

Interventionist residents- infotainment  
Tools Production of desires  
And: In bed with bureaucracy.

Because of the long time, since we started, and the realization of the park, the idea of collective production of desires has been seriously damaged. But the bureaucrats had another trick in their sleeves: they sold a building under the park to an investor with a taste for subcultural milieus as a misery backdrop for expensive gastronomic enterprises. The park area on top of the building has been fenced off since 2 years already, so construction of the park can not start. The investor aspires to use the Park Fiction area on his building for gastronomic yuppie events which we could stop and will fin means to stop in the future.

I would like to end my talk with a bit of skateboard philosophy. The skateboard is a genial and dumb invention, and I imagine, good art would work exactly like a skateboard: it is a device you nearly cannot use to move forward, and it is neither a sports device. But a board with wheels, that allows to use different urban facilities asphalt, concrete flower pots, abstract public sculpture, staircases for fun, and to interpret them in a different way at the same time. The fascinating thing is exactly the simultaneity of this form of functionality, that allows you to use the world in an unpredicted way, while at the same time, the world is redefined in a meaning making process. The ideal artwork functions like a device.

As precondition for skateboarding, you need a great amount of urban planning cures. Sealed up surfaces and concrete plains. For dead zones like this, the critical theory of the sixties only had the concept of "alienation", This alienation was answered with the utopian sentence "Under the pavement is the beach" (Unter dem Pflaster liegt der Strand). In the middle 80ies however, when skateboarding had radicalized extremely, an

independent skateboard company called itself "life is a beach" (paraphrase of "life is a bitch"). And the trick of skateboarding is of course, that the monolithic asphalt by the mythical city planning authority is transformed by skating it. Speed, skill and tricks, turn concrete into a soft and a very sensual thing it is being ridiculed. So the category of freedom appears in play full friction with real social conditions, crisscrossing through powers objectives voluntarily.

But advisable it is, to confront the mythical powers with trickery and recklessness (Benjamin)

## **ARE PUBLIC ART POLICIES NECESSARY?**

### **POLICIES FOR PUBLIC ART? Graciela Schmilchuk**

It has been stated that cultural policy making refers to the system of the state's action with clear goals and strategies articulated on the level of education, economics and the body politic. In Mexico, this system is bankrupt; neither the state nor any political party have shown themselves capable of understanding the task at hand or undertaking the transformations that the present time requires. Today we witness the mobilization of various social forces: artists, cultural and corporate groups launching initiatives. However, in political terms there seems to be a lack of both clarity and debate concerning the role culture in general and art in particular must play, though actions have clearly been taken.

These round table panelists offer some guidelines to discuss the topic at hand, one which is actually a question of policies for public art? Which makes me wonder: to what extent are policies concerning public art necessary or desirable if we consider art as a public issue?

Public art-as both a concept and a physical thing- has a very loaded history in Mexico as

in other parts of the world in spite of its current significance and the way its problems have been examined. That even the boundaries between art and non art are not clear lead the issue even more whether the field is city planning, sculpture, mural painting, actions or installations, basic questions, we must ask are how the changing boundaries between the public and the private or the lack of legislation and regulation in this regard affect everyone's art and life within cities. The state does not take on its role of arbitrator on behalf of everyone's interests but rather on behalf of only a few, by allowing for instance, the creation of new roads that encourage car culture or permitting excessive outdoor advertising or inversely, by refusing to acknowledge contemporary Mexican artistic experience committed to the social and public context. I.E. creative collectives, activists' printmaking urban performances and interventions, monumental sculpture programs, etc.

In this forum dealing with contemporary art, Gustavo Lipkau presents the controversial city-planning project *Mexico Ciudad* (Mexico, the City) We may then ask ourselves: how has the population participated in the discussion and conception of the project and what role will it play in the future? What is the place of artists and how will profession also from diverse fields of the social sciences and humanities take part in this debate?

On the other hand, what kind of demarche does the actions of independent individuals and groups suggest in terms of art and the body politic? Fernando Garcia de Ageing talks to us about Francisco Toledo's actions in Oaxaca, an outstanding case of involvement and shared responsibility in public cultural matters without the intervention of vested economic, political or image related interest, A case that also shows that one way we may take part in public policy making is by analyzing problems

speaking out discussing actions and thinking them through, establishing a good connection with the citizenry and recognizing its capacity for rapid mobilization, and eventually a certain amount of fundraising

Another topic or perspective we should discuss is the role that the art world lends to art within the city. Is the city viewed as an extension of contemporary art's field of experimentation and hermeticism? Or perhaps as a realm that encourages one to reflect out loud about the city's diverse aspects and to seek out new channels of involvement? Or, to quote Ferran Barenblit does contemporary art see the city as a synonym for a reality that reaches beyond the specific site in which it is deployed maybe even beyond its public and public policies?

And finally, what do we actually know about arts negotiation of space? Very little We need to follow up, do careful research in each specific area or neighborhood and in central municipal administrations in order to find out how the issue is dealt with and think of recommendations based upon this Without a doubt, greater cooperation between research institutes (in sociology anthropology and art and municipal governments is essential.)

In terms of the state's private sector's and citizenry's involvement in public art policy making, what most people would find hard to reject is the mere deepening understanding of art's role in the public sphere, including its political clout and the tendency to open new paths and create an atmosphere that fosters creation and participation.

267

#### **PUBLIC ART; WHAT FOR? Ferran Barenblit.**

As it turned out, I was asked to participate on the last day of the SITAC the only day