

ISRAEL MEZA MORENO “MORIS”

b. Mexico City, 1978

Lives and Works in Mexico City

Education

BFA National School of Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts, La Esmeralda, National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA) Mexico City

Solo shows

- 2013 *The beast has its day*, Galerie Michael Sturm, Stuttgart, Germany (february)
- 2012 *Es difícil ser atado como una oveja cuando se es un lobo (It's difficult to be tied up as a sheep when one's a wolf)* Baró Galería, Sao Paulo, Brazil.
Los buitres ya dan vueltas (The vultures are circling), Arróniz Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City.
Sádico (Sadistic), González y González Gallery, Santiago de Chile.
- 2011 *Cuando el león mata los Chacales se benefician (When the lion kills the jackals benefit)*. I-20 Gallery, New York, USA.
Estás vivo porque no te maté (You are alive because I didn't kill you), ARCO, Solo Projects Focus Latinoamerica. Madrid
- 2010 *Speranza*, Colectivo Viernes. El 52, OMR Gallery, Mexico City.
Mi casa es tu casa, Los Angeles Nomadic Division (LAND), Geffen Contemporary, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
- 2008 *Un animal pierde la vida porque otro tiene hambre (An animal dies because another is hungry)* Museo Experimental El Eco, Mexico City
- 2007 *Nido de malvivientes (Delinquent's Nest)*, Trolebús Gallery, Mexico City
Todos tenemos sucios los zapatos (We all have dirty shoes), Project Room, kbk ArteContemporáneo, ARCO, Madrid
- 2006 *Puesto casa carro (Stand, House, Cart)*, 9th Havana Biennale, Havana
- 2005 *Urgencia Urbana (Urban Urgency)*, kbk arte contemporáneo, Mexico City

Group shows (selected)

- 2013 *Metal Coyote*, Y Gallery, New York
Museo de la Nación, Lima, Peru
Palacio das Artes - Belo Horizonte
SESC Bauru
- 2012 *Thirtieth Sao Paulo Bienal, The Imminence of Poetics*, Sao Paulo, Brazil.
La hora y los Sitios, Obra en Proceso. Contemporary Art Museum of Oaxaca, MACO. Mexico.
Mapas Invisibles. Luis Adelantado Gallery, Mexico City.
- 2011 *Tiempo de Sospecha*. Museum of Modern Art, México city D.F.
NOW, Art Pieces of Jumex Collection. Centro Cultural Cabañas, Guadalajara, Mexico. city
Mexico. Poetry and Politic. Nordic Watercolor Museum, Estocolmo, Suecia
Destello, Art Pieces of Jumex Collection Jumex, Estado de México
Colectiva, Honor Fraser Gallery, Los Angeles
Mexico. Poetry and Politic. Modern and Contemporary Works on Paper and Animations, Fine Arts Gallery, San Francisco State University Fine Arts Building, San Francisco, CA
Mexico Expected/Unexpected, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego.
- 2010 *Educando el saber*, MUSAC, León
Where Do We Go From Here?, Works from the Jumex Collection, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati
Viva la Revolución: A Dialogue with the Urban Landscape, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego
- 2009 *Where Do We Go From Here?*, Works from the Jumex Collection, Bass Museum, Miami Beach
Zwischen Zonen : La Coleccion Jumex Mexiko, MUMOK, Vienna
- 2008 *Las líneas de la mano (The Lines of the Hand)*, Inaugural Exhibition program, Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo (MUAC), Mexico City
Schweiz Über Alles, Jumex Collection, Ecatepec, Mexico City
Fortunate Objects: Selections from The Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection, Miami
- 2007 *International Triennial of Architecture*, Lisbon
- 2006 *Esquiador en el fondo de un pozo (Skier at the Bottom of the Well)*, The Jumex Collection Mexico
Regreso de Heterotopías (Return of Heterotopias), Puebla
Ceguera (Blindness), Museum of Contemporary Art, Oaxaca
Light/Art: Mystic Crystal Revelation, Contemporary Arts Forum, Santa Barbara
Los Angeles-Mexico City, Jumex Collection @ Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso. Mexico City

Grants and awards

2008 Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation (CIFO Grants & Commissions Programs Awards), Miami

2006 SIVAM Visual Arts, Acquisition Prize, Mexico City

Public collections (selected)

Americas Collection, ASU Art Museum, Tempe, Arizona, USA

Colección Bergé, Madrid, Spain

FEMSA Collection, Monterrey, Mexico

La Colección Jumex, Mexico

Museum of Contemporary Art (MoCA), Los Angeles, USA

Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York City, USA

Ella Cisneros Fontanals Collection, (CIFO), Miami, USA

CIAC, Isabel and Agustin Coppel Collection, Mexico

Cincinnati Art Museum, USA

Articles/ Reviews/ Books/ Catalogues (selected)

2009 *An Animal Dies because another is Hungry*, by Victor Zamudio-Taylor, Atlantica Spring

Younger than Jesus: The Artist Directory, New Museum, New York & Phaidon Press:

London and New York

2008 *Moris*, El Eco Experimental Museum, by Jessica Berlanga Taylor, Artforum, December

2006 *Puesto casa carro (Stand, House, Cart)*, 9th Havana Biennale, Havana

Esquiador en el fondo de un pozo (Skier at the Bottom of the Well), La Colección Jumex,

Ecatepec, Mexico City

Art Fairs

2013 Zona MACO, Galería Arróniz, Mexico

2012 ArtBO, Galería Arróniz, Colombia

Chaco, Galería Arróniz, Chile

Zona MACO, Galería Arróniz, Mexico

2011 ArtBo, Galería Arróniz, Bogotá, Colombia

ARCO, Galería Arróniz, Madrid, España

2010 ArteBA, Galería Arróniz, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

ChACo, Galería Arróniz, Santiago de Chile.

2009 ART LA, I-20 Gallery

ARCO, I-20 Gallery; and kbk arte contemporáneo

FEMACO, I-20 Gallery; and kbk arte contemporáneo

Art Basel Miami Beach, I-20 Gallery

2008 FIAC, kbk arte contemporáneo

FEMACO, kbk arte contemporáneo

2007 FIA 07, kbk arte contemporáneo Caracas

MACO, kbk arte contemporáneo

FIAC, kbk arte contemporáneo

Art Nova, Art Basel Miami Beach, kbk arte contemporáneo

2006 Art Positions, Art Basel Miami Beach, kbk arte contemporáneo

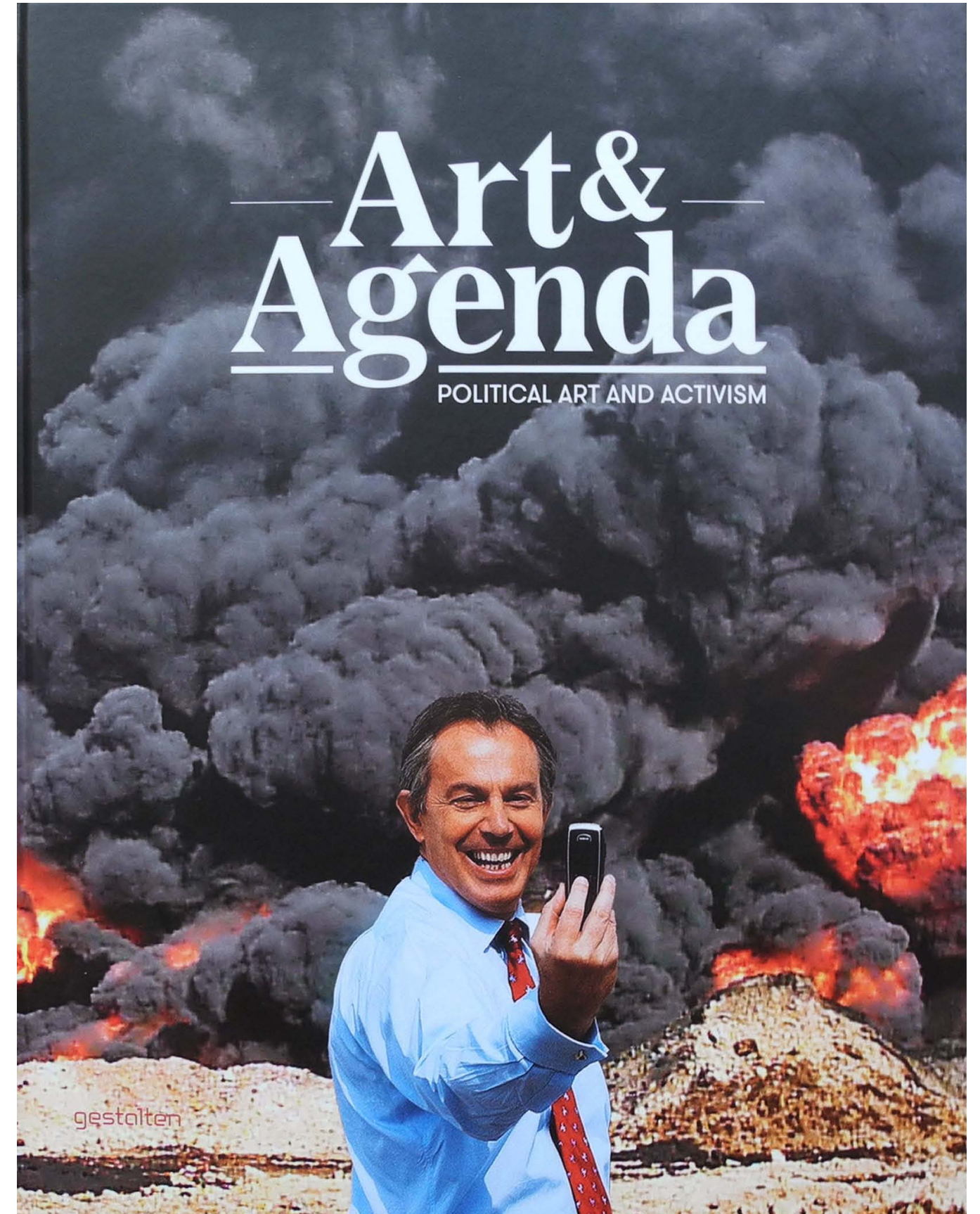
2005 Artissima, kbk arte contemporáneo

Moris studied the Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts at the National School of Painting, Sculpture and Engraving "La Esmeralda" in Mexico City.

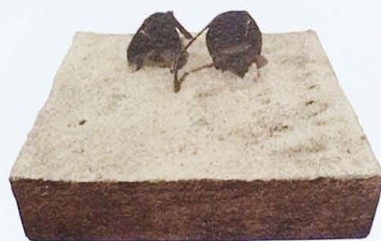
He is one of the most outstanding Mexican artists of his generation and emerges as an early artist of inescapable anthropological urban grain.

*His work has been exhibited in major institutions like the Museum of Contemporary Art in Mexico City, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Los Angeles, Museum of Contemporary Art of San Diego, the 9th Biennial of Havana, Cuba and the Contemporary Arts Forum of Santa Barbara, as well as belonging to the selection of artists that make the directory *Younger than Jesus: The Artist Directory*, New Museum, New York & Phaidon Press.*

Some of her collectors are Bergé Collection in Madrid, Mexico Jumex Collection, MoCA, MoMA, David Chipperfield, Isabel and Agustin Coppel Collection, FEMSA Collection and the Americas Collection ASU Art Museum.



MORIS (ISRAEL MEZA MORENO)



- 1
Sembrar II
2009, Poured cement,
found women's shoes
- 2
Paisaje Censurado 17
[Censored Landscape 17]
2010
- 3
Robar Invalido
(Rob Invalid)
2007
- 4
Hermoso Paisaje 1
[Cartolandia]
Beautiful Landscape
[Cardboard City]
2007, Mexico, Collection
Isabel and Agustín Coppel

Moris (Israel Meza Moreno) uses the dense urban jungle of Mexico City as an excavation site and laboratory for his artistic practice. For Moris, public space functions as the site for field exercises where the artist moves about the city observing, collecting data, and objects that will later be studied, processed, and transformed into art. Moris studies the survival strategies developed and adopted by the inhabitants of marginal communities in Mexico City. His art is a response to the adverse conditions that are dealt with on a daily basis by millions of people around the world. Rudimentary architectural techniques used to build shelters by the homeless, or basic housing for low-income families, homemade tools—including weapons—designed for specific needs, codes of conduct, signage, and secret ciphers used by burglars all form part of Moris's urban vocabulary. The artist is also tapping into the unbridled ingenuity and extreme resourcefulness of these communities—skills needed to survive in communities with limited resources and strict codes of conduct.

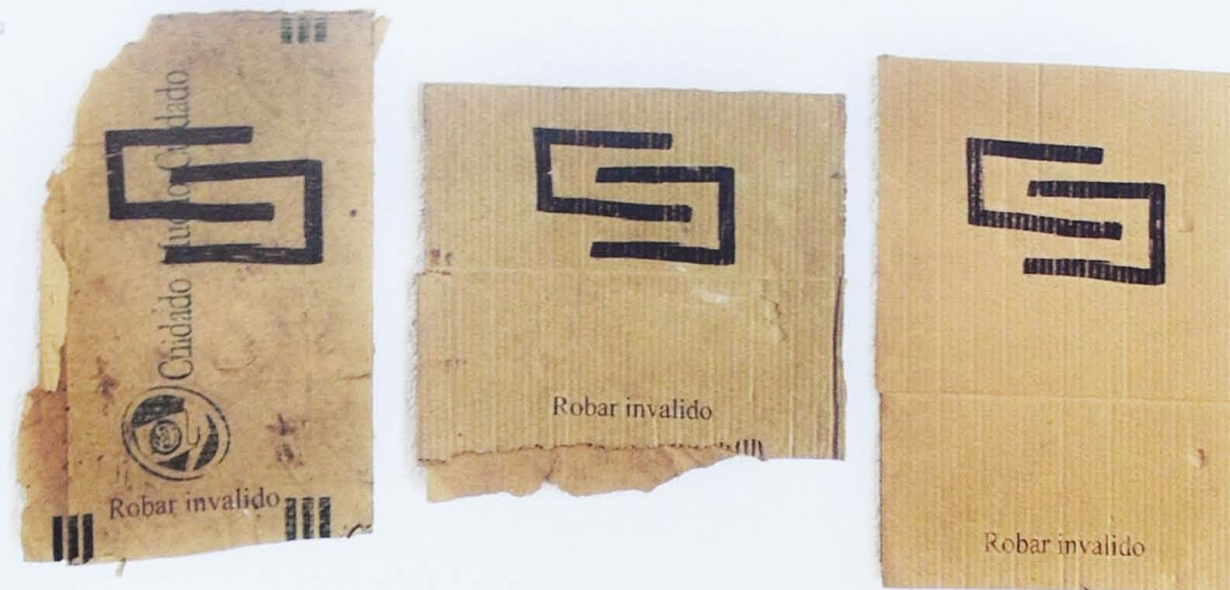
Moris is an insider; his level of engagement goes beyond observation and collecting data. The artist lives in one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in Mexico City, where his studio is in ground zero from which he ventures not as a tourist, but as a native. Working from within, he is granted privileged access to the city and its inhabitants. This familiarity allows for exchanges with the people who live there. Tools that have been used to commit violent acts such as bats, knives, and other weapons, are at first appropriated and then modified to make art. Moris has pasted text onto a club that read, *Solo yo tengo la razon* (Only I Am Right), 2010. In one of his most compelling series of works titled *Nido de malviviendes* (Delinquent's Nest), 2007, the artist deciphered the symbols used by burglars to mark homes before robbing them. The symbols were drawn onto three torn sheets of corrugated cardboard with phrases such as, *Woman Alone*, *Charitable House*, and *Can be Robbed*.

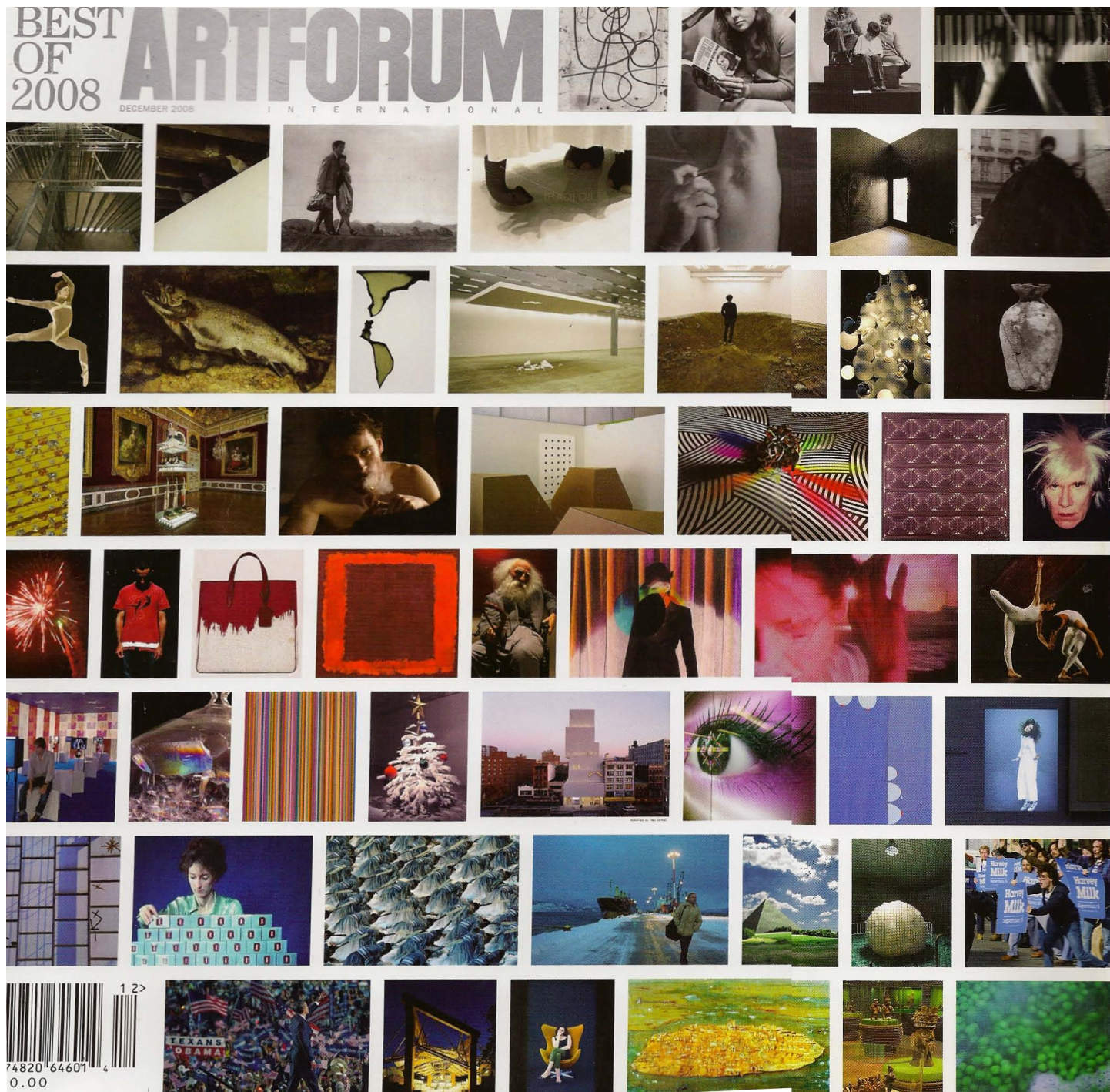
Homeless children inspired the large-scale installation titled, *Hermoso Paisaje 7: golpes, pan duro y baños de agua fría* (Beautiful Landscape 7: beatings, stale bread, and cold showers), 2010. A tower resting on a bed of sand alludes to a playground. Four plaster statuettes of San Judas Tadeo support the base—the patron saint of miracles serves as the pillars. The top half of the tower, which was made of cardboard boxes inscribed with prayers, has collapsed, revealing a makeshift mattress covered in the toxic glue known in Mexico as *Resistol 5000*. Replicas of *bolillos*, loaves of Mexican white bread, are strewn around the tower. Three tarps used to cover loads on trucks hang from the ceiling bordering the sand. The tarps have been cleaned, with dirt and grime removed from the surface in order

“THE WORKS DO NOT EXIST IN A MOMENT THAT ENDS WITH CENSURE OR THE EXIT OF THE VISITOR, THEY ARE ACTIVATED AFTER THE FACT IN THE FORM OF A RUMOR OR SHARED ANECDOTE, ENDOWING THE BEARER OF THE GIVEN EXPERIENCE WITH A NEW HABITUS THAT CAN BE USED OR FORGOTTEN.”



to draw an idyllic American-style home; a brick wall that symbolizes the lack of access to a normal life, with text painted onto canvas that reads: “We are here but we are not playing.” The installation shares the same theme as Luis Buñuel's classic film, *Los Olvidados* (The Forgotten) in which bands of homeless children struggle for survival. The artist incorporates elements used by children to navigate the urban jungle. Children beg for money and steal in order to purchase *bolillos* and *Resistol 5000*. The former is the cheapest and least-nourishing food, the latter is a toxic substance desired for the fumes that stave off hunger, and whose intoxicating high gives a false sense of security to those forced to sleep on the streets.





be called the “parachute effect”: What effect does the documentarian, the anthropologist, the interloper in a foreign region have on the lives of the people who do live there? Collins, though British, has lived in Barcelona—so *La Mina*, at least, may be immune to the potential criticism implied by this question. The works dealing with Africa and Russia are another matter. Does the artist have the informed consent of the people she represents? Have they participated in deciding on how their lives are presented and exhibited? Can art alter or leave a trace on the subjects it portrays, such as the three protagonists of *Parallel* (Constantine Diomonde, Dewa Abdousalaam, and Pamela Anyoti, who emigrated to London, Madrid, and Rome, respectively, from different parts of sub-Saharan Africa)? What does “leaving a trace” mean? These are difficult questions, and while Collins’s work is to be admired for raising them, that is not enough. For some time, she has been drawn to places that convey a sense of desolation and melancholy, places where the stories of people largely unknown take place. Yet the artist’s predilection for presenting her imagery on a monumental scale creates a kind of dissonance: These formats give the work a spectacular quality out of keeping with the intimacy implied by the narratives.

—Juan Vicente Aliaga
Translated from Spanish by Jane Brodie.

MEXICO CITY

Moris

EL ECO EXPERIMENTAL MUSEUM

Moris (Israel Meza Moreno) is a thirty-year-old Mexican artist whose work rapidly caught the eye of gallerists, collectors, and the general public. *Un animal muere porque otro tiene hambre* (An animal dies because another is hungry), 2008, his baroque, socially charged installation at El Eco Experimental Museum, contrasted sharply with the modernist aesthetic philosophy of the museum’s designer (Mathias Goeritz [1915–1990]), embodied in the building’s stark lines and monastic simplicity. Moris uses a repertoire of materials found along the sprawling streets of Mexico City (cardboard boxes, tin cans, cigarettes, glue, silicon, wood, masking tape, mattresses, weapons, figurines—“materials from hell,” as the artist called them in conversation) that tell of his constant traveling across geographical, physical, spiritual, and imaginative boundaries. From his home to bars, museums, galleries, discos, and parties, his ever-expanding circuit of movements has also taken him to jails, gang meetings, police headquarters, and drug markets. He knows Mexico City’s streets well and has developed the ability to merge with different communities.

Moris explores territory to detect and act on problems. He collects objects, forms relationships, and derives his works from these experiences. As an individual who moves within an increasingly sensitive and reactionary social body, he is a combination artist/sociologist/anthropologist/archaeologist whose work’s organizing principles lie beneath the surface, though its performative dimension is always the determinant. Emphasizing process and offering precarious assemblages, Moris never completes his work, underlining the insecurity of viewers and their social dynamics as well.

One part of *An animal dies* is a cardboard box simulating a living space, with an old mattress as roof; a ragged red blanket that lies on the floor is pierced by ice picks, “inviting” the audience into this frail habitat. Inside hang two amateur oil paintings of banal landscapes and a furry blanket with a tiger’s face; words such as TERRIFYING, BRUTAL, DECAPITATED, and MASSACRED, cut out from local newspapers, are collaged to the surfaces of the paintings. The second part of



Moris, *Un animal muere porque otro tiene hambre* (An animal dies because another is hungry), 2008, mixed-media installation, 78 1/2 x 59 1/2

the installation is a fragile square arrangement of six levels. The entire ensemble evokes the intertwining of religious hierarchy, power, money, politics, corruption, and conspiracy, typical of this country in which the government’s relation with the church is so twisted.

Moris questions the way in which we inhabit our big cities; he asks who the predators are and who the victims. Yet he accuses no one, displaying instead our destructive and alienated nature, which conditions our interactions with the metropolis. His strategies challenge the dynamics of domesticity that have dictated our “civilized” daily lives. Disrupting the safe, soft space of the museum, this is an exhibition about raw perceptions, the apparatus of domination, the logic of resistance, and a dark desire to see in all of this a particular kind of poetics.

—Jessica Berlanga Taylor

SHANGHAI

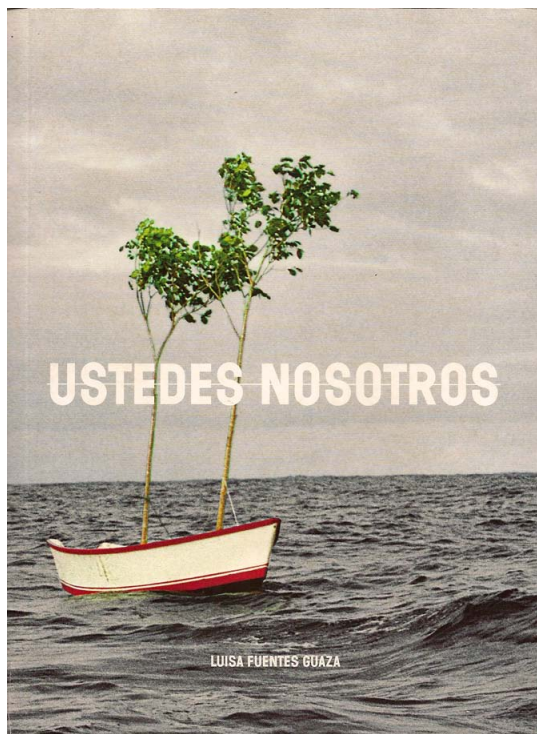
Michael Lin

SHANGHAI GALLERY OF ART

In Michael Lin’s first solo show in Shanghai—two years following his arrival in the city—his usual colorful flowers and patterns were nowhere to be found. Lin seems to have discovered a new formula with which to transform the vernacular into the spectacular, using ready-made objects, video, music, and performance as an ensemble in his new work, *What a Difference a Day Made*, 2008.

Entering the exhibition space, one experienced a sudden sense of displacement as a minimally furnished reception area led to a small, low-ceilinged room densely crowded with shelves of thoroughly banal mass-produced kitchen supplies and household goods. Piles of vividly colored plastic baskets lay scattered on the floor, below shelves packed with dozens of rice cookers and teapots. The artist had essentially transplanted to the gallery one of the local daily supply stores near his Shanghai residence, buying some 8,400 items from the store and reinstalling them here. As Lin comments, these mom-and-pop stores—on the verge of disappearance as convenience-store chains expand to supply international products—cater to the specific needs of their locales, forming a kind of commodity vernacular.

In his earlier work, Lin had appropriated ornamental flower patterns from Taiwanese or Japanese textiles and enlarged them to fit spaces of modern social engagement, and the work’s significance derived mostly from its temporal and cultural decontextualization as well as its often overwhelming visual presentation. In the current exhibition, too, the artificially insulated context of a gallery situated in an



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A

A *Hermoso paisaje: pintura social C4, 2007.* (Materiales diversos, 200 x 100 cm.). Cortesía del artista.

B *Serie hermoso paisaje: pintura social, 2007.* (Materiales diversos, 200 x 100 cm.). Cortesía del artista.

C (página siguiente). *Hermoso paisaje (El Baldío), 2008.* (Instalación, materiales diversos. Dimensiones variables). Cortesía del artista. **Instalación perteneciente a la Colección Jumex, servía como zona de paso obligatorio antes de acceder a las obras pictóricas, dispuestas en una sala contigua cubierta de arena que registraba las huellas de los visitantes, donde recuerda la capacidad de acción y elección del individuo ante la realidad social que le rodea.**



B

MORIS 179

La producción artística de Moris, rescatando postulados póvera, habla de la caducidad del objeto artístico y del espacio urbano residual o "no-lugar" –término acuñado por Marc Augé para referirse a los lugares de transitoriedad– a través de la observación de las dinámicas desarrolladas por grupos desfavorecidos. Su obra, fuertemente hipermodernista y multidisciplinaria, nos habla de las nuevas relaciones que establecemos con los espacios públicos y cómo estas relaciones están marcadas por la ideología del presente. Su trabajo lo coloca como "escultor social" siendo parte de la nueva generación de creadores en México que están transformando el significado de "arte" en busca de un acercamiento con una realidad difícil de entender, pero abierta a los avances.

Sus acciones van dirigidas hacia la transformación de estos márgenes –generadores de un tejido social excluyente–, como denuncia y respuesta, y como contrapunto moral a un humanitarismo defectuoso asociado a una injusta estructura global basada en desigualdades económicas y sociales. Su obra pictórica intenta traspasar la bidimensionalidad y

ocupar el espacio –como advertimos en *Advertencia*, 2009– además, nos conecta con las intervenciones, en espacio público, de Jenny Holzer que, al igual que Moris, centran su atención en la apariencia del texto, atrayendo la atención del espectador hacia el mismo y recordándole que cualquier texto siempre conlleva una existencia material.

(Israel Meza Moreno)
Ciudad de México, México, 1978
Vive y trabaja en Ciudad de México

Nacido en 1978, Moris (Israel Moreno Meza) pertenece a una tercera generación de artistas nacidos y activos en la Ciudad de México cuyo trabajo se plantea la ciudad como un laboratorio y la cultura urbana cotidiana como un inventario de temas a investigar. Inscribiendo su producción en ese umbral desde el que se abordan las estrategias neoconceptuales interdisciplinarias mediante artificios performáticos y aproximaciones antropológicas visuales a la práctica artística, y se contempla la cultura urbana como tema o referencia clave, un umbral establecido muy especialmente por Gabriel Orozco y Francis Alÿs, Moris se dedica, al igual que estos artistas, a escoger el lenguaje formal que mejor expresa su temática y su concepto.

Valiéndose de un estilo franco y directo, su enfoque es de naturaleza etnográfica. Los territorios no cartografiados de ciudades perdidas y barrios marginales son los territorios de su trabajo de campo. Y aunque lo social y lo político componen sus preocupaciones constantes, se plasman siempre en unas escuetas resoluciones formales. En su condición de artista/etnógrafo, a Moris no le interesa juzgar, sino más bien presentar en forma sucinta los problemas que surgen de su investigación en las subculturas urbanas. En ese sentido, sus reflexiones sobre el poder, el conocimiento y la representación son más existenciales que ideológicas, planteando preguntas, más que sugiriendo respuestas, relacionadas con la responsabilidad individual,

los derechos y el uso o el abuso del poder, dejando totalmente abierta la lectura e interpretación sobre su obra.

Su reciente exposición *Un animal muere porque otro tiene hambre* (2008) en el Museo Experimental El Eco, nos permite apreciar y comprender la complejidad y el carácter provocador de su trabajo. La instalación, que mostraba una serie de elementos en dinámica interrelación consistente en dos esculturas, cinco pinturas – o algo parecido – y una obra sobre papel, establecía un claro contraste entre el barroquismo – abundancia de imaginería, capas de textos, contradicción, paradoja y polisemia – y la pureza, pulcra y moderna, de la propuesta de Mathias Goeritz (1915-1990), el artista y arquitecto mexicano de origen alemán que diseñó la *kunsthalle* que en la actualidad gestiona la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) como un espacio al servicio de artistas emergentes. Aglutinada alrededor del tema general de las subculturas del inframundo que habita en los pliegues castigados por la pobreza de la monstruosa expansión urbana del Distrito Federal, la producción de Moris resalta la violencia social y el universo cotidiano de la picaresca contemporánea.

El discurso de la instalación se inspiraba en el vocabulario de la zoología y el comportamiento animal que se utiliza en la literatura y en los programas divulgativos de la televisión, en la jerga de la prensa sensacionalista y en los dialectos de

Moris (Israel Moreno Meza), born in 1978, belongs to the third generation of artists living and working in Mexico City whose oeuvre approaches the city as a laboratory, and its urban everyday culture as an inventory of research topics. Inscribing his work in the threshold, set in place most notably by Gabriel Orozco (1962-) and Francis Alÿs (1959-), that engages interdisciplinary neo-conceptual strategies by means of performative devices, visual anthropological approaches to the practice of art, and urban culture as a key theme or reference, likewise, Moris selects the formal language that best articulates his subject matter and concept.

Working in a frank, direct style, his approach is of an ethnographic nature. The uncharted territories of *ciudades perdidas* ("lost cities") and marginal *barrios* are the zones of his fieldwork. His ongoing concerns are social and political, yet they are always rendered in crisp formal resolutions. As an artist/ethnographer, he is not interested in judgement but rather in the succinct presentation of issues resulting from his research on urban subcultures. In this regard, his reflections on power, knowledge, and representation are more existential than ideological, posing questions rather than suggesting answers regarding individual responsibility, rights, and the use or abuse of power, leaving wide open the reading and interpretation of the work.

His recent exhibition at El Eco Museo Experimental, *Un animal muere porque otro tiene hambre* (*An animal dies because another is hungry*, 2008), allows one to appreciate and understand the complexity and provocative nature of his work. Consisting of two sculptures, five paintings of sorts, and a work on paper, all dynamically interrelated, the installation contrasted baroque-like qualities – saturated with imagery, layered texts, contradiction, paradox and polysemy – with the modernist, sleek purity proposed by the German-born Mexican artist and architect Mathias Goeritz (1915-1990), who designed the *kunsthalle* currently administered by the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) as a space for emerging artists. Linked together by its general theme of underworld subcultures that operate in the poverty-stricken folds populating Mexico City's monstrous urban sprawl, Moris' oeuvre underlines social violence and the cotidian universe of the contemporary picaresque.

The discourse of the installation was inspired by the lexicon of zoology and animal behavior used in literature and educational TV programmes; tabloid press jargon; and underworld dialects. Presenting a rogue and vicious world, *Un animal muere porque otro tiene hambre* is a comment on the state of things in which economic and social inequalities, violence, and power relations forge, on the one hand, a culture of fear and survival, but, on the other, critical and

affirmative responses from citizens who refuse defeat and who sustain and encourage hope. Forceful yet elegant, overall, the installation pushes the viewer to the limit by means of an economical yet exuberant use of materials and a bittersweet sense of humour. Brechtian in its distance, Moris's work uses the *Verfremdungseffekt* ("estrangement effect") to present the issues in a detached manner and to avoid dwelling in value judgments. Regarding his audience, he seeks to persuade and generate a "critical conscious" attitude, playing down emotions, passivity, and guilt.

"Materials from Hell" is how the artist defines the objects, and elements he uses – cardboard; newsprint; masking, packing, and electrical tapes; figurines; jewellery; mattresses, blankets and cloth; architectural fragments and furniture; wood; found thriftstore-like paintings; tin cans; weapons, and tools altered for criminal use. Bought and traded in the black markets, his materials are found in his meanderings through the field, in his crisscrossing of urban borders.

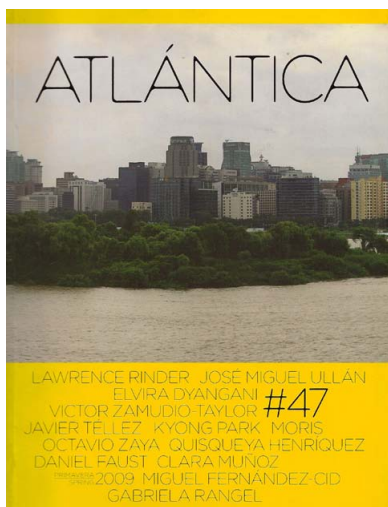
The artist walks and bikes through hellish *barrios* that only the poorest and most disenfranchised citizens frequent. Yet, along with brutal conditions and a never-ending array of problems, the citizens of these underdeveloped and underserved zones within the vast city have a profound sense of pride in their homes and surroundings, though, to more privileged members of society these may seem

ugly and even uninhabitable. With a sense of affirmation, their abodes and contexts are beautified. Moris knows these barrios, he grew up in them, and in this regard, his oeuvre engages self-representation from specific cultural locations germane to him, hence the title of the series: *Beautiful Landscape*. In contrast to artists who produce work with content involving the suffering of others, Moris' art is generated from his own experiential parameters. As he strolls and traverses these *barrios*, the artist observes, takes notes, and listens. Like Walter Benjamin's figure of the cultural historian (in his thoughts on the anecdote), Moris listens to every piece of language – from gossip and banalities to fleeting quotations – in order to get a sense of history as a lived experience, an excursion into the thickness of daily life.

Hermoso paisaje #4 (*Beautiful Landscape #4*, 2008) is a key sculpture in the genesis of *An animal dies because another is hungry*, particularly his current text-image works involving found paintings. The sculpture is part of a body of work – *The Beautiful Landscape Series* – dealing with beauty, the urban landscape, and subcultures, topics that may be alluring and devilish, handsome and repulsive. Produced with the support of CIFO, Miami, the sculpture refers to a den inhabited by delinquents who work the streets. Though petty, these smalltime criminals operate with intimidation, fear, and reprisals. The hut's wooden

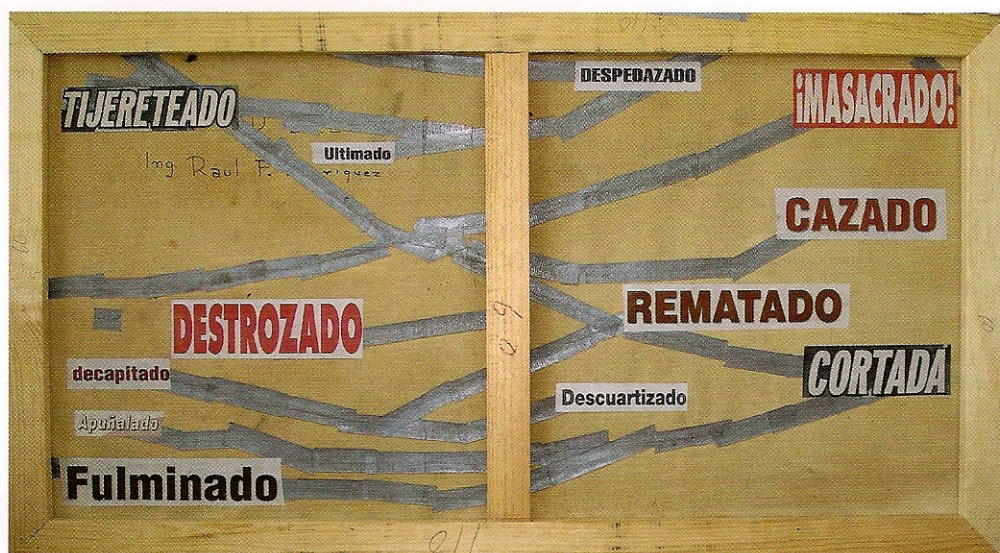


MORIS
Zorras casi matan a viejito en hotel / Old Man almost killed by foxes in hotel, 2008
Collage sobre lienzo encontrado / Collage on found canvas
Cortesía / Courtesy: el artista / the artist





MORIS, *Aterrador, brutal, cruel... / Frightening, Brutal, Cruel...*, 2008
Verso / Front side. Collage sobre lienzo encontrado / Collage on found canvas
Cortesía / Courtesy: el artista / the artist



MORIS, *Aterrador, brutal, cruel... / Frightening, Brutal, Cruel...*, 2008.
Reverso / Back side. Collage sobre lienzo encontrado / Collage on found canvas
Cortesía / Courtesy: el artista / the artist

los bajos fondos. En su exhibición de un mundo de crimen y de maldad, *Un animal muere porque otro tiene hambre* aborda un estado de cosas en el que las desigualdades económicas y sociales, la violencia y las relaciones de poder generan, por un lado, una cultura del temor y la supervivencia y, por otro, respuestas de crítica y afirmación por parte de ciudadanos que rechazan la derrota y que defienden y alientan la esperanza. Con contundencia, pero también con elegancia, valiéndose de un uso económico y a un tiempo exuberante de los materiales y de un agri dulce sentido del humor, la instalación empuja al espectador hacia el límite. Brechtiana en su distancia, la obra de Moris recurre al *Verfremdungseffekt* ("efecto de alejamiento") para exponer sus contenidos de una manera supuestamente objetiva, evitando detenerse en juicios de valor. Por lo que respecta a su público, lo que Moris busca es convencer y generar una actitud "crítica consciente", minimizando las emociones, la pasividad y la culpa.

"Materiales del infierno" es la expresión que el artista utiliza para definir los objetos y elementos empleados: cartón; papel de periódico; diversos tipos de cinta - de pintor, de embalar o aislante-; figuras; bisutería; colchones, mantas y telas; fragmentos arquitectónicos y mobiliario; madera; los típicos cuadros que se encuentran en las tiendas de segunda mano; latas; armas y herramientas alteradas con fines criminales... Adquiridos en el mercado negro, se trata de materiales encontrados en su expedi-

walls are made from found paintings whose surfaces are altered, on one side, with texts and cut-out letters taken from tabloids, and, on their reverse, with transferred graffiti tags. A roof formed out of a found soiled mattress covers the dwelling. Jutting out, it forms a canopy, protecting the entrance and making it grandiose. A red-dyed leather skin spreads out like tongue from under the structure, recalling the work's controlling animal metaphor. Placed in delicate patterns on a grid and flanking the entrance or mouth of the crib are jewels, weapons, and altered tools that were found, bought, and traded on the black markets. From the mouth, one gazes through the structure at a blanket with a tiger printed on its polyester surface.

Qué tan leal es un perro hambriento 2 (How Loyal a Hungry Dog Is 2, 2008) is a readymade that links *Hermoso Paisaje #4* with an outdoor sculpture in the patio. The readymade hangs in direct dialogue with the two sculptures. The work is a newspaper, *La Ley (The Law)*, affixed directly on the wall that divides the gallery from the courtyard. Its lead story, illustrated with a photo, headlines an itinerant candy and cookie vendor who was murdered when he refused to hand over to his assailants his humble earnings from sales on Mexico City's popular urban buses. He died from a pistol bullet in his head; his faithful pet dog guarded his lifeless cadaver until the arrival of the police.

ciones de campo, en sus continuas incursiones a un lado y otro de las fronteras urbanas.

A pie o en bicicleta, el artista atraviesa barrios infernales frecuentados únicamente por los ciudadanos más pobres y desheredados. Unos habitantes de esas zonas subdesarrolladas y desposeídas de la gran urbe que, a pesar de las brutales condiciones de vida reinantes y del interminable espectro de problemas que les aquejan, se sienten profundamente orgullosos de sus hogares y de su entorno por espantosos o inhabitables que pudieran parecerles a miembros más privilegiados de la sociedad, hermo seando, con sentido de afirmación, sus moradas, sus contextos. Moris conoce esos barrios; creció en ellos y es por eso por lo que su obra se implica en la representación de unos emplazamientos culturales específicos que le son cercanos. De ahí el título de la serie: *Hermosos paisajes*. En contraste con otros artistas, autores de un tipo de obra cuyo contenido se basa en el sufrimiento de otros, la creación de Moris parte de sus propios parámetros vivenciales. Al pasear por esos barrios, al atravesarlos, el artista observa, toma notas, escucha. Como la figura del historiador cultural de Walter Benjamin (en sus reflexiones sobre lo anecdótico), Moris registra cada fragmento de lenguaje - del chisme y la banalidad a la referencia fugaz - para componer una historia que refleje el sentido de la experiencia vivida, una excursión a la espesura de la existencia cotidiana.

The outdoor sculpture—with the same title but numbered 1—deals with the absence of loyalty, the twisted logic and general *modus operandi* of betrayal and treachery amongst the cold-hearted subculture of thieves, swindlers, kidnappers, and murderers. In a most precarious fashion, four sawhorses form its base, upon which are placed four boards to form a square. On this middle tier, piled bricks, concrete slabs, and fragments of pillars are placed on each board, functioning as reinforcing support as well as metaphors. In turn, the boards sustain an unstable platform of layered used plywood. Concrete blocks with shoes embedded in them are placed on the four corners of the rickety platform. In the centre of the platform, four figurines of Saint Jude Thaddeus—the patron of desperate causes—prop up a stylized modern chair cushioned with fabric pillows. Resembling a derelict throne, it represents the ceremonial seat of a powerful figure straight out of a picaresque and grotesque universe. Theatrical and operatic, the sculpture expresses a sense of fragility, as if the brick-a-brac construction were about to collapse, an allegory for the shifts of power and the continual changing of the guard in the criminal world, which has appropriated Saint Jude Thaddeus as its patron.

Four of the five paintings were found in the street tianguis or informal markets. By and large anonymous,

모리스

1978년 멕시코 멕시코 시티 출생/현, 멕시코 멕시코 시티 거주 및 활동

멕시코시티를 중심으로 활동하는 작가 모리스는 조각의 물리적 특성에 중점을 둔다. 작가는 다양한 매체로부터 채도하는 이미지로 꽉 찬 이 세계 안의 자신의 삶에서 이미지를 추출하여(그렇다고 내러티브를 추출하는 것은 아니다.) 작업의 형식적 요소들을 구성하기 위한 하나의 방법으로 사용한다. 문학, 정치, 여행과 같은 공적 활동과 상황들에서 뽑아낸 요소들은 그의 작품을 통해 보다 넓은 층의 관람객들에게 접근하는 수단으로 가능하다. 모리스는 입체적 사물들을 가장 인지하기 쉬운 미술기호라 보고, 하나의 새로운 미술적 사고를 반영하는 설치적 요소들에 초점을 맞춘다. 모리스의 작업은 주로 정치역사적 스펙터클이 현대문화 속에 사는 개인에게 어떤 영향을 미치는가에 대한 것이며, 그의 작품들은 주류문화, 대중문화 그리고 다양한 하위문화의 경계를 넘나든다. 그의 관심사는 사람들이 자신들을 어떻게 정의하는가, 그리고 사회적 정체성이 어떤 경로로부터 생성되며 공적으로 표출되는가에 있다. 그의 작품들에서는 어떠한 동적인 요소도 찾아볼 수 없다. 걸으로는 아무리 동적으로 보일지언정 말이다.

첫 대면에서 모리스의 작품은 역사적으로 포장되거나 꾸며진 사건들을 보여주는 듯하다. 하지만 그의 수사법은 은밀한 기교를 부림으로써 예상치 못했던 효과들의 발생을 가능하게 하며 총체성이 형성되는 것을 방해하기 위해 블랙유머를 살짝 가미한다. 건축가 르 코르뷔지에(Le Corbusier, 1887-1965)가 "건축의 목적은 우리를 움직이게 하는 데 있다"고 했듯이 모리스는 건축의 극적 목표를 고집스럽게 현실화한다. 즉, 그의 작품은 미술 작품의 비범한 힘이 단지 우리로 하여금 뭔가를 깊게 느끼게끔 하는 데만 있는 것이 아니라, 그것이 우리를 거주 가능토록 하는 의미 있는 여러 환경들 속에서 서로 복잡하게 얽혀 있는 우리의 감정과 느낌을 인지할 수 있도록 한다는 것에도 있다. 주거 영역의 주변적 공간들의 의미를 탐색하는 흥미진진한 에세이를 살펴보면 '주거'라는 단어의 출처는 고대 영어 단어 'dwellan'인데, 이 단어는 '길을 잃다' 또는 '지연'이라는 뜻을 가지고 있다. 주거지는 사이의(in-between), 공간이며, 이 '사이의 공간'에서 즉, 여러 세계들 사이에서는 어정쩡하게 주춤거린다. 거주라는 활동은 따라서 정관적 꾸물거림이라 할 수 있다. 즉 특정 장소의 본성에 반응하는, 그리고 연상작용에 의해 생성된 판타지, 백일몽, 욕망, 또는 기억들을 통해서 당신을 당신의 상상으로 데려가는 그 어떤 무엇에 대해 열려 있는, 공간 또는 위치에 머무는 하나의 방식이다. 거주한다는 것은 기꺼이 부유하기, 잠시 '동작 그만' 할 수 있기, 어느 정도 단념하며 자신에게 상상을 허용하기이다. 왜냐하면 거주라는 활동은 우리가 사적인 의미를 부여하는 공간들(방, 스튜디오, 화랑, 집, 가정)에서 상상적으로 서식하는 것을 포함하기 때문이다. 그러한 장소들에 대해 우리는 종종 어떤 뒤섞인 감정

Moris

Born in Mexico City, Mexico, 1978 / Lives and works in Mexico City, Mexico

In his work, Mexico City-based artist Moris likes the physical facts of sculpture. With the glut of imagery in the world from various media he chooses images from his own life—not narrative per se—as a way to organize the formal elements of his work. Elements from public activities and situations such as literature, politics and travel appear in his work as a way to make them accessible to a broader audience. Moris uses three-dimensional objects as the most recognizable sign of art while introducing installation elements that reflect a new artistic thought. Moris' work is primarily concerned with how the political and historical spectacle has affected the individual in contemporary culture. His works move between the territories of dominant culture, popular culture and diverse subcultures. He is interested in how people define themselves, and in how social identity is constructed and manifested publicly. His works never carry elements of movement—even though they may seem to do so.

At first glance, Moris' art objects appear to be historically wrapped or packaged events. But his rhetoric has an underhanded virtuosity, capable of producing unexpected effects with a bit of black humor tossed in discreetly to prevent the final ensemble. As the architect Le Corbusier(1887-1965) once remarked, the purpose of architecture is to move us, then in his work Moris consistently realizes architecture's highest aim: he creates works whose extraordinary power lies not only in how deeply they make us feel, but also in how they let us see the complexity of our feelings, in meaningful environments which help us to dwell. In a fascinating essay exploring the significance of peripheral spaces in dwellings, the word "dwelling" has its origins in the Old English word "dwellan," which means to go astray or to delay. A dwelling is an in-between space where one may hesitate between worlds. The activity of dwelling is therefore a contemplative lingering—a way of remaining in a space or location that is responsive to the nature of that particular place, and open to whatever it happens to take you in your imagination, through association, through fantasies, daydreams, desires, or memories. To dwell, then is to be willing to drift, to be able to pause, to let yourself imagine with some abandon. For the activity of dwelling involves imaginatively inhabiting the spaces we invest with personal meaning—rooms, studios, galleries, houses, homes. That our feelings about such places are often mixed, that we are often drawn to what both attracts and repels, these are things Moris understands intuitively, and are his greatest insights as an artist. If in the space surrounding his objects we experience our own ambivalence about certain issues more intensely, it is because of the way, in theme and structure, his work so elegantly hold contradictory elements in tension.

Peter DOROSHENKO

을 가지게 된다는 사실, 우리가 끌어당기기도 하고 밀어내기도 하는 그 무엇에 우리가 종종 끌려들어 간다는 사실, 이러한 사실들이 바로 모리스가 직관적으로 인식하는 것들이며 미술가로서의 그가 간파한 탁월한 식견들이다. 만약 그의 사물들을 둘러싸는 공간에서 어떤 이슈들에 대한 우리의 애매한 태도를 보다 격렬하게 경험한다면, 모리스의 작업이 모순적 요소들 간의 긴장을 그렇게도 우아한 형태로 확보한 방식, 주제 그리고 구조에 그 원인이 있다.

피터 도로센코



Photo: Courtesy of the artist

찢겨진 하늘
2009
캔버스 위에 나무, 금속, 유채
60x180x2.5cm

Cielo Roto (Ripped Sky)
2009
Oil on canvas, wood, metal
60x180x2.5cm

