

Alicia Herrero

The Revolutionary Journey! A Navigated Novel (El Viaje Revolucionario! Novela Navegada)

8th Mercosul Biennial, Porto Alegre 2011

Curator José Roca

Catalogue text by

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Alicia Herrero's projects generally involve experimentation with different media, including publications, meetings, installation, archives and video, and using the resources of conceptual art and language to investigate the limits of art and the contradictions of culture's role in capitalism. Herrero constantly questions issues like the art economy, the relationship between art and the public, and the roles of the intellectual and the institution in the construction of knowledge. She develops her proposals through careful theoretical reflections which appear as theses in interacting with the viewers, participants or readers of her various projects. Herrero sometimes produces a hybrid of theatre, theoretical event and television programme, sometimes a series of actions in an auction room and employing a series of tools from communication and teaching, inviting participants to recognise the issues of the surrounding political, economic and social structures and participate in discussion or actions that lead to collective awareness of them.

Herrero is showing a multidisciplinary project for the *8th Mercosul Biennial*, consisting of a series of river journeys in South America. The artist considers this project as a "navigated novel", in which the process of a river journey is equated with the process of writing. The project title is inspired by the legendary diaries of Ernesto Guevara, before he became "Che", who travelled to several parts of South America, describing what Herrero calls, "the spirit of the uncertain and illusory nationalities of America." During these voyages by boat, ferry or barge, Herrero invites a series of characters into the dialogue to share their reflections about local culture through different structures (or "conversational scenarios"), combining the structural rigour of the novel with the unpredictable elements of the rivers and discussions with members of the communities that appear on the way.