

Inventory of the fantastic incarnated

Inventory of the fantastic incarnated will be a series of animated pieces made with different experimental technics, where my personal search will be to reconstruct an illustrated inventory, animated and transit-able that will manifest an uncanny feeling. It is an inventory because a collection that is divided in six chapters and it is walkable because its objective is that the spectator goes through the space, to be able to contemplate by parts the different episodes of the inventory that will be assembled in his head as one. The result will reflect the contemporary audiovisual translation based on a re-reading of the original text “Das Unheimlich”¹ essays written by Sigmund Freud in 1919.

The main argument is based on an investigation that describes the origin and the esthetic manifestations of the uncanny feeling, term that corresponds to the translation of the german adjective *Heimliche- Unheimliche* and it refers to a phenomena that has to do with anxiety, with the thing that provokes fear, with the terrifying. *Unheimliche* has been translated as the Ominous², the return of the repressed or the disruptive strangeness.

The best know definition has been formulated by the philosopher Friedrich Schelling in which he manifests that: “UNHEIMLICH is denominated to all that, should be secret, hidden... however, it has been manifested”.

Freud’s essay “Das Unheimliche” (1919), uses as an approach the story “The Sandbox” of E.T.A. Hoffman to describe the sinister experience. The essay constitutes my parting point and the structure of *Inventory of the fantastic incarnated*. The freudian notion of the uncanny was created contemporary to the rising of the surrealist vanguard, and although this concept was exploited by surrealist exponents such as: Max Ernst, Alberto Giacometti, Hans Bellmer, among many others; my interest is to work with Freud text to formulate a *transmedia* product in which I make a primordial use of an experimental esthetic of animation, as a trigger and enhancer of the fantastic, opening the mind and the eyes to a magical, psychological and sensory experience.

The aim is to make an animated and walkable catalog of the uncanny through a series of animated pieces where a map is drawn to define the precipitated and fascinating geography of the *disruptive strangeness* and through its representation reveal an X-ray on the common ground of this experience. This will build six state micro-narratives animated theme retaking paragraphs inventory sinister motives of Freud and images inspired from extracts of the literary work of ETA Hoffman.

¹ Sigmund Freud, Collected Works, vol XVII, "The uncanny" Amorroutu Editors.

² In German, Heim means "home." But unheimlich denotes that which is familiar and homey. "In German there is a [...] word that expresses both the anxiety, frustration, strangeness and lack of parental or shelter is said to both, frustration and stateless condition or absence of shelter. Unheimlich without Heim, without shelter, without country or home "(Juan Rof Carballo, Medicine and creative activity, Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1964, pp 255-56.)

The series will be built from two approaches that are interwoven; experiential uncanny: consisting of a Freudian psychological approach -analysis and uncanny in fiction: understood as the aesthetic approach.

Inventory of the Fantastic incarnate, is divided into six animated episodes which retake a collecting of the associations of Freud and that the philosopher Eugenio Trias structures in a manner of a thematic inventory of uncanny motives. The thematic core of each point will be reinterpreted and will define the argument, the technique and aesthetics of each of the 6 pieces produced. The result is a journey that reproduces the experience of the sinister through animations presented as an installation.

Following the points of the thematic of the inventory of sinister motives³:

1.

An uncanny individual carries curses and evil omens; cross him carries bad fortune (the failure of love, death, murder, dementia).

2.

An uncanny individual carrier curses and evil omens for the subject, has or may have the character of a double of him or some other very close relative (the father). The theme of the double is associated with the theme of the uncanny.

3.

The doubt that a being apparently animated has a living effect; and conversely, that subtle link between the inanimate and the animate: "a marble and frigid beauty, as if it were a statue, despite being a living woman; a picture that seems to have life. This ambivalence produces a found feeling in the soul that suggests a deep, intrinsic, mysterious link between familiarity and beauty of a face and the extraordinary, magical character which that community of contradictions produces, such promiscuity between organic inorganic, between human and inhuman."⁴

4.

The repetition of a situation in identical conditions to the first time it was presented, in a genuine return to the same; repetition that produces a magical and supernatural effect, accompanied by a feeling of *déjà vu*.

5.

Images alluding amputations or injuries to especially valuable and delicate organs of the human body, very intimate and personal organs like the eyes. Separated members that are automatized and acquire independent activity; feet that dance alone.

³ Eugenio Trias, *The beautiful and uncanny*, Editorial Ariel 3rd edition 2006

⁴ Eugenio Trias *Ibid*.

6.

In general, Freud suggests, the sinister becomes when the fantastic (fantasized, desired by the subject, but hidden, veiled and self-censored) occurs in reality. When something felt and sensed, feared and secretly desired by the subject, becomes suddenly, reality. It is essentially the realization of a hidden, intimate and forbidden desire.

The uncanny is a recognizable and common sense, it is both figure and power source of the artistic work; figure of its magic, mystery and fascination, source of its capacity of outburst suggestion.

A first approach of reinterpretation from the previous 6 points, resulted in these story lines that will be worked and tweaking as the creative process forward to build the final arguments.

1. The strange in the familiar
2. The other is my (own) unconscious
3. Compulsive repetition
4. Bewildered logic
5. The return of the repressed
6. The artifice neutralizes the experience

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

As a first stage of the process, it is proposed to realize a thorough research in efforts to consolidate a support the representations of the moving images for each of the items of the inventory, which leads to a final product having three formats:

A) As a short film about 15 to 18 minutes that will be displayed in single-channel projections.

B) Six pieces that function as loops living in a multichannel installation. The loops will be projected in an installation that will function within an environment, thought from its conception, to form an exhibition altogether.

C) A website where the user will have all the information of the research, and who will be able to participate in an open manner choosing episodes or the complete short film, to later to interact through the interface and to participate in a sound installation among the exhibition.

This will be a graphical research that will establish connections with the public, seeking a captivating and meaningful approach of the viewer, with their own experience of the uncanny. I will illustrate the phenomenon in a poetic form, parting from a place where dreams are challenged and metaphorical part is evoked.

The micro arguments of the animations are constructed from three aspects:

- A) A free interpretation of the thematic inventory of uncanny motives.
- B) Translating in animated images fragments of the literary work of ETA Hoffman (*The sandpit* and *The Devil's Elixirs*).
- C) Data that will emerge from the research.

Once the micro argument of each piece is settled, the visual art concept and the technic will be defined, at this stage the presentation format for the installation will also be thought of, since I consider this to be very important to take into account from the conception of the piece. Subsequently, the detailed planning for implementation will be done. The duration of each piece (loop) will range between one minute and three minutes maximum.

The second phase will focus on the production of the six pieces of animation, which will be finished in Full-HD video. At this stage you will work in collaboration with artist Eduardo Brenes for art direction, as well as several sound artists that will work in parallel with the production; providing feedback and perhaps modifying the visual part. I am proposing a workflow as a lab where the sound can be modify and/ or alter the visual part in its production stage and vice versa, the sound intervenes in the process, it is done along with the image. This process will cover a total of 15 months, concluding in post-production and mastering of 6 pieces.

The third stage is the planning of the installation that will adapt to various spaces, both exterior and interior. The intent of the installation is that as the viewer travels on the different projections, gathering different aspects of the experience to then round out the story in their minds.

At this stage we shall also gestate a space to exhibit the results and at the same time the construction of a platform on line specifically for *Fantastic Incarnate*. The visitor will access to a log of the project, the work process and content of research. You shall be able to interact with the pieces when accessing the animated sinister inventory. The pieces will be available to the visitor so he can build their own tour in a puzzle manner and as a result, the site will yields a play back with the combination he has chosen. Also, if they wish so, they can choose one with which they identify themselves, and thus may enable a device to record their voice, to narrate their experience or single contribution phrases or single words. These recordings will be stored in a database which will be used later to add as part of a sound installation in the exhibition. The installation will be modified as the new recorded tracks reach the site.

DETAILS OF THE REALIZATION OF THE PIECES

Making six pieces of animation as episodes, lasting from between one to three minutes each, which work together as a short film and independently as pieces within the exhibition. According to the micro story and how it will be illustrated, many technics or combination of them will be used, such as:

- 2D Animation graphite and ink on paper
- Animation on a Lightbox drawing on glass with ink, oils and solvents digital ink
- Digital animation intervening fixed images
- Digital abstract animation with programming and the use of plug-ins

The animations will have a format of mini stories, loops or vivid graphics, they will be free interpretations that seek to persuade about the contents of each episode, they are "anticipatory" which set forth and prepare us for the next chapter of the inventory.

Each piece is the entry point to a new taxonomy of the uncanny, using moving image and experimenting with various techniques of sound, using the space for the viewer to travel through the animations as part of the concept.