



UOA D32

ART AND DESIGN:
HISTORY, THEORY AND PRACTICE



RESEARCHER

Juan Cruz

OUTPUT TITLE

Catalogue: It will seem a dream

OUTPUT TYPE

Exhibition and Book

DATE

18 February – 4 June 2017

FIG. 1

Juan Cruz *It will seem a dream/It is/1981/L'urinoir n'est pas une cendrier/A kiss without a kiss*, all 2012. Carborundum prints, each 745 × 485mm. Photo Courtesy of MUSAC



Link to exhibition website:

<https://musac.es/#exposiciones/expo?id=6298&from=anteriores>

<https://vimeo.com/215039547>

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.7488/1c03254b-aa57-425e-b284-e65491586def>

01 / STATEMENT

Catalogue: It will seem a dream is the title of an exhibition project at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (MUSAC) Leon, Spain, 18 February – 4 June 2017.

The exhibition consisted of an installation (FIG. 1) and a book (FIGS. 2–3). The installation comprised 10 video works, 1 slide work, 1 sculpture, 10 prints and 1 typed piece. The book was published by MUSAC and Occasional Papers in 2017.

The project addressed questions about ways in which artists might reinterpret and curate their own work. Situated within the context of contemporary practices that are not object based, the research questions the extent to which works made through such practices might be able to generate and be understood through several forms, thus challenging expectations, based in object based practice and to some extent museology and conservation, around the singularity and stability of the artwork. The research was also an investigation into impact and practical implications of the digital within conceptual art.

The exhibition was widely reviewed and the book was launched at an event at Matt's Gallery 6 June 2017 and during the Artists' Book Fair at Wiels, Brussels, 9 September 2017, in both cases with readings by Cruz.

FIGS. 2-3
Juan Cruz *Catalogue: It will seem a dream* book, 13 x 21cm.
Courtesy MUSAC

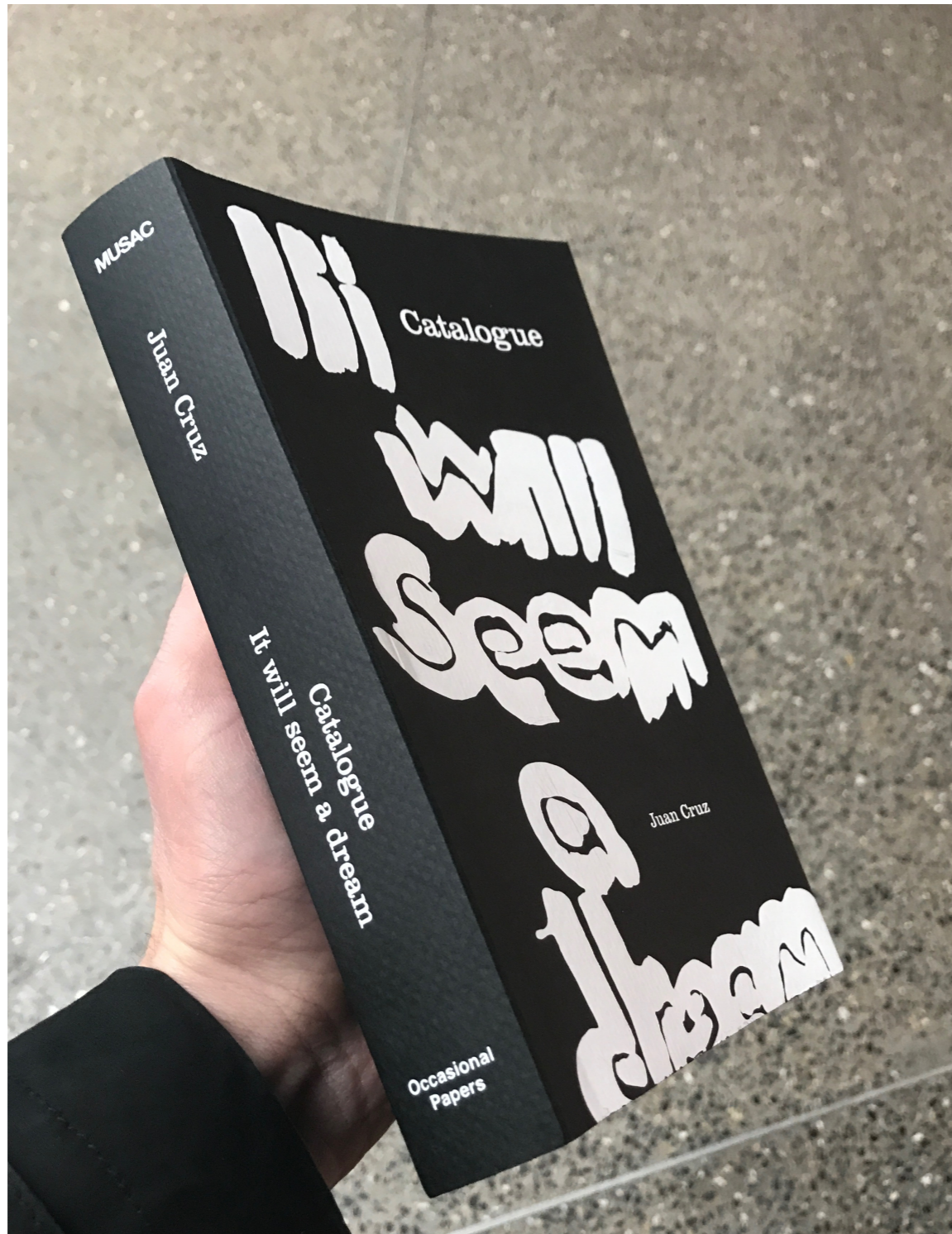




FIG. 4
 Juan Cruz, *Catalogue: It will seem a dream*, exhibition view, MUSAC, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, 17 January – 4 June 2017. Photo Imagen MAS. © courtesy of MUSAC.

02 / RESEARCH DIMENSIONS

The research references traditions of conceptual and archival art practices.

This includes long-standing questions concerning the materiality and potential dematerialisation of artworks, the relations between text and image, the identity of the artist and its navigation across thresholds of the personal and the descriptive, autobiographical and artistic, the fictionalisation of photographic processes, and the interrogation of the exhibition form (Le Witt, Weiner, Boltanski, Broodthaers).

Central to the project is the question of how artists might reinterpret and curate their own work and how the reconstitution of works challenges expectations about the singularity and stability of the artwork. The research also considers the impact and practical implications of the digital within discourses of conceptual art. In its foregrounding of the administrative and intellectual implications of artworks comprising of data, it stands apart from much contemporary art that addresses the digital, which tends to foreground the aesthetics of a digital age.

Research process

Cruz identified 32 works he had made between 1997 and 2017 on the basis that they all involved original writing, as opposed to translations or treatments of other written material. These works took a number of forms, with the writing present as text in books, pamphlets, videos, prints and as monologues and audio pieces. Cruz extracted the textual materials from these works and reconfigured them within the standard format of a single book. In addition, some of these texts – 23 in total – were re-presented within the installation, most in different ways and formats, effectively as new works.

Those works that originally had assumed a fixed material presence – the prints – were included in the installation in their original form. The others, which had originally assumed a number of forms, generally determined by the context in which they had been exhibited, were recreated as new single channel video works. This research process involved the excavation of digital files produced in an array of now obsolete formats: audio cassette, MiniDisc, MiniDV, Hi8, Quark Xpress and ClarisWorks. These works were then projected at a standard scale, from identical projectors and stands in the installation space.

The process of excavation and re-presentation was a technical and intellectual exercise that enabled an understanding of the potential for artworks to remain flexible and to be reconstituted.

The idea of the project was developed through conversations with publishers, archivists, registrars and curators about the extent to which existing artworks might be reconfigured, and how that might impact the reading and value of the work.

The research was also informed by the activities of the Exhibition Research Centre at Liverpool School of Art & Design, established by Antony Hudek in 2012 as a centre devoted to the study of exhibitions. Its mission was to support research in this then-overlooked area of study by publishing books and organising exhibitions and other public events. As the then director of Liverpool School of Art & Design, Cruz supported and contributed to the launch of the centre, and his research undertaken there into curatorial and archival approaches to exhibitions and programming have influenced this output.

03 / ORIGINALITY

In Cruz's work, the question of the archival is positioned with respect to the archiving of the artist's own production over a number of years.

The exhibition and the collation and re-presentation of texts as a single book functions as a transformative and productive process. Archiving operates here as a method of reflection on the artist's development, a process of translation and retranslation that implicates the possibility of new meaning through the discovery of new semantic, conceptual and visual relations between material.

Concomitantly, materialisation and dematerialisation are invested as part of the act of re-translating, archiving previous works. This approach, and the effects that it generates disrupts the linearity of standard 'survey' exhibition presentations. The exhibition becomes the site for a documenting of the artist's oeuvre.

The exhibition hinged on the relations between the book and the installation. The book consists of 16 texts, written between 1997 and 2012, that cross autobiography and description, documentary and fiction.

The exhibition consisted of an installation and a book. The installation comprised 10 video works, 1 slide work, 1 sculpture, 10 prints and 1 typed piece. These are listed on pages 10 – 12.

Rather than a catalogue to an exhibition, functioning in the standard sense of a re-presentation, the book acted more as a source and conceptual hinge for the exhibition, shaping the selection of its contents and their modes of display and spatial interrelations. This self-referentiality based on a dynamic interplay between the book and the installation challenges the logic of chronology that usually accompanies any survey presentation of an artist's work, and invites a new way of experiencing an 'oeuvre'.



FIG. 5
 Juan Cruz, *Catalogue: It will seem a dream*, exhibition view, MUSAC, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, 17 January – 4 June 2017. Photo Imagen MAS. © courtesy of MUSAC.

List of works

The project deployed 32 works in total. All of these are identified in the book and 23 of them were exhibited, in most cases reconfigured as new works, for the exhibition.

1. *Descriptions of Works in the Collection of the South London Gallery*, 1997.
Book/installation.

Commissioned by graduating students of the Goldsmiths MA Curating programme for the exhibition *Summer Collection* at the South London Gallery. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

2. *Sancti Petri*, 1998 (FIGS. 6–7).
Tape/slide installation, 38 minutes.

Commissioned by Matt's Gallery, London, and now in the Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London. *Included in the book and recreated as new single channel video work for the exhibition, 38 minutes, 2017.*

3. *James: Grey Doors, Woodyard and The Golden Heart*, 1998.
Typescript/installation.

First exhibited in *Backspace*, Matt's Gallery, London. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

James: Grey Doors, 1998.
Typescript/installation.

First exhibited in *Artists of the World*, Passage de Retz, Paris. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

James: Woodyard, 1998.
Typescript/installation.

First exhibited in *Soon*, curated by Dermot O'Brien, Het Consortium, Amsterdam. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

4. *That That Which*, 1998 (FIG. 8).
Silkscreen on poster paper 648 × 478mm.

First exhibited in *A to Z*, curated by Matthew Higgs for *The Approach*, London 1998. *Included in the book and the exhibition.*

5. *Lock and Quarry*, 1999.
Typescript/installation.

First exhibited in *Lucy Gunning – Juan Cruz*, curated by Susanne Gaensheimer, Künstlerwerkstatt, Munich. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

6. *Driving Back*, 2000 (FIG. 9).
Audio installation 25 minutes.

Commissioned by Camden Arts Centre, London. First published as *Driving Back* [CD] London: Camden Arts Centre, 2000. ISBN 1900470144. *Included in the book and recreated as new single channel video work for the exhibition, 25 minutes, 2017.*

7. *Meter*, 2000.
Aluminium multiple.

Commissioned by Camden Arts Centre, London. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

8. *Santa Maria 5 O'Clock*, 2000 (FIG. 10).
Video installation 32 minutes.

Commissioned by Kettle's Yard, Cambridge. *Included in the book and the exhibition.*

9. *Portrait of a Sculptor*, 2001 (FIG. 11).
Installation with video projection, video on monitor, architectural interventions and pamphlet, 62 minutes.

Commissioned by Matt's Gallery, London. First published as *Portrait of a Sculptor*, London: Matt's Gallery [monograph]. ISBN 0907623387. *Included in the book and recreated as new single channel video work for the exhibition, 62 minutes, 2017.*

10. *Application for Planning Permit: Proposal to Build a Metaphor*, 2001.

Planning permit applications in twelve sites throughout Melbourne and project lodged permanently in Melbourne City Archives.

Commissioned by Juliana Engberg for the Melbourne Festival. First published as *Application for Planning Permit: Proposal to Build a Metaphor Melbourne: Melbourne Festival 2002*. ISBN 0958 039208. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

11. *Two Cameras*, 2002.
Typescript/installation.

First exhibited in *Geometers*, curated by Simon Morrissey for Geometers, Nylon, London. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

12. *Disappearing Streets*, 2002 (FIGS. 12–13).
Typescript, photographs, cable clip sculptures, slide projections, 7 minutes.

Versions of this work have been exhibited in *Techniken Des Vorueberziehens/Techniques of Passing-Alluding*, curated by Verena Gfader, Fotoforum, Innsbruck and at Galeria Elba Benitez, Madrid. *Included in the book and recreated as new single channel video work for the exhibition, 25 minutes, 2017.*

13. *Cable Clips*, 2002 (FIG. 14).
Found objects (cable clips) c. 40 × 70cm.

Courtesy of the artist and Elba Benitez Gallery. *Included in the book and the exhibition.*

14. *Planning Permits*, 2003 (FIG. 15).
80 × 35mm timed slide projection.

Courtesy of the artist and Elba Benitez Gallery. *Included in the book and the exhibition.*

15. *Palms*, 2003–2017 (FIGS. 16–17).
Slide projections, 15 minutes.

Not previously exhibited. *Included in the book and configured as new single channel video work for the exhibition, 15 minutes, 2017.*

16. *Index*, 2003–2017 (FIGS. 18–20).
36 typed index cards each 127 × 75mm.

Not previously exhibited. *Included in the book and configured as new work for the exhibition, 2017.*

17. *Three Shows*, 2004 (FIGS. 21–23).
Performance / slide projections, 20 minutes.

Commissioned by Mark Wilsher for The Tabernacle Theatre, London. *Included in the book and configured as new single channel video work for the exhibition, 60 minutes, 2017.*

18. *Two Clamped Books*, 2009.
Photograph.

Previously reproduced in NOIT, London: Camberwell Press; 1st issue, November 2013. ISBN 1908971282. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

19. *In the Shape of What We Know*, 2007 (FIG. 24).
Two channel asynchronous video installation, undefined, loop.

Commissioned by Remise Bludenz, Austria. *Included in the book and configured as new single channel video work for the exhibition, 6 minutes, 2017.*

20. *Un Aire de Actividad*, 2008 (FIGS. 25–26).
Two channel asynchronous video installation, undefined, loop.

Commissioned by PAC, Murcia for Estratos, curated by Nicolas Bourriaud. *Configured as new single channel video work for the exhibition, but not included in the book, 16 minutes, 2017.*

21. *Mensch*, 2009.
Bluetooth transmissions.

Commissioned by Juliana Engberg for *The Enlightenments*, Edinburgh International Festival. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

22. *Translating: Chapter 2*, 2009 (FIGS. 27–28).
Video / installation, 19 minutes.

Commissioned by Matthew de Pullford for *Bad Translations*, Crate, Margate and made in collaboration with Naama Yuria. *Included in the book and configured as new single channel video work for the exhibition, 19 minutes, 2017.*

23. *Perdendosi*, 2011.
Carborundum print, 380 × 285mm.

Included in the book and the exhibition.

24. *Perdendosi*, 2012 (FIGS. 29–31).
Adapted airport signage.

Commissioned by Peter Gorschluter for *Terminal Convention*, Cork – a Static, Liverpool, project. *Included in the book but not the exhibition.*

25 a. – e. *It will seem a dream/It is/1981/L'urinoir n'est pas une cendrier/A kiss without a kiss*, all 2012 (FIG. 32 & FIGS. 43–38).
Carborundum prints, each 745 × 485mm.

All included in the book and the exhibition.

26 a. – c. *Casi esto/Menos fuerte/Y con ganas*, all 2014 (FIG. 33).
Offset litho monoprints, each 765 × 565mm.

All included in the book and the exhibition.

What follows on pages 13–37 are details and images of the works presented in the MUSAC installation. The works in the book are not enumerated here.

2. *Sancti Petri*, 1998.

Sancti Petri, in Cadiz, was a base for the local seasonal tuna fishing industry. The images in the video show the village as it was in 1998, when the video was made. However, the text in the book refers to the fishing industry when it was in full function.

This occasions a dislocation between the image and the text. This dislocation was extended by the disjunctive conditions between the site of the work and the site of the exhibition.



FIG. 6
Juan Cruz *Sancti Petri*, 1998.
Tape / slide installation, 38 minutes.
Still from new single channel video work, 2017. Photo by Juan Cruz



FIG. 7
Juan Cruz *Sancti Petri*, 1998.
Tape / slide installation, 38 minutes.
Source image, 1998. Photo by Juan Cruz

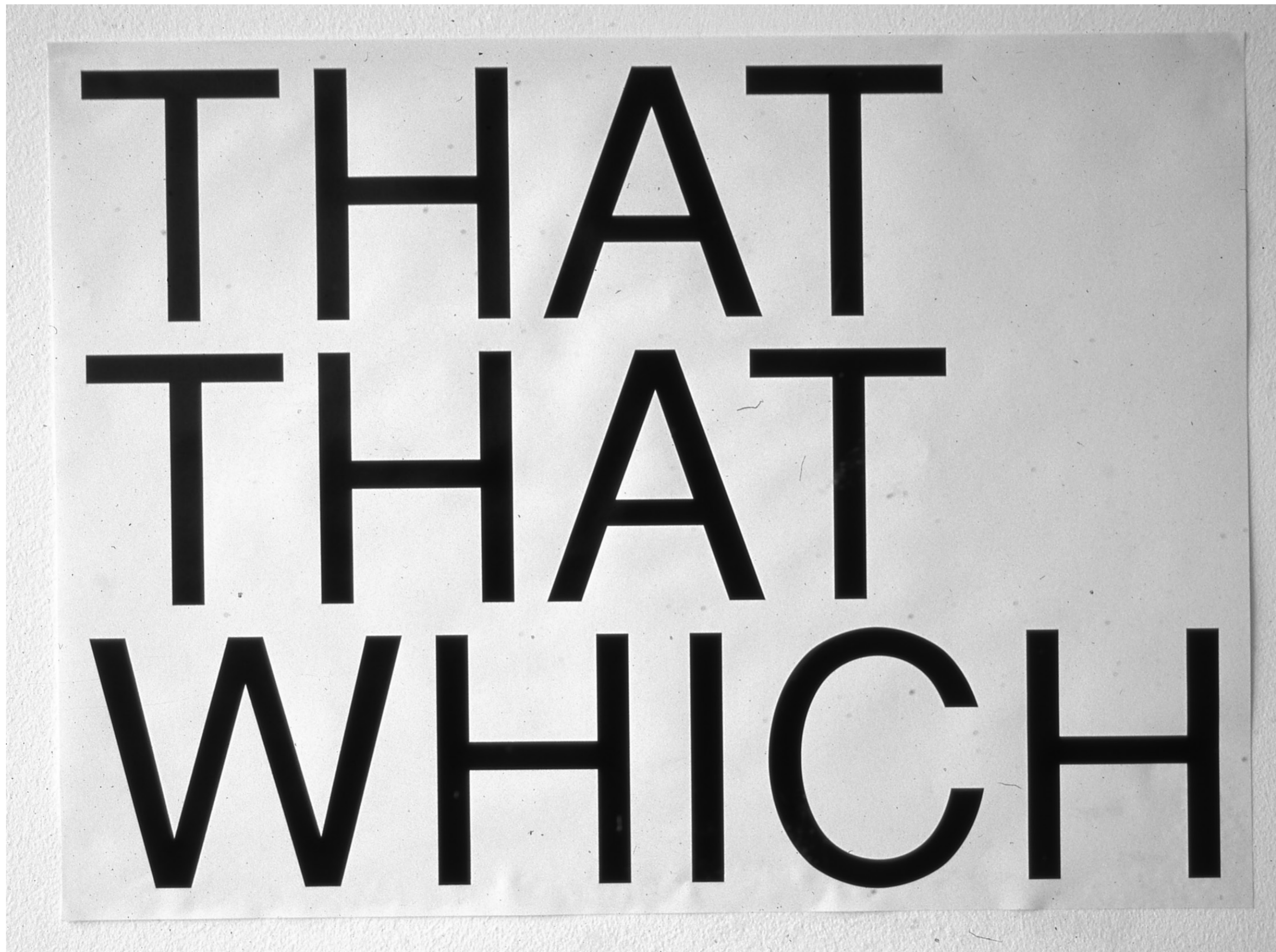


FIG. 8
Juan Cruz *That That Which*, 1998.
Silkscreen on poster paper 648
× 478mm. Photo by Juan Cruz

4. *That That Which*, 1998.

This work, made specifically for an exhibition about artists using text and language in 1998, is prescient of Cruz's later work, and has always been something of a leitmotif in his practice.

That That Which, both through the sparseness of the text and the rigidity of the design, seems to be trying to define and specify something very particular, but could at the same time be understood to mean nothing, or anything at all. These are words that we use every day, and in almost all our utterances, to glue other words together and make specific meanings emerge from the generic tools of language.

6. *Driving Back*, 2000.

The spoken text in this work describes consecutive stages of a familiar car journey in mid Wales, interspersed with reflections that appear to emerge from a conversation between driver and passenger. *Driving Back* was originally shown as an audio piece, with no images.

For MUSAC, the work incorporated the images originally used as references for the text. As such, the work is effectively reversed, with the images that gave rise to the text in the first instance now following the lead of the recorded text.

FIG. 9
 Juan Cruz *Driving Back*, 2000.
 Audio installation, 25 minutes.
 Still from new single channel
 video work 2017. Photo by Juan
 Cruz



8. *Santa Maria 5 O'Clock*, 2000.

This work depicts a repetitive journey between two villages in Palencia that concludes, in each instance, with the vertical orientation of the images being cut by the violent, lateral movement of a train. The work develops a strong narrative and atmospheric sense of place, alongside a meditation on the technical conditions of video and narrative image making, with the explicit foregrounding of aspects such as the blur of rewind and the colour of blue screen.

As with many of the works in this exhibition, this piece addresses the way in which changes in media over the last twenty years have impacted our expectations of images and their consumption.

FIG. 10
 Juan Cruz *Santa Maria 5 O'Clock*,
 2000. Video installation, 32
 minutes. Source image. Photo by
 Juan Cruz



9. *Portrait of a Sculptor, 2001.*

This work was inspired by Cruz's fascination for Velazquez's painting, *Portrait of a Sculptor: The Sculptor Juan Martínez Montañés, in the Prado*. In the short story that accompanies the video, Cruz writes:

"... the most striking memory I have of seeing the painting for the first time – and the thing that has retained my interest in it for so long – was the shock and pleasure of seeing raw canvas in a painting of that period. Indeed, the joy of seeing in a museum a material that I could think of as real.

For what the caption doesn't mention is that the bust, rather than having been painted by Velazquez, is represented by a patch of bare canvas onto which a few features are sketched. There are some texts about the painting that insist that it is unfinished, but I find this interpretation unconvincing. I maintain that, instead of depicting the bust, Velazquez finds an equivalent, in relation to painting, that indicates the unfinished state of the sculpture."

FIG. 11
Juan Cruz *Portrait of a Sculptor*, 2001. Installation with video projection, video on monitor, architectural interventions and pamphlet. Still from new single channel video work 2017. Photo by Juan Cruz



12. *Disappearing Streets, 2002.*

The image of a disappearing street is really an expression of perspective, of a space that appears to be contained only because it is frozen as an image. As such, these images hold a certain promise or potential, as well as speaking to a certain sense of desperation in their banality.

The work is fundamentally about the problem of how to make decisions, both in art and in life, and touches on such questions as how to frame an image and how to present it, as well as how to choose a haircut or a vehicle.

FIG. 12
Juan Cruz *Disappearing Streets*, 2002. Photographs, installation view from new single channel video work 2017. Courtesy MUSAC

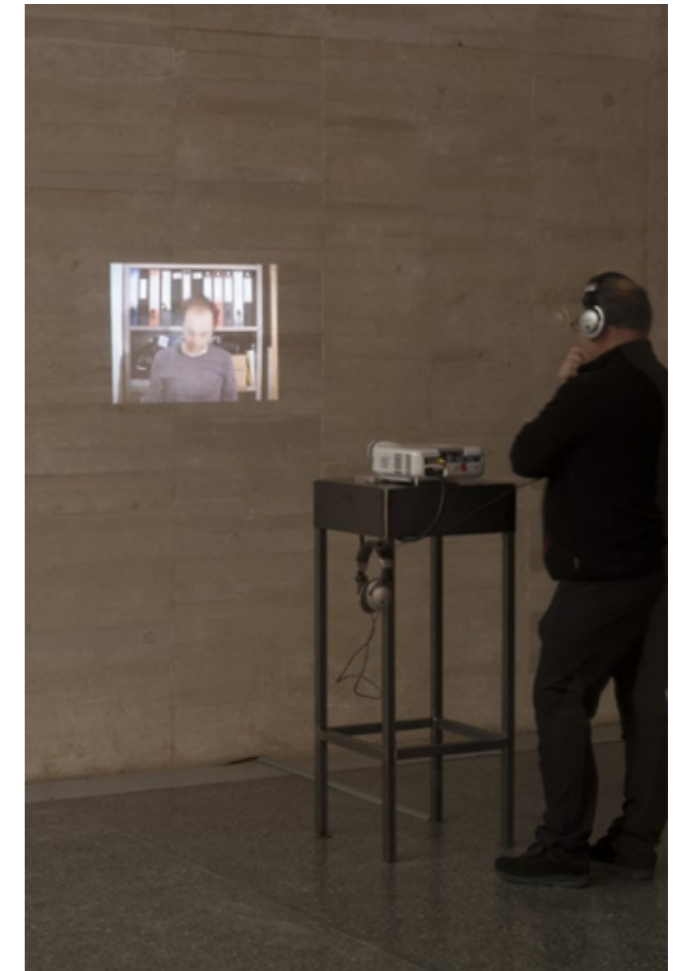


FIG. 13
Juan Cruz *Disappearing Streets*, 2002. Photographs, still from new single channel video work 2017. Photo by Juan Cruz



13. Cable Clips, 2002.

Cruz collected the cable clips and other elements in these works on several walks through London, during which he cut them from lampposts, traffic lights and railings. They are the remnants of signs and notices that were required for various reasons to be present in the public realm, and they remain stubbornly attached even when the notices they held are removed.

Whereas much of the work in this exhibition presents itself in a documentary and immaterial fashion, these works are doggedly materialist. Their form comes about from the way in which the various elements combine and cling onto each other when collected in a bag. They also have the appearance of tumbleweed, and allude to the idea of artworks simply being there to fill otherwise empty spaces.

FIG. 14
 Juan Cruz *Cable Clips*, 2002. Found objects (cable clips) c. 40 x 70cm
 Courtesy of the artist and Elba Benitez Gallery. Photo by Juan Cruz

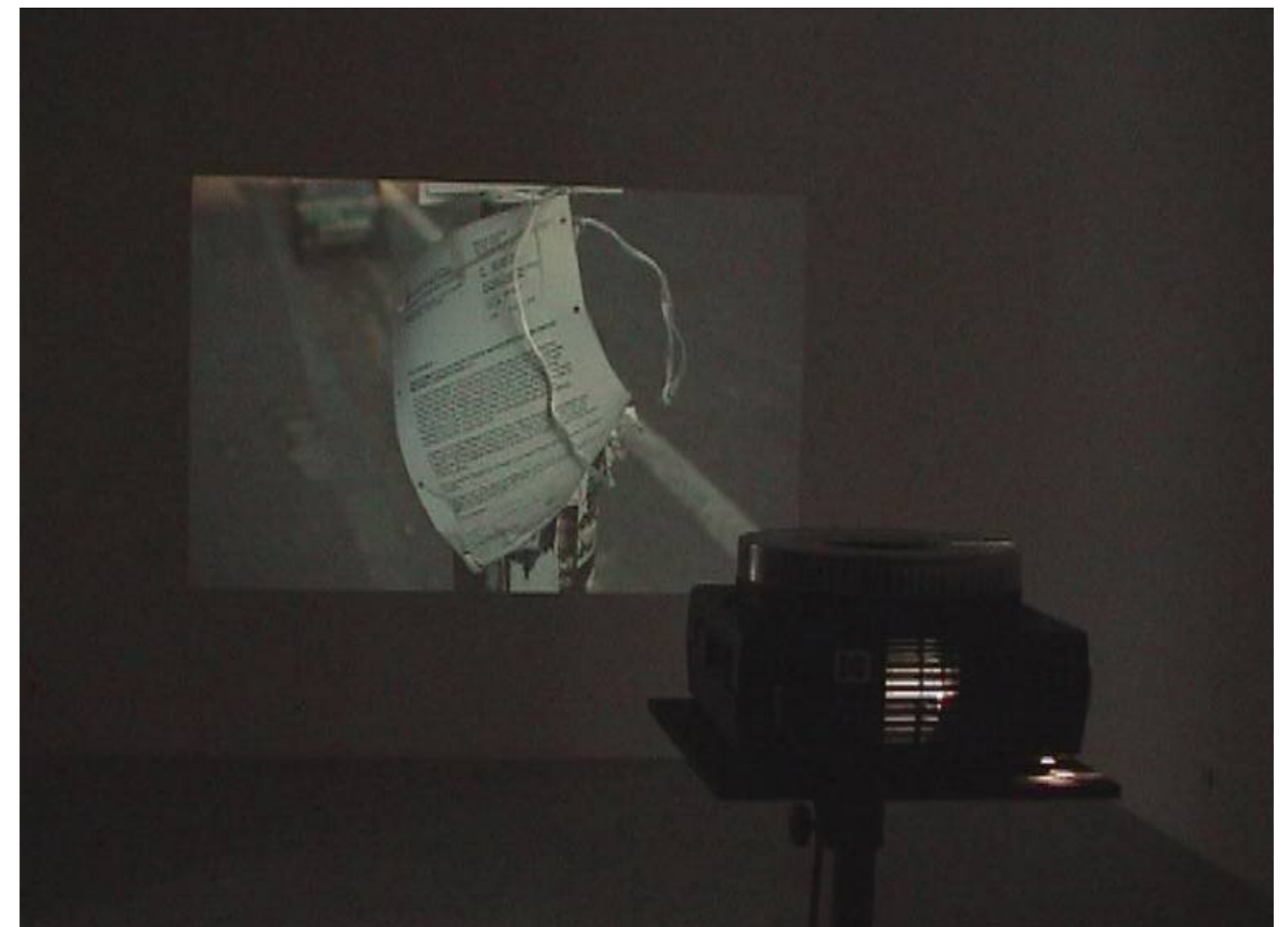


14. Planning Permits, 2003.

Planning permit applications are required to give residents the opportunity to know about, and possibly object to, proposed developments in the city. In these images the applications are somewhat eulogised as relics of these intended developments that may or may not have taken place. Within an exhibition that explores the relationships between text and image or object, these applications could also be seen as examples of texts that exist in an in-between space of intention and affect, proposal and representation.

This work relates very strongly to *Application for Planning Permit: Proposal to Build a Metaphor* 2001, which features in the book but not the exhibition and which comprises a series of narratives Cruz wrote in the guise of planning applications as a site specific work for the Melbourne Festival.

FIG. 15
 Juan Cruz *Planning Permits*, 2003. 80 x 35mm timed slide projection.
 Courtesy of the artist and Elba Benitez Gallery. Photo by Juan Cruz



15. *Palms*, 2003 – 2017.

Palms has not previously been exhibited. The images were taken in 2003 and intended as a series of medium format projections of palm trees in the front gardens of houses on the borders between Hackney and Islington. The palm trees introduce an exotic element into the urban landscape of London, and present themselves as an immediate subject within otherwise rather banal images. The work also makes reference to Marcel Broodthaers, another artist who worked at the interstices of text and image, and who also used domesticated palms within his own installations.

A video was made of the projected medium format slides in the artist's studio. The work relates to other works in the exhibition and the publication involving the fictionalisation of photographic processes. The text relating to the work does not refer to it directly but attempts to pick out and narrate moments of strangeness or potential significance from very ordinary situations.

FIG. 16
 Juan Cruz *Palms* 2003 – 2017.
 Large format slide projections,
 15 minutes. Still from new
 single channel video work 2017.
 Photo by Juan Cruz



FIG. 17
 Juan Cruz *Palms* 2003 – 2017.
 Large format slide projections,
 15 minutes. Still from new
 single channel video work 2017.
 Photo by Juan Cruz

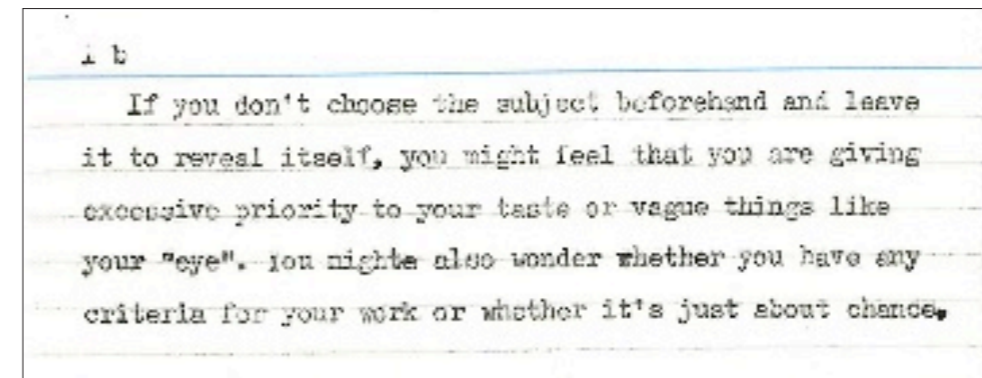
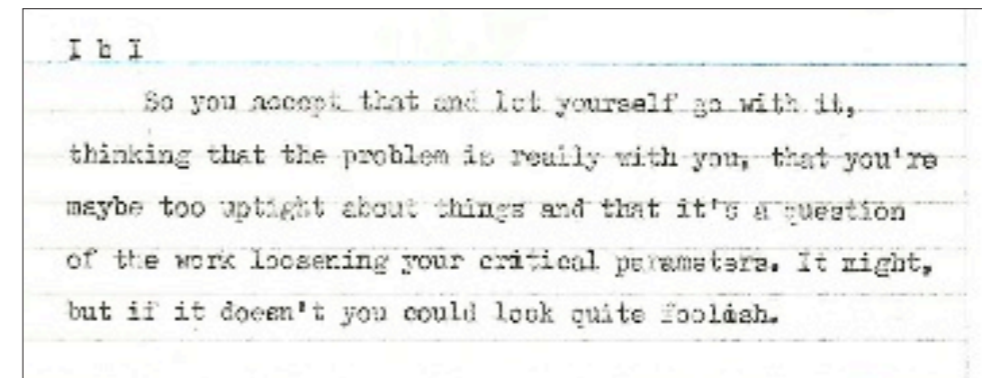
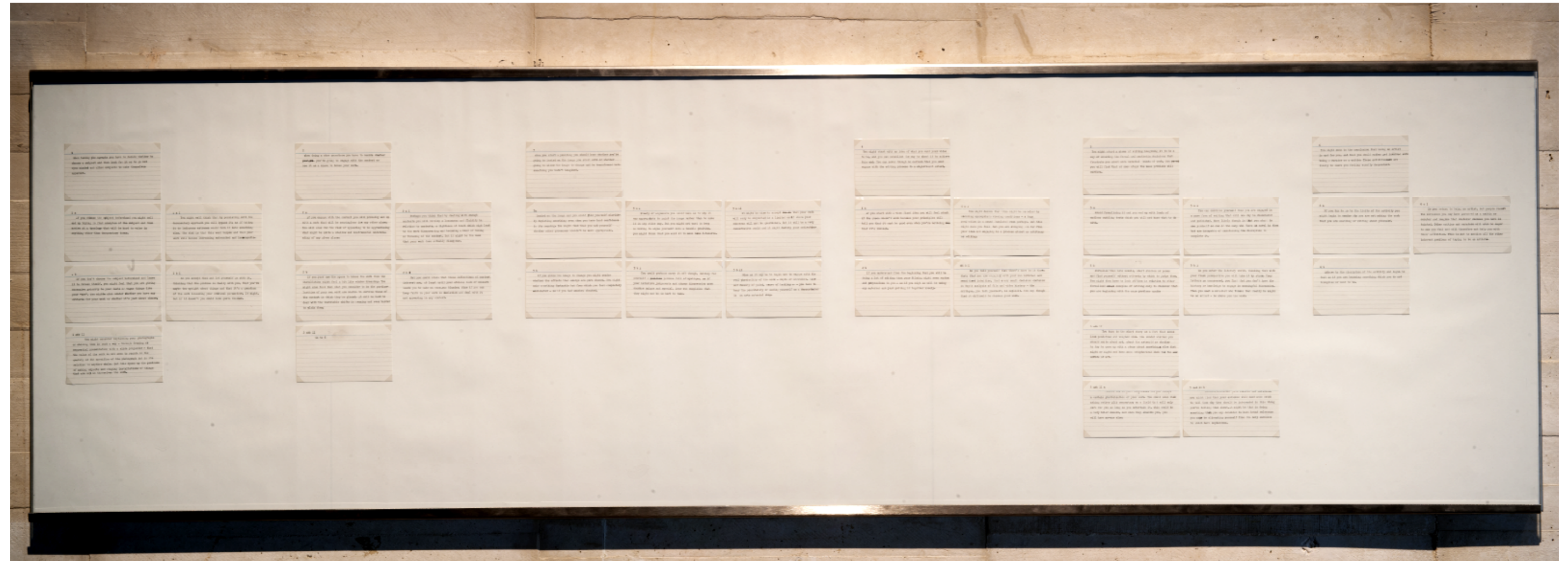


16. *Index*, 2003 – 2017.

This work assumes the guise of a series of instructions, written by the artist, providing fictitious advice about how to deal with the difficulties of being an artist and making artworks. The work vocalizes the rather paranoid internal monologue that many artists maintain with themselves as they attempt to rationalise their work, and it identifies the various dead ends at which they might arrive.

Made as a series of texts on functional cards, the work almost identifies itself as a proposition for a self-help kit for artists. The exhibition at MUSAC was the first time the work was exhibited and the cards were configured specifically for this purpose.

FIG. 18
Juan Cruz *Index* 2003 – 2017.
36 typed index cards each
127 × 75mm. Image courtesy
MUSAC



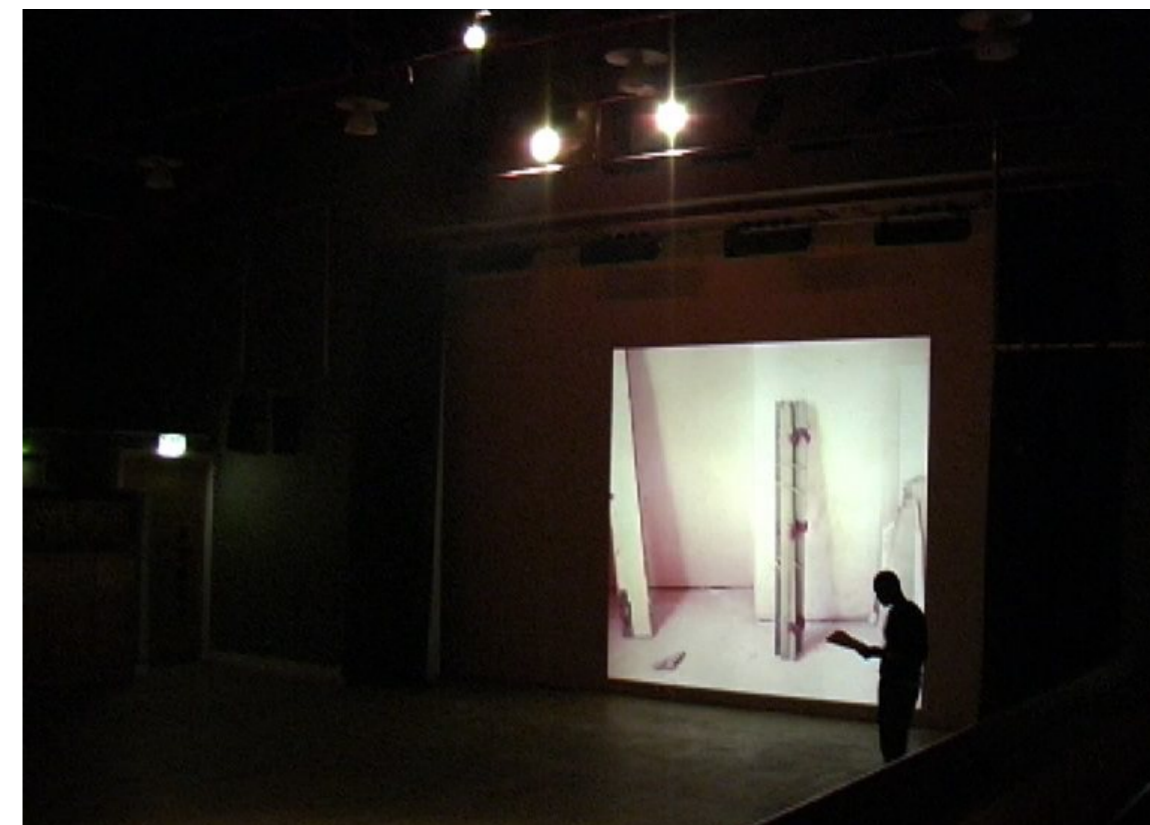
FIGS. 19–20
Juan Cruz *Index* 2003 – 2017
(detail of two cards). 36 typed
index cards each 127 × 75mm.

17. *Three Shows*, 2004.

Three Shows is an experiment in activating and staging a script, with an actor effectively performing the role of a tape/slide mechanism. The work was performed over three nights, and the three performances are shown here consecutively. The work is an experimentation with the form of the exhibition and challenges assumed modes of display.

The actor who facilitates the work also becomes its protagonist. The subject of the work is the artist, as an autobiographical figure and a generic construct, attempting to come to terms with questions that hover between the artistic and the personal.

FIGS. 21–23
Juan Cruz, *Three Shows*, 2004.
Performance/slide projections
20 minutes. Source material.
Photos by Juan Cruz



19. *In the Shape of What We Know*, 2007.

The text relating to this work narrates the death and subsequent funeral of the artist's grandmother. The images, however, are more reflective of the artist's concerns with the blurring of artistic and domestic activities, the performative and the real. The artist's children feature in the work, both as collaborators and protagonists.

The work was originally shown as two overlapping and asynchronous projections, one with a sequence of video images and the other with the accompanying text. This meant that the text and the image were never in synch.

FIG. 24
Juan Cruz *In the Shape of What We Know*, 2007. Video installation with sound. Still from new single channel video work, 2017. Photo by Juan Cruz



20. *Un Aire de Actividad*, 2008.

This work shares the formal mechanism of *In the Shape of What We Know*, with asynchronous projections leading to an evolving set of relations in the work. Here, the context is the artist's studio, and the questions concern the relationship between writing, representation and the visual.

The work also plays with questions of distraction and the importance of incidental occurrences. Cruz chose to omit the original text for the MUSAC show.

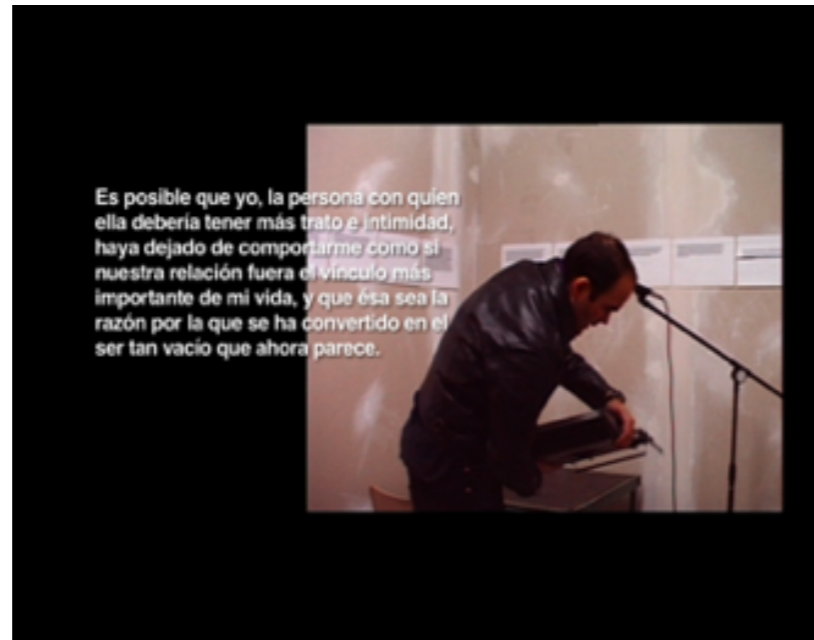


FIG. 25
Juan Cruz *Un Aire de Actividad*, 2008. Video installation with sound. Installation shot from PAC, Murcia for Estratos 2008. Photo Credit Juan Cruz



FIG. 26
Juan Cruz *Un Aire de Actividad*, 2008. Video installation with sound. Still from new single channel video work 2017. Image by Juan Cruz

22. *Translating: Chapter 2*, 2009.

Translating: Chapter 2 charts the artist's attempt to perform a translation of a short story by Pio Baroja. While Cruz approached Yuria to help him document the work, her protagonism extends beyond this function, and the work challenges expectations around the act of translation.

The work was subsequently shown in Tokyo, and for MUSAC, Cruz presented a version with Japanese subtitles that seem to extend a certain absurdity about this work and introduce an idea about its ongoing development.



FIGS. 27–28
Juan Cruz in collaboration with Naama Yuria, *A Translation of La Sima (The Chasm)* by Pio Baroja, 2009. Video projection with subtitles and sound. Still from new single channel video work 2017. Image credit Juan Cruz



23. *Perdendosi*, 2011.

24. *Perdendosi*, 2012.

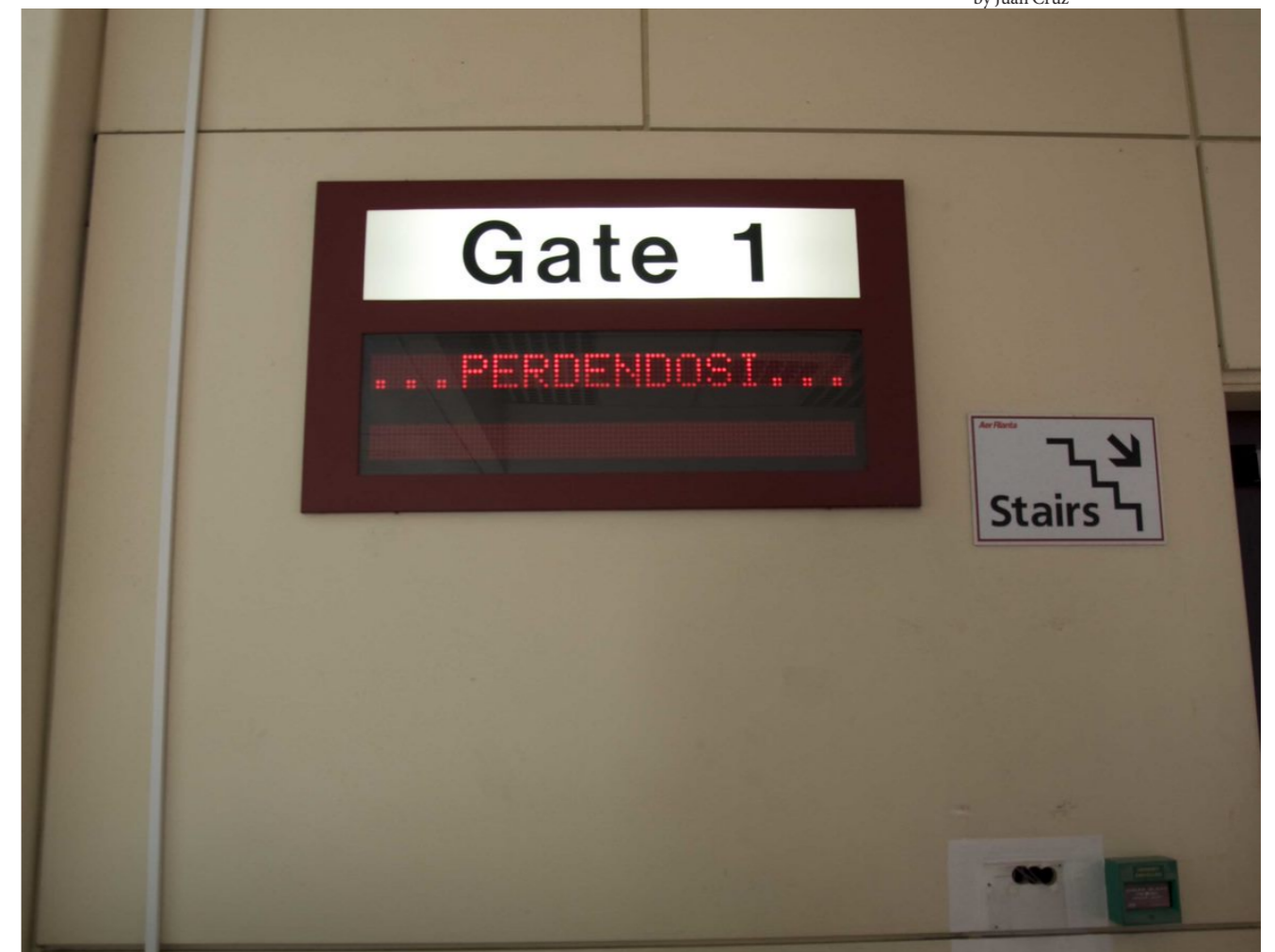
Perdendosi is a musical term denoting that the player should make the piece they are playing die away slowly. Cruz deployed this term as a word in a small carborundum print and a site specific work via the existing airport signage in Cork's decommissioned airport.

The word evinces different meanings depending on its context, but maintains an overwhelmingly tragic note of something – life, art, love – dying away slowly and inexorably. At MUSAC the work was represented with the carborundum print.

FIG. 29
Juan Cruz *Perdendosi*, 2011.
Carborundum print, 380 × 285mm.
Image credit Juan Cruz.



FIGS. 30-31
Juan Cruz *Perdendosi*, 2012.
Adapted airport signage.
Cork Airport, 2012. Photos
by Juan Cruz



27. *It will seem a dream/It is/1981/L'urinoir n'est pas une cendrier/A kiss without a kiss*, all 2012.

28. *Casi esto/Menos fuerte/ Y con ganas*, all 2014.

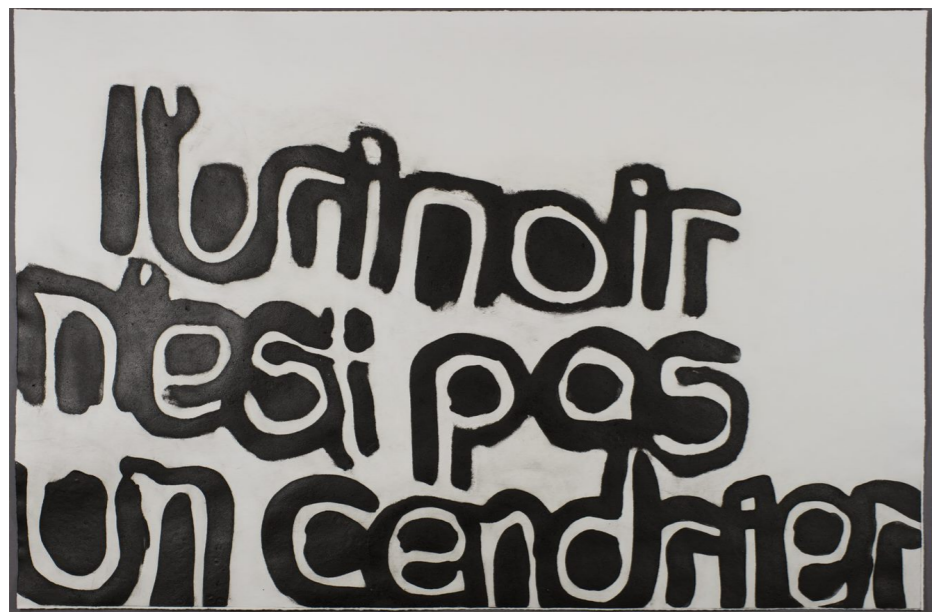
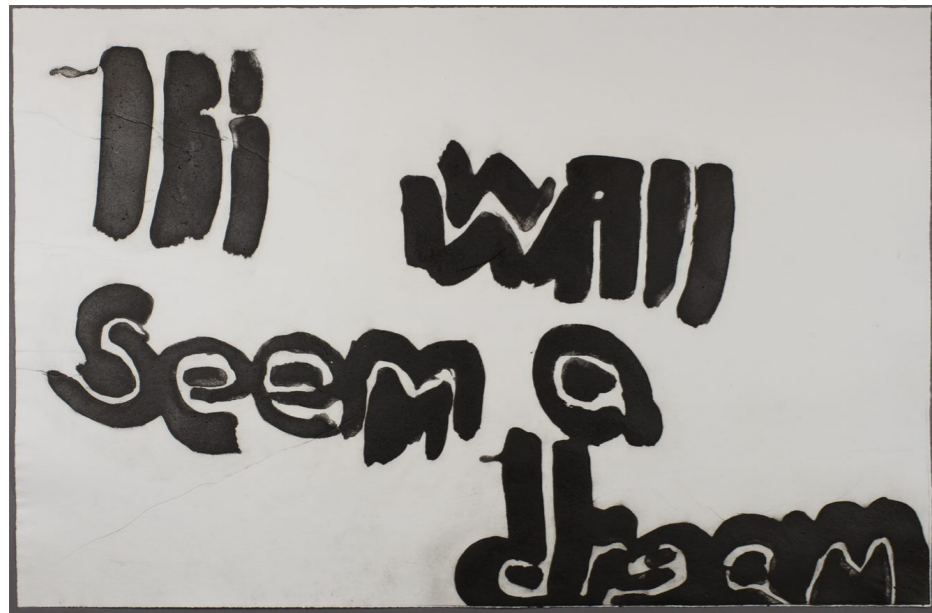
Cruz sees these text-based prints as complete and somewhat solipsistic works that combine at one glance an image, a title and a thought. Whereas much of the work in this exhibition requires some consideration of its presentation, these prints show themselves in a highly conventional but strangely effective manner.

In some instances the texts are ones that the artist has seen, found or imagined over the years. In others they are invented in the moment of the making of the work, and refer to decisions between the visual and the textual, between the spaces of writing and drawing.

FIG. 32
Juan Cruz *It will seem a dream/It is/1981/L'urinoir n'est pas une cendrier/A kiss without a kiss*, all 2012. Carborundum prints, each 745 × 485mm. Image courtesy of MUSAC



FIG. 33
Juan Cruz *Casi esto/Menos fuerte/ Y con ganas*, all 2014. Offset litho monoprints, each 765 × 565mm. Image courtesy of MUSAC



FIGS. 35-38
Juan Cruz *It will seem a dream/*
It is/1981/L'urinoir n'est pas une
cendrier/A kiss without a kiss,
all 2012. Carborundum prints,
each 745 × 485mm. Image
credit Juan Cruz

04 / RIGOUR



FIG. 39
 Juan Cruz *Catalogue: It Will Seem a Dream*, exhibition view. MUSAC, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León 17 January – 4 June 2017. Photo Imagen MAS © Courtesy of MUSAC.

Cruz has previously generated much research around translation as a method in art practice.

This has included *Translating Don Quijote* 1996, *Juan Cruz is Translating Don Quijote [again]*, 2005, A translation of *Niebla (Fog)* by Miguel de Unamuno, 2005, among many others. With *Catalogue: It will seem a dream* Cruz has effectively folded this process of translation appropriation and interpretation back onto his own production.

In order to clarify this intent, Cruz selected only works that had been generated from his own original writing, rather than created through translations of pre-existing texts. He combined works that had been previously exhibited with those that had been abandoned and languished in envelopes, boxes and some now obsolete digital media files. This excavation of original materials, mainly digital files, and previously unpublished typescripts and manuscripts, enabled an understanding of the potential for artworks to remain flexible and to be reconstituted.

The research process itself involved the process of the artist archiving his own works, constituting and reworking the relations within a body of work as reservoir of future conceptual and semantic possibilities

The concepts for the installation and the book were developed in response to an invitation from Manuel Oliveira, Director of MUSAC, for Cruz to stage a retrospective exhibition at the museum. Cruz accepted the invitation on the condition that he be able to sidestep the idea of the retrospective and instead develop this project, which benefitted from conversations with publishers, archivists, registrars and curators about the extent to which existing artworks might be reshaped and reconfigured, and how that might impact upon the reading and value of the work.

The format of the installation was determined in part by the cavernous nature of the spaces of MUSAC, with Cruz deploying an overt gesture to deny the expectations of scale and theatre that would appear to be required by the space. This was combined with the standardisation of the format of the exhibited works, with the videos all projected at small scale on the rough walls of the gallery from specially designed and constructed uniform metal plinths/platforms that housed the projectors.

The prints and objects were gathered together and hung in a perfunctory way at the end of the space which enjoyed natural light, and the overall impression was more like that of a viewing room than a public exhibition.

FIGS. 40–41

Juan Cruz *Catalogue: It will seem a dream* exhibition visitors. Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (MUSAC) Leon, Spain, 18 February – 4 June 2017. Photos by MUSAC



05 / SIGNIFICANCE

The research engages with contemporary approaches to art practice and curatorial practice, and to some extent museology and conservation.

MUSAC has a specific collecting strategy, based upon acquisitions of artworks from 1989 to the present, and is invested in interrogating the implications of a collection based on data used to generate artworks, rather than on artworks as objects. This is an increasingly important question for artists and museums around the world.

MUSAC was visited by approximately 20,000 people during the course of the exhibition.

The exhibition was widely reviewed and the book was launched at an event at Matt's Gallery, 6 June 2017 and during the Artists' Book Fair at Wiels, Brussels 9 September 2017, in both cases with readings by Cruz. See Appendix, page 42.

06 / APPENDIX

MUSAC exhibition website

<https://musac.es/#exposiciones/expo/?id=6298&from=anteriores>

MUSAC video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXXKyQB-VSLI&feature=emb_logo

Book

Juan Cruz *Catalogue: It will seem a dream*.

Pub. MUSAC, Spain and Occasional Papers, 2017. 316 p, ills b&w, 12 x 21cm, pb, English. ISBN 9780992903992.

Book launches

Matt's Gallery, London

6 June 2017.

<https://mailchi.mp/mattsgallery/artistname-exhibitiontitle-at-matts-gallery-01-january-to-01-february-2014?e=ed556ce55a>

The Artists' Book Fair, Wiels, Brussels, 9 September 2017.

Synopsis

'*Catalogue: It Will Seem a Dream* is the first collection of art writing by the British artist Juan Cruz. Cruz's artistic practice – which spans video, performance and installation – has always been intimately concerned with language, and with translation in particular.

The collected texts cover Cruz's entire career to date, and have been retrieved from works produced in an array of now obsolete formats: audio cassette, MiniDisc, MiniDV, Hi8, Quark and ClarisWorks. Somewhere between an exhibition and its catalogue, an artist's book and a reader, *Catalogue: It Will Seem a Dream* clears a meandering speculative path through words and images.

An essential resource for anyone interested in experimental art writing today.'

From the *Occasional Papers* website.

Press (selected)

The Spanish critic Bruno Marcos, writing in *La Nueva Cronica*, 9 May 2017, draws parallels between the exhibition and Borges story about Pierre Menard:

'One of Borges' most surprising stories is that in which a literary critic tells us about a writer named Pierre Menard who, in the C20th, wrote a version of 'Don Quijote' identical to Cervantes' C17th original. In fact the narrator acknowledges that he only wrote the ninth and thirty-eighth chapter of the first part as well as a fragment of the twenty-second chapter, but did so letter by letter, and comma by comma, assuring us that it was not a copy.

It seems at times that the artist, Juan Cruz, whose exhibition *Catalogue: It will seem a dream* we see now in MUSAC, is afflicted by Menard's malaise, quietly exploring the most invisible details of stories.

The artist is very insistent that the exhibition, which started life as a retrospective of his work over more than two decades, is installed in the space as a single work, that is to say, a singular installation, but it's more like the story of that enterprise, a collection of intentions. The sense of the exhibition is therefore like contemplating the remains of something, fragments of a carefully trivial experience, as if the mass of the everyday had become very dense in that transit between life and representation.

Whoever has been in places that have been the scenes of films or disasters will have felt something similar, a troubling emptiness, an effort to remember what cannot be remembered, maintaining the huge differences in scale, the way we know New York from films or the post catastrophic images of the Twin Towers. Cruz, like Borges, effectively sides with the receiver as creator. The spectator must recover what is missing, or give up.'

Translated by Juan Cruz. Full article at:

<https://www.lanuevacronica.com/pierre-menard-autor-del-quiote>

Other reviews (Spanish press):

MUSAC 'La gran instalación de Juan Cruz', *Tamtampress*, 17 February 2017.

<https://tamtampress.es/2017/02/17/musac-la-gran-instalacion-de-juan-cruz/>

'El Musac dedica una retrospectiva al artista palentino Juan Cruz', *Carrion Digital*, 22 March 2017

MUSAC 'Inaugura Tres Exposiciones Monográficas De Los Artistas Babi Badalov, Juan Cruz Y Amable Arias', *Malagaes*, 17 February 2017.

<https://www.malagaes.com/cultura/musac-inaugura-tres-exposiciones-monograficas-de-los-artistas-babi-badalov-juan-cruz-y-amable-arias/>

'Triplete en el MUSAC', *Liceus*, 17 February 2017.

<https://www.liceus.com/triplete-musac/>

'El Musac completa el ciclo dedicado a la poesía visual', *La Nueva Cronica*, 17 February 2017.

<https://www.lanuevacronica.com/el-musac-completa-el-ciclo-dedicado-a-la-poesia-visual>

'La palabra y las artes visuales en tres exposiciones del MUSAC', *Info en Punto*, 5 March 2017.



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