The Earth Beneath Our Feet
An interview with Tomás Ruiz-Rivas

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Traducteur : Traduit de l'espagnol par Roxana Dumble
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1 An interview with Tomás Ruiz-Rivas about his exhibition Fosa Común (Mass Grave) and the desaparecidos (the “Disappeared”) who vanished during the Spanish civil war and under the Franco dictatorship.

2 “Nonetheless, there is no doubt that society needs symbolism; particularly when confronted by facts that are difficult to rationalise. And this is, has been and will be our topic of conversation. The role that art plays or can play in a wider debate about the desaparecidos, the possibility of illustrating cruelty, the limits of this representation and its transcendence, or non-transcendence, politics and whether the visual arts can construct "places". Whether the visual arts can play a role in restoring the desaparecidos, ripped from their historic past, to their rightful place in history.”

3 This word, desaparecidos, has not always pertained to those people opposed to Franco’s government who were murdered and buried in mass graves during and after the civil war. Neither to those labelled as such who consequently suffered the same fate. The use of this word, just like the ground gained by this issue in Spanish society, is a recent phenomenon, and is closely linked to the opening of said mass graves in the early 2000s. For many people, amongst them Tomás Ruiz-Rivas, this event signified a turning point: “I, personally, was not aware of what I truly had beneath my feet, until I read the news about the first bodies to be exhumed by the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory), also known by the cumbersome acronym ARMH, in the summer of 2000. Thirteen bodies were disinterred from a grave in Priaranza del Bierzo, a small town in the province of León, northwest Spain.” The majority of mass grave burials took place between 1936 and 1948. Since the first bodies were exhumed in 2000, the ARMH has recovered more than a thousand bodies from more than two hundred graves, most of which were located in León and the historic region of Castilla la Vieja, northern Spain. The scale of this phenomenon can be highlighted by the fact that in Andalucía there are an estimated
648 mass graves containing the bodies of 53,665 people who were executed by firing squad⁴.

There are at least two publications of import (currently available in Spanish and French) that tackle the opening of these graves and that go further, dealing with the coercive nature of franquista politics⁵. This dossier does not profess to detail the complexity of these issues, nor their characteristics nor implications for Spain, which have been tackled by our magazine on various occasions from different perspectives⁶. Focusing our attention on the video installation directed by Tomás Ruiz-Rivas (under the pseudonym Tom Lavín) and Günter Schwaiger⁷, we wanted to concentrate on this experience and any questions raised as a result. This dossier also fleetingly brings together the opinions of others who have become involved in this very particular and poorly known chapter of Spain’s contemporary history, in different ways; those of Monserrat Sans, a lawyer who represented the ARMH before the UN, and that of film maker Marie-Paule Jeunehomme, who directed the film Los Nietos (The Grandchildren)⁸.

Tomás Ruiz-Rivas and Günter Schwaiger collected several bags of earth⁹ from the grave found in Santa Cruz de la Salceda, northern Spain, for the Fosa Común video installation. Tomás Ruiz-Rivas used this earth to create a map of Spain on the floor of the studio-gallery that he directs in Madrid. Visitors would walk on this sprawling earth, while various films were projected. Originally, there were four video channels: one showing Günter Schwaiger’s film Santa Cruz, por ejemplo (Santa Cruz, for example)¹⁰ on a large screen, with sound; one showing a silent mini-documentary about collecting the earth, also directed by Günter Schwaiger; one showing photos of desaparecidos gathered together by the ARMH and the final one showing footage from the security camera monitor i.e. people’s reactions to the map, sprawling on the floor¹¹. This format varied slightly depending on where the exhibition was being held¹². The interview with Tomás Ruiz-Rivas¹³, carried out long-distance, focused on one aspect of this work: the map of earth.

Cultures & Conflits (C&C): I’ve seen photos of the Fosa Común installation and in one of them somebody (you?) is squatting down, wearing white gloves, spreading out the earth, creating the map of Spain. That image caused a song, originally a poem by Rafael Alberti, to immediately spring to mind: “The lands, the lands, the lands of Spain, the large, the lonely, the bleak plains”¹⁴. Even now, whenever I think about the exhibition these verses dominate. You told me that the earth that you and Günter Schwaiger used for the installation is currently in bags at your house. I would like you tell me about it. Why earth? How did you come up with the idea of the map of Spain?

Tomás Ruiz-Rivas (T.R-R.): The person on the floor, creating the map with the earth is indeed me. The idea of working with earth came before the idea of the map. In 2000, I returned from a three-year stint in Mexico; the ARMH had exhumed their first bodies that same year, sending shockwaves through the press. This had a huge impact on me because at the time I was reflecting on the collapse of my generation, on the contradictions of Spanish art and on the perversions of our institutions. It was a time when museums were being erected all over Spain but without context or debate. During this period of reflexion, I came to understand the depth of the scars that the dictatorship had left in Spanish society; and with the uncovering of the thirteen bodies in Priaranza, I was confronted by a side of franquismo that was both brutal and symbolic. At that moment I decided I’d do something with earth from a mass grave; something that would make visitors walk across the earth itself. But I didn’t know what exactly until I saw Günter Schwaiger’s film, Santa Cruz, por ejemplo¹⁵.
I’d been thinking about what to do with the earth for two years and it quickly became clear to me: a map of Spain. I would make Spanish society face up to the skeletons in its closet by uniting two things that are both highly symbolic and emotive.

The lands, the lands, the lands of Spain,
The plains, large, lonely, desolate,
Gallop, white-footed horse,
Cavalier of the people,
To the sun and the moon.16

C&C: You’ve spoken about the collapse of your generation; “collapse” is a very strong word, what are you referring to?

T. R-R.: It’s a very personal opinion. I worked fervently in Madrid between 1990 and 1996; this period coincided with a serious economic crisis, the stagnation of the Spanish Socialist party and the art market bubble bursting. These were the circumstances under which an alternative scene emerged in Madrid, an alternative scene with a strong (to a certain extent) generational identity. In 1993 and 1994, I was Director of the first Ojo Atómico (Atomic Eye) museum – Anti-museum of Contemporary Art17 – completing a programme of site-specific installations, the first to be held in Madrid. I also began to vocalize my thoughts and acquire a political vision of art; I was strongly influenced by artists Manuel Ludeña and Santiago Sierra.

We would sometimes discuss the need to re-evaluate the 80s and, consequently, the Movida Madrileña (the cultural movement that appeared in Madrid in post-Franco Spain during the Transition to democracy, 1975-82); this was a generational need. And so, there were two important considerations: firstly, the renewal of artistic medium, as painting was the dominant force in the art scene, and secondly, an historical re-evaluation with a marked political slant. When I returned in 2000 I found the situation difficult to understand. The artists who had begun to use new mediums were distinct, but their work was not remotely political, nor did it challenge the work of previous generations. And the artists with whom I had worked had disappeared from the scene. This conveyed a feeling of collapse for me, and amongst other things I started to ask myself the obvious question: what had happened to us? It suddenly clicked that as a generation, we had seminal common roots: we were the 60s’ generation and had been born in, and grown up under, Franco’s regime, something that those born in the 70s had not experienced. Yet, this difference was never acknowledged and I believe that this disparity was instrumental in Spanish art losing its direction; it is currently adrift in meaninglessness.

C&C: How would you rate Fosa Común in relation to your other work?

T. R-R.: Before my stay in Mexico, I wasn’t an artist. That’s to say, although I’d studied fine arts, my area of expertise was independent art criticism; in fact, I played a somewhat important role in the 90s as innovator behind an alternative scene never before seen in Madrid. My experience in Mexico and re-immersion in Spanish society drove me to take up art once again. An ironic analysis of Spanish identity, that’s to say something witty, caused me to grow as an artist; my work on fascism was extremely politicised. I’m still focusing on memory for now. My latest project, which is on-going, is the Museo de la Defensa de Madrid (Museum on the Defence of Madrid)18 and I’ve other projects in mind along the same lines. Yet I’m also interested in
working on today’s franquismo; on the (still discernible) foundations that were left behind. A case in point is the urbanisation of the Mediterranean coast.

C&C: Could you tell me a little about how your experience in Mexico was decisive for?

T. R-R.: Mexico allowed me to understand Spain and, consequently, many aspects of myself. Mexican society has strong modern traditions and has done since gaining independence; its society was given a new lease of life through 20th century revolution. It’s the complete opposite of Spain where there has been no modernisation and, sadly, the coup d’etat that saw Franco come to power, and the ensuing dictatorship, constitute our mythological rejuvenation. I was also lucky enough to live through a very important period for Mexican art, the second half of the 90s. This was the u-turn generation, and although there were certainly doubts, this generation was nonetheless capable of re-inventing itself along with many facets of the Mexican imagination. It was then that I realised that this is something we had missed out on in Spain, or in Madrid at least; a u-turn generation.

C&C: Okay, let’s get back to the video installation Fosa Común. What were your motivations when you began? What were your expectations?

T. R-R.: It happened in 2005, a year before the 70th anniversary of General Franco’s coup d’etat and coincided with Günter thinking about promoting additional projects. He wanted us to do something at the Ojo Atómico; and I wanted to suggest that we collaborate on a video installation using the map of earth and his documentary. We had similar motivations: first and foremost, criticism of a situation that remains unresolved, that of the Spanish desaparecidos. Our criticism also showed support for the ARMH members who were filmed by Günter exhuming bodies, and who’ve been working diligently on this tricky matter since 2002; more than a thousand bodies have already been exhumed. Yet it’s natural that Günter, who’s Austrian, has a different relationship with franquismo and the cruelty of the regime. He’s been living in Spain for 15 years and I think that he sees shadows of Nazism in his adoptive country. Nevertheless, he has the intellectual and emotional resources needed to face this issue as he’s been taught, since Primary school, to accept a collective past steeped in evil, and to live with it.

We don’t know how to cope with our past. I believe that the Right in particular have a problem that’s more psychological than political; they still cannot accept that dearest grandpa could have been a fascist murderer. But that’s another matter. My motivations were very complex because they included descending into the hell of Spanish collective consciousness; necessary so that I could continue with my artistic project. The project was an analysis of art’s political capacity, both in terms of criticism and something more subtle, something I came to understand on seeing visitors’ reactions: pain “management” i.e. the ability to objectify pain in order to make it more manageable.

They call to my heart, they call again and again,
The lands of Spain, through galloping hooves.
Gallop, cavalier of the people,
White-footed horse,
Horse of foam.19
C&C: How exactly did you set about your work? I’d like to be able to visualise the scene. Where did the earth, with which you created the map, come from? When, how and with whom did you search for it?

T. R-R.: In our first conversation Günter and I decided on the two main elements of the exhibition: the map of earth and the film projection. The Ojo Atómico exhibition hall is 120m² and it was easy to imagine the set-up. We wanted the map as large as possible, with southern Spain near the entrance and the edges almost touching the walls so that people couldn’t walk around it. The film would be projected on the wall facing the entrance at the far end. We clarified the details in successive meetings: it was important for me that the earth’s origin be documented and certified, so we decided to film the collection of the soil. As Günter already knew the people from Santa Cruz de la Salceda, he called the farmer who owned the land where the grave was found and asked for permission. We also wanted to ensure that the project wouldn’t be too upsetting for relatives of the six victims, so he called them too. Everyone was 100% supportive and Luis Gonzalo, one of the relatives in question, brought tools, helped me to dig and helped me to fill bags.

We also included other items in the exhibition: historical texts (such as the brutal declarations made by Generals Mola and Queipo del Llano20), the UN declaration on Enforced Disappearances21 (Spain signed said declaration but did not fulfil its commitments), a list of exhumations carried out by the ARMH, a map of the graves and so on.

My idea was that visitors would partially rub away the map’s contours, symbolising the fading of collective memory, and I put up a security camera up to record the process. The truth is that people tread very respectfully on the earth or did not tread on it at all; consequently, only the tip of Tarifa, in Andalucía, southern Spain, was rubbed away because it was near the door. Nevertheless, the footage of people walking across the map itself was good.

From the third exhibition onwards (held in Salzburg, Austria), we decided that the map would be “created” in front of visitors, and the exhibition has gained strength since.

C&C: As to the camera that you've mentioned, did people know, were they aware of being filmed? Why film? Why was the scope of the filming and what, from an artistic perspective, were the implications of using a security camera?

T. R-R.: The camera was connected to a monitor; on this monitor you could witness the scene in real time. The original idea was that if people’s footsteps rubbed the map away, there would be footage, but because people tried to avoid walking on the map too much, we were left with footage of visitors hesitating, walking around the map without walking on it or walking on it with extreme care. In Salzburg and Toledo, I created the map in front of the visitors and everything was recorded. In Toledo, only officials from the Junta de Castilla la Mancha culture department (Governing Council for the Autonomous Community of Castilla la Mancha) walked on the earth; the rest of the visitors didn’t want to. In Salzburg, however, people walked across the map very respectfully, aware of doing something incredibly important.

C&C: Let’s go back to something that you said previously. I think I understand what you suggested concerning “art’s political capacity”. But bearing in mind other experiences, a niggle remains: is it not pain, specifically, that can never be “managed”? Not by art, nor by social sciences? And isn’t it this very powerlessness that we all have in common? That is...
those of us who work – from different perspectives - on these or similar issues linked to conflicts, not to mention political disasters?

T. R-R.: When I read the word “manage” now, in connection with pain, I don’t like it very much; when I wrote it I didn’t want to spend a long time thinking of a more precise term. I believe that when art deals with pain and with the pain that some human beings inflict on others, more specifically within the framework of class war, it has the same capacity or powerlessness as any other political or cultural activity. Personally, I believe that art does indeed have the capacity to give pain meaning, and to provide for its expression through further (political and historical) realities. We’re talking about something more complex than a rite for mourning, and art can play a part in every way. What’s more, art works in a different way, and follows a different timescale to direct political action. We understand reality through symbols, and by the same token, art, as a generator of symbols, can help to change the way we perceive painful truths or pain itself.

No-one, no-one, no-one, there is no-one who is opposed; Death is no-one if it rides in your saddle.

Gallop, white-footed horse,
Cavalier of the people,
The land is yours.

C&C: How does someone live with these “lands of Spain”... in your own case?

T. R-R.: Well, the bags are in a little cupboard in the basement, not in my front room. All the same, you can distance yourself from what’s inside the bags by working with the earth itself. I must say that generally speaking, working on the desaparecidos causes me great distress, but it’s not the bags being there, it’s preparing the exhibitions, looking into history... reading through the evidence makes your blood runs cold.

C&C: I’ve read Emilio Silva and Santiago Macías' book, and what I read did indeed “make my blood run cold”. I was utterly overcome with distress. Spain seemed a vast mass grave. And something that truly left its mark, something that differentiates Spanish history from that of Chile and Argentina is the large, in fact, the enormous number of people who bore witness to what was happening. If I’ve read correctly, murderers and those people who made others disappear were not particularly worried about hiding their actions. I understand that your work is part of a focalization process for something that, although not wholly unheard of, never became common knowledge. It was never official, nor acknowledged, presumed to be an unavoidable truth of the Spanish civil war and its repercussions. Your work, along with Günter’s work and the work of the ARMH (in other areas) seems to ensure a change in the scattered memories of the relatives and witnesses who did not support Franco, who were opposed to him. Now-a-days, what is quite different (as I see it, and please correct me if I’m wrong) is the possibility of undertaking joint, co-ordinated action so that these memories don’t perish with the witnesses themselves. Does that make sense to you? Or am I on the wrong track in your view?

T. R-R.: Those responsible didn’t hide the massacre because in reality, they wanted to instil terror. One of the reasons behind the fierce defence of Madrid was that the refugees arriving from Andalucía and Extremadura told such horrific tales that people would rather die than be captured. I’m not sure if Emilio mentions the tactics used in the Autonomous Community of Castilla-León in his book, but there wasn’t a war front: the fascists (and the priest) from each town drew up a hit list of people to be killed, which they swapped with the fascists from other towns. Thus, they were never in a situation where they killed people from nearby, although I’m not sure this
mattered to them; and if the area was taken by The Republicans it would be difficult
to single out the guilty parties. But that’s another matter. As for your question, I
believe that the work of associations for historical memory and memory forums
along with our work i.e. the work of artists and intellectuals dedicated to the cause, is
incredibly important in many ways: for one, so that we stop denying the evidence; so
that we form another image of ourselves as a society and a country; so as to overcome
the collective trauma, which has never even been accepted for what it is. The list
goes on and these problems can be tackled through different historical events. The
most impassioned matter is that of the desaparecidos, which also has a very strong
symbolic importance. It’s symbolic because it’s an issue that was buried and that we
unknowingly “walk over”, just like the bodies of the victims. Yet you could explore
the confiscation of goods and its transcendence in the establishment of the franquista
bourgeoisie, still here today, or the slave trade and the advantages that it brought to
the very same bourgeoisie... The Jewish who were victims of Nazism have, on
occasion, been granted compensation, had their goods returned and had the harm
that they suffered acknowledged. Franco’s victims are within their rights to ask
themselves “why not us?”, and they do.

In my opinion, and with art as a starting point, it’s crucial to challenge the status quo,
accepted without question. I came to this line of work trying to understand why
Spanish art is so run-of-the-mill, and what I discovered is that there are a set of
assumptions that have been unconsciously accepted by the art world. It’s an
unremitting issue, yet it highlights how knowledge structures, the vertical system
of social relationships and the obligatory nature of Catholic education condition
Spanish thinking at a very deep level. There are some texts on this but it hasn’t been
looked into properly. If you’ll allow me to be poetic for a moment, it could be said
that every Spaniard unknowingly has a grave in his or her own subconscious and,
that in order to progress either as an intellectual or an artist, and as a political
subject, it must be found and opened.

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6 1. Human beings think in images. What does this mean? It means that we can create
representations of things in our minds, whether they exist or not; that we can accord
symbolic value to these representations and, that we can capture them in other
mediums in order to share them. This is the recurrent theme of and distant idea
behind visual arts from all cultures and is based on human nature itself. [...]  

7 2. The Anti-museum is an experimental centre for contemporary art. We believe that
visual arts can and should be a tool for emancipation; and that in a landscape in which
traditional political practices have lost their meaning, cultural subversion is one of the
most prolific fields of action for creating spaces for resistance, for strengthening
democracy and for conserving social diversity.

8 We aim to develop new types of publicity and new ways of connecting with society.
Unlike the means of self-publicisation characteristic of the culture industry (such as a
media presence and fame), the Anti-museum works in the construction of publics; in
the construction of ephemeral, communicative communities that are nonetheless
capable of producing meaning and expressing counter-public ideas amongst
themselves. [...]
Since the video installation *Fosa Común* was first exhibited in 2005 at the Anti-museum, my work has wholly focused on investigating *franquismo* and its repercussions in all imaginable aspects and areas of life [...] The *Museo de la Defensa de Madrid* is a part of this very working process, and at its roots is another underground presence: the air-raid shelter underneath the street *calle Juan Bautista de Toledo*, which is very near the spot where the *Ojo Atómico* has had its headquarters for the past five years. In the 1930s, Prosperidad (a neighbourhood in Madrid) was a community on the outskirts; the Metro did not venture there and all the while, the Metro’s city-centre tunnels were being used as a refuge from Nazi Luftwaffe air force attacks. The shelter has been closed for almost 70 years and almost everyone has forgotten about it.

My first idea was to work in this very location, harnessing its symbolic potential (created by its mere - secret - existence). To spark off memories using statements from the elderly and by taking precise steps; memories of the shelter as a symbol for the leading role played by Madrid’s in the heroic fight against fascism, subsequently condemned to be forgotten because of what ensued, with successive events leading to the legitimisation of *franquismo*: particularly the *pacto de Madrid* (The Madrid pact) in 1953 and the *Transición* (the Transition to democracy) in the 70s.

Yet it became clear to me immediately that Madrid’s defence is an historic fact that goes far beyond any questions I might raise using the shelter. In short, in 1963 Madrid was un-defendable from a military point of view, with a government that had lost control of the situation and had relocated to Valencia, and without a real army who might be able to confront the mutinous troops. Additionally, a very high percentage of these troops (almost 40%) were mercenaries who had fought in the colonial wars in Morocco and they also had the support of the German and Italian air forces. And up against them: unarmed civilians, a few members of the *Guardia Civil* who remained loyal to the government and very limited resources.

Nevertheless, Madrid resisted. She resisted the first assault in November 1936 and continued to resist throughout the whole of 1937 and 1938, until she fell in March 1939. Volunteers arrived from the rest of Spain along with the International Brigades and anti-fascist intellectuals such as Ernest Hemingway and French author André Malraux, not forgetting all of the Spanish writers and artists who decided to remain in the city until the very end. Madrid became an international symbol for the fight against fascism in those dark years, marked by a rise in National-socialism, that preceded the Second World War.

Given the incredibly tense political climate of the past two years, and with a debate truly raging on the *Ley de la Memoria Histórica*, the idea of opening the *Museo de la Defensa de Madrid* seemed obvious. Aside from one private museum (set up by a man in his attic in a little town called Mohedas de la Jara in Toledo) there are no civil war museums in Spain. What’s more, memorials are *franquista* and/or Catholic, a case in point being *El Valle de los Caídos* (Valley of the Fallen), a nationalist monument in a small municipality near Madrid. Although, since I began my work, some shelters have been renovated in Barcelona, Valencia and Almería, not one municipality or local government has yet taken the plunge and created a proper museum; something that will undoubtedly happen very soon. Yet Public Administration in Madrid - comprised
of the Ayuntamiento (Municipal Council) and the Comunidad Autónoma (Autonomous Community) - is governed by law and the law prohibits any act favouring the recovery of memory. In fact, it’s impossible to obtain a permit to visit the aforementioned shelter and it’s even more difficult to obtain one for the General Miaja bunker, in the parque de Capricho, both of which fall under the jurisdiction of the Municipal Council. I should add that I’ve stopped showing the exhibition in public spaces since being refused the necessary authorisation by the Ayuntamiento, although that wasn’t why I stopped.

7. I mulled over several ideas for the museum [...] and in the end, I decided on a mobile museum. Something of a sculptural nature, but that only came to life when part of a performance, something that people could interpret both through its artistic nature and its political nature. I had accepted the precariousness of Spanish historical memory as something that is difficult to classify. What’s more, I’d also discovered that the society and the life woven in a city that was under siege, replete with bombs, fear and hunger, and not forgetting a resolute decision to resist, left countless small traces that 40 years of dictatorship could erase. A mobile museum could unveil these traces in situ and give new meaning to the urban space. [...] 

14 The Museo de la Defensa de Madrid is one-sided: its aim is not to present a scientific and supposedly impartial view of the past, but rather to recover and extol the memory of those who fought for freedom. [...] 

15 Yet, I decided against including symbols that have retained political significance, such as the Republican flag, the Communist hammer and sickle, or the acronyms of the different political parties and trade unions that played an active part in the defence of the city. I thought that these symbols would limit the reach of the exhibit by connecting too closely to current political issues.

16 I don’t have a date in mind for the end of the project. The museum is in active service and I will continue to increase its funding and to take it onto the streets indefinitely.

NOTES


2. For more information on the ARMH, please see http://www.memoriahistorica.org/ (n.b. website available in Spanish only). The Law of Historical Memory aims at honouring the victims of the Spanish civil war and of the Franco dictatorship; this legislation was spearheaded by the leader of the Socialist government, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, in power since 2004.


4. This is according to research carried out by the Asociación Memoria Histórica y Justicia Andaluza (Andalusian Historical Memory & Justice Association), the ARMH and the Foro Ciudadano para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (Citizens' Forum for the Recovery of Historical Memory). This research led to the compilation of a document presented at the International Conference

6. Please see issues 13-14, 24-25, 62,63 & 67 of Cultures & Conflits.

7. Günter Schwaiger is a theatrical and operatic producer and director. Born in Austria in 1965, he has lived in Spain since 1991. In his own words, "[his] work focuses on solitude and isolation in an alienated society". Most notable amongst his recent works are El Paraño De Hafner (De Hafner’s Paradise), filmed in 2007 – Documentary, 74 mins Colour-b/w, Stereo, DigiBeta, aspect ratio 4:3 (please see http://www.hafnersparadise.com) - and Santa Cruz, por ejemplo (Santa Cruz, For Example), filmed in 2005 in collaboration with Hermann Peseckas - Betacam SP, 65 mins - a documentary that focuses on the opening of franquista mass graves and for which he received Salzburg’s Arts and Culture Award in 2006. Please see the interview with Günter Schwaiger on the "Inédits de Regards sur l’entre-deux" website (a section in the magazine Cultures & Conflits that focuses on politics and culture. N.b. selected texts available in French, Spanish and English).

8. Please see the interviews on the "Inédits de Regards sur l’entre-deux" website.

9. Some 300kg (around 47 stone) were used


11. The exhibition was completed with a selection of extracts from UN statements, speeches, a list of exhumations and a map of mass graves in Spain.

12. The Fosa Común exhibition was shown at the Ojo Atómico, Anti-museum of Contemporary Art (December-January 2006); at the Centro Cultural Español (Spanish Cultural Centre), Mexico (August-September 2006); in Salzburg (September-October 2006) and at ECAT or the Espacio Contemporáneo Archivo de Toledo (Contemporary Archives in Toledo) (March 2007). Additionally, it was the focus of a conference held at the Instituto Cervantes in Paris (June 2006) and of a conference held in Buenos Aires (November 2007) entitled "Homo Sacer, el lugar de los desaparecidos en el arte" ("Homo Sacer, the place of the desaparecidos in art").

13. Interview carried out by Antonia García Castro in May 2008 (Madrid and Buenos Aires). The first part was "on-sight" via webcam and the second was via written correspondence (email), explaining a handful of references to what was "written".

14. Extract of "Galope" (Gallop) by Rafael Alberti


16. Extract of "Galope" (Gallop) by Rafael Alberti

17. For more information on the Ojo Atómico, Anti-museum of Contemporary Art, please see http://www.ojoatomico.com (website available in Spanish and English)

18. Please see the "Documents" section.

19. Extract of "Galope" (Gallop) by Rafael Alberti

20. On 23rd July 1936, General Gonzalo Queipo del Llano y Sierra declared, "For this reason, I empower all citizens to silence these people with a shot when they happen to come across them, or to bring them to me, and I will do the deed myself. They already know the way I work: for every follower of the regime who falls, I will kill at least ten extremists." The following quote is attributed to General Emilio Mola Vidal; it is part of the document Instrucción Reservada No.1 (Confidential Order No.1) from 25th May 1936 and was signed by El Jefe (meaning "The Boss") i.e. Franco himself: "It will be taken into account that any action must be extremely violent in order to eliminate the enemy as soon as possible. The military personnel who have not joined our Movement should be thrown out and their pay should be scrapped. Those who have taken up arms against us, against the army, should be shot. If I were to see my father in the opposing ranks, I would shoot him. Anybody who is openly or secretly an advocate of the Frente Popular"
(Popular Front political party), must be shot. We must instil terror and create a feeling of authority, eliminating those who do not think like us unscrupulously and without hesitation."

These extracts were provided by Tomás Ruiz-Rivas and are also quoted in Emilio Silva and Santiago Macías’ book, op.cit.

21. There are currently various international documents relating to enforced disappearances, such as the UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances (Resolution 46/133) from 1992 and, much more recently, the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances, adopted on 20th December 2006.

22. For complete text, please see http://www.ojotomico.com.


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**Mots-clés :** Regards sur l’entre-deux, Espagne, art

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