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**DE LA SALLE-
COLLEGE
OF SAINT
BENILDE**

Re-enactments is an exhibition that takes up the issue of performance, whether this be documented, constructed, based within the parameters of gestural, traditional exhibition format of the medium, its possibilities, and its challenges, while at the same time engaging the forms by which concepts, performance, and documentation end the exhibition to exist within an institution.

The exhibition also introduces works that move away from the centrality of the artist's presence as it questions the role of body and language, blurring, and momentarily merging the live act

...documented performance, scripts, objects, situations, currently utilized by artists to render the performative art give us ways we can interpret and access this most challenging of media.

These propositions are explored through works by Francis Alÿs, Yason Basal, Erick Beltran, Dora Lacer, Silvana Mangano, Liz Magic Gabriella Mangano.

RE-ENACTMENTS

STUDY GUIDE

COLLEGE

RE-ENACTMENTS

FRANCIS ALÿS

A re-enactment is a repeat performance of a specific event. It is implied that the event has already happened before, in some form or another. There are many possible reasons for this repetition—we sometimes repeat things to emphasize them, sometimes to bring back a specific feeling or experience, or even sometimes to arrive at a different result. Of course, the question is this: do things ever *really* repeat? Even if one performs a specific action for a second time, is it not already different, a completely independent event from the first time? And if the re-enactment is different from the original—then what kind of purpose does a re-enactment actually serve?

Here, Francis Alÿs shows two videos of him walking around Mexico City with a purchased gun in his hand. His subsequent arrest as a consequence of the action and his release has been documented and re-enacted. The two videos make up the documentation of the actual event and the re-enactment.



PRE-VISIT

- Divide the class into groups to discuss incidences when they have done a re-enactment or was an audience for a re-enactment. Discussion can look into
 - What was re-enacted and for whom
 - Scale of the re-enactment
 - Purpose for the re-enactment
 - Manner and means of doing the re-enactment
 - Effect on the audience
- Have each group share their findings, compare and contrast these findings and come up with a group definition of re-enactments.
- Let the students research on different kinds of re-enacted performances and pieces. It can be a theater piece, a musical piece, a movie or television show, a poem or short story turned into a performance, and etc.
- Authenticity is one of the issues re-enactments face. Have the students create a rubric by which they would evaluate the authenticity of a re-enactment. Let them use this rubric when viewing a re-enactment and discuss the effectiveness and efficiency of such a rubric.

VISIT

EXPLORE THE EXHIBIT

View the exhibit/two videos. The walk that Alys does is a negation of “productive” action, of rational decision making. But while walking may be seen as nothing, the act of walking with a gun in the streets of Mexico is commentary on that society at that time -- the violence, corruption, etc. Take note of the time line in both videos and discuss the implication of the duration of the events.

You can use the following as guide questions for the students:

- Are there differences in the two videos? What are these?
- How do the differences strengthen or weaken the idea of re-enactment?
- What was the effect on the viewers of having the two videos play simultaneously, with one being marked re-enactment?
- The artist stated that this work demonstrates “how media can distort and dramatize the immediate reality of a moment.” Look at the two videos to determine the distortions and dramatizations, and how these were accomplished and their effects on the viewers.
- The setting is Mexico City in 2001. Would it have been possible to do the actual event and/or its re-enactment in an earlier or later period in Mexico? In another place? Why?

POST-VISIT

Originally from Belgium, Alys moved to Mexico City. “It has often been noted that the poverty of means of Alys’s practice is particularly suited to the Latin American milieu in which he has largely worked,” wrote James Meyer. Have a look at Alys’ other works and see what is meant by “poverty of means” and whether or not the assertion of suitability of his work in Mexico is true or not. Why or why not?

Alys, along with Christian Philipp Müller and Renée Green “inscribed the mobility of the artist at the center of their practices.” Discuss the idea of artists’ mobility in terms of Alys’ walk as well as the contemporary art scene with the availability of residencies, globalization, etc.

Look into the relation of performance and mobility.

DEMONSTRATIVE FIGURES

ERICK BELTRÀN



Dance is one of the many forms of art, prioritizing the ability of the human body to perform various movements. While dance is primarily a physical activity, as a form of art, its power lies in its ability to express via movements of the body, its capacity to tell stories or visualize certain emotions. Dance becomes a form of communication, and those privy to its language become part of a community.

Apart from the capacity to build certain communities, dance can establish cultures, locations, or even histories. Here, Erick Beltràn gives us a view of the history of the dance called Sarabande, “from its unclear origin in Spain, to its revitalization as sexual Caribbean dance eventually taken as symbol of independence and revolt to its reintroduction to Europe by [the] Scottish (because of this very reason: political charge), to its domestication by French Court (Louis XIV).”

PRE-VISIT

Look into the history of the sarabande, how it moved from Mexico to Spain, Italy and France. What made the movement of the dance possible from one country to another possible? Was the movement smooth? Why? Would there have been other directions the sarabande could have gone? Why?

VISIT

Focus on having the students interpret the graphics or movements seen and let them jot down their ideas and answers. Divide the class into groups and let each group dance and interpret the work; allow them to follow the symbols and lines. After all the performances, you or a dancer can critique their performance.

Show them an example of a dance notation and ask the students to look into the ff: implication of the size of the stickers, the color of the stickers, where the stickers are located in the gallery, the positioning of the dance notations/instructions. Discuss the idea of interventions, how they appear in art and their function.

POST-VISIT

Symbols evolve. Discuss the dance notations in terms of their evolution. What were the influence on the past and present form of the notations? What form do you think the future notations will take? Why?

The artist is interested in how images and icons organize and convey information. The class can be divided into groups — one group looking into branding, another on image fusion techniques, etc. The similarities and differences in terms of input and output, rationale, effect etc. can be discussed.

THERE IS NO THERE

SILVANA MANGANO
AND GABRIELLA MANGANO

Silvana and Gabriella Mangano usually use their bodies in their practice but in this piece, they collaborated with actors/dancers. A 10 minute looped video with sound plays in conjunction with a live performance. The gestures are taken from images in newspapers, and the performers' movement within the space helps create the sculptural aspect of the work.



Invite photo editors as well as photographers from different newspapers. Have a discussion on their protocols, ethics with regard to taking photographs and with regard to choosing which photograph to use in which section of the newspaper. Research on the different professional organizations that focus on photojournalism. Have the students go through the winning photographs for photojournalism and see which of these have similarities with the gestures in the work of the Mangano sisters.

INVISIBLE OBJECT

MICHELLE LOPEZ

The title of the work is taken from Alberto Giacometti's *Hands Holding the Void (Invisible Object)*. In front of a two-way mirror and with eyes closed, persons describe — through words and gestures — an object they cannot name or understand that appeared to them in a dream.



PRE-VISIT

Look at different videos where you have people describing an object (make sure that an image of the object being described does not appear in the video) using language you can understand and accompanied by gestures. Mute the videos and see if you can guess the object being described through the gestures alone. Play the video with sound on and guess the object. Then close your eyes, listen to the descriptions and guess the objects. Compare the number of correct guesses you have from each exercise. Is there a discrepancy in the scores? Why or why not? Have a discussion on how human beings are conditioned to perceive things.

VISIT

The artist wrote

There are a few modalities that operate in my process of late: one involves the material of light, one considers the residue of the absent body; the other builds the unknown, imagined space that brings forward an object.

Watch the video and note the techniques the artist uses to help create what she calls "imagined space that brings forward an object." What is/are the object/s that are/ is brought forth, if any?

POST-VISIT

In the video, the objects are invisible because as yet they remain in the minds of the persons in the video as dreams. Have a discussion on how objects, spaces and people can be rendered invisible in society and why.

THE THOUGHT LEADER

LIZ MAGIC LASER



When prominent individuals give talks or speeches, the usual configuration we have in mind is that of the speaker orating in front, exerting authority over a sea of audience members who nod silently in approval. This format allows for a specific flow of power to happen—since the speaker is the center of attention, he or she controls the whole room. Everyone is hanging on to the speaker’s every word, thereby giving the words more value. If somebody other than the speaker was to interrupt, or cause a commotion, there is even a possibility that enforcers (in the form of guards, or other audience members) will move to subdue the offender. If an audience member were to oppose the speaker’s thoughts, even in the form of a whisper to the person sitting beside him/her, that opposition is weak. The speaker is a person of power.

In Liz Magic Laser’s *The Thought Leader*, a 10-year old delivers a talk in the usual TED talk stage and format, borrowing the speech content from Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s *Notes From the Underground* (1864). The TED talk format has gained traction in recent years, being a vehicle of communicating “big” ideas to huge groups of people, making it easier to understand.

PRE-VISIT

Dostoyevsky and Freewill

- Let the students read “Notes from Underground” by Fyodor Dostoyevsky.
- Once done reading the book, let them make an analysis and reflection. Focus on the following when writing the analysis:
 - Book’s theme
 - Dostoyevsky’s concept of freewill and consciousness
 - Exploration of the students’ own concept of freewill and consciousness
- From this, let the class have a group sharing of the analysis and reflections they made.
- In the same groups, prepare a report summarizing the group’s overall concept of freewill. Include in the report sentiments regarding questions on:
- What is freewill for you?
 - How do you practice your freewill in everyday situations?
 - In a bigger perspective, how do you practice freewill in the society?
 - Do you adhere to society’s social constructs? Why or why not?
 - What do you think are the factors that hinder you from acting on your freewill?
 - What are the factors that urge you to act on your freewill?

What is a TED Talk?

Watch videos of TED Talks. From this, have a class discussion evolving around these questions:

- What is a TED Talk?
- What are the topics in a TED Talk?
- How do you feel when listening to the talk?
 - Do you feel empowered? Motivated?
 - Do you feel enlightened? Interested in the topic?
 - Do you feel neutral or passive?
 - Do you feel uninterested? Exasperated?
- Why do you feel this way?

VISIT

Explore the Exhibit

List down the ways in which the performance conforms to TED Talks and the ways in which it differs.

Share Your Thoughts

- In groups, let the students share their answers about the 5 points they find interesting or have learned. Include also in the discussion the following questions:
 - In the video, what is the main difference between the person delivering the talk and the crowd listening to the talk?
 - Put yourself in the shoes of an audience member. How does it feel to listen to this talk?
 - Observe carefully the various expressions of the audience members—what do you notice?
 - In the last part of the video, there is an attempt at audience participation. How does this make you feel? Have you ever felt similarly before?
- Have a sharing of your expectations regarding the exhibit. Were your expectations met? Were you surprised of what you saw? Why or why not?
- Let the students jot down their answers during the discussions.

POST-VISIT

Look into how the discussion on free will has moved from philosophy to mass media. How are they similar? different? Also look into how actions determine free will

RE- ENACTMENTS

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Cori Francesca Co
Mia Fortugaleza
Carissa Laurel
Venus Mar
Jezi Matias
Michelangelo Miccolis
Paul Natividad
Amihan Ceres Ruiz
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GRAPHIC DESIGN

Bon Corachea

MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday to Saturday
Sunday

10.00am - 6.00pm
10.00am - 2.00pm

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