

Glòria Picazo

Curator and director of the "Centre d'Art la Panera" of Lleida, Spain.

The truthfulness of images.

Text for the catalogue of the exposition at "Centre d'Art la Panera", Lleida, Spain 2007.

Since the invention of photography in the mid-19th century one aspect has changed substantially when analyzing it as a medium of visual expression. Although in the moment of its irruption it was considered the ideal medium for freezing a moment of reality and making it known, with the passage of time and the multiplicity of its uses, photography has also shown that it can cast doubt on reality, play with appearances and challenge viewers to approach what is apparently real but may not be so.

And it is this very evolutionary process which has substantially marked the photographic work of Jordi Bernadó. His interest first focused on the transformations of the great metropolises, on cities that in 1994 were experiencing changes of great urban transcendence, such as Berlin with the dissolution of frontiers between East and West or Atlanta, facing a remodelling which was to lead it to the Olympic Games of 1996. The photographic image thus became the confirmation of an urban reality in process of transformation, of a reality which was transitory but frozen and spread by photography.

Rapidly, however, Jordi Bernadó's photographic perspective began to use the apparent objectivity of images to introduce doubts to make us wonder whether the photographed reality had not already been transformed. Moving along the border between what is true and what perhaps is false has been the basis of many of his work projects. It was then that some images emerged which affirm some of the fundamental traits that characterize contemporary society, such as cultural mixing, the result of a globalized world in constant movement, which he himself exemplifies. His work can only be explained by a tireless desire to use travel as a source of knowledge and questioning of reality itself that, whether we like it or not, is irremediably mixed and confused with that of "others".

After years of work in the field in which the urban landscape in all its complexity had been supreme, his interests have broadened towards the narrative potential that can lie behind a small discovery, a fortuitous fact uncovered by chance. Following the thread of an event he has heard about or of an object found gives him the opportunity to re-construct a story with images, playing once again with the possible false truthfulness of the photographs he presents. He thus becomes a narrator of visual stories that can tell us of a ship that at the start of the 19th century set sail from Sicily to America on a fated voyage, as the passengers disembarked again in Italy, believing, however, that they were starting a new life in the promised land of California, or of a luxury cruiser that sank in 1995 off the coasts of Fuerteventura, the story of which he has reconstructed by locating the remains of the ship scattered all over the island.

Visual stories, micro-tales that Jordi Bernadó extracts of geographically and culturally distant corners, from the boundless development of Tokyo or Dallas to the traditional stagnation of deepest America, and always exploiting the ironies of destiny and chance to warn about the development model followed by current society. Criticism, irony and even on occasions sarcasm hang over his images, and thus become narrative strategies, which undoubtedly position him ideologically and do not allow us to be passive consumers. For all these reasons, as the filmmaker Wim Wenders argues, for Jordi Bernadó "taking photographs is also an act of rebellion".

The selection of photographic images made for this exhibition at the Centre d'Art la Panera in Lleida seeks to offer a retrospective view of Jordi Bernadó's work from 1994 to the present, revealing those fundamental traits that have characterized it in this brief but intense professional period.

JORDI BERNADÓ



Palo Alto
Pellaires 30-38
E-08019 Barcelona
Spain

+34 93 303 3148

www.jordibernado.com
estudi@jordibernado.com