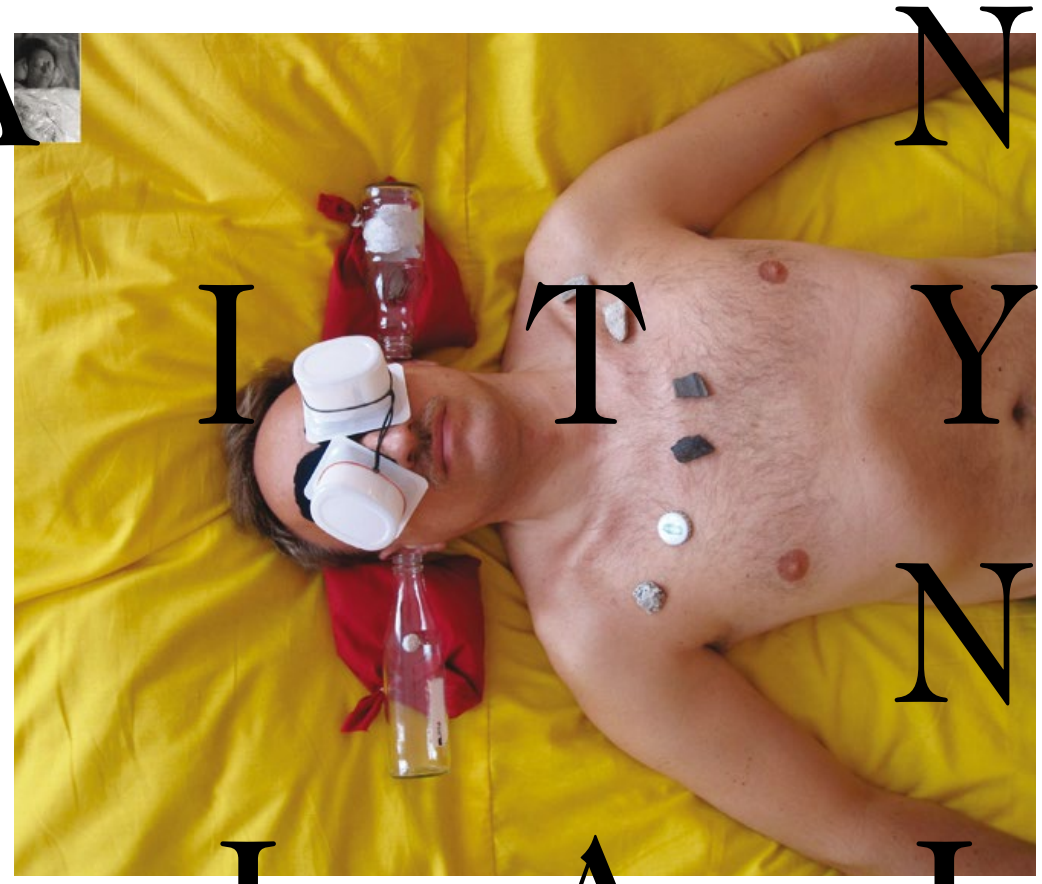
SPACE
ORTANDING
MANTIVITY
ANENTIAL
VEL



Romeo Gongora
Research studio

A time-space for understanding human collectivity at an experiential level

Romeo Gongora
Research studio

416 Activités sociales

COMMUNE

Cherche des personnes sérieuses, pour une commune à Granby, juin 2015. Repensez le monde à travers la Création. Écrire à 3e Impérial, 164, rue Cowie, suite 310, J2G 3V3 ou téléphonez 514-500-3078

Repenser le monde was a month-long experiment bringing strangers together to experience life in a commune inspired by the Quebec commune culture of the 1970s, which rejected an alienating society.

The commune was organized by five people with a baby and called *Commun Commune*. It took place in June 2015 on the site of a former 1980s commune in Quebec, *Mater Materia* by Jacques Languirand. The experiment was developed collectively and investigated issues related to the environment, family, health, friendship and economy. These reflections were formed through artistic activities (writing, film production, collage, etc.), private or public. The stay included collaborating with various invitees to explore the issues.

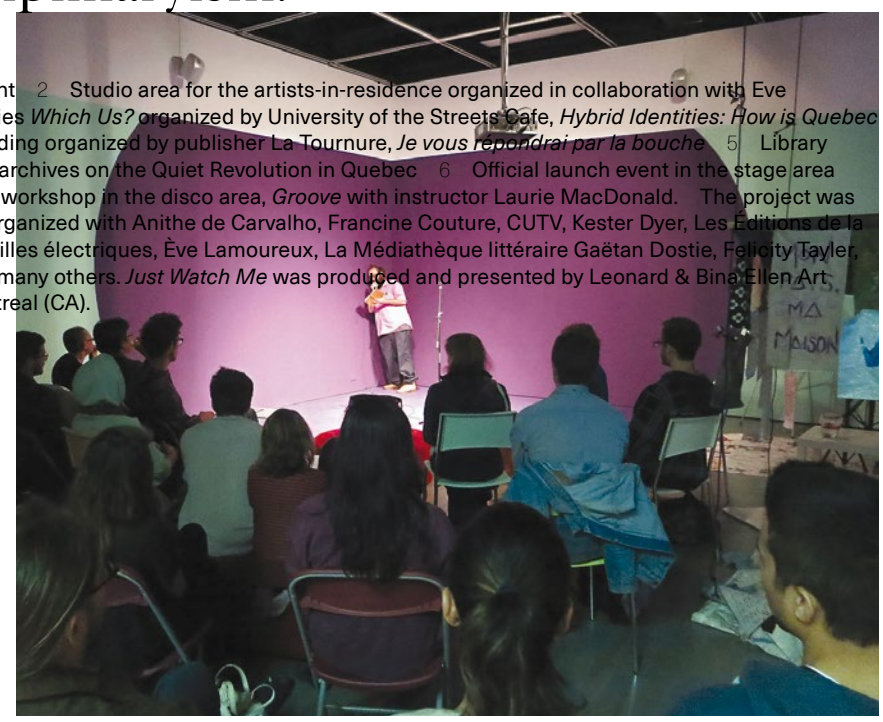
The project was part of a body of collective work that analyzes the artistic legacy of modernity in Quebec and Neo Quebecois identity, interleaving cultural, economic and governmental issues.

1 Workshop, *Rethinking motherhood through creation* with Camila Vasquez 2 Ad in the newspaper La voix de l'Est, Granby (CA) 3 Workshop, *Energy Psychology* with Simon Le Ruez 4 Cleaning the dumpster diving and discussion about our dynamic of authority 5 Housing in the former commune, *Mater Materia* 6 Workshop, *Modes of political action and power...* with Angéline Desaulniers, Brome Lake (CA) 7 Picnic and music in nature 8 Film projection and discussion. Participants: Angéline Desaulniers, Romeo Gongora, Andréanne Martin, My Ta Trung, Camila Vasquez and Cécilia. The project was co-produced by 3ième Impérial, a cultural platform in Granby (CA).

Repenser le monde, 2015
Collaborative performance, video documentation
Granby, Canada

This collaborative project transformed an art gallery into an immersive environment inspired by artist collectives that made an impact on modernity in Quebec.

Comprising several performance activities and works, which involved the public throughout the month, the event turned the gallery into a social club with a disco and bar, cinema, artist residency, library and theater stage. This way of coming together and of thinking through identity in its various forms is part of an artistic practice that offers social and political alternatives through mediation work based on the notion of critical consciousness or "conscientization" (as theorized by Paulo Freire), participatory action research (according to Orlando Fals Borda) and multidisciplinaryism.



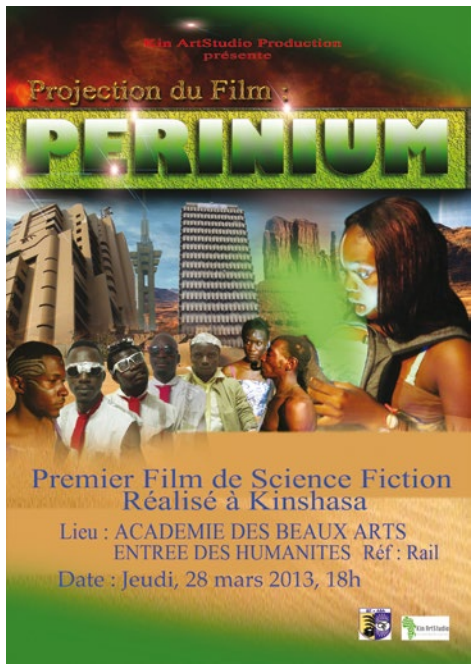
1 Flyer for the official launch event 2 Studio area for the artists-in-residence organized in collaboration with Eve Lamoureux 3 Conversation series *Which Us?* organized by University of the Streets Cafe, *Hybrid Identities: How is Quebec changing?* 4 Weekly poetry reading organized by publisher La Tournure, *Je vous répondrai par la bouche* 5 Library organized in collaboration with Anarchives on the Quiet Revolution in Quebec 6 Official launch event in the stage area 7 Cafe and bar area 8 Weekly workshop in the disco area, *Groove* with instructor Laurie MacDonald. The project was initiated by Romeo Gongora and organized with Anithe de Carvalho, Francine Couture, CUTV, Kester Dyer, Les Éditions de la Tournure, Géraldine Eguiluz, Les Filles électriques, Ève Lamoureux, La Médiathèque littéraire Gaëtan Dostie, Felicity Tayler, University of the Streets Café and many others. *Just Watch Me* was produced and presented by Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery, a cultural platform in Montreal (CA).

www.clubjwm.com

Just Watch me, 2014

Artist-curator for a collaborative exhibition
Montreal, Canada

ROSE SANS SOLEIL
QUEBEC
SANS LIBERTE
PIERRE PAUL GEOFFROY


Kin ArtStudio Production
présente
Projection du Film :
PERINIUM
Premier Film de Science Fiction
Réalisé à Kinshasa
Lieu : ACADEMIE DES BEAUX ARTS
ENTREE DES HUMANITES Réf : Rail
Date : Jeudi, 28 mars 2013, 18h

MALEWA

←1 *Perinium* was the pilot for a science-fiction film made by a group of young artists in Kinshasa (DRC) in dialogue with the artist.

2→ The project was intended to stimulate collective forms of creation, develop local structures of self-production and enable the implementation of a social utopia.

←3 The film's plot told the story of Zai, a young girl who must save the world in the year 3010 with a product called Perinium. The screenplay emerged from a literature competition for science-fiction stories. The story dealt with the current Congolese reality (historical, political, economic, cultural) implemented in a dystopian world. This will be the first science-fiction film made by/in the DRC.

4→

←5

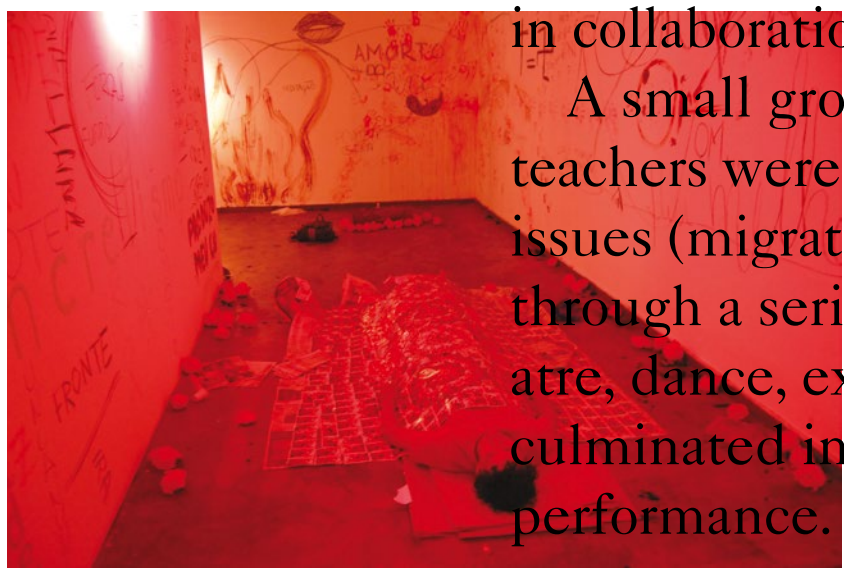
6→

7→

←8

1 Poster for the collaborative film *Perinium* 2 3 5 8 Still image, *Perinium*, collaborative film, stereo sound, 18m. 4 Production and costume designer 6 Street banner for the collaborative film *Perinium* 7 Post-production team during the film editing. The project was initiated following an invitation from the Kin Art Studio, a cultural platform created in 2011 in Kinshasa (DRC) by the artist Vitshois Mwilambwe Bondo

Perinium, 2013
Collaborative performance and film
Kinshasa, DRC

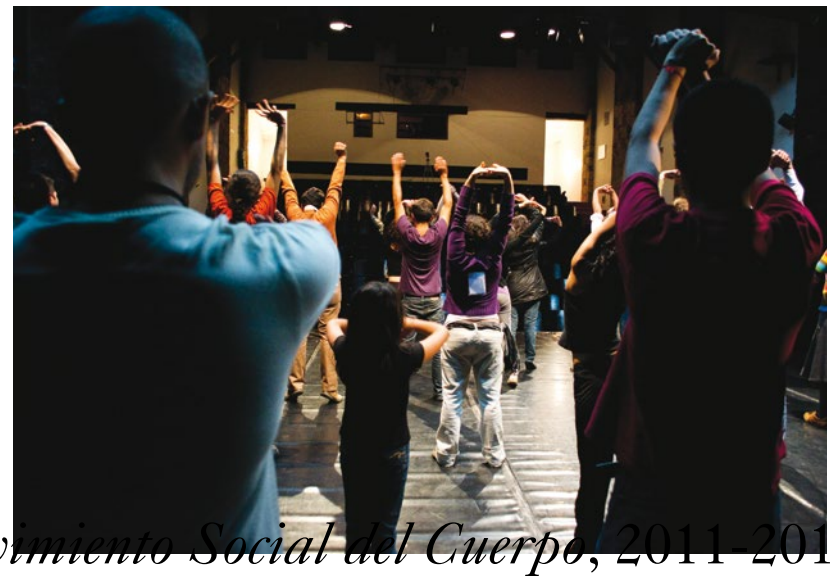


Movimiento Social del Cuerpo was an attempt at human collectivity. It was a series of experimental workshops in collaboration with Latin American universities.

A small group of students/participants and teachers were asked to investigate socio-political issues (migration, education, religion, mining, etc.) through a series of meetings that consisted of theatre, dance, excursion, poetry, etc. The experience culminated in a public participatory exhibition or performance. The workshops were based on:

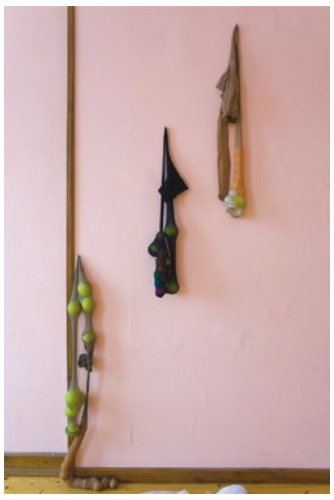
- The pedagogical methods of Paulo Freire and Orlando Fals Borda;
- The techniques of Augusto Boal's Legislative Theatre and the psychodrama of Jacob L. Moreno;
- The attempt at democratizing art by artists and art collectives such as Lygia Clark, Allan Kaprow, Judson Dance Theater, etc.

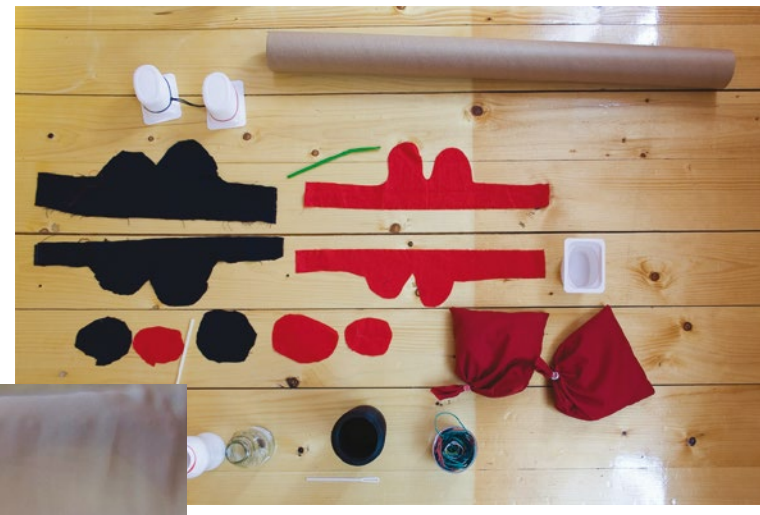
1 Participatory exhibition, launch of the event, Museu de Arte, Goiania (BR), December 2012 2 Participatory exhibition, Museu de Arte, Goiania (BR), December 2012 3 Participatory performance, Chabuca Granda park amphitheater, Lima (PE), March 2012 4 Retreat in nature, National University of Colombia (Bogota, CO), Anolaima (CO) September 2011 5 Workshop in collaboration with Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (Lima, PE), February 2012 6 Participatory exhibition, *What is a nation?*, painting, Museu de Arte, Goiania (BR), December 2012 7 Participatory performance, Teatro Libre, Bogota (CO), September 23, 2011 8 Workshop in collaboration with the psychologist Valeria Cotaimich, National University of Cordoba (Cordoba, AR), November 2011.



Movimiento Social del Cuerpo, 2011-2013
Workshops, performances and exhibitions
Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Peru)

SER
Livre



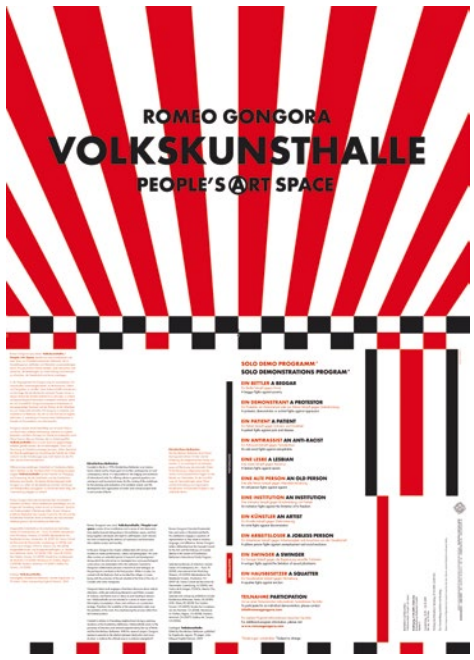


I am the Other was a series of performances that revisited Lygia Clark's *Estruturacao do Self*.

Started at the end of the 1970s, *Estruturacao do Self* defined the last artistic phase of the Brazilian artist Clark. For that project, she interacted with her *patients* by placing different objects on their bodies. During a residency at CoCA in Torun (Poland), the project revisited and revised Clark's *Estruturacao do Self* by performing a series of experimental actions using tactics of appropriation, derivation, and reinterpretation. It also dealt with the local and urban context of Torun by producing objects in-situ, and inviting the city's inhabitants to participate in these *therapy* sessions. The intention was to explore the ambivalence of some concepts relating to art, as well as social sciences, such as the readymade, authorship, the spectator-performer, alienation, and rationality-intuition.

1 2 5 8 9 In-situ objects after Lygia Clark's relational objects 3 4 6 7 Participatory performance, May-June 2009.
The project was produced by the Centre of Contemporary Art Znaki Czasu in Torun (Poland), curated by Joanna Zielinska.

I am the other, 2009
Participatory performance
Torun, Poland



This project consisted of an installation and a series of one-day performances that brought together people performing their social role in the exhibition space.

Created in relation to Kreuzberg neighborhood during a yearlong artist-in-residence program at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien, *Volkskunsthalle* reacts to the processes of transition and renewal experienced by the city of Berlin and the Künstlerhaus Bethanien. Each intervention aimed at exploring the power relations that underlie society and morality. It engaged in a Brechtian discourse about radical alienation while also embracing the concepts of violence. It used incompletion, chaos and confusion as a production strategy.

1 Poster for the collaborative exhibition 2 Performance, *An activist that fights injustice*, September 24, 2009 3 Performance, *An anti-racist that fights xenophobia*, September 20, 2009 4 Performance, *A protester that fights oppression*, September 23, 2009 5 Installation, *Bikewar*, *Wargame* and *A Squatter* 6 Performance, *An activist that fights injustice*, September 24, 2009 7 Performance, *A musician that fights unemployment*, September 27, 2009 8 Performance, *An artist that fights normality*, October 02, 2009. The catalogue *Volkskunsthalle* was published by argosbook with the contribution of Aernout Mik (artist), Dr. Bernhart Schwenk (Chief Curator Contemporary Art, Pinakothek der Moderne), and Prof. Gökce Yurdakul (Georg Simmel Professor, Humboldt University). The project was realized with the support of Künstlerhaus Bethanien (Berlin), the Canada Council for the Arts and the Embassy of Canada (Berlin).

Volkskunsthalle | people's art space, 2009
Collaborative performances and installation
Berlin, Germany

Wir Waren Stunden mit
dem Auto von einander
Entfernt... Als meine
Groß/Mutter Starb fühlte
Ich ihren Abschied..!
doch niemand konnte
mir sagen Was Geschehen ist
KUNST
GRENZT
AN
WAHNSINN!
Curators
are
human
beings
KUNST
GRENZT
AN
WAHNSINN!

Groß/Mutter Starb fühlte
Ich ihren Ab
doch niem
mir sagen

Wir Waren Stunden mit
dem Auto von einander
Entfernt... Als meine
Groß/Mutter Starb fühlte
Ich ihren Abschied..!
REPLAY

Sin Island was an installation and performance that reflected upon the structures of nationalism and "otherness" as a way to define self-identity.

The installation consisted of a black cube containing original military weapons and in-situ animal costumes made of *papier-maché*, inspired by photographs kept in the archives of the Institute KITLV. Seven *tableaux-vivants* inspired by *The Fall of Sin Island*, a play by August Mahieu that criticized in 1894 the massive Dutch military intervention in Lombok's island (Indonesia), were staged inside this dark cube. These performances were given by four Dutch non-professional actors.

The soundtrack, performed by the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, was a military march celebrating the surrender of the city of Cakranegara in Lombok. By slowing the tempo to 1/6, the march became a funeral march.

1 Poster for the performance *Sin Island*, serigraph, 27 x 36 in. 2 Performance, *Catastrophe*, 4/7, ink-jet print, 57 x 43 in. 3 Performance, *Apotheosis*, 7/7, ink-jet print, 57 x 43 in. 4 Performance, *Revelation*, 6/7, ink-jet print, 57 x 43 in. 5 Installation, *Kris*, papier mâché, 35 x 02 x 09 in., and original weapons (19th/20th century) from the Bronbeek Museum 6 Installation, *Sin Island*, papier mâché and painted stones 7 Performance, *Ultimatum*, 2/7, ink-jet print, 57 x 43 in. 8 Soundtrack, *Cjakranegara marsch* (1894), military orchestra march by J. W. Portengen interpreted as a funeral march, 57 sec., performed by Michael Backer (Conservatorium van Amsterdam, NL). The project was realised with the support of Rijksakademie Van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam Artis Zoo (Natura Artis Magistra), KITLV, Tropenmuseum (Royal Tropical Institute), Museum Bronbeek (KTOMMB) and Conservatorium van Amsterdam.

Sin Island, 2008-2009

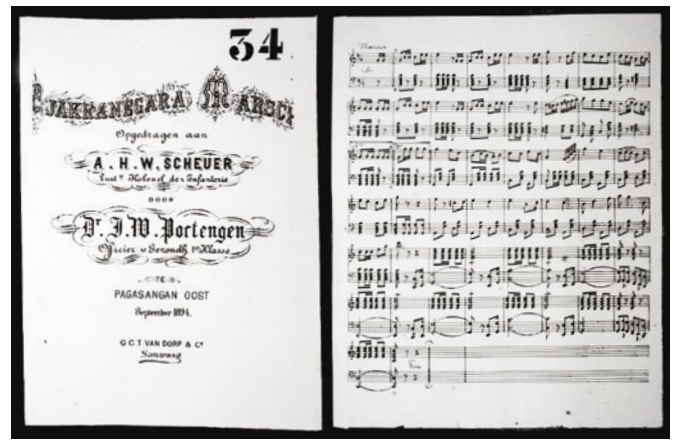
Performance, installation and soundtrack

Amsterdam, Netherlands

Romeo Gongora is a Canadian-Guatemalan visual artist active internationally. Since 2008, he has conducted major collaborative projects that interact with the social sphere, integrating politics and pedagogy in the practice of performance.

In 2005, he completed an MA in visual and media art at Université du Québec à Montréal (Canada). He is the recipient of several grants and has shown his work, amongst others, at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (Canada), Rencontres de Bamako (Mali), HISK (Belgium), CCA - Lagos (Nigeria), Festival Belluard (Switzerland), Centre of Art Torun (Poland), Centre Makan (Jordan), Kin Art Studio - Kinshasa (Congo) and Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery (Canada).

Recently, he was invited to work at Aux Recollets (France), Centro de la Imagen (Mexico) and Centre Neumünster (Luxembourg). In 2007, he undertook a two-year residency at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten (Netherlands). In 2009, he represented Canada as an artist in residence at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien (Germany) and at the Acme Studios (England) in 2016.



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www.romeogongora.com

Design: Bureau Principal

This publication was produced for *Rethinking Our Participation*, a conversation with the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) curator, Juliette Desorgues, 27 July 2016, at Open School East (London). This event was made possible by Acme Studios International Residencies and the Canada Council for the Arts. 50 copies printed.

SODEC Québec

A TIME-
F C
UNDERST
H UM
COLLEC
A T
EXPERI
L E V

To what extent does each individual mould its own role in society? To what extent is this role defined by the *Gemeinschaft* of others? What limits are imposed on the individual? Even in the 21st century, these questions are highly topical and of utmost relevance – and these are primarily the subject of Romeo Gongora's art. Gongora is interested in the energy potential generated between collective power and a growing quest for individuality. His projects include something that the classical avant-garde suppressed – individual responsibility. The determining factor is that the artist does not assume the role of the cognitive, the knowing being, but that of someone who makes things possible, the instructor, a *primus inter pares*. He is the one who visualises situations and renders them transparent, who shows that every individual has to be convinced of his own contribution to be able to make something a success. Gongora's "experimental set-up" presents an analogous situation. His projects are neither utopian nor unrealistic, as it can clearly be seen that its success is not dependent on any one principle, on a body of rules, but to a large extent on the judgment and personal appraisal of each individual. And what could emerge from this? Connecting to a greater state of awareness, liberating the individual from his immediate needs, the development of a collective consciousness. Seen in this light, Romeo Gongora's art is profoundly human and meaningful.

Pushing Limits. The work of art as an exemplary place of action, Dr. Bernhart Schwenk, Chief Curator Contemporary Art, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich