

STATEMENT - Isabel León

I conceive artistic creation as an act closely linked to life, so my work needs to be sincere and connected to my most intimate feelings, thoughts and emotions. I draw my inspiration from everyday life; from gestures, conversations or elements that I find on my way. I am interested in small things, the seemingly insignificant or trivial, the driving force of my work, often related to memory and recollections. On the other hand, my actions do not require great resources, being austere in terms of technical and material needs, as I look for coherence between form, content and intention; everything is based on the minimum, on what is close, on what is accessible. In live action art, I am interested in the presence of the audience and how they contribute to the work to exist, and how they often become the protagonists of my performances, in which sometimes an intimate communication takes place. I also like humour, play, challenges, absurdity and nonsense; to provoke situations or experiences that push me to expand personal boundaries, and to have the feeling that I am in the middle of a continuous learning process.

My first audiovisual works conceived as "self-portraits" were, in a way, my first performances in front of a camera, without really being aware that I was doing action art. When I made my first action in front of an audience, outside the university context, I was aware that this was my language; I felt profoundly free and I knew where I wanted to continue my artistic path. So I gave myself body and soul to the research and practice of action art for several reasons: because it is a living art, that is to say, an art that happens in a specific time and place, that is unrepeatable and unique; because of its ephemeral and immaterial character, since I only needed my body to create and I could free myself from the artistic object, from producing, exhibiting, storing...; and finally, because it is a living art, an art that happens in a specific time and place, that is unrepeatable and unique. And finally, for being an art of experience and for the importance of the presence of the other (the public, the audience...), for the energy you share at that moment, for the feedback you receive, and for the other artists with whom you interact in meetings and festivals.

In 2016 I took up audiovisual work again, making a series of mini-video-performances designed to be shared on the internet. These works, although they don't have the component of being performed live in front of other people, offer me the opportunity to work in the everyday and share my work through other media, reaching a wider audience.

I work with immediacy, with the "here and now", with the present circumstances, as I think that any context and situation can be the starting point to create thought-provoking works. I like to immerse myself in the creative process starting from zero, without totally closed ideas or objectives, allowing the work to emerge from each space and specific situations. These circumstances are what provide the formal and conceptual characteristics to the action, linked to experiences, sensations and personal reflections lived in that particular spatio-temporal context.

I believe that there is a "dictatorship of the mind", both in art and in life, so I find myself in a period of exploration of intuition, freeing my creative process from excessive prior reflection, allowing the work to emerge from other places such as emotion and the body. With this way of working I rely on my experience as a performer and on the immense amount of stimuli to create that life offers us. I trust in the intelligence of intuition, and I transfer this fact to the creative act, and I give myself to the action itself and to my presence, convinced that they are what truly give content to each work.

As part of my professional career, in parallel to artistic creation, I work in two areas that I am equally passionate about, and that contribute to the practice and dissemination of action art, these are teaching and the coordination of artistic projects. In the field of teaching, I give workshops in different contexts and institutions such as art centers, universities and independent spaces, as well as in art programmes for secondary schools. In the field of the creation of cultural projects I highlight the project EXCHANGE Live Art, created together with the artist Ana Matey, and active since 2012. In this project we research on communication, taking action art as the basis of this research based on shared creative processes. It is a project in which we work as an artistic collective and also as organizers and curators of meetings, laboratories and residencies, as well as giving workshops with our methodology based on the use of performance scores.