



Sala Gran

LUIS BEZETA

ES UNA ESCENA EN LA QUE YO MISMO ACTUO

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In 1939, at the pinnacle of his career and shortly before World War II, the film director Jean Renoir presented *La Règle du jeu* (*The Rules of the Game*). Renoir premiered the film at the Colisée theatre in Paris on 7 July, and in September, the German troops, that had already invaded Czechoslovakia in March, invaded Poland. Aware of the war scenario that was about to be unleashed, Renoir directed this comedy of manners, not only to satirise the moral vagaries of the upper class, but also he seemed to wish, from a more historical perspective, to lay emphasis on the political apathy with which European democracies confronted fascism. Though today, for this and many other reasons, *La Règle du jeu* is considered to be one of the greatest films in the history of cinema, the vicissitudes of its history were never in favour of such an occurrence. Since the outset, in the throes of a pre-war ideological polarisation, the reactions of the audience and critics were always contrary to the film. The day of the première, an attempt was made to set fire to the Colisée, which kept the film on its billboard for just three weeks. Its bad run was set to continue. Shortly afterwards, the French government would ban the film for being "morbid and immoral" and, finally, in 1942, during an Allied bombing, the original negative was completely destroyed. Fourteen years later, only through the persistent efforts of two film enthusiasts, were parts of negatives, copies and sound mixes discovered. Following the instructions of Renoir himself, they were edited in the contemporary version that finally catapulted the film to glory.

For Luis Bezeta, however, the end, this ending, this void relationship with the work, does not end there. Through an interview conducted with Renoir years later, Bezeta discovered that, a scene was missing from the film's final cut, which could never be recovered. For this reason, in *Es una escena en la que yo mismo actúo* (*It's a Scene in which I Myself Act*), he suggests we explore this concept of cinematographic ruin and disaster, which seems to have permeated the whole tangible history of *La Règle du jeu*. From there, following the brief notes featured in the interview and information extracted from thorough research at the French Cinémathèque in Paris, Bezeta plans the reconstruction of this loss, a vast 20-second panoramic shot in which Renoir himself, playing the role of Octave, discussed the libidinal instincts of servants with another character.

The ekphrastic nature with which Renoir reminds us of the forms of this unrecoverable fragment of his work brings us back to the question: what need does reconstructing the scene obey if we are already aware of its details and its role in the whole work? Beyond suppressing an iconoclastic impulse or providing padding for a mere *horror vacui*, Bezeta's decision is based on a criterion of simple access,

breaking down the barriers of a distance that not only exists to inject an object with aura which has become, over the years, an artefact of worship. If the concept of popular culture is only conceivable through the copy, how far do we allow ourselves to develop the need for this simulacrum? What is interesting, in this case, is that here the need for simulacrum occurs in terms of the author's relationship with his work. For Renoir, playing the part of Octave takes on symptomatic value. Octave is the character that leads the entire network of relationships that are developed in the film. Renoir is Octave in order to penetrate the world of *Les Caprices de Marianne*, the comedy by Alfred de Musset which initially inspired *La Règle du jeu*, and, from that point on, to familiarise himself with the alienating feeling of a class moved by Hedonistic individualism. In *Es una escena en la que yo mismo actúo*, Bezeta precisely addresses the need for this simulacrum.

Having pursued studies at the Institute of Audiovisual Sciences in Berlin, at the Film and Audiovisual School of Catalonia (ESCAC) and in the field of Direction and Production in Film-Video-TV at Barcelona's IDEP, Luis Bezeta has managed to establish a sustained and meaningful questioning of key issues in the creation of video with projects that, through a very personal style, which is close to his everyday reality, and the performance conditions he generates, propose revising and challenging great film structures and assumptions. For Bezeta, the appropriation of this grand narrative is necessary to open his own and autonomous space and thereby establish a relational basis with a language which, on account of its material, structural and historic complexity, may come to alienate us. Among other distinctions, the work of Luis Bezeta has garnered the Miquel Casablanques Prize, Barcelona; the Madatac / Metròpolis prize for video creation, La2 (TVE); the 49^o Grand Prize at the Salon Européen des Jeunes Créateurs, Paris; and the first video-art award in Arte Laguna, Venice.



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