

minimal or maximum gestures or expenditures, subtle and, in many cases, fleeting dislocations.

## **SITTING ABROAD - SENTADO EN EL EXTRANJERO** **Erik Gongrich**

First part: What's really necessary to add to reality? Is there any need as an artist to add something to all the found situations, objects, sculptures, etc. in public space? How much are found situations already art or architecture? How do I create as an artist a relationship between the public space in a city and myself? In this first part I would like to present some of the found situations, objects, sculptures, etc. and some of my works focusing on the artistic interventions in the urban context. That means how I changed specific situations in public institutions and how I developed guided tours through different cities. These presentations are: „Ready- Mix" was an exhibition 1997 in a pavilion and the public space in the center of east-Berlin.

I placed different foam objects and billboards in public space and made a specific guided tour through the backyards of the center of east-Berlin along these signs. The whole formerly east part of Berlin changed a lot at that time which means it got „westernised". „Interface Rue du Chevaleret" 1998 in Paris was an intervention in two different institutions. It also included a guided tour through these institutions and the district where they are located. The whole district got massively gentrified in the last years. „Quadras y manzanas" was an installation in Fundacion Proa/ Buenos Aires which questioned the image of the city of Buenos Aires and used the interview-questions of „Sitting Abroad - Sentado en el Extranjero" written on a wall to answer directly on it. The show was accompanied by a bicycle-tour which was another way of using a tour to discuss the informal part of a city.

**Second Part: Sitting Abroad - Sentado en el Extranjero**, 2000 Is a research of several months in Mexico-city, Bogota and Buenos Aires which has been published as a book and presented in different installations. In interviews and photographs the complexity, the function and the use of public space is examined. The interviews focus on personal views on how people live with public space and how they imagine to change it.

Are there ideas or plans that are more than reality for you? Do you have hidden places in your city with a personal meaning/history? Has your favorite architect build in your favorite city? Which Science-Fiction-Films do you like most? Which street in your city is masculine which one feminine for you?, Which houses did influence you, especially in your youth?, Do you prefer city-maps or do you ask a taxi driver?, Did you ever had the feeling of being in the city of tomorrow?, Do you think an art work could be effective as city planning?, Which place, city and space a-e you dreaming of?, Does graffiti in public space bother you'?, ..." are some of the questions which I used in the interviews. They have been as well basic questions etc. start my work in Istanbul. Some of the answers of these interviews are going to be projected as text-slides together with image-slides. Excerpts of some interviews:

*Can you describe the daily route you take everyday in the city?*

I leave home - walk towards the office: chancellery, street 10 with road 6 (historic center)- and I walk all along road 7 up to the junction with 26. Then I walk from that corner up to the 72th (second center). From the 72th on, I have no clue what will happen to my life. Two sites (both centers). Moving from the historic to the contemporary, which is necessary, which I do everyday.

*Do you like city maps or do you prefer to ask along the way?*

I don't trust maps. I prefer the human filter

*Where do you prefer to sit in public space?*

In the floor, against a wall or in the windowsills, in those niches. I think these should be more public. There I feel safe. It is a matter of safety and image. I enjoy sitting in the windowsill. Contemporary life relies on scenery. To feel good, I must consider what is behind me, what surrounds me, as much as what I have ahead of me. As I sit in a building, the building becomes my context and I must like the building. It's like a conversation between the building and the user. *Franklin Aguirre, artist, Bogota.*

*Can you describe the daily route you take everyday in the city?*

I call the elevator. The door opens. I go 14 floors down, walk four meters, get on a taxi. I try not to talk to the driver. I pay five pesos, get off the cab, walk ten meters and I arrive to my office. *Ferhmann Silvia, Press Goethe-Institut, Buenos Aires.*

*Can you describe the daily route you take everyday in the city?*

I live in the Nápoles neighborhood. It's a neighborhood of houses for one or several families built in the 50's. I walk ten minutes to Insurgentes Av. Then I continue in bus for 45 minutes until I arrive to Ciudad Universitaria, which is in the south end of the city in the middle of a ecological reserve. This hour by bus is an important for me as a thinking space.

*Did you ever experienced violence in public space?*

There exists an obscene exhibition of wealth and poverty. I'm happy for every person who plays music and doesn't rob me. *Peter Krieger, city, architecture and art historian, Mexico city*

*Can you describe the daily route you take everyday in the city?*

I have a night route for security reasons. But I have a route to say "hi" to my friends. In Bogota is better not to have always the same route, because that is "giving papaya". It is dangerous.

*Which is your favorite city?*

The Bogota which I like the most is a Bogota that combines prices, salaries, combines types of people, combines social classes, combines ways of transport, combines costs. The Bogota which I like the most is the one that blends and is no bigger than two percent of the city. The rest of the city labels and strongly excludes. If you live south, you are labeled. If you live north you are labeled. *Alvaro Suarez, architect, Santa Fe de Buenos Aires*

*Are there hidden places in the city that have a personal meaning for you?*

Some places are forbidden, for example the neighborhood of Santa Ines which is being demolish in order to do the Third Millennium Park. Now there are several social problems in this area of Bogota, for example homeless. There exist around 12,000 in this neighborhood. Neighboring areas like the "Sabana", "Estanzuela", "Pepita" are known as "la playa". If some-thing is stolen from you and you need it back go to "la playa" and you can buy it back. There they also rent spaces to sleep of two square meters. There is no bed, it is just to sleep indoors. People go because there they can meet with a stranger and find support and share a loaf of bread. I was walking with my nephew around the neighborhood and we met a group of mechanics. They asked us: "What are you doing around here?" I told him I was remembering the past with my nephew and he answered: "It is better if you look after your future, it is dangerous". They have their own laws that have nothing to do with the ones of the country, even if they are just three blocks away from the presidential palace. *German Bernal, interior construction craftsman, Santa Fe de Bogota.*

Can you describe the daily route you take everyday in the city? There is an alternative way into downtown, not going through the conventional streets. We call it the "Circunvalar". As the Americans say, it is a scenic road at the edge of the mountain that goes from north of the city into downtown. I

always take this route. It is the same always: from my house to the "Circunvalación", along the mountain and then into downtown in street 10. It is the only way to get there. It must be a level five road (for an upper class) of people that go to work in the downtown area and then until their homes in the north of the city. Nobody else uses this road because there is no public transport. José Ignacio Rocha, *curador museo Luis San Angel*, Santa Fe de Bogotá.

*Can you describe the daily route you take everyday in the city?*

The route I take everyday implies a thousand changes. From home to the street, from the sophisticate neighborhood to the market. From there to the subway. Then I meet with friends it means I must change a thousand times direction, going from one island to the next. Doris Steinbicher, Austrian artist, Mexico city.

Are there key experiences or journeys that allowed you to access to something new? It happens suddenly that I remember a situation and cant remember a situation and cant remember in which city it happened. That is why I think that loosing your way is the best way to get to know a city. For example, when I don't know any longer where I am and continue walking and walking and walking and don't know if I m walking on the right direction or not. For a strange reason in the end, I think this lonely situations in which I m. walking in a certain city, become fresh memories but sometimes don't even remember in which city they happened. Pedro Reyes, artist, Mexico City.

*Can you describe the daily route you take everyday in the city?*

What a terrible thing coming up to here Everyday from home up o here. I can almost not describe it as I go out, there is a six lane avenue with traffic all the time if I wake up with energy and feeling. OK. come here in the car with the music at its highest

singing, dancing. If not, if am anxious. I try to match every stoplight where they sale the newspaper to buy it. L come with the newspaper opened here, driving still with it But I really arrive here like through a tunnel of traffic. Osvaldo Sanchez curator, Mexico city.

Are there hidden places in the city that have a personal meaning for you?.

Two or three years ago, regional television channels started in Bogota. There are at least two. Then people started noticing how Bogota has really beautiful places. Places you can enjoy randomly but this satanization didn't allow you to see al these beautiful places. These situation must be created so people notice that we have a city even though with several problems but with beautiful things which other cities in Colombia do not offer. Julian Betancourt *Mellizo*, director of he Museum of Science an Play Santa Fe.

*Can you describe the daily route you take everyday in the city?*

In my house, going from bed to the living room.

*Where and how do you experiment the city in an erotic way?*

In the highway, yes Cecilia Alvis, architect, Buenos Aires.

*What is missing in your city? What would you like to change?*

This city has a serious problem of public ways in which to transit. There is no public space were you can feel or walk at ease. It's a city were you never feel at ease. In a poll we asked people. What do you do on the weekends? Nothing, I stayed at home. The 80- 90% of the people does not leave their homes. At night, this city is sex, drugs and violence. He who goes out to the street goes looking for one of the three.

*Where do you prefer to sit in public space?*

I walk plenty. Almost always, I am walking. I don't like to sit down in general, if you go to

the plaza, you'll notice that very few people are sitting down. People rather get together in groups to eat or talk, and talking is always done standing up.

*Do you prefer staying at small hostels or rather at large hotels?*

Large gives a safer- feeling. In a small hostel you never know if you get or leave the next day. Funny as it is, where there are more people. One feels much more at ease Ismael Ortiz. Santa Fe de Bogota.

*Did you ever-experienced violence in public space?*

Always, I believe it's a permanent occupation of the public space. I see it every day.

Today there is a stripe of land between the constructed towers and the river.

Afterwards comes Puerto Madero that is lower, and on the other side is the ecological reserve. Between buildings, after Puerto Madero and the ecological reserve. There still remains a free band of land. This band was privatized and last Sunday two towers appeared that are going to be larger than the already existing ones. These are closer to the river I hate Puerto Madero.

Yesterday I went because I had to go to the Catholic University and on my way back, on the cab, I saw that the Hilton Hotel is constructed in this area. So all that area that is park now, that used to be part of the -*Costanera Sur* - will become a line of private buildings. This happens constantly in Buenos Aires. I see all the line from.

Belgrano towards *El Tigre*, what they are doing in the area of el Nuñez, We must consider that Buenos Aires has three million inhabitants since 1949, There has been no growth. It is not necessary to construct. All is a big speculation. Gabriela Massuh, director of Culture Goethe- Institut, Buenos Aires.

*What do you like most of your city?*

Bogota has great communication networks I like that we are starting to care about the

city. I also like of Bogota the majority of women over men. It gives the city a feminine look. It creates an interesting sexual competence. You can see how between the woman from Bogota and the rest of the Colombian women from Bogota are more explicit. This makes the city much more mysterious, more erotic more gentle, stranger, and more seducing. *Armando Silva, sociologist. Santa Fe de Bogota.*

## **PARK FICTION** **Christoph Schäfer**

I would like to start with two slides that show how art is being challenged by everyday life. The first picture shows a small, expensive shopping mall in the heart of the city center of Hamburg. But there is secret yet monumental message hidden in this building from the early 80's. So, let's take a closer look.

The challenging thing in this picture is of course not the golden letters at the bottom "Hanse" –referring to the nostalgic past the hanse trade network that founded Hamburg's wealth in the renaissance time. The calling thing is inscribed right into the bricks above. Badly paid workers from Poland work on German construction sites and if you look precisely, you can see 5 letters here. P-O-L-E-N- Poland.

Having been in Mexico City for the first time and only for a couple of days now I feel challenges like this on every corner

Power is the ability to define a phenomenon and make it act in a desired way (HUEY p. Newton)

Henri Lefebvre, book "The Urban Revolution" – was an influence on the initial park fiction concept the urban revolution will supersede the industrial revolution. Lefebvre concept of -the urbanll corresponds in May points with the concept of the multitude. At this point I d jus like to line out, that urban space is being described as