

"I would like a company to talk while I have my hair cut "

By Bernardo Mosqueira, 2017

(for my love)

"Hello, adds the Department of the newspaper O Globo. Who do I talk to?" "You talk to Anna. I'd like to make an ad." "What kind of ad?" "I offer a company." "Company? But company for what?" "For anything, there are some examples here, moral support, bureaucracy, projects, boredom. (...) No, it's not prostitution. And it does not involve money." But what is the purpose of your ad? If it does not involve money, your ad has no purpose. We cannot make an advertisement without purpose. " "The purpose is to offer a company." "This is not within the newspaper's standards, I cannot make that announcement, you have to come to the office in person."

This was the way that the artist Anna Costa e Silva began the process of "I offer company", in which she would spread advertisements in newspapers and on the internet declaring herself available to accompany anyone in any activity. After intense scheduling dynamics, 33 meetings were held in a 21-day period. The effort to spread the call in different communication channels meant that a large part of the participants were unknown people who asked Anna's company for a variety of actions, such as ripping old letters and accounts, caring for a newborn baby, helping organize the rooms of a house after the end of a relationship and talk about life and impermanence in a graveyard.

This exhibition is formed by a set of traces and derivations of an immaterial work defined exclusively by the sequence of encounters: a video showing the first attempt to publish the advertisement in the newspaper; the same handwritten, published in a classified and printed on different internet sites; pages taken from a notebook with markings and clearances on the activity schedule during the 21 days; a set of 33 photos related to each of the meetings; 3 artist books composed of interlocations with the public through messages in whatsapp, facebook and e-mail; and 40 monocols in which we can read small and intense fragments of the conversations that occurred during the action.

In recent years, Anna Costa e Silva has been developing works that are carried out as disruptive dynamics of communication, relationships, and socialization that stress the processes of formation of subjects, ties and identities. They are works, therefore, that take place in the dimension of ethics, through operations that lead us to question the basal values of our ways of being and of relating.

It is important to note that the announcement made by Anna made it clear that this was not a remunerated action, but it did not make explicit its status as an artwork. Many of the participants asked for your company without questioning her intentions. Others, who did question, were informed about the nature of the action and still remained suspicious. But why, in the end, did work generate so much estrangement? Why do we bother with the idea of someone abdicating the image of "independent human being" to assume that we want or need the companionship of

others? Why does someone distrust one who offers their time and strength to others without financial gain?

We are currently experiencing a critical time in Western culture. We are hesitant to observe the vacuum left by the inadequacy and bankruptcy of some of the main foundations of modernity. We experience daily the urgency of developing some alternative to individualism, rationality, identity, utilitarianism, the predominance of the economic dimension and the notion of the future with progress. If we perceive with humanist principles in check and cruelty threatening to become a hegemonic conduct, it is essential that we are actively creative in filling the value gap. Fertile and generous initiatives as in Anna's works create extraordinary situations that stimulate us to create new ways to act, with new values, in the present time. It is when we understand that the creative (non-perverse) ethical transgression of the artist has an important social function of expanding or undoing limitations.

If the works in this exhibition refer to the previous action with the 33 participants, they also remind us that it is the nature of "accompanying" to be impossible to apprehend or to represent. Regardless of which actions Anna's company was asked for (and the exhibition does not reveal them in full), they were performed between Anna and the participant (not by Anna and the participant), and only there, in the dimension of affection, of subjective content streams, the initial work existed. To us, traces, referential indices, the original statement and the notion that the human being is an animal that sometimes needs to walk holding hands.