo exhibition Monument Machine travelled between the Museo Guerrero (Granada), the Fundación Helga de Alvear (Cáceres) (2015) and the Württembergischer Kunstverein (WKV), Stuttgart (2016). He was the Head of Public Programs at MACBA (The Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona) from 1999-2009, and he has curated exhibitions like Universal Archive: The condition of the document and the modern photographic utopia (MACBA, Barcelona, 2008), A Hard, Merciless Light: The Worker-Photography Movement, 1926-1939 (Museum Reina Sofia, Madrid, 2011) and Not Yet: On the Reinvention of Documentary and the Critique of Modernism (Museum Reina Sofia, Madrid, 2011). His edited books include Public Photographic Spaces: Propaganda Exhibitions from Pressa to the Family of Man.

THURS 3.30 11 AM

300 SILVER

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