

To Be and Not To Be

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*"Beyond any forbidden area,
There is a mirror for our sad transparency"*
Alejandra Pizarnik

Throughout her career, Gabriela Golder has slowly and persistently developed a corpus of works with a manifest identity. It is not exactly a matter of style. I would rather talk about a tactic. Farther than the universe of themes and characters that settle in her videos and installations, what best defines her thinking and artistic labour is the position she holds for them.

The method sounds quite simple. On the whole it consists of naming situations by their opposite. There are women who escape or emigrate to meet their origins; there is a search for beauty in brutality. There is a need to open closed spaces, or to emphasize silence by means of deafening sounds. What is private turns public very quickly, what is unimportant gains the solidity of a monument. Although it might look as an aesthetics of opposition, on the contrary, it is a strong decision to pullout the gist of the situation from what is apparently absent in it.

Golder's tactic is described by a word whose sole mention gives the shivers in Argentina: subversion. Killing subversion was the aim that provoked people's torture, death and disappearance during the dictatorial government in the 1970's - the years when the artist lived her childhood. It is not fortuitous that the echoes of the military process often erupt in her works. Nevertheless, the political character of those artworks is much more conclusive at the level of their narrative

and formal construction, in the power with which the social ruptures, the political fluctuations and the footprints of history have a repercussion in the individual existence and in the daily space; in the full understanding of the feminist maxim, according to which, what is personal is political.

According to Michel de Certeau, a tactic is an action determined by the absence of an own space, by the need to operate in a foreign ground, organised by a strange law. It is the art of the weak, of the one who makes use of the breaches which allow him to talk in a discursive field dominated by another voice. In times of censorship, the possibility of naming what was not allowed to be voiced was above all a question of tactics. Today, Golder makes these procedures hers, and refers to situations which can be named though might still be not so nice to hear.

This shift from censorship to the potential of the unsaid marks the artist's work in a particular way. It labels her work historically, aesthetically and politically. It emerges once and again as the result of an elaborate reflection about the ways to approach conflicting circumstances, environments and characters in critical dilemmas, or else it appears as the singular feminine conception of the world. She acts as a sharp look, many times intimate and with sensibility, evoking facts whose vision is not forbidden but which we still find hard to face.

