

## HORACIO ZABALA / EDUARDO KAC: Spaces of Repression and Liberation

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 15, 6-9 pm

Exhibition runs through Saturday, June 21, 2014

Gallery Hours: Tuesday to Saturday 11-6 pm

Henrique Faria Fine Art is pleased to present *Spaces of Repression and Liberation*, a dual exhibition of historical works by Horacio Zabala and Eduardo Kac. Both artists were working during tumultuous periods, one in Argentina and the other in Brazil, near the end of dictatorial regimes. As societal and political limitations bore down upon civilians, artists sought alternative modes of creative expression as a means to continue developing artistically while, importantly, responding to the harsh realities of their current situation. Through their different series of works, Zabala and Kac explore the effects that authoritarianism, censorship and violence had on the body, identity and individuality.

With his training in architecture, Horacio Zabala has used its modalities in his conceptual investigation of confinement and constriction. Jails and prisons have long been subjects of Zabala's focus. *Espacio represivo (Repressive Space)* (1973/2014), recontextualizes such a punitive space inside the gallery. The installation, comprised of scaffolding, steel strapping and chairs, will be specially reconstructed for this exhibition and shown alongside its supporting works: blueprint drawings, *Anteproyecto de espacio represivo (Preliminary Plans for Repressive Space)* (1973), and an architectural model, *Maqueta de espacio represivo (Maquette for Repressive Space)* (1973/2014). As these works play with magnitude and dimensionality, they are able to restore, as Julieta González writes in the exhibition text, "these architectures to the realm of lived experience" where the human body determines the scale. Zabala's works investigate not only the scale of repression but also the scope, as his censored newspapers echo *Espacio represivo's* defined limits, colorfully blocking the material printed within the pages' borders, rendering it trapped.

Eduardo Kac's Porn Art Movement in 1980-82 was, rather, centered on demonstrating the plurality and playfulness of the human body in daily experience, that which could not be subverted by totalitarian political mandates. Using the body as his primary medium, Kac created works that incorporated poetry and performance and reappropriated pornography and drag as a means to critique social conventions and traditional notions of obscenity. As Kac writes in his essay *The Porn Art Movement: reflections on an avant-garde*, "Living during a moment of political uncertainty, rampant police brutality, and spiraling inflation, I considered the authoritarian government and the social inequality it produced obscene and immoral—not one's body in its natural state or its effluvia and proclivities." In *Pornogram 2* (1981), Kac, nude and bathed in sunlight, faces the 19th Military Police Battalion building that lies outside of the frame, with the Copacabana Church in the shadowed background. This photograph depicts dichotomies experienced under the dictatorship: the state of the natural body in the environment of repression, the quest for self-determination in the face of reactionary religious and political dictums.

As Zabala deals with penalization and isolation while the works of Kac propose brazen examples of defiance, *Spaces of Repression and Liberation* explores two strategies utilized in the varied spectrum of institutional critique. Though created over 40 years ago, these works remain sharply relevant and offer an opportunity for continued dialogue on the freedoms and restrictions of the body, the gestures of homogenization and reactions to it, and the place of art amidst social change.

**Horacio Zabala** (Buenos Aires, 1943) obtained his architecture degree from the Universidad de Buenos Aires but gravitated towards the arts, putting on his first solo show in 1967 and publishing his first theoretical text in 1972. From 1972 to 1976, he was a member of the "Grupo de los Trece," formed as part of the CAYC. He lived in Europe between 1976 and 1998 before returning to Buenos Aires, where he lives and works. Zabala's work has been featured in both individual and group shows, including: *Horacio Zabala. Anteproyectos (1972-1978)*, Fundación Alon, Buenos Aires (2007); *Subversive Practices. Art under Conditions of Political Repression: 60s–80s South America/Europe*, Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart, (2009); *Ends of the Earth - Land Art to 1974*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2012); and *Horacio Zabala desde 1972*, Museo de la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, Buenos Aires (2013). His work is represented in the collections of Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires; Tate Modern, London; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; University of Essex Collection of Latin American Art, Colchester; Daros Latinamerica, Zürich; Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation (CIFO), Miami and Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (MIMA), Middlesbrough.

**Eduardo Kac** (Rio de Janeiro, 1962) began his artistic career at 17 with his *Pornogram* series, which merged poetry, photography, performance and body politics. He has since focused on telepresence and bio art. His works integrate robotics, biology and networking to explore the fluidity of subject positions in the post-digital world. Kac's work has been exhibited internationally, with shows at venues and biennials such as the Yokohama Triennial, Japan (2001); the Seoul Museum of Art, Korea (2002); Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris (2002 and 2005); Gwangju Biennial, Korea and Bienal de São Paulo (2004); Zendai Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai (2005); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2009); International Triennial of New Media Art, National Art Museum of China, Beijing (2011); Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy (2011 and 2012); the Reina Sofía Museum, Madrid (2012); and dOCUMENTA 13, Kassel (2012). His work has been acquired by the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Museum of Modern Art of Valencia, Spain; the ZKM Museum, Karlsruhe, Germany; the Museum of Modern Art, Rio de Janeiro, among others. Kac lives and works in Chicago.

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