

ANÓNIMA

TXUSPO POYO

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Futurable stories from anonymous wisdom

Álvaro de los Ángeles

I must consider her – this unknown woman as the descendant of all those other women of whose lives I have been glancing, and see what she has inherited from them, and what restrictions have been imposed upon her.¹

Virginia Woolf

Le texte est un tissu de citations, issues des mille foyers de la culture.²

Roland Barthes

Experience runs over us like a steamroller, and only years later, if at all, do we understand what has happened. Fiction offers a far deeper factual, psychological, and moral comprehension than reality itself.³

Ursula K. Le Guin

I

Futurable stories

A history of art that took into account working methodologies as a differentiating and classifying feature of the works and of authorship would not exclude categories, and naturally it would not exclude lists, or onomastic indices, or bibliographical references. Nor would it exclude a timeline, where this is taken to mean a chronology in which personal, collective, and stylistic information would converge and intersect. This history of art would be many histories of art. It would avoid being a single, authoritative history, that single place that one would wish to enter with eagerness and ambition, to

¹ Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own & The Voyage out*, Wordsworth Classics, Ware, Hertfordshire, 2012, p. 84.

² Roland Barthes, «La mort de l'auteur», en *Le bruissement de la langue. Essais critiques IV*, Seuil, Paris, 1984, pp. 63-69.

³ Ursula K. Le Guin, "Things Not Actually Present: On *The Book of Fantasy* and j. L. Borges", into *The wave in the mind: talks and essays on the writer, the reader, and the imagination*, Shambhala Publications, Boston, 2004.

become an example of a consolidated career, creative genius, and ultimately, a character embedded in posterity.

Better still, histories of art could be avoided; but not because one would want them to disappear – given that the last thing one would want now is for remembrance to be lost – but rather because their tiresome and ineffective specialization make no sense; the obsession with accepting innovation only if it has already existed or if someone spoke about it first – which is a contradiction – or when the said innovation is so transformative that it must be accepted because, by changing the materials of reality, a change is also required in the language through which it is named and the code that accepts it. It is even less effective and credible when it is composed or remade at a later time – revisited, as it is often called – on the basis of the flagrant absences of what is there but was never accepted as having been there or was never even recognized as having been there. A history littered with people who were not understood in their own time, with mortal insecurities of necessity, and with unmistakable signs of power wielded by conservative forces against the most disinhibited minds and bodies.

Perhaps it would be better to historically research how an exhibition should be held, with practice and with the attendance of the artists, with rules that are reviewed on a regular basis and that, far from making their narrative weaker because it is never consolidated, they accept that what ought to be consolidated is the actual process of searching, the very notion of the project, the innate sensation of continuous learning. These histories of art would also be anti-masterpiece histories of art, given that the centre of attention would be focussed on those methodologies that accept their practice as a research example. Maybe they could even historically research how to write a text that rehearses and takes control of all possible citations; that advances and retreats; that portrays and that still seeks to transform everything, despite being barely able to; that it should firmly doubt its format, but defend, with the same conviction, its role.

This way of doing things, this *sui generis* methodology, would be the exact opposite of conferring full responsibility for deciding what to do and how – *how* in particular – on generative technologies. Because the method advocated here serves to validate the stages of the process as an encounter in itself, that includes the resistance of materials, rather than their complete loss of resistance, when information enters and circulates solely within the realm of *the polished* or *the liquid*. By materials we mean a

broad range of formats, techniques, means... concrete or abstract; but also what is immaterial, symbolic, and even that which ‘acts’ only for the action to evaporate into thin air but remain in the memory.

With this tremendous development of technology, a completely new poverty has descended on mankind.⁴
Walter Benjamin

In the evanescence of data and in among the shadows of those who process it, some artistic practices have emerged intent on resistance. They are ready to generate a network of networks, a community of practitioners who use their own funds and knowledge borrowed from others. They settle down firmly in the various fields of what is *real*, that concept that re-emerged strongly in the last third of the twentieth century to define it once again within a changing context. In his book *The Return of the Real*, Hal Foster gathers together a number of highly-influential essays on artistic practice and aesthetic reflection from that moment on. On the one hand, he compiles the main features of contemporary art between the 1960s and the 1990s; on the other hand, he prescribes and identifies the paths along which certain trends concerned to the social will circulate, from a new perspective on the real, between the end of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century. In the essay that bears the name of the compilation, Foster analyses the concept of ‘traumatic realism’, from Surrealism through to Pop Art (although essentially focussing on part of the oeuvre and life of Andy Warhol) in relation to the seminar by Lacan *The unconscious and repetition*, in which the philosopher expresses his concern for ‘the definition of the real in terms of trauma’⁵. For Foster, ‘the theory of trauma in Lacan is not influenced by pop’, in contrast to ‘Baudrillard and company’ (with regard to the theory of simulacra), but rather it is ‘informed by the surrealism’⁶. Foster goes on to say: ‘In this seminar, Lacan defines the traumatic as a missed encounter with the real. As missed, the real cannot be represented; it can only be repeated, indeed it *must* be repeated’⁷. This *traumatic*

⁴ Walter Benjamin, ‘Experience and Poverty’, in *Discursos interrumpidos I*, Taurus, Madrid, 1973. Translated by Jesús Aguirre.

⁵ Hal Foster, ‘The Return of the Real,’ in *El retorno de lo real. La vanguardia a finales de siglo*, Akal, Madrid, 2001, p. 134. Translated by de Alfredo Brotons Muñoz.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁷ *Idem.*

difference between representation and repetition allows Foster to analyse Warhol's series in which one single element (the electric chair, Marilyn Monroe, tins of Campbell's soup...) is analysed as the basis for a productive repetition. It also allows us to think about the concept of series in contemporary art; not so much about repeating a single element, but rather the need to put different scopes, sequences, serializations, etc. of the same subject into relation.

However, the text contained in that volume – which remains an example of how to dissect the present (the present as it was then, obviously, and moreover forming part of what is now formalized as a kind of artistic project determined by the *social*) – is 'The artist as Ethnographer'. Here, Foster went back to 'The author as producer' by Walter Benjamin and looked forward. He was acting, to a certain extent, how Benjamin had acted with his analysis of the *Angelus Novus* by Paul Klee, and his definition of the 'angel of history'. In doing so, the American theorist was also advancing forwards while turning his head to the past; he was writing history 'against the grain'. And he illustrated this with paradigmatic examples that were contemporary to his analysis, and which are now essential works of the History(s) of Art: *Import / Export Funk Office* (1992) by Renée Green, that multimedia office for the exchange of Afro-American and Germanic wisdoms, concealed or persecuted, synthesized in the portraits of Angela Davis and Theodor Adorno of her invitation; *American Invention* (1993) by Lothar Baumgarten; *Mining the Museum* (1992) by Fred Wilson; *Enlarged from the Catalogue* (1990) by Silvia Kolbowski; *History* (1989) by Mary Kelly, and works and authors from the 1960s and 1970s such as Martha Rosler, Robert Smithson, Hans Haacke, or Dan Graham...

These are all diverse, but connected, ways of coming to certain *artistic-ethnographic*, multi-layered projects, which we also find in the processes of encounter and methodology⁸ created by Txuspo Poyo, who does so through the total absence of banal poses, poetic transformations through objects, their materials and their functions. For example, the bell cast using the legal-tender coins collected through the collection-boxes of Gestoras Pro-Amnistía in 2009; the golden thread made out of the wedding-ring of the artist's mother; the tuning-fork made out of the melted iron from a meteorite... And also through the productive mix of elements deriving from popular

⁸ With regard to this duality, read the conversation that constitutes the vehicle for the central part of this publication.

cultures with data and information on the way in which the world works. These are clear examples of how art transforms its context to the extent that the initial function of an object is redirected to make it into a poetic piece, with or without a defined function. Because, in effect, the life of an object is something appreciated in Poyo's work, as well as the choice of and respect for the materials. It may be said that the processes leading up to research and study, as is also the case for pre-production and management, are aimed at overseeing the ultimate presence of his works in terms of appearance and physical verification, with regard to materiality and form, original function and subsequent objective dysfunction, and therefore the use(ful/less) purpose of art.

Contemporaneously to the essays compiled by Foster, *documenta X* (1997), curated by Catherine David, laid down a roadmap that followed the same alternative route and directed it towards documentary and archival practices, where the spatial and the architectural⁹ would also become part of the polyhedron of an increasingly complex contemporaneity, and of an artform that, as a testament to this, could not overlook its transversal nature. When the most influential art event of the time had its first female 'artistic director', the *documenta* logo was limited to the initial 'd' in black and an orange 'X' on top. A pun that was both a statement (the tenth edition) and a question (the institution crossed out, but also the unknown of the present and the future) converging at a time when the twentieth century was commencing its rapid descent towards the mythical year 2000 and its *effect*. At that time, with the incipient expansion of the internet and transcendental changes in ways of generating and communicating information and of communicating between ourselves, globalism was no longer a way of talking about the future, but rather the shared and immediate expectation that a vast majority of humanity was hoping for. Just as the logo was printed with a variety of meanings, the title of the theoretical book for *documenta X* was using a play on the words *Politics – Poetics*; in this case, the 'e' was placed over the 'li' syllable of the original word. As such, it seemed to clearly indicate that above the main role of the

⁹ In the Introduction of the short guide for *documenta X*, Catherine David wrote: 'That said, the city and urban space in general —its circumstances, its failures, its architectural, economic, political, and human projects, its conflicts, and the new cultural attitude and practices to which it gives rise and which it spreads throughout the world— now clearly appears as the privileged site of contemporary experience. In these respects, Kassel today, at its own scale, in its singularity as well as its archetypes, can be regarded as "exemplary"'. Catherine David, *documenta X short guide*, *documenta* and Museum Fridericianum Veranstaltungs-GmbH, Kassel 1997, p. 11.

poetic, the political, or their action, it was underlining or marking out the poetic, which was in turn intervening as a social, aesthetic, and identity position.

At the same time, it seemed to be saying that plays on words or signs in these headings were not just a game, but rather an effort to turn the official upside-down and look at it critically; to look around the back of the scenery in order to check what materials it was made of along with its structure, and in this way launch the necessary challenges and undertake the required changes. The *retro perspectives* concept highlighted the way that *documenta* was facing the end of the twentieth century from two perspectives. On the one hand, reviewing previous editions of the cultural institution arising in the defeated Germany of the post-war era that was beginning to lay the foundations for its economic miracle [‘memory, historical reflection, decolonization and what Wolf Lapenies calls the “de-Europeanization” of the world’¹⁰]; on the other, ‘the complex processes of post-archaic, post-traditional, post-national identification at work in the “fractal societies” (Serge Gruzinski) born from the collapse of communism and the brutal imposition of the laws of the market’¹¹. When read now, this introduction resounds even more strongly, and is a paradigmatic example of how the generation of a discourse of one’s own can arise from and aim towards a context of crossed references where nothing exists without cohabiting with other ambits.

It is in conjunction with these ways of thinking and presenting *the real* and *the documentary*, respectively, where the projects by Txuspo Poyo take shape, or if you prefer, where they deposit their postulates and offer themselves to the audience and to the public. They arise from a variety of sources, acquiring combined forms across material references extracted from everyday life and other symbolic ways of thinking about the physical. They are examples of a kind of visual thinking that interferes with items found and what is commonplace, but also imposing themselves with an assertiveness of someone who thinks in new ways to showcase the new, and even to reflect the old. That historic, materialistic, debate between the old and the new presents in these multi-layered pieces a field of action that is rarely traversed, because it operates through common bonds, between improbable connections that show themselves to be effective, clearing away an undergrowth overloaded with empty structures, without

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 9.

¹¹ Idem.

specific meaning or function. Each project by Poyo is a small world arising out of the combination between the indigenous and the adopted, and the complexity that derives from discerning, precisely, what is other and what is one's own.

II

Anonymous Knowledge

Finally I accuse myself of dreaming, of imagining modes of resistance in the company of others; also of not ignoring that this all sounds like wishful thinking, that I say names that are more than worn out, that I repeat words moistened by the saliva of others, that I know that the driver of this desire is none other than desire itself, steeped in a thousand failures, betrayals, disappointments... I accuse myself of knowing that this love is not the first and yet and despite everything, still love it.

J(e m)'accuse, Rogelio López Cuenca

A work by Xisco Mensua (Barcelona, 1960–Rocafort, Valencia, 2025) is entitled *Palabras robadas a otros*. It is a polyptych of twenty papers with a black background and white text handwritten by the artist, which brings together quotations from a range of sources from the world of art and culture, from classicism to post-modernity, but without any intention of completeness. They are nailed to the wall, and flank their structural vulnerability while at the same time radiating a force similar to a heartbeat. It is impossible not to read aloud some of the phrases and not feel the breathing of the bodies through which each one has passed, from their original distillation to the person now seeing them, while obviously passing through the artist himself as he reads them and then writes them down. Almost the entire universe of an artistic act can be fitted into that simple process.

Even though his work *repeats words moistened by the saliva of others* and merges into the work of other earlier artists and their ideas, Xisco Mensua is not an *ethnographer* artist, according to the framework concept developed by Hal Foster in the 1990s. In contrast, this is exactly what Rogelio López Cuenca is (Nerja, 1959), author of that text-manifesto *J(e m)'accuse*, the final words of which we have brought here as a clear example of an art that is contemporary both because it was

made in its present and because it tackles socio-political issues that are contemporary to its time, or due to the need it demonstrates to resign oneself through *the other* and through others. At that common point of needing materials and ideas also used by others, both works intertwine and link to those of Poyo. The projects of López Cuenca, for his part, activate collective processes of past and present memory, such as with *Málaga 1937*; or they use codes taken from everyday life and from the public sphere and serve as a critical guide to the places, such as the *maps* made in cities such as Rome, Mataro, Mexico City, or Valencia, created *in situ* together with collectives and students through workshops. Likewise, they seek the progress of critical processes that are not exempt from irony, conveyers of a sense of humour that touches deeply due to its capacity to take the intrinsic comic gesture that operates in any movement very seriously, in particular in those speeches that are read out too seriously and in the things too transcendent that are offered. All his exploration of ‘the *Malaga-ization* of Picasso and the *Picasso-ization* of Malaga’, performed through various installations and projects, is ample example of this latest characteristic.

Without intending to provide at this juncture a catalogue of artists and/or works that would fit, as if in a box, according to the arguments contained in the essay ‘The Author as Ethnographer’, I would like to refer here to two examples of artists within Spain who help to demarcate the ever-transforming territory of social art. Coming from a very different narrative, the artist Mar Reykjavic (Sagunto, 1995) creates performative projects, always in the company of more agents or even without their presence, where she puts into practice a concept she dubs ‘Affective Translation’. In contrast to linguistic translation, which seeks the literality of meaning and of the sense of the message between different languages, Affective Translation uses the affective-symbolic connotations of the language to generate performances in which the word is the engine of the action and the catalysing driver of diversities. Her actions and the videos deriving from them, which are always created with the co-existence of different languages, become poetic pieces precisely due to the role of the words, which given their status as socializing and community tools, attach themselves in diverse ways to our most intimate feelings and our most personal memories and experiences.

The second example is the artist Xavier Arenós (Villarreal, Castellon, 1968), who bases his methodology on a detailed study of what is collective, or collectivized, focussing on eras and contexts such as the anarchist movements of the first third of the twentieth century, the Spanish Second Republic, and the analysis and use of the architecture of the *shadowy* (warrens, hideouts, underground spaces that link, separate, or conceal). The piece *Dibujar una estrella de cinco puntas [Drawing a Five-pointed Star]* (2016) is based on the combined work of a group of people, who are in turn taking part in a prior workshop, as in the case of the maps of López Cuenca. In addition to other objects, the centrepiece of this project is the construction of a five-pointed star. Each one of its parts takes after the individual height of the persons participating in the workshop, who had each previously cut a length of rope the exact length of their height. At the second stage they cut a board in accordance with that length and joined them all together. The result is an irregular, imperfect star as compared to the ideal shape, as happens with people and their bodies.¹²

In another context, and despite specific differences with the projects by Tx. Poyo but with precise subjective and narrative affinities, we would like to draw a line linking *Atlas* by Gerhard Richter with a large part of the output of Hanne Darboven, which culminates in some of the projects by Maria Eichhorn, specifically those made for the German Pavillion at the 59th edition of the Venice Biennale (2022) and at documenta 14 (2017). In the German Pavillion, Eichhorn traced a continuity with the intervention that Hans Haacke had created in 1993. While the latter destroyed the marble floor that had been installed in the national pavilion during the Third Reich, Eichhorn went further and left part of the structure of the building exposed, going even deeper into the questioning of German identity and the system of exhibiting by way of national pavilions at the Venice Biennale. In similar fashion, Eichhorn's intervention at documenta 14, *Rose Valland Institute* (2017), and his research in the archives into the loss of Jewish property in Germany from 1933 onwards, links, albeit as a counter-point, to the famous piece by Haacke, *Shapolsky et al. Manhattan Real Estate Holdings, A Real Time Social System as of May 1, 1971* (1971). In this piece, the German artist unearths property deals, real-estate registrations, and

¹² This project can be seen in the catalogue for the exhibition *La presencia y la ausencia*, IVAM, Valencia, 2017.

connections between the Guggenheim family and proven fraudulent activities. The exhibition, as is well known, was censored six weeks prior to inauguration at the Guggenheim Museum of New York in the spring of 1971. This *thin red line* has a varied make-up in each one of its parts, but an ethnological and ethnographic vocation persists; the desire to contrast *a* world – the personal perspective of each artist – with *the* world – that which we understand as being the generality of everything else.

All of these examples have authorship. As with the projects by Txuspo Poyo himself, they have been made so that the audience can know who made them; they are not anonymous works or projects that hide behind false names or non-existent corporations or idealized collectives. The same applies to *Anónima*. However, they all share the need to articulate themselves around diverse fields of knowledge and action, spaces where the personal is political and the political is activated like a spring that can only be completed from a personal space. As such, where do these investigations lead us when they seek to name the unnameable, to visualize the obvious, or to solve a problem that is not there?

In an essay entitled *Socialidades, autorías [Socialities, Authorships]*¹³, Juan Luis Moraza examines three independent and inter-related categories surrounding the concept of anonymity. For the author, a primary one ‘would be related to ignorance: an author whose name is unknown is designated as ‘anonymous’, as is a factor the influence of which in a particular process is unknown. This first form of anonymity would correspond to environmental sociality. A secondary notion of anonymity would be related to dispossession: the expurgation of the name is a form of cultural exile that entails a loss of singularity and of rights; the reduction of the subject to an instance without attributes, an entity without attributions, a reduction of the being to chattel, or slave, or mechanism’. And lastly, for Moraza, ‘a third form [...] would be related to a concealment: responsibility is delegated, transferred to another, to an instance that allows a projection, to an externalization of responsibility’.

¹³ *Mundos por venir. Fragmentos de un texto futuro*, (digital book), Miguel Ángel Baixauli (ed.), La documental edicions / Editorial Universitat Politècnica de València, Valencia, 2025, pp. 77-96. At the end of the essay, the author says: ‘This text condenses and develops ideas from a range of previous essays, such as “cualquiera, todos, ninguno” (1990), “Más acá del principio de placer” (1991), “Bárbaro neoclásico” (1992), “Tesoro público” (2014), “Fondo” (2021), “Autoría y creación patrimonial” (2022)’.

Anónima presents itself as a territory where one arrives; as an experience that would have been acquired after years of trying; a repertoire of methodological resources and casual encounters destined to face each other, to doubt themselves, and to generate themselves through themselves. However, *Anónima* does not fit exclusively or plainly into any of the notions so skilfully described by Moraza, but rather into a random, indiscriminate use that is almost detached from elements belonging to the three. In this case, the name of the author is known: Txuspo Poyo; but the second part of the primary notion, ‘a factor the influence of which in a particular process is unknown’, could find itself inserted into some of the projects, given that it pertains to a random quality of what is done with an intention to change.

With regard to the secondary notion, linked to dispossession, it does not appear that the artist can in any sense feel culturally exiled due to ‘the expurgation of the name’, but in certain projects created and developed over time, there is an attempt to disappear behind known cultural processes in which the artist intervenes from a secondary position. The artistic emerges from its specific place, which is often also an elitist and sophisticated posture, to be diluted with ordinary life, the simple gesture, the eternal starting point. In *Izaro*, for example, Poyo subtly intervenes in the annual tradition of throwing a roof tile into the sea, off the island of Izaro. The pilgrimage culminates when the mayor of Bermeo throws a roof tile into the sea while exclaiming ‘the leaks from Bermeo reach this far’, claiming sovereignty over the island in the historical dispute with Mundaka and Elantxobe. The artist has created a roof tile identical to that thrown in the sea with each pilgrimage, but cast from metal sourced from three boats which are in turn from each one of the three places party to the dispute. Art intervenes but without altering the essence of the ritual, only contributing the desire to transcend time, an essential element of any artwork.

The third notion developed by Moraza argues that anonymity entails ‘an externalization of responsibility’ or concealment. Once again, this does not apply to the works of Txuspo Poyo who, if anything, seeks to linger in the fortuitous encounters and in the advances made by others, whether anonymous or not, but necessary for the complete development of a shared culture. So what contribution does *Anónima* by Txuspo Poyo offer to this multifaceted, co-operative – and as we can see, elusive – concept? A key contribution: to assert the anonymous status of the materials and objects

used. Newspaper, celluloids, death notices, meteorites, furniture, images that have been used before, tools, postcards... these are the base material on which the artist works and with which he produces his projects. The results – having a defined authorship as they all do – share a time of expression that is not completely their own, but rather bask in the incisions and in their own marks, like when someone writes a name or a date on a tree trunk.

More than one, like myself no doubt, write in order
to have no face.
Do not ask who I am and do not ask me to remain
the same: leave it to our bureaucrats and our police
to see that our papers are in order.
At least spare us that when we write.¹⁴
Michel Foucault

This quotation from Michel Foucault, taken from the last lines of the Introduction to *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, is a ‘mine’: a *mine* in the sense conferred by Didi-Huberman on the ‘atlas’ as an object in the text of the magnificent complementary publication to the exhibition entitled *Atlas. How to Carry the World on One’s Back?* In other words, ‘behind its utilitarian and inoffensive appearance, the atlas could turn out to be, for someone looking closely, a duplicitous, dangerous object, perhaps even explosive, albeit inexhaustibly generous; in a word, a *mine*’¹⁵. Therefore, it is explosive because it blows up the intention that anyone who creates, writes, or makes art has to underpin authorship. It is rich like an (as yet) unexploded mine because it opens up the idea of authorship to its dissolution, and the areas of knowledge and generosity to a territory yet to be discovered and shared. But is it possible to construct a discourse that is as radically new as that of Foucault and pretend that, after doing so or even at the very moment of its construction, one can disappear, or that the person reading it can ignore the person who is behind those words or behind that thought that becomes common at the very moment it is expressed? This question hovers over any attempt to *seek to disappear behind the work*, and is obviously prior to succeeding in disappearing by hiding behind it. And this is the accurate analysis developed by Miguel Morey, a

¹⁴ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.

¹⁵ Georges Didi-Huberman, *Atlas, or the Anxious Gay Science*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, 2010, p. 14.

major expert in Foucault, in the Introduction to the book *Technologies of the Self*¹⁶. In his preliminary essay entitled ‘The Question of Method’, Morey’s starting point is the article dedicated to Foucault written by Maurice Florence in *Le dictionnaire des philosophes*. When the dictionary was published in 1984, Foucault had already died, and therefore the achievements of his philosophical project described under this entry were to an extent left open, like the date of his death, which was just a blank space next to 1926, the date of his birth. Morey develops a powerful analysis of the philosopher’s career via his three intellectual periods: *archaeology*, *genealogy*, and ‘the displacement that leads to the third is already in the making following questions such as ‘governability’ [...]. It is often said that this last period revolves around the question of subjectivity, or if one prefers, the *techniques and technology of subjectivity*’¹⁷. However, so as not to digress from the idea of authorship and anonymity in Foucault, the relevant part is this paragraph:

However, the surprise emerges years later when we discover that the innocuous name taking responsibility for the article (Maurice Florence, *écrivain*) is actually none other than a pseudonym of Foucault himself. Suddenly we find that the philosopher who has throughout his whole career fiercely defended his right to be faceless, the *philosophe masqué* who, just days before his death was arguing for the right to anonymity and to use a pseudonym, whose books ‘should be read for what they are in themselves’, without reference to the author who sustains them from a track record of work, that same author, through one of those sarcasms of fate that surrounded his death, should end up drafting a critical report on the evolution and current state of his work only for chance to transform it into his perfect obituary.¹⁸

In this double game of disguise there is a line of action that is propitious for *Anónima*. The Foucault quotation, on the one hand, proposes the key to what is a shared knowledge, generated through diverse hands and minds, of legacies hanging by thin threads over the course of history and which have somehow managed to reach us with

¹⁶ Michel Foucault, *Technologies of the Self*.

¹⁷ Miguel Morey, ‘Introduction: The Question of Method’, *op. cit.* 7, pp. 12-13.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

incredible tenacity. Everything we know comes from the same source, implying the lifting of a disguise and also a concealment. Wanting to say what one knows does not involve wishing to reap the glory following the impact or the influence of what has been said. If the information and the wisdom arrived via the paths of accessibility, the result will be rightfully used if it is in turn presented as accessible. A continuous current, a circle with no beginning or end, a flame that still burns ... metaphors of the disinterested transfer of knowledge, of the innate faculty of learning.

On the other hand, Morey's reflection: the *masked philosopher*¹⁹, who is commissioned to write an entry about his philosophical impact and his theoretical legacy, which is hidden behind another name, the initials of which (M. F.) coincide with his own and which furthermore is a pseudonym shared with François Ewald²⁰. And all of this without forgetting that, when the *dictionary* is published, Foucault is already dead. This *mise en abyme* of disguises, concealments, pseudonyms, disappearances, and theories launched for the discovery of new disguises, is a tapestry constructed with materials that are similar to those that make up *Anónima*. Works that take the form of a journey through space also offer variables through which to understand time. They are made of time, many diverse times and multiple ways of approaching it. The present is just a new interface that allows the tapestry to be verified.

We know that to give writing its future, it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author.²¹

Roland Barthes

When Roland Barthes talks of the birth of the reader at the expenses of the death of the author, the read-across to the world of art is simple, almost self-evident: here, the birth of the audience is paid for by the death of the artist. In its evolution from the sign to the symbol and from the symbol to the allegory (Herbert Read), there is no work of contemporary art that does not culminate its meaning, and even its function, without the

¹⁹ Michel Foucault was known by this epithet following an interview he gave to the newspaper *Le Monde* on 6 April 1980 and which bore this title. The philosopher made it a condition of the interview that his anonymity should be maintained in full.

²⁰ *Op. cit.* 17, p. 11.

²¹ *Op. cit.* 2.

interpretation of the person who is observing it in detail. Whether there is enough time to observe something in sufficient detail so as to understand it – so that it goes right through us and forms part of our life – is another matter; an excessive requirement for any particular thing and yet one that art insists on achieving. The audience, just like ‘the reader’, has not remained unchanged either. From the audience in the singular we now have audiences in the plural, with the conviction and the certainty that messages are not launched in a prospective direction but rather towards all possible surfaces. Audiences are not measured any more by the expectation of critical reflection of their proposals and comments, but rather by the numbers of visitors, the impact of their *likes*, and their passage through the cloned gift shops of global arts centres and museums.

Anónima, by Txuspo Poyo, sets aside a final spot for this reflection. In the last part of the narrow room of the gallery, his studio has been recreated. It is not a reproduction that seeks to imitate a stage where the artist is always present, like a creator-demiurge; quite the contrary, it is the construction of a way to understand what the artist’s studio contains by way of space and experience; that place once mythical that now stands firm as *a room of one’s own*. In some cases, it even becomes an air-raided shelter protecting against the dialectic outbursts attacking freedom of thought and of expression, precisely championing that which they seek to annihilate. The resistance of art is individual, but in order for it to increase in value and meaning, it must be found in the territories of the anonymous collective, in the marketplaces of the shared social, in the gaps and in the cracks where we reflect on the way we want to live and relate to one another, to create and be remembered in the community to which we belong. A banner by **foundationClass** collective expresses it well: ‘it takes a community to raise an artist’.