

Iza Tarasewicz „The Strange Attractors“

In terms of function, space means speed, “celeritas”. It was something that the antique Romans knew too, but for them it was only used to start wars. In modernity space becomes, together with speed, the fundamental rule for all relations that compose the social life. The modernity is the epoch of the space, of the general equivalence of all its parts. (...) In every epoch, all cultures have elaborated images of the world but only one, the occidental, will pretend that its own image of the world is the world itself and be suitable to the world, hence operate over the image means to operate directly or indirectly over the world.

Franco Farinelli. The Perspective.¹

With the advent of Cartesian logic, however, space has entered the realm of the absolute. As Object opposed to Subject, as res extensa opposed to, and present to, res cogitans, space came to dominate, by containing them, all senses and all bodies.

Henry Lefebvre, The Production of Space.²

In substitution of the Aristotelian idea of “place”, modernity established the use of the notion of “space”. As Franco Farinelli pointed out, space became a quantifiable object, which can be measured. This transition would not be possible if in the representation of this new countable reality there had not appeared a new technology. A new set of instruments allowed a new kind of subject: the one who is placed in front of the world, determining it as his study object.

In the 15th century, perspective appeared together with a new set of techniques, which expanded the western way of seeing. Art, architecture and science were still at the same junction, the one from where the representation and measurement of the world was made and for which a large number of instruments emerged. Those prostheses brought a new way of representing and understanding the world, a novel way of looking at reality: bringing closer the object in the distance, magnifying details of bodies and recording them into the flat surfaces of the paper.

One consequence was that reality was reorganized under the lens of this new vision, producing new rules through the emerging scientific discourse and in fact, a new order. Another one, was that a radical separation happened: the subject, the one who is looking through this new position that emerged through the idea of perspective, was not anymore in reality, which became the object - that space that has to be quantified and measured.

As the world was understood through these new rules, it became mechanised. It was supposed that every single movement, before or after, would be analysed and calculated. Which means: every motion could be predicted. The modern subject, empowered by this knowledge, would believe in his ability to anticipate the future since every signal traces its own possibilities of development. This modern tale was told thanks to the extreme simplification of the abstract writing under the ideal conditions of the mathematicians. However most of the time, reality does not fit to models. Fortunately, the unexpected has plenty of possibilities.

Iza Tarasewicz places her practice in alignment with the branch of physics that problematizes the study of patterns of behaviours in space: the Chaos Theory. This line of scientific thought works under the assumption that

1 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFsKfkbvcy8>

2 LEFEBVRE, Henri, The Production of Space, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2012.

dynamical systems are highly sensitive to the variation of the given initial conditions³. Summarizing, what the Chaos Theory tells us is that an understanding through science is the impossibility of predicting the future.

In order to visualize these systems where chaotic movement is represented, diagrams are used. When a movement appears in the diagram, it is represented through a roving orbit. When this happens, it is said that there is an Attractor. Strange Attractors are elements that influence the behaviour of the reality to be studied, altering the given conditions. In the Chaos Theory, they have structure in all their scales, which follows a fractal logic. We could say that they are catalysts of unexpected possibilities.

The book "Strange Attractors" by Louis Armand, who will present a response to the exhibition at the finissage, also influenced Tarasewicz. This book explores the poetic potential of the language and concepts coming from the Chaos Theory applied to the understanding of layers of reality not necessarily linked to physics. Tarasewicz's incorporation of this poetic license shows an approach more related to a philosophical trajectory rather than an illustration of the concept. With her proposal, she speculates on processes that cover a range of phenomena from the micro to the macro, analysing the representations incorporated in diagrams, statistics and other scientific devices, which magnify details of microscopic reality such as DNA fragments or describe the movements of the weather presented in the Lorenz Attractor, well known as the Butterfly Effect. With these strategies, she rehearses on the tangled and often unacknowledged relations between control and disorder, expected and unexpected, and attraction and repulsion.

The perception of the space unfolded from these models of thought places us in a different situation than the one described in the classical modern approach. There is not an absolute determination. The classical opposition between Object and Subject is not functional anymore. Through this paradigm, a situation is presented where the one who operates the instruments of observation cannot be separated from the object that is observed, the reality. The subject is an inevitable part of the context, constituting a model capable of restoring that radical separation. Tarasewicz's works go into this multi-layered composition with an analysis of Chaos representations and references to the instruments used in physics to produce them. She interweaves a composition between the perception and its representation, producing artworks that restore the relation between the Object and the Subject.

Lorenzo Sandoval

Lorenzo Sandoval works as an artist and curator. He is co-founder and chief curator of the artists' initiative „Altes Finanzamt“ in Berlin. He received several awards for his curatorial work. He was born in Madrid in 1980 and now lives in Berlin. <http://cargocollective.com/lorenzosandoval/>

Iza Tarasewicz „The Strange Attractors“

The artist's first solo exhibition in Berlin

opening: Thursday, 20 February 2014, 19:00 pm

Location: Polish Institute Berlin, Burgstraße 27, 10178 Berlin

Curator: Lorenzo Sandoval

Exhibition open until 3 April 2014

in cooperation with the Künstlerhaus Bethanien

³ Small differences in initial conditions (such as those due to rounding errors in numerical computation) yield widely diverging outcomes for such dynamical systems, rendering long-term prediction impossible in general. This happens even though these systems are deterministic, meaning that their future behaviour is fully determined by their initial conditions, with no random elements involved. In other words, the deterministic nature of these systems does not make them predictable. This behaviour is known as deterministic chaos, or simply chaos. From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaos_theory