

Casa Tomada

Rosa Aiello, Mathis Altmann, Ed Atkins, Sammy Baloji & Filip De Boeck, Dora Budor, Juan Caloca, Gina Folly, Isa Genzken, Stuart Middleton, Fernando Palma, Francesco Pedraglio, Tania Pérez Córdova, Laure Prouvost, Diego Salvador Rios, Jorge Satorre, John Skoog, John Smith, Hito Steyerl, Lewis Teague Wright

Opening: Saturday, 7 April 2018, 2-6pm
7 April – 5 May 2018, Thursday-Saturday 2-6pm
Calle 22 12BIS, San Pedro de los Pinos, Ciudad de México

<http://casatomada.odie.us/>

Performances by Juan Caloca: 7+13 April, 2-6pm
Performance by Francesco Pedraglio: 15 April + 5 May, 8pm
(with registration at anna.roberta.goetz@gmail.com)

Curated by Anna Goetz

*I wanted to reconstruct that space and enter it so I could feel real again.*¹

Casa Tomada, the independent exhibition project, is inspired by Tom McCarthy's novel *Remainder* (2006), and by Julio Cortázar's title-giving short story, *Casa Tomada* (1946).

In McCarthy's *Remainder* the protagonist questions the authenticity of the world as he experiences it – he suspects everything around him being staged. After a déjà vu experience, he begins to reconstruct and reenact the remembered scenes, because he feels emotionally connected to them and therefore understands them as “the authentic”. In order to reenact and relive these experiences he acquires a house, refurbishes it and casts actors to enact all characters partaking in the remembered imaginary scenes. However, the simulations are never satisfying to him so he manipulates them and thus creates his very own parallel reality he is in control of.

In Cortázar's *Casa Tomada* a brother and sister live together in an old mansion. Their everyday is organized along a strict timetable, which is connected to always the same sequence of rooms – every activity dedicated to one room. One day, “unknown creatures” seem to take over one room after another and the siblings' routines get disrupted. It remains unclear if the “unknown creatures” are real or a subconscious construct. Either way, they affect the subjective reality of the protagonists and make them discard the established system of routines within they hitherto were living.

¹ Quote from: Tom McCarthy, *Remainder*, 2006

Casa Tomada is undermining the notion of the house as sanctity and refuge and can be interpreted as allegory for Argentina's political climate and its impact on society at the time of its publication – the house as traditional Argentina being corrupted by new (“unknown”) or until then marginalized forces; forces which at that time were able to “progressively” take over the country.

In both stories, the private house provides setting and form for the unfolding of the narratives, and functions as a metaphor for the prevailing conventions, ideologies, and belief systems of the social context in which each story is set. At the same time, the house serves the protagonists as a set structure with which to understand, control, and construct their everyday realities. In both cases, however, this structure is called into question, and is threatened to the point of eventual collapse.

For the exhibition *Casa Tomada*, a group of international artists – some living in Mexico, others living abroad – were invited to develop site-specific new works in an empty *vecindad* (specific Mexican housing complex) in a middle-class residential neighborhood, in response to the thematic framework suggested by the literary references. The great number of new commissions are contextualized by a selection of works on loan.

The exhibition is in addition activated by performances by Juan Caloca and Francesco Perdaglio.

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