

esculpiendo MILAGROS

La idea de esculpiendo Milagros surgió de un taller de música. De la disconformidad y el fastidio que compartíamos ante la crítica de los diarios y revistas del *establishment*. El intento por fundamentar un nuevo modo de pensar la música recorre todas sus páginas. Por supuesto, éramos conscientes de que existían tradiciones en la crítica de rock, jazz y música contemporánea. Queríamos actualizarlas en un país (Argentina) que las desconocía por completo. Para ello, pusimos el acento en cuatro puntos principales. En primer término, mejorar la calidad de la información. Hacer una revista sobre música escrita por personas que supieran de qué estaban hablando. Que no contuviera los errores, producto de la ignorancia, que caracterizaban a las demás. En segundo lugar, queríamos que fuera justamente eso: una revista crítica. Una forma de reflexionar sobre todo lo que rodea a la música desde un lugar alejado del fanatismo que permea tantos discursos sobre el jazz y el rock.

Corolario de lo anterior, decidimos centrar nuestra propuesta en dos enfoques básicos: un trabajo conceptual serio que aprovechara los conocimientos que ofrecen distintas disciplinas (musicología, filosofía, sociología, crítica de arte, etc.), sin renunciar a un estilo más ligado a lo periodístico, y un seguimiento detallado de los contextos históricos, sociales, políticos y económicos que determinan a los fenómenos culturales. Finalmente, eso nos llevó a ampliar el campo de modo considerable. Esculpiendo Milagros difundió corrientes experimentales de las cuales poco se hablaba, no sólo en nuestro país sino incluso en el resto del mundo. El rock de raíz no anglosajona, el free jazz y la improvisación, las formas de música contemporánea alejadas de la tradición modernista encontraron aquí un espacio que hasta entonces nadie les había otorgado. Otras manifestaciones culturales como el cine, el vídeo, el arte, la fotografía, la literatura, también formaron parte de las preocupaciones de la revista. Recientemente hemos prestado una renovada atención a los movimientos sociales, los grupos de sabotaje cultural y las nuevas formas de protesta en el contexto de la llamada globalización.

Dado el tipo de material que difundimos, nuestra publicación está pensada para los lectores sin prejuicios, aquellos que están ávidos por enterarse de lo que acontece en el escenario cultural contemporáneo. En definitiva, nos dirigimos a quienes se interesan por las formas de experimentación social y cultural que, en cierto sentido, continúan ciertas tradiciones que se avistaron en la contracultura de la década del sesenta. La postura de esculpiendo es fuertemente internacionalista. En sus páginas conviven sin dificultad la psicodelia latinoamericana, el pop eslovaco, el cine de Taiwan y la fotografía alemana, por citar sólo algunos ejemplos. Somos conscientes de que semejante discurso apunta a lectores con un poder adquisitivo razonable, algo que se ha vuelto poco menos que imposible en el contexto de la crisis argentina.

No obstante, rechazamos con energía cualquier forma de elitismo, snobismo o aristocratismo. Este tipo de acusaciones han sido frecuentes en nuestros detractores. Pero nuestra propia práctica demuestra lo contrario. Sólo un fuerte interés democrático y un alto grado de apasionamiento permiten que un grupo de personas continúe un proyecto que ya lleva diez años sin ningún tipo de recompensa monetaria ni poder real en las decisiones de los grandes medios de masas.

El contexto argentino es demasiado hostil para una revista de estas características. Esculpiendo Milagros tiene seguidores en lugares tan dispares como Europa, Estados Unidos y Latinoamérica. Y es muy respetada por el entorno de los músicos experimentales. Pero la situación económica hace imposible cualquier intento de exportación más o menos masiva. Internet es una opción que estamos analizando. La situación de los medios gráficos en nuestro país es desesperante. Peor aún para una revista que se autofinancia por medio de la venta y de pequeñas publicidades. Creemos que la estrecha colaboración con sellos discográficos, revistas y otras iniciativas independientes en diversos lugares del mundo podría apuntalar el proyecto. También, el apoyo de instituciones culturales. La supervivencia de esculpiendo depende de su capacidad de internacionalización. En ese sentido, se está tanteando el terreno para ver qué posibilidades existen de publicar la revista en España. ■

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Esculpiendo milagrosen ideia musika tailer batetik sortu zen. Establishmenteko egunkari eta aldizkarietako kritikarekin bat ez gentozela, kritika horrexek eragiten zigun amorrutik. Aldizkariaren orrialde guztietan zehar musika pentsatzeko modu berri bat oinarritzeko ahalegina hedatzen da. Jakin bagenekien, noski, rock, jazz eta gaur egungo musikaren kritikaren tradizioak hortxe zeudela, baina gaurkotu egin nahi genituen, tradizio horiek ezezagun zitzaizkion herrialde batean, Argentinan. Horretarako, lau puntu nagusi azpimarratu genituen. Lehen-lehenik, informazioaren kalitatea hobetu behar zen, zertaz ari ziren bazekiten pertsonak idatzia. Ezjakintasunaren eraginez besteen ezaugarri ziren akatsak izango ez zituena. Bigarrenik, aldizkari kritikoa izatea nahi genuen, hori besterik ez. Musikaren inguruan dagoen guztiari buruz hausnartzeko modu bat, jazzari eta rockari buruzko diskurtso askotan sumatzen den fanatismotik urruneko toki batetik egin.

Aurreko guztiaren ondorio, gure proposamena bi oinarritzeko ikuspegitan biltzea erabaki genuen: alde batetik lan kontzeptual serioa egin beharko genuen, hainbat diziplinak (musikologia, filosofia, soziologia eta arte-kritikak, besteak beste) eskaintzen duten ezaguera aprobetxatuz, kazetaritzari lotuagoko estilo bati muzin egin gabe inolaz ere; eta bestetik, kultur fenomenoak determinatzen dituzten testuinguru historiko, sozial, politiko eta

ekonomikoen jarraipen zehatza. Azkenean, honek guztiak gure esparrua nabarmen zabaltzera eraman gintuen. Esculpiendo Milagrosek ordu arte gutxi aipatutako korrante esperimenter batzuk hedatu zituen, ez soilik gure herrialdean bertan, baita munduko beste inguruetan ere. Sustrai anglosaxo-niarrrik ez duen rockak, free jazzak eta inprobisazioak, tradizio modernistatik aparte dagoen gaur egungo musikaren formek, horiek guztiek ordura arte inork eman gabeko espazioa aurkitu zuten hemen. Beste kultur adierazpen batzuk ere, esaterako zinea, bideoa, arte, argazkia eta literatura, aldizkariaren kezka izan ziren. Duela gutxi gure arreta berritua eskaini diegu globalizazio delakoa-ren testuinguruan lanean ari diren gizarte mugimenduei, kultur sabotajeko taldeei eta protesta modu berriei.

Zabaltzen dugun material mota dela eta, gure argitalpena aurreiritzirik gabeko irakurleentzat pentsatuta dago, gaur egungo kultur eszenatokian gertatzen denaren berri izateko gose direnentzat. Azken batean, hainbat gizarte zein kultur esperimenterazio formatan interesatutakoak ditugu gure hartzaileak, hirurogeiko hamarkadako kontrakturan ikusten hasi ziren tradizio batzuk nolabait jarraitzen dituzten forma horietan interesatutakoak alegia. Esculpiendoren jarrera zeharo internazionalista da. Bere orrialdeetan batera arazorik gabe elkartzen dira psikodelia latinoamerikarra, pop eslovakiarra, Taiwango zinea eta argazkigintza alemaniara, batzuk aipatze aldera. Oso garbi

ikusten dugu halako diskurtso batek erosteko ahalmen handiko irakurleak dituela jomuga, eta horrelakorik aurkitzea, une honetan, ia-ia ezinezko kontua da; ikusi besterik ez Argentinako krisialdia. Dena den, gogor egiten dugu elitismo, esnobismo edo aristokratismo forma ororen aurka. Elitismo salaketa hau askotan entzun diegu gure aurkakoei. Baina gure praktikak berak justu kontrakoa erakusten digu. Interes demokratiko handi batek eta apasionamendu maila altu batek, ez beste ezerk, ahalbidetzen dute pertsona talde batek segitzea, inolako diru-saririk gabe zein masa-hedabide nagusietako erabakietan inolako boteririk gabe, dagoeneko hamar urte dituen proiektu bat aurrera ateratzeko lanean.

Testuinguru argentinarra zeharo kontrakoa da aipatu ezaugarriak dituen aldizkari batentzat. Esculpiendo Milagrosek oso toki desberdinetan ditu jarraitzaileak, hala Europan nola Estatu Batuetan eta Latinoamerikan. Eta musikari esperimenter mundu osoak begirune handia dio. Baina ekonomiaren egoerak erabat eragozten du esportazio masibo samarrerako aukera oro. Internet aztertzen ari garen aukera bat da. Gure herrialdean, hedabide grafikoaren egoera etsigarria da zeharo. Are okerragoa, inondik ere, salmenta bidez eta publizitate txiki batzuei esker autofinantzaketa lortzen duen aldizkari batentzat. Gure ustez, munduko beste zenbait tokitako diskoetxe, aldizkari eta ekimen independenteekiko elkarlan estuak proiektua sendotzen lagun lezake. Era berean, kultur instituzioen laguntza ere oso garrantzitsua izango litzateke. Esculpiendoren iraupena, erakusten duen internazionalizazio gaitasunaren mendean dago. Ildo honetatik, egoera aztertzen ari gara, aldizkaria Espainian argitaratzeko aukerarik ba ote dagoen argitzearren. ■

and in shaping a (hazy) civil resistance zone. This is a role that, when the Utopian phase of its development has begun to get left behind, has nevertheless remained a long way from what it promised to be. The world has become more unequal, oppressive and violent since the internet came into being. Its use as a means for the flight and promotion of capital has ended up greatly overshadowing its responsible, critical use. Although we cannot blame the internet itself for the effects it has had, the confusion is no less, nor are its obvious effects any more evident. This is not the place to list the factors that have prevented this medium from fully developing its potential; it is enough to state that they are linked to the fact that it falls within an untenable economic system that the networks offer no response to, and that its possibilities will not be displayed without a transformation at another level.

Today the situation is less open and our perception of the medium is less naive. Our perspectives have also become more humble. Hakim Bey, the ideologue of "electronic resistance" has changed his "hit and run" discourse to one that proclaims the need to forge structures that aim to last. However, we are committed to structures that are neither materially or formally indebted to any manifestation of the political or commercial powers that be, where we can keep up our hopes and the possibility of free thinking and non-conditioned consumer habits.

The mutual support network created by small alternative publishing companies throughout the country that we are currently involved in (www.alte-diciones.com) aspires to coordinate this aim in difficult times. ■

Contribution by Luis Navarro, promoter of "Industrias Mikuerpo" and member of the editorial team of MAL DE OJO: Cuadernos de Crítica Social, published in Madrid by the Maldejojo Collective. <http://www.sindominio.net/maldejojo>.

AFTERALL

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Afterall was established as an academic journal — literally in that it was funded and housed within a London art academy at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design. Our initial impetus was simply a growing unease at the lack of what we would call 'serious' writing about the work of artists. By that I think we initially meant writing that took the work of artists as a starting point to think differently about social or political questions, and writers who felt art could address questions about our collective future. To the extent that we have a position as a journal, it is one that unashamedly privileges creative work as a trigger or tool for investigating contemporary life.

We wanted to be broad in our definition of 'creative' and to include film makers and architects within the frame. We also felt the permissiveness of visual art as an open terrain in which people were welcomed who could not find a home elsewhere was something to be celebrated and actively encouraged.

For these reasons we decided to have a fairly rigid system of four-five artists per issue with two texts each on their work or their approach. Alongside that we commission two longer, expansive essays that take a more general approach or a longer view of social, historical or psychological developments in art practice.

As the journal has developed, we have become more interested in the relationships between the artists and the way each issue might be read horizontally as well as vertically, with imaginary conversations between the artists suggested by the texts or the longer essays. But this desire is always tempered by a fierce resistance to the simplification of the 'theme issue' and an emphasis on the reader finding their own connections between the individuals.

At this stage, after 6 issues, we are happy with the direction and the quality of writing we have maintained. However, various ideas have not always been able to fit into the rigid format and for this reason we are starting to fundraise for an Afterall imprint in

which looser collections of writings or specific questions can be addressed in book form.

We can also see more clearly that the journal has to mature in terms of its own political position, at a time when a new concern with emancipatory strategies and ways of avoiding a simple affirmation of democratic capitalism are vital. In terms of content, we would happily place ourselves in the ironically idealist camp or 'nihilism with a positive attitude' to quote one contributor, Shep Steiner. This means that our hopes for the journal's contents are that they will trigger activity and a questioning of the economic and political status quo, however marginal or forlorn we know our efforts to be.

We want to journal to contribute to an intellectual discourse and to resist the trivialisation of culture and the speedy consumption of images that much of the media are engaged in. We are less interested in a mass market and want to remain dependent on public funds as well as advertising income from galleries in that classic contemporary capitalist compromise that we hopefully all understand by now. As there is no such thing as purity (thankfully) and the market is not only exploitative, we would be happy to be on regular magazine shelves as well as in specialist art bookshops.

Glibly, I could say an audience that is interested in the artists we feature. Beyond that I hope it is interesting to people who are not only concerned with art but want to find out how current creative expression might impact on society. We certainly have to improve our distribution and marketing if we are to reach such an audience, but these things do and should take time and we are slowly building up a good subscription base. Part of our purpose also is to be a reference journal for the artists and to have a long term value for people interested in those individuals. For this reason, we want to be in as many libraries and universities as possible and try to concentrate our limited marketing resources on those areas. ■

Contribution by Charles Esche and Mark Lewis. AFTERALL Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry, is edited in London and published by Central Saint Martin College of Art & Design.

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The idea for esculpiendo Milagros (Carving Miracles) came out of a music workshop. It was a result of the fact that we were all annoyed and dissatisfied with the critics in the establishment papers and magazines. The aim of laying the foundations of a new way of thinking about music runs through all its pages. Of course, we were aware that there were traditions in rock, jazz and contemporary music criticism, and we wanted to bring them up to date in a country (Argentina) that knew nothing at all about them. To do this, we placed the emphasis on four main points. Firstly, improving the quality of the information. Producing a magazine about music written by people who knew what they were talking about. This would be a magazine which didn't contain the errors resulting from ignorance that were a characteristic feature of other magazines. Secondly, a critical magazine is exactly what we wanted it to be: a way of reflecting on everything to do with music from a viewpoint far removed from the dogmatism that so much of the discourse on jazz and rock betrays.

As a corollary to what we've just said, we decided to focus our proposal on two basic approaches: a serious conceptual work that would take advantage of the knowledge provided by various disciplines (musicology, philosophy, sociology, art criticism, etc.) without abandoning a style that was closer to journalism, and a detailed monitoring of the historical, social, political and economic contexts that determine cultural phenomena. In the end, this led us to expand our scope considerably. Esculpiendo Milagros provided coverage of experimental trends that receive little attention in our country or indeed the rest of the world. Rock from outside the English-speaking world, free jazz and improvisation, kinds of contemporary music that are far removed from mod-

ernist traditions, find a place here that nobody had provided them with before now. Other forms of cultural expression such as films, video, art, photography, and literature also formed part of the magazine's concerns. Recently we have once again been paying attention to the social movements, groups carrying out cultural sabotage and the new forms of protest that have emerged within the context of the so-called globalisation process.

Given the type of material that we provide coverage of, our magazine is aimed at open-minded readers who are keen to find out about what is happening on the modern cultural scene. All in all, we are aimed at people who are interested in social and cultural experiments that to a certain extent keep alive certain traditions which appeared in the counterculture of the sixties. Esculpiendo's stance is markedly internationalist. To mention but a few examples, Latin American psychedelia, Slovakian pop, Taiwanese cinema and German photography appear side-by-side in its pages without any problems. We are aware that a discourse like this is aiming at readers with a reasonable level of spending power, something that has become almost completely impossible in the context of the crisis in Argentina. Nevertheless, we vigorously reject any kind of elitism, snobbery or superior attitudes, which we have often been accused of by our critics. Indeed, our very activities show that the opposite is the case. Only a strong commitment to democracy and a high degree of enthusiasm have enabled a group of people to carry on with a project that has now been running for ten years without any kind of financial reward or any real power over the decisions taken by the mass media.

The Argentine context is too hostile for a magazine of this type. Esculpiendo Milagros has readers in places as varied as Europe, the United States and Latin America, and it is highly respected among experimental musicians. However the economic situation makes it impossible to attempt to export it on a more or less large-scale basis. The internet is one option that we are analysing. The situation of the graphic media in our country is exasperating, and it is even worse for a magazine that finances itself through its sales and a small amount of advertising. We think that working closely with record labels, magazines and other independent initiatives in various parts of the world could underpin the project, as would getting support from cultural institutions. Esculpiendo's survival depends on its ability to become internationalised. In this respect, we are seeing how the land lies as far as the possibilities of publishing the magazine in Spain are concerned. ■

Contribution by Norberto Cambiasso, editor of esculpiendo Milagros, magazine published in Buenos Aires.

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