

EXHIBITION RATIONALE- KOLDO MITXELENA (San Sebastián)

Title: URBAN FICTIONS

Venue: KOLDO MITXELENA, San Sebastián (Spain)

Date: 27th of October 2011- 27th of January 2012

Curator: Neus Miró

Concept.-

This exhibition will bring together a number of works whose aim is to represent, re-think and re-formulate urban environments throughout a diverse use of “drawing” as a main tool.

This project will include an important section devoted to comic books as being a crucial cultural product in terms of city representation, as well as works by artists and architects who have been reflecting on the nature of urban environments and its possibilities, and sometimes also influenced by some elements from the comic books.

The comic book as a cultural product is intimately related to the city. The first comic strips were published in newspapers at the end of the XIX century and the city was the scenario where the adventures of the main character would invariably take place.

A defining aspect of the comic book is the distinctive relationship that creates between text and image. The combination of text and image is something that goes back a few centuries, the comic book however manages to combine text and image in such a way that narration is unfold in a spatial sequence. On the other hand, the grid introduces a new way of looking at the page; the viewer's gaze can drift over the page, it can shift from vignette to vignette before

focusing on the actual story. If the modern city established the *flâneur*, in a very similar way the comic book demands a *flâneur* reader, implying a mobile and decentralized gaze.

Some contemporary artists have explored the possibilities of the drawing in combination with the digital technologies to expand the representation of the city. Some others have clearly been taken comic book as a reference that makes itself manifest in a number of ways. This is especially relevant for those who have literally make comic books or graphic novels. But it is also important for those other artists –and some architects- who have taken some specific aspects from the comic book such as the spatial sequence and extend it to the display mode or to the very structure of the work.

The show will include representations of the modern and contemporary city, works featuring their parallel urban environments, as well as those that use drawing to envision and project the future cities. These two approaches to city representation may be intertwined in the actual exhibition display rather than defining two different chapters or sections of the show.

- SHORTLIST.-

Historical Comic books:

Little Nemo in Slumberland, The Spirit, The Building, City People Notebook, Building Stories, La ciudad de cristal, From Hell, Mister X, Les Cités Obscures, The Long Tomorrow, La ville qui n'existait pas, Akira

Contemporary comic books by:

Abarrots, Alvarortega, Ata, Nono Kadaver, Miguel Angel Martin, Gol, Manolito Rastaman, Javier Royo, Simonides, Furillo y Kini.

Works:

- Pushwagner, *Soft-City*, 1969-1975, graphic novel

Animation film

4 colour prints:

Life, 2009, 61 x 51 cm

Sunrise, 2010, 61 x 79 cm

They Are Asleep, 2008, 61 x 71,1 cm

The Boss, 2009, 61 x 75 cm

- Simon Faithfull, *Revolutionary Postcards from Berlin* (with Crows), 2009, 5'4", b/w

- Pia Rönicke, *Cell City*, 2003, 4', b/w and colour

The whole installation comprising 4 videos (*Cell City* plus other 3) and a standing-up and viewing structure

- Anouk de Clercq, *Building*, 2003, 12', b/w

- Txuspo Poyo, *Passenger: 50 segundos en vertical*, 2006, 8', colour

The whole installation comprising 4 videos (*Passenger: 50 segundos en vertical* plus other 3)

- Francesc Ruiz, *The Green Detour*, comic magazine, 9 issues, 2010

Francesc Ruiz will also make a specific work (a comic magazine) for the exhibition that will be distributed for free during the exhibition.

- Judas Arrieta very often makes mural paintings combining different type of imaginary clearly coming from comic aesthetics. He will make a specific mural in the exhibition space.

- Archigram

Archigram Magazine nº 5, Metropolis, 1964

Prints from the following projects:

City Interchange Project, Plug-in City Study, Computer City Project