

# The Ocaña We Deserve

## *Campceptualism, sexual insubordination, and performative politics*<sup>1</sup>

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*'The vampire Ocaña interrupts me with birdlike shrieks that cannot bear solemnity: What a pain! Eeek! To have to die to enter the Museum of Contemporary Art! What a dirty trick! I'd rather continue to be unknown but alive!'*<sup>2</sup>

*'What would become of the art world's financial and ideological foundations if the same recognition as art were to be given to the whole enormous mass of (informal and politicized) practices that have been excluded?'*<sup>3</sup>

Apart from certain brief mentions<sup>4</sup> and scant presence in exhibitions<sup>5</sup>, Ocaña has been largely ignored by the historiography of Spanish art. More present in the newspapers of the time than in art galleries or journals, from all the descriptions of him one common discursive core emerges: Ocaña is presented as 'the transvestite painter of Las Ramblas', 'Andalusian, homosexual and poor'<sup>6</sup>, and less well-known for his production of 'objects' (from his stubborn practice there remain more than 200 paintings and papier-mâché dolls) than for his public performance of homosexuality, his walks and interventions in Las Ramblas, his Carnavalesque parties in Villanova I la Geltrú, Sitges and Seville, the first demonstration against the Law on Dangerousness and Social Rehabilitation, the Canet Rock festival and the Libertarian Days in Barcelona in 1977.

In *El mundo del desencanto*, her study of culture during the Spanish transition to democracy, Teresa M. Vilarós describes the resistance to history and historiographical reflection as the 'process of Spanish de-historicization'. According to Vilarós, this process of de-historicization was not in contradiction to but in continuation of the present insistence on recovering the 'historic memory'<sup>7</sup>.

Perhaps we might ask ourselves whether recovering Ocaña today as a queer artist does nothing more than 'de-historicize' him, imposing opaque genealogies and ideas that, more than revealing, actually conceal the contexts, not only of discursive, artistic, and political production during Spanish dictatorship and democratic transition, but also of counterculture. To say today that Ocaña's work is camp, turning 'La Ocaña' (using the feminine form) into an Andalusian version of John Waters' Divine, exchanging

flamingos and the caravan for fans and long dresses, and the streets of Baltimore for Las Ramblas in Barcelona, or transforming the communal courtyard in Plaza Real into a factory in which Ocaña is Mario Montez's poor gypsy cousin might be to run the risk of consecrating the American genealogy, transforming the culture of resistance to the Franco dictatorship into an exotic but peripheral footnote to the dominant Western historiography.

Worse, interpreting Ocaña's alleged transvestism as a sign of 'gay sensibility' would not indicate critical openness, but rather a form of hetero/homosexual ethnocentrism (using Alberto Cardin's expression), turning minority practices into 'the expression of a difference'<sup>8</sup> and reducing kitsch, camp, and queer practices to the 'staging of a [proletarian and homosexual] symptom'<sup>9</sup> and, finally, neutralizing their critical potential.

When, in 1989, two years after his death, the Museum of Modern Art anointed Andy Warhol as one of the most outstanding American artists, Douglas Crimp forced art historiography to look queer and cultural studies in the eye by asking, 'Which is the Warhol we deserve?' Today, we may well ask ourselves: which is La Ocaña we deserve?

So, rather than rushing to describe Ocaña as kitsch, camp, or queer, I propose to interpret these ideas not so much as signs of identity or styles, but more as historiographical conflicts in which Ocaña can help us to understand how hegemony and subordination were constructed during the transition: Ocaña's production spans, precisely, from 1973, the crucial years at the end of the dictatorship when Carrero Blanco was assassinated, and when Ocaña gave his first performances and exhibitions in Barcelona, until his death in 1983, coinciding with the rise of the socialists to power, Spain's entry into NATO, and media coverage of the first deaths from AIDS.

In response to *de-historization* and *essentialism*, Ocaña can serve as a critical model for the reinterpretation of the historiography of art in Spain and also, in a broader sense, to 'construct a different modernity'<sup>10</sup> which, as artist and critic Pedro G. Romero suggests, enables us to 'resituate certain behaviors that all too often escape the sphere of art to appear as mere sociocultural happenings'.<sup>11</sup>

Queer historiography, or why Ocaña is so *cursi*, so kitsch, so camp... and so divine

*'Camp goes to the flea market to recycle the second-hand clothes of history.'*<sup>12</sup>

*'Monumental history is a parody in itself. Genealogy is history in the form of a condensed carnival.'*<sup>13</sup>

In this text, I would like to think of the appearance of the notions of *cursi*, kitsch, camp, *hortera*, and even queer in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as part of a semantic field that sought to define (and monitor) the ethical and aesthetic, political and poetic tensions generated as a result of not only the adaptation of the different social classes to processes of transition to European industrial capitalism, from rural to urban models of production and the new ways of consuming

and inhabiting public space, but also as an effect of the production of gender and sexual identities as visible species that characterized disciplinary European colonial biopolitics.<sup>14</sup> All these notions, despite the processes of re-signifying that took place over the 20th century, share the capacity to signal that a body, an object, or an action belongs to a certain class or identity, marking its distance or degree of subordination with regard to the hegemony. *Cursi*, kitsch, camp, *hortera*, queer... are rhetorics of political inadaptation that, in the dominant language, indicate the tasteless and socially embarrassing, as well as public ridicule, fake, ugliness, excess, and sexual pathology. Such notions exist only in relation to the rules for producing social identity that transversally construct not only Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, emigrants, vagabonds, errant travelers, but also actors, prostitutes, dropouts, and tramps, all crucial minorities in the biopolitical stratification of modernity.

The words *cursi*, kitsch, and camp appeared in the artistic discourse as part of a broader larger epistemic apparatus in order to draw borders between what is natural and what is original, operating as instruments of moral or clinical diagnosis aimed at detecting perversion and deviation. Impregnated with religious, economic, and moral rhetoric, definitions of kitsch and camp served to construct, through contrast, ideas about the avant-garde and modernism. Ocaña's importance resides in the fact that he was able to function over the final years of the Franco dictatorship and during the democratic transition as a veritable semiotic black hole, gathering and condensing while also re-signifying and subverting all those signs of subordination.

A *cursi*, said Ramón Solís in 1966, is a *fin-de-siècle* Andalusian displaced to the court in Madrid who, in a clumsy attempt to conceal his intruder status, makes the most complete fool of himself. The word *cursi*, as Joan Coromines' dictionary reminds us, first appeared in Andalusia, probably from Moroccan Arabic, meaning an 'ostentatious, important person' and, by extension 'presumptuous', 'tacky', but also one who wears 'loud' clothes. As a corporal style, then, *cursilería* shares the same field of social and aesthetic signifiers as flamenco.<sup>15</sup> According to this narrative, three traits – which are also determinant, as we shall see in the case of Ocaña, characterize the *cursi*: aesthetic inappropriateness, the search for social advancement, and geographic dislocation.

The word *cursi*, as the rhetorical residue of a political discipline, indicates the poor taste of those who do not belong to the hegemonic classes: the escape from the country to the city and the nomadic, erratic lifestyle (common to emigrants, Jews, and Gypsies) mark the destination of the *cursi* in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>16</sup> By around 1920, the idea of the *cursi* had become globalized to the extent that the Mexican Bernardo Ortiz de Montellano defined it as meaning 'rebelliousness, the search for innovation, the vital desire for improvement... it is the aesthetic of the poor person with aspirations'.<sup>17</sup>

If anything would appear to characterize the *cursi*, it is its obstinate presence in the public space, the determination to infiltrate places where one does not socially belong and to make oneself visible. The *cursi*, as Spanish writer Francisco

Umbral would later note, 'spends all day going around the city, walking, at the café or the tavern, gambling or at the brothel, at the bullfight or booing opening performances'.<sup>18</sup> Before the traditional diatribe between being and having, it is said that the *cursi* prefers to 'appear', to 'figure', and to 'make theatre'; to the origin, the *cursi* opposes their unstoppable mobility,<sup>19</sup> their capacity to transport his gruesome portable roots. According to this cultural theory of the *cursi*, Andalusian identity (like the bean or the Gypsy) is fabricated through the very process of transporting and staging. As we shall see, this question of displacement, of traffic of origins and theater, is crucial in the case of Ocaña.

However, it is, without doubt, the essay entitled *Ensayo sobre lo cursi* (1934) that Ramón Gómez de la Serna wrote in Argentina – soon after Hermann Broch published *Evil in the Value-System of Art* in order to discredit kitsch – that best understood the cultural battle being fought in the name of the *cursi*. For Gómez de la Serna, *cursi* is everything that eludes Western rationality: 'what is rectilinear, clear, what has been carved on surfaces that are all too evident'.<sup>20</sup> Here we find not only the Oriental and the Arabic, the organ without the body (the lung and the windpipe turned into something separate), and the body without organs (the ghost and the vampire, the cadaver, the dissected animal and everything that "entertains death") but also that which is feminine and that which is mannered – feeling, love: 'It's ladies dressed as troubadours and the decoration of the house acquired the intimacy of the museum of small things, of the exhibition of objects made by the mad, prisoners, lovers and warm creators of wedding presents'.<sup>21</sup>

Like *cursi*, the word kitsch appeared in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to describe the drawings and cheap objects that filled markets in the cities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and began to decorate bourgeois interiors. Etymologically speaking, kitsch refers to the urban space and, particularly, to the street, to dirt and to the hygienic practices that proliferated in European cities as they underwent modernization: *kitschen* means to strip the dirt from the streets, and it was from here that other terms, such as detritus, junk, *contrefaçon*, *cursilada*, and *camelote*, were later derived, ambiguously fashioned, embraced by the word *kitsch*.

It is in the debates about the autonomy of art and its relation to modernity by authors such as Theodor Adorno, Hermann Broch, and Clement Greenberg<sup>22</sup> in which the idea of kitsch becomes a true ideological operator that serves to define – by contrast or opposition – avant-garde art. These authors deploy a complicated system of metamorphic classifications that, through a series of equivalences and differences, is aimed at detecting – by contrasting kitsch and avant-garde – not only rubbish, but also that propaganda or merchandising that hopes to pass itself off as an artistic object. For Broch, metamorphosing aesthetic and ethics, the problem of kitsch is not that it is ugly, but that it is inherently evil: the attempt to produce beautiful objects outside a real system. To put it another way, for them, beauty, when false, is kitsch.

Contemporaries of *cursi* and kitsch, the Anglo-Saxon words 'camp' (possibly derived from the French *camper*, 'to pose in a mannered way' and 'to be affected') and 'queer' (kinky,

'sexually deviant') began to be insults indicating the effeminate and affected (camp) nature of certain bodies in the public space of their flaunting of sexual norms (queer). In the same way that, for the protectors of the frontiers of avant-garde, kitsch parodies the aesthetic experience, camp and queer (the gay, lady-boy, the eccentric stance towards sexual norms) parody the truth of sex. To Marxist critics, the notion of parody (which ranges from theatricalization to transvestism) has ceased to describe a process of representation to identify a system, whether ideological (the market) or pathological (that of homosexuality). Strangely enough, what this Eurocentric art discourse seeks is to detect not only the merchandise or copy that is camouflaged under the appearance of an 'original aesthetic experience', but also the queers, faggots, and transvestites who try to pass themselves off as 'real' men or 'natural' women. Considered in the context of defining new techniques for producing sexual difference that characterized Central European biopolitics in the late 19th century, *cursi*, kitsch, camp, and queer signal all that which exceeds the new bourgeois, urban and capitalist masculine figure of the virile, white, heterosexual man. The modern male, not only the true protagonist of the public space and political life of the colonial metropolis, but also social player and artistic producer, is sketched out in disciplinary terms in opposition to the *cursi*: romantic, Baroque, Oriental, domestic, southern, fetishist, sentimental, childish, feminine, crazy, and mannered. If exuberant forms of tropical vegetation, the excessive rhythm of popular music, treacly theatrical farce, the garish taste of brides who will never marry, the gay and the effeminate, and so on are dangerous, it is because they all breach the colonial, class, and sexual rules that define white, masculine, heterosexual Central European modernity.

In this table of binary oppositions, femininity is associated with ornament, with theatricality, with the mask, with madness and hysteria, with homosexuality, with the south and the Oriental, and, therefore, with kitsch, *cursi*, and camp. Bourgeois heterosexual femininity and its pathologies are, like domestic interiors, full of fans, gaudy decorative flowers, polka dot fabrics, curtains, veils, miniatures, china Madonnas... It is not by chance that, as we shall see later, the transvestite (hyperbolic theatricalization of femininity in a body marked culturally as masculine) ends up acting as a semiotic crucible into which successive rhetorical tropes are poured, from *kitschen* as urban waste to kitsch as a copy and diabolic production of mechanization, and to camp as a dirty trick, the irreverent personification of natural femininity and masculinity.

Despite their apparent marginal nature, the concepts of *cursi*, *hortera*, kitsch, camp, and queer (words that stuck to Ocaña like magnets) serve to mobilize and reorganize the hierarchy of disciplines and systems of representation, which was undergoing a shake-up in the late 19th century: photography (as a product of mechanization and inversion) and theater (as a falsification) have affinities with both and will be denounced by watchdogs as threats to real avant-garde art (painting and sculpture).<sup>23</sup> In this system of signifiers, photography and theater are the transvestism of modernity, the queer inversion of avant-garde art.<sup>24</sup>

Ideas about the *cursi*, kitsch, camp, and queer enable the construction of these forms of subaltern practices as eccentricities and 'styles', pathologies of taste and, at the same time, as moral deviations or as sexual pathologies. In response to this avant-garde quality control and its virile ideal of modernity, dandies, photophiles, hams, and ingrates of white heterosexuality will perform the first performative re-signifying of the slander, vindicating the camp as a characteristic art production form of modernity.

Ocaña condensed this series of subordinate historical meanings (Andalusia, ruralism, economic insecurity, femininity, homosexuality, Jewishness, theatricality, copy, refuse, inversion, masquerade, sexual deviation, pathology, amateurism...) and occupied a strategic position (formalized through transvestism) both before the National-Catholic hegemony and the left-wing and counter-cultural languages that would acquire representative status during Spanish democratic transition.

'José Pérez Ocaña, a child with a pointed nose, was born in Cantillana de Sevilla under the radiant light of the clear sky of Andalusia, which expresses artistically through mannerist cults, flowers, processions, frilly, ruffled dresses, fans and angels. The son of a forceful woman and the grandson of a house painter, a member of the Patacán family, with their pure lineage and, therefore, devotion to the Assumption, not without a bob or two, but with no fortune and so closer to the Divine Shepherdess. The Assumption and the Divine Shepherdess, two Madonnas and two brotherhoods that, as in every Spanish town, opposes Christians old and new in mysteries and processions, those born here and those born there, well-known and revolutionary families. He learned to be an artist at these artistic festivities. [...] And, in a country of males and homosexuals he chose the latter, which cost him a spell undergoing treatment at the mental hospital in Seville, a more positive and less effective solution than the priests' condemnation to Hell. [...] He served his country as seaman on land at the Navy Ministry and emigrated to Barcelona in 1970 as a building laborer and house painter with aspirations to triumph amongst Catalan culture and pockets.'<sup>25</sup>

That is how Ignacio Zavala describes Pepe Ocaña in the introduction to the play that Andrés Luis López dedicated to Ocaña in 1989, in a story that had been repeated previously, in various prologues and presentations of catalogues of his work. If we think of Ocaña as a conglomerate of cultural signs, then, we might ask: What is indicated by the expressions 'pointed nose', 'forceful mother' and the 'house painter' uncle, the 'mannerist cults, flowers, processions, frilly, ruffled dresses, fans and angels'? What purpose is served by the reference to the opposition between 'Christians old and new', between 'those born here and those born there', and between 'males and homosexuals'? What are the 'aspirations to triumph amongst Catalan culture and pockets'? All these characterizations are nothing more than signs of subordination, ways of pointing towards peripheral conditions (whether or not they coincide with the reality of Ocaña's biography) of the converted Jew, *cursi*, mannered, the amateur artist, homosexual: the rural proletarian, and the emigrant as opposed to the cultural norm and artistic hegemony.

Ignacio Zavala strives to protect Ocaña not only from the politico-sexual spell of the radical left, from the supposed aggressiveness of militancy, but also from the excesses of pornography, before which the artist is defined as an unrecoverable individual: 'He developed his non-conformist character detached from social groups and affectionate towards weaker, sensitive individuals, a nature that led him to create an art universe of innocents surprised by life, free from gay and pornographic aesthetic forms'<sup>26</sup>, Paradoxically, recognizing Ocaña's 'difference' (*cursi*, popular, effeminate, Andalusian...) as an exceptional index of artistic individual originality also enables Zavala to inscribe Ocaña within a tradition of modernity, the avant-garde and artistic production without questioning assumptions in relation to race, gender, sex, or class struggles.

### Ocaña's way and performative disobedience

*'Nothing is more material, physical, corporal than the exercise of power.'*<sup>27</sup>

*'Sex is, above all, an expansive recreational and creative capacity. Imagination and enjoyment, Oedipus, the gods of Olympus and Christ crucified in a sadomasochistic orgy, belong to the culture of death, and we are firmly against this. The resurrection of the body, today-now-and-there.'*<sup>28</sup>

In *Bodies that Matter*, Judith Butler takes Althusser's 'interpellation' to the place where sexual identity is produced to explain the performative status of law: the sexual subject interpellated by the law, says Butler, does not exist prior to the law, but is instituted by it.<sup>29</sup> Gender law, its structures, codes, and norms, are not description, but constitute the subject that we name through a feedback political process that, at the same time, implies recognition and repression. From the political viewpoint, what interests Butler in this interpellation process is not how the law determines positions of subject, but whether it is possible to disobey this interpellative law, introducing failures and interruptions within the normative process of subjectivization.

Ocaña's actions constitute an inventory of practices of performative disobedience to the interpellation of the sexual subject in the context of the late Franco period and the Spanish transition. Although it would be precipitous and anachronistic to consider Ocaña's work queer, it is nevertheless possible to affirm that his actions, contemporaneous to punk and the emergence of the first critical reactions to gay and lesbian identity policies, foreshadow performative gender and sexual disobedience that began to be known as 'queer activism' in the 1980s: his theatricalization of exclusion and reclaiming of the public space anticipate the strategies that will be deployed in later queer and transfeminist movements: ACT UP's die-ins, kiss-ins that criticize the hetero-dominance of both the public space and its commercial establishments; the actions by the Reclaim the Streets movement; and by the CIRCA clown army, drag king workshops and marches that theatricalize and re-signify masculinity, crisscross and postporno workshops aimed at re-signifying the performative codes of sexuality,

urban marches with vampires and freaks, '*panto-jismo*'<sup>30</sup> workshops lampooning monogamous sentimentalism.

Ocaña's general performativity, with its affinities to performance both feminist (Adrian Piper, Eleanor Antin, Woman House Project, Annie Sprinkle, Sanja Ivekovic, Cosey Fanni Tutti, etc.) and queer (Jack Smith, Barbara Hammer, Ulrike Ottinger, etc.) and sexual-political guerilla actions (the French Gazolines, PONY from New York, Las Yeguas del Apocalipsis in Chile, Krzystof Niemczyck's in Poland, etc.) deconstructs and surpasses historiographical oppositions between *arte conseptuá* (as Ocaña pronounced 'conceptual art' in his Andalusian accent) and painting, between feminist and camp art, between pop and postmodernity. We might call the result of this performative multiplication *campceptualism* under the condition of causing both categories, understood as strategies for political theatricalization through which the body is excluded from its disciplinary condition and its sensitive structure is made visible in the public space, to become contaminated through proximity. But can camp be conceptual? Can conceptualism be camp?

There is nothing naturally in Ocaña's character, or in his status as Andalusian emigrant or gay, whose effect should be to produce kitsch, camp, or queer aesthetic practice. On the contrary, kitsch, camp, and queer are the visible styles through which hegemony constructs peripheral conditions. In 1964, Susan Sontag reclaimed camp as an aesthetic category, separating it from gay, transvestite, and transsexual culture to define it as an 'operation of taste' characteristic of the 'postmodern sensitivity' and the effect of a series of re-signifying techniques such as irony, satire, burlesque, and pastiche.<sup>31</sup> Replying to Sontag's definition, in part post-political if not depoliticizing, such authors as Judith Butler, Andrew Floss, Douglas Crimp, and Moe Meyer<sup>32</sup> have insisted on resituating these practices within their sexual cultures, underscoring the construction of political subjectivity in relation to the norm. Following these critical intuitions, I shall discuss Ocaña's<sup>33</sup> performative techniques and uses of the body together with a series of popular and collective performative practices of gender and sexual disobedience and production of subordinate visibility in the public space that characterized sexual and political revolts in Barcelona from 1973 to 1983, and in which Ocaña's figure and creative power stood out, though not exclusively: Ocaña's practices were also reflected in those of Camilo, Nazario, Alejandro, Pau Riba, Onliyú, Maria la Virgen de las Ramblas, Violeta la Burra, Kike, Xefo, Miguel/Carmen de Mairena, the De Las Cuevas transvestites, Carlos Mir, Les 5 QKs, the Farriol siblings, La Bocas, La Weekend, La Torbellio... as were those of many public demonstrations that took place during that decade in Catalonia and Spain and which took performative politics as a strategy for action and protest. Secondly, I shall not take Ocaña's transvestite figure as a paradigmatic example of the *cursi*, kitsch, camp, or queer; rather, I shall try to understand how Ocaña's public image is constructed and what place it occupies, not only in countercultural discourses and practices, but also in governmental practice during the transition years in Spain.

Ocaña's practices of performative disobedience comprise a series of strategies (actions, acts of voicing, public dances,

rituals, and interventions) through which politico-sexual minorities seek to intervene in the process of producing social meaning by misquoting the sexual and gender codes of National Catholicism, distorting and displacing them through flawed imitation or satire. Ocañian practices show how the sexual underclass can have access to the production of social meaning and political representation. Gender parody, glamorization of shame and sorrow, praise of bad taste, consecration of copies: these are re-signifying operations through which the subordinate intervene in the dominant codes and displace their hegemonic meaning.

What characterizes Ocaña's practices is the manipulation by subjugated minorities of elements from popular culture that had been transformed into bastions of the National Catholic hegemony (religious, sexual, artistic, etc.): Christian iconography, virility, and heterosexuality understood as 'natural'. The Franco dictatorship had placed Andalusian popular culture and its signifiers (the bullfighter, the legionnaire, the torch singer, flamenco...) at the symbolic center of a campaign for sexual normalization and national 'Hispanization'. As Alejandro Yarza points out, this mythical and iconographic repertoire served to create a homogeneous Spanish identity at the expense of Moors, Jews, Protestants, left-wingers, homosexuals, Basques, Catalans, Galicians, masons, etc., who formed part of the infamous 'Jewish-Masonic-left-wing conspiracy, which if it honors them debases us'.<sup>34</sup> This is precisely the furrow that Ocaña ploughs: he trafficks with such phenomena as the *cursi*, religion, folklore, Andalusia, and queer culture in order to imbue popular culture, the captive of Francoist ideology, with new meaning: 'liberating these signifiers that had been forged by the Francoist discourse was a political gesture, whilst this satirical re-appropriation subverted ideological codes that sought to establish the national identity'.<sup>35</sup>

But what characterizes Ocaña's actions is not complete rejection of performative norms governing gender, class, or sexuality, but precisely what Judith Butler has called his 'parodic compliance'. Ocaña's performative practices are, at the same time, a utopian and hyperbolic reference to the dominant heterosexual order and a subversion (inversion and divergence) of social gender hierarchies. Considered in isolation, without context, Ocaña's practices can be understood as ways of consolidating the hegemonic norms governing class, gender, or sexuality. One might argue against 'Ocaña the misogynist' that his performance of femininity ridicules the image of Andalusian women or stigmatize transvestites 'who earn their living in the theatre', or that his exhibitions *La primavera* [The Spring] or *Un poco de Andalucía* [A Bit of Andalusia] re-naturalize Andalusian culture, reducing it to a hodgepodge of Madonnas, flowers, angels, and *copla* torch songs. There is not, nor can there be, a necessary causal relationship between performative citation of normative cultural codes and subversion. As Jacques Derrida noted, *indecidibility* is a condition for the possibility of performative power: it is not possible to affirm whether a performative action is inherently subversive or mere repetition of the established order, since its subversive capacity depends strictly on the citation's context. There are no revolutionary performances (what is subversive in Ocaña's practices is neither the comb nor the full-length

dress); rather, there are contexts in which the performative intervention unleashes chains of significance that deconstruct the norm and open new possibilities for subjectivization. The political power of the performative action does not depend on either its form or its content, but on its relationality, its capacity to establish meanings that exceed the norm.

Let us concentrate, then, on the context and the successive failures of sexual, gender, or normative class interpellations. The systems of gender subjectification that produce Andalusian heterosexual masculinity failed in Ocaña. In 1978, eight years after his arrival in Barcelona from his Sevillian village, in his theatrically decorated studio at the Plaza Real, he recounted to filmmaker Ventura Pons how he had experienced the imposition of heterosexual masculinity as a performative mandate. 'In Andalusia, being male is what society calls being natural and normal,' says Ocaña. 'I grew up amongst people, in the village. I had many interests, but there was a lot of repression. I realized my tastes from a very young age. I liked men a lot but people forbade that. I started to feel different from the rest and to perform *false theatre*. But at night when I went to bed I found myself again and it made me really angry to have to play a false role before everyone [...].'<sup>36</sup> Ocaña does not contrast nature and theater, but *false* and *true* theater. The performative imposition (false theater) does not necessarily involve language, but is inscribed on the body through compensatory social protocols linked to work and sexual reproduction or punishment and exclusion rituals. As Ocaña remembers, 'I began to work picking cotton and olives when I was ten and people threw stones at me. They hated me because I was so elegant; I was in a different world, they had pushed me aside. I was excluded [...]. To them, some guy cutting flowers or watching sunsets wasn't normal. What's normal is going to work and courting, that's what's normal for them.' He added, 'But I didn't ever hear the word homosexual until I came to Barcelona.'<sup>37</sup>

Ocañan practice might well be defined according to two strategic ruptures that were already present in 19th-century post-revolutionary dandyism, embodied by the likes of George Beau Brummell, D'Orsay, Baudelaire, Oscar Wilde, Cocteau, and even Alfred Jarry, against the new, dominant urban classes' bourgeois work ethic and codes of heterosexual masculinity. A new subaltern body emerged, in biopolitical feedback between the hermaphrodite and the hysterical woman, challenging the conventions of gender and class. Nonetheless, unlike the dandy, whose critique of the bourgeois masculine ethic is aristocratic in inspiration, Ocaña's transgression of this ethos takes place bottom up, in a three-fold topographic and political sense: from the south, from sexuality, from the popular.<sup>38</sup> It is no longer the elite outsider who professes a kind of chosen exclusion; rather, it is a case of betraying both bourgeois, urban masculinity and National Catholic masculinity through the peripheral contamination that the popular, rural, faggot, Andalusian body propagates. While, for Susan Sontag, camp is 'dandyism in the age of mass culture',<sup>39</sup> we might say that Ocaña, who practiced a cultural do-it-yourself that had not yet found access to the consumerism to which the democratic transition gradually opened the doors, embodies

a singular form of poor, rural dandyism that hustles between National Catholicism culture affected by transformations from the agricultural and patriarchal economy of the large estates and the masters to tourist developmentalism and anarcho-libertarian countercultural practices. Marked, above all, by class break-up and its peripheral condition and in a status in which, as Carmen de Mairena points out, 'a poor queer was a queer and a rich queer was a rich person',<sup>40</sup> Ocaña's masculinity is, paradoxically, closer to British skinheads than to the 'gays' of the Catalan *gauche divine*. That is why both painting and performative practices operate in Ocaña as a series of subjectivization techniques (*true theater*) that enable him to repair the damage caused by the failure of the masculine interpellation and bourgeois heterosexuality: 'I fight to be someone, to be me, a person, and I don't mind dressing as a woman, a monkey or whatever as long as I can be what I want.'<sup>41</sup> It is not a question here of discovering a deep sexual or national identity or a psychological truth, but of performing the subordinate condition, 'in which to perform means to generate social visibility'.<sup>42</sup> Ocaña explains: 'Where I like exhibiting myself is amongst people, with people... because I am excluded. Like whores, like pimps, like queers and like motorbike thieves, even though I am a painter... I identify with all those people.'<sup>43</sup>

Amelia Jones has explored the gender construction processes that take place as performance, happening, and body art emerge in the late 1950s. Against the theatricalization of the modern artist's sovereign heterosexual masculinity expressed through painting and embodied in such figures as Picasso and Jackson Pollock, Jones insists on the paradoxical position that masculinity occupies among performance artists, as performance depends on a process of public exhibition of a body that has been historically marked as feminine or deviant, what medical discourses considered 'pathologies' and sharing its modalities of visual production – hysteria, fetishism, exhibitionism, or homosexuality<sup>44</sup> 'deliberately turning himself into the show's object of desire, the artist with male body negotiates his masculinity from a feminine position'.<sup>45</sup> Hence the suspected homosexuality and the imperious need to reconstruct the modern artist's identity as male and heterosexual in the historical account. Ocaña, though a painter, exists (like women, *cursis*, *horteras*, dandies, and the theatrical) within this performative tradition: he belongs to the subaltern subjects of modernity, those that cannot or will not perform the modern or avant-garde artist's sovereign heterosexual masculinity. The struggle between painting and 'theatre' that characterizes Ocaña's work is also the tension between two gender constructions of the artist in the public space and within the historiographical narrative.

This proximity to other 'failed' subjects of the hegemonic performative phenomenon (not only whores, pimps, thieves, queers, but also the mad,<sup>46</sup> the impaired, vagabonds, punks, hippies, dykes, clowns, freaks, amputees, etc.) who have been, as Ocaña puts it 'fucked' by the normative interpellation, causes his distance from any naturalized identity, his romantic distrust of everything that is not childish innocence, and the vitalist affirmation of the body that resists the imposition of the norm. It is not, then, heterosexual or

transvestite femininity, but childhood, as a place where the performative imperative has not yet been able to impose its rule, and old age, as a relic that has survived normalization, towards which Ocaña's construction points in utopian style. Both spaces – childhood and old age, the angel and the cadaver – are, for Ocaña, zones of highly sensitive intensity, reservoirs of life and containers of death that, at either end of the biopolitical chain, seem to threaten performative repetition: 'we village children live so much [note that Ocaña includes himself among these children by his use of the first person plural], it's as if we were constantly on drugs, as if we were taking what they call LSD. You're always active, you always want to cry, and you always want to be happy'.<sup>47</sup>

If the body that Ocaña displays publicly is perceived as grotesque or excessively sexual, it is precisely because it breaches the limits of the normative construction of masculinity during the dictatorship. Wearing a simple mantilla, a carnation, a pair of wooden-soled Galician boots, and four papier-mâché figures, the *Ocañeras* parodied and outraged the military and religious establishment that ruled over the city. Ocaña's micro-political use of performance involves the physical body, the body's carnal and vulnerable dimension, as a place where displacements and transcodings between the normal and the pathological, the masculine and the feminine, the North and the South, the heterosexual and the homosexual, the natural and the artificial, the organic and the mechanical...too place. Like the grotesque carnival body, like the exuberant and *cursi* body, the body signified in Ocaña's practices is not an organic, individual, natural, and closed corpus, but a popular and molecular body, a body of the crowd, a multiple body, always artificially constructed and extensive, impossible to enclose or delimit. If Ocaña walked around dressed as an angel, an old woman or a lady, or stripped his clothes off on Las Ramblas, and if, first and foremost, he showed his bottom to the crowd at Canet Rock or offered himself publicly to be given blowjobs, it is not because he was particularly depraved or shameless (though perhaps he was those things too); rather, it is because, from a somatic-political stance, that is, from the standpoint of the relations that the body establishes with power, these are places (body techniques, ensembles of anuses, dicks, mouths, tits ...) of political, sexual, and gender antagonism.

Ocaña rejected National Catholic normative models of heterosexuality (but also models of bourgeois homosexuality) through the process that Homi Bhabha, describing the relationship between the colonized and the colonial norm, calls *flawed colonial mimesis*, according to which the repetition of the hegemonic code includes the possibility of both its reaffirmation and its distortion. One of the practices of parodic repetition of the gender law that would later be used to construct the media figure of 'La Ocaña' is the can-can dance from Plaza Real along Las Ramblas Avenue. In Ocaña, *retrat intermitent* (1977-1978), Ventura Pons films one of these outings: Ocaña, in makeup and skirt, broad-brimmed hat and high-heeled shoes, walks arm-in-arm with an elegantly turned-out Camilo,<sup>48</sup> who wears a white suit like a Visconti-style dandy. As he strolls among the people, Ocaña grabs a pushchair with baby included from a passerby, enabling the eccentric pair to

briefly perform as the heterosexual family, the symbolic care and reproductive cell of the National Catholic sexual and political norm. That might have turned out as a mere performative repetition if Ocaña had not quickly pulled up his dress to reveal his buttocks and penis, at which point the bemused pushchair's owner seizes back his child and means of transport. In this way, heterosexuality is exhibited as a normative political theater, denaturalized and, finally, ridiculed by the introduction of a subtle but radical performative variation: a buttock, a penis, cited in the body that should incarnate heterosexual femininity and maternity...introducing an unstoppable drift in the chain of normative signifiers.

Ocaña's apparent process of 'feminization' is, then, by no means free from contradiction. Femininity displayed hyperbolically is not the expression of an inner sensitivity, but the staging of a political conflict.<sup>49</sup> Although his actions appear to performatively exalt the Andalusian popular models of femininity that National Catholicism imposed normatively (the virgin, the saint, the mother...), the legitimacy of this mandate is questioned through its 'decontextualized citation': repeated in Ocaña's irreverent and hyper-sexualized body, removed from the heterosexual and religious contexts that give them legitimacy, Ocaña's gender practices surpass the provisions of hegemonic performance, reinventing the sexual-political law that now turns against the authority that imposed the same. Saint-transvestite-old-woman-whore-queer-knight-angel-Andalusian-Gypsy-libertarian. The ambiguity of Ocaña's practices, and also their disruptive capacity, arise from the fact that they are 'implicated in the very relations of power that [they seek] to oppose'.<sup>50</sup> This is characteristic of a time when, as artist Nazario says, 'uniforms were compatible with long hair... even though they were not made to be together'.<sup>51</sup>

Ocaña acts precisely at the point where Franquism and the communist revolution meet. Where Franco and Lenin secretly gaze at each other. Where power gazes on the stars of transvestite cabaret. The ambiguities in Ocaña's work result from this contagion and traffic: revealing the pagan origins of Christianity,<sup>52</sup> showing the affinities between the icons of hegemonic National Catholic culture and the sexual-political lumpen, illuminating the heroic masculinity of Our Lady's maternity and the feminine passivity of Christ, and showing the inconfessable attraction between the soldier and the queer, between the dyke and the queen, between the cop and the whore, between the artist and the illiterate, between the aesthetic of the martyrs and sado-masochistic sexual culture. Ocaña highlights the limits of both National Catholic discourse and the countercultural languages of the homosexual struggles that begin to operate according to logics of identity politics. He occupies the limit as a place of antagonism, but also as a space for creation, exhibiting the costly suturing mechanisms that constitute the coherence not only of the heterosexual male body but also the homosexual or transvestite body.

## Performative difference: libertarian transvestites and queers versus homosexuals and gays

The Libertarian Days, which took place in Barcelona in 1977, were not only a performative laboratory in which to articulate new political relations, but also a space in which to extend the limits of the official left. In an effervescent social context marked by euphoria after the death of Franco but also by the violent repression of the May 1 demonstration after the strikes at factories Numax and Roca, the Libertarian Days introduced a new form of political action and reflection centered on reclaiming the body and its pleasure within the streets. 'The anti-authoritarian alternative to the capitalist system', according to Ceesepe, involved 'reviving popular festivities, popular theatre, the new libertarian athenaeums and self-growing marihuana'.<sup>53</sup> Inverting the topologies of the theater and the Parliament, the Saló Diana became the venue for unprecedented and intense debates on political practice, post-dictatorship transformation, feminism, drugs, ecology, etc., while Park Güell became a place for collective celebration where, for the first time, the sexual minorities became visible through the theatricalization of sexuality in the public space.

This theatricalization took on iconic character through the Ocañan actions during the *Jornadas Libertarias*, filmed by the Catalan collective Video-Nou. José Ribas recalls: "When Pepe Ocaña, Camilo and Nazario, dressed as women, came up on stage as if walking on air, the delirious orgasm became collective. As they took off their clothes to shouts of "get them off and wet yourself", Pepe Ocaña took the mic and sang a *pasodoble*. The rock band that was playing had to stop; the crowd only had eyes for the transvestites. The incredible became reality when Ocaña spat out: 'I'm not a pure Gypsy, I'm a libertarian Gypsy, that's why I demand an amnesty for all queers' whilst urinating in grateful response to the applause".<sup>54</sup> The hyperbolical visibility of the subaltern body created by the Ocañan performance was met by rage, not only among the singer-songwriters and rockers it pushed off the stage but also, and above all, among the left-wing and the CNT syndicate, who felt that their virile ideal of the male worker's revolutionary body was under attack.

Ecologism, feminism, transvestism, and homosexuality appeared as messy splits in the official left that was unable to codify these subaltern claims completely within the grammar of Marxism and its party logic. Libertarian language, 'not as an ideology, but as a process that implies an internal metamorphosis'<sup>55</sup>, served as the vehicle for a critique that, taking inspiration from the radical struggles of the French Front Homosexuel d'Action Révolutionnaire (FHAR), the writing of Guy Hocquenghem<sup>56</sup>, and the Italian Mario Mielli, proposed to make sexual liberation the base for libertarian communism and was the most direct precursor of North American queer theory: 'Gays are not only gays and heterosexuals are not only heterosexuals. Such parceling off is, in principle, a limitation and a neurosis caused by a repressive, stratified and authoritarian society [...]. The State, male chauvinism and reactionism, the thought police and the culture condemn all deviant activities and attitudes, whether through repression in the environment, even using left-wing parties, or in more direct ways, through laws [...].

We demand that the State should immediately repeal the Law on Social Dangerousness and all laws against sexual freedom. We demand that businesses cease to marginalize employees that openly declare themselves gay. We demand the immediate abolition of laws that separate men from women and militarize the father, frustrate the mother and castrate the children.<sup>57</sup> Refuting criticism coming from the CNT syndicate, writers and activists gathered around the countercultural journal *Ajoblanco* appealed for support for the Ocañans: 'The fact that some people cross-dress and take the stage provocatively and strip off at rock, neighborhood, party and union festivals is not just folklore; it is disinhibiting behavior after 40 YEARS OF FASCISM, it is a protest against a REPRESSIVE, CASTRATING MORALITY.'<sup>58</sup>

For many, the first march for sexual freedom, which took place after the first Libertarian Days, was 'the most beautiful of all the demonstrations on Las Ramblas', an exercise in creating a counter-public sphere that led to a collective orgy at which, as José Ribas recalls, 'many more people than one might think made love for their first time in their life under the trees', and which *Ajoblanco* called 'the long night of Anarchy'.<sup>59</sup> The march, organized by the FAGC (Front d'Alliberament Gai de Catalunya, or Gay Liberation Front of Catalonia, established in 1975 by Armand de Fluvià), brought together several thousand people to demand 'complete sexual freedom and amnesty' and the immediate repeal of the Law on Social Dangerousness and Rehabilitation (which both UCD – Union of Democratic Center Party- and PSOE – Spanish Socialist Party- had neglected to include on their agendas). However, the demonstration, far from the myth that 'gay' militants later constructed around it, was marked by the impossibility of including gender dissidence in the political representation of homosexuality. FAGC activists perceived the visibility of transvestites, transsexuals, and prostitutes in the demonstration as a threat to the goal of integration in the public space and the legal normalization of homosexuals. In this way, a schism was created that was expressed in the 1990s in the opposition between queer politics and homosexual identity politics. Antoni Rojas describes it as follows: while the 'libertarian transvestites' (who would soon leave the FAGC to form CCAG, the Coordinadora de Collectius d'Alliberament Gai, or Coordinating Committee for Gay Freedom Groups) and the Ocañans 'opted for violence against the State and gender queering', the FAGC and the burgeoning homosexual movements decided to 'fight for the normalization of homosexuality, the end of the repressive policies and the granting of civil rights'.<sup>60</sup> Nazario remembers this fight for the performative staging of gender dissidence in the public space as follows: 'They wouldn't let us carry the banner because it was bad for the image, because we cross-dressed or were too queer.'<sup>61</sup> Jaime Gil de Biedma, from his homosexual ivory tower, made a fair summary in 1978: '*la pluma*', the feather, whose public meaning was feminine transvestism (but also lesbian masculinity), was 'what the homosexual movement repressed when it became constituted as a politic block'.<sup>62</sup> Jordi Petit, an FAGC member in 1978, recalls: 'On the one hand, a sector led by Darío encouraged radical transgression through transvestism as the best formula

against the prevailing norm and to overcome the masculine-feminine genders and the heterosexual-homosexual option. This sector, which was close to the libertarian movement, was mistrustful about those they accused of being "white-collar gays" being assimilated into the capitalist system. The other sector, of which both Armand de Fluvià and I were members, believed that it was not necessary to make transvestism a priority because it served to spread the prevailing clichés and what was really revolutionary was not to give the image that people expected, but quite the opposite, to break molds, and appear as ordinary people [...]. These tensions became crystallized at the FAGC general assemblies, including a chaotic Easter session in 1978. A group left, immediately forming the CCAG, which soon began to spread the message that the FAGC was dead and to publish the magazine *La Pluma*.<sup>63</sup>

As with the transvestites and transsexuals in Compton, San Francisco, and Stonewall in New York<sup>64</sup> and the French Gazolines in France, who were distanced from both the Trotskyite left and the Front Homosexuel d'Action Révolutionnaire,<sup>65</sup> the Ocañans, gender queers, and the more 'folkloric' transvestites did not become actual members of either the MELH (Spanish Homosexual Liberation Movement) or, later, the FAGC (Gay Catalan Movement). Nor did they identify with the *gauche divine*, Alberto Cardín, or the group of writers that, though not militants, studied sexuality through anthropology or sociology and were known as '*las intelectuales*'. Close to the CCAG libertarian transvestites, the Ocañans rejected both membership of political parties and identity assimilation. Before both the bourgeois public sphere and National Catholicism they invented the first forms of queer politico-sexual protest in the post-dictatorial Spanish public space.

## De-burials: Unearthing queer history

Ocaña's performative feminization, which met with mistrust both in the left and amongs homosexual movements, was not only a satirical reference to bourgeois and national Catholic female models (wife, mother, virgin) but also the exaltation of marginal figures such as mad women, tomboys, spinsters, widows, invalids, southern women, sinful saints, orphan girls, hunchbacks, outcasts, whores, dykes... Ocaña's performance embodied all these subordinate biopolitical figures. By theatricalizing them, he did not represent them (in the political or even metaphysical sense of the word); rather, he brought them to life, embodied them, produced them, activated them as somatic fictions and at the same time affirmed them as not only ghosts in history (invisible bodies with no discourse or agency of their own) but also as lines of flight through which life evades biopolitical control.

This is perhaps the goal behind Ocaña's performative politics: to make visible, today-here-and-now the 'buried'<sup>66</sup> bodies of National Catholicism, unearthing them, extracting them from the discourses and practices of popular normalization, where they had, until then, become unintelligible. Ocañas' urban *romerías* (religious processions) were burials reversed: marches of exhumed

bodies. Perhaps for this reason, these bodies (paintings, papier-mâché sculptures, performatively embodied) have the spectral quality of mummies, are presented in coffins or at wakes, are held up, taking the place of saints on improvised false altars or transformed into menacing “giants” and “bigheads”. Titanlux paint and cheap, fragile, and highly inflammable papier-mâché (materials associated with the house painter’s trade, children’s handicrafts, women’s work, and amateur practices) were used to make visible and codify this preliminary biopolitical status of the de-buried.

One figure stands out among all the bodies that Ocaña disinterred and elevated: the prostitute – virgin, and mother of urban junk– a central figure in the modern biopolitical order. We should remember that, for George Simmel, the prostitute was the paradigm of the modern subaltern worker, condensing producer, production force, and merchandise into one body. The prostitute’s body, at once object of desire and of social debasement, operates like a laboratory in which forms of economic production alternative to industrial capitalism are tested. Like the sex worker, Ocaña’s body is the space of overlapping of the production spheres that industrial capitalism seeks to separate: artist, exhibition space, and work are united within the fragile space of a body, treated as a great performative machine (a cannibal machine that always threatens to devour not only Ocaña’s painterly work, but also its commercial value, the possibility of generating surplus). That is why it is not surprising that Ocaña should answer the question ‘What does art mean to you?’ with the reply ‘Fucking and painting’, as if he wished to reconcile two logics that the market had historically separated.<sup>67</sup> That is why, moreover, Ocaña’s relationship with María, the alcoholic whore of Las Ramblas, whom he transforms into a Madonna, worshipping her like a Catholic virgin, or with Marilyn Monroe, another ‘great sinner’ that he turns into a virgin in the performance that would form the basis for the film *Ocaña, der Engel der in der Qual singt*, is not coincidental, but essential. Ocaña, a hybrid of flâneur (or, rather, of its lumpen versions: Gypsy, emigrant, and tramp) and prostitute, absorbed and somatized the colportage techniques that, for Walter Benjamin, defined modernity, turning his own body into an organic valise, and therefore inventing the logic of the performative body as a living, portable artwork.

In his posthumous homage to Jacques Derrida, Peter Sloterdijk suggests that text as we know it emerged from the Jewish people’s determination to detach writing (which they believed was God’s footprint) from stone, more specifically from the pyramids in Egypt, to write it on papyrus, which could be more easily transported. It was, then, a change of means: from architecture to paper, from archeological archive to book, from monument to document, from stone to body, from weighty god to light sign. In Sloterdijk’s view, identity is constructed in this process of ‘transporting the pyramid’ by other means, or carrying the pyramid in portable form.<sup>68</sup> Ocaña carried out a similar process of cultural mediation: by building altars, improvising *romerías* and processions, elevating figures and joining sacred, festival, and sexual elements together, Ocaña transported Andalusia (and resignified it through this traffic) as a popular phenomenon. Here, lifting and exporting are not metaphors,

but actions through which a socially subordinate body, but which had been central as a sign in National Catholicism coding is made visible. While, cut in pieces, the sovereign and patriarchal body of Carrero Blanco rose and fell, Ocaña elevated a reconstructed subordinate papier-mâché queer giant.<sup>69</sup> Ocaña's altars and dolls are like a drag queen's wig and high heels: extrusions, ways of breaking the city's somato-political scale, inserting a culturally marginal body into the architectural or sculptural order of the city as a living counter-monument.

The Ocañan processions along Las Ramblas and the transport of paper queer sacred figures from his home to the Mec-Mec Gallery (1977) and La Capella (1982) are paradigmatic expressions of this portable logic applied to performance with a 'de-territorialization' that at once exalted and corroded the very body of National Catholic identity and its codes. Ocaña re-signified his village Cantillana in Barcelona: like the Second Empire *flanêur* that fascinated Walter Benjamin, Ocaña is 'capable of behaving in the street is such a homely way as he is *cursi* behind closed doors, turning the interior into a boulevard'. Ocaña's *cursilería* lies in his ability to treat Barcelona as if it were a tiny Andalusian village, to transform Las Ramblas into a domestic parliament, a collective of courtyards, at once communal and intimate. Ocaña worked in an *extra-territorial way*<sup>70</sup>, like a queer situationist, superimposing the map of Seville, or even Cantillana, over that of Barcelona, transforming Las Ramblas into an Andalusian backstreet. In response to the official parody proposed by the miniature theatricalization of national cohesion in the 'Spanish Village' in Montjuïc, Ocaña's Andalusian village rose, a village side street capable of denaturalizing any other space. Transvestism (and its relational extensions: high heels, *peineta* combs, altars, dolls...) served as a political operator in this exercise in decontextualized citation: Ocaña transvested a street in Barcelona's Barri Xino, Chinatown, into a Cantillana street, citing a procession for Our Lady of the Assumption in which the brotherhood was replaced by a party of queers and sadomasochists; he transvested the belvedere in his apartment into an Andalusian balcony from where, dressed in a mantilla and wearing a carnation, accompanied by Camilo, he sings a *saeta*; he transvested the Mec-Mec Gallery into a wake, lighting the space with candles and burning incense and, like Sarah Bernhardt, he enjoyed organizing false burials; he transvested a rustic papier-mâché doll into Our Lady of Macarena, sickening a Sevillian Jesuit priest who found this 'ugly, ordinary' representation of the Mother of God to be blasphemous.

### Transvestism and gender biopolitics under Franco and during the transition: utopia, paranoia and somato-political camouflage

Transvestism absorbs and redistributes all of Ocaña's performative practices. It is important to notice that Ocaña, along with such figures as Bibi Andersen and Paco España Pavlovsky, was among the first figures to be represented in the media as a 'transvestite' in the early 1970s (the word *transvestite* condensed, at that time, a huge range of

performative and somatic practices that went from homosexuality to transsexuality and transformism) in Spanish popular culture. Ocaña-as-transvestite served as a signifier, not only for Barcelonan politico-sexual counterculture but also for the democratic transition: this is how he was represented by the media, both hegemonic and countercultural, from *El Periódico de Catalunya* and *Triunfo to Party* (the first national gay magazine), *Ajoblanco*, the TV program *Trazos*, the films of the Video-Nou group, and in *Ocaña, retrat intermitent*, Ventura Pons' 1978 documentary about the artist, which finally projected the 'transvestite' image of 'La Ocaña', already formatted as a 'countercultural figure', from his tiny flat in Plaza Real to the international circuits of Cannes, the Berlin Festival, and even Studio 54.

However, while it is true that, at the end of the dictatorship, transvestism and transsexuality functioned as tropes for democratic transition,<sup>71</sup> what place does Ocaña occupy in this sequence of symbolic substitutions? Going beyond the semantic community: what is the relation between transvestism, transsexuality, and democratic transition? What are the somatic, technical, and institutional processes that cross the individual and social body to enable the analogy to be sustained? What are the substances and the citation practices or gender reassignment operations that take place in democratization processes? And what position do popular transvestite and transsexual practices occupy in relation to this discursive and political symbolization?

Before entering everyday language, the word 'transvestism' emerged during the late-19<sup>th</sup> century as a medical term in psychopathology. The word was used to describe a 'paraphilia' deriving from 'clothing fetishism,' through which certain 'inverted men obtained sexual pleasure by wearing the clothes of the opposite sex'.<sup>72</sup> As a technique for urban management, the idea of transvestism served, in reality, for governing uses of the body in the public space: the modern sexual regime depended on a rigid continuity between male anatomy and male gender performance. The bourgeois feminine performative practices (characterized by over-ornamentation of the body, as well as the domestic space, childhood, interiority, and emotion)<sup>73</sup> were only authorized for those bodies that had been assigned a female sex, just as male performative practices (characterized by austere ornamentation, but also by work, action, and uses of speech within the public space) were legitimated only for bodies marked as masculine. The stability of the heterosexual regime depended on this continuity between between sexual assignation and theatricalization of the body in the public and private spheres.<sup>74</sup>

Transvestism as a cultural practice of the body, then, is subject to surveillance and is represented by a dual disciplinary management that reduces it either to the clinical-penal space or to the theatrical spectacle and pornographic consumption. The transvestite body, as a biopolitical species, is made visible, on the one hand, through the techniques and languages of medicine and legal mechanisms for control and repression. On the other, it takes part in the processes of spectacularization and eroticization, marked as a body belonging to the sexual and political lumpen, whose image can be consumed at popular theaters, cabarets, and in the sex industry. Since the late

1920s, Barcelona, an industrial and port city, was famous for the intense life of its streets, and for its wealth and variety of brothels, cabarets, bars, *tablaos*, and theaters featuring flamenco, transvestites, and drag artists.<sup>75</sup> This was the 'moral territory' where Genet took refuge after deserting from the French army and which would later, during the dictatorship, be subject to surveillance and repression.

Although the streets were 'disinfected', in the Barri Xino (now El Raval), Las Ramblas, and Parallel, clubs like the Copacabana (now converted to the Wax Museum on Las Ramblas), Bodega Apolo, El Molino, El Patio Andaluz, La Bodega Bohemia, Whisky Twist, Barcelona de Noche, Ciro's, Andalucía de Noche, etc., operated as heterotopical places where gender and sexuality performances that had been eliminated from the National Catholic public space could be consumed and turned into folklore: queer femininity, the prostitute's hypersexuality, the queer masculine body offered as sexual goods...

Barcelona contained, within its geography, a sexopolitical island (connected to other disciplinary islets, such as the Model prison) where practices and laws did not coincide completely with those of the normalized public sphere.

These were the scenes where distorted versions of icons from the official culture were displayed: the transvestites Margarita, Rosalinda, Tulita, Carmen de Mairena, and others played the role of Estrellita Castro, Juanita Reina, Concha Piquer, Lala Flores, Sara Montiel, and Marujita Diaz, while Pedrito Rico, Tomás de Antequera, Antonio Amaya, and Miguel de los Reyes performed queer versions of flamenco *cante* and popular songs.<sup>76</sup>

In this context, the discovery and clinical commercialization of sexual hormones and the appearance of surgical procedures for sexual reassignment after 1940 opened up a divide between homosexuality, transvestism, and transsexuality. Clinically speaking, homosexuals were defined by their sexual orientation, which the medical establishment of the day proclaimed that it could change by electric or neurological therapies.<sup>77</sup> In opposition to this, according to Harry Benjamin's language, transsexuals (particularly in their feminine variants) are considered gender mutants: while transvestites theatricalize femininity, transsexuals convert this theater into a somatic scene with the aid of endocrinologic or surgical technologies.<sup>78</sup> The possibility of producing sexual difference technically was an unprecedented biopolitical event: transsexuals became signifiers of a process of political and cultural mutation. Capitalism was changing, and with it the body was becoming a new platform not only for hegemonic production of gender and sexuality, but also for political resistance. The figure of the transsexual woman (embodied by the likes of the American soldier and cabaret performer Christine Jorgensen and the French drag queen Coccinelle)<sup>79</sup> was a powerful visual icon in popular culture during the Cold War, capable of at once symbolizing the repression at work within masculinity and the eroticization of its transgression.

In the 1970s, words like 'queer', 'homo', 'transvestite', and 'transsexual' were used to denote sexual and subaltern gender practices in ways that were not always differentiated. As affirmed by the main characters in Giménez-Rico's documentary *Vestida de azul* (1983), a group of trans girls

who have moved to Madrid and make a living from prostitution and cabaret performance, 'We are all transvestites', some of us are 'modern transvestites' (which is how they refer to those who take hormones and/or have access to surgery), and other are older queers, or simply 'more dykish', 'poorer', 'more careful', or 'more repressed girls'. During the 1970s, queers, transvestites, and transsexual women shared and exchanged a series of 'gender objection' techniques: they resisted the imposition of performing normative masculinity by reclaiming feminine body techniques. Jordi Barcelonesa recalls: 'In those days we used to go to the hairdressers' to pretty ourselves up on a Sunday and, of course, those were the times of La Germana, a long-suffering hairdresser friend who would wax our beards. It really hurt, but you had to have nice soft skin, like a baby's bottom; that was what was cool then. Some of us even waxed our legs, like Bibi, who had just come from Ceuta. We still called her Manolo – that was before she went to Madrid, after performing at Barcelona de Noche or Gambrinus with Madame Arthur, who said no other than Burt Lancaster had raped her in Valladolid'.<sup>80</sup> These terms were still not used in stable political or identificatory ways; rather, they overlapped to denote performative or somatic traffic in which what was at stake was the survival of a body that resisted the norm of sovereign, heterosexual masculinity.

The Franco dictatorship did not prevent the introduction of new chemical or surgical technologies for producing sexual identity typical of neoliberal and pharmacopornographic societies. Rather, it inserted them into the religious and moral discourses of National Catholicism. During his trip to Madrid in 1975, Foucault became fascinated by the collision during the late-Franco years of two somato-political regulations that historically had corresponded to different periods:<sup>81</sup> there is in Spain, said Foucault, a 'superior form of fascism'<sup>82</sup> that propitiates meeting and friction between '*necropower*' and its ways of managing death, typical of sovereign and theocratic regimes with new technologies for managing life.<sup>83</sup>

During the final years of the dictatorship, the Franco government used *necropolitical* techniques (executions by garrote of political prisoners, such as Salvador Puig Antich in 1974) as signs of its persistence. As if afraid of any echo of the uprising by minorities in other Western countries in the late 1960s, the dictatorship government introduced 'homosexuality' for the first time as a criminal offence in passing, at the advice of Pilar Primer de Rivera, in June 1970, the Law on Social Dangerousness and Rehabilitation. The previous *Ley de Vagos y Maleantes* (passed in 1933 during the Second Republic and amended in 1954) was aimed at clearing the public space of its erratic users, 'beggars and ruffians', but did not explicitly mention sexual deviation.<sup>84</sup> Now, the new Law on Social Dangerousness and Rehabilitation (LPRS) turned gender and sexual dissidents into criminal figures by identifying them as a class dangerous to society and constructing them as the object of a large barrage of methods for repression, punishment, and re-education, from internment in psychiatric institutions to prison sentences.<sup>85</sup> The LPRS, which was just one more legal provision within a broader network of control over

society as a whole, defined a new group of dangerous subjects (in the language of the dictatorship, 'homosexuals', 'pornographers', 'gangsters', 'transvestites', 'passive effeminates', 'hippies', 'rockers', 'dykes', 'whores', 'drug addicts', 'tramps', men with long hair'...) who, using scant, vulnerable weapons (bodies, sexuality, pleasure) seemed to jeopardize National Catholicism, channeling desire along highly restricted circuits.

As Pablo Carmona points out, 'the Law on Social Dangerousness marked with absolute precision all those ways in which the moral order was breached that were not concerned either with classical clandestine organizations (parties, unions, associations, etc.) or with ideologies that the Generalissimo had always persecuted (communism, freemasonry, anarchism)'.<sup>86</sup> In fact, surveillance, censorship and punishment mechanisms were changing in pace with social transformation. The forms of political protest that marked the transition period, and in which Ocaña stood out as a leading figure, went beyond party logic and class opposition to embody cultural struggles. These were characterized by new spaces and new forms of social relation (communes, orgies, music groups, cafés, discotheques, shared flats, comic book production studies, publishing companies...) that were activated by new players (women, homosexuals, transsexuals, sex workers, young people, convicts, artists, ecologists, hippies, rockers, junkies, etc.) whose action could not be completely absorbed by left-wing languages and logics. Against the old normative skeleton of the dictatorship, these new subjects opposed new forms of economic and social production (immaterial and somato-political work) that would later characterize post-Fordist regimes.

A counter-figure to Francoist sovereign masculinity and its public performance, the queer/transvestite/transsexual body was the scene of a violent encounter between two governing regimes. Firstly, it was threatened with social exclusion and death by the State's repressive apparatus. Secondly, that same body – treated as an expendable flesh – was intervened by hormonal, surgical, and media technologies that. Trapped between two conflicting regimes of representation, skewered by National Catholicism's cultural, religious, and patriarchal signifiers and by chemical and psychiatric biotechnologies, the queer/transvestite/transsexual body was, at the same time, object of maximum social subjugation and the utopian signifier of sexual democratic modernity. Between these two, trans subjectivity emerged as the result of imposition and appropriation, observance of and resistance to the norm. Under the conflicting rule of two regimes (disciplinary National-Catholic government and pharmacopornographic), at once excluded and eroticized, the transvestite/transsexual/transgender body (and, by extension, the image of Ocaña-transvestite as an icon of sexual revolution) could not serve as a univocal sign of the democratic transition. Referring to the apparent referential function of transvestism, the cultural critic Paul P. Garlinger points out its ambiguity:

*'The use of drag as a metaphor to re-conceptualize Spanish national identity tends to understand the transvestite in binary terms: before Franco/after*

*Franco, old/new, modern/postmodern, authentic/artificial. [...] the drag metaphor appears, on the one hand, as a sign of liberation a border-crossing that signifies agency and newly constructed identities or, on the other, as a mere masquerade that cloaks an underlying identity. As a result, the postmodern transvestite represents alternately a celebratory emblem of Spain finally breaking free of its repressive past... or a deceptive sign of superficial changes behind which hides a fundamentally unchanged Spain.*<sup>87</sup>

A similar ambiguity affected Ocaña's public representation. Within the utopian rhetoric, transvestism, transsexuality, and homosexuality are associated to the radical left, to anarchism and counterculture, but also to direct action and terrorism. Two semiotic processes are taking place: first, transvestism, the performance of femininity in a body to which the male sex has been assigned, absorbs in its signification both homosexuality and transsexuality and is presented as a rejection of masculinity both bourgeois and National Catholic; second, and once established as a discrete signifier, transvestism is understood as a motor for radical social change and revolt that has to be punished and normalized. At the crossing point of these two rhetorical narratives, the image of Ocaña as countercultural transvestite is generated and consumed.

Rafael Acona and Pedro Olea's film *Un hombre llamado Flor de Otoño* (1978), made in Barcelona in 1977, provides perhaps the clearest interpretation of the circulation of the utopian rhetoric of transvestism in the hegemonic language.<sup>88</sup> The narrative portrays Lluís as split between his public/daytime/masculine personality as a man belonging to the Catalan bourgeoisie in the 1920s and his secret/night-time/feminine life as a cabaret drag artist, working under the name Flor de Otoño. Exposed to family and social repression, the victim of blackmail and violence, Lluís/Flor de Otoño distances himself from his bourgeois origins and joins the anarchists, with whom he plans the assassination of Primo de Rivera. Here, the transvestite's body is linked to the explosive materials that cause the disorganization of the social body. Flor de Otoño lives between the cabaret, the workers' union, the brothel, the powder store, and the pharmacy, a circuit in which his body transports semen, lipstick, makeup, morphine, dynamite, and blood. Reported and corralled by the authorities, Lluís/Flor de Otoño, who was finally unable to kill Primo de Rivera or to migrate to America, is accused of attempted assassination and executed. If this rhetoric presents the disruptive figure of the transvestite/homosexual/transsexual/anarchist, it is only within the safety of a narrative closure: the death or disappearance of the subaltern body and the threat of transformation it supposedly contains. The image of Lluís going to the gallows in lipstick forecloses any form of political agency. This narrative conclusion is accentuated by José Sacristán's distant, dispassionate, asexual theatricalization of Flor de Otoño: the Sacristán-transvestite can only be a victim.<sup>89</sup>

In the second rhetoric, which I will call paranoid, transvestism represents a 'false democratization process' under which the Francoist institutions lie. This rhetoric

depends on a naturalist ontology of sex in which transvestism conceals a masculine anatomy, a process through which authentic femininity is unsuccessfully faked, just as the transition would be a parody of democracy working upon the political anatomy of Franquism. Strangely, this naturalist ontology is shared by the hetero-patriarchal discourses of the left and the first homosexual liberation movements. This is the representation of transvestism (of Ocaña, Nazario, Camilo, Dario, etc.) that was dominant within the official gay movement, the first formation of the FAGC (1975), which led to the split and the creation of the CCAG in 1978.<sup>90</sup>

Finally, both the utopian rhetoric and the paranoid rhetoric depend on the same understanding of transvestism derived from the image that late 19<sup>th</sup>-century heteronormative psychopathology had constructed of the homosexual as a 'sexual parody' and a 'social danger'. Both, as Garlinger points out, 'run the risk of erasing the referent: in the end, the material, live transsexual subject is all but absent from these formulations'.<sup>91</sup> In both, the transvestite/transsexual/transgender body and the promise of transgression that it contains are condemned to die. As we shall see, even Ocaña cannot escape this narrative resolution, which promises the death of the social body in transition.

### The transvestite machine: Ocaña's cinematographic figurations

Ocaña appeared in many cinematographic figurations and actions in the decade from 1973 to 1983 that revolved around performative transvestism as a metaphor of the political transition. Affected by the same political metonymy found in accounts the transition, both utopian and paranoid, the Ocaña-transvestite gained visibility in the space of tension between repressive apparatus and folklore, between pathologization and pornographic spectacularization, but also in the breach opened by the exclusion of gender dissidence, both in the languages of the official left and gay identity normalizing politics. Extracting and fixing countless actions, poses, disguises, and costumes (angel, Chaplin, white-haired old peasant, etc.), Ocaña's transvestism neither occupies a single position nor does it allow itself to become settled. Trapped in a problematic irresolvable tension by both National Catholicism and the official left and the gay movement, Ocaña does not represent transvestism, but rather embodies the very conflict of its political representation.

It is strange that Ventura Pons should have filmed *Ocaña, retrat intermitent* in 1977 in exactly the same places and times as *Un hombre llamado Flor de Otoño* was made. Two discourses, two languages, and two forms of representation clashed at the building in Plaza de Sant Josep Oriol where Nazario and Pepicheck lived. Nazario explains that, while Sacristán 'entered and left at night disguised as a woman stumbling along on high heels without much rehearsal', they, with Ocaña 'dressed as *Sevillanas*', would shout down from the windows. The film crew working on *Un hombre llamado Flor de Otoño* would shout back: 'Please get off the balcony,

you'll appear in the shot!' And they would answer: 'Well, we'd do it better than that Sacristana! And we won't leave!' What is at stake here, in the struggle for the 'shot' or to 'do it better' is the representation of subaltern subjectivities and its political survival through transformation into visual icons. 'From the balconies, Nazario and Ocaña's crowd made fun of the fictional representation that they themselves repeated every day, coming and going from parties, walks and festivals.'<sup>92</sup> This confrontation between 'La Sacristana' and 'La Ocaña' (who was flat-footed and also incapable of walking in high heels), shows that the figure of the 'transvestite' that circulated in hegemonic media, and cinematic language and served as a signifier of political transition, corresponds more to what, with Judith Butler, we may call 'heterosexual melancholy' than to the lives of sexual minorities.<sup>93</sup>

The short film *Silencis* (made in 1982, shortly before Ocaña's death), impeccably shot by Carles Gusi (who was also director of photography for *Manderley*) and directed by Xavier Daniel, reversed this exercise by representing heterosexuality from the subaltern subject viewpoint.<sup>94</sup> The first scene in *Silencis* shows a family comprising military father, mother, and two sons. We gradually discover, through a series of scenes that obey no linear narrative flow, that all the men in the family have sexual relations with other men. Playing the only female role in the film, Ocaña is the bourgeois wife and mother. Diametrically opposite to 'La Sacristana' in *Flor de Otoño*, Ocaña does not play a transvestite character, however. There is no histrionic distance in his portrayal of the wife; rather, there is the de-theatralization of femininity, as if Xavier Daniel was trying to show us that what characterizes the wife and mother is precisely that she has been fully naturalized. Opposite her, Adolfo Myer plays the father, soldier, and husband as a male transvestite; killing the mother with his gun as if at firing practice, he takes off his uniform in front of the mirror revealing not only his body but also his inconfessable desires: he masturbates while visualizing scenes in which a priest kisses a child or in which military torture and sadomasochistic sex mingle. Silent, as the title indicates, though featuring a dramatic soundtrack of music by Shostakovich and Brian Eno, *Silencis* is an acid critique of the silenced homoerotic and incestuous foundations underlying the three core institutions of National Catholicism: the Army, the Catholic church, and the heterosexual family. The trope of transvestism is present once more, but completely reversed: the Francoist institutions are transvested (by the uniforms of masculinity, the Army, or the Church) to disguise the homosexual and sadomasochistic desire that runs through them. *Silencis* shows that the central taboos of warrior and Muslim-Jewish-Christian monotheist societies (incest, rape, and homosexuality), those seen as the legal and moral limits of 19th-century European societies, are not prohibitions whose obedience constitutes the culture, but constitutive desires that structure their symbolic apparatus and articulate their instruments of political vigilance and management.

In tension between the fictional codes of *Silencis* and the documentary style of *Ocaña, retrat inter-mitent* is *Manderley*, certainly one of the most complex film exercises

representing the culture of sexual dissidence during the transition. A groundbreaking work directed by Jesús Garay in the late 1970s and first shown in 1981,<sup>95</sup> *Manderley* brings together homosexuality, transvestism, and transsexuality in an irreconcilable triangle: the peaceful holiday of three 'queens' in Ontoria (Santander) are marked by the desire of Enrique, who feels like a woman (Paula) and plans to have a sex change. Contrary to his media image, Ocaña plays the role of Olmo, who is neither a cross-dresser nor a transsexual, and that defines himself in radical opposition to Enrique/Paula's desire and body practices. Strangely, against all expectations, in *Manderley*, it is Ocaña who expresses the paranoid rhetoric under which the transsexual body can only be an anatomic and a political imposture.

Finally, in 1979, Gérard Courant filmed Ocaña dressed as a *Sevillana* perched on a precarious wooden platform (originally built to enable tourists to see the Berlin Wall) between the Brandenburg Gate and the Wall. In this short film, Courant represented the transgender body as a territory in which both political rhetorics (utopian and paranoid) are woven together without finding resolution. Courant, who had already met Ocaña at the Berlin Film Festival with Serge Daney, the legendary writer on *Cahiers du Cinéma*, said that he was inspired by a hilarious scene from Billy Wilder's *One, Two, Three*, in which a "hairy-legged" American soldier disguises himself as a woman to throw off the Soviet agents who are following him'.<sup>96</sup> Courant made his film in a single frame (later adding post-synched audio), gradually zooming in over the space of ten minutes to an unusual scene: Ocaña arguing and singing beside an advertising image of Marilyn Monroe. What Courant saw as 'a fictional satire about the Berlin Wall' was also a metaphor on the impossibility of embodying normative gender ideals, whichever side of the Wall one was on. The clash between two apparently opposing femininities (the Andalusian woman and the Hollywood icon, though both are similarly over-coded) does not succeed in completely signifying the opposition between the two blocs separated by the Wall. Marilyn (as an image-object of exchange in Western capitalism) is rescued thanks to the complicity of an Ocaña whose Andalusian queer femininity exceeds also the communist sexual order. The Wall stands here as a material symbol of the Western cultural construction of sexual (male/female) and political (West/East) difference and its binary logics, which are distorted in the film narrative not only by Ocaña's uncanny presence but also by Courant's intentional disconnection of sound and image. Between femininity and masculinity, between East and West, between transgender's practices and homosexuality, Ocaña sits and sings at the threshold.

### Post-transvestism and decontextualized citation of the norm

The disruptive force of Ocaña's performance (feminine, gender queer, popular, Andalusian, and rural) depends largely on the exercise in *transporting*, which enables him to extract transvestism (and also folklore and religious rituals) from the institutional and cultural contexts in which they

were confined during the Franco period to cite them in the public space and turning them into a social theater in which norm and transgression can be displayed. In this sense, Ocaña's practices, foreshadowing queer activism, are post-transvestite and counter-sexual because they distort both the political topography of transvestism and its cultural codes of gender theatricalization.

Ocaña detached transvestism from the disciplinary spaces in which it had been confined, and which he knew from direct experience: taken away from the psychiatric hospital<sup>97</sup> and from the cabaret, from the domestic arena and the brothel, transvestism becomes a program for redefining the limits of performing gender in the public space. Ocaña's performance shows that the street (before and after the death of Franco) is a highly regulated space, a political theater in which practices of gender, race, sexuality and, class are staged, placed under surveillance and managed. That is why Ocaña does not 'come out of the closet' as a homosexual, but theatricalizes the way in which the public space is itself a closet in which all bodies are subjected to performative control practices. Here, the satire on femininity or heterosexuality (like Nazario and Pepicheck's photograph as a bourgeois married couple in bed) is a strategy by which the subordinate body (queer, Andalusian, migrant, rural, and working-class) fights to become visible in the public space of Barcelona during the transition, at once performing and displacing the norm. Ocaña's spectacular entrance into the 'closet' that was Las Ramblas signifies the eruption of gender performance from the theater onto the street, the overflowing of queer theater into the total political setting of the city. Performing on Las Ramblas meant pulling down the fourth wall of the transvestite stage, but also revealing the internal performative rules that dominate sexual and gender practices in the public space. In the political theater of the city, gender and sexual actors and spectators are irremediably out.<sup>98</sup> Closed in, on the street. It is not simply that sexual identity is a farce; rather, it is a question of understanding how gender performativity works when there is no longer a theatrical scene. Ocaña forced spectators of his gender performances to realize that they, too, are gender and sexual actors and that both conditions are politically engaged. 'They are all disguised as their jobs or as serious or smart people,' he said. Before them, 'Ocaña dresses up as whatever he wants. He likes fans, mantillas, handsome men, old women, angels, sincerity'. Ocaña considers transvestism a general social condition: the decontextualized citation of gender and sexual codes is a local intervention in this 'general theatricality', in which he uses transvestism as a viewing device, which enables him to 'see people and them to see him',<sup>99</sup> revealing the structurally disguised condition of the political space. That is why Ocaña's disguise is not a parody of reality, but an epistemological machine which shows how the truth of gender and sexual identities is produced. The disguise, said Ocaña, 'is absurdly real compared to the absurd unreality that surrounds us'.<sup>100</sup>

José Guijarro, Ocaña, and Nazario were arrested, beaten up, and imprisoned by the police on the Feast of Saint James, July 24, 1978 in Calle Bonsuccés in Barcelona, near the Café de la Ópera on Las Ramblas. Their punishment

was an endeavor to mark out once more the limits of gender performance in the public space. Ocaña, dressed as 'an old village woman with flour in her hair', and Nazario, dressed as Salome with moustache, were singing *copla* torch songs when the police intervened.<sup>101</sup> Ocaña remembers his arrest: 'They beat me up with their truncheons. I was dressed as an old hunchback lady, I was with some friends and we started to sing *sevillanas* and perform a bit of theatre in Plaza Real, and everything was fine until the police came... Imagine me dressed as an old hunchback and the police on top of me, hitting me all over.'<sup>102</sup> Martí Font was surprised that the police should go after Ocaña and Nazario and not the transvestite bars in the area. And he asks: 'Maybe they remember that mad last summer, the incredible Libertarian Days, the spectacle on Las Ramblas every night, and they decided not to let it happen again... They are frightened by any get-together that is not scheduled, whether by the parties or the "powers that be" in general. These days [referring to the incipient democratic transition] spontaneity is frightening, because in a process like the one the country is going through it is very easy to go further than what the mandarins allow, and that is what they will not allow to happen, because if they did, the whole mess they are creating would bring them down. That is what we call "consensus" nowadays.'<sup>103</sup> The public space and its sexual and gender uses were being reorganized during the transition. The problem, then, was not gender performance (the indescribable costumes of the old hunchback and mustachioed Salome), but the space of its theatricalization: what had to be punished was the way in which Ocaña and Nazario had surpassed the theatrical limits that the new 'democratic repression' tolerated.<sup>104</sup>

Ocaña did not play transvestism; rather, he questioned its normative definition and subjected it (like Artaud and Duchamp) to the corrosive logic of total theater. Both the heteroglossic exuberance that Bajtin saw in the carnival and the cross-dressing practices to which Judith Butler afforded an epistemological potential are seen in Ocaña theatrically duplicated, elevated to a second power that, at the same time, intensifies and denaturalizes them.<sup>105</sup> Ocaña theatricalized even transvestism. While he was happy to identify with whores and thieves, he took care to distance himself from media definitions of both transvestism ('I like to cross-dress, but I'm not a transvestite... A transvestite is a man who likes wearing women's clothing; he's not a queer, to put it that way, and I have got nothing against queers, because I am one myself')<sup>106</sup> and transsexuality ('I think a man who gets tits and cuts off his penis if he feels like a woman and in his mind he feels like a woman, that's fine, but I don't feel like a woman').<sup>107</sup> Against both meanings, he suggested a performative and artistic definition: 'Transvestism is a visual art.' This includes dressing not only as a woman, but also as an old woman or as Charlie Chaplin, singing and fucking, as Ocaña put it on the TV program *Trazos*. Interviewed at the Mec-Mec Gallery in 1977 on the occasion of his exhibition *Un poco de Andalucía*, Ocaña referred once more to transvestism as a signifier threatened to eclipse and overshadow his entire artistic practice: 'People ask me if I'm a transvestite. I'm not a transvestite. I'm a thespian and my theatre is Las Ramblas, and my costumes are second-hand clothes from

the flea market... When I go down Las Ramblas dressed up, some shout out: "Clown, learn to put on makeup!" I feel like a male clown and a female clown, it's all the same. Neither masculine nor feminine. I feel like a person and a clown, that's right, a clown who laughs whilst weeping inside and paints, sings to life, to people, that is my god, people.<sup>108</sup> Ocaña performs transvestism as total biopolitical theatre, embodying a 'living dead', anti-glamour version of gender identities: he performs as both female queer and butch, Andalusia and Spanish nationalism, childhood and old age, femininity and masculinity...but always offstage, reclaiming the public space as a political scene in which the norm and its transgression are represented simultaneously and brought face-to-face.

Neither did Ocaña's deviated mimesis satisfy the stage space and its rules. With the same violence that he entered the closet on Las Ramblas, he erupted into the theater scene. He took to the tiny stages of the Assembly of Show Business Workers at the Barcelona's Mercat del Forn in 1976 as Doña Inés Fatal, in makeup but unshaven, dressed only in a short slip and a white boa. He received more booing than applause for a performance that could not be understood even as a drag show. Ocaña went beyond the stage, transcending normative codes governing gender reversal, to make transvestism a *campceptual* political practice.

Jordi Esteva calls 'anarchotransformism' Ocaña's distortion of the traditional codes governing transvestism.<sup>109</sup> Alberto Cardín describes Ocaña as a real performative disaster, his face 'full of rice powder', with 'mascara spreading all over his crow's feet and rouge over his Bella Aurora face cream', a hybrid, he said, between 'Tonetti and Nosferatu', between 'Juanita Reina' and 'La Manola de Galletas María, the luxury striptease and Manet's *demi-mondaine*', a mixture of 'charlina (cravat) and Chaplin', who resembles 'a mummy' more than a transvestite.<sup>110</sup> Ocaña takes as his theme the failure of gender performance: he parodies and exalts the impossibility of embodying National Catholic femininity and masculinity, transvestism, and homosexuality. This post-transvestite, queer-punk stance fuelled Ocaña's contempt towards the staged containment of the drag show, the difficulty of his image becoming an easy object of erotic consumption on the stage at Canet Rock or during Las Jornadas Libertarias - the Libertarian Days.

The art curator and cross-dresser Arakis mentioned these performative shortcomings at a drag show that took place in 1983 on the occasion of Ocaña's exhibition in San Sebastian:

*'His look was something between trendy lefty and anti-establishment/or village drag queen (depending on the occasion) that was the antithesis, not only of Morgan Fairchild but also of, for example, Divine. I remember perfectly how I first met him in the early 80s at an alternative fashion show we both took part in. He went out on the catwalk dressed as a bride in white, with bohemian painter's boots underneath and made up any old how. His image clashed absolutely with both classical glamour images and the Goth glamour that the rest of us were sporting.'*<sup>111</sup>

Ocaña invented a 'transvestite Catholic' and 'queer *charnega*'<sup>112</sup> language that theatricalized, intensified, and displaced, to the point of denaturalizing them, both Catholic rituals and Andalusian folklore, Spanish nationalism, masculinity and femininity, at the same time revealing the complicity that sustains the somatopolitical fictions (those that establish relations between body and power) of religion and national, gender, or sexual identity. In this way, he subverted and revealed the prevailing gender conventions, proposing a sacrilegious and absurd version of official culture. He was joined in this post-transvestite, *cutrechou*<sup>113</sup> performative disobedience by Violeta la Burra 'dressed up like a gazpacho' in a dress made from fresh vegetables and Paca la Tomate, an Andalusian queer from Bujalance (Cordoba) who worked in El Kike, a Barcelona club in Calle Raurich near Las Ramblas, who wore 'a mop as a wig and a toilet-paper skirt, her face running with makeup... Folkloric drag queens hate her because she ridicules them and their histrionics'.<sup>114</sup> Ocaña considered her 'a model, a saint'.<sup>115</sup>

Decontextualized citation also affected the use of the exhibition space of the art gallery in Ocaña's practices. Ocaña satirically criticized the performative norms that governed the exhibition space in the early 1970s. At the Mec-Mec Gallery in Barcelona, in 1977, for his exhibition *Un poco de Andalucía*, he transvested the entire gallery space into an Andalusian village with flowers, Madonnas, angels, and a pottery crèche.<sup>116</sup> Similarly, in 1982, for the exhibition *La primavera* at La Capella de l'Hospital de la Santa Creu, Barcelona, he cited the Andalusian spring within the gallery space. By bringing popular, three-dimensional, and theatrical phenomena to the gallery, Ocaña honored and legitimized the subordinate forms of popular visual consumption (what should be described as *cursi*, kitsch, and camp). These not only constituted a critique of authorized art forms, but also threatened to devour all his works, gobbling up the painting that finally became an insignificant sign in an immense performative apparatus.

Ocaña called his ceaseless exercises in decontextualized citation 'montaje', montage or assemblage (not 'performance'). In this, he referred, perhaps, to the physical act of cutting and pasting that produces filmic significance and resembles his own way of 'mounting' his own life and customs in painting, at the gallery, in the street, in the city.<sup>117</sup> Even more appropriate for understanding his artistic and performative production is the term '*gazpacho*', the typical Andalusian cold soup. Ocaña reclaimed this term, rooted in southern forms of production, the popular, domestic, female sphere, as a technique for organizing the sensitive phenomenon: 'When I feel, perhaps when making *gazpacho*, between tomato and tomato, a brushstroke over the sad eyes of my characters.'<sup>118</sup> Identity and tradition (like his paintings and his actions), Ocaña shows us, are the result of a giant montage, made in the same way as one makes gazpacho. Gazpacho, as a production technique, is also reminiscent of the 'syntagma salad' that, in Julio Pérez Perucha's view, characterizes the complex cinematic fabric (documentary and fictional film, deconstruction and *cinéma vérité*, ethnographic documentary and protest, music reporting, and political comedy) that García Pelayo created in the same period in *Vivir en Sevilla* (1978).<sup>119</sup>

The deviated mimesis that characterizes the production of 'gazpacho' art and 'syntagma salad' also operates in Ocaña's painting. Both what is represented and the frame for representation are subjected to the same general process of sensorial transvestism. It is impossible to discern whether the old women are men dressed in black and in headscarves, impossible to guess their age. Impossible to ascertain whether or not some of those portrayed are not excessively masculine women rather than effeminate men. Impossible to determine the sex of the angels, or of Our Lady, or Christ, or the saints. In Pepe Ocaña's self-portrait as an Andalusian Virgin, Ocaña-Virgin, dressed in *peineta* and mantilla, glances at the edge of the painting with a look of concern or mistrust, while apparently protecting the Child (denaturalized and represented as a statue from a Baroque altarpiece) with a fan, converted into a grey knife. In the portrait of Camilo as *Sevillana*, the dark, frontal gaze contrasts with the mask, without volume, from which the mantilla hangs like a synthetic hair. The red *peineta* appears to be made from organic matter and to have been stuck into a two-dimensional skull like a piece of brain shown vertically to the gaze while three carnations, impossible to attach to the hair, look as if they may fall out at any moment. This sexual *gazpacho* and transgender salad is accentuated, paradoxically, in works in which the genital organs appear (i.e., in Ocaña's self-portrait as a naked angel surrounded by doves), as if the penis had ceased to serve as an anatomical sign indicating masculinity sought to enter a different order of intelligibility.

Ocaña's portraits are reminiscent of those that Alice Neel made of Andy Warhol in 1970. As Judith Halberstam points out, Neel rejects the pop Warhol and chooses to present him semi-naked, with grey hair and skin, his chest marked by scars, creating an unexpected 'portrait of the artist as an old woman'.<sup>120</sup> Similarly, the bodies to which Ocaña grants visibility are elderly, crippled, queer, children...whose vulnerability is exalted through representation using sacred and modernist painterly codes. In all these portraits, playful de-contextualization gives way to visual representation of trauma and the crystallization of affection in the body, as if Ocaña wanted to make subjectivity visible in his fight for survival against the norm. For example, the pain of the woman/man and boy/girl child, in which maternity is de-normalized by the presence of prosthetic limb and a pair of crutches. Or the one in which sovereign, normative masculinity is questioned as it features a hairy-chested body from which, however, both legs have been amputated, in a wheelchair. This is not the frivolous carnivalization of identity that Sontag mentions in her description of camp, nor 'apolitical satire', but, as in Neel's case, a political vindication of the deformed body and its affections as the very sites of any possible form of sovereignty. Here, far from a random combination of signs, the decontextualized citation (the exaltation of the shabby, the sanctification of the oppressed, the elevation of the marginalized body to the altar) 'transforms subordination and abasement into political action'.<sup>121</sup>

## The death and resurrection of the Blessed Ocaña. *Trans* representation politics: between visibility and combustion

Within these utopian-paranoid rhetorics in which the transvestite body operates as a signifier, Ocaña's premature death at the age of 36, in Seville on September 18, 1983, was read from the start as a biopolitical sign of the end of the democratic transition, as if Ocaña's living body and his performative action had embodied a series of new possibilities for social and cultural transformation that his death had now closed. Ocaña's death, said Enric Majó in an interview with *El País*, was 'the death of the spirit of '75, which took over Barcelona and transformed Las Ramblas into a wonderful place of freedom, of which nothing now remains'.<sup>122</sup> The demise of the transgender body was the result of the disappearance of the exceptional conditions for production of a public counter-sphere that had been generated in Catalonia for a decade and which were ended by the democratic process and the new forms of democratic repression and consumption. According to Teresa M. Vilaròs, this process began as early as 1978, amid exaltation of the counterculture: 'With the Spanish Constitution recently approved, in that legendary summer of 1978, Catalonia suddenly shook off all its ghosts, monkeys, disenchantments and anarcho-queer-proletarian-Andalusian traits to become aligned with the *seny* (good sense) demanded by Jordi Pujol, soon to be elected as the president of the Catalan Government, enthusiastically getting down to work on a project for European (and world) repositioning that would culminate in the 1992 Olympic Games'.<sup>123</sup>

This narrative, which accentuated Ocaña's singularity while at the same time certifying his death, is part of the utopian and paranoid rhetorics of the transition that led *Flor de Otoño* to the gallows and prevented Enrique/Paula from returning to Manderley.

The disastrous accident which led to his death has the status of an intense sensorial sign within the performative chain of Ocañian actions and finds coherence in an anticipatory and obsessive series of self-fictions of death (since 1975 at least, Ocaña had been producing self-portraits as a dead child and representations of his own funeral, such as the oil painting in which he portrays him/herself as dead, watched over by him/herself, surrounded by a group of angel friends). On August 23, Ocaña organized a party in Cantillana at which he appeared as the Sun, wearing a fancy dress made from colored paper. His friend Alejandro Molina recounts the accident as follows: 'Ocaña had enlisted all the children, getting their mothers and grandmothers (as he had enlisted his friends and neighbors for his glorious exhibition at Lá Capella in Barcelona the year before) to lend them to him dressed as angels in a procession that would go through the village and end in the school playground ... [...] Surrounded by little angels, kids, he wore a splendid sun fancy dress made from colored paper, his face made up like a painting (even his glasses), carrying a huge sun like a standard, to which he had attached some flares, which he lit once they got to the

school playground. Some sparks immediately fell on the tissue paper, setting it on fire. In seconds, his costume, hair, face were engulfed by flames that he tried to put out with his hands, screaming all the while. We ran to try to put the fire out. The women shrieked in horror, the stunned children did not know whether to get closer for a look or to run off in fright.<sup>124</sup> Ocaña, whose immune system had already been weakened by hepatitis ('we all had enormous livers in those days', said Nazario), died a few days later.

The burning of Ocaña-Sun not only finds performative significance in relation to other actions by him, but can also be read – and herein, perhaps, lies its strength – as a sign regarding a series of social rituals in which the power and death of the dissident and transgender body are acted out. In the 1960s, the best-known drag show in Barcelona was Margarita's 'fire dance' at the Copacabana, which had become a classic by the 1970s. Carmen de Mairena describes it as follows: 'Margarita, wearing a frilly dress made from newspaper, got people from the audience to light fire to her frills whilst she prayed not to go up in flames herself.'<sup>125</sup> The film director Jacinto Esteva included footage from one such performance in his documentary *Lejos de los árboles* (which was made in the 60s but was first shown in 1972): Margarita performs a flamenco dance while customers and spectators at the Copacabana launch themselves at her with cigarettes, lighters, and matches, setting light to her dress. In seconds, the dress is consumed by fire while Margarita spins like a human torch, jumping to put out any flames that threaten to burn her skin or hair. Once the fire is completely extinguished, Margarita, like some Kazuo Ono reborn half-naked from the ashes, fights to free herself from the spectators, who attack her and pull her hair. No other performance condenses with the same intensity the conflict between production of transgender visibility and destruction of the minority body; the transvestite body is made visible through its media dress (made from newspaper), but this visibility is transformed into fire and finally threatens the body it makes visible. In this way, the transgender body, object of sexual consumption and social debasement, is literally consumed by the very processes of spectacularization that make it visible.

The accident that befell Ocaña-Sun reproduced, among a crowd of frightened children, the ignition of the transgender body as performed by Margarita at the Copacabana. However, unlike Margarita, Ocaña, as he had already done by bringing transvestism to Las Ramblas, removed the performance from its theatrical limits. Nothing can control fire. What burns, like that which is performed, is the subaltern life itself.

Forming a continuum with the discourses both of the right and the new social-democrat left, in which transvestism and transsexuality were considered political impostures, the democratic transition that was taking place implied eliminating the sexual visibility and political power of the transgender body. At the club Kike, Paca la Tomate,<sup>126</sup> Camilo,<sup>127</sup> and Violeta la Burra were later swept aside by hepatitis and AIDS, but also by 'design fever and the Barcelona Olympics'.<sup>128</sup> Among them all, once more

Ocaña's dead body had operated as a signifier, a queer semiotic channel, a dissident performative machine. Among them all, Ocaña would return later, transformed into a saint, the Blessed Ocaña. Ocaña's resurrection does not escape the contradictions of the politics or visibility that have affected other sexual minorities since the 1970s: the Blessed Ocaña, now turned into folkloric cadaver and bastion of transitional revolution nostalgia may function as what Barthes called 'a homoeopathic dose' to vaccinate the social body against any possible gender revolt. Moreover, the Blessed Ocaña, more vampire than cadaver, may also be a performative machine ready to be started here and now, a kind of Rebecca whose spectral presence sows the seeds of panic among the dominant narratives of art history and the frameworks of visibility created by the Western museum. This is the Ocaña we deserve, and the one I now call on.

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1. Thanks to Pedro G. Romero, Pere Pedrals, and La Rosa del Vietnam for their inestimable help with the documentation, and the Blessed Ocaña's archive of 'works and miracles'.
2. Ocaña quoted by Ignacio Zabala, *op. cit.* p. 25.
3. Gregory Scholette, "Dark Matter. Activist Art and the Counter-Public Sphere", p. 5. Available at: [www.gregoryscholette.com](http://www.gregoryscholette.com).
4. Ocaña appears as a countercultural figure (in such studies as, for example, Teresa M. Vilarós, *El mono del desencanto. op. cit.*, pp. 194-198, or Alejandro Yarza, *Pedro Almodóvar. Un caníbal en Madrid. La sensibilidad camp y el reciclaje de la historia del cine*, Madrid: Ediciones Libertarias 1999, 1999, p. 174) or as an icon of sexual transgression (in accounts by the likes of Alberto Mira and Arturo Amalte...), but he is absent from histories of art (in her history of 'Spanish conceptual art', Pilar Parcerisas mentions Ocaña briefly). Nonetheless, it is significant that no place is found for Ocaña among either the 'poetic', 'political', or 'peripheral' 'conceptualisms'. In "Una mapa infinito. Acerca de las representaciones de la diversidad", Juan Vicente Aliaga describes Ocaña as follows: 'A painter of Andalusian virgins established in the Catalan capital went around Las Ramblas and other places, wearing woman's clothing whilst revealing his privates and brazenly fanning himself... Barcelona was the city of Ocaña, the cartoonist Nazario and Camilo, both good friends of the transvestite performer, who performed with them in various dives.' *En todas partes. Políticas de la diversidad sexual en el arte* (Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, CGAC 2009).
5. Ocaña's work was included in: the collective exhibition *Transexual Express* by Xavier Arakistain and Rosa Martínez. See: *Trans Sexual Express: Barcelona* (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya 2001); the exhibition *Vivir en Sevilla*, curated by Pedro G. Romero in 2005, at CAAC, Mexic, and Salvador de Bahía; in the 2006 *Desacuerdos* project; and in *Un teatro sin teatro*, at MACBA in 2007. Filmed by Video-Nou, Ocaña is also included in Manolo Borja's current MNCARS collection. It is significant that it is precisely the inclusion of Nazario and

- Ocaña that aroused the greatest criticism from José Luis Brea and David G. Torres. See: David G. Torres, "Reina la Colección", A'Desk, 11/06/2009.
6. Description of Ocaña in the newspaper *Triunfo*, 17/06/1978.
  7. Teresa M. Vilarós, "Banalidad y biopolítica: la transición española y el nuevo orden del mundo", in *Desacuerdos 2* (Barcelona: Arteleku, Macba, Unia 2005), p. 32.
  8. Alberto Cardin, *Dialéctica del canibalismo* (Barcelona: Anagrama 1994), p. 72. 'Taking "savage thought" literally is not exactly a sign of relativism, but of acute ethnocentrism.'
  9. Dominique Baqué provides an example of historiography, in which camp and queer practices are seen as the enactment of a symptom that has not yet been symbolized. This category would include, according to their surprising and moralizing taxonomy, works by Pierre Molinier, Andrés Serrano, Bon Flanagan, Ron Althey, Franko B. and Annie Sprinkle, among others. Dominique Baqué, *Mauvais genre(s), Érotisme, pornographie, art contemporain* (Paris: Éditions du Regard 2002), p. 138.
  10. Pedro G. Romero, *Un teatro sin teatro*, p. 46.
  11. Pedro G. Romero, *op. cit.*, p. 50. Gregory Scholette, for example, uses the astrophysical expression 'dark matter' to refer to all those practices of cultural production and critique that elude the economic and discursive structures of institutionalized art. See: "Dark Matter. Activist Art and the Counter-Public Sphere". *op. cit.*
  12. Alejandro Yarza, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
  13. Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, généalogie, histoire", in *Hommage à Jean Hyppolite* (Paris: PUF 1971). p. 181.
  14. On the biopolitical figures of modernity and their disciplinary management, see: Michel Foucault, *Les Anormaux*. 1974-1975.
  15. Joan Coromines, *Breve diccionario etimológico de la lengua castellana* (Madrid: Gredos 2006), p. 186. Ramón Solís, in 1966, presents a different etymology, according to which the word 'cursi', affected, is a variation by metathesis of the syllables forming the word 'Sicour' (allegedly the name of a French tailor who lived in Cadiz) to whom the city's medical students devoted a typical local song ('Las hijas de Sicur, Sicur, Sicur...') referring to the loud clothes worn by his daughters. Solís refers to an article entitled 'Un cursi', which appeared for the first time in the Cadiz newspaper *La Estrella* de in 1842 and is considered one of the first citations of this concept in Spanish.
  16. Reading Ortega y Gasset's "Teoría de Andalucía" (1927) along with the literature about the 'cursi' phenomenon in the early 20th century, Carlos Moreno Hernández concludes that 'cursi-masculine or feminine- is an Andalusian type transplanted to the town or court where, in the main, they become acclimatized, forgetting their Cadiz origins, grafted to it along with the retinue of aspirants that dominated the social and political scene in the 19th century'. Carlos Moreno Hernández, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
  17. Bernardo Ortiz Montellano (1899-1949), "Definiciones para una estética de lo cursi", in *Contemporáneos*, quoted by Álvaro Enrique, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
  18. Francisco Umbral, 1978, pp. 191-195.
  19. This 'cursi mobility' could be one of the practices that later characterized and gave its name to the Madrid scene known as *La movida*. 'La Movida,' says Pablo Carmona, 'spoke of mobility in the city, of trips to get drugs or attend events, meetings and situations that occurred in everyday life, 'tengo una movida' meant, in general terms, having to do something.' Pedro Carmona, "La pasión capturado. Del carnaval underground a 'La Movida madrileña' marca registrada", in *Desacuerdos 5* (Barcelona 2009), p. 155.
  20. Ramón Gómez de la Serna, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.
  21. Ramón Gómez de la Serna, *op. cit.*, pp. 35.
  22. Clement Greenberg. "The Avant-Garde and Kitsch" (1939) in *Art and Culture*, 1978.

23. The question of architecture will be complex. It oscillates, according to the authors, between a tendency towards the kitsch (which Adolf Loos detects, for example, and not by chance, in Hoffman, a Jew and a homosexual) and avant-garde hegemony.
24. This would explain, perhaps, why so-called postmodernity, understood as 'generalized transvestism' characterized by its strategies of citation and appropriation, would restore photography and their theatre to their rightful places in art. See: Douglas Crimp, *Posiciones críticas* (Madrid: Akal 2005).
25. Ignacio Zabala, "De la vide de Ocaña", in Andrés Ruiz López, *Ocaña, el fuego infinito*, Teatro 2, El Público (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura 1989), p. 23-24.
26. Ignacio Zabala, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
27. Michel Foucault, 1976.
28. "Por una libertad sexual", *Ajoblanco*, special issue devoted to International Libertarian Days, 25/09/1977.
29. See: Judith Butlet, *Cuerpos que importan* (Paidós), p. 179-203.
30. See: Patojismo refers to Spanish singer Isabel Pantoja and her hyperbolic performance of female gender codes in Spanish popular music culture. Itziar Ziga, *Devenir perra* (Melusina 2009).
31. Susan Sontag, "Notas sobre el camp", *Contra la interpretación y otros ensayos* (Barcelona: De Bolsillo 2007).
32. Moe Meyer, "Introduction, Reclaiming the Discourse of Camp", *The Politics and Poetics of Camp* (London / New York: Routledge 1994), p. 5. 'Camp is the total body of performative practices and strategies used to enact a queer identity, with enactment defined as the production of social visibility.'
33. Roser Maestro and Ramón Guzmán propose a list of adjectives to define Barcelona in the 1970s, beginning with motley, acrylic, effeminate, loud, shocking, tacky... going on with objector, oculist, onanist, dreamlike, opiate, orbital, orgasmic, original, and outsider to reach Ocañan. Roser Maestro and Juan Ramón Guzmán, in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setena vista por Nazario y sus amigos*. (Barcelona: Ellgao 2004), p. 15.
34. Alejandro Yarza, *Un canibal en Madrid. La sensibilidad camp y el reciclaje de la historia en el cine camp* (Madrid: Ediciones Libertarias 1999), p. 15.
35. Alejandro Yarza, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
36. Ocaña in *Ocaña, retrat intermittent*, Ventura Pons, 1978.
37. On the political topography of the social body, see: Peter Stallybrass and Allon White. "Política y poética de la transgresión"
38. Susan Sontag, *op. cit.*
39. Carmen de Mairena, in Pierrot, *Memorias Trans, op. cit.*, p. 15.
40. Ocaña in *Ocaña, retrat intermittent*, Ventura Pons, 1978.
41. This is Moe Meyer's definition of camp and queer practices, *op. cit.*, p. 5. 'Camp is the total body of performative practices and strategies used to enact a queer identity, with enactment defined as the production of social visibility.'
42. Ocaña in *Ocaña, retrat intermittent*, Ventura Pons, 1978.
43. Amelia Jones, "Clothes Make the Man: The Male Artist as a Performative Function", *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 18, no. 2 (1995), pp. 18-32. Amelia Jones calls this process of exhibiting the body that characterizes performance 'corporal display'. For Jones, this association between performance and femininity is a residue of the reconstruction of the public space that occurred after the French Revolution: masculinity and corporal austerity, femininity and ornamentation, sexuality and domesticity.
44. Amelia Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
45. Manolo, the madman who committed suicide in his village and with whom Nazario said he was 'madly in love', is an important founding figure. 'Everything I do is in Manolo's memory,' said Ocaña in 1978. Ocaña in *Ocaña, retrat intermittent*, Ventura Pons, 1978.
46. Ocaña in *Ocaña, retrat intermittent*, Ventura Pons, 1978.
47. Camilo was also from Andalusia, from Moguer, from where he had come to live with an aunt, fleeing his 'insults, laughter,

- jokes and hurtful comments', quoted by Nazario, Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos*, *op. cit.*, p. 239.
48. Christina Buci-Glucksmann has shown that the dandy's appropriation of the hegemonic codes of femininity is, at the same time, a hostile reaction the transformations of gender, class, and nationality that took place in the cities in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Christina Buci-Glucksmann, "Catastrophic utopia. The Feminine as Allegory of the Modern", (trans. Catherine Streip), *Representations*, vol. 14, 1986, autumn, pp. 220-229.
  49. Judith Butler, *op. cit.*, p. 181.
  50. Nazario Luque, in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos*, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
  51. A similar incident occurs in Lluís Fernández's *La fallera mecánica*, in which a transvestite is crowned carnival queen. Amid enormous controversy, the magazine *Ajoblanco*, defended the film, arguing that the carnival queen is 'a symbol of that femininity that has to be deflowered each spring. Like a symbol of the goddess Demeter'.
  52. Caesepe, in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos*, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
  53. José Ribas, *op. cit.* pp. 647-648. Also told by Karmela to *Ajoblanco*, *op. cit.*
  54. José Ribas, *op. cit.* p. 639.
  55. Aberto Cardín acted as translator and 'trafficker' at this time for texts from the French FHAR, Hocquenghem, and René Schérer. In 1979, Anagrama published the controversial *Album systematic de la infància*.
  56. "Por un libertad sexual", *Ajoblanco*, special issue devoted to International Libertarian Days, Barcelona, 25/09/1977.
  57. "Por un libertad sexual", *Ajoblanco*, special issue devoted to International Libertarian Days, Barcelona, 25/09/1977. *op. cit.*
  58. José Ribas, *op. cit.* p. 647.
  59. Antoni Rojas, "¿Qué hubo de revolucionario durante la Transición? La CCAG y Ocaña", p. 2. A manuscript posted on internet, Antoni.rox@gmail.com
  60. Nazario Luque, interview with B. Preciado in Barcelona on February 18, 2010.
  61. Interview with Jaime Gil de Biedma, 1978, mentioned in Rafael Mérida, etc.
  62. Jori Petit and Empar Pineda, "El movimiento de liberación de gays y lesbianas durante la Transición (1875-1881)", in Javier Ugarte (red.), *Una discriminación universal. La homosexualidad durante el franquismo y la Transición* (Madrid: Egales 2008), pp. 184-185. The CCAG lasted just two years.
  63. On the exclusion of transsexuals and transvestites from the American gay movements, see Victor Silverman and Susan Stryker's documentary *Screaming Queens*, 2005.
  64. On revolutionary sexual policies in France in the 1970s, see Guy Hocquenghem, *El deseo homosexual* (Barcelona: Melusina 2009), and the epilogue 'Terror anal.'
  65. As Pedro Salines intimated in a letter to Guillermo de la Torre in 1941, being "desasterrado" ("de-buried") was the opposite of being 'in-terrado', in-terred, under dictatorship law. Quoted by Jordi García, *A la intemparia. Exilio y cultura en España*, Anagrama, Barcelona, 2010, p. 8.
  66. Interview with Ocaña, "Homenaje a Ocaña", *la edad de oro*, Paloma Chamorro, 06/10/1983.
  67. Peter Sloterdijk, *Derrida, un Égyptien* (Paris: Maren Sell Éditeurs 2006).
  68. For Krakauer, the dandy always works extra-territorially, so that he is an expatriate even in his homeland.
  69. Six months after being named prime minister, Carrero Blanco, who embodied Franco's regime, was assassinated on 20 December 1973 in Madrid by members of ETA, who carried out a bombing near the San Francisco de Borja church in the calle de Serrano while he returned from Mass in a car. The bomb blew up beneath the politician's car and threw it five stories into the air and over the top of a nearby building onto a balcony in a nearby courtyard.

70. These would include Alberto Mira, Teresa M. Vilarós, Gema Pérez-Sánchez, Patrick Paul Garlinger, etc. The transsexual and the transgender body was also converted into a significant problem of 'post-modernity' in the 1980s and 1990s. See: Jean Beaudrillard, "Transsexualité", *La transparence du mal* (Paris: Galilée 1990), and Rita Felski "Fin de siècle. Fin de Sexe: Transsexuality, Postmodernism, and the Death of History", *New Literary History* 27, no. 2, 1996, pp. 337-349.
71. According to this clinical interpretation, transvestism, as a form of fetishism, is, above all, a perversion that affects the masculine subject. It was not until Joan Riviere (1927) that thought turned to femininity as the effect of a social masquerade. On the implications of denying female fetishism in clinical discourses, see: Teresa De Laurentis, *The Practice of Love* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press 1994).
72. See Julia Valera, *Nacimiento de la mujer burguesa* (Madrid: Endimión 1997).
73. On performative regulation, see Judith Butler *El género en disputa. Feminismo y subversión de género* (Barcelona: Paidós 1997).
74. See: Sebastià Guasch, *Barcelona de nit* (Barcelona: Parsifal 2007).
75. On transvestite, transsexual, and drag culture in Barcelona during the 1970s, see: Pierrot, *Memorias Trans* (Barcelona: Morales I Torres 2006).
76. On medical treatment of homosexuality in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, see: Jennifer Ferri, *An American Obsession. Science, Medicine and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: Chicago University Press 1999).
77. Harry Benjamin, "Transsexualism and Transvestism as Psychosomatic and Somatopsychic syndromes", *The Transgender Studies Reader*, Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle (ed.) (New York: Routledge 2006), pp. 45-52.
78. On media production of some of these icons and their autobiographical narratives, see: *Sexual Metamorphosis. An Anthology of Transsexual Memoirs*, Jonathan Ames (ed.) (New York: Vintage 2005).
79. Jordi Barcelonesa, in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos, op. cit.*, p. 27.
80. On September 22, 1975, Michel Foucault, Régis Debray, and other participants at a conference in Madrid were expelled after giving a press conference to protest against the death sentences passed on eleven political activists.
81. Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits*, p 1643; and Michel Foucault, *Il faut défendre la société. Cours au Collège de France* (Paris: Gallimard, Seuil 1997), 17 March 1976.
82. Policies governing the homosexual and transsexual body in Iran in 2010 provide a good contemporary example of a collision, similar to that which occurred during the Franco dictatorship, of 'thanato-political' regulations (death penalty for homosexuality under Islamic law) and pharmacopornographic management of the body (all homosexuals and transsexuals legally obliged to take hormone treatment and sexual reassignment surgery).
83. In this context, male homosexuals were tried by military courts for 'acts against honour'.
84. To this end, special prisons were established in Huelva and Badajoz, where the 'active' were separated from the 'passive', as well as work camps in Fuerteventura.
85. Pablo Carmona, "La pasión capturada. Del carnaval underground a "La Movida madrileña" marca registrada", *Desacuerdos* 5 (Barcelona 2009), p. 150.
86. Paul Patric Garlinger, "Dragging Spain into the 'Post-Franco Era': Transvestism and National Identity", in *Una mala nocha la tiene cualquiera*, *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 24, no. 2 (winter), 2000, p. 365.
87. Based on the book by José María Rodríguez Méndez.
88. Perhaps as a way of confirming Sacristán's masculinity and heterosexuality, he was awarded the prize for Best Actor at the San Sebastián Film Festival in 1978.

89. The left's official discourse has been marked by a knee-jerk rejection of the *cursi*, kitsch, camp, femininity, homosexuality, and transvestism. In Spain, this exclusion was present in most left-wing parties, with the exception of groups influenced by feminist languages, such as the EMK and the MC, in which opposition to the patriarchy and conscientious objection formed the backbone to the critique of capitalism (see, for example, the research project on the MC's anti-patriarchal and pacifist critical practices in Andalusia from 1970 to 1978 at [www.peligrosidadsocial.com](http://www.peligrosidadsocial.com)). How are we to understand, apart from these exceptions, the Marxist tradition's forthright rejection to cultural practices generated by the subordinate? This Marxist repulsion of homosexuality may derive from bio-political ideals of the body, gender, and sexuality that the revolutionary utopia mobilizes. This critique does not seem to depend wholly on misgivings about the frivolous nature of mass culture and pleasures easy to consume but also, and particularly, on the exaltation of the virile values of manual labor and heterosexual reproduction as the foundations of the nation as opposed to the dangers of passivity, femininity, the pleasure of the body, and drugs. During the transition, the position that Tierno Galván adopted is paradigmatic of the official left's repression and rejection of homosexuality. A socialist MP, mayor of Madrid, and prolific writer, Tierno Galván made *cursi* and effeminate behavior an aesthetic-political category to define the ascending subject of land-holder capitalism: the style imposed by the bourgeois lord, a 'dull, lazy type' after Mandizábal's disentanglement (Enrique Tierno Galván, "Aparición y desarrollo de nuevas perspectivas de valoración social en el siglo XIX: lo cursi", in *Del espectáculo a la trivialización*, Madrid: Tecnos 1961, pp. 79-106). Moreover, in 1977, he felt no hesitation in defining homosexuality as 'a deviation of the instinct', adding: 'I don't believe that they should be punished, but I do not agree that they should be free even to make propaganda for homosexuality' (interview with Enrique Tierno Galván, *Interviú*, January 1977). Even more interesting is the fact that Tierno Galván was, for many, the personification of *cursilería* and mannerism, something reflected in his funeral, which would have pleased Ocaña himself, and which he turned into theater, using a French 19<sup>th</sup>-century carriage pulled by six black horses, and hired from the film industry. See: N. Valis, *The Cultura of Cursilería: Bad Taste, Kitsch and Class in Modern Spain* (Durham: Duke University Press 2002), p. 3.
90. Paul M. Garlinger, "Transgender Nation: Bibi Andersen, Postmodernity and the Spanish Transition to Democracy", *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, no. 37 (January 2003), p. II.
91. Nazario, in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos*, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
92. See: Judith Butler, "La melancolía y los límites de la actuación", in *Cuerpos que importan*, *op. cit.*, pp. 328-332.
93. Xavier Daniel's film was banned in Spain, many critics considering it unworthy of representing the nation at such international festivals as the Berlin Film Festival and the festival devoted to auteur film in Figueira de Foz, Portugal. Mentioned in Nazario, *op. cit.*, p. 221. Today, Xavier Daniel is the director of the Barcelona Gay and Lesbian Film Festival.
94. Although there are no sexually explicit scenes in *Manderley*, it was given an 'S' certificate and its distribution was therefore greatly restricted. This censorship was applied among others, to all films whose narratives were not heterosexual. *Manderley* merits more detailed study than is possible here. To give an idea of its narrative complexity, we need only remember that both *Manderley* and *Rebecca* are also iconic figures in lesbian culture.
95. [www.gerardcourant.com](http://www.gerardcourant.com).
96. Ocaña was interned in the Seville psychiatric hospital during his military service for allegedly making passionate advances at a recruit.

97. See this inside-outside theatrical dialectic in Pedro G. Romero, "Actores, situaciones, desenlaces", in *Un teatro sin teatro. op. cit.*, p. 48.
98. Interview with Ocaña. José R. Caubet, "Ocaña, niño lúcido y sin edad", *Última Hora*, Palma de Mallorca, 16/08/1978, p. 13.
99. *Ibid.*
100. The arrest of Ocaña and Nazario has become part of an epic narrative in which their resistance to police control and the popular support they received created a kind of Barcelona Stonewall: 'the painter decided to resist police arbitrariness, shouting and refusing to be arrested peacefully. In this magical moment, the first spontaneous demonstration for homosexual rights started. People began to throw chairs and glasses at the police and to demand the release of their victims. The police had to call for reinforcements in order to get away, and when they arrived the pitched battle continued and they arrested several other unknown people who had shown solidarity towards them' (Arnalte, pp. 233-234). His arrest contributed to the media construction of the Ocaña legend. According to Martí Font, for Ocaña and Nazario their spell in prison was 'clear evidence of their popular projection' (Nazario, p. 67). The news was reported in all the national papers, increasing the success of Ventura Pons' film, then being shown. Later, the four detainees were beaten up by the police in cells at the Calle Bonsuccés station. 'The next day they were moved to the station in Via Laietana, where they were fingerprinted and photographed, with Nazario still dressed as Salome, Meanwhile, the Gay Liberation Front, still illegal, began to mobilize to demand their release and to organize protest demonstrations and other forms of pressure all over the city.' (Arnalte, p. 234).  
They spent a few days in the Model prison. 'Where they coincided with members of Els Joglars, who had been imprisoned for alleged slanders against the army in their play *La Torna*, a satire on the execution of the Polish citizen Heinz Chez, whose case the Franco regime had used to smother criticism against that of the anarchist Salvador Puig Antich.' (Arnalte, p. 234).
101. Pepe Ocaña, quoted in a newspaper article by José R Caubet, *Última Hora*, 16/08/1978. pp. 13-14.
102. Martí Font, in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos*, op. cit., p. 167.
103. The sex worker and transsexual activist Beatriz Espejo called the application of methods for the control of sexuality by democratic means after the dictatorship 'democratic repression', See: (p. 13, cited by Mérida, p. 123).
104. See: Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, op. cit. We might note that Butler did with transvestism and drag queen culture what Bajtin had done for carnival through Rabelais: cease to read it as a ritual or folklore practice or a pathological phenomenon to understand it as a cultural logic and an epistemological category capable of explaining not only a society's political functioning, but also the internal organization of its knowledge structures.
105. Ocaña, in *Ocaña, retrat intermitent*, Ventura Pons, 1978.
106. Ocaña, interviewed for this TV program *La edad de oro* Published in "Homenaje a Ocaña", 1983.
107. Ocaña, quoted in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos*. op. cit. p. 137.
108. Jordi Esteva, in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos*. op. cit. p. 233.
109. Alberto Cardín, "Renata Saldaña", in *Detrás por delante* (Barcelona: Ucronía 1978), p. 125.
110. Xavier Arakistain, *Trans sexual express. A classic for the third millennium* (Barcelona: Centre d'Art Santa Mònica 2001), p. 137.
111. We take the liberty of using the expression 'cutrechou' by which the Andalusian performance artist Miguel Belioch referred to his interventions raising awareness about AIDS and the sexual minorities in the 1980s, and which can be considered

112. Charnego: condescending name given to the working class Spanish speaking immigrant coming to Catalonia from the rest of Spain.
113. Ocañan. Jordi Esteva, in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos. op. cit.* p. 233.
114. *Ibid.*
115. Strangely, this quote illustrates the transformation from the rural to the urban economy that the neighborhood had recently undergone: until recently, the gallery was occupied by a dairy farm and, as J. M. Martí Font describes it, 'still smelled of manure and was full of fleas.' In Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos. op. cit.* p. 173.
116. Ocaña, quoted in *Ocaña Pinturas* (Madrid: Museo Español de Arte Contemporáneo, 1985), no page.
117. Pepe Ocaña, *op. cit.*, *Ajoblanco*, no. 73.
118. See Pedro G. Romero, *Vivir en Sevilla* (Barcelona: Fundació Antoni Tàpies 2005).
119. Judith Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place, op. cit.*, p. 116.
120. Judith Butler, *Cuerpos que importan. Sobre los límites materiales y discursivos del "sexo"* (Barcelona: Paidós 2002), p. 47.
121. Enric Majó quoted in *El País*, José Aguilar, "El pintor y actor Ocaña murió en Sevilla víctima de una hepatitis", 19/09/1983.
122. Teresa M. Vilaròs, *El mono del desencanto, op. cit.*, p. 188.
123. Alejandro Molina, quoted in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos. op. cit.* p. 227.
124. Entrevista realizada por Pierrot a Carmen de Mairena en 2005 y recogida en *Memorias Trans. op. cit.*, p. 16.
125. La Paca ended up a tramp and died in the streets of Barcelona, by then converted into the so-called *Gaieixample*. Jordi Esteva, in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos. op. cit.* p. 233.
126. Camilo returned to his hometown in Andalusia, where he opened a bar. He died just a few years later.
127. Jordi Esteva, in . Jordi Esteva, in Nazario (ed.), *La Barcelona de los años setenta vista por Nazario y sus amigos. op. cit.* p. 233.
128. On the first anniversary of Ocaña's death, his friend Pep Torruellas organized the tribute, as part of the Feast of La Mercè, patron saint of Barcelona. From then on, and for several years, Alejandro Molina and Nazario Luque, with local authority support, recreated a party with papier-mâché figures in Plaza Real. Nowadays, the Rosa del Vietnam organizes the Beata Ocaña procession (around September 18) in which members of the queer and post-porno movements take part.