

The titular projects in this exhibition refer to the recent activities of community art centre Mexicali Rose and the autonomous space La Galería de Comercio – two organisations in Mexicali and Mexico City respectively – and two ventures by practitioners from outside of the country that took place in or refer to their Mexican based contexts. A display structure and furniture by Studio Manuel Raeder, an interdisciplinary design studio in Berlin made in collaboration with Centro de Diseño de Oaxaca, and writer Chris Kraus' multifaceted text Kelly Lake Store.

In the rapid move of globalised capital, gentrification replaces local economies with a more global consensus. Each of these projects deals with the effects of this process upon the practices of art, design, writing and self- organisation, by investigating and engaging with localised forms of community building to specify a sense of place within Mexico's broader growth economy. A subsequent process of dislocation, caused by migration or the introduction of a capital-driven monoculture, has become a ubiquitous condition under which the individuals and collectives behind these projects embrace the locality of time, space and micro-community within their own practices. For example, Studio Manuel Raeder always works on a 'local' scale; hence countering standardisation in design by developing graphic identities determined through direct contact with the particulars of the communities they serve; whether publications for individual artists, grounded in the coastal, rural areas of Mexico or as the integral designer (from publishing to furniture making) for Kunstverein München. Likewise, in Kelly Lake Store Kraus praises the cultural role Mexicali Rose plays in bringing together and galvanising local artistic community. Through her literary output she often writes marginalised practices into contemporary history.

Over the last decade, Mexico City has become a centralised grid of art galleries, private collections and institutions adopted by the international art market. Within this, La Galería de Comercio deals in their own energy and time, and the support of neighbours and passers-by, to solely serve the neighbourhood of a typical street corner. They organise temporary events and communal activities – ranging from film presentations and talks to installing a wall ramp for skateboarding – that usually exist for only a day, leaving no physical trace of what happened. Meanwhile, the artists in Mexicali, a border town in the Mexican province of Baja California, live from a meagre economy around their work. The circumstances surrounding Mexicali's sociality are of a different kind due to its proximity to the Mexican / U S border. Because of this the Pueblo Nuevo community faces a constant battle with crime, which its youth can fall prey to if it finds itself continuously lacking altruistic options. As such, Mexicali Rose founder Marco Vera was inspired to create the audio-visual production workshop for neighbourhood kids upon his return to his native Mexicali after becoming disillusioned by the gentrification of, and exodus of community, in LA's Echo Park where

he lived until 2006. Since then, as Kraus notes in her 2011 essay *You Are Invited to Be the Last Tiny Creature*, 'Mexicali Rose has become a hybrid border community all of its own'.

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