

wanted to distance ourselves from this model. The issue is divided into two parts: the first with proposals by the artists—some very interesting—while for the second part, we asked an architect specializing in designing spaces for children to contribute a text on how he sees his own creativity in architecture. We also invited a Scottish curator to participate. Rather than writing a text about children and creativity, she wrote a tale called *The Greedy Emperor*. The last page is by an Algerian artist and we printed it in phosphorescent ink, so children can read it at night, in the dark.

You can all find this on the magazine website www.versionmagazine.com, and you can download all previous issues.

The Same Fleas

Guillermo Santamarina

I don't like things the way they are. My capacity for surprise has diminished, or I've been stupefied by the art market's ulterior motives, or I'm bored of inadequate political quotas, or because maybe it's no longer possible to come up with another superficial derivative to go with the sofa, the mattress, Mr. Mattress, Mrs. Sofa... or maybe it's just because I'm bored, sorry... I'm making things up again.

Bored of artists and their total absence of risk and honest commitment, of art professionals, the bohemian mélange, the deluge, even the hip, cool and open-minded... enough already.

I read the Manifesto that Mathias Goeritz wrote in 1960 more than forty years ago and I can't help feeling the same way he did.

Check it out: "I'm tired of the pretentious imposition of logic and reason, functionalism, decorative calculation and, of course, all the chaotic pornography of individualism, the glory of the day and the flavor of the week, vanity and ambition, posers and artistic jokes, conscious and unconscious egocentrism, inflated concepts, the incredibly dull propaganda of isms and ists, figurative or abstract. also I'm tired of all the brouhaha about an art of deformation, the stains, the rags and pieces of garbage; tired of the preciousness of an inverted aesthetic that celebrates the exterior beauty of the wrecked and rotten; tired of all these interesting textures and empty games of a purely visual or tactile upbringing. no less tired of the abundant absence of the sensibility, with its opportunistic dogmas, that continues to flaunt its ability to milk the copy or stylization of a heroically vulgar reality for all it's worth. most of all, I'm tired of the artificial and hysterical atmosphere of the so-called art world, with its adulterated pleasures. I want a chair to be a chair, nothing else, without all the stomach-turning mystification that is created around it. I'm tired of myself, as I find myself more repugnant than ever when I see myself dragged through the crushing wave of low art and when I feel my profound impotence.

finally, I'm convinced that artistic beauty, nowadays, presents itself more vigorously when there is less involvement of the so-called artist.

all the established values must be thoroughly rectified: believing, without asking in what! turning, or at least to trying to turn, man's work into a visual prayer.

Mathias goeritz (1960 manifesto)

While Goeritz believed that artistic production had been battered by formulas and attitudes that were languid in the extreme, now he would simply confirm the fact that those very ills constituted the death sentence of a body with no hope for resuscitation.

Finally, to not get stuck in fatalities, I would prefer, at least momentarily, to try to foment certain forecasts for the probable convalescence of the entity in question. So, mouth-to-mouth respiration, massaging the heart, I will believe that I am depositing the energy of all that tiredness exclusively in my spiritual mentor:

It seems to me that these days, artistic institutions—in all their subdivisions, including creation itself—which try to reconcile their interests with the larger part of human society, should act as hubs for an experimentation that is, shall we say... delirious?! Shall we say, non-specific in terms of categorical and exclusively practical knowledge? Likely, some more situations for uncommon encounters, to the rhythm of the non-coopted revelation of exceptional knowledge.

Toward—the—expansion—of—model—lan-
guages—and—options—for pure—(is there anything pure left?)—
—vital—exaltation.

It also seems to me that the museums of our times (museums of art, science, technology, anthropology and/or their promissory hybrids) should not be an urban benefit—of urbanity—but rather strong, discerning bases for many of the social context's identifications, for its renewed passions in a world without electricity. And of course, sources of contradiction... and of highly critical entanglements. And in pursuit of that—essential—foundation, which has been manipulated by discordant interests (political positioning with little room for maneuvering, indolent inversions of power) forgetting that its missions and programs could—this time—give them a chance at a collective conscience in favor of—mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm, oh! now I remember!—poetic and human development, in the present tense, with analogue beats, acoustic reverberations, for the renewed accreditation of capacities—intellectual, creative, inspired—which—likely—facilitate the transcendental values of a community that has not been marginalized in a state of anonymity.

The Historic Path of the Archetype that Has Represented the Modern Museum reveals:

- that the structures that guarantee a flexible practice have not been in vain,
- openness to any evolution, and above all,
- its self-definition as a permanent facilitator of the experience of its own parameters,
- as well as the fact that it has kept firm and transparent commitments to and relationships with beneficiaries, coauthors, neighbors and friends.

I can't hesitate when gambling on an organ of keen sight, related to dreams, visionary mischief, both in the grandiosity of fantasy and in the dazzling reintegration of

its spirituality. Even in an analysis of fate and abjection which demands a huge number of social groups in order to guarantee connections in the face of adversity, or simply confronting existential passiveness.

Anyway, the inertia of years spent on the same thing, or the lingering effect of my obsessions, my commitments, bring me once again to imagine a platform that will guarantee artists the insertion of their caprices and complaints, their technological negotiations, and their possible multidisciplinary dispersions, particularly those formulated in conjunction with the thematic cotters that their axial cultures generate, consume, observe and communicate; in the calculation of declarations that—perhaps—support the articulation of a body of research (perhaps pseudoscientific or even metaphoric-modest), or at least, as a situation parallel to a beautiful gratuitousness, the provocative blow or the sublime scratch... naturally planting other detonators for the expansion and concentration of diverse and infinite fields of knowledge.

So, finally, I will include here, to see whether it will receive the supposed blessing of—printed—posterity, the following text that once presented one of those, well, one of those wagers.

Essay on Concentration and Expansion

In 1953, a carved wooden torso was displayed at the inauguration of El Eco Experimental Museum. It was a sculpture by Mathias Goeritz that acted as a container and catalyst for sensuality and culture. Its compositional lines were synthetic, with an expressionistic or essential energy, and its material nature, the "mother" of all abstractions, was a bridge between the classical codes of art and its modern orientation. The work would "head up" a tour—situational, euphoric—through the body of emotional architecture that framed it.

The preamble to the experience, which began with the El Eco corridor, with its rogue architectural design converging on that torso (*The Scream*, 1953, carved and perforated wood), prepared for the ultimate focal point: a "uterus" that first absorbed—toward the mystic encounter, the "collusions" of the international avant-gardes, toward total freedom of expression, exempt from nationalist quotas—and then returned artistic and philosophical expressions in the opposite direction, back to the street...

The approach which El Eco took to the many types of symbolic discourse, and probably to emotion, or forms of extraordinary consciousness, revealed an interest in the origins of expression: en route to Venus, the goddess of fertility... toward the beginning. The torso as the key to the promises and virtues which Modernity enunciated... or announced, even in this difficult time.

Polyptych (2004), a work that James Brown created during a residency in Oaxaca and presented at the Oaxaca Museum of Contemporary Art in 2004, analyzes with pleasure the configuration of an internal order, and at the same time it explores the values of comprehension; it accounts for a fixed gaze that registers how the presence of the person looking and what is being observed are configured. Once again, James Brown

allows painting to speak, taking it to its final abode, to the limit of what it can say. By doing so, he shifts aesthetic attention from the sphere of the recognizable to the sphere of poetry; he bestows all-new qualities on the canvas and the image, related to the ways in which materiality itself is experienced.

Mario de Vega (Mexico City, 1979) returns to a singular intervention resulting from a forceful action inspired by *The Aesthetics of Disappearance* by Paul Virilio—a French philosopher who has worked on numerous contemporary art exhibitions. Under his direction and according to his plan, the Museum of Accidents was opened in Japan in 2000—affirming that human beings invent their own relationships with time in order to thus pave the way for the creative potential of the unseen and the power of absence. Virilio also speaks about the phenomena of aesthetic surprise, from which one can deduce that the aesthetics of disappearance rejuvenates the adventure of appearance. De Vega presents the work *Match* in a similar fashion, evoking an event that has or has not occurred, in which the site intervention is apparent in the attempt to modify appearances.

Mario de Vega's work *Match* is in keeping with the bases of the expressive device known for over thirty years as “action art.” The intention of action art is to appropriate life through any kind of action that has a conscious and elaborate aesthetic intention; it can be rooted in the expression of subjectivity, in a reflection on philosophical matters, with an ecological conscience, a social or individual identity, sexuality, politics, etc. In action art, part of reality itself is a work of art, which is not merchandise, it is not bought or sold, it isn't an object to be contemplated or appropriated: it is a human act that is carried out in a determined time and space. Different every time, full of present life. It happens in reality, not like a representation but like life itself.¹

At the end of Modernity, the structures within artistic conception expanded; based on that central idea, the art object's degree of concentration becomes even more “introjected,” even announcing the object's own probable disappearance. Indeed, the main elements of artistic expression would become historic burdens, planes of consciousness, social and political quotas, or simply scenarios. The exercise of site-specific installations refers particularly to those constituents. The space and what remains following the aesthetic action stand as testimony to the tide in which artists become submerged, under the *Aesthetic of Disappearance*. Addressing the pyknolepsy and epileptic forms so suited to contemporary urban societies, Paul Virilio affirms that human beings invent their own relationships with time, to thus admit the creative potential of the unseen, or the pre-conceptualization typical of the adult sphere. The powers of absence, added to the phenomena of “aesthetic surprise” renew the appearance of form. These are the fundamentals of a large part of today's art.

¹ To learn about the far-reaching effects of Mario de Vega's work *Match*, see Rubén Bonet's note in *Replicante* 11 (2007).

Q and A with the artist Carla Zaccagnini

First of all, I'd like to thank Ivo Mesquita for inviting me to participate in SITAC, and all the organizers for their efforts to ensure that the event runs smoothly and that we enjoy our time in Mexico. I'm going to talk about some recent projects. I was amused when Allan said he was going to talk briefly about his recent projects—from the last ten years. I'm going to talk briefly about some recent projects, but from the last two years. I think it is a question of scale. There are three projects that I've worked on with people who are knowledgeable about some area of interest to me. These projects were done in collaboration with people from different fields.

The first is called *Museu das Vistas* (Museum of Views). I began planning it in 2002, but I did it for the first time in 2004. It has been done four times thus far. It is a project done in collaboration with police artists—professionals who sketch the faces of suspects or missing persons when there is no recent photograph available. If someone assaults or robs you, you go down to the station where you describe the person, and the police artist sketches a portrait of that individual so they have something to go on in their search. What I thought was the most interesting aspect of these professionals' expertise was not so much the sketch itself but that they knew how to make someone describe something: their ability to make you *reimagine* a prior image which was stored in your memory but is somewhat blurry.

The first time I did the project was in Puerto Rico in 2004. On that occasion I was working with the police artist Roberto Echeverría. The idea was the following: one person describes a view to the sketch artist, who draws it on carbon paper to create a record of the project. I still haven't decided what to do with the copies—there are probably around two or three hundred of them. It would be interesting to exhibit them but for now they stand as a record, which is clearly missing a piece. They are blue carbon copies, meaning that the original is missing. I'm interested in the fact that they give the sense that something is absent. This project could be taped, and the video could be presented with the audio description as the image gradually takes shape. But I think that in this case, one would get the impression that one was viewing the actual work, when in reality, the work consists of the dialogue between two people: the person describing the scene and the sketch artist who is drawing it. A dialogue: a relationship that exists only during that encounter and which cannot be communicated.

The second time I did this project was in São Paulo, in the Vermelho Gallery. The artist working with me there was Tamara do Espírito Santo. She was also an art student. I made some improvements to the project in this case, because in Puerto Rico I realized that by having the two people facing each other, the artist was seeing