

GALERIE MICHEL REIN

DORA GARCIA

The Beggar's Things

1ST
FLOOR

DORA GARCIA

The Beggar's Things (a social sculpture)

10.03 - 07.04.2012

La galerie Michel Rein est heureuse d'accueillir la troisième exposition personnelle de Dora García (*Letters to other planets*, 2005, *What a fucking wonderful audience*, 2009). Cette exposition présente l'oeuvre *The Beggar's Things*, issue de la performance *The Beggar's Opera*, réalisée pour le Münster Skulptur Projekte en 2007.

Dora Garcia, pour la performance *The Beggar's Opera* met en scène le personnage de Filch, apparu d'abord dans l'opéra du même nom de John Gay (1728), puis plus tard dans l'*Opéra de Quat'sous* de Bertolt Brecht (1928). Un acteur a ainsi endossé le rôle de ce personnage et déambulait dans la ville, à la rencontre des habitants et des touristes. Incarnant le personnage du mendiant, l'acteur devenait marginal, parfois invisible, et donc, selon les mots de l'artiste, « pouvait parler à tout le monde, dire ce qu'il voulait, sans être vraiment remarqué - comme les serviteurs et les fous. ».



L'artiste interagissait avec le public, suivant un script ou de façon improvisée, de façon à provoquer des situations et des réactions. Son activité quotidienne fut ensuite racontée tous les quinze jours au public d'un théâtre de Münster, retranscrite sur le site Internet www.thebeggarsopera.org et enfin publiée dans l'ouvrage *The Beggar's Diary*¹. À l'occasion de cette performance, un grand nombre d'objets ont été collectés, chacun ayant sa propre histoire et son propre rôle au sein du projet. Tous ces éléments ont été rassemblés afin de créer l'oeuvre *The Beggar's Things*, une sculpture sociale, qui nous renseigne non seulement sur la performance historique de Dora García à Münster, mais aussi sur nos interactions quotidiennes, qui tombent bien souvent dans l'oubli.

L'œuvre a été présentée à l'occasion des expositions *Contes Choisis* au Centre de Arte Santa Monica à Barcelone (2007), *Where do Characters go when the story is over* au CGAC (Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea) à Saint Jacques de Compostelle, (2009), *Not to play with dead things* à la Villa Arson de Nice (2010) et dans le pavillon espagnol *The Inadequate* conçu par Dora García pour la Biennale de Venise 2011. Dora García enquête sur les relations qui existent entre l'artiste, l'oeuvre d'art, le public et l'espace. Son travail nous apprend à questionner à la fois notre réalité et nous-mêmes. L'artiste s'engage elle-même dans les questions : qu'est-ce que la réalité et qu'est-ce que la fiction, incitant le visiteur à devenir protagoniste, parfois sciemment, mais pas toujours.

Avant de représenter l'Espagne à la Biennale de Venise en 2011, Dora García a bénéficié de nombreuses expositions personnelles, notamment au FRAC Bourgogne (2005), au CGAC de Saint Jacques de Compostelle (2009), à la Kunsthalle Bern (2010) et à l'Index Contemporary Art Foundation à Stockholm (2010). Dora Garcia sera exposée à la dOCUMENTA (13) qui ouvre en juin 2012. Elle a participé à de nombreuses expositions collectives, notamment au MACBA (Barcelone), à la Tate Modern (Londres) et à la Schirn Kunsthalle de Francfort. Son travail est présent dans de nombreuses collections privées et publiques : Museo National Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, le Fond National d'Art Contemporain, le MoMA de San Francisco, le MUSAC, Leon, et la Fondation Kadist qui soutient son projet pour la dOCUMENTA (13).

¹ Dora García, *The Beggar's Diary*, 2008, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Köln, textes de Brigitte Franzen, Dora García, Samir Kandil, Jan Mech et Peter Aers, 567 pages.

Saâdane Afif, Maria Thereza Alves, Maja Bajevic, Jean-Pierre Bertrand, Jordi Colomer, Jimmie Durham, Didier Faustino, Dora García, Mathew Hale, Christian Hidaka, Jean-Charles Hue, Armand Jalut, Yuri Leiderman, Didier Marcel, Stefan Nikolaev, ORLAN, Dan Perjovschi, Elisa Pône, Mark Raidpere, Michael Riedel, Franck Scurti, Allan Sekula, Raphaël Zarka, Chen Zhen

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Galerie Michel Rein is pleased to present its third solo exhibition by Dora García at the gallery (previous exhibitions: *Letters to other planets*, 2005, *What a fucking wonderful audience*, 2009). This exhibition will present the artwork *The Beggar's Things* which is made up of the performance *The Beggar's Opera*, created by Dora García for Münster Skulptur Projekte in 2007.

The Beggar's Opera consisted of an extended performance in which Dora García adopted the character of Filch, who first appeared in the opera of the same name by John Gay and later in Bertolt Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera*. An actor inhabited this character and wandered around the town meeting with locals and tourists. By taking on the character of the beggar, the actor became marginal, at times invisible, and therefore, in the words of the artist, was "able to talk to everybody, to say whatever he pleased, and be there without really being noticed - like servants and madmen."



In this way the performer interacted with the public in a half scripted, half improvised manner in order to create situations and reactions. His daily activity was fortnightly recounted in front of a theatre audience in Münster, noted down on the website www.thebeggarsopera.org and later printed in the book *The Beggar's Diary*¹. The scope of this performance resulted in the collection of a great number of objects, each with its own story and its own part played in the action. These elements were brought together to create the artwork *The Beggar's Things*, a social sculpture that documents not only Dora García's historic performance at Münster but also our daily interactions, which, more often than not, fall into oblivion.

This artwork has been presented at the exhibitions *Contes Choisis* at the Centre de Arte Santa Monica in Barcelona (2007), *Where to Characters go when the story is over* at the CGAC (Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea) in Santiago de Compostela (2009), *Not to play with dead things* at the Villa Arson in Nice (2010), and as part of Dora García's Spanish pavilion *The Inadequate* at the Venice Biennale 2011.

Dora García uses her work to investigate the relationship between artist, artwork, audience and space. By engaging with Dora García's work we learn to question ourselves and our reality. The artist engages herself with the question of what is reality and what is fiction, drawing the visitor into becoming a protagonist: sometimes knowingly, sometimes not.

As well as representing Spain at the Venice Biennale in 2011, Dora García has had a number international solo shows, notably at the FRAC Bourgogne (2005), the Kunsthalle Bern, the CGAC in Santiago de Compostela (2009) and Index Contemporary Art Foundation in Stockholm. She will be taking part in dOCUMENTA (13) opening in June this year, adding to her list of group shows in places including the MACBA (Barcelona), Tate Modern (London), Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, and the Sao Paulo Biennale. Her work is held in many public and private collections such as the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, the Centre National des Arts Plastiques in France, the San Francisco MoMA, the MUSAC, Leon and the Kadist Foundation in Paris which is kindly supporting her project for dOCUMENTA (13).

¹ Dora García, *The Beggar's Diary*, 2008, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Köln, texts by Brigitte Franzen, Dora García, Samir Kandil, Jan Mech and Peter Aers.

GALERIE MICHEL REIN



DORA GARCIA

The Beggar's Things

2007

elements from the performance "The Beggar's Opera" which took place during the Skulptur Projekte, Münster, 2007 (the beggaropera.org) including a publication "The Beggar's Diary" (563 pages)

dimensions variables

oeuvre unique

Exhibitions:

Galerie Michel Rein, Paris, 2012

The Inadequate, Spanish Pavillion, Venice Biennial, 2011

Villa Arson, Nice, France, 2010

CGAC (Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea), Santiago de Compostella, Spain, 2009

Centre de Arte Santa Monica, Barcelona, Spain 2007

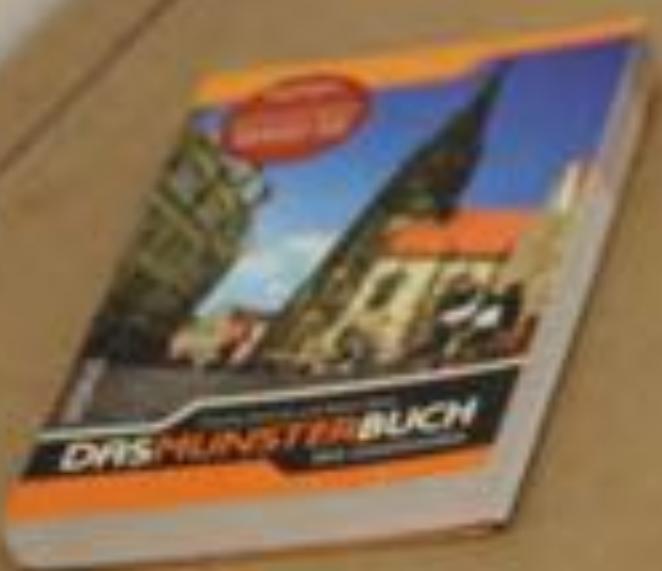


Doris Dörrie
The Bagger's Things



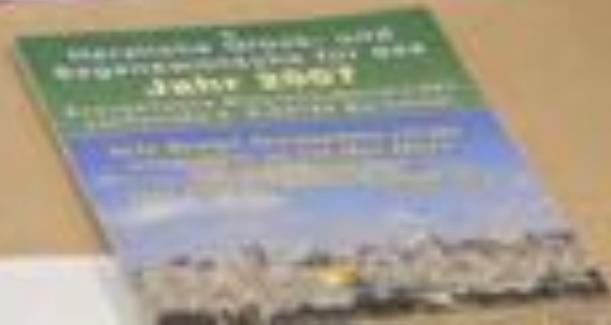


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The
Beggars



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M. GARCIA



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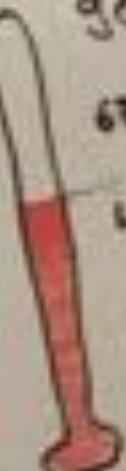
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①

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FILCH

06

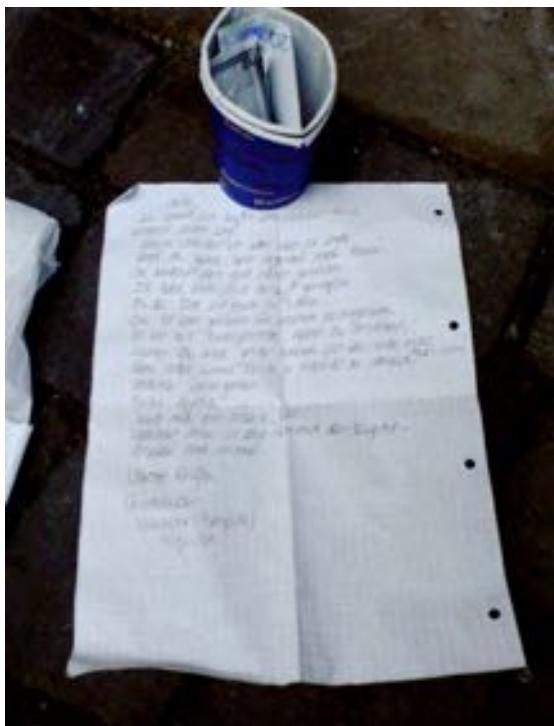
Documentation

The Beggar's Opera

Skulptur Projekte Münster

2007





Performance views during
the Skulptur Projekte Münster 2007

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The Beggar's Opera [Die Bettleroper]

Ein Echtzeit-Theaterstück im öffentlichen Raum

Ein Kunstwerk von Dora Garcia
für skulptur projekte münster 07

mit Samir Kandil, Peter Aers, Jan Mech
und der Stadt Münster

(nach 'The Beggar's Opera' von John Gay und der Dreigroschenoper von Bertolt Brecht)

Foto: Michael Schäfer / Fotostudio Kammel para la Revista Cultural Estrella

16. Juni - 30. September

www.thebeggarsopera.org

Dora García

The Beggar's Opera, throughout the city, www.thebeggaroperating.com

The Beggar's Opera

ACT ONE

1

[...]

FIDEL What's that?

PEACHUM: These are the five basic rules of misery best adapted to touching the human heart. The eight of them includes that unnatural state of mind in which a man is actually willing to give money away.

DUKE & MUSKAT of the Thoroughfare of Modern Traffic, The cheerful Cripple, always good-natured – [he demonstrates it] – always cheerful, often heightened by a revolting smell.

DUKE B: Stage of the Art of War: The Troublesome Taishan, among passers-by, his job is to avenge disgruntled [the demonstrators in] – pacifying rebels.

DUKE C: Stage of the Industrial Room: The Peacock Room, or the High School of the Art of Begging. Peachum adopts him, advancing steadily toward FIDEL at the moment when he bumps into FIDEL, the latter武装 with knife. PEACHUM looks him over, grins at him in amazement, and suddenly says [he's] "Taishan, giving? You'll never make a beggar – not in a lifetime. That sort of behavior is only fit for the passers-by." Then it's back to [...].

[...] DUKE C: Young man who's seen better days, probably one who "never thought he would come down to this."

FIDEL: Oh, so you're using that too. Why can't I have the better days back?

PEACHUM: Because nobody believes in his own misery, my boy. If you've got stomach-ache and say so, it only sounds disgusting. Anyway, it's not for you to ask questions. Just purchase things on.

[...]

On the board is written:

THE ARRIVAL OF THE MOUNTED MESSENDER
THREE THREEPENNY FINALE

CHORUS:

Mark, who comes?

The Royal Messenger riding comes!

Riding high, BROOK walks on the messenger

Bertolt Brecht

NOTES TO THE THREEPENNY OPERA

WHY MUST THE MOUNTED MESSENDER BE MOUNTED?

The Beggar's Opera presents a picture of bourgeois society (and not only of the "bürger-patriot" elements). This bourgeois society has, for its part, produced a bourgeois idea of the world, and therefore has quite a dismal "Weltanschauung" about which it could probably not care less. Whenever the bourgeoisie sees its own world represented, the appearance of the royal mounted messenger is absolutely inevitable. Mr Peachum, when he is financially exploiting society's bad consequences, is trading on this very fact. Theatrical practitioners may care to ponder why nothing is more stupid than to abolish the horse of the mounted messenger – as nearly all modernistic producers of The Beggar's Opera have done. If one were representing a judicial murder on the stage, one could only pay proper tribute to the theatre's role in bourgeois society by having the journalist who discloses the innocence of the murdered man drawn and court by a hawk. Seized people-against-him tactics do not lure the public into laughing at itself by making the appearance of the mounted messenger a matter for mirth? Without the appearance of some form of mounted messenger, bourgeois literature would sink to a mere representation of circumstances. The mounted messenger guarantees really undisputed enjoyment even of circumstances themselves unbearable, and is therefore a reliable and quiet tool for a discourse whose conditions give rise to lack of consequences [1].

Of course the third finale must be played with complete seriousness and extreme dignity.

12 December 2006

Looking for the role of the Beggar

Office of Münster projects manager 07

Santa Rosalia But then, what is your intention by making a project based on the figure of a beggar? Do you want to make a social project?

The Beggar's Opus

A preparation for Münster projects manager 07

Dora García

A continuous performance-in-public space, briefly distinguishable from daily life – the distribution of information about it is made through an internet site [blog, page, mailing]. This site contains mainly (but recently) of the nearly day-updated documentation about the performances made by the performer and the author – every single day, the performance takes place.

The Beggar's Opus, my particular version of John Gay's and Berlin's theater play, is a theater play, a one-character theater play, no clear beginning or ending, barely distinguishable from daily life.

The project is a collaboration between me and the three actors (Santia Randt, Joss Mech and Peter Aers) chosen to represent, by turns, the Beggar's character. We aim at introducing in Münster's public life and public space a new character: the Beggar.

The Beggar is both homage to Brecht's theater and a very useful 'agent,' intended to get to know what is really happening in Münster during the events known as Münster Projects.

A marginal character, the Beggar goes everywhere, talks to everybody, dances to say and to whom others don't. The Beggar is an informant, informing the artist, the public and the organization about how the event functions, about what goes on in the city around it and besides it, and about each other [2].

But the Beggar is, as said, a theater character in the Brechtian tradition. The Beggar is the mounted messenger.

The Beggar is the mounted messenger and that's why he is not a social project and that's why he is not a [proposed] real beggar [3]. There are beggars in Münster, not many but some, they are organized and they distribute a newspaper. When writing this text I am not sufficiently informed about this organization nor can I follow the logic of relation between character and audience with them, but sure there will be a relation, and an open one. The Beggar will not be disguised as a beggar among beggars, but it will be made clear to them that he is part of a fiction [4].

He is part of a fiction, he is the mounted messenger, and his intentions are not to draw attention to the life conditions of beggars in Münster – he might do that by the way – nor study the charitable attitudes of the prosperous citizens of Münster; he is not a researcher, he is not an undercover mole, he is a character in a fictional play, even if the lines of the play may always blurr and point towards reality.

Reformulating the Marxist underpinnings of Brecht's recommendations for the Threepenny's Opera, if the Beggar is holding a ticket to Münster's events during the summer of 2007 he cannot do it in an efficient, interesting way if he just holds the ticket for the audience as it is presented as well.

This is, he must have a very sophisticated repertoire of theatrical scenes so well designed that the public will be reluctant to distinguish them from reality, even after having been turned themselves into players [5]. Thus the negotiation between this repertoire and unpredictable reality, the notation The Beggar's Opus will be born [6].

Dora García

[1] Institut für Kulturwissenschaften, The Threepenny Opera, chapter book by Klaus-Uwe Lüdtke (http://www.kult.uni-muenster.de/verlag/threepenny.htm)

[2] Differently from other theater interventions, here it is, the participation, the Beggar is not requesting any payment or a complementary one for other members, regard the city and its audience. It is not an action, you can assist without fee or anyone nor feels you as someone you owe.

[3] Acting as Brechtian, opus means requires actions in play characters differently without revealing either the audience or themselves. If it does, as truly the spectator is less able address the audience directly not in character ("knowing the character") and play with them.

[4] An example of having to face a car-rental agency placed next door to them, the notion of permeability, where in which the participation between the participant and the space (author or client) is negotiate in a space between the "real" and the "not real" so that the participants can consider that the character stays out, although "not an actor and not real while the performers are not explicit about the class than in their communication with the audience. This space between participation and authority. (H. L. H. in a talk to researchers, web change, 2006, *Thoughts*, "Opus and Re-imaging the status of performing arts/theatre," in Research in Drama Education, June 2006, Vol. 15, No. 2, p. 200-207).

[5] Making use of this last mentioned concept, the Beggar goes on being, interacting or addressing, he shows expressing actions in a suggestion way and in general more strange situations in public space to which the audience is forced to react and perceive them because the Beggar is the mounted messenger. The Beggar's intervention seriously not addressed to the public, addressing mainly the audience about their own interests, their sense and understanding of what they see and giving plausible information about facts, resources, how to act, perhaps.

[6] The Beggar writes a diary publicly addressing his audience in the course of the day. The diary can be communicated by e-mail (jewel@t-online.de).

The Beggar's Opera

A work by Dora Garcia
for skulptur projekte münster 07
June 16 - September 30, 2007

[.intro](#) [.posts](#) [.a beggar's typology](#) [.the beggar's evenings](#)

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The Beggar's Opera, Dora Garcia's own version of plays by John Gay and Bertolt Brecht, is a theatrical production in real time and in public space. A theatre play with no clear beginning or end, in which it is hard to distinguish the scripted plot from the natural course of events, and with just one character (Filch, the apprentice beggar). You can follow the development of The Beggar's Opera daily on this site, you can have it mailed to you if you subscribe, or you can go to the Metropolis Theater in Münster (The Beggar's Evenings).

Sun 23
Sep 2007

[fiction characters do not really die, rather, the book ends.](#)

Posted by dora under [The Beggar's Diary](#)

0 Comments

The Beggar's diary, 22.09.2007

All by myself in the mornin'
All by myself in the night
I sit alone with a table and a chair
So unhappy there, playing solitaire
All by myself I get lonely
Watching the clock on the shelf
I'd love to rest my head on somebody's shoulder
I have to grow older... all by myself

