

Rosa Olivares, "Milagros de la Torre." In *El Enigma de lo cotidiano* (Spain: Casa de Américas, 2000)

Peru, Mexico and the United States comprise the itinerary of an artist who has chosen photography to obliquely render a reality hidden behind objects. It is not so much a question of a technology of memory, but of considering what we are reminded of and why; once again it is the questioning of the tool and its use by the established power. All her work is articulated as a considerable record systematically documenting an absence or a reality. The works are never isolated from one another and, moreover, there is a nexus between all her series that goes beyond the absence of people to end up pushing the viewer into a world of violence, fear and absolute authority that determines who is ill and who is healthy, who is a criminal, who lives and who dies, and even what we can read and what is hidden forever.

In her first works, *Bajo el Sol Negro* (1991-1993) she already proposed a phantasmagorical place and space, as this first series is the only one in which portraiture appears (albeit transforming the individuals into simple metaphors without their own identity). In 1996, *Los Pasos Perdidos* took us to the Palace of Justice in Lima where she recovered the object's memory and the entire personalized story of its relation with man, with tragedy and with a preordained destiny. These kinds of 'still-lives' were to link perfectly to later series, *Ultimas Cosas* and *Paginas Dobladas*, both from 1996, projects developed in the archives of a hospital for which the departure point was the patients' belongings kept in storerooms, objects that tell stories of pain and loneliness. The soberness with which the artist confronts the objects and fashions the setting and a contained and suggestive yet never hyperbolic narrative, delimits a very personal style that ties the history of a certain kind of documentary archival photography to the most absolute subjectivity of creative photography.

In later series, such as *Blindados* (2000), she continued with her closed system methodology, touching on the idea of power, control and domination more externally. In other series she approaches these themes of domination of some people over others, this blind force defining control, in a more sophisticated way, as in *Censurados* (2000), in which she photographed censored pages of books from history that have been manipulated by censorship, by the powers at given times, to limit freedom and knowledge for eternity. In the series *Bleus* (2003), de la Torre focused on the marks wounds leave on skin, the scars, subtle features of violence to which she gave a more lyrical treatment, composing practically abstract works in which she again employed her method of relation between the cause and its mark, the visual consequence.