

1) Como ha cambiado el arte en Mexico en el decado pasado? Por que crees que ha cambiado cosas?

There have been enormous changes in the art world in Mexico City in the last decade. Ten years ago there was practically no infrastructure for Contemporary Art and now there are a decent amount of independent space, galleries, museums, institutions, foundations and publications that support Contemporary Art. Also during the 70's and 80's there was hardly any contact with other countries. I think that things changed mostly due to a combination of independent initiatives and a specific historical moment that eventually also pressured the institutions into changing. In Mexico City there has always been a lot of artists eager to produce work and a huge public eager to experience Contemporary Art but for most of the 70's and 80's, the institutions were completely out of touch with these realities. That is way there had to be independent efforts to create an infrastructure to make up for what didn't exist as well as to promote exchange with the outside. These efforts had an incredible amount of success due to the big public demand for them. This in turn made obvious how obsolet the main art institutions (including the commercial art galleries) were and eventually created enough pressure for these institutions to change. Among these early independent efforts are "Temistocles 44" (1993-95), a collective of artists including Eduardo Abaroa, Sofia Taboas and Daniel Guzman among others, that organized independent non-profit shows, The publication "Curare" directed by Olivier Debrouse and "La Panaderia" an independent space coordinated by artists that was founded by Miguel Calderon and myself in 1994 and that I Directed until 2002 when it closed.

2) El arte contemporaneo Mexicano parece tener mucho mas realismo en sus temas. Los tradicionalistas como Rivera eran magnifico, pero tiro las temas de revolucion. Los artistas de hoy les gustan las temas verdades, como la pobreza, imagenes de la violencia de policia, el racismo, las cosas no buenas pero los que existen. Se puede decir que eso es el arte nuevo de mexico?

I think that part of the attitude of this generation of artists in Mexico has to do, like I mentioned before, with a reaction to people and institutions that were out of touch with or in negation of obvious realities of our lives. Despite big disfunctionality, the institutions continued with their modernist demagogy of progress based on technological development without addressing basic human problems. and I think that the art institutions reflected this attitude, they only showed modernist art that was completely detached to everyday life experience. So in a sense yes, in a very general way we could say that the new art in Mexico takes into consideration unpleasant aspects of everyday life. But on the other hand, since the 60's there have been artists dealing with these kind of issues that were completely ignored due to a lack of infranstructure and also today there are also some good artists in Mexico City that do not necesarilly address these issues.

3) Porque esas temas ahora? Porque es una nueva generacion de artistas, mas joven, etc? El artista Mexicano, puede expressarse mas ahora que antes, cuando habia un gobierno mas estricto?

I think this has mostly to do with the independent "do it yourself" attitude that I mentioned before, but I also think that definitely there is as well a historical context that helped in allowing for this generation of artists to somewhat flourish and develop (for instance with the appearance of the internet). But I don't think that this has to do with the government being less strict than before, during the PRI era the government wasn't really "strict" towards artists. So more that being able to express ourselves more that before, now there is a support system that did not exist in previous times.

4) O posiblemente es la privatizacion que da este libertad de expresion? Hace unos años, el PRI pagó por mucho del arte mexicano y tambien los exposiciones. Ahora, el President Fox ha privazitado mucho, no? Entonces, companias como Jumex y Banamex, companias provadas, pagan por mucho del arte. Eso da mas libertad a los artistas? El PRI les gustaban las temas revolucionarias y temas tradicionales. Ahora, con la privatizacion, el arista puede tirar o construir lo que quiere? Es verdad eso?

I don't really associate privatization with liberty of expression. The public cultural institutions that were founded by the PRI (like the CONACULTA founded by Salinas) have played an important role in the changes that have taken place over the last decade and these institutions have been adopted by Fox and are still playing an important role. In the case of Jumex for instance, they are buying art because the owner (Eugenio Lopez) likes Contempoary art but I don't really see a direct connection to privatization. Of course that having private corporations buying art has stimulated and injected a lot of energy to the local art scene and opened up a lot more possibilities. But in terms of the artists having more freedom I do not necessarily agree.

5) En los dos o tres anos pasados, el mundo ha empezado a interesarse en el arte contemporeano mexicano, tu arte. Porque ahora? A causa de las temas nuevas y honestas? Vuestro talento? NAFTA, ayuda a vender to trabajo en lugares como Estados UNidos y Europa tambien?

I do think it is the result of a very interesting historical moment in which all the reasons you mention above came together.

I think that the internationalization of the commercial policies of Mexico have played a really important role in allowing a lot more flow of information in and out of Mexico. Also, I think that world wide, it was a good timing for art that on the one hand incorporated the traditions of modernism but on the other, also addressed the negative side effects of modernity: this happened in the Mexico City art scene.

6) Has visto un explosion de este tipo, y temas nuevas y reales, pasando en otras partes de America del Sur? Quiero alargar este articulo si posible, para escribir de toda la region.

Due to the very big distances, I think that there are very different developments among the different countries of Latin America. In a way, in part due to distance, there is a lot more cultural contact between Mexico and California that between let's say Mexico and Brazil or Argentina. I do know about some really good and interesting work happening in Colombia, Brazil and Venezuela but it is hard to establish any direct link or resemblance with what has happened in Mexico.