
YAOI AYOR

FRANCESC RUIZ

ENGLISH

GALERIA ESTRANY · DE LA MOTA

ANTONI ESTRANY · ÀNGELS DE LA MOTA

A | PASSATGE MERCADER, 18. 08008 BARCELONA

T | (0034) 93.215.70.51 F | (0034) 93.487.35.52

W | www.estranydelamota.com

M | galeria@estranydelamota.com

H | TUESDAY – SATURDAY 10.30-13.30 / 16.30-20.30

E | 12/11/03 – 02/07/04

We present the latest project by Francesc Ruiz (Barcelona, 1971), entitled Yaoi Ayor. It consists of a big format drawing that takes up the gallery's main area. It is an attempt to meditate about the human experience consisting of the projection and realisation of private fantasies, and about the new approaches to gender discourse that take its dedramatization as a starting point.

As it is usually the case, the narrative method in Francesc's work consists of displaying a series of apparently unconnected scenes. The drawing forms a global map of those situations the characters may be involved in. These characters are three girls devoted to the edition of the Yaoi fanzine, this being a variety of Japanese manga of homoerotic contents whose characters live stories marked by sex and romance. Contrary to what it may be expected, Yaois are not aimed at a gay audience but to a feminine one, which may use it as a vehicle to let fantasies flow.

In the gallery space this story is structured at three levels.

One of them shows the audience the places where the three girls go to take the pictures for their Yaoi. These places are enclosed in the Barcelonan district popularly known as gayeixample, which comprises Muntaner, Aribau, Casanova and Consell de Cent streets. The facades of some specific buildings and gay clubs are reproduced.

Another level allows us to share the girls' experiences as photographers, which are reproduced in the form of comic strips. What they do is taking pictures of gay couples in a romantic attitude that will later use as inspiration for the drawings needed to illustrate their Yaoi. They act as observers and apprehend a reality they do not belong to, and which consider unreal in spite of it being absolutely desirable and ideal. In this light, with their approach they do not intend to take an active role in the gay community, but they prefer to transform it in fiction with their fanzine recreation. The girls' experience is the thread of the story.

As regards the title of the exhibition, Yaoi Ayor, Francesc Ruiz plays with the sound of two words whose meaning reveals the importance that partaking in their project has for the three girls. Ayor is the short form for At your own risk, which is used in travel guides for gays to refer to those spaces not categorized such as rest areas in motorways, public toilets or parks, where anonymous sexual contacts are made. Although it is an expression of gay jargon, in this case the risk to which the title alludes also refers to the risk implicit in everyday experiences, by means of a private fantasy that affects leisure time as well as one's social and professional life.

One may also consider the importance of referring to the creative method used by the artist who works with digitalized drawings, that eventually exhibits forming a collage of glued photocopies hanging on the wall. This involves a process which begins with a drawing, a creative space to which the artist's personal mark is associated. It is then computer-manipulated and, in the end, exhibited in an analogical, popular format, this being the photocopy.

As well as this piece of work, one can admire the author's work done in Valence during his stay in Art3, the result of a grant by the Generalitat de Catalunya, thanks to an artist's exchange program organized by the Sabadell Museum of Art. This project has been previously exhibited in the Art3 Centre and in the Florence Loewy-Books in Paris. *Ésta es mi playa* is presented in seven volumes, throughout which the pages are ordered differently from one volume to another, so that the same drawings allow different readings and form different stories. Francesc Ruiz has taken the Portuguese expression *Esta no es mi playa* ("this is not my beach"), which Brazilians use to refer to that which is not interesting for them, and has reversed it to introduce "his beach". With this motif, he shows images taken from the collective unconscious where everybody belongs, and whose beach is presented as a place for relation and exchange.