

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 instant, 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 field 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.

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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

when the topic at hand is indeed a question of policies for public art?

In a first instance, we must take into account that Europeans have grown increasingly distant from the notion that many of us had of the politicized citizen and are nowadays more often merely considered to be a city's or a state's consumers. The relationship that the individual establishes with his or her community is departing or, at least, we are led to believe that it must depart- from this idea of involvement, following instead another concept whereby the individual is merely consumer of the offers that are made to him or her. Thus, people's relationship with their environment is increasingly mediated by their use of the latter.

Art must work with the essential raw matter of reality. In a word aspiring to ever greater objectivity, art is a territory of political and civic resistance. When I use the term -political and civic resistance. When I use the term political I am referring to politics in both its narrow and broad sense: what everyone has in common including but not limited to traditional political work

We live in a world pushing us ever further towards objectivity- to accepting the existence of indisputable spaces of truth. The framework imposed by the capitalist system in which we live insists that absolute values must be viewed as unquestionable points of reference. The market has been established as the ultimate and only grounds on which to validate truth and objectivity: everything is and exists in terms of its value in a brutal economic space. Objects (but also ideas worrisomely enough) acquire or lose value in this global economic space that now governs our lives and thanks to which wars are declared without shame or mercy.

What role does art play in this setting? That of a space of resistance *vis à vis*. This condition of irrefutability continually thrust upon us art work is a stronghold of

subjectivity a space of resistance against the standardization of human relations and the globalization of emotions.

That is why we must reassert art's engagement with the real. Let us recall that Don Quixote, after all, lost his mind due to an excess of fiction, though this then endowed him with an extraordinary ability to see the real.

My friend and colleague David G. Torres ascribes to the following: that one of art's most effective processes is to put things between quotation marks. When Duchamp put a urinal on a stand, he was asking us to question the nature of an object whose use was so unquestionable in a way Duchamp set us on a very interesting course: in we call into question whether the urinal is a urinal then in fact we can call everything into question. As Torres states, we can even question whether the news on CNN is true or whether- as a well-known Spanish reporter says - that's how things were and that's how we've informed you of them.

What Duchamp was doing then, ultimately, was to open the way to ironic subversion. Pierre Cabane's well-known interview with him features the following dialogue.

PC: It seems that every time you decide to take a stance you qualify it by means of irony or sarcasm.

MD: Always. Because I didn't believe in it. PC: But what did you believe in?

MD: In nothing. The word "belief" is also a mistake. It's just like the word "Judgment". These are the two appalling things on which the Earth is based.

PC: In any case, do you believe in yourself?

MD: No

Duchamp's trust or reliance on irony is essential to understanding all contemporary art because it is an extraordinary weapon for dealing with the subjective- an instrument allowing one to be exactly indeterminate. Irony is not a universal process. It is not

something that quite simply “exists” as the great paradigm of objectivity likes to claim. Irony is something that “happens” and only if the speaker and the listener are willing to play the game of multiple interpretations irony is based on “maybes”, on taking the risk that one might or might not be understood.

Even defining irony is awfully difficult Irony does not have the same meaning here in Mexico as it does in Spain; its meaning has also changed over the past 100, 500 or 1000 years. Although irony is as ancient as thinking, oddly enough, over all these years, it is hard to draw the line between those who are in favor and against it.

Generally, we can say that irony happens when the speaker says one thing but might mean the contrary. Clearly, we are once again dealing with maybes—a situation in which the spectator is forced to think

I will venture three examples.

In 1991, Rogelio Lopez Cuenca was asked to come up with a -public sculpture project for the Universal Exhibition that was taking place Seville a year later. Expo -90 was supposed to be a visible sign marking Spain's definitive incorporation into Modernity after a long period of Transition. Lopez Cuenca's proposal did not agree with what those who had commissioned him surely had in mind. In the end, Do not Cross. Art Scene was rejected. It consists of a length of plastic tape that the artist uses to delimit public space, whether urban or rural. In the Expo's immediate context, this simple strip of plastic, costing close to nothing, cordoned off a few square meters of the Isla de la Cartuja — in the name of art — What happened here? In the name of untenable speculation, these same square meters were worth their price in gold, creating a strange paradox.

Indeed, Lopez Cuenca's goal, in his own word, was to ridicule the idea of art as an insular, autonomous territory “the exclusive preserve of professionals and specialists in

the field” By deciding quite arbitrarily to cordon off a zone that spectators were supposedly allowed to enter. Rogelio Lopez Cuenca posits a totally ironic situation: the work's nature negates its own materialization, Thus, he questions both accepted notions concerning the essence of creation and that of -the divorce between art and life

Another piece I should mention here is Javier Longobardo's Monumental Zaidin. As many of you know, Granada is a beautiful city in the southern Spanish province of Andalusia. It is located in a fertile valley backed by the Sierra Nevada- not too far from the extremely popular Costa del Sol indeed a setting beyond compare. Millions of tourists visit the Alhambra, the Albaicin and the historic area's narrow streets. Javier Longobardo's piece is a series of postcards of his city. However, rather than take pretty pictures of Arabic monuments,

He chose to represent the neighborhood where he lives- Zaidin, one of the city's lower-class neighborhoods whose various deficiencies can be rather obvious And yet, he gave his images the kind of visual treatment usually reserved for postcards of beautiful places. In fact, he says he does not understand why we always celebrate the exceptional rather than the everyday. The result is a playful take on the urban environment that doubles as a harsh critique. However, instead of resorting to direct criticism, Longobardo chose to use irony as the most effective weapon to face a complex reality.

The third piece I would like to discuss is Aparejo Antonio Ortega (the Antonio Ortega Technique) which you will soon be able to see in a show at the Laboratorio Arte Alameda. Ortega Has registered a design in his name that is simply a specific way of laying bricks to form a wall Ortega spent precious time and energy trying to find a new solution to the problem of bricklaying. According to experts

in the field (and they do indeed exist, as Ortega demonstrates with an extensive technical bibliography), there are only so many ways one can lay bricks to build a proper wall so that no bricks have to be cut in half in order to form right angles. Ortega figured out an as yet unforeseen way of doing this and he registered it in his name. He thus found a new solution to a non-existent problem. In fact, to something that no one had even considered as a problem. Did we actually need a new design? In a way, he reverts Duchamp's logic when the latter said that if there is no solution neither is there a problem.

The *Aparejo* Antonio Ortega has many possible readings. On the one hand, it treats the artist's role ironically and locates Ortega himself at the starting point of critical analysis. In fact, it is as gratuitous as Rogelio Lopez Cuenca's delimitation of a few square meters of urban space. The result is a piece that, playing with minimalist aesthetics, questions the "usefulness" of work in art.

As conclusions to the question proposed by the title of this conference (Policies for Public Art ?) I would like to put forth two ideas.

On the one hand, I believe we must have faith in art as an intellectual activity that generates discourse. We should resist the increasingly widespread temptation of the kind of art that simply illustrates other disciplines' discourse. This tendency posits art as a documentary activity- a machine that puts into images what philosophers, scientists and anthropologists think and say. We must claim a space for art and artists where they can generate their own discourse, or, better said, discourses.

On the other hand, I would like to venture an answer: this is not about marking work in the city but rather with the city. I believe we should not invade reality with urban sculptures or limit ourselves to documenting reality's processes. Art is an extraordinary

activity but means of which one can look at, analyze and alter the real. It should not be a passive spectator of the world in which it exists, but rather yet another actor on the broad political stage in which we live. Let us make art that deals with intensity. That studies the real, that reflects upon its reason for being and that emphasizes its contradictions.

PUBLIC SPACE IN JAPAN **Toshio Shimizu**

Introduction. Since the 1990s art is changing in Japan. Before that date, New York was the model young artists followed. Every month, art magazines reported the latest information on the most recent art from New York. However, since the 90s, New York has lost its preponderant position. Instead of art from New York we started seeing a larger range of art. The Japanese art scene opened up to works by young British artists from London or art from emerging Asian countries such as Korea and South East Asia.

Young Japanese artists started showing abroad. Tadashi Kawamata, Tatsuo IYAJIMA, Yasumasa Morimura, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Dum Type belong to the first generation of such artists. Foreign museums or international exhibitions presented these artists. They are artists who didn't follow the American model. They created an art based on Japanese traditional aesthetics but which showed new elements that could be appreciated in the international art world.

The most important change during the 1990s was that art started being shown outside of museums, mostly in cities, in what we call the -Public Space. It is curious that during the 1990 important museums of contemporary art opened in Japan in Hiroshima, Marugame, Mito and Tokyo.

They began to support contemporary artists and to open up possibilities for them. But at the same time people started to want to see art outside the museums. The Museum has lost its prestigious position in the art scene.