

# **EXIT**

## **MÉXICO**



Textos de / Essays by

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## Mexican Artists in the International Arena / Ery Cámara

At the turn of the 20th century and the dawn of the new millennium, contemporary Mexican art is increasingly sought after by a wide range of exhibition venues and both private and public collectors, in addition to drawing favorable critiques and essays in specialized art publications. Many curators have visited Mexico to establish contacts with artists, curators, galleries and alternative spaces to procure their collaboration on exhibition projects throughout the world. On the one hand, this success has spurred the production of reams of informative material regarding the artists, the subjects they address and how the country's insertion into the globalized system may be reflected in artistic production and movements. On the other hand, it is important to note that the local dissemination of the riskiest or most heterodox proposals has most often taken place in under-funded alternative spaces, a circumstance that limits their effectiveness.

The presentation of myriad exhibitions in varying venues, some of which are very prestigious, has led to the publication of catalogues, monographs and books containing serious assessments, by Mexican authors as well as foreigners, of the contemporary artistic production taking place in Mexico. These publications are actually filling a void since little has been published in this country about this art. Few museum holdings include contemporary artworks and the university institutions do not teach contemporary Mexican art. In this sense, it can be said that the artists' nomadism has been successful in that it has induced the recognition of their work in the international circuit as well as their invitations to biennales and solo and group shows in renowned museums and galleries, in addition to many residencies that involve complementary activities. To evaluate the events of recent years, it suffices to assay the careers of Gabriel Orozco, Francis Alÿs, Damián Ortega, Santiago Sierra, Teresa Margolles, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Gustavo Artigas, Minerva Cuevas, Melanie Smith, Miguel Calderón, Gabriel Kuri, Carlos Amorales, Ruben Ortiz Torres, Eduardo Abaroa, Rafael Lozano Hemmer, Thomas Glassford, Miguel Ventura,

Silvia Gruner and so many others they cannot be enumerated here.

The proof of their worthy stature lies in the fact that they have been represented by Mexican and foreign galleries at the most prestigious international shows such as Documenta, the Venice Biennale, those of Sao Paulo, Havana, Istanbul, Taipei and Kwangju. The circulation of this art sparked the interest of many cultural institutions to focus on the changes transforming the country, and the city of the same name, to the point of converting the capital into an exhibition theme. New York's PS1, Berlin's Kunst-werke, San Diego's Art Museum, Boston's ICA and Berlin's MexArtes festival all organized thematic exhibitions that raised many questions, such as those emphasizing the problem of representation. How are the contradictions or the complexity of certain social, economic or political processes reflected in the artworks? How can the distinct curatorial conceptions avoid lumping together such heterogeneous imagery under a common, and therefore reductive, scheme? Isn't there a risk of homogenization implicit in resorting so frequently to nationality? None of the abovementioned exhibitions is free of these risks and as they are presented in contexts where mentalities may or may not comprise preconceptions or references with regard to Mexico or the artists, interpretations may be quite divergent.

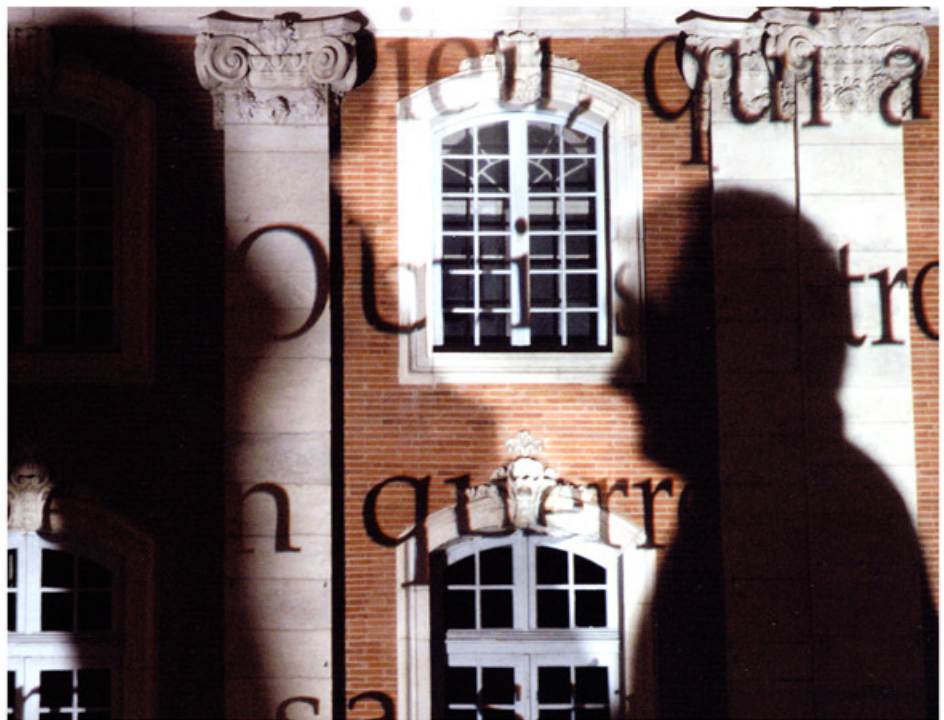
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TRANSLATED BY DENA ELLEN COWAN

*Ery Cámara. Museologist and free-lance curator settled in Mexico since 1974. He has worked in different museums in Mexico and contributed to art magazines such as Curare, Poliester, Atlántica and Lápiz, and he has twice been director of the International Symposium on Contemporary Art Theory (SITAC) organized by the Patrons of Contemporary Art (PAC). He teaches museology at the Universidad Iberoamericana.*



**Rafael Lozano-Hemmer.** *Re: Posición del Miedo.* *Arquitectura Relacional 3*, 1997. Bial de Arquitectura y Media, Graz, Austria  
Foto: Joerg Mohr. Cortesía Galería OMR, México DF



**Rafael Lozano-Hemmer.** *Das Principios.* *Arquitectura Relacional 7*, 2002. Festival Printemps de Septembre, Toulouse, Francia  
Foto: Rafael Lozano-Hemmer. Cortesía Galería OMR, México DF