

Peace, Friendship, Limits and Settlement – This all used to be outside

BENOÎT ANTILLE

An installation by Ricardo Rivera (MX/USA) and Chris Daubert (USA), from June 23 to August 28 2016 in the old church, with a performance by Christophe Fellay (CH) and Ricardo Rivera on the night of the opening.

Peace, Friendship, Limits and Settlement – This all used to be outside is an installation created specifically for the old church in Leytron by artists Ricardo Rivera and Chris Daubert. The first part of the title, *Peace, Friendship, Limits and Settlement* [to which should be added *between the United States of America and the Mexican Republic*] refers to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed February 2, 1848 to put an end to the Mexican-American war. The site, which has become a neighborhood of Mexico City, is an important Catholic pilgrimage for many Mexican people. It is here that the Virgin of Guadalupe appeared to a peasant named Juan Diego. Taking inspiration from these references, Ricardo built a dome, typical of religious architecture, which is accompanied by a video and a performance.

The second part of the title refers to a monumental installation by Chris Daubert called *Travelers Amid Buildings and Streams*. The piece evokes the landscape of the Central Valley in California, an agricultural region characterized by its extreme flatness. Daubert's piece, a paper model, represents the steep Ardèvas mountain, which he links to a horizontal line reminiscent of the Central Valley's topography. Bringing together two antagonistic geographical situations, the piece explores the

notion of *distance* in a world that tends to reduce it more and more, in all its forms (as much from the geographical as the cultural point of view, for example).

Peace, Friendship, Limits and Settlement – *This all used to be outside* thus includes a synthesis of different landscapes or territories (in particular, Mexico, California and the Valais) transplanted into an architectural element – the old church in Leytron – and explores the dynamics that these displacements or “translocations” generate. This monumental installation simultaneously evokes all that brings together and all that separates, on the level of landscape or territory.

With his dual Mexican-American heritage, Ricardo Rivera is sensitive to notions of identity and power. He is interested in the strength of symbols, in particular religious ones, that temporarily leave their mark on a place: Christian churches that have replaced Amerindian temples, churches that have become mosques, such as Sainte-Sophie, or mosques that have become churches, etc. Placed near a stained-glass window and a key-stone, his piece evokes a minaret, of course: a crumbling minaret, on its way to becoming a ruin, conjuring a reflection on the always-transitory nature of the powers that be.

Chris Daubert’s monumental piece represents Ardèvez through negative space. Here again, symbols are the subject, because this mountain is like a kind of a logo or brand of the Leytron community – the stamp of its visual identity. But the image has been cut away: the mountain is represented by the emptiness left behind by cut-out paper. The viewer’s eye navigates a forest of vertical lines that hide as much as they reveal. Looking through the play of shadow and light, viewers can see Ricardo Rivera’s piece at the back, the different parts of the church, and other viewers in the space. This visual experience – a kind of game of “hide and seek” – recalls the tensions or contradictions that are sometimes at play when it comes to territory: it evokes what we see, or know, and also that which must hide and be forgotten.

Counterpoint to Chris Daubert’s installation, a television shows a video made onsite by Ricardo Rivera with the help of Maëlle Cornut. The video retraces the artist’s walk between Ovronnaz and Leytron, clothed in a reflective futuristic suit, and ending up at the old church where the exhibition is held. The video,

whose background proposes a synthesis of the territory of the municipality, puts the artist in the position of intruder, of “Alien” – as much through the word’s reference to science fiction as through its first meaning, of “stranger,” seeking to melt into the territory (through the reflective suit that acts as a mirror) while at the same time “stealing the show”: this disruptive presence bears the mark of the unexpected, the unforeseeable that bursts into the daily life of a quiet little village.

In their dialogue, the works of these two artists explore the notions of limits and borders – political, cultural, social and religious – while also delving into the deeper grey areas of an “unsettling strangeness.” The artists bring what is physically *outside* (the territory of the community) *inside* (the church), while inverting the dynamic on the symbolic level: by unveiling – which is to say, showing on the *outside* – that which is normally *inside* (oneself) – forgotten, cut away, or unsaid.

L’Art du partage

[The Art
of Sharing]

FRANCISCO CAMACHO,
ALEXANDRE PRAZ

A project by artist Francisco Camacho
and his collaborator, Alexandre Praz, from
February 1st to July 9th, 2017

At the convergence of art and social action,
L’Art du partage aimed to (re)create a web
of non-monetary exchanges between local

and/or private organizations from the
municipality of Leytron. Over the course of
several months, artist Francisco Camacho
Herrera and Alexandre Praz attempted to
assist and motivate the local communities
of Leytron to (re)develop and galvanize the
free exchange of services, training, transmis-
sion of intangible heritage, and activities.

Faced with many emerging social conflicts
(migration, economic crisis, environmental
degradation), it’s up to each of us to learn
new ways of living. It is crucial for inhabit-
ants of this planet to become conscious
that culture must change. The pursuit of a
harmonious life for humanity will involve
concrete actions, intended as responses
to the depletion of natural resources, to the
lack of funding for cultural and social
activities, and to the many stresses that get
in the way of interpersonal relationships.
Artistic and cultural environments can