

One-man/one-city band (Abraham Cruzvillegas)
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THE
SIMULTANEOUS
PROMISE

2011
Tricycle, rétroviseurs,
installation sonore
Tricycle, rear-view
mirrors, sound system
200 x 155,1 x 101,0 cm

The work you are about to see is so varied it will make your head spin. It will have you hunting around for points of reference. The spectrum opened up by Abraham Cruzvillegas' art seems immense. The extent of the challenge is plain simply from a list of the materials he uses or the images he evokes : a street vendor's cart; a Mayan bas-relief; stacks of merchandise on market stalls; a skateboard; an animal totem, hallucinatory visions...

Will the diversity, the complexity and the sheer enormity of this work make you give up on it ? Are you bothered by the apparent lack of coherence ? Of course not, you're going to step boldly into its depths, its catacombs. So now it's my turn to be unsettled by your confidence. You're following your intuition.

Have you taken some hallucinogen to guide you ? In that case, let's share it. I'll follow you. "What comes first?" you say. What comes first is that he's from Mexico City, La Ciudad de México, the city of cities; a tiered city; a city of hanging gardens. "Like Babylon?" I ask. "Of course," you reply. This is a city that testifies to its permanent status of future archaeological site. Future archaeology : it's only a contradiction in the fleeting circumstances of a language. Not so in the swirling reality of Mexico City, with its balancing act between past, present, and future. Because that's what Cruzvillegas sets out to do : his art seeks constantly to foreground all these energies, which emanate from several eras and several places.

Doing this is a social, economic, and mental gamble; a dangerous one too. We normally prefer to keep eras and

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Doing this is a social, economic, and mental gamble; a dangerous one too. We normally prefer to keep eras and energies within circumscribed spaces. The past, for instance, in the museum. But Cruzvillegas the shaman insists on doing something else; an attitude that the spirit and beating heart of a city like his demand. Cruzvillegas the shaman-artist knows that and tries to live up to it. It goes without saying that this is an inhuman task: tuning into a place like Mexico City takes immense concentration. You have to recalculate your position relative to things. Reconnect with them constantly. Resonate with them over and over. You do that through movement. You're always on the move: the city of cities shifts, trembles down to its foundations. You pause along the way, at city squares, to catch your breath. You talk to those who, like you, are becoming one with this pyramidal Aztec city, organised into strata, into layers of individuals, eras, and sediments. Then you set off again. The electricity that plays around living things, objects, and places—at ancient sites and supermarkets alike—flows through you.

Here, there's out
Utopia. If this out
becomes speech. C

Although the art of ass
tory where recycling a
ticipated in renewing f
be the contemporary n
dissociated fragments
Cruzvillegas's *The Sim*
amidst this mixed pro
references, urban and
connect. In an interview
of his sculptures: "Whe
they have their own d
there's also my voice."
phones, accompanied b
fect of a cacophonous co
on the movement of the t
cal sculpture writes its
linked to its complex rela
migration of images, sou
allows Abraham Cruzvi
of critical overtures. By
makes this glissantian t
union of several culture
tinct cultures, in a part o
new, an outcome that is
sum or simple synthesis

1 Édouard Glissant, *Traité de*
[Trans. by K.S.-K.]

2 *Idem*, 37. [Trans. by K.S.-K.]

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