

Introduction

Art should not be different from life but an action within life.
John Cage

Pedro Déniz, a Spanish artist who was born in 1964 and now lives in Gran Canaria, is an exceptional phenomenon. In his extremely multifaceted and multilayered work, he creates powerful images of the injustices of our time. In the form of performances, videos, actions, objects, as well as visual poetry, he produces works that challenge the viewer by revealing unconventional perspectives on issues that are not usually called into question.

Pedro Déniz is a political artist, a critic, and an activist. He exposes what society otherwise tries to sweep under the rug by confronting us with the double standards of our time, with global problems, and with human tragedies, but also with the little questions and peculiarities of everyday life.

At the same time, his works captivate the viewer because they combine political explosiveness with a multiplicity of meaning, profundity, and aesthetic qualities. That's how Pedro Déniz, with his objects, installations, and photographs, creates works that long endure in the viewer's memory as afterimages of an intense viewing experience.

However, working in close relation with the foundational principles of concept art, but also drawing upon linguistic philosophy, the visual experience is only one aspect of experiencing his work. As is the case with Marcel Duchamp, the aim of the artist is to intertwine various meanings in the viewer's consciousness. The works are often representations of abstract thoughts that must be deciphered. In many cases, they deconstruct established viewpoints, opening up new perspectives on what was seemingly well-known, radically challenging concepts and connections that are conventionally utilized as explanations.

Pedro Déniz's mindset is always a global one. On the island of Gran Canaria, growing up in a very rural region, he learned at an early age the essential importance of solidarity and a willingness to help. Later, he travelled through Italy, France, Austria, and Germany, lived in Morocco for an extended period, took part in the Havana Biennial in Cuba, and participated in an art project in Mali. So Pedro Déniz has seen a lot.

With his art, he has found a way to visualize his experiences and impressions. For him, it is an opportunity for personal humanistic growth, but above all, it is an opportunity to get involved. With his art, he can build bridges, he can inspire contemplation, he can provoke reactions, and he can trigger debates. He constantly walks the tightrope between social, political, and

aesthetic boundaries, often exposing them all the more powerfully by using his own subtle humor. That is because, returning to the John Cage quote, the artist is “not capable of differentiating between art and life. For me, this lifestyle (art) is a way of existing in this world and it’s a conscious decision.” (Déniz 2006)

Due to its conceptuality and complexity, his work only begins to become more accessible after one deals with Pedro Déniz’s approach more intensively. This catalogue is meant to open a door to the cosmos of a provocative and yet thoroughly compassionate artistic position.

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