

## **The age of innocence** - About *Conversation Piece*.

Text by Graciela Taquini and Rodrigo Alonso

A *Conversation Piece* is a special typology of the group pictorial narration - quite frequent during the 17th and 18th centuries -, that Gabriela Golder takes as a model to create an audiovisual triptych. This genre embodies a tour along times, a metaphor of *traditio* that etymologically means "the passing of hands". Thus, the work unfolds onto the motif of legacy, combining history in small letters with political and social History, the History of art and of family.

Golder composes this video-installation placing a grandmother on the right screen, which in fact is her mother, a militant in the Argentine Communist Party; she is wearing an emblematic red color. On the right screen, two girls - her granddaughters -, read the Communist Manifest like characters of the French *nouvelle vague*, which the woman eventually corrects. The whole set is structured by means of three different frames of the same scene. The central frame, with the pregnant depth of the countryside, shows the entire event that takes place in a very formal and elegant room, challenging any reference to domestic affairs with a fictional touch.

*Conversation Piece* then turns into a kind of manifest or will. From the title to the staging, it recalls the rococo aristocratic world of *boudoir* and of the gallant parties of the 18th century, overshadowed by the French Revolution of 1789. The Communist Manifest of 1848 - that supports struggles and social rebellions throughout the 20th century -, starts its crisis at the end of the century. The present 21st century brings - as a corollary - this small though not minor rescue of revolutionary memory.

In this conjunction of times, a political and social itinerary is traced, and an intimate and proper one as well, where it undoubtedly stands out the homage and admiration to her mother. Nevertheless, this route is not the only one the piece passes through. Theatre and painting are latent quotes mixed up in this video art (we need to mention it somehow), of whose history Golder is a living testimony and a highlighted representative.

In *Conversation Piece*, the artist transforms the reading of an emblematic text into a metaphor of the development of life. She emphasizes difficulties, doubts, mistakes; she points at the importance of accompaniment but also at the challenge and will to carry on the task, overcoming drawbacks. The scene does not hide a melancholic tone, the remnants of a time when political reflection was built upon certain roots, slowly, upon the crossing between an embodied thought and another settled one, historical, but always potential.

There is nothing more political than the personal aspect of this homage of Gabriela Golder to the integrity of her mother, extended onto the love of these girls, her nieces, on whom she trusts a non dystopic hope. There is nothing more forceful than a domestic scene, minimal, transfigured into a subtle social mirror.