

## Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster SPLENDIDE HOTEL



DOMINIQUE GONZALEZ-FOERSTER  
*Splendide Hotel*, 2014  
Palacio de Cristal. Parque del Retiro  
Archivo fotográfico del Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. 2014

<b>DATES:</b>	13th March – 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2014
<b>PLACE:</b>	Palacio de Cristal. Parque del Retiro (Madrid)
<b>ORGANISATION:</b>	Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid)
<b>CURATOR:</b>	João Fernandes
<b>COORDINATION:</b>	Soledad Liaño
<b>RELATED ACTIVITIES:</b>	Encounter with Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Enrique Vila-Matas 13th March 2014 Nouvel Building, Auditorium 200, 19:00 h.

The projects of Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster (Strasbourg, France, 1965) invite the visitor on a journey through spaces and times where literature becomes a habitual practice of inhabiting the world. The artwork is redefined as a process beyond the concrete significance of objects. Literature and theatre constitute strategies for the configuration of an imaginary where physical space is no more than the tip of an iceberg traced out by the viewer on both real and fictional coordinates.

From her first works of the mid-eighties to her latest creations, the artist has explored the notion of space as a revealing medium, and of time as one of its closest allies. The characteristics of the Palacio de Cristal offer Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster the opportunity for a new exercise that will attempt to revisit the 19th century context in which it was built.

1887 is the year when Ricardo Velázquez Bosco built the greenhouse known today as the Palacio de Cristal, or 'Crystal Palace'. Its purpose was to house an exhibition of plants and flowers from the Philippines as part of the General Exposition of the Philippine Islands, held that year.

In the same year, **Rimbaud** was in Aden, Yemen, after the publication the previous year of his *Illuminations*. In the first poem of this compilation, *Après le Déluge*, he gives life to the Splendide Hôtel: "... *Et le Splendide Hôtel fut bâti dans le chaos de glaces et de nuit du pôle*" ("*... And the Splendide Hôtel was built in the chaos of ice and night of the Pole*").

Also inaugurated in 1887 was the Hotel Splendide in Lugano, and the Splendide was furthermore the name of the hotel in Évian-les-Bains where Proust used to summer with his parents. Splendide Hotel is now also this hotel into which Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster has temporarily transformed the Palacio de Cristal in Retiro Park.

A large luminous sign on the main door announces that the visitor is entering the new Splendide in Retiro Park, a hotel with just one impenetrable room that replicates the original architecture of the building. The carpet covering the floor and the mystery reigning inside evoke that distant period when the Palacio was built. Around it are several rocking-chairs surrounded by books, inviting visitors to sit down and transport themselves to the worlds hidden inside the literary selection that the French artist has made for this occasion. Authors like the Philippine **José Rizal**, **Dostoyevsky**, **Rubén Darío**, **H.G. Wells** and **Vila-Matas** become companions on the voyage in time that Gonzalez-Foerster encourages us to share.

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster was born in Strasbourg, France, in 1965. Her work, often associated with the work of Philippe Parreno and Pierre Huyghe, is represented in the collections of the most pre-eminent museums. She has recently exhibited in New York's New Museum and MUSAC in León, among other centres.

## RELATED ACTIVITIES

### **Encounter with Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Enrique Vila-Matas**

**Date:** 13th March 2014

**Time:** 19:00 h.

**Place:** Nouvel Building, Auditorium 200

*In collaboration with: illy caffè*

Artist and writer engage in conversation, dialogue that coincides with the opening of *SPLENDIDE-HOTEL*, a site-specific project carried out by Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster in the Palacio de Cristal. Fiction within reality, compulsive reading or literature as a tool for understanding the world, these are elements shared by both and mark an ongoing collaboration. This conference is divided into two parts. In the first, Enrique Vila-Matas (Barcelona, 1948) gives a lecture on an unpublished text that, through the relationship between the artist and writer, comments on the multiple narrative connections of *SPLENDIDE-HOTEL*. In the second, Gonzalez-Foerster and Vila-Matas enter into dialogue.

Enrique Vila-Matas' work, standing between narrative and essay writing, has been translated into a many languages and has been given recognition through literary awards such as Rómulo Gallegos, Herralde and the Medicis. Recent noteworthy publications include *Aire de Dylan* (2012) and *Kassel no invita a la lógica* (2014).

#### **Para más información:**

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