

José Kuri and Mónica Manzutto

1. Minerva Cuevas, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Luis Felipe Ortega, Daniel Guzmán, Sofía Táboas, Gabriel Orozco, Dr. Lakra, Fernando Ortega, Eduardo Abaroa, Jonathan Hernández, Gabriel Kuri, Damián Ortega, Phillippe Hernández and Ririkrit Tiravanija are the artists that the gallery has been representing for the past two years in Mexico City.

A new gallery model for a new kind of art.

Our gallery's structure responded to the needs of a specific group of artists, to the kind of work they were making and also to context- for instance, pieces made outdoors that sometimes lent more importance to process than product or were unstable formal manifestations. Then-existing galleries were designed for other kinds of work, primarily painting; these galleries' architecture and work structures catered to that type of art. It continues to be the case that in spaces such as those, art may even be reduced to an exercise whose main challenge is how to fill wall space.

It is our artists who decide what shape our gallery takes.

Traditionally, galleries first open a space and then seek out artists, whereas we took the opposite approach. The shape of our gallery was determined by the needs of an artist or group of artists.

Our gallery also expects its artists to be a cohesive group. We started working with artists who were somehow associated with each other, and part of our work is to foster these links, these productive instances.

Another reason we had for launching the project was that commercial galleries in general were not meeting the community's needs and this, paradoxically, did not only evince deficiencies on a commercial level but also spoke of a cultural void. There was often a missing link in the chain of cultural production. We believe that, for the cycle of artistic production to be complete, works must find a niche as products in a system of exchange which is symbolic but also economic. This system of (economic) exchange is not only an abstract or parallel space where a vertical scale of values determines an artwork's price-it is also a code by which the qualitative worth of works is determined and the latter thus acquire value as cultural products without being stripped of their artistic and symbolic integrity.

Market Economy. An exercise in dislocation to understand the market's systems of exchange. How artworks are presented and circulate. Inexpensive materials not unlike those found in markets. The works immediacy, put into circulation, reflected in pieces made of perishable materials or participatory works. Series of works rather than multiplies. In spite of the artwork's low price, there were no subsidies.

Conceived in terms of a market. Everything was sold. Playing with the market's own rules-opening hours, prices, materials. A single day, a market based on opportunity. Not speculation.

2. When we look at a work of art and try to understand or establish in our minds a rapport between form, concept and context- that is precisely how we conceived the gallery. We also thought of it as problem-solving agency working within and industry of exceptions. Not so much as an organization programming artists' activities or production.

Understanding modes of production to comprehend modes of distribution.

For instance: learning about gardening to assist in the process of making a work, but also to foster its circulation, i.e. sell it.

This model can be adapted to specific circumstances and possibilities. The gallery's working process is an organic one that attempts to benefit the artist's creative process.

The two of us who run the gallery are not curators, nor artists, nor theorists. Our interest as a gallery is to develop and foster our artists' careers.

Living rooms. There was no artwork. Creating a social occasion. A space that comes alive through interaction. A private space taken into a public space. Not reacting to people's expectations.

Permanencia voluntaria/Stay as long as You Want. An exercise in conciliation and dislocation. How an artist's video is shown but also consumed. A movie theater, not only a different space but a different material backdrop-the movie screen. As with the *Market Economy* project, we used preexisting structures, followed the context's rules. There was an entrance fee. Videos were for sale. Not only gallery artists.

3. Our gallery is a company. From the outset and by definition, it was conceived as a business. It was clear from the start that our gallery would deal in work that might be considered hard to sell due to its formal features, but we made the decision from the beginning to commit ourselves to promoting this kind of work, which does not necessarily lead to short-term profits.

Anything can be sold, bought, collected. Projects are conceived from an economic point of view; projects that are not immediately lucrative are never seen as secondary or parallel, but rather meet with the same process of evaluation.

Another challenge is to foster people's interest in starting a collection and then maintaining a relationship with them, and also offering something new to established collectors.

We formed a company to nurture artists' individual development; this rather than the strength of the group as a whole, is one criterion by which we evaluate our work, since we are not an association or collective.

Nor does our gallery opportunistically strive to create a market or sell by creating a buzz; it promotes conceptual and formal systems rather than single pieces.

Our gallery's only source of income is sales. The Mexican market is small, for which reason we have tried to set foot in foreign markets. However, we do not simply export products which only, specifically bespeak of the local context: we also strive to establish a more a more direct dialogue with other contexts, and that is why our projects depend on the presence of the artists and the gallery.

Kurimanzutto @ Chantal Crousel. One gallery inside another. A gallery as a transportable organization of creation and negotiation. The gallery ceased to exist in Mexico City to thus exist elsewhere. Two parallel structures, neither one subordinate to the other. Spatial, administrative negotiation. A gallery without a space or geographical location. It can open its doors anywhere. The gallery opened spaces within itself that are normally off-limits- storerooms, offices, the fire scape- and that offered new perspectives for the presentation and consumption of aesthetic experience. This model still interests us, to be reinvented on other occasions in the future. We repeated this experience, for instance, in New York and Los Angeles.

Individual projects. A show inside an apartment. It coexisted and merged with the apartment and the daily life of its occupants. A show in a garage. A workplace rather than a place of contemplation. Our office moved next to a garage.

4. Though it was born out of the artists' initiative or needs, the gallery bears its directors' names and is not an artist-run center. Responsibilities are not shared by the group. Nor is there a power bloc or structure interested in establishing a collective viewpoint; rather, the gallery is conceived as a business, as a way of life for each individual.

Regarding the question of whether we will have a space of our own in the future, the answer is we do not know. It seems clearer to us now than we got started that we do not need one. If the need arises due to process, projects or products, we might. If we do open a space it might not be a permanent one, as it will probably not need it to exist for more than a year or two. To us, this stage of the gallery- inserted within an open, polymorphous situation- is not a period of transition to a more permanent space: it is a statement, a decision, a commitment to the artists and to what they are doing.

Speculating as to what lies ahead, it might be better to have fives spaces instead of just one, and not only in Mexico but in five cities in different parts of the world. Adapting the model to what happens rather than vice-versa.

We could have a space, but without art it does not make sense. What is important is to open up the time frame in which art happens. The gallery's shape is molded by time.