

hechoenoaxaca.org

MADE IN OAXACA

Creating an Oaxacan
'Other' under
multicolored tarps.

Perceptions of authenticity are rooted in the drawing of boundaries and the formation of preconceptions. Who decides where to draw the lines? What are the forces that create the stereotypes and expectations of a cultural region? Which models are authoritative, imposed and which ones are authentic, real? These are constant issues younger artists in Oaxaca, México, are confronted with, while producing and exhibiting their work within a cultural context where 'unique local characteristics' and 'traditional heritage' are the buzzwords to sell a growing demand for 'authentic' and 'traditional' culture. Colonization, progress and modernity have a strong influence on the collective cultural life of every community in Oaxaca. The "mercados" of every pueblo provide a good example that merges these apparently contradictory tendencies. The model of the street market or "tianguis" has served as an important social and cultural space in the mexican landscape, an 'omnitopia', where the exchange of products reflects the practices and perceptions of multiple locations being accessed through a singular site. Permeability and abundance of offer, instead of selection or specialization, are the rule in the tianguis. Thus, hechoenoaxaca.org, a virtual art space founded in 2007 by Saúl Hernández, explores the process of gift, bartering or exchange by inviting and providing artists from Oaxaca and abroad to work and relate discreet cultural fragments to incorporate them into a rich cultural aggregate, that, quoting Robert Smithson: takes into account the direct effect of the elements as they exist from day to day apart from representation.

By using the "tianguis" phenomena -as an exhibition-online-zine model- the paintings, drawings, videos, ob-

by **Saúl Hernández**

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1 Luis Hampshire, 2 Rosa Vallejo. Interventions at La Antigua Fábrica de Cal. Hecho en Oaxaca. Anniversary.



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jects, texts, sounds, music and installations that conform hechoenoaxaca.org question how tourism, leisure, travel and exchange of information and products define and erode identity while acknowledging the pitfalls of putting local identity on display. Urgent solutions have to be invented and practiced in order to create conditions for sustainable development for the emergent art and life in Oaxaca.

All The artists in the site share the use of fiction, manipulation, narrative identities and appropriation of popular imagery, traditional art forms and local curiosities, as tools to produce situations, critiques and identities (not just visual ones) of living in Oaxaca today. In doing so, the hechoenoaxaca.org project adopts the form of an Environment, a zone of urgency, a type of realtime laboratorium, a testing site for a series of event-based activities that collects, transports and exposes work of several scales and mediums assembling and creating a mix and collision of worlds, in the manner of a future archaeology that attempts to reconstruct a culture yet to come.

This mixture can be seen in the different stages that conform the hechoenoaxaca.org project:

COVER/PORTADA. An online exhibition that generates a constant dialogue between artists from diverse latitudes. So far hechoenoaxaca.org has shown 10 different covers from the following artists: Jessica Wozny, Joel Gómez, Bruno Varela, Alejandra Pérez Peña, Emilia Sandoval, Alfonso Barranco, Daniel Guzmán, Txema Novelo and Charles Glaubitz.

BILLBOARD/CARTELERA. Platform that offers a tangible routes to cultural events in the city of Oaxaca.

LINKS/ENLACES. Access to virtual paths within the global from the local. From music, art, architecture, design, literature, found images to online zines.

FOOTNOTE/NOTAS AL PIE. A weekly subjective selection



3 Ronal Martínez,
4 Blanca González & Sergio Gutiérrez,
5 Mariana Gullco,
6 Moisés García,
7 Daniel Guzmán.
Interventions at La Antigua Fábrica de Cal.
Hecho en Oaxaca. Anniversary.



▲ Alfonso Barranco.
Web cover September 2009.



▲ Charles Glaubitz. Web cover January 2009.



▲ Jessica Wozny. Web cover March 2008.



▲ Txema Novelo. Web cover December 2008.

of videos and images that range from the exotic, the odd, the vernacular to classic an contemporary orchestras.

THE CORNER POCKET. A curated music showroom. So far the young american dj and writer LeeLee Pedrick has curated four shows: Inversiones en primavera, En mayo nos derretimos, Preguntas/respuestas para la primavera mas cálida en 100 años. Along the independent oaxacan based radio producer Rocío Ortega curated 4 shows with the theme: Music non stop.

TEXT/TEXTOS. A site for the flux knowledge.

INTERVIEWS/ENTREVISTAS. An open dialogue with diverse creators. The hechoenoaxaca.org editors has interviewed the following persons: Israel born Denmark based artist Tal R, The italian-dominican oaxacan based anthropologist Alessandra Galimberti, The emergent artist Blanca González, Italia Rodríguez and Sergio Gutiérrez, and the zacatecan oaxacan based writer and editor Tryno Maldonado.

STUDIO/ESTUDIOS. Atelier visits, a behind the scenes of the creative process.

ARTISTS/ARTISTAS. An online dossier of outstanding artists working within, with, on and above the pretext of Oaxaca. Alfonso Barranco, Enrique Canseco, Jorge Castellanos, Cesar Chávez, Pablo Cotama, Miguel Ángel Frausto, Moisés García, Joel Gómez, Sr. González, Mariana Gullco, Sergio Gutiérrez Aragón, Luis Hampshire, Saúl Hernández, Junko Hirose, Claudia López Terroso, Morelos León Celis, Mako, Rolando Martínez,

Carlos Ortega, Ana Belén Paizanni, Plan B, Rosa Vallejo, Bruno Varela and Jessica Wozny

MÚLTIPLES/MÚLTIPLES. A limited edition of prints, objects, music, shirts, stickers, pins, posters and postcards are made to create a self-sustainable project.

Each one of these stages provide a useful opening-out of potentialities and enable multiple responses to the question How can an exhibition, and art work or a cultural process attempt to represent the social, the political complexities of the area and its cultural articulations without reducing them to stereotypes (or in any case creating new ones)? while incorporating failure as a disruptive ingredient hechoenoaxaca.org is an adaptive model that

seeks for plurality, negotiation, exchange, critique and the courage to do things without fear to loose. As the artist Tal R said to hechoenoaxaca.org in a recent interview you have to "Invest in Loosing", it means that you have to take chances, to make work that even you don't recognize as possible... You have to dare to invest in bad ideas, wrong steps, small sideways, not only the main road, because in the end, you are searching for something, that should be beyond of what you can reach. After all, art is still possible, as asian curator Hou Hanru says, because we still believe in the effort of micro actions to discover new realities.

'Come on, come out of the rain. You're not oppressed you're just too learned. I took the book, I looked the page - your sabbatical was burning. ' Streets of Fire, The New Pornographers.