



Mexico City

Photo: Dante Busquets

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DAZ_AGENDA

CITÁMBULOS Journey to the Mexican megalopolis

+++ An exploration of urban phenomena in Mexico City: **Citámbulos** recreates the experience of daily life in the megalopolis. +++ Significant contributions to the discussion about the future of megacities worldwide are presented at the DAZ. +++

Exhibition: 24.07. till 21.09.2008 in the DAZ_Scharoun Saal
Tue to Fri 12am - 7pm, Sat + Sun 2 - 7pm. Free entrance.

Colloquium: 19.09.2008, 10 am – 5 pm at DAZ Taut Saal

“CITÁMBULOS_Urban Strategies, a Mexico City – Berlin Dialogue”
A dialogue between experts from Mexico City and Berlin will present informal urban strategies on one side and formal governance of the other. The discussion will focus on current political challenges and planning strategies.

Closing event: 19.09.2008, 6 pm at DAZ Taut Saal

Summary of the colloquium “CITÁMBULOS_Urban Strategies, a Mexico City – Berlin Dialogue”, Wolfgang Nowak, Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft

Book launch of the exhibition catalogue „CITÁMBULOS – MEXICO CITY“
Christian von Wissel, Citámbulos

6.45pm: OPERATIONAL SYSTEM MEXICO: Beyond crisis, beyond megacityness”, José Castillo, Architect, Founder Arquitectura 911sc and Professor at the Pennsylvania`s School of Design and the Universidad Iberoamericana School of Architecture, Mexico City.

followed by closing event of the CITÁMBULOS exhibition



"Citámbulos" at the DAZ

Photo: Till Budde

Berlin, September 2008. **Mexico City is an exemplary case for diverse strategies dealing with the challenges of globalisation. The exhibition "Citámbulos" presents the city through a number of specific locations, situations and processes. The exhibition will focus on the city's people and how they are adapting their daily lives to urban processes in their vicinity, and how they are shaping their own physical environment. With this exhibition the DAZ continues the observation of exemplary megacities such as New York and Seoul, the focus of this year's program.**

The exhibition "Citámbulos" is arranged along a travelogue through daily life in Mexico City which appeals to all the senses. "Citámbulos", the research collective by the same name, has assembled statements from artists, planners and architects for this presentation which provide insights into urban phenomena that are characteristic for Mexico City and also serve as relevant models within the context of a wider discussion on the future of megacities worldwide. The spontaneous and creative way in which people deal with the city's problems in a context of urban expansion and globalisation are as much part of the exhibit as are the reactions to the challenges of urban densification by professional architects and planners. "Citámbulos" presents these phenomena through a variety of media to form an overall portrait of the megalopolis that is Mexico City.

Background

Mexico City comprising more than 20 million inhabitants for the capital region and environs is one of the biggest cities in the world. Increasing urbanisation worldwide will ultimately affect everyone. Experts from the "Urban Age" research project into the future of cities in a global context have defined the 21st century as the age of cities, where more than 50 percent of the world's population now live. In Mexico City this growth leads to progressing fragmentation of the city and an inaccessibility of public space.

The complexity and radical transformation of life in the globalised megacities is attracting increasing attention from artists, architects, designers and landscapers, too. Mexico City occupies an exemplary position here, and the profusion of its very own phenomena of urbanisation has become a unique source of creative and professional inspiration. The research collective "Citámbulos" has been exploring the megalopolis for several years, focusing on the formal and informal, everyday situations in the city. Citámbulos' work questions the impact of these situations as driving forces for social, economic and cultural processes. Apart from pure observation, the Citamblers heighten all five senses to investigate their environment in a critical and creative way from different perspectives.

Exhibition

The research collective "Citámbulos" has designed this exhibition by the same name like an excursion to Mexico City that takes you through an experience of daily life there. You will be able to comprehend the complexity and scale of the city and learn how to manoeuvre its urban spaces. These impressions are recreated by structuring the exhibition along the lines of a public transport system based on Mexico City's metro network. The metro system is also a leitmotif, since it is an underground connection for places, phenomena and structures that threaten to lose relationship to an overall context.

There are six thematic lines with 32 stops along a number of characteristic phenomena which visitors will be able to see, hear, sense and even smell. Each line represents a complex analysis of one specific aspect of the city. "Metro Lines" named "Overflow", "Urban Jungle", "Counterpoints", "Mind the Gap", "Arena Mexico" and "Multipurpose" will expose Mexico City in its rapid expansion, the impact this has on public spaces and the environment, and illustrate the kind of strategies people develop in defining their cultural identity, their position with officialdom and their daily survival.

Line A for instance deals with the immoderateness of the city. One example is the paradox situation that Mexico City permanently suffers of water shortage and at the same time is threatened by flooding. This theme is also about the endless growth of the city. One station goes into detail on the countless self-constructed dwellings in periphery of Mexico City. To settle on undeveloped land was for long time the only chance to get a property for the low-income class, which is almost half of the population. The inhabitants developed creative and spontaneous solutions for the "growing house". This building type makes it possible for the owners to extend whenever it suits financially or to their individual situation.

The metro network is full of cross-references. Specific phenomena where several, overlapping themes apply will be marked by intersections. At the station "Parachutists" about self-construction, visitors can change to line F. Line F examines the sector of informal employment and street sales, but also the phenomena like "bricolage" – the creative way of recycling everyday objects as building materials. Picking up garbage and used items does not result from an ecological lifestyle, it is rather more the need to save money and to compensate poverty. By this manner of recycling new creations develop: plastic boxes assembled as doors, beer mats as washer and walls made from plastic bottles. The principle of "bricolage" is also used for the architecture of the exhibition. The urban ecosystem with its interaction of flora, fauna and human being is represented by line B (Urban Jungle). In contrast to this socio-ecological observation, line C focuses on socio-cultural aspects: "Counterpoint" presents the living conditions and cultural phenomena of different social groups, where the commingling of Indigen and Spanish culture plays a decisive role.

Line D describes the growing segregation, which increases because of a lack of urban planning, gated communities and social marginalisation. This phenomenon is especially clear at the station "Bulletproof" where it is shown how high crime rate and violence create a climate of insecurity in the city. The private security business is very profitable due to deficient police and justice systems. To be able to afford private security service is a privilege that divides Mexico City into secure and insecure areas. The disparity between citizens and officialdom is also theme of the line "Arena Mexico", named after the big hall for traditional Mexican wrestling. It opposes different private initiatives as well as public networks to official measures and analysis the resulting conflicts.

This interdisciplinary and experimental exhibit is presented through a variety of media: video work, photography, sound installation, sculptures, maps, plans, drawings and descriptive texts are combined to create an exciting, interactive portrait of Mexico City.

For the citamblers from Mexico City the exhibition forms the arrival of their journey through their own city. For the visitors at the DAZ it is the departure of an urban journey to the phenomena of the megalopolis.

Citámbulos

The research collective "Citámbulos" from Mexico City is an interdisciplinary team of four experts from the fields of architecture, mathematics, literature and philosophy. Besides the curators Ana Álvarez, Valentina Rojas Loa, Christian von Wissel and Fionn Petch there are more than hundred artists and architects represented at the DAZ. Among others there are shown urban interventions of Mexican architect Héctor Zamora as well as installations and videos of Carlos Ranc, Armando

Migueléz, Verena Grimm, Nuria Ibañez, Orlando Jiménez and Paulina del Paso. Among the exhibiting photographs there are several winners of the Biennial of Photography Mexico City like Katya Brailovsky, Livia Corona, Frederico Gama and Dante Busquets. Together with the Mexican architect José Castillo, who is also a main collaborator of the Alfred Herrhausen Society's "Urban Age" project, the curators put the informal aspects of their work into a context with formal architecture.

Exhibition catalogue

Under the title "CITÁMBULOS – MEXICO CITY, Urban Transformation in the Mexican Megalopolis" the catalogue going along with the exhibiton has been published by Jovis Publisher.

Editor: Ana Álvarez, Fionn Petch, Valentina Rojas Loa, Christian von Wissel, CITÁMBULOS with Kristien Ring, DAZ, English/Spanish/German, 272 pages with approx. 200 images, flexocover, dimensions: 22 x 28 cm, Euro 35.00 sFr 62,00, ISBN 978-3-939633-76-1, Jovis Publisher.

More about Citámbulos on www.citambulos.net

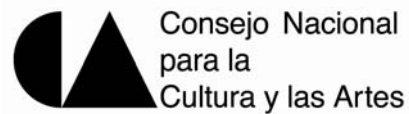
The exhibition is a collaboration of the DAZ, the research collective 'Citámbulos' (Mexico City) and the Alfred Herrhausen Society, Berlin and is under the patronage of the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Klaus Wowereit.



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