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ARTE CONTEMPORÁNEO: EL DOGMA INCUESTIONABLE (CONTEMPORARY ART: THE UNQUESTIONABLE DOGMA)

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We are at a culminating moment in the history of art. Today, what we used to call by that name has been transformed into an ideology, a closed orthodoxy that does not allow its critics any possibility of verification. Some of the dogmas established by contemporary art theorists are quite familiar to all of us: the concept and the context transform objects into art; art is ideas, not about the work; everyone is an artist; whatever the artist designates as art is art, and of course, the curator has supremacy over the artist. This lack of rigor has permitted a situation in which minimal effort, happenstance, and the lack of intelligence are the values of this false art, and that anything can be exhibited in museums. Objects without aesthetic values that are presented as art are accepted as such through the demands of this dogmatism, in complete submission to the principles imposed by authority.

For theology, a dogma is a truth or divine revelation imposed on, and to be believed by, the faithful. Kant opposes dogmatic philosophy to critical philosophy and the dogmatic use of reason to the critical use of reason. Dogma is an idea that does not accept criticism or questioning, it exists *a priori*. If we question it, if we use criticism to analyze it, dogma vanishes and shows that it lacks logic, and that is an arbitrary affirmation to sustain an ideology, religion or superstition. That is why it is belief, because without the presence of faith, which is blind belief, dogma cannot be assimilated to knowledge. The theorist Arthur Danto compares Christian faith to the belief that a common object is artistic; according to him, in its *meaning* lies in its *transfiguration*. It is not gratuitous for Danto to use a religious term. On the contrary, it is intentional, because the critic must no longer examine the work, but the meaning, and believe in it. Art is a belief, a dogma, an imposed idea, and this applies to any object, because its values are no longer visible, but become substance, ontology, intentions, phantasmagoria that impose themselves as supernatural truths in permanent contradiction with appearance and facts.

In what follows, I will analyze each one of the dogmas in which the ideology of contemporary art is held to achieve the transfiguration of which Danto speaks. This revision is necessary, because as dogmatism is based on intellectual submission, its ideology can permeate other areas of knowledge and creation, and it can produce less intelligent societies and can ultimately lead to barbarism.

THE DOGMA OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION

This dogma states that an object changes substance by a magical influence, by an act of prestidigitation or by a miracle. That which we see is no longer what we see; it is something else,

not evident in its physical or material presence, because its substance has changed. This substance, which is not verifiable, is invisible to the eyes. For it to exist we must believe in its transformation. The transubstantiation of art is divided into two branches:

a) The dogma of the concept: When Marcel Duchamp defended the urinal as a work of art, in his writing signed as R. Mutt, he said verbatim: “If Mr. Mutt did not make the fountain with his own hands it does not matter. He chose. He took an ordinary article of life and placed it in such a way that its utilitarian meaning disappeared under a new title and another point of view, creating a new thought for that object.” This new thought, this concept, caused a urinal to be transfigured into a fountain and turn into a work of art. The urinal as such did not change its appearance one iota; it is what it is, a prefabricated object of common use, but the transubstantiation, the magical religious change occurred at the whim of Duchamp.

In this change of substance, the word plays a fundamental role: the change is not visible, but it is declared. We are no longer talking about a urinal but about art; naming that change is essential for it to be fulfilled. The dogma works because this idea is obeyed without questioning it, because the ideologists of art affirm: “That is art.” Art is a superstition that denies the facts, a powerful belief that the phenomenon of transformation exists. With the [idea of] ready-made [art], we return to the most elemental and irrational state of human thought, to magical thinking. Denying reality, objects are transfigured into art. Everything that the artist chooses and designates becomes art. Art is reduced to a fantasy belief and its presence to a meaning. Danto says: “The differences between an artistic object and a common one are invisible and that is precisely what today should interest the critic and the viewer.” Asking us to alienate our perception to accept as art something that does not demonstrate aesthetic values, is to ask us to mutilate our intelligence, our sensibility, and of course our critical spirit.

We need art, not beliefs. But just as atrocious crimes have been committed in the name of faith, we see how, in the name of the belief that everything is art, art itself is being demolished. The change of substance that turned any object into art is a phenomenon of language, it focuses on the conceptualization of the work, on the meaning, on the intention of the artist, on the curatorial discourse, on an aligned and complacent critical explanation, that is, on a rhetorical exercise. The constant of this rhetoric, of this concept, is that it contradicts the very nature of the object: the work *Biblioteca de Loreto Martínez Troncoso* is not a pile of books placed on the floor, “it is a palimpsest in which intertextuality becomes an instrument of communication.” The concept is different from what the object already has by its very nature. These concepts define and outline the works. The artistic object is interpreted by the curatorship that establishes what type of work it is, based on a predetermined classification. To sustain itself as an art, these works must be, first, receptacles of preconceived affirmations. I quote Danto: “A philosophical definition can capture everything without excluding anything.” This false art exists based on its definitions, and something is defined to disallow other meanings. We define something in order to have a univocal version of it and avoid questioning. The Aristotelian definition [that is commonly used] includes gender and specific difference: found object is gender; a molten bulb and the remains of boards (the work of Colby Bird), is specific difference. The intention to define or conceptualize is in the precise pigeon-holing of each work to cover up its banality and superficiality with ideas;

it is a rhetorical disguise for the emptiness of creation and the lack of talent. We cannot pragmatically refer to the object found as trash; that object [in and of itself] is what threatens to limit the curator's speech, and for him the tangible reality does not exist. That object, although it does not seem so, is "art," and asks us to submit our reason to that dogma. The texts [displayed with the objects] are never critical; rather, they are didactic texts of the philosophical schools that protect this trickery. According to a survey by Columbia University, Arthur Danto's texts are among the most read by students and experts. The reason, they explain, is that they do not analyze the works; they simply try to educate viewers and tell them why philosophy considers that "art," although apparently it is a common and ordinary object. Art can undoubtedly trigger philosophical ideas, but it is not these that create the works of art.

If, as Gadamer says, language is the medium in which comprehension is carried out, what curators, artists, and critics do serves as the vehicle that gives existence to these objects as art through a pseudo-philosophical language or jargon. In other words: these works are first and foremost a succession of adjectives and quotations. According to Arthur Danto, "to see an object as art requires something that the eye cannot give, an atmosphere of theory." A work is legitimized by citations of Adorno, Baudrillard, Deleuze, or Benjamin. The works exist for a theoretical and curatorial discourse, denying all logical reasoning. This art refuses critical thinking, and demands that it be interpreted within the coordinates that accept it as art. It is the belief in a fact through ideas: we do not have to see the miracle—it exists if we believe in it and are able to articulate it with definitions and concepts. We do not have to see the work: it exists if we believe in what they have already written about it. The works exist for philosophy, for rhetorical speculation, for their dogmas, not for art itself.

b) The dogma of the infallibility of meaning: Everything that the curator places in the museum room has meaning and significance. The ontological values attributed to the work are *a priori* and arbitrary. Everything has meaning in the assumption that everything is art, and as such, it should have a reason for being. The point is that this meaning is arbitrary because the object itself is arbitrary. The works, lacking an aesthetic value that justifies them as art, need to be awarded a philosophical value, usually derived from the fact that in all works there is an intention of the artist that is good in the moral sense. What the artist does, starting with the action of urinating in public (a performance of Itziar Okariz, among many others who also do it), has a good intention—it is an irony, a denunciation, a social or intimate analysis, and the curator adds to that intention a meaning that reinforces the arguments of the work as art.

Within these parameters, anything can have an intention and a meaning. For example: the work of Santiago Sierra, a pornographic video titled *Los Penetrados*, "is a serious critique that reflects on the exploitation and exclusion of people, and generates a thoughtful debate about the structures of power" (or at least that's what the Spanish Ministry of Culture claims). If the public before the work or the performance affirms that it does not communicate or demonstrate such a meaning, then the public is wrong, because the artist, the curator, and the critic have a culture, a special sensitivity, a metaphysics and a demiurgic creativity that allows them to see what is not evident or verifiable. The fictitious values of the work are unquestionable and infallible. Seeing art in these objects means following the phrase of the theologian Jacques Maritain: "Let us not

observe reality with physical methods, let's do it with the pure spirit." That is, to see the work we must renounce both our perception of reality and our intelligence, and submit to the dictatorship of faith. Under a kind of religious or magical influence, we are asked to see what is invisible to others. This meaning becomes superior and gives a value to what has no inherent worth, and what is more, gives an intellectual status to those who join the invisible miracle. The consciousness of reality gives way to the phantasmagoria of metaphysics, and superstition takes the place of reason.

THE DOGMA OF THE BENEVOLENCE OF MEANING

In all the works that I mentioned in the previous sections, one notices that art has been converted into [an activist enterprise] that profits from the ignorance of the State. The works, which physically appear unintelligent and devoid of aesthetic values, have great moral intentions. The artist is a messianic preacher, a Savonarola who tells us from the white cube of the gallery what is good and what is bad. It is curious that such works that determinedly assassinate art are also obsessed with saving the world and humanity. Empty of aesthetics but wrapped in great intentions, these works defend the environment, make critical statements on gender, denounce consumerism, capitalism, and pollution. Everything a television news program schedules is a theme for an anti-art work. However, its level does not exceed that of a secondary school newspaper. These works are not only superficial and childish; they also demonstrate a complicit submission to the State and the system that they falsely criticize. Theirs are politically correct denunciations. These works, supposedly rebellious, are carried out in the comfort and protection of wealthy institutions and with the support of the market. Hence, they make criticisms in a tone that does not displease the power or the oligarchy that sponsors them. This would not go further than superficiality, if it were not that in many cases, they engage in irresponsible practices that do more harm than they denounce: staging interventions with women who suffer violence, while lacking psychological and sociological methodology (work by Lorena Wolffer), ecological installations that waste materials and mistreat animals (work by Ann Hamilton), works that pollute the environment (the work of Marcela Armas), false allegations that conceal state crimes and distort the historical truth to stay in the good graces of the Party (Teresa's work *Margolles*). Everything, of course, full of moral arguments.

Incredibly, these artists descend into the most elementary Manicheanism. They ask us not to see the work in its physical and real dimension, and to ignore the dangerous implications of its irresponsibility and servility. On the contrary, we must stick to their ideas, in this case morals, and as the intentions of these works are supposed to be socially benevolent, we must applaud them without analyzing them, without studying them, without even noticing, much less denouncing, the fact that they are worse than the evil they expose with childish or scandalous means. To say that Hannah Wilke's photographs with cancer are not art but a commercial derision of her own illness, is understood as an attack on feminism. *Seeing* the work becomes an attack against the social activism of the artist, against her Manichean vision of the world. Seeing, analyzing and questioning puts us on the side of the enemies of society. The artists of this false art parasitize institutions, sapping their resources, hiding in the shadowy borders that do not disturb power, while engaging in gallery activism, throwing tantrums as rebellion. Criticism

stands in solidarity, lest they accuse her of being antisocial. And yes, the surrender gives its fruits: the one who flatters today, may be curating an exhibition tomorrow.

THE DOGMA OF CONTEXT

The dogma of transubstantiation is also the dogma of context. The context is defined by the environment, the factors and the circumstances that surround and protect the work and that affect its art status. The context par excellence is the museum or gallery. The object ceases to be what it is the moment it crosses the threshold of the museum. The works that are displayed by its side, the exhibition area, the identification card, the curatorship, everything is coordinated so that an object without beauty or intelligence is art. In great art, the work is what creates the context. A collection of paintings makes a museum, a statue defines a square. The museum, when housing works, tells us that they have extraordinary characteristics, and that for their aesthetic value, their cultural and historical contribution, they must be safeguarded and ordered to be conserved and exhibited to society. The museum *makes* art by association and then puts that “knowledge” before the people.

With this frame of reference, it is assumed that everything inside the museum is art and that is what contemporary works of art prey on. While the museums of true art create their collection with works that are still art even outside its walls, this false art called contemporary requires those walls, that institution, that context to exist in the eyes of the public as art. These works do not show extraordinary characteristics, and they need the context to assign them those characteristics. They take things from everyday life, like found objects, make installations with office furniture or sound installations with street noises, and the museum creates the atmosphere so that these objects that are literal replicas of everyday life [that has] become something different. Faced with the impossibility of being something else, of creating and of portraying a reality the objects do not have, the context gives them the difference that the artist does not achieve. It is in a museum; therefore, it is something with value. Context has the capacity to transform objects: if a merchant puts a spectacular advertisement on the street, it is advertising; but if Jeff Koons or Richard Prince appropriate the same ad and expose it in a museum, it is art. The purpose of the invention of the context is to give these pieces and objects an artificial position of art that they do not have outside the enclosure or the exhibition area. Ready-mades, common and current objects, interventions or appropriations, things that do not appear in any way exceptional, require an even larger, more striking, more regulated and limited framework to distinguish themselves, attract attention and justify their price. The dogma of context is a trap, a way of disguising the fatal situation of requiring the museum room to exist as art.

Adorno, as well as Malévich, disdained the great museums like the Louvre, called them cemeteries, and predicted their destruction, but neither imagined that contemporary works could not exist without the walls of the museum. For that reason, in the definition of context, in addition to the place we must also consider the works with which contemporary pieces are surrounded so they will be regarded as art. In the Reina Sofía Museum in Madrid, the permanent collection includes engravings by Goya. This creates context and tells the public that a trash

installation is just as much art as are Goya's engravings, that a video of a performance by Esther Ferrer is just as much art as are Goya's engravings. That is what they call "creating dialogues."

Now, if contemporary art was born as a rejection of academies, if great art is for its flag-bearers a symbol of backwardness and does not motivate the interaction of the public, what is the need to relate to works by Goya or Velázquez? The context [provided by those works] enables [works of contemporary art] to consecrate themselves in museums and in the market. Creating this type of context serves to confer on a plastic bag installation of B. Wurtz the quality of a masterpiece. Here the search for the ephemeral, the recovery of the everyday object, and the change in the uses of the museum collapse before the evidence: they fear being ephemeral, they do not want to be perceived as everyday objects; they want, like great art, to be extraordinary and do not want to change the uses of the museum; rather, they want those uses to be subject to their needs and to elevate their foolishness. In the Guggenheim Museum, the artist Tino Sehgal asked to empty the rooms to put on a performance that basically consisted of two people hired to be kissing on the floor when a spectator entered. In this case, the work is not the work but the context [is the work]: the museum, its spectacular empty rooms, the architectural space, the Guggenheim as a showcase at the service of the artist. If these actors kiss in a subway station or in Central Park, the work simply does not exist. The curator's argument is a document that can be kept in an illustrated book with the photograph of the couple kissing. That is why contemporary artists are addicted to the museum: it is impossible to value and exhibit their art beyond its limits. What would remain of contemporary art with the museum without Malraux's walls and the Malévich museum, the one that burns in flames thanks to a liberated society that seeks to get rid of the past to make way for a living art? Absolutely nothing.

THE DOGMA OF THE CURATOR

The curator's speech is market discourse, the curator is a salesman. The product, that is, the artist, can change; the seller, on the other hand, is immovable. For the 2007 Venice Biennial, the Spanish pavilion was assigned to the curator Alberto Ruiz de Samaniego. When questioning who would be the four artists that would make up the pavilion, he was blunt: "One of the problems of art is the fetishism of names. I try to work with projects to which names can be incorporated, and that is why I have selected artists who come close to the postulates I have commented on." The attitude of the curator Ruiz de Samaniego is no exception; on the contrary, it is the norm. By turning art into rhetorical speculation and theory, by reducing it to a discursive construction, the artist leaves his place as creator to hand it over to the theorist, to the curator. The curator is the one who dictates the theme of the exhibition, how it will be mounted and who will integrate it. In the brochures of the exhibitions the artists are no longer mentioned. Now the name of the curator is put first and it is specified that it is a project under the guidance of such and such an expert. If the name of the artist is not relevant to a curator, it is because the intellectual support of these works is provided by him and in practical terms, as the work can be whatever it is, what matters least is who makes it. The important thing is who directs it, who theorizes it, and that these theories are the structure of the work.

This format is a sensational trap, it is the door to destroy the artist, so that he ceases to exist as a person and as a creative figure. Because if the artist is the creator of art and art no longer requires creation, then it does not require the artist either. The difference between the Latin *ars* and the Greek *téchne* was established to give a more intellectual dimension to the creation, to emphasize that it is not only manual skills, that an artist is a being who meditates and raises his own theories and proposals, and that this translates into his work. Every work has behind it a method, that is, an ordered thought with a clear objective. Despite the doses of inspiration that an artist may have, the work is raised and solved through a method. This refers, of course, to the art that artists do, to painting, to sculpture, to drawing, to printmaking, in short, to real art. This art requires a museographer, an advisor who participates in the montage with his knowledge, but not someone who dictates to the artist how the work should be. That is why the curators refuse to exhibit great art, because such works do not need them there, since their rhetoric, their power, is sufficient.

For the figure of the curator to have authority, it must be over works of this false art that is called contemporary. The other art, the true one, does not require it, because the work of the artist is not the theoretical discourse of the work; the work demonstrates itself, and it does not need a theorist to give it intellectual sustenance and substance because it is already implicit. In other words: the ideas are resolved by the creator in the work.

THE DOGMA OF THE OMNIPOTENCE OF THE CURATOR

Contemporary art allows, like no other genre, an exceptional opportunity for the curator: his ideas are more important than the artist, the work itself, and therefore the art. It is a perfect relationship: curators are rhetorically incontinent, have a visceral need to generate the most unlikely texts for the works. The pinnacle of this relationship is that the work allows it because, as it is practically nothing, then anything whatever can be said of it, any text, however disproportionate it may seem, can be imposed on the work. Writing speculative and rhetorical texts about drawings by Egon Schiele has a limit, no matter how much imagination and baggage is employed and emptied. The work says it all, it is itself imposing, and there will be no words that surpass it. Whatever the critic or the expert says, he does it at his own risk, because the work is compelling. The descriptions, the theories, although they go far, never do as much as the work. It is the limitation of the critic, the theorist, the historian. Great works are bigger than their texts.

But that does not happen with contemporary art. Curators are omnipotent and take over the work, because their texts create them. They give meaning to some sticks with splattered paint by Anna Jóelsdóttir, describing [them] as “a metaphorical vision of the narrative of painting that establishes an abstract dialogue to break with logical representation.” In this way, they are no longer painted sticks lying on the floor, but a “representation of the chaos that the artist has experienced.” The work acquires that dimension with a descriptive text, but this only happens to works of false art without realization, without technique and without talent. The curator is aware of the artist's dependence, of the fragmented state in which the work lives without the curator's protection. And he exploits it. He owns the works. It is a phenomenon that happens in biennials as well as in museums and galleries. The obedient, submissive, and undisclosed artists stick to what the curator orders. This obedience means little; the work is always irrelevant; the work can

be anything, because it is, in the end, an excuse, a procedure for the curator to exercise his power as a demiurge and with rhetoric turn those objects into something that they are not. In the assembly of the work, the curator's speech materializes and it is his conceptual and megalomaniac boast that decides to deliver a room of fifty square meters to a banana peel on the floor or to some yogurt containers on the wall (Gabriel Orozco in the MoMA). It makes the work behave in space as he decides, because the work lacks a demonstrable value outside the curatorship: it is garbage or everyday things, but the transubstantiation that begins with the choice of the object is a miracle consecrated by the curator. The artist is irrelevant to the montage. If the general vision of the work is of the curator, and the montage responds to that vision, the artist is not important, not even necessary. You [the artist] can leave your items and return to see the result on the day of the exhibition. This gives the curator the power over the work, the meaning, and the space. The artist stops working for the work and starts doing it for the curator.

THE DOGMA OF "EVERYONE IS AN ARTIST"

Of all the dogmatisms that have been imposed to destroy art, this is the most pernicious. Democratizing artistic creation, as Beuys asked, democratized mediocrity and turned it into the identity marker of contemporary art. Not everyone is an artist, nor does studying in a school make us artists. Art is not infused [or inspired], art is the result of working and dedicating oneself, of spending thousands of hours learning and forming one's own talent. We are sensitive to art, but between that point and being artists and creating media art is a chasm. This dogma started from the destructive idea of ending the figure of genius, and has a certain logic, because, as we have seen, geniuses—or at least talented artists with real creativity—do not need curators. However, its consequences are felt in a very different field. Genius is not a myth. Education trains geniuses. Talent plays a part, but rigorous training and systematic work make the standards and results of talent higher, and consequently the artist's craft and artistic level improves. We have had, and still have talents that can be called great: what is the intention behind demeaning them by generalizing and equalizing all people? Uniformity and equalization is the communism of art: it is the obsession that does not highlight what is really exceptional, in order to create a mass idea in which the only highlight is ideology, not people.

The central figure of this false art is contemporary art itself, not its artists. Never before in the history of art have there been so many artists. With the invention of ready-made art, ready-made artists emerged. This idea that demeans individuality in favor of uniformity is destroying the figure of the artist. In the figure of the genius, the artist was indispensable, and his work irreplaceable. Today, with the overpopulation of artists, all are dispensable and one work is replaced with another, because they lack singularity. The works in their ease and caprice do not require special talent to be made. Everything the artist does is susceptible to be art—excrements, fetishes, hysterias, hatreds, personal objects, limitations, ignorance, illnesses, private photos, internet messages, toys, and so on. Making art is a pretentious and egotistical exercise. The performances, the videos, the facilities with such overwhelming obviousness are pieces that in their immense majority appeal to the lowest standard of effort, and in their creative nullity they

tell us that they are things that anyone can do. That possibility, the “anyone can do it,” warns us that the artist is an unnecessary luxury. There is no creation; therefore, we do not need an artist.

And what to do when we have an unprecedented overpopulation? Giving everyone the status of an artist does not bring art closer to people, it detracts from it, it banalizes it. Every time someone without merit and without real and exceptional work appears, art decreases in its presence and conception. The more artists there are, the worse the works are. Collective exhibitions, crammed with objects that are confounded with videos and audios, are uniformly mediocre. Art fairs, with immense areas of repetitive works in their inferior intelligence and emptiness, are no better.

The artist, to make matters worse, has become a low-ranking jack-of-all-trades. He touches all the areas because he is supposed to be multidisciplinary and does everything with little rigor. If he makes video, he does not reach the standards that they ask for in the cinema or in advertising; if he does electronic works, he does not even do what an average technician does; if his work is involved with sounds, it does not even reach the level or experience of a DJ. It is assumed that if the work is contemporary, art does not have to reach even a minimum range of quality in its realization. And if the work *is* done with quality, like the advertising objects of Jeff Koons, it is because it is made in a factory. This multitude of artists either do not do the work themselves, or are unable to do it well. Let the craftsmen do; *they* are dedicated to thinking. The reality is that, since their works are not art, the supposed creators are not artists. There are no artists without art. If the work is obviously easy and mediocre, the author is not an artist. Assumedly, artists do extraordinary things and demonstrate in each work their status as creators. Neither Damien Hirst, nor Gabriel Orozco, nor Teresa Margolles, nor anyone else on the immense and daily-growing list of people like them, are artists. And this is not what I say, this is what the works say. Let your work speak for you, not a curator, not a system, not a dogma. Artists’ work will tell if they are artists or not, and if they do this false art, I repeat, they are not artists.

THE DOGMA OF ARTISTIC EDUCATION

Let's start with the situation of this school, La Esmeralda. They only give them three semesters of drawing, something they call two-dimensional, which should be painting, and three-dimensional, which should be sculpture. This is less than the minimum time required by these disciplines. They give them one of photography and one of video, believing that with that the students become video artists. In the University Center of Cinematographic Studies (CUEC), however, mastering a camera takes five years of training and a demanding admission test. With these brief bases, the supposed artists go into the production and conceptualization of the work, which is the most important part of the teaching they receive. How can they be producing if they just took a few classes? With a curriculum such as the one they have here—with teachers who go on television to show their hatred of painting (and despite that, still give painting classes), and with a direction that clearly adapts education to fashions and to the market—there is no sense in students coming to study at La Esmeralda. If they want to be real artists—to be able to paint, draw, sculpt or make prints—they cannot learn, with the depth and rigor necessary, if it is with this school format.

For others, those interested in VIP art—video, installation, performance—this school is superfluous, because when analyzing the teaching staff, I do not see the stars of media teaching. And those who already consider themselves artists do not teach them what they should know. With the false pretense that they are already artists, the only thing that is required of them is an official role that gives them access to scholarships, learning how to fill out grant requests, and knowing who is who among the curators, museum directors, gallery owners, etc. Nor is it necessary to study theory and curatorial jargon, since the rhetoric of the work is in the hands of the curator. The artist has only to designate something as art, as Arthur Danto already said: “artists leave philosophers the job of thinking about the work.”

Self-criticism, which is fundamental in any process of artistic creation, does not exist with this ideology. Anything that the student does is immediately accepted as art, be it a table full of rotting food or toy carts. The paternalistic pedagogy of non-frustration prevents the work from being examined, corrected and, as it should be in most cases, rejected. These forms of expression are a fad, and a school cannot sacrifice a complete curriculum only to be at the level of the galleries that offer these anti-art works. It has been an enormous irresponsibility and an attack against artistic education that the fundamental subjects of the plastic arts were reduced to the minimum to dedicate more hours to teach “conceptualization of work,” the ability to make speeches about the objects that they produce. The obsession of this anti-art with producing ephemeral works, with exhibiting disposable works, cannot be applied in the formation of people. This school is forming throw-away artists, because when such trends happen they will not have in their hands a solid formation they can move forward with. Education is an existential decision; it is a life project, and the direction of this school is playing games with that. The students are losing valuable time in their lives and they are being cheated.

Conceptualizing and generating all kinds of rhetorical discourses does not produce artworks. Instructing others to do the artworks does not make us artists. *Ideas are not art*. Due to the distance I have as an observer of this phenomenon, I can appreciate the damage that is done to art, the disillusionment that the public experiences with these works; but what annoys me most is to see that students receive an education that is submissive to the market, an education that frustrates the talented and excites the mediocre. That is something that those who made the decision to change the curriculum will have to take responsibility for one day. This school has a social and humanistic responsibility that it is perverting in the name of the dogmatism of an ideology. The utopia has been realized: all are artists, the abyss of stupidity opens as wide as infinity. There is room for everyone.

CONCLUSION

The philosopher Michel Onfray says in his book *La fuerza de existir (The Force to Exist)*: “Galleries of contemporary art exhibit with complacency the defects of our time.” This misnamed art is a defect of our time and, as such, it means a setback in human intelligence. The endemic contempt for beauty, the persecution that has been mounted against talent, the contempt for techniques and manual work, are reducing art to a deficiency of our civilization. It is not

innocuous to demean human creation to accommodate an ideology and its dogmas, allowing a domain of power that in other circumstances would be impossible to imagine. It is a reality that thousands of people who call themselves artists could not [create “art”] if this ideology had not been implemented. The aesthetic experience does not exist with these works; there is nothing to appreciate, evaluate, question. The work has become a rhapsody of theories and nouns. And obviously the key assertion—“this is not art”—is absolutely out of your code of ideas. I will not tire of insisting that it is a false art of self-help, of blind optimists dazzled by the concept of the contemporary, by believing in the modern, in which everything is good, valid, and intelligent. The optimist does not want to see the abyss into which he goes singing. He does not settle and look around; he advances deliriously, because he has discovered something, the apotheosis of happiness: everything is art.