



Exhibition «Cosmopolis. Borges and Buenos Aires»  
29/10/2002 - 16/02/2003

## The Borgesian categorical imperative

“It seems like a story to me that Buenos Aires began: / I consider it as eternal as water and air”. This is Borges’ universe which goes from the street corner—a universe of life—to the myth—the timeless homeland of man—without sacrificing reality or fiction one iota. *Cosmopolis. Borges and Buenos Aires* is a chronicle of this way of relating to the world, from the Palermo district to the cosmic city, which takes the form of literature. In Borges, there is no other experience worthy of this name other than the literary one. Buenos Aires is, in turn, his city and all cities, the churned up space of his works and memories, but it is also the imaginary world, the city Borges does not know but which also exists: “Buenos Aires is the other street, the street I never set foot in, it is the secret centre of the housing blocks, the backyards, it is what the façades conceal, it is my enemy, if I have one, it is the person who does not like my verses (I dislike them too), it is the modest book shop, now forgotten, which we may have once entered, it is the refrain of a whistled *milonga* which we do not recognise and which touches us, it is what has been lost, and what will be, it is the subsequent, the alien, the lateral, the district which is neither yours nor mine, it is what we ignore and what we want”. The city is not the tranquil referential space of our adventures, the city is a mystery with many circumferences whose circles intersect. The city is what I know and what I do not know, what I see and what is hidden from me. The city is the universe built by man which he never knows fully. The city is of every man and of all men.

Borges made literature from this city, and Juan Insua has built the exhibition on this city. It is the fourth in the series of exhibitions entitled *Cities and their Writers*. Borges’ profound ambiguity, forever transporting signs between the real and mythical (round trip), makes its mark on the exhibition layout adopted. The investigation into the genre continues. *Cosmopolis. Borges and Buenos Aires* is perhaps less tangible than the previous exhibitions in the series, and endeavours to bring sensations to the presentation of the documents and audiovisuals which, in other exhibitions, were part of the scenography, so that Borges “would be seen endlessly multiplied in them”, in this Buenos Aires with “the sound of the multitudes moving further away”. Space and time, Buenos Aires as the Borgesian categorical imperative.