

AEROPLASTICS

Carlos Aires *Sweet Dreams are made of this*

Aeroplastics // The Chapel

17 - 21 of April

The video "Sweet Dreams are made of this" shows two policemen wearing anti-riot uniforms, dancing a tango version of the famous 80's song written and performed by the British music duo Eurhythmics. The fantastic lyric of the song is the central motor of the piece. Opera or classical music is part of the high culture, meanwhile pop music is still considered popular music or low culture. I completely disagree with it. A lot of the lyrics of pop songs are contemporary poetry and are part of both social imaginary and our sentimental discographies. The cover of the song "Sweet Dreams are made of this" has been arranged by the bandoneon player Fernando Girdini and recorded exclusively for the video, performed by the broken voice of Sara Van.

In its origins, at the end of 19th century, tango was mainly a dance between two men. They danced in harbour brothels, while drinking and waiting for their turn. Tango was the result of the cultural mix of locals with African, Italian and Hispanic immigrants. Dances from the candombe ceremonies (Uruguayan music and dance that comes from African slaves) of former slave people helped shape the modern Tango. It was originally forbidden by the church and rejected by high society, which resulted in its development in poor suburbs and working-class slums.

Spain was recently on the international news due to the violent riots, protests and demonstrations that happened as a consequence of the extreme financial crisis, corruption and bad government policies. Many videos showing police brutality can be found online. In them, the officers cannot be identified because their faces are hidden behind the helmets and their ID numbers are not visible. All this lead into the 15M movement. After the resulting numerous protests, the Government published an antidemocratic law: it was and still is illegal to take photos, videos or any form of visual record of police forces or police uniforms without the Government's permission. I could find original anti-riot Spanish police uniforms through friends that worked in the cinema industry, since I could not even rent them without the Spanish Government's permission. I am aware of the fact that I could have never gotten permission to make this piece. The video was recorded in the ballroom and celebration space of the Museo Cerralbo, in Madrid. This museum is one of the few examples in Madrid of a 19th century mansion, which preserves its original décor. It was the residence of the 17th Marquis of Cerralbo and his family, part of the Spanish aristocracy. The Ballroom is decorated with panels of agate from Granada, marble from the Pyrenees, oil paintings on the ceiling and large Venetian mirrors which infinitely multiply light and reflections. All this creates a particular atmosphere of splendor and brilliance in a place designed for enjoyment, in which everything is designed with the idea of dance in mind. This concept of a "temple of dance" is reinforced with the inclusion of Roman-style busts placed among the seating: divans and cane-bottomed chairs upholstered in silk from Lyon. All these ingredients, as well as other elements that are not so logical or possible to be rationally explained, are part of the "Sweet dreams are made of this" cocktail. I recommend drinking it before dancing. They shoot horses, don't they?

- Carlos Aires