



FUNDAÇÃO BIENAL DO MERCOSUL

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7th Mercosul Biennial: *Grito e Escuta* [Screaming and Hearing]

Porto Alegre, Brazil – October 16 to November 29, 2009

The **7th Mercosul Biennial** runs from **October 16 to November 29 2009** in **Porto Alegre**, Rio Grande do Sul/**Brazil**. The exhibitions will be open to the public for 45 days in **three exhibition spaces** – The Quayside Warehouses, Santander Cultural and MARGS – The Rio Grande do Sul Museum of Art – together with other public spaces in the state capital. Approximately 70% of the works will be produced by the artists especially for this Biennial. The full list of artists taking part in this edition will be released in early July.

The conceptual foundation for the 7th Mercosul Biennial entails a methodological shift: it positions a reflection on artistic processes today at the core of the Biennial, focusing on the creative energy of artists who posit both *reflexive pauses* and *expansive actions*. We are interested in working with artists who reflect on their roles, while making way for new critical perspectives, affirming their importance as social players and constant producers of necessary critical visions. We are interested in minimal, specific signalings whose consequences are vast. We are interested in generous gestures, in the constructive quality of those gestures, in the artists' aesthetic, ethical and conceptual formulations, and in their ability to listen. As a whole, we propose a *system* focused on creative processes – rather than specific themes–, a system bound together by the notions of *action and reflection* and their attendant tools. We attempt to create a Biennial that is, in itself, a system of dynamic possibilities, where each autonomous viewer can build his or her own system for reading the event.

In line with this shift, in the curatorial team of the 7th Biennial, artists will occupy the role of curators, develop the educational tools and programs, take a leading role in creating the Biennial's image and communication, and conceptualize its publishing projects including the mass-scale, low-cost publications to be produced. The curatorial team includes Chief Curators Victoria Noorthoorn (Argentina) and Camilo Yáñez (Chile), Curator of Education Marina De Caro (Argentina), Adjunct Curators Roberto Jacoby (Argentina), Artur Lescher (Brazil), Laura Lima (Brazil) and Mario Navarro (Chile), *Radiovisual* Curator Lenora De Barros (Brazil), and Curators of Publications Erick Beltrán (Mexico) and Bernardo Ortiz (Colombia).

All the while, the 7th Biennial attempts to break limits in terms of both time and space. In time, because this is an ongoing Biennial: it is our hope that its educational methodologies will continue to operate for a time after the formal closing of the event; while one of the Biennial's exhibitions will be open indefinitely on the www. In space, because the physical limits of the Biennial do not coincide with the boundaries of Porto Alegre, Brazil or even Mercosul: the artists and their areas of operation go beyond borders.

The centrality of the artist is felt in each and every action undertaken by the Biennial, as well as in its exhibitions and programs.



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The *exhibitions* will investigate specific dimensions of the creative process:

- Drawing as the opening space for translating the artist's thought
- Works that question the cultural and political conditions of specific contexts
- Works that articulate a dialogue with the city, whose grid is altered and re-signified, rendering it a public text
- Works that lay bare artistic language to stage the conditions of their production and exhibition
- Transformation as a tool capable of dislocating the perception of artwork and suspending time
- Humor and the absurd as instruments of resistance and freedom
- The project as a site for planning, communication, invention, and the expansion of the imagination
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The Biennial's *programs* will be geared towards a public from a variety of locations and backgrounds. The *Residency Program* - a part of the *Educational Project* - is to take place months before the opening of the Biennial in Porto Alegre and in various communities throughout the State of Rio Grande do Sul. In it, artists will design new methodologies for the educational system. The *Publishing Program* envisions a system of mobile, low-cost publications that can be assembled by the viewers themselves, who will be able to access the works in the Biennial from multiple perspectives. This program also supports a multifaceted conception of communication: in this Biennial, there will be artworks in the media. Finally, our *Radiovisual* program, which symbolizes the communication interest of this 7th Biennial, will bring the Biennial's processes of construction and debate to both nearby and distant listeners.

Together, the Biennial's exhibitions and programs constitute an organic system, geared towards expansion and openness. To underscore the importance of the latter, the 7th Biennial organize an open call for submissions for *Projetáveis* [Projectables], an exhibition that will travel with no luggage and be displayed simultaneously at the Biennial itself as well as in a number of cities around Brazil and the rest of the world.

Furthermore, the title of the Biennial, **Grito e Escuta [Screaming and Hearing]**, speaks of the importance of exploring multi-directional communication between a world in a state of conflict and an artist who listens and responds, an artist who produces meanings for the world to listen. Such communication takes place through multiple languages and seeks to break the hegemony of visuality. Thus, the 7th Biennial explores sound, body movement, and social and educational experience as integral parts of art today. Furthermore, the title underscores our intention to include a wide range of contents: from the artist who undertakes an action to effect a change or have a specific impact on reality, to the artist with a reflexive attitude who carefully owns up to his or her environment and captures the power of conversation as a possible model for a better world.

- Victoria Noorthoorn and Camilo Yáñez, Chief Curators, 7th Mercosul Biennial

7ª bienal do mercosul
GRITO E ESCUTA





The Programs of the 7th Biennial

The Programs of the 7th Biennial, connect the contents of the different exhibitions, such that as a whole the Biennial explores a broad field of action, experience and reflection on the complex and surprising nature of current creative processes. Together, these exhibitions constitute a system of inter-related actions characterized by openness and mobile methodologies that invite the viewer to approach the Biennial from multiple and changing perspectives. They include:

I. Educational Project:

In keeping with the curatorial proposal as a whole, the 7th Biennial's Educational Project seeks to make visible the educational proposals of contemporary artists. Several artists will be invited to reflect on the educational process and enrich the major educational project already underway in the State of Rio Grande do Sul. Months before the opening of the Biennial, these artists, as well as leading international specialists in education, will participate in a seminar and carry out residencies in different communities of the State, translating their work as artists into educational methodologies that can later be replicated in a wide range of communities by teachers and other social actors.

In this new Educational Project, we seek to create spaces for dialogue between art and education, microcosms that house small actions initially geared towards exploring reality and exercising poetic and independent thought. We formulate education as a concrete and transformative practice that allows the student to engage his or her environment from the always revealing lens of art to later, on the basis of his or her own experience, construct new knowledge and experience about contemporary art, and this Biennial's contents and programs. Practice and theory will be integrally bound, privileging the relationship between *experience*, as capital for the construction of ideas, and its possible translation into dialogues between teaching and learning.

II. Publications Program:

The Publishing Program entails three areas:

- The creation of the image of the 7th Mercosur Biennial, conceived as a system in and of itself
- The organization of a communications system, to include artworks in the media
- The construction of a mobile and flexible publications system that engages the conceptual and practical complexity of the works in the Biennial.

This Program sets out to form a part of and to work with the Biennial's other programs, projects and actions on the basis of the conviction that all points of view are equally complex. If we conceive of this program as operating like the camera of architects Charles and Ray Eames, Powers of Ten (1977) –which moves gradually into the infinite distance to then effect an equally infinite approach and penetrate subatomic cells– the public will be able to access the Biennial from many points of view, all of them equally complex,



though different. This entails engaging the conceptual development of each one of the exhibitions on its own terms, while also creating the possibility of organizing different reading systems –depending on the distance from the work in question. These different systems will take the shape of publications in a variety of low-cost and mass-scale formats. Available in the exhibition spaces themselves, such publications will serve to complement the experience of each one of the Biennial’s exhibitions and, through multiple readings, to link the artists included in the diverse exhibitions .

III. Radiovisual:

Radiovisual, a joint project with Universidad Federal, will be broadcast from the University’s radio station and live from Cais do Porto. Starting months before the opening of the Biennial, the station will be open to artists, curators and critics, as well as to Porto Alegre’s general public and school community. Its programming will include sound works, interviews and conversations with participating artists, as well as reports on the construction of this Biennial and on the progress of its educational project. The Biennial’s radio station will serve as a symbol for the entire Biennial and its aims: mainly, to communicate with a broad public beyond the strict Biennial audience, bringing that public into contact with art that reflects on current creative processes as well as with the 7th Biennial itself.

The Image of the 7th Biennial:

The image of the 7th Mercosur Biennial was conceived by the publications curators of this edition. They created a visual equation, an isotype that connected and bound the Fundação Bienal do Mercosul and the 7th edition of the event, rendering them parts of a whole. To this end, they created a symbol that, like a living organism, grows and changes while maintaining its identity.

The points of the isotype of the 7th Biennial represent the seven exhibitions that will be presented during the Biennial and the lines represent its three programs: the Educational Project, the Publication Program and *Radiovisual*. The combination of these ten elements generates 1,800 combinations and formats.

The isotype was created on the basis of a grid conceived as the habitat of a living organism: the 7th Biennial. It has the same proportions as the Biennial’s entire publication system, and it is based on the standard international proportion of sheets of paper according to the ISO 216 A Format norm (created in 1786 by Georg Christoph Lichtenberg). The Biennial’s publication system entails six formats for paper (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and A6), each one of which shapes a level of reading and an analysis of the artworks.

Like the Mercosur Biennial, the isotype-system is characterized by endless mobility. That mobility, which is the basis for all creative processes, sustains the actions of this Biennial, all of which have been conceived for a participative viewer who is open to a vast range of possible occurrences. Mobility and openness are the engine of this edition of the Mercosur Biennial, and a major mark of our isotype.



Curator profiles

Victoria Noorthoorn (Argentina, 1971) – Chief curator. Independent curator trained in Arts from the University of Buenos Aires and *Master of Arts in Curatorial Studies* from Bard College, New York. She has worked in the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and The Drawing Center, New York, and Malba-Fundación Costantini in Buenos Aires. She curated the 29th Pontevedra Art Biennial, Spain (2006), *Beginning With A Bang! From Confrontation to Intimacy: An Exhibition of Argentine Contemporary Artists 1960-2007*, at the Americas Society, New York (2007), assisted with the presentation of León Ferrari at the 52nd Venice Biennale (2007), and was co-curator of the 41st National Artists Salon in Cali, Colombia (2008).

Camilo Yáñez (Chile, 1974) – Chief curator. Visual artist and curator with a degree and master's degree in Arts from the University of Chile. He teaches at Diego Portales University, the University of Development and UNIACC. He was curator of the Matucana 100 Cultural Centre in Santiago de Chile (2001-2008). He was co-editor of POBLADO, the visual journal on contemporary Chilean art distributed by ARCO in 2006, and member of the Editorial committee for the book "*Copiando el Edén. Arte Reciente en Chile*", published by Gerardo Mosquera and *PuroChile ediciones*, 2006.

Marina De Caro (Argentina, 1961) – Education curator. Visual artist. Trained in Art History from the University of Buenos Aires, she has run an artists' training programme since 1998. From 2001 to 2004 she coordinated the institutional relations, workshops and publications for the *TRAMA Project / Artists' Cooperation and Confrontation programme*. She has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in Argentina and abroad.

Roberto Jacoby (Argentina, 1944) – Adjunct curator. Visual artist working since the 1960s, when he co-created the manifesto "*For an art of the communication media*" (1966) and took part in *Tucumán Arde* (1968), among other activities. Since then he has worked in the fields of sociology and art and explored the development of experimental networks with the *Bola de Nieve* artists' network (1998), *Chacra* and *Proyecto Venus* (1999), together with various forms of collaboration, such as creation of the *Fundación Start* (1999) and *Ramona* magazine (since 2000). His works have been shown at important international exhibitions such as *Documenta Magazines*, Kassel (2007); *Inverted Utopias*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (2004); and *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s*, Queens Museum of Art, New York (1999).

Artur Lescher (Brazil, 1962) - Adjunct curator. Visual artist. He has taught at the Faculdade Santa Marcelina, São Paulo, since 1991. He has participated in many solo and group exhibitions in Brazil and abroad since 1984, including the 19th and 25th São Paulo International Biennials (1987 and 2002) and the 5th Mercosul Biennial (2005). The book *Artur Lescher*, with texts by Aracy Amaral, Rafael Vogt and Arthur Nestrovski was published by Cosac & Naify in 2002.

Laura Lima (Brazil, 1971) - Adjunct curator. Visual artist. Graduated in Philosophy from Rio de Janeiro State University, and also studied at Parque Lage School of Visual Arts in Rio de Janeiro. She is an artist and co-director of A Gentil Carioca gallery in Rio de Janeiro, with the artists Márcio Botner and Ernesto Neto. She has exhibited in solo and



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group exhibitions in Brazil and abroad, including the 27th São Paulo International Biennial (2006) and the 5th Mercosul Biennial (2005).

Mario Navarro (Chile, 1970) - Adjunct curator. Visual artist. Studied at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Chile School of Art and University of Paris I, Pantheon Sorbonne, France. He teaches at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Chile School of Art. As curator he has organised exhibitions in Valdivia, Santiago de Chile and New York. As an artist he has had solo exhibitions and group exhibitions in several cities in the world, including *Les Rencontres Internacionales*, at Centre Pompidou, Paris (2007); 27th São Paulo International Biennial, Brazil (2006); and the 4th Liverpool Biennial, England (2006).

Erick Beltrán (Mexico, 1974) – Editorial curator. Visual artist. Studied at the National School of Visual Arts, UNAM, Mexico. He teaches at the Nuova Belle Arti Academy, in Milan/Italy. He has shown in solo and group exhibitions in several cities of the world including the 28th São Paulo International Biennial (2008); Lyon Biennial (2007); *Société anonyme*, Le Plateau, Paris (2007); and *MDE07*, Medellín (2007). He was responsible for the image for the 3rd International Contemporary Art Symposium in Mexico (2006) and the Centro Cultural Mexico de Paris (2001).

Bernardo Ortiz (Colombia, 1972) - Editorial curator. Designer and writer. Studied Visual Art at the University of Los Andes, Bogotá, and is a Master of Philosophy from the University of Valle, Cali, Colombia. He teaches at the University of Los Andes. He is co-editor of *Valdez* magazine, with François Bucher and Lucas Ospina. His most important exhibitions include: *Documenta Magazines* (Valdez magazine), Kassel (2007) and *MDE07*, Medellín (2007). He curated the Bogotá Biennial (MaMBo, 2006) and was co-curator of the 41st National Artists Salon of Colombia (2008).

Lenora de Barros (Brazil, 1953) – co-curator of Radio Biennial. Poet and visual artist. Trained in linguistics at the University of São Paulo – USP. She started working in the 1970s, developing work in various languages, such as video, poetic performance, photography and installation. She has shown in solo and group exhibitions in Brazil and abroad, including *Entre a Palavra e a Imagem*, Museu da Cidade de Lisboa (2007), 4th *Mercosul Biennial* (2005) and the 25th São Paulo International Biennial (1998).

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