

# CITAMBULOS\_ 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 on the other. The discussion will focus on current political challenges and planning strategies. To be held at the German Center for Architecture DAZ in Berlin, where the exhibition "Citámbulos: Journey to the Mexican Megalopolis" is on show +++

19th of September 2008

Colloquium: 10.00 am - 6.00 pm

Public Event: 6.00 pm, followed by a reception and closing event of the exhibition



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.

## 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.

## Colloquium CITAMBULOS\_ URBAN STRATEGIES A MEXICO CITY – BERLIN DIALOGUE

The Urban Age is seeing a steady increase in new city-dwellers all over the world. These inhabitants of new and changing urban environments are constantly redefining the urban, suburban and new "rurban" (rural-urban) social and physical make-up while finding their place in the global urban society. In this context, the relationship between present and future citizens and their environment as well as their political representation must be examined in order to be able to focus on the changing needs of the urban structure, space and social organization. Experts will discuss experiences from two emblematic, yet contrary cases – Mexico City, the still-growing megacity, and Berlin, the ever-transforming capital of the German urban system. Their backgrounds include architecture, landscape architecture and urban planning, as well as cultural studies, aesthetics and practical urban intervention in the social sphere.

10.00 - 10.15 Arrival

10:15 – 10:30

### Welcoming speech

Kristien Ring, Director DAZ  
Wolfgang Nowak, Alfred Herrhausen Society,  
Citámbulos

10.30 - 13.00

### Panel 1

### 'The Urban Public: Strategies of Collective Construction of the City'

The first panel seeks to raise questions about how the inhabitants of Mexico City and Berlin find both spontaneous and managed ways of dealing with what the city offers. The active mode of appropriating the city by means of conscious experiencing of everyday life and alternative transport use in a highly car-dominated context like Mexico City enters into dialogue with Berliners' activation of urban residual land through temporary usage as well as new cultural strategies for encouraging urban participation.

(statements = 45 min., discussion = 60 min.)

Peter Krieger (Chair: 15 min.)

Jochen Becker (Statement: 10 min.)

Philipp Oswalt (Statement: 10 min.)

Felipe Leal (Statement: 10 min.)

followed by discussion



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## Biographies of the participants

Jochen Becker

Author, lecturer and curator living in Berlin. He is co-editor of the book series metroZones.

José Castillo

Architect and urban planner living and working in Mexico City. He holds a degree in architecture from the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City as well as a Masters in architecture and a Doctor of Design degree from Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. Castillo has lectured and taught in Mexico and abroad and is currently professor at the Universidad Iberoamericana's School of Architecture and UPenn's School of Design. Since 2005, Castillo has curated various exhibitions including Mexico City Dialogues, Rotterdam Architecture Biennale, Sao Paulo Biennale, Venice Biennale.

Hella Dunger-Löper

State secretary of the Senate Department for Urban Development of Berlin.

Argel Gómez

Visual artist, graphic designer and cultural promoter. In the last 5 years he managed the arts and crafts workshops at Faro de Oriente, a cultural center of Mexico City government, which has become a referent for cultural public policies. At the Faro, Argel edited six books about cultural policies and teaching experiences in the art field. He currently teaches at the Faro, studies a postgraduate course of cultural policies given by Organization of Ibero-American States, and coordinates a new cultural space at downtown Mexico City.

Peter Krieger

Architectural historian with PhD from the University of Hamburg, researcher at the Institute of Aesthetic Research (IIE), and professor at the Graduate Program of the Architecture Faculty (CIEP) at the Mexican National University (UNAM).

Felipe Leal

Architect, since 2005 director of the "Strategic Projects" department at the UNAM. From 1997 to 2005 Dean of the Faculty of Architecture of the UNAM.

Wolfgang Nowak

Spokesman of the Executive Board of the Alfred Herrhausen Society for International Dialogue. A former State-Secretary, he was Director General for Political Analysis and Planning at the German Federal Chancellery. He has held various senior positions in state and federal administrations in Germany, in the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris, and in UNESCO.

Philipp Oswalt

Architect and publicist, guest professor at the TU Cottbus, permanent staff member of the architecture magazine Arch+, co-founder and chief of the European research project 'Urban Catalysts' on the temporality in urban space.

The exhibition and the colloquium are 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.



Das DAZ ist eine Initiative des Bundes Deutscher Architekten BDA. Es wird unterstützt durch das Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Technologie.

13.00 - 15.00 Lunch will be served on the River Boat 'Stralauer'. During an excursion along the Spree River, participants may experience some of the most important developing areas of the Berliner waterfront. Speakers: Jochen Sandig, Radialsystem and Reiner Nagel, Senate for City Planning of Berlin.

## 15.00 - 17.00 Panel 2 'Urban Governance: Challenges and Opportunities for the City'

The second panel discusses the relationship between local forms of government and the citizens, as well as alternative bottom-up strategies of organizing daily urban reality. Representatives from the urban planning departments of both City Governments will present their specific ideas and projects to deal with the current and future needs of Berlin and Mexico City. Inside knowledge about informal forms of organization in Mexico City are put into context by the broad international experience arising from three years of Urban Age conferences run by the Alfred Herrhausen Society and LSE. (statements = 45 min., discussion = 60 min.)

Wolfgang Nowak (*Chair: 15 min.*)  
Argel Gómez (*Statement: 10 min.*)  
Hella Dunger-Löper (*Statement: 10 min.*)  
José Castillo (*Statement: 10 min.*)  
*followed by discussion*

## 18.00 Public Event

Summary of the Colloquium, by Wolfgang Nowak, Alfred Herrhausen Society

Presentation of the exhibition catalogue 'CITÁMBULOS: Journey to the Mexican Megalopolis', by Christian von Wissel, Citámbulos

Lecture by José Castillo:  
'Operational System Mexico: beyond crisis, beyond megacityness'

The social, demographic, legal, economic and political complexities in Mexico City have shaped a new set of tools to understand and engage in its urban and architectural transformations. The lecture will present Mexico City as a new space of architectural and urban potentialities.

followed by Reception / closing event of the CITÁMBULOS exhibition