

Versión en inglés
English version

Epilogue

"(...)we should all take every opportunity to have sympathy". Sympathy is part of imagination, and imagination is the engine of intelligence:

Jimmie Durham⁹¹

* Sympathy: social emotion characterised by a general pro-attitude towards another person and their goals.
www.wikipedia.org

There are projects that take place: they occur; they come true. On the whole, we are confronted with the most interesting challenges at the wrong time. It is necessary to make way for them to happen; imagine their conditions of possibility, generate them, and keep them up throughout time.

The basis of artistic practice lies in expressing actions in concrete ways and in making images visible. Regarding this issue, some artists only find some sense in their practice standing in the place of the other, projecting themselves, so to speak. They imagine themselves in the place of the other, which inevitably leads to building a shared space.

In Argentina, over the last few years an increasing number of artists has fortunately decided to create shared spaces: artists take over spaces that were alien to them, extend their practice, and make their projects happen. In Trama we call them artist-managers.

In the majority of cases, these artist-managers play crucial roles to the functioning of the artists' community: in some cases, through the organisation of workshops, debates, clinics and visits paid by artists and intellectuals to their cities, they attempt to supplement the flawed art education provided by official institutions.; in other cases, they generate spaces for bubbling dialogue where young artists acquire visibility, not only in the light of the legitimised art circuit, but in their own environments: they come to know one another, they start new associations, create interdisciplinary projects and build strategies of incipient co-operation. There are still other cases where they open up communal spaces, unforeseen territories from where to ponder upon the role of the artist in the community he/she belongs in; places from where to pursue the practice of art amid a social reality which, intimidating as it may prove, serves the purpose of stimulating their action as well as of supplying them with a field of action and analysis.

It goes without saying that for these kind of projects to happen in a context like ours, co-operation is a key element. All of these initiatives work on the basis of sheer courage and intuition: these artists do not wonder how long they should devote to their project, because their project blends with their lives; they do not posit long-term goals, because an idea come true, or the generation of a project's conditions of possibility is an objective in its own right, one that is negotiated anew every day. They are (proto) organisations, their structure is flimsy; nevertheless they resist mishaps and detours because they are based in a most primary, deeply rooted sense of trust in the other (the neighbour, the group of friends, fellow artists, an audience that will be invented if it is not real, and the new artists-to-come). Perhaps such trust often proves to be groundless but, mysteriously and stubbornly, is renovated with each new project, regardless of disappointments, success, and mistakes.

Ever since its early days, Trama placed its bet on artists' co-operation. After some time, we realised that co-operative action did not suffice, but that it was necessary to acknowledge, encourage, and support co-operation among initiatives managed by artists throughout the country. To do this, we set about activities involving exchange, training and dissemination of cultural management, giving visibility to the phenomenon of emerging artists' initiatives in the different regions.

Trama's three previous publications have accounted for this acknowledgement process. Trama was a consequence of the same drive that gives rise to all artists' initiatives: artists who love their work more than they love themselves decide to look after it, which results in also looking after those to whom artistic work is addressed. This is translated into an identification process with colleagues and audiences alike, for artists feel the urge of sharing the benefits of the work they love. The reason is that, should they be unable to do so, they would devote their efforts to some other task.

Thus, our first activities aimed to stimulate curiosity about other artists' creative processes and to recognise ourselves in others: training workshops that we tried to circulate through different cities, joining initiatives started by artists who shared our views. The latest of the said initiatives was the Project Development and Analysis Encounter held in Mar del Plata. The workshops were always complemented by other activities open to the general public, such as public presentations of projects, exhibitions-cum-rehearsals, and public debates.

It soon became clear to us that the power generated by these workshops could be dramatically increased if we supported the work carried out by initiatives of fellow artists and associates by means of research and training activities related to cultural management and tailored to suit the concerns of the artists in charge of organisation.

This is how there arose two editions of Cultural Management Research Workshops for artists; the written records of the latter can be read in the mid-section of this publication. The need to build an organic, effective co-operation network was reborn among the participants in these workshops, and once again Trama took upon itself the implementation of a need it had aroused.

The next step came as a natural consequence: a decision had to be made about the net's interlocutor. From the very beginning, Trama posed a clear line of work: its association with Rain implies that its activities respond to South-South interchange interests. Duplus agreed with this outlook when it proposed the Independent Project Management Encounter for Latin America and the Caribbean, which Trama joined enthusiastically. The material produced during this event closes this publication.

In 2003 Trama took an important turn. In mid-year, and with much to be done, and many opportunities to take advantage of, we decided that it would be best to train and aid those who made a daily celebration of the possibility of doing things, firmly persevering in their projects of communal scope against all odds to obtain local, let alone international, support.

Thus, in 2004 and 2005 we set about strengthening the connexions and contacts that Trama had engaged in over its five years of existence. We had engaged in artistic and international relations in every corner of our country and in several foreign countries in order to socialise them into this incipient artists' initiatives network that we had helped to envision. In 2004 we held art management clinics for emerging artists' initiatives, published a Guide with funding and project presentation guidelines, travelled round the country to gather and disseminate information, discussed our ideas in international

events dealing with problems of management and artistic interchange, and made research trips in eight Latin American countries. The experience, information and the friends that resulted from these activities finally converged in a large meeting held in 2005. Trama: The Encounter, intends to reunite in Buenos Aires, for the first time, 120 Latin-American artist-managers in order to discuss informal and spontaneous cultural policies derived from their operations as well as the impact of their work on the cultural development of the subcontinent.

It is extremely important that projects, no matter how short lived, become expressed in concrete terms in Argentina, even if their intuitive modes of implementation are unprecedented, even if their plans of action fall out of proportion to their likelihood of realisation. It is important not only because of their prompt benefit in the community where they operate, but also because to implement a project, err the way, and reformulate the path are the only ways to gain experience and knowledge.

At the beginning of 1983, artist Federico Peralta Ramos insisted, amid the recovery of democracy:

“For a very long time, one way of turning an idea into an Argentine notion consisted in failing to show its concretion. But now this is over, nobody wants now to postpone their dreams”.

Twenty years later, this statement may sound grotesquely utopian, above all if we stop to think of the way in which successive democratic administrations have interpreted the Argentines’ “dreams” since 1983. However, his words point to the vital, unbeatable energy to be found profusely among the artists that lead this communal initiatives; an energy that we wish to highlight: the intimate recognition that only we are responsible for the

generation of this experience, and that these experience will necessarily have to be shared if it is to guarantee the kind of knowledge that is useful and functional to our needs.

In September 2005, as this editorial is being written, the Trama programme has been at work for five years, the five years that it publicly committed itself to function as a programme when it came to life in the year 2000. It leaves a scenario teeming with possibilities, all of them available to its initiatives’ networks. It also has set an example in the sense that it is feasible to imagine and create a space of one’s own, and it bequeaths the certainty that network initiatives are fully prepared to make the best of the opportunity.

Along this way, Trama was a fact. It created a space, it cleaned up the way, it built the shared place we envisioned when we started to move on. This is the most valued treasure we could have imagined as artists, and the best legacy we can leave.

Trama, September 2005.

Notes

1. Durham, Jimmie, *Between the Furniture and the Building (Between a Rock and a Hard Place)*, Kunstverein München: Berliner Künstlerprogramm DAAD, (Kunstwissenschaftliche Bibliothek: Bd.9: Künstlertext), Munich, Alemania, 1998.
 2. In 2003, through three art interchanges, we participated actively in the Rain network.; with Centre Soleil, in Bamako, Mali; with El despacho, Mexico DF; and with Open Circle, Mumbai, India. For further information about these interchanges, see <http://www.proyectotrama.org/00/ASOCIADOS/index.html>
 3. See details of the activities held in 2004 and 2005 at www.proyectotrama.org
 4. Cited in *Federico Manuel Peralta Ramos, Retrospectiva*. Catalogue of the retrospective exhibition held at Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, September 2003, p. 87.
- Original article: *Volveré y sere Clemente (milonga)*, La Semana magazine, Buenos Aires, year VI, # 333, 04/28/1983

TRAMA

Workshop on project analysis and development

“All along the Atlantic coast there are a number of villages and little towns whose rhythm of life resembles much that of Mar del Plata; however, Mar del Plata, with its 600,000 inhabitants, is the only truly large city in the area. After nearly one hundred and twenty years, Mar del Plata is still a seaside resort. A shapeless, hypertrophic one. What do so many men and women do when the city dies out? Do they sleep? Do they watch television? Do they play cards? Of course, some of them commit suicide, but I suppose that others, like Matias, spend their time inventing what does not exist. They play with the void. In other words, they create arbitrary rules on a blank checkerboard to endow randomness with some sort of shape. Life as a means of art?”

Santiago García Navarro, extracted from *Cualquier día de estos te va a pasar* [This will happen to you sooner or later]

Santiago García Navarro is a writer. He was a member of the research collective Duplus, Buenos Aires, between 2002 and 2004. Born in Mar del Plata, when he was 18 he moved to Buenos Aires, where he lives and works to date. He frequently travels back to his hometown, with which he holds strong emotional bonds.

Notes

1. A reference to artist Matias Duville (see p. 104)
2. Published in: *Zaccagnini, Carla. Catálogo*, Rio de Janeiro, Capacete, 2003.

Introduction

In 1999, Daniel Besoytaorube, Cecilia Gispert and Mario Gemin established the Fondo Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo [International Fund of Contemporary Art] with the purpose of creating a fluid space for art production where young local artist had the chance to exchange views and go deeper into their practices.

In 2000, when Trama engaged in working with artists’ initiatives associated among them in several provinces, the Fund proved to be the best-qualified organisation to work from the field of visual arts in the Province of Buenos Aires. Once the possibility of collaboration had been posed, a proposal was made to hold a work analysis encounter within the framework of Trama.

The said Encounter for Project Analysis and Development was held in the City of Mar del Plata between September 25 and October 15, 2003. The work proposal and the characteristics of the workshop were discussed with organising artists Daniel Besoytaorube, Mario Gemin and Cecilia Gispert, as well as with Argentine artist Pablo Siquier, who was to be one of the Encounter’s co-ordinators together with Anne-Mie Van Kerkhoven, from Amberes, Belgium.

The work plan laid emphasis on the following:

- Work was based on the idea that gave rise to the project, proposing an intensive dynamics that demanded true commitment from the participants.
- Analysis of the creative process was privileged over analysis of concrete results.
- A work dynamics was sought so that artists would be motivated to interact with their peers. Artists were invited to choose a project they would attend from those submitted by the rest of the participants. This was an attempt to strengthen the knowledge of peers’ creative processes, bringing about the subsequent artistic

ulation of coincidences or differences in the emerging issues

- critical reflexion was encouraged through debate and presentation of ideas.

The following artists participated as fellows: Agnes Geoffray (France), invited through the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten and Laura Belem (Belo Horizonte, Brazil), invited through CEIA (www.ceia.art.br) participated with the aid of a scholarship. Ten Argentine artists, selected by means of a contest, joined the group: Daniel Basso, Margarita Ciarlotti, María Inés Drangosch, Matías Duville, Teresita Olhaberry, Juan Souto, Inés Szígyet, Mariano Ullúa –all of them from Mar del Plata and its surroundings-, Andrea Cavagnaro from Buenos Aires, and Fabián Ramos from Tucumán.

The jury was composed by artists Magdalena Jitrik and Pablo Siquier (Buenos Aires), and Daniel Besoytaorube (Mar del Plata), who in all cases passed a unanimous verdict, thus guaranteeing the heterogeneity of the projects that were selected.

Those artists who were selected were offered assistance in the production of their projects plus a small subsidy for the purchase of materials. When the participants were not residents, they were provided with lodging and transportation.

The agenda for the encounter included public presentations by Laura Belém, Agnes Geoffray, Anne-Mie van Kerckhoven and Pablo Siquier, and work meetings at the Fund premises and at the lobby of the Auditorium Theatre. Here the participants who had been granted a scholarship set up an exhibition with works and documents of the projects involved, thus providing a suitable closure to the Encounter.

A ludic invasion

Daniel Basso

These interventions carried out in public spaces are as spontaneous as they are strategic. The purpose is to make an impact on urban everyday life, camouflaging into it and thus transforming it.

The interventions propose a game in which the spectator, who has been caught unawares, suddenly finds himself included and becomes a "user" through his behaviour.

This is why the project, conceived within the walls of the workshop, was performed as an intervention in a traditional Sunday promenade, with attractive visual features such as the grassy hillocks, the sea, and emblematic buildings.

At first sight, the work looks like tiny touches of colour on the landscape. From this experience, I start to go deeper into the participatory aspect of the work, turning the colour modules into comfortably cushioned circles where people can sit and gaze at a breathtaking panoramic view of the city while they themselves feel a part of the landscape.

The materials chosen for these modules are related to my desire of providing, through contact, a feeling of indoor comfort in an outdoor area.

Daniel Basso. Born in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1974.

Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships: Trained as a visual artist at Escuela Martín A. Malharro, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 2003: Fundación Antorchas de Análisis y Producción de Obra [Scholarship for the Analysis and Production of Works granted by Fundación Antorchas] in Tandil, Argentina.

Selected exhibitions: 2003: Salón "Diario La Capital" Museo Álvaro Castagnino, Rosario, Argentina. / Joint exhibition with artist Nilda Rosemberg at MOP, Arte Contemporáneo [Contemporary Art], Mar del Plata, Argentina. / IV Taller del Artista [Artists' Workshop IV], Municipal Museum of Art Juan C. Castagnino, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / "Contemporary" Exhibition, Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 2002: Salón Nacional de Rosario, Argentina. / 2001: "Paintings and Objects" Exhibition, [Townhall] Palacio

Municipal, City of Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 1999: "Europa – Argentina, Argentina- Europa" Exhibition, Multiespacio Sauro Güemes [Multispace], Mar del Plata, Argentina. / "Desechos Humanos" [Human Waste] Exhibition, objects, Espacio Nave, Cultural Centre Auditorium, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 1998: 1st Municipal Salon "Arte y Cine" [Art and Cinema] (drawings), Municipal Museum of Art Juan C. Castagnino, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 1997: Municipal Salon "Arte y Cine" (paintings), Municipal Museum of Art Arte Juan C. Castagnino, Mar del Plata, Argentina.

Look, the brief sea

Laura Belém

The video entitled *Look, the brief sea* was made in Mar del Plata and resorts to various devices in order to hint at a love story. The frequent dance images act as a metaphor emphasising the dialogue and the relationship between a man and a woman whose faces are never shown. The video suggests a nostalgic atmosphere in suspended time: past and present blend. Sound is instrumental to this purpose; it is often disconnected from the images. The story is not narrated clearly and objectively, but only hinted at so that viewers may interpret it through their own sensations and experiences.

Laura Belém. Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships: 1996: Earns her degree as a Bachelor of Fine Arts issued by the School of Fine Arts at Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil. / 2000/1999: CAPES/ CBN Scholarship- APARTES Master of Arts in Fine Arts Programme, Central Saint Martins College of Arts & Design, London, England. / 1998: Scholarship granted by the Brazilian Government and the Headlands Center of Arts. Resident Artists' Program at Headlands Center of Arts, Sausalito, EEUU. Selected exhibitions: 2004: Bolsa Pampulha, "4 ensayos sobre el amor" [Four Essays on Love], Museo de Arte de Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, Brasil. / Collective exhibition "Imagen Sitiada" [Besieged Image], SESC Campos, Campos (RJ), Brasil. / 2003: Participates in collective I Prague Biennial, Peripheries become the Center, National Gallery, Veletrzn Palác, Prague, Czech Republic. / Collective exhibition, Jakarta Video Art Festival 2003, Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia. / Bolsa Pampulha, 27^a National Art Salon of Belo

Horizonte, Museo de Arte de Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, Brasil. / 2002: "Coreografía para figuras inflables" [Choreography for inflatable figures] Exhibition, Thomas Kampe Collaboration, Project Season 2001/2002, Paseo de las Artes, San Pablo, Brasil. / Pampulha Project, Pampulha Art Museum, Belo Horizonte, Brasil. / 2001: "Vuelvo en 5 minutos" [Back in 5 minutes] Exhibition, Palacio de las Artes, Belo Horizonte, Brasil. / 2001-2000: participated in Programa Rumbos Visuales I [Visual Paths Program I], Instituto Itaú Cultural, San Pablo/Recife/ Fortaleza, Brasil. / 2000: Collective exhibition MA Fine Arts Degree Show Central Saint Martins College, London, England. / 1999: Collective exhibition at Galeria Celma [Celma Gallery] Albuquerque, Belo Horizonte, Brazil. / Collective exhibition in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of UFMG Cultural Centre, Belo Horizonte, Brasil. / 1998: Open House, collective exhibition, Headlands Center of Arts, Sausalito, EEUU.

Untitled

Andrea Cavagnaro

On submitting this project, I intended to expand my interventions in public spaces. On this occasion, I resorted to the graphic medium, using a flowered plastic material, and attaching drawings to surfaces where they are rarely found.

I perform an operation through a gesture made in a given context. The gesture has a beginning and an end, even when it is only a part of a much more encompassing gesture, a more intangible one, if you will. Modifying the context, I establish a relation of tension between a space (physical/urban/social) and what I place within it. This results in a relation of distance, a distance defined by the shape, the material, and the colour, all three unchangeable and defined; by the meanings at play, by what remains unsaid, and by something that is just beginning to occur.

The intervention at Germán's house could have taken place at any other house as well, 50 metres behind his. It would be fair to say that the intervention does not exclusively belong in this house: the colour does not "embrace" either the building or the lives of the dwellers;

it rather leans on them. And the leaning is very light; there is barely any contact between the two objects. The transparent fabric enables us to see the intact house underneath. There is a correlation between the fabric/house distance and the relation I propose between the individuals (dwellers) and the objects.

These works are a sort of interference in the daily lives of groups of people; in this case, the group is a family. In this way multiple bonds are established; among the neighbours, the work arouses a network of reactions that interest me. The subjects are placed inside a situation, and at the same time the work moves through aspects of desire: the desire to look, to touch, to own, to dwell, to lean on, to wear, even to steal a piece of plastic just because it is pretty.

I enjoy my perception of collective desire, of the attraction exercised by an image or a situation to which a community or a group of people attribute the ineffable quality of beauty.

Andrea Cavagnaro. Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1966. Studies / Professional Training: In 2003 participates in Taller de Pensamiento Duplus [Duplus Thought Workshop]. Work Clinic with Diana Aisenberg and Tulio de Sagastizabal. Head of Practical Works and assistant to Bendjeslov's Chair of Clothes Design, School of Architecture, University of Buenos Aires. Studies of Industrial Design at the School of Architecture, University of Buenos Aires. Since 1990 she has been working as product designer, mainly in the fields of clothing and textile decorative objects, as well as in some costume productions for commercials and the film industry. Selected exhibitions: 2003: "Verde" [Green], Galeria Pedro and Jaquie Green. / "Dibujístico" Materia Urbana Gallery, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / *Naturaleza Artificial IV Edición* [Artificial Nature 4th Edition], La Casona de los Olivera, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / 1st Salon of Painting and Textile Art, Borges Cultural Centre, Galerías Pacifico, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / "Confección; Plaza de Jujuy y Méjico [Jujuy and Mexico Square], Buenos Aires, Argentina. / 2002: "Reverso" [Reverse], Intervention, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / Estudio Abierto, San Telmo, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / Estudio Abierto, El Abasto, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / 2001: "Textiles" [Textiles], objects and sculptures, Juana de Arco, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / *Arte Córdoba, Córdoba, Argentina.* / 2000: Objects made by artists, La

Fábrica, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / 1997: Bienal de Arte Moda [Fashion Art Biennial], Rosario, Argentina. / 1996: Auction of exclusive garments and objects, Bar Dos Mundos, Fundación Bco. Patricios, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Visit Mar del Plata **Margarita Ciarlotti**

The project consists in using materials such as postcards, pocket almanacs, and pins that have traditionally served as supports to circulate photographs of Mar del Plata City. The purpose is still the same (to make the city known), but one might say that it is based on a more emotional connection, emphasising the idealisation of space. The focus is on the beauty of the city, on the small details, and on the interaction between the natural and the artificial.

I am particularly drawn to such supports, insofar as they function as a representation of the whole through the component parts. I mean to work on postcards as a symbolic construction of space which, to some extent, portrays an idealisation of what has been photographed.

My interest in developing this particular project arose from my observation of old postcards depicting Mar del Plata. Apart from the significant changes in architectural conception that the city underwent throughout the past century, a historical retrospective study of these postcards shows how the changing ideals of the city were represented depending on the years when the postcards were made. The representation follows a logical pattern of its own, besides concrete changes in building structures, styles, and fashion. It is my belief that all this is related to the varying image of the city at the different moments, to the kind of tourism it targeted, etc. My analysis was informal, since it was only meant to trigger a more conscientious manner of work on the metonymic mechanism to be connotated by the images chosen.

During the workshop I should like to start from the observation and analysis of already produced material so as to go on to performance. I think that photographs would prove most suitable, although I would also like to consider the possibility of using collage.

The second step would be to decide on the kind of support. Postcards and pocket almanacs would be the most traditional ones, although I am also interested in others such as pins, key rings, and slide visors.

The third step would consist in deciding on the manner of distribution. In this sense, it would also be interesting to resort to traditional ways (hotels, beaches, museums, etc.) Perhaps I should also consider the possibility of printing traditional slogans like "visit Mar del Plata" on some of the postcards.

Throughout the phase of production and analysis we have discussed all the factors that make up a process of construction both in my own work as in that of the other participants in these encounters.

Margarita Ciarlotti. Born in, Argentina in 1977. Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships: 2001: Photography Workshop under Alberto Goldenstein. / Experimental Photography Workshop under Guillermo Ueno. / 2000: Studies at the School of Photography, Higher Institute of Visual Arts [Carrera de Fotografía de la Escuela Superior de Artes Visuales] Martín A. Malharro, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 1997-1996: Studies at the School of Letters [Carrera de Letras] of Mar del Plata National University, Argentina. / 2001: Scholarship for Photography and Fashion Production, Espacio Nuevo, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Since 2002 she has been taking part in various productions in the fields of photography, film-making and theatre.

Selected exhibitions: 2003: Proyecto A. / Curriculum 0, Ruth Benzacar Art Gallery, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / Viva 23! Multidisciplinary event at Parque de la Ciudad, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / 2002: Salón Primavera Wipe, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / Mar del Plata di Giorno, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 2001: Bridgestone Biennial, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / R. Rojas Cultural Centre, Buenos Aires. / 2000: Casa Tomada [Squatted House], Mar del Plata, Argentina. / Escuela superior de Artes Visuales Martín A. Malharro, Mar del Plata, Argentina.

Sheets for...

María Inés Drangosch

Sheets for crossing out, for tracing out words, for erasing, for crying, for tearing off writings, for music, for peeping into texts, for drawing lines, for writing poetry; sheets for nothing at all, glossy paper with poems on them; corrected correctors. All of them in stacks, spare sheets alternating with other sheets: lined ones, accountancy sheets, penmanship practice sheets, indicating the number of sheets for each case on a 2.20 by 0.80 by 0.80 drawing board. This installation was exhibited at the Auditorium Theatre in Mar del Plata. The project included selling the sheets at 20 cents a piece. Still, this decision was defined by the presentation of the work within the context of the encounter.

My proposal does not seek to diminish the concept of art. What I meant was: "Look at these things that are part of our everyday life; they are delightful. This Rivadavia lined sheet of paper has a special attraction, and so do those pencil drawings".

How to take another look at what we have seen so many times already and, in an instant, something else is revealed because we are looking at it in a different way.

The function of each sheet was explained on one of the walls surrounding the installation. People usually read about the function first and then tried to discover to which of the sheets it referred. Of course, the text and their interpretation not always coincided, and this endowed the work with a new meaning.

The idea resulted from my numerous trials with different sheets of paper: computer printed texts and interventions on those very sheets; printing mistakes ("the computer has gone crazy"); trials that in fact never reached the status of a proper work, but which I keep because "there is something to them". I also saw this as an artist's board, with all

those sketches annotated on the margins and findings that never took a definite course, but that remain on the board, as if waiting. Still, I was interested in the work to be tinged with a nostalgic nature.

Then I opted for a stand with various supports and with an ambiguous trait in which I am truly interested. That is to say, this stand is not meant to be placed in a bookshop. It is rather an artistic proposal enhancing the softness of the paper, the different qualities of white, the marks, the strokes.

The fact that on the evening in question people (most of them artists) took sheets home with them sounded to me like the trigger of an exquisite corpse.

María Inés Drangosch. Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1956. Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships: 2001: Scholarship for Higher Attainments by Fondo Nacional de las Artes. / 2000: Beca Fondo Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo de Mar del Plata. [Scholarship by the Contemporary Art International Fund from Mar del Plata] / 1999: Beca Fundación Antorchas de Análisis y Producción de obra. [Scholarship for Work Analysis and Production by Fundación Antorchas] Honorary member of Mar del Plata Poets' Foundation, Argentina. Selected exhibitions: 2004: "Caja de Música" [Music Box] Installation in Baltar Contemporáneo, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / " El objeto y su representación" [The object and its representation] Collective Exhibition, Museo Municipal de Arte Juan C. Castagnino, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / Regional Art Biennial of Bahía Blanca, Argentina. / 2003: "Certeza del abedul que se creia libro" [The certainty of the birch that believed itself a book], Installation, Lelé de Troya, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / 2002: "Plugged" Virtual exhibition, Site: inoscomtronweb.com.ar / ARTEBA2002, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / MOTP; Espacio de Arte Contemporáneo, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / "Merluzá" [Hake] exhibition, Galeria Brodersohn-Martinez, Arte Contemporáneo, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / Art Academy of Cincinnati (02txt: a celebration of the visual word), EEUU. / 2000: Regional Art Biennial of Bahía Blanca MAC, Bahía Blanca, Argentina. / Chosen for the Banco Nación Argentina Award, Recoleta Cultural Centre, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / Exhibition at Belleza y Felicidad, Galeria de Arte, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / Collective exhibition "22 Metros" [22 metres], Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 1999: V National Salon of Mar del Plata, Mar del Plata, Argentina.

Interventions on a plastic plane **Matías Duville**

The project I submitted consisted of a series of works on black polyethylene. I had come across this material before, but it was during my participation in this workshop that I began searching for a meaning which I believed was encapsulated within these glossy planes. I then decided to change their essence and go against their nature.

After a number of trials I ended up rubbing sandpaper on the surface of the material on the road. The procedure yielded raised dots resulting from the stones that had been used as an ingredient of the asphalt. The process involved a physical effect, for the harder my intervention was, the more noticeable the contrast of the imprint. Once I had adjusted the representation technique, I started generating a series of images that, at the beginning, did not seem to achieve the effect I had expected. But then I found that these architectural designs unexpectedly connected the nature of the wall with the white dots left where the material had been worn away. One of the strong points in the analysis was the degree of tension this experience intended: representation endowed with a narrative content at a counterpoint with the intervention on the material, thus placing the work half-way between reality and illusion.

After the meetings, having exchanged ideas with Pablo Siquier, Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven and others, I came to the conclusion that this experience starts from a concrete place (in this case, the imprint of the road on the material) and fades into an atmosphere that tries to set itself free and float about without a past. As I see it, this point marks a passage that turns objects into lost patterns. We can then think why it occurred to me to use polyethylene, a material that does not faithfully reflect the imprint, added to a series of architectures that make their appearance in a state of seeming levitation. Throughout the phase of production and analy-

sis we have discussed all the factors that make up a process of construction both in my own work as in that of the other participants in these encounters.

Matías Duville. Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1974. Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships: 1999/96: Studies at Escuela Superior de Artes Visuales Martín Malharro [Higher Institute of Visual Arts], Mar del Plata, Argentina. / Takes classes with Daniel Besoytauroube. / 2002: San Pablo Biennial Scholarship Journey, Fundación Antorchas. / 2001: Fundación Antorchas Scholarship for the Analysis and Production of Works. / 2000: Beca Fondo Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo. [Scholarship by the Contemporary Art International Fund] / 1999: Fundación Antorchas Scholarship for the Analysis and Production of Works. Selected exhibitions: 2002: "Curriculum 0" collective exhibition, Ruth Benzacar Art Gallery, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / "Naturaleza Artificial" [Artificial Nature] exhibition, La casona de los Olivera, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / Exhibition #6 Drangosch/ Duville, at MOTP Contemporary Art, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / "Club del Dibujo" collective exhibition, Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / "Portátiles" [Portables] collective exhibition, Galeria Doppia, Lugano, Switzerland. / "Lectura en la sala de lectura" [Reading in the reading-room] exhibition, Lelé de Troya, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / 2001: collective exhibition "2,3y 4 Mar del Plata, Tandil y Bahía Blanca" Biblioteca Municipal de Tandil. [Tandil Municipal Library] / "Onda y Partícula" [Wave and Particle] exhibition, Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 2000: Collective exhibition "22 Metros" [22 metres], Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 1999: Collective exhibition, Espacio Nave, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / "Big/ Short" exhibition, Villa Victoria Ocampo, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / Salón Nacional del Mar [National Sea Salon], Honourable Mention, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 1998: Exhibition at Mar del Medical Centre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 1997: Salón Municipal de Necochea [Necochea Municipal Salon], 1st Mention, Necochea, Argentina.

Untitled **Agnès Geoffray**

My fields of research are as many as they are dissimilar. In fact, my work seems to be made of a number of tentacles, although the head is the same. Or rather, to be more precise, my work is like a two-headed animal.

The first head feeds on my fascination for exploring human relations together with an individual's capacity to stand out from a given group. I wish to record the various fields where individuals gather. My foremost interest is the relationship individuals engage in, whether by the slant of their mere psychic presence, their discourse, their coexistence in a common space, or their belonging in a given social group. I intentionally bring people together, thus creating fictitious, artificial, forced relationships, where the very purpose of the gathering fades away. On the other hand, I have recently been working with already existing groups, whose social standing has, therefore, been previously defined. Whether or not the groups are pre-existent, I particularly focus on an individual's capacity to emerge from a given group as well as to his lack of capacity to exist outside the relationship established with others. I especially seek this approach in my group photographs. I photograph groups because this type of photography is socially accepted, a fact that makes it immediately identifiable. Group photographs are taken to keep a record of some particular event, or to point to an individual within his/her social role (student, professional, family celebrations, etc.) However, social definition is always absent in my photographs: they are mere juxtapositions of individuals in an undetermined status. By means of a staging, assumed as such or not, I open a space of fiction that introduces microrelationships. The interchange among the protagonists brings forth a latent narrative. This is when the second aspect that makes up my work appears. This is my interest in writing and in the development of fiction. I have always written brief fictional pieces that never really existed as autonomous writings but that I often include in my videos by way of narrative structures. I work on this issue alongside with my activities in the field of the plastic arts. But each time I try harder to make my writings more autonomous and endow them with an existence of their own, raising them to the same

level as my images. I conceive of writing as a very wide field for the imaginary; that's why I am so very interested in it.

Agnès Geoffray. Born in Sant Chamond, France in 1973. Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships:1996:graduates from the Ecole de Beaux Arts at Lyon./ 1997:graduates from Ecole de Beaux Arts in Paris. / 2002: resident at Rijksacademie, Amsterdam./ Purchase of photograph by the French Ministry of Culture, FNAC, Paris, France. / 2001: Support of diffusion, publishing of a catalogue-ENSBA, Paris, France. Selected exhibitions:2003: Lieu Unique, Nantes, France / OK video Festival, Jakarta, Indonesia / Cinéma Le Flaget, Brussels, Belgium. / 2002: Chinese European Art Center, Xiamen, China / Espacio Paul Ricard, Paris, France / Museum of Contemporary Art, Lyon, France / La Périphérie Gallery, Malakoff, France. / 2001: International Encounters Paris- Berlin. / La Friche Belle de Mai, Marseilles, France / Ipso Facto Gallery, Nantes, France / Eof Gallery, Paris, France / William van Zoetendaal Gallery, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. / 1999: Le magazin, Grenoble, France / 1998: Museum of Contemporary Art, Lyon, France / Interface Gallery, Dijon, France / Museum of Contemporary Art, Paris, France. / 1997: La Maison, Douai, Francia

Paintings and paper projects Teresita Olhaberry

I worked on two projects at the same time. The former, based on painting, was expressed in two specific works: a suburban landscape, and La villa, shaped round drawings that I asked from people in the streets, which was an offshoot of the latter project that I developed. In concrete terms, this latter project's first stage consisted in interviewing passers-by and encouraging them to produce drawings on various matters, sometimes by request, others letting them choose at will. The material thus obtained underwent different processes and served different ends. While participating in the workshop, I was able to achieve something I had long wanted; namely, an urban installation. In this particular case, I made the installation within the space outlined by the University streets, with posters in which every person drew a portrait of

himself/herself, wrote what they had wanted to become as children, and their actual profession or occupation as adults. The installation bore no signatures and the posters were glued on during the night so that the next day they could be seen at the University, without any identifiable information. The installation aroused considerable bewilderment; people in general, but mostly students, stopped to gaze at the posters.

Teresita Olhaberry. Born in Ayacucho, Argentina in 1976. Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships: 1998: Etcher at Escuela Superior de Artes Visuales [Higher Institute of Visual Arts] Martin A. Malharro. / Instructor of Visual Arts at Artes Visuales Escuela Superior de Artes Visuales Martin A. Malharro, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 2003/ 2002: Scholarship for the Analysis and Production of Works by Fundación Antorchas, Tandil, Argentina. Selected exhibitions:2001: XXXI Salón Nacional de Arte Sacro, Pintura, [National Salon of Holy Art, Paintings] National Museum of Fine Arts, Tandil, Argentina. / "A caballo" [On horseback], Municipalidad del Partido de Gral. Pueyrredón, Mar del Plata / 2000: LXXXIX National Salon of Plastic Arts, Palais de Glace, Buenos Aires. / "Vida de perro", Victoria Ocampo Cultural Centre, Mar del Plata, Argentina / 1999: "No se ría de la desgracia ajena" [Do not laugh at other people's misfortunes], El Gato Viejo Gallery, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / "Bicho Feo"; silkscreen printing, Paseo de la Imagen II, Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata. / 1998: IV National Sea Salon, 1st Mention for Drawing, Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 1996: First Biennial of Young Art, Mention for Painting, Municipal Museum of Art Arte Juan C. Castagnino, Mar del Plata, Argentina.

Untitled Fabián Ramos

"I was the desert in the desert..."¹ My works are composed of altered landscapes, situations, temporal sceneries, and actions. The images are characterised by the presence of simple objects that have been given a theatrical nature. Organised in a particular way, these objects open up a corridor, a passage between reality and fiction that can be traversed in either way without the objects taking on an ambiguous

appearance or looking as something different from what they really are. Each one of the works is an exploration of space, an observatory. For this project I designed a floating sculpture to be later cast into the sea, like a drifting piece of architecture or just a shape on the horizon. Lined in holographic paper, the piece gave off sparkling colours that appeared and disappeared thanks to the constant movement of the floating medium. Finally, the sea engulfed the sculpture, as it was destined to go out of sight, carried off into incommensurable space on the face of a horizon whose horizontal quality is no more than an illusion.

1. Hyacinthe, cited in BACHELARD, Gaston [1957]. La Poética del Espacio. 2ª reimpr. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1991. 281 p.

Fabián Ramos. Born in Tucumán, Argentina, in 1968. Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships: Completes the 4th year at the School of Architecture. At present, he is advanced student at the Licentiate Course of Visual Arts, National University of Tucumán. / 2002: Trama Scholarship for the Art Research Production and Creation Context, Argentina. / 2001: Scholarship by Fundación Antorchas. Encounters for the Analysis and Production of Works. / 1998: Scholarship by Fundación Antorchas. Encounters for the Analysis and Production of Works. Together with Mariana Ferrari, he coordinated "La Perla" Espacio de Arte ["The Pearl" Art Space], where activities and exhibitions of various fields of art were held. Selected exhibitions:2004: Chosen for the Cultural Chandon, Córdoba, Argentina. / Collective exhibition at Espacio Centro Gallery, Córdoba. / ARTEBA 2004, participa tes in Re- collection at MALBA, Argentina. / 2003: ARTEBA2003, New Expressions Section, MOP Gallery, Contemporary Art, Argentina. / Collective exhibition at "Faro de Oriente", DF, Mexico. / Collective exhibition at the Provincial Museum of Fine Arts, Tucumán, Argentina. / 2002: "Paisajes privados, prisiones colectivas" [Private landscapes, collective prisons], Ruth Benzacar Art Gallery, Buenos Aires. / "Colectivos y Asociados" [Collectives and Associates], Casa de las Américas, Madrid, Spain. / 2001: "Aportes de la Crítica para un nuevo coleccionismo" [Critical contributions towards a new type of collectionism], curatorship by Eva Grinstein, Praxis Gallery, Buenos Aires. / "Souvenirs de Tucumán" [Souvenirs from Tucumán], Los Angeles Museum of Latin American Art, an itinerant exhibition shown at various cities in the United States of America.

Untitled Juan José Souto

A series of dissections in living spaces (blocks of flats, offices, duplexes, etc., etc.).
Examples:
1-To extract a piece that is both a part of the ceiling of one room and of the floor of the room above.
2-To extract a piece that makes up the intersection of two apartments by making a horizontal cut of 1 metre wide by 2 metres high, leaving 30 cms of the floor slab that divides both flats in the central part of the perimeter that was horizontally cut.
"An action carried out on October 8 at Alvarado and Guemes Streets in the city of Mar del Plata. A house that was to be pulled down in 6 hours'-time. It was done by 6 people who made use of electric machinery for cutting concrete, ropes, a stone hammer and a cold chisel. A photographic mechanism was used, thus obtaining a cutout from reality (framing in- cutting out). below: a room in a house; the ground
The action: to cut out a fragment of the ceiling-floor plane, the limit between the space called sky and the space called earth"

Juan Souto. Born in Mar de Ajo, Argentina, in 1980. Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships: 2002: Scholarship by Fundación Antorchas. Encounters for the Analysis and Production of Works in Tandil, Argentina. Selected exhibitions:2003:"Diario La Capital" Salon, Álvaro Castagnino Museum, Rosario, Argentina. / "Contemporánea" [Contemporary], collective exhibition at the Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 2001: Interventions on beaches in the region. / 1999: Exhibits Installation entitled "Mar del Plata no duerme" [Mar del Plata does not sleep], Mar del Plata, Argentina.

Intonation - Signification Inés Szigety

Ever since I started my research into videos and photographs, the notion of subtraction has been the guide to my search. Aiming at destroying the linear time and the referential nature of a text, I

generate certain mechanisms meant to corrupt them. The work communicates from what it lacks. I mean to cancel, corrupt and suspend the meaning of text. In a wider sense, I reflect upon the words' sense of belonging.

For this project, I specifically wanted to work on the meanings contributed by the reader from the comprehensive reading of a text and the destruction of sense emerging from a fragmented reading. While an integrative edition will enable a comprehensive perception of the texts, it is my wish that they should not be perceived as complete.

The reader reading the dissociated text will perceive it in a certain way, but when this same reader rereads the text as a unit, he/she will draw a different conclusion. What has made him change his conclusion if he has read exactly the same narration on both occasions?

My objective is to generate a suspension in the sense of the text even when this is already complete. The limitation would be due to a lack of signification at the moment of reading.

Signification vanishes from the moment when values representing words are dissociated in their independence, thus making way for materials that are not articulated by thought and whose links cannot be referred to those of discourse.

There is a special mechanics that rules concordance, regimes, inflexions, syllables and sounds, and no representative value can account for such mechanics.

In previous works, I destroyed the narration myself. I myself divided it depending on the categories at stake: connectors, verbs, nouns, gaps. Now the text is offered as a whole, but just in appearance. Subjectivity and interpretation are missing from the picture.

It is up to the spectator to realize that something odd has happened, that something has been removed from some of those texts: something is not there; something has not been understood, thus laying emphasis on the fact that a language is used insofar as it is unders-

stood, or that a text acquires meaning if it is assimilated and understood. I wish to make it clear that words are alive insofar as they signify. A complete text may mean nothing unless it has been understood or sensed.

Texts communicate different things, even when we are talking about one and the same text, because they stemmed from different consciousnesses. Language can communicate from a number of places: in this case, words will communicate from intonation and the reader's commitment.

I am interested in the absence of sense in texts. In poem-discourse I work from reading's lack of meaning. I also break cohesion and coherence in previously disarranged texts. On the other hand, in blank words I generate various formal games as from the moment of edition. These games distort and interrupt the narratives of the four characters involved.

Inés Szigety. Born in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1967
Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships: 2004: Visual Arts Scholarship for artists from the interior granted by Fondo Nacional de las Artes. / 2003-05: Workshop Programme for the Visual Arts Ricardo Rojas Cultural Centre- UBAV/ Kuitca. / 2002-01: Fundación Antorchas Scholarship for the Analysis and Production of Works, aimed at artists from Tandil and surrounding areas.
Selected exhibitions: 2003: National Salon of Visual Arts, New Mountings and Installation, mention. / Venus Biennial, Category: video art, Panel's mention, Casa Chango, Tandil, Argentina. / 2002: MAMBA Award, Arts and new technologies, experimental video, honourable mention, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Untitled **Mariano Ullua**

A part of my work is related to the bond existing between image and writing. For this specific project, my starting points were maps from which I transcribed, in longhand, the names of cities in different parts of the world. My interest in these kind of diagrammatic manifestations of reality is due to the overall vision that

these images present us with. We strive to decode these images, in which we try to recognise and identify signals, hints. Our knowledge (the knowledge we may have of world topography) struggles with our perception and, in a way, quoting Roland Barthes, this is what intelligence amounts to: to reconstruct, to make memory and sensation cooperate to produce a semblance of the world inside our minds. It is this very continuum that commits the mind to a certain degree of struggle: it wants to be decoded, and it is necessary to rediscover the signs inside it. This work has been printed in book format in order to reinforce the idea of a continuum.

Mariano Ullua. Born in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1976
Studies / Professional Training / Scholarships: 2002/3: Attends visual artist Jorge Macchi's workshop / 1996- 1997: becomes a student at Centro de Investigación Literaria de Mar del Plata [Mar del Plata Centre of Literary Research] run by Daniel Boggio. / 2001: Scholarship by Fondo Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo [Contemporary Art International Fund] and Fundación Antorchas for encounters for the production and analysis of works.
Selected exhibitions: 2004: "Como alguien que aprovecha la confusión para cometer un asesinato, así es como puede comportarse un falso recuerdo" [Just as somebody takes advantage of confusion to commit a murder, this is the way in which a false memory can operate], Alberto Sendros Gallery, Buenos Aires, Argentina. / "Club del Dibujo 2", Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 2003: "Contemporánea" [Contemporary], Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / National Biennial of Contemporary Art, Bahía Blanca, Argentina. / "Poema Panorámico" [Panoramic Poem], Baltar Contemporáneo, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / 2002: "Club del Dibujo", Auditorium Theatre, Mar del Plata, Argentina. / "Club del Dibujo", Rosario, Argentina.

TRAMA

The Others, there and at home

Bettina Prezioso

For 11 months, Mar del Plata has 600,000 inhabitants, a number that rises to about 3 million in January. During practically the whole year, there is little or no cultural activity; suddenly, for a month, there is an outburst of artistic and cultural proposals of various degrees of quality, in some cases, even impossible to classify. In the first month of the year it teems with shops and meeting places; then, it is full of empty stores. November, the month of the eve-season, announces great policy and management plans; all calculations and ambitions aim at the most fleeting success a holiday resort may aspire to; after the International Film Festival held in March, there are positions that have been vacated of all cultural interests. By the end of January (perhaps February, if the weather keeps too hot, though this is rarely the case) we witness the relentless autumn of our sham ingenuousness: we are left to our own devices, all activity is restricted to two or three commercial streets, and our culture sets out towards its true routine.

Supposing that, for a brief moment, we hearkened to Sebrelli's thought expressed 30 years ago, we might be led to believe that Mar del Plata is constituted as a city whose identity and idiosyncrasy hesitate on the edge of lacuna either; the tourist throng leaves us owning nothing, adopting the customs that the people from Buenos Aires have tyrannically imprinted on us along so many years, these customs that survive fashion and that we have made our own and scaled down to our own size.

Without declaring that this is exclusive of our city, and feeling fully aware that the whole country moves around the capital city, I think that to us, artists from Mar del Plata, the influence from the capital is much more “sovereign” than the one exerted in other areas of the interior that have known or have managed to preserve some of their own customs. This may be due to the fact that they lie farther away, or perhaps as they are visited by fewer strangers, they have had the time and the concentration to look into their inner selves. It is also possible that they have been more rebellious, or that they have not learnt so well as we have the servile tradition of pleasing and working for the happiness of the outsider, that outsider that we have allowed to impose on us and turn us into aliens in our home.

Striving for autochthonous art, an art typical of Mar del Plata, is not the solution to the problem, for then we would be encouraging definitions like the ones posed by Argentine cinema or Argentine rock. (We still do not understand very clearly why our country insists on stressing the names of the inhabitants of a country or region rather than the quality of our art which, after all, is what is at stake). I am talking about such art production as may transcend and acquire visibility without necessarily having to be addressed at Buenos Aires. Every year, the Escuela de Artes Visuales [School of Visual Arts] releases dozens of graduates. Plastic Arts, a subject taught in schools, is their only way of making a living. If they create their own works of art...they will have to be happy to show them to their friends, or else invest thousands of pesos in trips to Buenos Aires in the hope that somebody may see what they are doing and offer them some possible projection.

When two artists from Mar del Plata meet, they will invariably ask each other: “Are you travelling? Who are you seeing?”. The destination

implied is Buenos Aires, and the ‘who’ is the tutor with whom the artist must be working if he/she is in fact travelling. In the view of artists from the interior, the tutor figure is much more important than that of the master chosen to underpin their work, for it is the former who is expected to explain and sometimes sponsor our attempts at insertion in the real milieu of visual arts.

In spite of everything, and thanks to management that does not always originate in the city, every now and then something happens that pulls us out of our melancholy: clinics offered by Fundación Antorchas and TRAMA’s workshop, always co-managed with organisers from Mar del Plata have been examples of the valuable opportunities when we have been able to work in our own place. Even so, after a few months, when these experiences come to an end, the good will of resident artists that have collaborated in the organisation is exhausted. Indeed, they want to go back to work on their own plans, everything becomes atomised once again, and the only way to continue with the experience is there. The brilliance and the richness of those few months filled with reflection, analysis, and production, tutors that do their best to encourage us to defeat dependence are gone. And so we go back to travelling and to becoming the others.

It is true that we have also had good artist initiatives that grew from the inside and nailed their flag in Mar del Plata: el Fondo, Baltar, Motp, Drangosch Art Dealer, Doro Experimenta, all of them driven by local artists. Paradoxically, perhaps this is where our weakness lies: the lack of galleries and spaces run by people whose work and savoir faire specialise in carrying out the production of competitions, exhibitions, and meetings; the lack of managers, critics and curators who are at once specialised in and independent of the artist’s craft; the lack of collaboration from others, which results in the fact that

the artist-brain of the initiative will not have the time to do his/her own work because he/she must take care of the project single-handed; a certain amount of competitiveness (for we know that, sooner or later, we will have to reach Buenos Aires and there is a limited number of places); the overestimation of everything that comes from some other place in detriment to local production; the experience of poor management of the few public spaces allotted to art; and the lack of the necessary funding to achieve a really feasible proposal leave these artists-managers out in the cold, accompanied by all those who express a wish for it “to work this time”.

The dynamics of the throngs of visitors that come to Mar del Plata every summer goes beyond a tourist phenomenon. It also settles down in the “fireworks” of the season’s eve and in the beginning of cultural initiatives and projects that then fade away, causing artists’ quality and diversity to turn into disappointment and violation, forcing them to emigrate and to become strangers for a time as they bring their freshness, novelties, and “exoticism” to the capital city.

Perhaps the apathy that ensues brief spells of enthusiasm is due to our awareness of the uselessness of a mature exhibition circuit. The same feeling of uselessness might apply to the press, institutional support, and art consumption in our environment; to the non-existence of public exhibition spaces open to wider audiences that might be interested in such a circuit, and all of this because, deep down, we know that only our colleagues consume our products: a visual kind of consumption. Thus, in a city where art production is as abundant as it is solid, we, the makers, in critical solitude, hesitate between resistance through the creation of our own spaces as a means to lead the way to emancipation –a vital factor for us- and the road that will eventually insert our work in an alien market at the permanent cost of squandering our autonomy.

Notes

1. Mar del Plata city is located 400 km away from the capital of the country, on the Southern coast of the Province of Buenos Aires. Historically, it has always been the country’s most important holiday resort, and earning the name of “The Happy City” in the heyday of trade union tourism. Shortly after its foundation, Mar del Plata was the favourite seaside resort of the upper classes living in the capital, who thought of this place as a local substitute for Biarritz or Bristol. Later on it became the seat of social tourism, as a consequence of the expropriation and nationalisation of the land and manor houses of the rich, added to the fostering of tourism among the middle and working class through the trade unions and social welfare plans. On account of the short distance between Buenos Aires and Mar del Plata, the latter frequently hosts conferences and festivals, thus importing people and culture from other areas of the country or of the world.
2. Sebrelli, Juan José. Mar del Plata. *El ocio represivo*. ED. Tiempo Contemporáneo, Buenos Aires, 1970.
3. In Argentina, young artists tend to pay for private tuition at the workshops of locally and/or internationally well-known artists so as to complete the training process they have started in state-run institutions or through self-teaching. On many occasions they are able to carry out this initiative thanks to grants provided by Fondo Nacional de las Artes and Fundación Antorchas.
4. Among others, this refers to Fondo Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo de Mar del Plata, see p. 11 in this volume.

Bettina Prezioso

Artist and photographer born in Mar del Plata, where she has trained, works and lives. She attended art courses at Escuela Superior de Artes Visuales Martín A. Malharro and literature at Mar del Plata National University. As a young artist, she has participated in two Production and Work Analysis Encounters held in Mar del Plata and in the neighbouring city of Tandil between 2001 and 2003.

Workshop for the research in cultural management for artists II

Proposals that posited the artist's ethical and political commitment together with his social responsibility have long been disregarded. Now reality again points to the crisis involved in a mode of art production legitimised by the institutions, while it addresses us in an attempt to redefine the functions and objectives of art in an order that is cracking apart.

In a context of profound social mobilisations, where new ways of survival and organisation arise, there step up artistic practices that are alien to what traditionally goes by the name of art, and artists take part in new activist proposals involved in debates where the current conditions are discussed. This gives rise to unavoidable analogies and connections leading back to the 60s. (1)

To recreate ways of being inside and ways of being outside; to try new ways of "doing", or "showing", or "calling" or "lodging". Perhaps in our days to seek new spaces and modes of relating to others is the political in art. (2)

If an artist were deprived of the possibility of dealing with the conditioning imposed upon him by

Notes

1. Graciela Carnevale, *Reflexiones*, 2003
2. Graciela Carnevale, *Reflexiones*, 2005
3. "¿Guerilla cultural?" / Julio Le Parc, marzo 1968. Abstracted from *de Manifiestos argentinos. Políticas de lo visual 1900-2000*, Critical edition by Rafael Cipollini, Adriana Hidalgo ed.
4. "Desmistificar el arte" / Julio Le Parc, August 1968. Abstracted from *de Manifiestos argentinos. Políticas de lo visual 1900-2000*, Critical edition by Rafael Cipollini, Adriana Hidalgo ed.

the art milieu, deprived of the possibility to question all established values regarding art, deprived of the possibility of struggling, even within a modest scope, with the tentacles that the social system stretches into the world of art, without the possibility of creating a true bond with social problems, the artist's attitude would be nothing but mere unconditional or unconscious support of the system, or else be reduced to individualistic activity under the pretence of neutrality. (3)

Nowadays, the need to view the artist's role in society has become much more apparent. It is necessary to grow in lucidity and multiply initiatives from the difficult position of one who, immersed in a given social situation, and aware of his commitment to it, tries to make the best of the possibilities available to him, so as to produce changes through them. (4)

Introduction

Between November 18 and November 25, 2003, Trama's second Cultural Management Research Workshop for artists' initiatives was held in Buenos Aires.

Twelve artists related to various initiatives at home and abroad participated in this meeting: Diego Trejo and Karol Zingali, from Apeiron Zool, and Casa 13, represented by Beatriz Scolamieri, both from Córdoba; Mauro Machado, artist, manager and founder of El Levante together with Graciela Carnevale, from Rosario; Jorge Gutiérrez, director of La Baulera, Centre of Contemporary Art, San Miguel de Tucumán; Amadeo Azar, artist, curator, and one of the creators of MOTP, Mar del Plata; Sebastián Codeseira and Gema Acevedo, on behalf of Proyecto Venus, Start Foundation, Buenos Aires; Julia Masvernat and Dina Roisman, managers of Terraza, Buenos Aires; TPS, [Taller Popular de Serigrafía], Buenos Aires; and Cristian Segura, former director of Tandil Museum of

Fine Arts and present curator and manager of several independent projects also in the city of Tandil.

The workshop consisted of an intensive eight-day meeting during which participants exchanged information about their respective initiatives and organizations, compared results and strategies, and exercised hypotheses of joint undertakings. The participants' work was guided by the intervention of three special guests.

Art historian Roberto Amigo⁽¹⁾ delivered an introductory speech about the problems involving artists' initiatives in Argentina. He also acted as moderator in the discussions and debates held by the participants in the ensuing days.

Fernando Frydman⁽²⁾ and Gertrude Flentge⁽³⁾, experts in cultural management, fundraising and project presentation, offered talks and exercises specifically aimed at problems confronting the role of an artist-manager.

A variety of topics were discussed throughout the workshop, as the participants presented their works, projects, and organisational strategies. One of the most immediate aspects that surfaced during the debates was that these organizations delved into the ethics of their operational possibilities. This issue stood out as a constant question for every one of the undertakings discussed.

Matters concerning artists' management, the dematerialization of the art system and the critical questioning of the art system were approached by these organisations from this standpoint.

Artists' initiatives were discussed as a way of rethinking a model of cultural distribution. The organisation network was discussed as a net of contention for the new discourses springing from art. Insofar as artistic experience proves to be a suitable tool for the construction of people's own narratives and discourses, its potential as an educational model was also considered.

Finally, a discussion was held about the desirable connection between projects and initiatives, and possible structures were proposed so that these connections could be implemented.

We proceeded to release information about the work carried out by the organisations and artist-managers that participated in the workshop along with two frametexts: on the one hand, Roberto Amigo's presentation, in which he proposed some of the already mentioned guidelines for the debates; on the other hand, and as a complement to the historical and theoretical framework by Amigo, an analytical text authored by Gertrude Flentge as a closure to her participation in this encounter. From an empirical stance, her text deals with the different managerial problems with which artists' initiatives are usually faced.

The guidelines suggested by Fernando Frydman at the workshop can be read in Cuaderno Práctico Trama 1. Pautas de presentación y financiamiento para proyectos de artistas⁽⁵⁾.

Notes

1. Roberto Amigo is an art historian and a Licentiate of Arts graduated from Buenos Aires National University. He also lectures at University and has written numerous essays about 19th Century Argentine art.
2. Fernando Frydman is a member of the Compromiso Foundation, lectures on Fundraising at the School of Cultural Management at University of San Martín, and acts as a consultant to several cultural institutions in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
3. Gertrude Flentge worked as project manager and net co-ordinator for various cultural organizations (Edinburgh Festival, Vereniging voor Internationale Culturele Betrekkingen (Dutch association for the promotion of international cultural relations) and the Felix Meritis Foundation/European Centre for the arts and sciences in Amsterdam. Between 2000 and 2004 she co-ordinated RAIN, a network of artists' initiatives in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.
4. For this edition we asked the participants material updated as of 2004, in order to reflect how these projects developed after the workshop. The material presented by the participants in 2003 can be read at <http://www.proyectedtrama.org/00/2000-2002/index.html>
5. See also: <http://proyectedtrama.org/00/EDICIONES/CUADERNO-uno/home.htm>

Apeiron Zool

Apeiron is a word of Greek origin. It can be equated to infinite space, as a precedent of the notion of vacuum developed by Atomists and of the concept of receptacle by Plato.

Apeiron Zool is an organisation that aims at fostering the construction of meanings through art and culture, at articulating the experiential dimension in alternative art proposals, and at generating growth opportunities for artists who reside in the city of Cordoba and work on new blends expressed in an artistic language.

The organisational and administrative models followed by our organisation correspond with an NGO working model.

As artists and makers, and from our experience in the city of Cordoba, we noticed that our production and professional growth lacked projection opportunities. Looking into this context, we identified the following items:

- Poor citizen participation in alternative art proposals.
- A shortage of infrastructure and economic resources to go ahead with our art activities. A lack of planned, coherent policies on the part of both the provincial and the municipal governments.
- That is academically bound and hypercritical (oscillating between tradition and rebelliousness)
- A lack of strategies to seek resources in the alternative cultural sector.
- A split between the experiential dimension (social-concept environment) in the relations established between audiences and the various artistic and cultural proposals.

In 1999 we created Apeiron Zool, an organisation composed of visual artists, actors, and film makers with a view to contribute a solution to the said difficulties. This space developed the following programmes:

Phase 1: International Season of theatre and music. Editions 2000 / 2001 (a project designed

as a strategy to seek for genuine resources).

Apeiron Visual: A space for the implementation and promotion of visual arts, movies and video events. Editions. 99-00-01-02.

La Nave Theatre: A space for the production, staging and promotion of local and national shows (this programme is subsidised by the National Institute of Theatrical Arts). Editions. 99-00-01-02.

Apeiron Musical: A space for the staging and production of musical shows. Editions: 99-00-01-02.

Training: National and international workshops and seminars on Visual Arts, Theatrical Arts, and music. Editions: 99-00-01-02.

Living -bar: This was a space for interaction which acted as a link between spectators, artists, and projects. It hosted projections, small format music presentations, and performances. (It was also a strategy to generate resources.)

This stage finished in 2001.

With the purpose of improving our managerial tasks and finding new tools, the directors of Apeiron Zool trained in the following areas: Karol Zingali took up a post-graduate course in NGOs Management specialisation at UCC. Diego Trejo is currently a student at the Art and Management School at UNTREF.

Project 2005

La Dote [The Dowry] < Symbolic Investment Fund > , < Auction Centre >

Symbolic Investment Fund is an Art and Culture Management project addressed to genuine fund generation through the creation of an innovative investment model.

Auction Centres an offshoot of the investment fund and was designed to generate the circulation and sale of tangible cultural goods (painting-sculpture -photography- installations-objects -concerts -shows), both by young artists as by those with a major career in the city of Cordoba.

La Dote will be carried out by a Joint

Management team composed by La Luna, Theatre and society (19 years of existence), Casa 13, art and communication (10 years of existence / Argentine Critics Award to the Best Gallery of the Year, 2003). Apeiron Zool, art and culture management (five years of existence).

This joint management team acknowledges that the implementation of its programmes, continuity, growth, and contribution to the social sphere will entail positive changes as from the fulfillment of this project.

Casa 13

Casa 13 was established in 1993 as something necessary within the physical space provided by Escuela de Bellas Artes de Córdoba [Córdoba School of Fine Arts]. It went by the name of "Centre of Communication and Production-ARTE", worked as a seminar/workshop, and broached the study of new languages and aspects related to production as well as with what is nowadays known as management. The following year we "took over" one of the Houses belonging to the cultural complex "Paseo de las Artes", under Córdoba Town Hall's authorities. The house happened to be # 13. The profile of this House has been changing, feeding back on Córdoba's cultural scenario. Today it is place where experiences CROSS OVER and where art-related problems serve as a starting point for building up new social, political, and cultural senses.

This independent art space has prevailed in Córdoba for 12 years, becoming one of the places with a richer history. Our unyielding purpose to adapt institutions to life and to the wishes of those of us who dwell in a city has placed in a position from which we never cease our resistance and criticism, for we are bent on rescuing and creating new forms. Along these lines, the house is a model "house": it has a kitchen, a lounge, a living-room that serves sev-

eral uses, a bathroom, a small study, and even a yard with plant pots. For nearly 12 years now we have been holding our exhibitions (approximately 80), seminars, clinics, and some other events generally featuring young artists. We have recently been acknowledged as Gallery of the Year by the Asociación Argentina de Críticos de Arte [Argentine Association of Art Critics]. Ours is a place devoted to experimentation, growth and development and, more particularly, a place for encounters.

Ever since the beginning of 2002 we have hosted various projects authored by groups of Córdoba artists who, for some reason or other, lack a space of their own to carry them out. No institution, whether public or private, has ever aided Casa 13 through subsidies, scholarships, or some other kind of support.

Early this year we started TRECE, our first radio programme. Thus we have enlarged our family, while we continue to build up this endless net of people who are gradually losing their anonymity. The programme is broadcast every Monday from 9p.m. to 11p.m. on 94.3 FM at Universidad Tecnológica Nacional. Artists from other provinces visit us every year. They come to exhibit their works and to share their ideas with artists in our city. The house as such is the place where they live on these occasions. Exhibitions always open on Sundays. We always have special guests (artists, photographers, writers, people related to the theatre and to the cinema...) and there is also a selection of music. For the closing ceremony, we stage an encounter among the particular artist exhibiting his/her works, a guest artist, and the general public, so as to discuss the works exhibited and generate new paths to be walked, more hopeful of the journey than of the final destination. This project is articulated with the Research Department at Facultad de Filosofía y Humanidades de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba [School of Philosophy and Human Sciences, Córdoba National University] in the annual conferences organised by the said

Department, in which Casa 13 participates through special activities. Transversal links help us establish connections with other spaces in this city and in others with which we share and upgrade ideas.

The ideological corpus of Casa 13 is built on a daily basis by the hundreds of people who come our way and who somehow get involved with its ideals.

Belkis Scolameri and Aníbal Buede (directors), Córdoba, 2004.

Taller El Levante

In recent times, young creators from Rosario seek to complete their training out of the city along the lines of plans each of them devise by themselves. This tends to result in partial, haphazard achievements deriving in emotional and financial costs that, to many of them, act as a limitation to their potential.

El Levante Workshop has been established in order to provide a suitable response to the increasing demand posed by young artists - whether or not they have graduated from art schools- for a training and exchange forum starting from individual production.

In the first place, this workshop seeks to consolidate a training space while it acts as a link and exchange among independent artists' organizations both at home and abroad, emphasising transversal communication bonds within the inner areas as well as connections between the country and its neighbours in the region.

In the second place, we also aspire to contribute to the enlargement and consolidation of a more mature, dynamic and complex cultural environment in Rosario, to extend it later to the rest of the country. Whereas this goal perhaps goes beyond the workshop's exclusive responsibility, we feel bound to make our contribution through a series of activities "open"

to the whole of the artistic community. The series of activities is co-ordinated by Graciela Carnevale and Mauro Machado* and has the support of Secretaría de Cultura de la Municipalidad de Rosario [Secretariat of Culture of Rosario' Town Hall], el Centro Cultural Parque de España [Park of Spain Cultural Centre] and Fundación Antorchas [Antorchas Foundation].

In order to fulfill the first purpose mentioned, we have set up a workshop structured on the basis of fortnightly encounters: each month, the first encounter will welcome a guest artist of national reputation, while the second encounter will be held with local people, who will ensure follow-up continuity of the individual processes for participants in the workshop. In this way, there will be opportunity to hold meetings and exchanges among creators with different background experiences and trajectories so that the different voices and views may encourage other ways of thinking and expanding the boundaries of the field of art. Basically, the work is done through the production of the members, broaching such production from different viewpoints or approaches, analysing their technical, formal, and conceptual aspects and therefore building up the largest possible number of relations, not only from and towards the artistic field, but also from and towards other disciplines so as to perceive connections that are sometimes very straightforward, but that could also appear in a random fashion, building "oblique" points of view.

We also intend to make room for individual real life experiences and circumstances, emotional relations and histories, as we are persuaded that an undertaking with a clearly visible subjective nature is preferable to one that appears as "objective" and impregnable to human actions and desires.

In addition to the monthly work agenda mentioned above, Centro Cultural Parque de

España fosters visits to the Workshop by foreign leading personalities in the fields of art and culture.

All activities are held at the lecture hall in Centro Cultural del Parque de España, located on the banks of the Paraná river, and at El Levante workshop, in the Pichincha district which, in other times, used to house Rosario's brothels. The emblematic revival of this area encourages encounters and developments of cultural activities stemming from different backgrounds and lacking a shared history.

The second, longer-term goal, will be implemented to secure experience in the following fields (these items are mentioned by way of example, and are not mutually exclusive): organisation of discussion meetings, seminars on artistic practice and education, building-up of an Internet site for discussion, work, and interchange, montage of an intranet including a library, an experience area, etc. It is this programme's most sincere wish to be able to build up, by means of the proposed work and exchange plan, an alternative training space where artists from our region can multiply their possibilities of action and where the problems pertaining to art may be articulated with the social and political circumstances that single us out from other places.

* At the moment also take part in the initiative with different responsibilities, Lorena Cardona, Luján Castellani y María Spinelli.

La Baulera, Centro de Arte Contemporáneo

La Baulera, an independent production, training and artistic management organisation is a non-profit Civil Association whose juridical status was granted by Resolution # 626/02-DPJ on 12/26/02. It is governed by a chairman, a

secretary, and a treasurer besides a Governing Board comprising nine members (deputies included). In addition, this Civil Association has over fifty subscribers.

This Contemporary Art Center was created by the civil association, which carries out production, training and cultural management activities aimed at independent artists and at the community at large. All these activities take place at La Baulera's premises, located at 1462 General Paz, City of San Miguel de Tucumán. La Baulera Contemporary Art Centre depends on a small structure (some furniture, 2 [two] computers, a slide projector, and a library containing books on art and aesthetics) but, to date, lacks regular economic resources of its own. Although members contribute a fee, the place functions chiefly thanks to the time and work volunteered by its people, who carry out different tasks and procedures related to the projects being developed. However, it has recently been awarded two subsidies, one of \$300 (300 Argentine pesos) a month granted by the Caja Nacional de Ahorro y Seguro and destined to paying the rent of our premises, and another of \$15,000 (Fifteen thousand Argentine pesos), to be received in instalments* from Instituto Nacional de Teatro in order to purchase equipment for our exhibition.

La Baulera Civil Association has started taking the necessary steps before the municipal authorities concerned to undertake the creation of a Cultural Complex on the site that used to house the former Mercado de Abasto of the City of San Miguel de Tucumán. The project includes a mini-Commercial and Civic Centre and a Contemporary Art Centre, through which we intend to generate a space for cultural exchange that will foster the development of the competencies required for the actual practice of individual creativity as well as an awareness of communal responsibility, for we believe that both art and solidarity are

unmistakable signs of social intelligence. The previous paragraph is in agreement with the general objectives of Complejo Cultural "El Abasto", a work we have broached this year and which has already been officially submitted to the Municipalidad [Town Hall] of San Miguel de Tucumán (Dossier # 863/260). Through this project, La Baulera intends to define aspects pertaining to the design of architectural and city-planning spaces; funding and management; cultural tourism; museum capacity; management of exhibition halls; publication of magazines containing informative, analytical and study articles; research and archives; educational programs devised for schools, and enlightenment of spectators. All of these issues are related to the wider field of cultural management that we strive to enlarge at Complejo Cultural "El Abasto", though we have already been developing it at our present headquarters.

La Baulera aspires to improve its knowledge, enrich its strategies, and update practices of cultural management which, in our province, are still performed following outdated modes that focus only on the production of entertainment while they ignore the economic impact brought about by the decision of stimulating production, distribution, and consumption of cultural products.

MOTP

MOTP is an independent management space established by three visual artists in 2001. Its chief objective is to exhibit the latest trends in Argentine contemporary art, specially those of the area and of the rest of the country. This is the reason why we have designed and built a place where no constraints hinder the use of the space destined to exhibitions, so the artists may experiment with materials and montage forms which they are not allowed to exercise in other institutional places of the city, at the

same time as they enjoy the opportunity of putting their projects in practice without physical conditions interfering with their work. We cannot but draw attention to the fact that Mar del Plata lacks a museum or exhibition space with these characteristics; neither does it have any space seeking to promote the work of young creators by placing it within the people's reach. All of the above widens the gap between the society and the artists, particularly when the latter resort to contemporary languages as their means of expression. Practically at the same time as we were creating this exhibition space, we felt it was necessary to foster contact among creators from different parts of the country, thus generating spaces for exchange and debate. Many are the occasions when this offers the opportunity to propose solutions to problems shared by artists in different regions. On the other hand, the mere fact of getting to know one another encourages them to carry out joint projects.

It is within this framework that MOTP comes to life. Three years later, we have opened 26 exhibitions with the participation of about 70 visual artists from all over the country, including an exhibition by Chilean artists from the Caja Negra group. Among others, we should mention Roxana Fuertes, Daniel Joglar, Daniel Ontiveros, Carlos Trilnick, Silvia Rivas, Magdalena Jitrik, Fabián Burgos, Fabio Kacero, Eduardo Capilla, Jorge Gumier Maier, Matias Duville, Sergio Avello, Grupo el Levante de Rosario, Mauro Machado, Juan Sorrentino, Mario Gemin, Dolores Esteves, Raúl La Cava, Ana Gallardo, Margarita García Faure, Silvana Lacarra, Andrés Denegri, Ines Raiteri, Ines Szigety, Juan Lecuona, Leticia el Halli Obeid, Gabriela Golder, Analia Salazar, Valeria Gopar, and Andrés Sobrino. We also made two editions of electronic experimental music and held seminars with prominent artists.

In 2002/03/04 MOTP participated in Arte Ba and Expotrastienda, which meant a most interesting

opening for both the space and the artists involved. Our selection included only artists from the interior of the country who, for the first time, had the opportunity of selling their work and exhibiting it to critics and curators. Besides enabling us to make the project massively known in Buenos Aires, this worked as a basis of support of the place, thus helping it to generate the necessary means to afford overheads for a whole year, which we had initially been paying out of our own pockets.

Thanks to donations from institutions, foundations, art galleries, artists, and critics we created a small book and contemporary art catalogue reference library. This was and is open to the community so that new generations of artists may have access to the kind of material that would otherwise be very difficult to obtain in this city, for not even the School of Visual Arts has something like this. In this way, we are also striving for MOTP to become a meeting point for different generations of artists to converge. The projects to be carried out are clearly related to the fact that the space needs to grow, that we need to be able to take artists from Mar del Plata to other central cities of the country, that we have to go on experimenting on our curatorial undertakings and generate new collectors in the city so the artists may continue working for the space to reach self-funding in this way.

No doubt MOTP arose from the shared need to possess an appropriate space, and was in fact the answer provided by artists to the 2001 political and social conjunctural, taking charge of a space that should naturally have been taken over by institutions. As this was not the case, MOTP generated the necessary means to show the production of young artists.

Proyecto Venus

Proyecto Venus is an advanced experience in the field of technoculture. Using basic digital

technologies, it articulates the virtual community with spaces of personal encounter through what we have named "technology of friendship".

PV is a world of desires that can be fulfilled by means of interchange and co-operation; a micro-society in a network of artists from different fields together with non-artists (professionals, technicians, intellectuals, etc) mainly oriented to artistic and cultural production and communication.

PV has its own currency: the venus. Transactions are carried out through either donations or the venus currency, which not only stands for a unit of measurement and a device for interaction but also accounts for an ethical device.

PV started in 2001 Placidis Domingos [Placid Sundays], during which experts in the social sciences, literature, philosophy and history held 13 meetings where the overall bases for the proposal were established.

Early in 2002 the first members signed in, the venus currency was issued (at present there is a circulation of 13,000 venuses) and the web site became active.

PV comprises 500 members (many of whom belong to groups and spaces managed by artists) who exchange products, information, and services for the sake of collective creation and collaboration. Most of its members reside in Argentina, but there are also Venusians in other countries.

Among many other participants of Proyecto Venus there are members of Suscripción, M777, Belleza y Felicidad, Whats'Up Buenos Aires, Sonoridad Amarilla, Qué Out, Oligatega Numeric, Ahora!, Enano Dorado, Ruda Macho, Klemm, Baccarat, Plebella, Zapatos Rojos, El asunto, Orquesta de Salón, Tokonoma, Divos y Divas, Suavestar, Strauch Pereyra, Chico Forever, Juliana Periodista, Sin Nombre, Puty Club, Pedro y Jacqui Green, Gray, Éxito, Ansel, Semen Up, Eloisa Cartonera, Ramona. In this sense, Proyecto Venus acts as network among various other networks.

Site www.proyectovenus.org (15-20,000 monthly visitors) is the uninterrupted bond among members, where they publish their offers, requests, news, and information on events, all of these directly entered by members through their own password.

A co-ordinator keeps the site dynamic by including material from other sources in addition to a weekly bulletin (900 subscribers) that highlights relevant information. Two hundred events, attended by 10000 spectators, were organised in Buenos Aires City and in the rest of the country within the PV framework. Among others, we should mention fairs of works and products at El Argentino, Belleza y Felicidad, Start; Photocopy Festival at Proa; a debate on Arte Rosa Light y Arte Rosa Luxemburgo at MALBA; Encuentro Multiplicidad including 20 collectives at Tatlin; Band Festival and Pollen at Cemento; Last Biennial at Casachango, Tandil; Low-profile Musicians' Festival at Cabaret Voltaire; Failure Cabaret at Teatro Colonial; Venusian Calendar by Gisella Liffchitz at Imaginario Cultural; "15 sensible model parade" in the streets of Monserrat; Technology of Friendship video and Venews newsreel at the Cosmos cinema; Juegobierno by m777 and Eloísa Cartonera's presentation at Tatlin; Autogov by m777 (decision making within small groups) at CCRojas and School of Social Sciences; Drum & Box at Dorado; Zoon Politikon documentary fiction shooting at CCRojas; Venusian survey at Sonoridad Amarilla.

The project managed and sponsored 30 joint projects and many more individual undertakings: "Nueva sala de terapia intensiva" [New intensive care ward] by Mat_as Rizzone; "Desayunando" [Having breakfast], reading sessions; exhibitions by Fernanda Laguna, Ernesto Arellano, Lorelei Arnesto; performances by Diego Melero. It participated in Estudio Abierto (2004) and arteBA (2004) in a collective capacity.

Proyecto Venus's management is based on a very small centralised co-ordination that supports and promotes members' initiatives through dissemination, material aid, and connection inside and outside the net. Inés Acevedo and Sebastián Codeseira were co-ordinators between 2001 and 2003, while Lara Correa took over in 2004. In 2005, PV's chief centralised activity will concentrate on the redesigning of its website, laying emphasis on its features as an interchange and collaboration network.

PV is supported by the Technology and Art Society (START), which provides it with computer technology resources, premises, per diem funds and funding for such activities as may require it.

The START Foundation is a non-money making concern that fosters experimentation and development of new ways of life in society through interaction between artists and non-artists. START encourages the establishment of self-managed, self-funded public spaces as networks that articulate and expand cultural activities in Argentina, connecting them to the rest of the world. Its two main projects are magazine ramona and PV.

START's main own sources of income come from its publications, courses, and small private donations. It was awarded donations by Guggenheim grants, Fondo Nacional de las Artes and Fondo de Cultura de la Ciudad. In 2005 it is striving to consolidate its funding through contributions from national and international organisations.

TPS

We are a group of artists participating in the context of social struggles and protest movements.

Taller Popular de Serigrafía (TPS) [Popular Silkscreen Printing Workshop] born in the heat of the popular revolts that took place on

December 19 and 20, 2001. The Popular Silkscreen Printing Workshop was established collectively in February 2002 as an activity within the framework of Asamblea Popular de San Telmo [San Telmo's Popular Assembly].

It was rather by chance that TPS found its own dynamics when making a silkscreen print on a T-shirts while printing posters during a street demonstration. Ever since then it has settled down in contexts of struggle to perform the same task; namely, to silkprint all sorts of garments with images that intend to reproduce the frame of mind underlying each protest. We try to endow struggle with an image that succeeds in identifying the time and place of each particular protest, within an interchange between materials provided by the hand that prints and the hand that gives us the T-shirt. Thousands of posters, T-shirts, banners, shirt-fronts, windbreakers and garments that people put on and take off in loving demand were printed in this context. Taking the workshop out into the street and socialising the production process enables us to build up a relationship, a "participative" art where "techniques" and "styles" emerge from a specific situation; from a moment of encounter. Our images and slogans draw a cartography that slides into both agreements and differences existing in social and political organisations, thus generating processes that lead to identification and belonging. In this way, our work is shaped across aesthetic and political situations, and these very situations constantly redefine what should be done and how it should be done.

TPS continued to create images that were to accompany activities programmed by Asamblea Popular de San Telmo, and from this practice we established relationships with movements of unemployed workers, with other popular assemblies, with workers of recovered factories, with Mesa de Escrache Popular [Popular Board of Denunciation], with left-wing political par-

ties, with relatives and friends of advocates for the rights of the people who had been murdered in the course of social protests, with art groups and with artists. The images we created were printed over and over again in different arenas: May Square, Plaza de los dos Congresos [Square of the Two Congresses], el Puente Pueyrredón [Pueyrredón Bridge], and in ceremonies and commemorations in the city and province of Buenos Aires.

Towards the end of 2002, several artists joined in and the workshops became an activity with a dynamics in its own right, independent from the Asamblea. At present, and after some time at the home of one of our members, TPS has its own workplace at a site recovered by Asamblea Popular de Palermo Viejo, a workshop that we share with the Arde!Arte group. We are keen on working with other art groups and artists that manifest themselves. In May 2003, together with Arde! Arte, Etcétera..., Kino Nuestra Lucha, Rosita presenta and Soledad, among others, we organised "Arte y Confección", a week for culture in support of the tents set up by Brukman factory workers after being violently thrown out of the premises. In November 2004, the same groups issued a call for "Ceramicazo / visual - acción directa", an initiative included into the week of activities supporting FaSinPat (ex Zanón) workers as they rejected eviction ruled by the Judiciary of the province of Neuquén and claimed for the definitive application to the factory of the corresponding expropriation law.

After the "Arte y confección" experience and of a job commissioned by artist and activist John Jordan, we carried out a joint undertaking with Brukman with designs by Arde!Arte, Etcétera and TPS. The objectives we pursued were to make the conflict known to the general public, to contribute to the strike funds and to generate resources to continue with our activity in an independent manner, without "bosses".

Along these same lines, towards the end of 2003 we started to work jointly with a sewing workshop named *Cooperativa La Juanita* in *Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados de La Matanza* [Movement of La Matanza Unemployed Workers]. To date, we have manufactured five stocks of T-shirts with our silk-prints on them. Among other places, these T-shirts are being distributed at *Cooperativa La Asamblearia*, a network of fair trade in which we participate.

At present, TPS is a member of the National Movement for a Legal Six-hour Workday and General Increase in Salaries [*Movimiento Nacional por una Jornada Legal de 6 horas de Trabajo y Aumento de General de Salarios*]. In April 2004, thanks to a strike, *Metrovias* workers regained the six-hour workday. One month later, the workers called the First National Encounter for the Workday Reduction [1º Encuentro Nacional por la Reducción de la Jornada Laboral] to extend the claim to the rest of the working class. As from that moment, TPS joined the Movement established during the said Encounter and, again, together with the *Arde! Arte* collective, participated in the design and illustration of the flyer and the launching bulletin announcing the initiative. For the launching ceremony, we made the Movement's banners, something we had already tried when, early that year, we made the banner *Cooperativa 18 de diciembre*, the new name taken by the *Brukman* factory after it was finally recovered by its workers.

In our view, it is not possible to give solid, encompassing answers to concretely directed threats before the layers of a social tissue that chooses its lifestyles collectively and questions relations of power have been truly consolidated. This is why we believe in the need for continuous work, in the possibility of generating our own conditions of intervention, time

for our own thoughts, an invention where problems where we wish to make an intervention can be the material support of image.

Terraza

Terraza could be defined as a space for collaborative work, where works, publications and events are produced at junctures where visual, audiovisual, and electronic arts meet music and literature.

Terraza is a space for affinity. It has neither a special shape nor a particular manner of behaviour. It changes with time, contexts and ideas.

It seeks to foster working bonds, as well as generate and independent circulation, dissemination and exhibition of these works. Terraza is viewed in different ways. Some people think that we only do net art. They relate our activity with electronic art, perhaps because we introduce ourselves through our website. Others think that we are a work group involved in collective work, but we feel more comfortable with the idea that we are a publishing house, a producer, or a laboratory. The website www.terrazed.com.ar is a project that keeps constantly on the move, at the same time as it is the most visible and accessible manifestation of terraza.

Here we exhibit the works we have developed for multimedia and the Internet, "pires de metal" -our magazine of unusual subjects-, a lounge filled with images depicting works by various visual artists, and a collection of books and records that we have been producing without haste.

The website also provides a space for the documentation and dissemination of other related projects, such as "rage" and "the motley cow". Our works also circulate through the publishing house. Up to now, we have published 8 books, 5 music CDs and 2 audiovisuals. Ours are craft editions in which, apart from the

authors proper, several other artists usually take part.

Through recourse to collective work we intend to produce good quality books at accessible prices. The website and the publishing work are complementary. Our editions are circulated through the Internet. The site also includes fragments of writings, images and songs originally published in other formats.

Familiarity with the digital medium together with the website as a work basis enable people who are physically far away to participate in the project.

The experience of working with artists from other cities proved quite interesting, as did the fact that they were able to follow closely the publishing process of their books.

Members are not always the same. At present, five of us are responsible for the general decisions, and other people join us for special tasks.

Access to digital edition and design and experience in this field prove important resources to edit the website, the books and the records. Regarding these aspects, we also work with artists who are not experts in these technologies, but who have a vast experience in other fields.

Terraza is a totally self-managed project. We try to make up for the lack of economic means through collective work and the search for alternative ways.

We would like to succeed in keeping up our project by selling the works we have published so as to have the possibility of covering the costs of future publications.

With a view to circulate our works, we have organised, together with other publishing houses, a distribution circuit in bookstores located in Buenos Aires, Rosario, and some other cities of our country.

Terraza never established a regular manner of organisation. Some periods are more active than others.

The groups of people involved in the projects

gather and separate in accordance with the needs of the moment, their wishes, and their availability.

We define ourselves from praxis. Whatever we do is always side by side with reflection, but there is never a stop to the impulse which, at a certain moment that we could call whimsical, led us to occupy a place we had not dreamt of.

Catalogue

Audiovisuals/Interactive/net.art:

Domingo [Sunday], by C. Belmont, J. Masverná and P. Etchegaray /

L'emploi du temps, by C. Katz /

El maravilloso mundo de las telas de camisa [The Wonderful World of Shirt Fabrics], by J. Neral Aves 1.0, by D. Roisman and J. Masverná

Matelot, Tandis and Dan Dan, 3 videos of *Velocidad Veleró* [Sailing-boat Speed] (E. Arauz, E. Arauz, J. Masverná, C. Belmont, M. Jitrik /

Diario de Bitácora [Logbook], by S. Gurfein /

Naranjas [Oranges], by J. Masverná /

Toutesdirections, by D. Roisman, /

[*relaciones de incertidumbre*] [relations of uncertainty] by D. Roisman /

El interior de la Ballena [The Inside of the Whale], by C. Prado, D.

Posadas, A. Bruno and P. Udenio, J. Fernández, J. Escajal /

Donde estoy [Where I Am], by C. Belmont and D. Posadas.

Records:

Velocidad Veleró 2001 / [Sailing-boat Speed 2001]

Velocidad Veleró 2002 / [Sailing-boat Speed 2002]

Expreso Trompo / [Spinning-top Express]

Sellese and Mirador, Duet

Books:

36 Haikus, Diego Posadas (2000) /

Detalles, citas y tal, Cécile Belmont and Julia Masverná (2001) /

Duchamp, Claudia Sastre (2002) /

Formas, Valeria Cini and Paula Jiménez (2002) /

Donde estoy, Cécile Belmont and Diego Posadas (2002) / *Lomasombra*,

Ariel Williams (2003) /

La casa en la avenida, Paula Jiménez (2004) /

Juntajabones, Pablo Calvi (2004)

“Untitled” Notes for a discussion on artist’s management

Roberto Amigo

These notes work like thoughts uttered in a loud voice, with the only purpose of opening a preliminary discussion before participants in this meeting called by Trama share their proposals with us. This is the reason why I have not attempted a meticulous paper, but just a bird’s eye view of the questions involved in whether there is a historical local model for artists’ “management” and on the control mechanisms that artists’ management should establish. As a historian who is more dedicated to the 19th Century than to the 20th, we shall take a view of the period in between the last years of both centuries.

When we examine the construction of historical narratives dealing with the artistic and its particular local features, what stands out is the role played by actions carried out by artists. Adjusting the terms to the programme of Trama’s meeting, we can state that “artists’ management” was instrumental to the creation of “Argentine art”. Artists occupied the place reserved for the various agents that constitute art’s autonomous field as the bourgeois cultural sphere. This aspect –“artists’ management”- might enable us to discuss the extent to which the last years of the 19th Century reached the status of “modern art field”, but in fact this is not the actual purpose of this brief introduction to the discussion.

One of the ruling notions in the historiography of art lies in stating that, in Argentina, artistic modernity is related to the estab-

ishment of institutions of art. The one event that is always mentioned in this respect is the foundation of Sociedad Estímulo de Bellas Artes (SEBA) in 1876 by a group of young people led by Eduardo Sívori and Eduardo Schiaffino who, at the time, were initiating a career in art. Among others, we should also remember Alejandro Sívori and Alfred Paris, artists as well. Schiaffino started acquiring importance as from this inaugural deed: he was an art critic at *El Diario*, owned by the Láinez family; promoted the National Museum of Fine Arts and wrote the first narrative about art in Argentina, re-written over and over again (1883, 1910, 1933). In other words, Schiaffino played all the roles natural to the field: he was a critic, an artist, and a museographer. Let us then go back to SEBA. Its main function, starting in 1878, was the teaching of art; it was the forerunner of state art schools of our own time, for it was nationalised in 1905. After a number of thwarted attempts by the State in order to gain access to technical and artistic capitalisation, the artists themselves guaranteed the said access.

Anyway, what matters here is to explore a few more ideas rather than go into the series of details that put together the factual narration of the history of Argentine art. The first of these ideas is that, on the face of the weak state policy when it came to dealing with art, the first agents that tried to modernise “art” were the very artists who played multiple roles as they struggled in an effort to build institutions that might legitimise their practice. It was not only Schiaffino; there were others, like Ernesto de la Cárcova, who walked the same road, though the latter seems to have been more of a teacher, an activity that Schiaffino performed to a lesser degree. It is not a minor detail that both Schiaffino and de la Cárcova –the latter more so than the former- entertained socialist

ideas; hence, their “management” was tinged by the assumption that spiritual improvement of society can be achieved through art.

Rather than going over aspects of their work that point to their political affiliation, i.e., symbolism and realism respectively, we may dwell here on a description of the kind of teaching that SEBA promoted in the field of art. In Schiaffino’s own words, workers attending evening classes “seek to improve their working conditions in their struggle for life. They come in ever larger numbers, six hundred and more.” Schiaffino ended his narration about the academy with a sustained rhetoric, half-way between class-consciousness and salvationism: “it is fair to claim that all of these conquests and achievements stemmed directly from the initial foundation, which gave us our first professional artists and teachers, and rescued thousands of workers from squalor. These workers improved their working capacity, dignified their spirit while learning to draw, frequenting the plaster models of classic statuary, reading art publications and attending the luminic projections shown in the history classroom.”

Thus, the universalistic project of the generation of the 80s contained a notion of the political quality involved in the artistic as a dignification of the working class. The narration of the “Founding Fathers of Art” fostered the value that society ascribed to art through a close connection between workers and the learning of art, as if there were a unique civilising matrix uniting the learning of drawing, the European tradition, and the brightness of history. Perhaps the origin of “politics” as a distinctive feature of Argentine art as seen in the shaping of its historical narratives (from Berni’s *Sin pan y sin trabajo* to his *Manifestación*; from *Artistas del Pueblo* to *C.A.Pa.ta.co*; from *Tucumán Arde* to *El Siluetazo*) lies in that initial classroom and

teleological bond between artists and workers. In other words, it may well have arisen from the factual encounter between Ernesto de la Cárcova and the anonymous worker.

No doubt, the bond was “managed” by the artists themselves, but at the same time it was “sponsored” by prominent members of the bourgeoisie (as was the case with the Schiaffino, de la Cárcova, and Sívori families) that were fond of the arts and of moral regeneration. They had not taken fright yet. Naturally, the time came when they got bored with the project and ceased to contribute to the school’s maintenance. Argentine liberals always resort to the State, and it began to subsidise the place as from 1899, until it was fully nationalised in 1905 as a national academy. Nothing has changed too much.

Before changing the subject, it is interesting to point out how another artist remembered this promising place for social emancipation, as Schiaffino described it in his narrative. Martín Malharro, in Borges’ words, did not come from the kind of bourgeois family to which the elegant critic of criolla* prose had been born. Malharro’s anarchist ideas were related to his practice of luminic painting in the universal identity of ideology and style. In this respect, Laura Malosetti Costa, in her book *Los primeros modernos*, writes:

Those neglected halls, cold and monotonous; that exaltation of plasters, busts, fragments and statues, eternally dirty, with the same gesture, in the same posture, with the permanent, impassive Olympic indifference of gods demanding a cult that I did not understand [...] And that Academy offered me an atmosphere that contrasted in a particular way with my notion about life. The smell of gas, dampness, tobacco and cheap restaurant of that temple of art has long remained in my mind as a blasphemy directed to the fra-

grance of clover and violets, of wild herbs covered in dew, to the truth that smelt of countryside; in one word, with all that was familiar to me.

The organisational role played by the artists of the 80's was marked by its totalling nature. Intellectual networks – the one that used to gather at El Ateneo, for instance- not only reproduced the usual European model but also tried its action to encompass such empty spaces as the State left, for the State did not entertain much interest in artistic matters. It was only in 1911, after the Centennial Inter national Exhibition, that the first National Salon was held, to be then repeated on an annual basis. From then on, it was to determine legitimacy regarding local art. At that time, besides, control institutions were consolidated, as was the case with the National Commission of Fine Arts, which was additionally important because of the role it played in the purchase of works of art.

Faced with the persistence of the generation of the 80s, who prevailed when it came to making seminal decisions, there was a confrontation with the younger artists, gathered in a group called Nexus (1907-1908). The passage from “net” to “group” is indeed significant. They come to supplant the weary masters, according to Carlos Ripamonte, who then undertook the group's “testimonial writing”, while José León Pagano, a discreet artist, took charge of critical interpretation and historical position at a counterpoint with Schiaffino. The net involved the building of a wider system of alliances to acquire strength before the State; on the other hand, the group artists activated a claim that later enabled them to occupy the spaces of power and legitimacy in the field. This explains Pagano's blatant generational exclusion of Malharro, which, of course, was aided by the

early death of Malharro, Ramón Silva and Walter de Navazio. We may even think that Malharro, at one and the same time, sought to build a group and a network that would act as an alternative to the hegemonic net; polarity is characteristic of their manner of working, although it does not imply any contradiction, whether we look into the political (anarchism-State's educational role) or in the stylistic (naturalist drawing with social connotations-luminic landscape painting).

Even in our days, José León Pagano's work is still important as a builder of the central narrative of the history of Argentine art. It has not ceased to be a focal reference to collectors and amateurs alike. Artists have assembled their own historical narration. The history of art and the critics (who stood apart from literary parallelism) have had to discuss on the basis of historical models established by the artists themselves.

Why are present –day artists bent on self-management?

No doubt, this is a way to contend with the weakness of Argentina's art field, which is in no condition to account for either the market or the institutional crises. In other words, we have returned to the initial moment: artists seek to rule the whole of the field involved. This response is in keeping with the overrating of assumptions sustained by the global market as applied to the local scale, together with the predominance of the curator's figure, museographic explosion, professionalisation of the history of art, the economic crisis and its impact on the art market. All of a sudden, they became aware that they might well be the weakest leg on which the art system stands.

Political effervescence during the crisis of the Menem administration found its correlation in the ways in which individuals sought self-

organisation outside the established institutions. There was a rebirth of artists' collectives (loss of individualism), and management of spaces of intervention within the art scenario in order to overcome museum-commercialisation, with contests as their most banalised expression. At the same time, current conditions of artistic production impose an alteration of international transference mechanisms that, until not long ago, were restricted to biennials. On the other hand, the teaching of art has pent itself up by mimicking the worst features of university education (disparagement of lengthy graduate studies, debasement of long-standing learning spaces, new-fledged graduate studies demanding “research” and a “thesis”, the parody of appointing teachers by contest, etc.)

In this context, artists' management addresses the field of art, when the possibility of the State's material intervention has become nullified because of economic reasons, but also, and fundamentally so, on account of ideological issues. By means of management activities, artists take upon themselves their role in a widened public sphere, becoming intermediaries for society's symbolic assets, which are potentially endangered thanks to market logic and to the logic bureaucracy of the State.

Artists' self-management blocks the curator's figure, forcing him back into his role regarding his work on history. That is to say, the curator is left with the possibility of museum tasks only (hence the possibility of disagreement between the history of art and curatorship supported on a different notion of historical time and territoriality). Together with Chilean critic Justo Pastor Mellado we can sustain the status of curatorship as a minor theory, understood as a practical concept working on an artist's stage of production. It is because of this that we may think of

artists' self-management and of the construction of their own spaces to generate and develop their discourse as an obligation to appropriate the practical concept of curatorship. At the same time, these spaces should become protective of artists' own practices and production. Such a protective mechanism cancels the modern market: art-dealers, critics, museums, and collectors. We should perhaps consider this to be the moment of dematerialisation not only of the object but also of the art system itself, as we knew it.

19th Century artists faced the issue of how to find their insertion as “national artists” in a global, complex, and competitive market, all the more so when Argentina was a sales outlet of minor European and decorative art. The creation of a fight for national art amounted to the creation of a way in which the local collector chose to purchase works by Argentinean artists rather than negligible works coming from the bazaar culture. To fulfil this purpose, they needed to place art inside institutions such as academies, museums and salons.

Such a structure, obsolete though it may seem today, does not conceal the fact that artists' present “management” is confronted with the same problems posed by 19th Century markets, although in the current global stage it is bound to build tools that may interrogate the market. Self-management may well be one of these tools. The crisis compels artists to walk into the space of critical questioning and, paradoxically, to bring to light aspects of their production, whether the ways in which their management is funded or their acceptance of prizes and benefits provided by scholarly artistic competence. At this point, it is inevitable to enter a discussion on management funding. When everything is said and done, no one knows whom he is working for.

The self-management model reviews some of the practices that were implemented in the early 80s, sieved through the 90s experience in the global market. In the 80s it was assumed that artistic praxis was supported by long-range solidarity, that it was akin to new manners of fighting. It was also believed to be aided by growing disconnection from the power of the State and by the generation of informal ways of recruitment that allowed for particular processes of legitimacy. At present, management forces art to lay the stress on how to socialise resources (i.e., information); on full disconnection from the State and on formal recruitment as demanded by institutional forms of sponsorship. It has to move on from art as political praxis to artistic practice as "efficiency". If management implies a model for political action, it does so only as communal practice, and if this is true, we should then find out how it is to be inserted in the economic-and-artistic process and in the legitimacy mechanisms that management reproduces.

"Culture" has always been important to the urban consumer's social life. Business has boosted by offering symbolic sinecures: being a sponsor or a partner are the possible steps on the ladder to participation and decision-making. Culture has ceased to be the business of national identity to become the identity of the brand that promotes it; that is to say, it has turned into the business of managing entertainment. Still, these arguments, that sound rather obvious when applied to large urban centres where the fiction of the market still prevails, are also reproduced, in a distorted fashion, in small places. The management model is reproduced as a 19th Century hypothesis for development: that spiritual improvement to which Schiaffino aspired.

One more issue: how to generate the necessary control mechanisms if self-management,

added to collectives, possibly cancels mechanisms that are an integral part of consolidated systems like knowledge acquired at the university, legitimacy of art galleries and museums, journalistic critical discourse, etc.?

I do not have an answer yet, but neither do I presume that you need one as you carry out your daily work.

TRAMA

Utopia and management. Artists imagining ways of sociability

Gertrude Flentge

In November 2003 Trama invited me to participate and speak at their second workshop on cultural management for artists. I was the only non-Argentinean and non-native Spanish speaker, and therefore found myself in the luxurious and difficult position of the outsider.

From the very first moment I was most impressed by the capacity of all the participants in the workshop to theorize and think on an abstract, philosophical level and even more by their sharp sense for ethical issues - issues which we hardly discuss in our daily practice in my own country, the Netherlands. For days we talked about the position of the artists towards each other, towards society, the way projects are profiled and the motives artists have to organize certain projects or initiatives. Never did I meet a group so willing and eager to analyze these issues to the bone.

After a few days we started to shift to the more practical part of the workshop, in which consultant Fernando Frydman analyzed all the specific projects regarding their organizational and financial potential. What struck me after the first presentations was the lack of long-term goals and aims in the presentation of many of the project proposals. To me it seemed strange to discuss at length the political and ethical position an artist and artist-initiative should take, if you do not formulate why you do this in the long term. Coming from a context where the infrastructure provides you with a lot of opportunities (or at least has done so until now) to develop projects on a longer term basis and where many people

believe that actions should lead to a certain goal or benefit, for me this is the first and most basic question to think of when starting an artist platform or initiative. Political, but above all ethical issues, come far after that in the Netherlands.

In Argentina this appeared to be quite the opposite. When one works and lives in a context where traces of dictatorship are still present, where from one day to the next the economical system can collapse, where politicians are often in power to enrich a happy few, where to position oneself and how ethical one is in terms of goals and working methods is one of the first questions people ask themselves and others. Together with this, thinking of the long term has often proved to be of no use, because things were cut off even before they really started to be. Perhaps the goal lies more in the fact that you are doing things and in the way you do them rather than in what you will reach in the end.

In spite of these differences, there are also, of course, many similar mechanisms that decide the practice of artists and their projects. In the following paragraphs I will go into some concrete examples of concepts and positions that artists need to confront when starting an artist's run initiative(1). Examples are taken from my experience working as the coordinator of the RAIN Artists' Initiatives Network(2) and from the initiatives that participated in Trama's cultural management workshop itself. They concern platforms and initiatives working in totally differing circumstances and contexts.

Why do artists imagine an artists' initiative Artist Marco Paulo Rolla and art historian Marcos Hill decided to establish an initiative called CEIA (3) in Belo Horizonte, Brazil's third largest city. Their aim was not only to enrich the cultural atmosphere in Belo Horizonte- as a city in more or less the 'periphery' not having a large cultural infrastructure- but also to provide a different approach to art and education to the

one practiced in Brazilian universities. The established art-system is characterized by a rather hierarchical approach to teaching and learning and to a product oriented concept of making art. Furthermore, the production of artists is often highly influenced by the demands of the strong art markets in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and the United States. CEIA, instead, organizes activities where horizontality of debate and the process of making art play a central role, and in this way hopes to deepen the quality of art making in its country.

Casa 13 in Cordoba, Argentina, started in 1993 as a centre for production by and communication among artists. In its 10 years of existence it has become a house where people pass by, where artists come to share with each other and with other actors in the cultural domain. The main starting points for its activities are the acknowledgement of the meaning of history to art, the sense that the work of art is defined by its context and a wish to redefine the role of the curator in such a way that he/she becomes the facilitator of a joint venture of art-makers and the one that writes about it. Combining these starting points with daily practice and the character of its organizers, Casa13 is now a kind of a redefined 'institution'. It could be called a family art institution, a place where people come to share the same interests, a gathering of differences. Activities only happen on the initiative of the visiting artists, it is their 'house'.

As these examples also point out, contemporary artistic practice appears to include elements of the self, society and (art-) systems. Often an artist initiative grows out of the need to create a space for distribution or presentation that is closer to the individual artistic practice of a group than are the existing spaces and/or institutions. The aim can also be to create a relatively safe but critical environment for research, discussion and confrontation. An artist's initiative in this sense can

function as an interface between the individual practice of an artist and the outside world. An interface where ideas and works can be confronted in a critical environment without the repercussions it might have when bringing that to the larger public. It then works as a kind of laboratory.

Sometimes the need to create an alternative space comes from conditions in the context. This can mean either that the initiative creates a space for artists that has not existed so far, or that socio-political conditions in that context urge artists to organize themselves and play a more active role in larger processes in society.

Artists' initiative, the art world, and society at large

RAIN partner ruangrupa (4) (Indonesia) has as one of its core aims to bring a cultural dimension to the city of Jakarta. The city is built mainly from political and economic needs and perspectives, and there is hardly any space that is not 'used' for an economic, political or housing reason. The idea of 'public space' is therefore hardly known in Jakarta, and the average person living there consequently does not seem to feel connected or responsible for the city, for the way in which it is developed or for the need to make it a more human place. ruangrupa does not believe that artists can change this situation. However, ruangrupa tries to develop strategies of intimate communication with the people in Jakarta; one of the objectives is to make the people aware that the city is also theirs; that people can take their own responsibility and, if they wish to, end up by changing the situation.

The Taller Popular de Serigrafía (TPS) started as a spontaneous artists' action during the events that followed the economic and political crisis in Argentina in 2001. Large numbers of citizens went out into the streets to protest against the government and its policy, political corruption and violence. The artists that

formed Taller Popular de Serigrafía felt that they should contribute to this movement from their own capacity and went out into the streets with a mobile silkscreen workshop, to print posters, t-shirts etc. that translated the feeling and message of the people into images they could use in their protest. After the most hectic period in the crisis, the TPS continued its actions on a more planned and structured basis.

If the relationship with the art world and society is not already explicit in the aims of the initiative, from the moment the existence of the initiative becomes known to a larger public or "the system", a choice has to be made as to how to relate to "the system" and how to relate to society at large. The need to relate to society at large can be very intense or non-existent. Be that as it may, this society will always 'allow' the context and – in the end – set working conditions. This context and these conditions will vary according to the scope of the initiative.

Institutional art-world

When it started, ruangrupa took a clear position to be able to create a free space for artists and other cultural producers. It did not want to relate to the more established institutions in the Indonesian art world. These institutions were too oppressive, bureaucratic and corrupt. Interacting with them would mean the danger of losing freedom and ruangrupa's main aim was to create an alternative to them. In the four years of its existence ruangrupa has grown rapidly. For young artists, designers and filmmakers working in Indonesia, it has become an important reference. Even the more established art world in Indonesia is showing interest in ruangrupa's activity and has asked ruangrupa several times to put together exhibitions, festivals etcetera. Although ruangrupa was against interacting with the establishment, in the meantime it has also cooperated with it on several occasions. It has grown strong enough to work

with these institutions on its own conditions, without having to compromise on crucial issues. Starting as a critical outsider to the system, ruangrupa is now slowly changing it from the inside.

At its start in 2000, one of the main aims of Trama was to build an alternative to the hierarchical and relatively closed and centralized art world in Argentina. It wanted to provide a platform where artists and organizations from everywhere in the country, coming from different backgrounds and at different stages of development, could meet. In order to reach this it would not have been effective to exclude the institutionalised art world. Also this institutionalized art world is part of Argentina's art platform and represents groups of artists as well. Trama didn't want to become another 'closed' system by excluding the establishment. By involving everyone as a partner, Trama secured, on the one hand, a wide enough basis to in fact build this horizontal platform and, on the other hand, that power had to be shared by every member. No single player was much stronger than the other so as to dominate; they all had a little influence.

The strategies for relating to other institutions in the art world can be numerous. Sometimes it might be necessary to negate the institutionalised art world, either because the goals and working field of the initiative lie outside this world, or because "the system" is too bureaucratic or oppressive to relate to. In the last case, working actively in this field might only lead to frustration and even to the end of the initiative. Nevertheless, working completely outside the system might lead to isolation, to a "nice artistic exercise"; to a beautiful publication to treasure like every unrealized dream.

Choosing to relate to other institutions can take the form of confrontation or of interaction. In the case of confrontation, the initiative retains its

own character and evokes change through criticism. When choosing to interact with the system, a continuous interplay of involvement, taking and giving power and keeping distance, has to be played. This can be the most direct tactic for changing the system and at the same time avoiding becoming isolated.

Leaning on different institutions as pillars of the initiative is one option. In this case, one can use facilities and knowledge of different institutions, but by leaning on more than one, independent status is preserved. There is a thin line between keeping the power to the initiative and losing it to the institutions involved. Another possible way is to set up a completely independent initiative which, after having been set up, involves many other actors in the art world without becoming dependent. Power in this case is distributed among many players, no player being too powerful on his/her own. In both cases the adage linked but not tied applies. The artist-initiative functions within the institutionalized art world and tries to initiate change from within this system.

Local and global

Artists' initiative PULSE⁵ (South-Africa) wants to stimulate the intercultural debate within the professional visual art world in South Africa. South-Africa is a huge country, but the professional scene is quite small. Besides, South-Africa's recent history has resulted in long isolation from the international debate in the art world. PULSE feels the professional art world needs some nurturing by being confronted with different opinions and approaches. Therefore, in all its projects half of the participants come from different parts of South Africa, and half are foreign visitors. Working with artists from other non-western countries has proved to be very fruitful for PULSE. The parallels in history and in the current sociopolitical phase brought about an interesting mix between familiarity and difference.

The performance group La Baulera works in Tucumán in the northern part of Argentina. Tucumán has a vivid and interesting cultural life, but given that the distribution of information and cultural resources in Argentina has historically been centered in Buenos Aires - harbour and capital city- it wasn't easy for artists in Tucumán to share artistic experience with other parts of the country, let alone other countries in other continents. Partly because of their connection to Trama in the past years, they were able to invite artists from other parts of Argentina, but also from other places in the world that were quite different to Tucumán. The confrontations that happened were often very fruitful to both sides. To foreign artists, the energy of La Baulera and the specific context of Tucumán proved to be a very inspiring and confronting context to work in. On the other hand, being able to work with artists coming from more central places not only proved inspiring to artists working with La Baulera, but also challenged them in their ability to read and translate their own context.

Are the aims of an artist's platform directed solely towards the local arts society? Is there a national reach, an explicit aim towards regional co-operation and maybe even to work with artists worldwide?

Having a local role means something completely different from working internationally. Creating links with artists and institutions from different cultures, outside the direct environment, can often provide more freedom both to think about- and to act upon - the local situation. Besides, working internationally can give the activities a broader scope.

Working globally means more complex, larger scale interacting, in addition to having to deal with more actors in different contexts. The complexity of working relationships on a global scale is influenced by cultural differences and the use

of different languages, but also by the overall power structures which dominate: centre-periphery dynamics come into play.

The position of the artist in the initiative One can say that artists' initiatives generally want to create an alternative place which can offer better possibilities - related directly to artists' practices than to existing - established institutions. The individual power of each participant in the initiative, however, has to be shared with others. Openness and willingness to share are therefore pre-assumptions. Personal involvement of each of the initiators is the driving force and the guarantee for quality, flexibility and building up trust in relation to the outside. This - on the other hand - should not be too "personal" or particularistic; aims should be broader than the personal career or interests of each individual, to reach a broader group and build trust and a basis in society.

With regard to personal involvement, the length of the project is an important factor. Sometimes it can help to define a limited life cycle of the initiative: for example, three to four years. On the one hand, this gives the organizing artists a clear limit to the input they have to give. Besides, sometimes a shorter life cycle is enough: there is the ever-present danger of the initiative becoming established and institutionalized itself, consequently losing its flexibility and initial aims ("circulation of elites"). This can be a positive or negative development. It is, though, very important to always take a step back and look at the aims and personal involvement. And to stop when it is needed.

Unimagined possibility

In this text I described a few mechanisms that decide the practice of artists' initiatives. There are many more of course. Some of the mechanisms might seem very obvious or natural, but practice often proves they are not. The first thing that becomes clear and the starting point for every

action is that each goal to be reached and each specific context requires its own strategies. There are no recipes.

The effort that artists initiatives undertake in contexts as the above mentioned is huge. In their work they certainly benefit from working in network structures with other initiatives in their country, region or in (un)similar contexts. This allows them to develop strategies of cooperation, to share information and experience and to relate to common problems and thoughts, also by being confronted with other thoughts, solutions and fruitful misunderstandings. The practice of the RAIN Artists' Initiatives Network, the network focusing on cooperation between artists initiatives in Africa, Asia and Latin America, which links most of the initiatives described in this text, is a small but intense proof of this.

In the case of the Argentinean artists' initiatives I encountered during Trama's workshop, I was struck by the sharp political and ethical awareness they have developed. Matching this kind of awareness with long term goals focusing on a common vision of however the artistic scene desirable for a networking community should look, could turn to be an unstoppable formula for the strengthening of local artists' practices, and therefore a guarantee for cultural diversity in these globalized times.

Notes

1 Parts of this text are based on the article 'The artist and the institution' by Jw. Schrofer and G. Flentge in *The visible and the invisible in contemporary art* (Belo Horizonte 2002), a publication from artists' initiative CEIA (Brazil).

2 The RAIN network is a network of eight artists' initiatives in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It was initiated in the year 2000 by the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten (Amsterdam) to support and connect the platforms built by its former residents. See also www.r-a-i-n.net

3 see also www.ceia.art.br

4 see also www.ruangrupa.org

5 see also www.pulseprojects.com

Meeting of independent contemporary art organisations in Latin America and Caribbean

"How could we define an "artist"? As the one who can appropriate the current state of things in order to produce his/her own work; in order to produce himself. Thus, practices and thought are one and the same thing. It is not about applying knowledge, but about being able to think about one's own practice; to think about oneself. When it is said that post-modernism has annihilated time, it should not be understood as the abolition of chronological time, of history, of disciplines related to history. In fact, the dictum means that thought has been abolished. Then, the kernel of creative practices of resistance would reside in our ability to recover time –the time that has been expropriated - to exercise our own thought" (1).

Introduction

In October 2003, Trama participated in the organisation of the "Independent management project encounter for Latin America and the Caribbean", where it was also a guest. The initiative was launched by Duplus(2), which Trama joined during the gestational process, since both work groups shared the same objectives.

Notes

1. Duplus, "El pez, la bicicleta y la máquina de escribir" [The fish, the bicycle, and the typewriter], Buenos Aires, Proa Foundation, 2005.

The meeting was held in Buenos Aires from October 28 to November 2 2003, and it posited the construction of a network to foster art and theoretical cooperation and exchange among artists' initiatives and self-managed art spaces in the region.

The following people took part in the said activity: Sandra Ceballos, (Espacio Aglutinador, Havana, Cuba); Luis Alarcón and Ana Saavedra, from Galería Metropolitana (Santiago, Chile); Michèle Faguet from La Rebeca (Bogotá, Colombia); Rodrigo Vergara, José Pablo Díaz and Isabel Ibáñez, from Hoffmann's House (Santiago, Chile); Helmut Batista, Capacete (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil); Santiago García Navarro, Valeria González, Teresa Riccardi and Santiago García Aramburu on behalf of Proyecto Duplus (Buenos Aires); and Marina De Caro, Irene Banchemo and Florencia Cacciabúe on behalf of Trama. Francisco Reyes Palma, art historian (Mexico), and José Fernández Vega, PhD in philosophy (Argentina), also attended the meeting.

The activity was divided into two stages: the first was devoted to a workshop followed by debate, and the second involved public presentations and conclusions.

The workshop, held at Fundación Proa, was meant for the representatives of the seven guest projects, with Reyes Palma and Fernández Vega as external witnesses encouraging debate. The discussions held over the four days dealt with the specificity of each of the projects, their interaction with the art community, the institutional context affecting them, and management strategies articulated to that effect in each particular case.

Afterwards, the audience was invited to participate in the debates. Over two days, there were public presentations of the projects at Espacio Giesso, in the framework of lectures given and conclusions expressed by the guest theoreticians.

This section includes a brief reference about the background of each of the spaces as well as the papers contributed by Francisco Reyes Palma and José Fernández Vega during the open venues.

Duplus and Trama have held a common view on this activity, each of them starting from the transformation process formulated within their respective planning as a consequence of the institutional crisis and the social outcry in Argentina towards the end of 2001.

Duplus, which functioned as an independent, non-money making art space between 2000 and 2002, experienced a change related to their perception, as from December 2001, of a new social scenario, a fact that drove them to reconsider their curatorship operational mode regarding practices, politics, and local art thought.

Trama had begun to consider working within a network since their early days. The 2001 crisis engineered a series of activities tending to strengthen cooperation bonds between artist-managers and artist initiatives throughout the country. The purpose of this lay in developing common sustainability strategies and to question and research into the assumptions generated by informal cultural policies represented by such initiatives (see box on p. 136).

When Duplus started to organise this meeting, we in Trama happened to be wondering about concrete interchange opportunities with border countries (3), so that the efforts of artists' initiatives that Trama had been fostering in the country should be projected into the region, following the policies of decentralization of information and resources that lay at the base of the creation of our network.

There was a second coincidence: we were drawn to the criteria adopted by Duplus when they

Duplus Duplus is a collective devoted to research into and experimentation of artistic thought and creative processes. It creates and fosters relational practices among people and organizations that hold either loose relations or are not related at all. To achieve this end, Duplus establishes thought workshops, produces and circulates texts and archives, and creates public practices beyond the logic of communication. It does not have a permanent seat, but mostly performs its activities in Buenos Aires.

In its early stages, between the end of 1999 and the end of 2001-, Duplus served as an independent space housing exhibitions of contemporary art managed by artists Santiago García Aramburu, Lucio Dorr, Pablo Zicarello and Hernán Salamano.

Towards the end of 2002, a new team took over with new objectives and interests. The new group is formed by Santiago García Aramburu, Valeria González, Teresa Riccardi and Santiago García Navarro. In 2004, Rodrigo Kommers Wender took part in some of the activities as well.

Aesthetic alternatives and social bonds in today's Latin American art areas

José Fernández Vega

Throughout the conference where we gathered there was much talk of "nets", of "network" bonds aimed at associating institutional experiments that might promote an alternative kind of art in the various Latin American cities from where participants of this meeting have come from. I would like to go deeper into the notion of "net" in order to reflect on whether art itself has not, in a way, become a net in at least one of the accepted meanings of the word. How could art be thought of as a net? And what could be the point of this?

As I see it, our discussions regarding the net referred to operational issues, to the circulation of information about the different activities performed as well as to their institutional, artistic, and social effects. Let us say that we were speaking of technical aspects. Still, this morning we held a debate that, in my view, was out of the ordinary. As we wondered what kind of network we wished to develop, and a whole doctrinal issue was raised about such a project, what was in fact being discussed was something much more significant, involving a wider scope. We were in fact discussing the nature of art in our times, for art itself might seem to be a net if we abide by the notions that were implicit in the exchanges I attended.

What I mean is that, apart from the strictly operational issue of exchanging information and taking advantage of the net for all kinds of communication, the notion entails another function, also related to art. This becomes evident when it is grasped conceptually, i.e., beyond the Internet

as a technical tool, for instance. There is a peculiar function inherent to art - not exclusively, though- that has never been as important -or rather, as pressingly necessary- as it is today. This function might be defined as social and aesthetic at once -not at all a new one, indeed. It would give shape to a special kind of political art that intends to reconstruct social places and bonds among people.

Many of our bonds have been destroyed by the neo-liberal privatisation, which, in some way or other, affected our countries in the last few decades. The privatising wave implied something else than the transferring of public enterprises to private owners and the rooting of a discourse that, in the name of common sense, stated that the market was the only effective manager, while the public sphere could only yield loss, inefficiency and misuse.

What I call privatisation in a broad sense led to life being constricted to the private space, to people living in isolation, to the dissolution of social groups, to the convulsion of the self and to the "desertification" of fields where political participation and social integration used to take place. It also implied the spread of fear of the other (strengthened by mediatic panic that disseminates an atmosphere of total urban insecurity), and of individual phobias that took on an almost epidemic quality. Ultimately, it drove people to sink into their own subjective poverty, into the domestic field, into the encapsulation of the individual watching a screen, whether on the TV or on a computer.

This is the reason why, during our discussions, there resurfaced the issue of art's social role. This is most significant, for it aims at regarding art as regenerative of nets that were torn up by politics. The said function could be clearly seen in drama festivals held in ancient Greece and, during the Middle Ages, in rituals carried out in churches teeming with visual artwork. All these phenomena belong in the past: although peo-

implemented their research with a view to select the initiatives included in the project. The criteria consisted in locating a group of projects -originated in different Latin American countries- that challenged the hegemonic status posed from the established contemporary art system, insofar as these projects make way for and propose spaces where it is possible to imagine new conditions of possibility for social creativity, while positing critical proposals aimed at the ruling cultural policies.

We are happy to have been able to contribute to the organisation of this event, sponsored by Fundación Proa from Buenos Aires, the Organisation of Iberian American States, (OEI) and the DOEN Foundation from the Netherlands through Rain, an international network of artists' initiatives of which Trama is a member.

All the material produced during the event, including the presentations submitted by the various spaces and the debates held on workshop days, can be read from <http://proyectotrama.org/00/TEXTOS/duplus3/home2.htm>

Notes

- Duplus participated in the Artists' Cultural Management Workshop I, organised by Trama in the City of Luján in December 2002. For further information on Duplus, see Trama 2002: *Imágenes, relatos y utopías/ Experiencias y proyectos en el arte argentino contemporáneo*, printed by Trama, Buenos Aires, December 2003, pp. 84- 85.
- For this purpose, Trama made a series of research travels in Latin America in 2004, visiting various artists' and cultural agents' initiatives in Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and Colombia. For further information on the outcomes of these travels, see www.proyectotrama.org/00/TRAMA2004/viajesLATINO/home.htm

Publishers' Note: for inclusion in this publication, participants were asked to submit updated materials not written earlier than 2004, with the purpose of showing how these projects are conceived of and described at present.

Materials submitted by participants in 2003 can be read at <http://www.proyectotrama.org/00/2000-2002/index.html>

Trama's work structure consists of a network organisation, connecting independent cultural operators with self-managed artists' initiatives in various cities of Argentina.

Ever since 2002, together with workshops and projects of artistic interchange, the programme has developed a series of activities related to training in cultural management specially designed for artists. In 2002 and 2003 we held workshops which gathered 20 guest artists from all over the country, all of them founders or coordinators of independent, self-managed initiatives: art spaces, cultural centres, art printing houses, collective projects, semi-independent art programmes in already existing institutions, etc.

In 2003 and 2004 we supplemented our task by organising regional Encounters for the analysis of art management: simultaneous symposiums in 4 cities of our country (Posadas, Salta, Córdoba y Bahía Blanca.) The encounters addressed emerging, generally isolated organisations within their own contexts. They were attended by 42 people, who were provided with comprehensive information about the problems involved in cultural management carried out by artists, fundraising strategies, communication strategies, etc.

All the activities described above are expressed through the virtual platform created by Trama for distance work: our site contains the information resulting from the encounters; we have also created a record of artists' initiatives that serves as a database and meeting point for organisations and self-managed projects in the country, and we have established a distance office in intranet, specially devised for collective work in art management.

ple still gather at theatres and attend all sorts of shows and art events, this social function is much less evident in a conventional visit to an art gallery, an individual motion that does not necessarily entail a relation to any other. All of the above has to do with one of the most interesting discussions here, one that focused on the so-called "emotional curatorship". I do not particularly like the name, yet I value the concept; I like what lies behind the name. Rather than feel suspicious of the "new age" scent that might be suggested by the expression "emotional curatorship", it would be better to consider whether it names an attempt at a "policy of friendship", at the establishment of interpersonal bonds among those who attend an artistic event. Bourgeois ritual displays always tend to isolate people or, in the best of cases, to create an alienated relationship among them. It goes without saying that, in the world of art, this is patent in rituals such as vernissage and in the communication -assumed to be purely intimate- between the spectator and the work, thus creating between them a circle where there is no room for strangers. In a broad sense, if we understand "emotional curatorship" as a channel of affection between curator and artist, it can likewise be seen in this light on more stereotyped, conventional levels of the realm of art. Is it possible to reach beyond this limited, contingent view so as to seek for affective channels between the work and the audience, channels that may acquire social rather than purely personal consistency? The point is a curatorship that is not restricted to the relation between the artist and his/her work and the one in charge of staging an exhibition. Can art catalyse bonds among those who come close to it? It is my belief that if the expression "emotional curatorship" makes any sense at all, its sense is determined by our answer to these quandaries. I do not entertain much hope about its general effects. Emotional curatorship cannot replace either politics or social movements, but it might well give rise to artificial, utopian spaces that will enable

us to catch a glimpse of a different way of life, in opposition to the kind of life to which we have been condemned by neo-liberalism's amputated sociability.

I wonder, then, whether the creation of these nets is not an actually aesthetic function. I do not mean to say that it is the only possible aesthetic function, or even the most important one. In other words, the question is whether what is called emotional curatorship does not ultimately boil down to building up bonds. But in what way could that be related to aesthetics? The social element is quite obvious, since establishing relationships among people seems to be, clearly enough, a social function. The aesthetic aspect is given by its strong determination to achieve visibility, by its defence of forms that are offered to the eye (where the visual arts are concerned), and by its aspiration to imagine a way of creating society through these forms. In this sense, art fulfils a utopian function that can also, on a limited scale, produce effects on reality. By way of example, our friend Helmut Batista's home in Rio de Janeiro is some sort of anticipation of the way in which we could all live, that is to say, in a home where we could come and go as we pleased. This stands for a model of a different kind of society. I insist that this experiment, which is as attractive as it is fun, does not mean to replace the existing society, or that it is intent on doing so. I cannot share the idea that social transformation be carried out through a proliferation of such experiments, i.e., encouraging the artificial creation of thousands of communal homes like Helmut's in the hope that we are thus building up a different society so as to push the real one out of existence once it has become a negligible minority. If we are to think that the neo-avant-garde laboratory of the 60s has taught us something, it is that inordinate expectations directed at art's immediate political efficacy led directly to a blind alley, both in the political and in the aesthetic field. Nor does art have such a straightforward

ward function. Perhaps its mission is not so much to bring about a change in society as it is to show what a different kind of society would look like. If one sets oneself this unprepossessing goal, it might turn out more useful.

It is clear to everybody that what in other times was assumed to be "art's social function" is undergoing the same crisis as the very notion of art is. This brings us back to the question What is art?, a constituent quandary pervading artistic activity throughout the 20th Century and, needless to say, ours as well. Starting from this time framework, it is interesting that the spaces where you do your management work shelter people who say, 'I used to be an artist, but I no longer am; now I'm a cultural operator, or an alternative curator or something else'. These people also tend to state that art, which at one time interested them, no longer does. These are radical manifestations, and the most telling case we had occasion to listen to here was that of a Colombian narrated by Michèle Faguet, about a Colombian artist who held her last exhibition in 'La rebecca', a space conducted by Michèle. The said artist celebrated a sort of culmination of her career through a last exhibition, and then declared that she ceased to be an artistic, at least in the public field. Her stance was twofold: she thus meant to abandon the system ruling art while she attacked the constraints of the Colombian circuit. Since she had already shown her works at every available place, found that the local market was non-existent and, consequently, the only thing left for her to do was to take her leave.

Another aspect of the same issue is Duplus' self-representation. They maintain that they are content to have relinquished their identity as a space for alternative art in search of a new identity. Since they admit lacking a definition of art, their conclusion is that they can no longer do what they used to. They would not be able to organise an exhibition of any kind, for they do

Espacio La Rebeca is an independent, not-for-profit space based in Bogotá, Colombia. The mission of this project is twofold: to provide a space of dialogue through which local artists might reach out to one another across a fragmented and dispersed set of institutional and social boundaries and to bring artists from abroad to Bogotá in order to establish a network of artists of diverse backgrounds whose work, nevertheless, demonstrates shared conceptual interests. The international scope of Espacio La Rebeca serves the dual function of enriching the local art scene and facilitating the access that emerging Colombian artists have to international art circuits.
www.michica.org

not feel up to distinguishing between which objects meet the requirements to be exhibited and which do not. Here we find another radical manifestation, but does it show even a trace of the artistic in it? Enlarging on the question: how artistic would it be for each of you to turn your private homes into open houses and offer them as public places, as spaces for artistic or social creativity, for instance? I believe there is an actual attempt launched from a quite abstract perspective, and that what Duplus intends to do is not so different from what others aim at through different means. All of our quests are addressed at creating society, at producing bonds. Yet not just any bonds, but one that is mediated through aesthetic production, even when it is not quite clear what exactly is aesthetic today, since our culture is unable to provide a clear-cut definition.

All of this also involves an aspiration that used to be restricted to religion. The already remote disconnection between art and religion left bourgeois art in a state of crisis, so to speak, for this type of art does not seem able to consolidate something transcendental, a spiritual atmosphere that may replace the dead God. In fact, it keeps threatening to just show something

pretty, and nothing else. It could be said that this stands for a change where design has replaced metaphysics. The notion of religare, about which you must have often heard, the idea of re-connecting people, of creating community, which was one of religion's general functions, seems to have taken on another hue when it comes to "art as a net". Now it is indeed about creating community, though not to frame it into some doctrine or other, but rather to picture what another lifestyle could be like, and what it could be like if we were reunited again – if we ever were actually united. It is on this level that the affective and the emotional issue find a place.

This quasi-religious function becomes interesting only if it can be understood as a demystified, thoroughly secularised matter. Should this be the case, the function quickly shifts onto a political level. It aspires to experiment with the constitutive power that the political sphere, such as we know it, seems to be in bad need of. This also explains why our own discourse shows some sort of inflation regarding "institution", a word that is cautiously uttered and that arouses a certain amount of suspicion. It would seem as if when one institutes something, one has invalidated from the start. The idea is to sustain the moment when this movement has not yet solidified, the moment when the institution is still in a state of magma, for when it has been constituted it is no longer useful, it has lost its capacity of circulation, and has become petrified. It is obvious that there is a tendency to privilege circulation over institution; still, paradoxically, the latter guarantees the former, for it would be unable to exist by itself in a void.

This is one of the political problems affecting art. It cannot dispense with institutions and neither can it support them. Additionally, it lacks the capacity to create effective political institutions, and this, in turn, thwarts its ambitions to intervene in the public sphere. However, this draw-

back finds its balance thanks to the fact that art can and does act as a stimulus for us to imagine what good societies would be like. This is indeed an advantage, insofar as the specific language of art highlights the borders of bad societies; that is, of the ones we live in.

The spaces herein represented are at risk in a symmetrical way with that of great institutions, and even with that of the worst kind. The danger is associated to the fact that space may become much more important than anything it contains or that it intends to exhibit or originate. When it comes to the worst kind of institutions, this is confirmed in increasingly visible, material, obscenely concrete ways. A case in point is Guggenheim at Bilbao, where nobody really cares about what is inside the building, for what really appeals to the public lies in the building itself. This stands for an extreme case illustrating what can happen when, rather than focusing on aesthetic aspects, one becomes obsessed with the institutional, with space, or –to put it more clumsily– with the building. One significant risk is that the net may become more important than its contents, thus acquiring the status of a fetish so that what can be found in it or what it can generate no longer matters.

Finally, I feel bound to insist on the issue of art understood as a net –this reconstitution or institution of bonds through art that is comprehended to some extent, and that may not even be clearly and permanently comprehended. This issue cannot be suitably assessed outside the context of the unspeakable destruction of bonds we have experienced in our countries of origin over the last twenty or thirty years. In the course of our meetings, whenever we brought up the subject of setting up projects within the urban space, the starting point was one and the same: the city had been closed. Bogotá perhaps provides an extreme example. It was here that Michèle's efforts to generate society demand the kind of energy that she

now feels she cannot cope with. It is in no way easy to generate bonds in Bogotá: the city proves to be an unbeatable case of privatisation and of domestic confinement owing to a series of factors it shares with other countries in addition to its own particular setbacks, such as overriding violence.

Even when a city may seem to open up to the world, as is the case with a seaside resort like Rio de Janeiro, for example, creating a space for alternative art, like Helmut did, laid more emphasis on setting up a stand half-way between the dwellings and the beach than in trying to lure people out of their homes. Because of the way he devised it, people necessarily had to walk past the stand on their way to the beach. Thus, for a few seconds, people traversed an "aesthetic" place that enabled them to connect with one another differently from the way they did on the beach. Helmut insisted that his city is also a victim to privatisation. Most entertainment activities have been privatised, and he also told us –and this is another extreme case– that many streets have been shut out because owners of neighbouring buildings block the way with a security guard. Thus, the city gradually renounces its already scarce public spaces. Helmut's is an unusual proposal: his home offers a cosmopolitan atmosphere welcoming artists from every place in the world, even though their initiatives are not restricted to a specific physical space. They go wherever they deem more suitable for their initiatives, although Espacio Capacete, fostered by Helmut Batista, now offers headquarters other than a private home.

It goes without saying that here, in Buenos Aires, institutions are very much distrusted. There are many that think that institutions are harmful, since, ultimately, they create themselves and their only achievement is destruction of some sort. Recent events in our political history have contributed to spread this feeling; still, I wonder whether systematic distrust may last over time.

Espacio Aglutinado, established in Havana in 1994, appears as an emergency space for culture. It purports to develop a fresh, free style of curatorship away from the rules and constraints that were predetermined by the official standards. Located at the home of two Cuban artists, it combines, in one and the same space, family life, and all sorts of cultural activities, such as works by emerging marginal artists and works of well-known artists, regardless of their place of residence.

The project aims to attract artists from the most diverse milieus, and to have them participate in both local and international activities. This makes it a proposal of non-governmental, alternative circulation in Cuba.

<http://www.thing.net/~cocofusco/espacioag.html>

This is one of the greatest challenges to be met by Duplus, but the problem involves the whole of Argentinean society. This is the reason for the specificity of Duplus' discourse. It can be articulated in our circumstances but not in Chile, for instance, where, in my view, institutions are endowed with a different sense and depth. In Chile it is still possible to stage an exhibition like the one organised by the "Hoffmann's House" group, expressing a most original questioning of museums.

They told us that they had started by buying a prefabricated wooden hut, a typical precarious dwelling for popular sectors. In Chile these houses are called "gables" and said to have been designed by a Mr Hoffmann whose name was adopted by the group. They installed it in various areas of the city, such as in a square located in an exclusive neighbourhood, on the pavement where the Housing Agency stands, and in a recreational park. The circuit ended at the museum, on whose walls they leaned the hut. They achieved a remarkable image, for it seemed as if the hut had run aground at the museum after a long urban navigation that could also be understood as a social vicissitude. In a way, this can be equated to art's social vicis-

situdes throughout its history: it arises in a rich neighbourhood and ends up in a museum. In addition, it gives rise to a number of questions addressed at other groups in that it inverts the operation by turning a private home into a public space. It provided the opportunity to visit the hut, where children played and artists held short exhibitions. Thus, a private home, so personal and isolating under neo-liberalism was opened to public use through the artists' choice to represent it as a public promenade. Hoffmann's House turns the home into a parody, a denunciation and an itinerant gallery which embodies, at one and the same time, a piece of art and a comment on art.

Perhaps some of the issues dealt with here sound rather abstract, but I found them relevant to attempt a particular reading of our discussions during the conference. I have not done fair justice to two extraordinary experiences which, with enormous effort, seek to install a space for independent art. One of them, named Espacio Aglutinador, is located in Havana, and the other is an exhibition platform in a working-class neighbourhood in Santiago de Chile [Galería Metropolitana]. Both seek to enlarge the boundaries of the art circuit, usually confined to rich or central city neighbourhoods. In both cases, a family house offers a public space with the resulting financial and organisational difficulties it is bound to meet, to say the least. Both these spaces run the risk of being incorporated –and therefore, neutralised– into the art routine agenda of their respective cities. This is why continuous interaction between Galería Metropolitana and its immediate social surroundings is decisive to its fate. On the other hand, it is crucial for Espacio Aglutinador to defend an independent meeting place and an exhibition policy that is not ruled by the changing official winds.

I regret these deficiencies; still, I would like to say that Francisco's previous intervention (our

Mexican friend), helped me to mitigate them while shedding light on what I myself wanted to voice. I am grateful to him as well as to you for your patience in listening to my unravelling a number of not altogether satisfactory reflections. It was most stimulating to me to learn about your experiences, for they speak of great generosity, of an urge of a different mode of sociability, and of a better fate for art, now a prisoner of money and prestige wherever we look.

José Fernández Vega

Philosophy PhD. from University of Buenos Aires, where he also lectures regularly. He holds a tenure as a researcher at CONICET.

TRAMA

The war of Metaphors

Francisco Reyes Palma

For the purpose of this encounter, designed to constitute co-operation networks among Latin American artists, curators and cultural activists, I was requested to participate so as to contribute my reflections on the difficulties of "translation" in contexts that claim to bear similarities with each other. The mere thought of translating ourselves made wonder whether we all belong in a unified linguistic network, inserted in a community of more or less homogeneous contexts. No doubt, the proposal engineered a play between similarities and differences, a Latin American "we" composed of many others, and a set of relations between text and context.

Apart from the fact that there is a correspondence between every cultural fact and an act of translation, I regard translation as a connecting task between realms of signification that would otherwise remain isolated. Translation is a state of between-languages; an initiative seeking to find proximity among senses as well as people, making language to communicate by itself.

Starting from this attempt at translation, I shall linger a while on some of the terminology used in the document on which this encounter was based and which provided the identifying features of the intervening independent management groups. "Context", included in the said terminology, is a decisive word in terms of the group network, since it tends to be associated to the notion of a surrounding reality, whose existence ineluctably imposes itself on us. Nobody would normally doubt that the context is present. However, it is available to us only as a construction of the mind or as act of creation, though it is as important as the text. The only existing context arouses

from an intense effort of selection and forgetfulness. When we offer a definition for "group", we tend to supplement it with something that appears familiar to us: Latin America as a reassuring context; a geography where we can gather and feel welcomed in a linguistic sense. Hence, we are faced with a problematic notion when it comes to translating Latin America with its various geopolitical and cultural characteristics, its language varieties, different historical experiences and multiple cultural projections.

Ultimately, the setting of Latin America into a union of differences is not really fruitful on the field of negotiation when it comes to international exhibition circuits. And this is because we are subordinating a number of nations to a common naming, then to grant the same amount of space to whichever European country, even to the tiniest one, which disposed of its name in an independent manner. Even the term "Latin" that names populations of Hispanic origin in the United States of America; I mean, even that sort of third-rate identifying trope originated by the dynamics of what is "politically correct" and its corresponding shares of power, is made to compete with the whole of Latin America. This is a delirious equivalence. In practical, daily terms, the narrow scope of the notion of Latin-America is intended to be mended through an extension reaching what is Iberian-American; i.e., by incorporating the Spanish element.

Bearing in mind one question (How do our most prominent researchers represent Latin America?), I reviewed some texts that constitute a part of cultural studies and cultural sociology in an attempt to extricate weighty, solid concepts that might aid translation. That initial moment became a language experience. To my surprise, after a tracking glance, strategic terminologies taken from diverse places came together in a meaningful bloc.

What I mean to say is that I found a level of metaphorical enunciation with a strong corporal accent, a terminology that is being commonly used, and one that, in some way, defines a living organism, characterised by discontinuity, subordination,

asymmetry, hybridisation, and heterogeneity. This organism was, at the same time, marginal, distorted, disproportionate, emerging, peripheral, informal, or dependent. I am aware of the fact the persistent recurrence of these expressions stemmed from the pressing need to explain to ourselves the features of our modernity. Still, seen as a whole, they referred me to the existence of the Latin American bloc as a unit in a hatching, incomplete state, when it is still blurred, unbalanced, broken, odd; even monstrous and inferior. An attempt at explaining these marks ends up by colonising us anew, drawing us back to the ancient imaginary of the Conquest with its savages, barbarians, and aberrations of Nature.

This part of my analysis was restricted to a cross-wise reading for the sake of separating terms regardless of author, original source, or degree of academic recognition. Seen thus, it did not make any difference whether the words named collective subjects or social processes inside the immense geopolitics called Latin America. In the end, the experiment resulted in a sample of conceptual teratology brandished by our collective intellectual, whose phantom portrayal offers a clear example of the way in which we are spoken by language, and of how discourse, even if it deals with liberation, recolonises us through our own writing.

Group, nation, and history

I find that wondering about the search of cohesive elements might provide good grounds to search for shared meanings; that is to say, such common elements as enable us to translate ourselves. Frederic Jameson outlines some explanatory principles on the matter:

[...] In no way does the concept of a national allegory stand for a nostalgic repetition of the old yearning for an organic community. In fact, the issue at stake is that of a community or group, but such a group may come into existence because it shares a given situation, a set of contradictions, a long-term social crisis or a situation involving aggression or oppression. It is

only on the basis of shared danger that a group can be constructed. (1)

If nations are communities bound together by shared fears, when they constitute regional blocs, as is the case with Latin America, they become enlarged communities of fear. Nowadays, regardless of language, territory, inhabitants, and the legal enforcement aimed to keep cohesion and order, the nation viewed as a factor of identification arouses profound distrust amid a fundamental portion of cultural formations. This standpoint is complemented by anti-state control thesis of globalisation, where it is imperative that planetary space be reformulated. Along these lines, each territory is defined as a boundless void deprived of autonomy, sovereignty, or national identities that might hinder the free flow of the market(2).

This use of spatiality as one of the fictions of power tends to facilitate new forms of generalised spoliation, but the paradox here lies in the fact that the United States of America, the world power that most emphatically insists on its efforts to eradicate all discourse rooted in nationality, behaves like a huge chauvinist enterprise. In this capacity, it closes its frontiers to migration, deploys a set of protectionist barriers that favour its economy alone, and swamps its people with national symbols on the grounds of the threat imposed by external terrorism.

There does not seem to be much dialogue between cultural groups and nation in our days. Artists and curators dispense with national representation in international forums, apart from the national rooting characteristic of the past. There are artists who take advantage of their double nationality, or who participate in these events as members of national groups that are not theirs, under a foreign flag. Rejection of nationality becomes manifest in the works themselves. Both curators and artists have come under the flag of denationalisation. We should then wonder what aspects of threat and fear intervene in the formation of groups and group networks. While it is true the scale of these

phenomena is much smaller than that operating on nations, this does not mean that they lack cohesive elements or aggregation of factors.

Mexico's recent history seems to provide us with the counterexample for the rejection of nation, understood in the allegorical terms maintained by Jameson. A neighbour to the American aggressive power, Mexico lost over half of its territory in the 19th Century, with the resulting exacerbation of national sentiment. Later on, with "the first revolution in the 20th Century –the civil upheaval known as "the Mexican revolution"- the theme of unity returned to the limelight. Moreover, it took on marked cultural hues that still influences our history: suffice it to think of the heritage of collectives by muralists and engravers.

As was to be expected, reaction to a twofold source of threats (external attacks and the multiplication of internal factions) resulted in artists and intellectuals being absorbed by the State apparatus, though not in a unilinear fashion. Thus, Mexican art and culture became privileged instruments for the restoration of the social tissue, avoiding domestic disintegration and putting a stop to external threats. I am raising the issue because one of the key facts to understand today's Mexican culture is still to be found in the problem of cohesion and cultural grouping as historical memory. One cannot but feel surprised at finding that the country enjoys unshakeable peace amid a chain of crises, above all, the aboriginal movement uprising that has not subsided for the last decade even though it has suffered the genocidal brutality of low-intensity warfare.

Nevertheless, Mexican rejection of the national is ever stronger, almost irrationally so. No differences are established between the strategic nature of the cohesive force necessary for survival in an environment of external and domestic commercial looting and old patriotic-holiday manipulative behaviours. There is no differentiation between cultural homogenisation mechanisms engineered by the State and the fight for autonomy carried out by national minorities. There is no effective official opposition to the violence exercised on the borders, but there

Galeria Metropolitana is a private space for the exhibition and dissemination of contemporary art. Its name, "Galeria Metropolitana", points to the purpose of setting itself up as a centre, disrupting the spatial distribution that excludes the periphery. Its critical-and-parodic operation brings about a tension between the local and the global from a "dis-located" centre. Standing on the periphery of Santiago de Chile – the Pedro Aguirre Viva Cerda popular municipality – the gallery occupies a metal barn. The building was conceived following the notion that it should work as an extension of an actual household, thus reproducing a typical behaviour of popular sectors: i.e. to adapt the home in order to have a space where some kind of work can be done. In this case, it is about an art gallery. By reviewing, disassembling and enlarging the systems of cultural stratification (art/social class: high culture/popular culture), this space intends to deconstruct the concept of what an art gallery should be. galeriametropolitana@hotmail.com

is a complaisant attitude on the face of mediatic mythologies like the cult of Frida Kahlo.

Unlike nations under open military siege, the rest of the countries undergoing experimental globalisation should become aware that they are, in fact, besieged nations, at least in an economic sense. As from there, they should recognise a scenario of invisible wars as a condition that, with equal intensity, affects the survival of cultural networks. But the system possesses the quality of promoting substitute spheres; the one related to international art is a unit characterised by a frivolity stemming from its connection with typographic and interior design, fashion parades, and architectural works signed by renowned professionals.

If the only thing that remains intact, in almost everybody's view, is the feeling that the State as an agency is on the verge of extinction, then perhaps the only threat suggested by the documents in which the groups briefly described their work is to be found in the institutions of art. I do not mean the fear of being engulfed by the large apparatus of bureaucratic inertia, but merely a slight suspicion to contract the institutional as if it were some kind of infection. Likewise, there are some misgivings about structures offering private sponsorship. Margin and institution occupy the relevant level, the level of opposites. Both artists and promoters

of culture are recognised as independent, liminal, civilian associations. They forswear the institution's systemic and coercive structure except when it plays its project-funding role. The obvious question is whether the institution itself is a mode of management that keeps rejecting change, incapable of interstitial transformation. Still, are there any worrying issues other than assessing whether the establishment of group networks actually stands for a renovated institutional form? Rather than go into this quandary, I would prefer to move into another dimension. Michel Foucault's visionary perspicacity noticed that, during the Cold War era, there was a change of course from disciplinary society towards control society, a characterisation that was taken up later on by Gilles Deleuze. I will not pause too long at control society except to highlight the straggling nature of its domination, its control over marketing, its machine-based surveillance, the end of institutions, the dominance of informatics, the disappearance of frontiers and the reckoning of humans as a recording and determination factor to access. (3)

However, recent historical events like September 11 lead us to take notice of the emergence of unprecedented factors that foreshadow a new aspect of control society. By this I mean the manipulation of terror, a stage of the social field dominated by oversized arbitrariness, with markets operating under illegality or usury, migrations moving forced by a state of emergency, and wars that go against international Law. Likewise, administration of production lies one step away from administration of death, through new experimental wars whose target is the civilian population. Their chosen weapon is terror, and their aim is to wear away both the unity of the family and the consistence of groups and inhabitants alike. Perhaps the future nature of management networks should be envisaged within this changing framework. Will communities of resistance be able to gloss over demands for defensive action when confronted with networks involving dread, or even terror?

Our efforts at translation will have to reshape the term "cohesion" together with its multiple connotations. The cultural network, just like the notion of Latin America, keeps its motherly, friendly quality, but it is clear that we are faced with such harsh situations that no alibi will open a route of escape or defence.

From tribes to networks, and on to corporate tribes

Following population growth and prestige bestowed upon artists as professionals, there has ensued a population explosion of professional ranks that contend for the pieces of what is usually known as the field of art. They first seek for local recognition and then for international acknowledgement or, conversely, they struggle for recognition abroad in order to ensure a special status in their countries of origin. Artists, curators, and critics alike cannot set themselves free from the expectation to stand out within this excessively rarefied environment. Still, the decision to define future careers and prestige lies more within the curators' scope, associated to the possibility of accessing visibility in exhibitions, biennials and fairs. Along these lines, the bare truth is that the skills involved in the game whose prize is to become a part of the prevailing trend may well burn out more energy than does the time devoted to the work itself. However, all in all, real assembly machinery can be deployed to achieve the effect of an actual work of art. Networks are apt to participate in the dispute for spaces through new forms of grouping together, with a sort of marketing approach gathering the largest possible number of specialists, disciplines and sponsorships under very flexible structures (rather similar to holdings*) spread across control areas(4). This does not differ much from what is happening to certain groups which, libertarian as their discourse may be, are bent on monopolising support, commissions, and recognition. The electronic network model, originated from a

* [In English in the original]

Cold War experiment intending to maintain communication at work in case of a nuclear attack, unleashed a world-wide informatics revolution as soon as it was introduced into the civil society, bringing along its own virtual space –cyberspace– and its surveillance technologies. Hence, speaking about the network implies assuming a relational system, a system of unstable power at play. And it is a long time since formal economies have been operating as a network, not to mention informal economies such as drug trafficking, sex tourism, or child prostitution, to cite just a few examples. It goes without saying that, in more modest ways, the industry of great art is also inserted within the same reticular system. Having reached this point, it might be useful to appeal to some sort of clarity regarding terminology. It was not by chance that Foucault adopted a dual version of power, with its positive aspect, as a productive deployment of strategies, tactics and technologies: a lasting exercise of the act of resistance; a state of friction among individuals and among forces in a permanent state of rearrangement. Power exists only in relational terms; when resistance ceases, power is no more. Conversely, seen in its negative aspect, power was reduced to the sheer presence of the State, or to the imposition of legal codes, to an aggregation of control and repression. Power as negativity then took on the characteristics of an emanation. Our vocabulary is deeply rooted in substantialism, which transforms the said power into something liable to being snatched, attacked, hoarded, and even bequeathed.

Curatorship: an enlarged notion

The old-fangled term "curator", which initially referred to the function of taking care of works of art, enjoys a special receptivity for new meanings. We can now speak of an aggregation of instrumental power that enables the curator to reshape the realm of creation, and even to propose views of possible and impossible worlds. In the essay that I submitted to the Conference held under the name *Del malestar de la cura* -

Hoffmann's house is a cultural experience that intends to create a consistent space for the analysis and discussion of the contemporary art scenario in Chile. It works towards this aim by suitably funding, promoting, or locating experimental art productions. Artists participating in the project try thus to address the "Chilean State" for the return to democracy has not yet prompted the State to undertake the role that culture deserves and should have by rights. In order to promote this research, a "Basic Dwelling", made of wood and painted white, has been installed as a space for the arts. Its 18 square metres have made it possible to show emerging production but, above all, they have brought to light art's lacks, wishes, and references, which –in a seemingly globalised society- exceed all local referents. www.hoffmannshouse.org

duria, I concluded that, since the global art system was actually in charge of control, there was nothing but struggle so that "the curator does not become yet another piece of waste in the global society, and [that we should] consider his projection as a cultural activist, an heir to two significant traditions: the freedom to propose initiatives grounded on creative autonomy and knowledge, and the connectivity of networks, both turning him into a liaison agent among initiatives undertaken by artists' communities and audiences; among institutions, enterprises, and new technologies. The curator should build rhizome-like rather than horizontal spaces, thus aiding to revert the patterns of a culture that is being threatened by global standardisation, war, and spoliation(5).

Almost a year after I wrote my paper, the considerations aroused by this meeting prompt me to be more precise in my remarks. Curatorship is a symptom of profound changes in the field of professional specialisation; it also points to ongoing events in the museum institution, one of the most representative mediators in the cultural field. In addition, the curator has been a mobile, connecting agent, because of his readiness to slip between networks made of various devices: the museum or the art gallery and the mass media; entertainment

and the Academy; critique and fashion; the artist and audiences; knowledge and technologies; the art market and the cultural industry. To a certain extent, it is demanded that the curator be a builder of more horizontal relational spaces. However, the linearity is the same, only that it is thought of as recumbent. Perhaps the rhizome notion is more productive, as it evokes deconstructurisation and absence of control.

From the very beginning, the curator has been a split figure, used to connecting dissimilar spheres. He originated from the dematerialization of artistic practice and from a conceptual proposal that validates him as a new kind of creator. On the other hand, he profits from the reshaping of the museum institution in accordance with the demands posed by the arts' avant-garde without losing the mediating power that enables him to act as an instrument of knowledge. In this capacity, he will classify, separate, arrange, divide, and distribute over time and space. For hundreds of years, these tasks have provided artists' works with scale, value, and visibility, while the museum, for the same purpose, counted on the support of other institutions pertaining to the world of art, history, and critique. Nevertheless, we shall have to distinguish among discourse, space, and discursiveness of spaces. In this sense, the curator has transformed the ground where cultural action occurs, and has become a crossing-point, a novel area of indistinctness directed at symbolic production. In fact, I had already noticed the "no place" characteristic in the most recent modes of the museum as a franchise. I now extend it to the curator, together with biennials and art fairs as offshoots of the museum at the point where it comes together with world fairs, thematic parks, and the market. We then reach a globalised version: the metacurator, whose arrogance is as inflated as his assumed power. Before equating the curator with the action of self-management networks, we shall have to consider the above characterisation. We shall also have to think whether management, autonomous though it may be conceived of, does not end up by moving as a more flexible institutional variable,

but still in association with formats redolent of administration and control.

Ubiquity of power

To assume that concentration of power occurs only in institutions is as narrow-minded as to locate it only in one isolated historical event. According to Foucault, we are dealing with a uniform, extensive element. In part, the translation work will consist in establishing bonds between time and space as dynamic expressions of the exercise of power. That some countries are eternally condemned to be the past strengthens the "metropolitan" idea of their novelty and modernity (metaphors about time applied to the social). Thus, newness becomes incompatible with the notion of tradition. It is a proven fact that we in Latin America can creatively interchange modernity and tradition, even though American hegemonic discourse, out of deficiency rather than of precision, only asserts the tradition of what is new. Countries like Mexico, with its strong indigenous tradition, tend to claim ownership of an exotic utopia: an eternal "trans-time", so to speak, and this is what they exploit as a novelty at the moment of gigantic exhibitions. Just like the museum, modernity determined its own forms of order and temporality; in some way or other, we should take it upon us to break them down. How to deal with such avant-garde elements that adhere to Saturn's principle of devouring his own offspring (in other words, to massacre trends? And just not to overlook the other avatar of Saturn the Titan by the name of Cronus, how are we to connect with the avant-garde's fondness for progress, evolutionary echoes included? The choice lies in rejecting eternal return as well as the linearity of avant-garde progress. The possibility of taking the lead, of being an avant-garde –a derivation of warfare terminology– is denied to Latin America. It would seem as if we were naturally destined to backwardness, to retreat. The avant-garde is a conservation area pertaining to the modernistic model, and therefore requires a rear-guard. And this is located in the Third World, since the Second World was vacated during the

Cold War, when the socialist bloc decided to leave it out of its ideological habitat, in the words used at the time.

Perhaps we feel more comfortable accessing other temporal cycles implying return and repetition, the cycles of fashion adopted by the world of art, for in these the option of "being alternative" –i.e., of becoming invested with otherness– is viewed as a valuable feature in the market of the season's novelties.

When it is not time that drags us towards difference, then space will. This is why I would prefer to include, in this set of terminologies, particles like the prefix "sub" – preceding words like underdevelopment*, subcontinent, or subaltern. According to cartography as a spatialised form of domination, the notion of South appears to be debased. Do you remember the map of the world upside down? A simple little thing like a turn of the co-ordinates, and our assumptions about the size and pre-eminence of countries also takes a turn. Even the scale measurements change.

Global and glocal are metaphors about space that have already been adopted into the language of networks and groups. "Glocal" denotes the impossibility of being global, of fully and truly belonging in the imaginary of language that permeates the whole of contemporary life. Again, "glocal" is hybrid born from the crossing of species, as one of its components is related to "local" while the other refers to "global"; when all is said and done, it is a half-caste word. When you do not have what is necessary to be one, so you are two, then you are another aspect of the barred Other, a contrasting figure with the roundness of globality, which keeps to itself the total equilibrium of shape: the perfect sphere.

We find yet another invention of power in the establishment of centrality as a reserved right. At the time of distribution, we were given the "periphery" and, suddenly, a new phenomenon occurs. Culture is driven off the centre; perhaps this decision is only a tactical measure meant to conceal control

* [subdesarrollo]

CAPACETE Entertainment proposes exhibiting and producing the works of conceptual artists and of new conceptual artists by resorting to multiple artistic strategies, facilitating self-introduction of national and international art groups, recording their production, aiding the construction of the artists' historical heritage and making it available to the public. Management constitutes its own contents.

Capacete Entertainment explores the interfaces between the city and the image (whether mobile or static), the word (whether written or spoken) –examining the constant changes of scene of the City centres in their counterpoint between narrative and place, language and location, politics and collective sensibility, fiction and architecture, the social and public space, nature and technological advances. Such projects as are developed by Capacete Entertainment aim to become one with the city, transforming it, mapping it anew, going over it in a different way, turning the urban area into a history circuit through personal experience.

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mechanisms and, perhaps, it drags along the peripheral tails. However, the idea of de-centring has turned out to be so attractive that it has inspired the geometric growth of biennials and art fairs.

The network as heterotopy?

Overwhelmed as we feel by the construction and maintenance of our own organisations, it is not often that we are able to situate micropolitical action in long-term prospects. However, I think that resorting to heterotopy as a matrix for reflection might help us to think of the role of metaphors about space and time (always side by side in their relation to power) so as to approach their operational quality.

Originally, heterotopy was the word that anatomists used to name displaced organs. When Foucault availed himself of this notion to deal with space in a broad sense, he discarded the reference to the initial anomaly and turned the concept into the place where the whole set of cultural environments are represented, discussed, or inverted. This fictitious spatiality enjoys full existence and materiality(6) .

At times, the French thinker seems to be dealing with an issue that originated in surrealist paradoxes, and whose purpose was to foster the encounter of heterogeneous spaces; the juxtaposition of the

incompatible at one and only place, like Borges did, with that peculiar atmosphere of alienation and familiarity all at once.

The very looseness of the term facilitates the connection among places that were seemingly opposed: the garden and the Turkish baths; the cinema, the brothel, but also prison as an area where control can be perfected. Our attention is drawn by a special variety of spaces, the hetrochronies. This feature is shared by the typical 19th Century museum and the pantheon; the former gathers different time planes, whereas the latter establishes total detention of duration.

The network itself acts as a threshold, the place where all places meet and dialogue about collaborative practices and cultural resistance. The alternate place offers the possibility of keeping up endless processes of movement, of enthusiastic resistance where the important thing is the fact of moving rather than the performance of each group or individual. However, there is some likelihood that the wandering silhouette of the nomadic artist will meet the new spatial device that Foucault relates to a ship. This is the point of "heterotopy par excellence", the "place no-place", and a space that is constantly floating and constantly adrift, yet fraught with the capacity to encourage the imaginary(7).

Overwhelmed by the construction and sustenance of our own organisations, it is not usual to locate micro-political action within long-term perspectives; however, I think that using heterotopy as a matrix for thought would be helpful for us to think of the role of metaphors of space and time, always hand in hand as regarding their relation to power, and it would also aid us to approach their operational force.

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Notes

1. His conception of national allegory in the work of art refers us, "instinctively or unconsciously," to a collective situation and to its political consequences, such as art of compromise. Frederic Jameson, "Transformaciones de la imagen en la posmodernidad," in *Revista de crítica cultural* # 6, Santiago de Chile, March 1993, p. 24.
2. Globalization is no more than a slogan, a metaphor. Still, like every other fictional term, it creates effects of reality that affect concrete lives. Its inconsistency will only become perceivable through the collapse of the symbolic web on which it is supported.
3. Gilles Deleuze, "Posdata sobre la sociedad de control," in *El lenguaje literario*, Christian Ferrer (comp.), Montevideo, Nordan, 1991.
4. There is an amazing number of new interconnections. We would have to resort to a network census to realise the low profile of the ones dedicated to culture or to so-called art.
5. Francisco Reyes Palma, "Estrategias curatoriales," paper submitted to the *Del malestar de la curaduría* Conference, *Curare Journal*, space for the critique of art, #22, Mexico City, July-Dec. 2003.
6. Michel Foucault, "Des espaces autres," in *Dits et écrits, 1954-1988* (lecture, 1967; first published in 1984). Paris, Gallimard, 1994, vol.IV.
7. Op. cit., vol.IV, p. 762

