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Art Nexus

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REVIEWS

Ricalde and Barbosa

Casa del Lago at Bosque de Chapultepec

Rosana Ricalde (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1971) and Felipe Barbosa (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1978) surprise us with their artistic intervention in the area around the Lake House in Chapultepec Forest, where viewers are invited to become part of the creative act, completing the work with their personal experience.

Jardines Móviles, the artists' 5th exhibition as a duo, proposes a reflection on the idea of the urban park as a space for relaxation and entertainment, but also for consumerism. A city's reconfigured parks become an artificial image of the place they used to be before the advent of the city itself.

The artists visited Mexico City, and its Chapultepec Forest, in June of 2007. They toured the site extensively, as required for the development of this proposal. The project's production started during a second trip in August of that same year. The project evolved from the artists' interest in the relationship between the spaces for relaxation and entertainment and the ever more present informal economy.

Colorful inflatables with figures of well-known children's film characters, like the ones offered by peddlers in and around Chapultepec forest, become the pieces forming the figures, topiary-like, of a giraffe, an ostrich, a horse... The artists build an "enchanted forest" in the gardens of the Lake House, regrouping and recontextualizing the characteristic everyday elements of the space that hosts them.

The arrangement of the inflatables, as accumulated or grouped pieces fleshing out the metallic structures that outline each animal, forms new figures and at the same time refers us to the invasion of the artificial, the generalization of consumerism by virtue of which entertainment is distorted through supply and demand and mass-production mechanisms.

The proposal is completed by the viewer's experience in finding the figures that emerge from the gardens, inviting them to fantasy and to reflection with the divertimento caused by the surprise of encountering everyday objects reformulated into new knowable structures. The figures, imitation of zoomorphic trees or bushes, are arranged throughout the garden with a view to the lake, with the Lake House and Nacho López Gallery as their backdrop, where photographs, video, and a biblio-

graphic selection of Ricalde and Barbosa's joint work are on exhibit.

The selection of their previous works helps to understand their artistic practice, especially in urban interventions that confront and invite us to reflect on issues of poverty, identity, appropriation of spaces, the market, the word, hospitality, and mutual support. Ricalde and Barbosa have taken part together in several urban interventions, like *Troca de Cartões* (2006,) where they stationed themselves at a table in the square in front of the Banco del Nordeste Cultural Center, a transit area for the unemployed, offering their services in the design and printing of business cards. The information of another person with similar services were printed on the back, in order to generate a network of collaborators and colleagues. Or *Cambiando el curso de las aguas* (2005,) where they allude to water management in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, distributing water bottles and committing those who received them to buying two more bottles and giving them away in order to generate a "virtual river" of people and water. Or *In-Site_05* (2003-2005,) where they covered Tijuana's Mexico bridge with a "welcome mat" inspired in the colors and the typography of the woven bracelets sold in handcrafts stalls, inviting label makers to inscribe the names of those who so requested.

Separately, each one of these two artists has developed projects and participated in solo and group shows, both in Brazil and abroad. Rosana Ricalde, graduated from the Fine Arts school at the Universidad Federal de Rio de Janeiro, has focused her work on the use of words and word games. Among her shows, the highlights are: *Entre a Palavra e a Imagem*; *Cidades ocultas*; *Um Século de Arte Brasileira*; *Primeira Pessoa*; *Móvel Mar*; *Poesia DES-RE-grada*; *Palavra Materia Escultórica*; and *Exercício da Possibilidade*.

Focused on the deconstructed and reconfigured object, Felipe Barbosa, graduated from the Fine Arts school with a post-graduate degree in Visual languages, Universidad federal de Rio de Janeiro, has exhibited *Introductions*; *Supermercado*; *Game-on sport*; *The Beautiful Game*; *Arte Brasileira Hoje*; *Amalgames Brésiliens*, *Palavra Matéria Escultórica*.

Felipe Barbosa and Rosana Ricalde. *Mobile Gardens*, 2007. Site-specific intervention, six metallic structures with plastic inflatable objects of 2,5 meters of height approximately.

