

#urbannatureCCCB

URBAN NATURE

A walk-through film by Rimini Protokoll

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CCCB



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Collaborators

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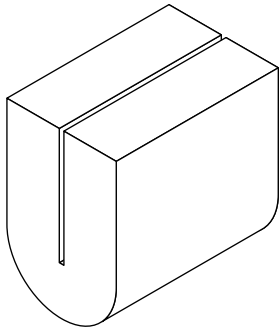
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If you stop for a moment and ask yourself what it is that defines a city, what the intrinsic nature of urban space is, you might come to a conclusion not so different from those that, in their own time, were reached by the writers of the libertine novels of the 18th century, or the authors of 20th-century noir fiction—that it is the coexistence of multiple, seemingly irreconcilable realities within the same few square miles, and with this, a whole range of possible relationships capable of calling into question the boundaries between class and social background.



Cities are a melting pot of varying realities that offer the potential for unexpected interactions, a place where identities are modulated and redrawn when seen through different eyes and from different perspectives. Over the course of an average day in any big city, we may all have many identities and pass through spaces that belong to very different worlds; spaces that push us to take on certain roles and actions. In a city, no action occurs in isolation. Everything we do and experience is connected to others, and perhaps even observed and interpreted from a completely opposing perspective that judges it in a manner contrary to what we intended, giving rise to different effects and consequences.

In libertine novels the city was the scene for promiscuous encounters, the possibility of climbing the social ladder through chance meetings that might permit the longed-for exchange of words between the nobodies and the elites; and from the nihilistic perspective of noir fiction cities were a body infected by corruption through and through, from the well-to-do neighbourhoods to the docks and ghettos. “Urban Nature”, however, proposes a new perspective for understanding the logic of urban areas, their specific nature and their plural and manifold identity, at a time when we are starting to think about new ways of inhabiting them—the city as a hub of highly heterogenous economic models that, in turn, represent different means of resistance, tried and tested ways of managing the present and envisaging the future.

Although life in the big cities during the lockdowns implemented to control the pandemic may have made us feel much more isolated, “Urban Nature” shows that we are never alone in a city, that the actions and decisions we take in our private lives leave their mark on the public sphere and have an effect on others.

Web and Social Networks

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With the collaboration of

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Documentary on URBAN NATURE,
www.cccb.org

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Credits

CAST

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CONCEPT, TEXT AND DIRECTION

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With the assistance of

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With the collaboration of

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With the assistance of

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With the collaboration of

Lotema and SIT

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Fountain construction

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COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

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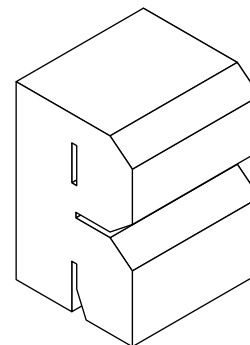
Núria Salinas and Susana Fernández

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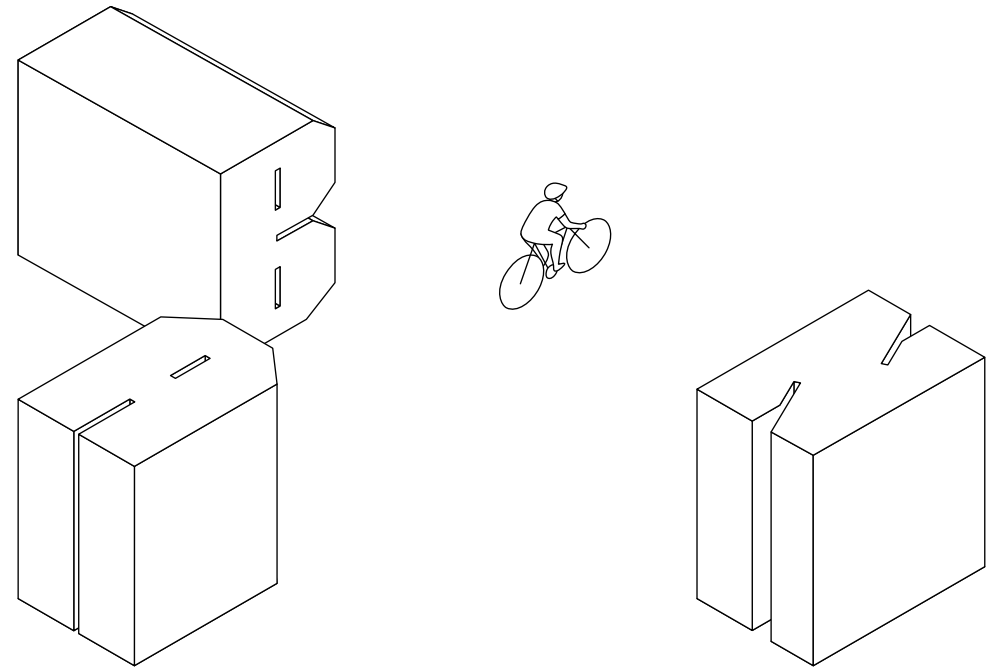
The image of a striking contrast was the starting block for this project –the disconcerting proximity between the splendour of the beaches of Copacabana and one of Río de Janeiro’s most sprawling favela neighbourhoods. A juxtaposition of opposites that can be found in any city and that may perhaps have been heightened during the months of lockdown, when urban areas put their daily dynamics on hold while at the same time highlighting other imbalances and inequalities that were not so clearly visible in the hustle and bustle of pre-pandemic life—the fronts of some of the most exclusive shops in Europe’s capitals were gradually turned into makeshift shelters for those who didn’t have a home to go to.

The long and intricate process of documentation, exploration and research, which has also involved a wide range of collectives, trade unions, associations and ordinary members of the public, has taken shape as “Urban Nature”, and has included intensive field work by the members of the theatre group Rimini Protokoll in the city of Barcelona, although the city that features in the project could, in essence, be any first-world city. “Urban Nature” reopens the debate on the management of natural resources such as water, the right to decent housing, the expansion of new economies and work models, the inequalities between residents and the perspective of the youngest generations on the future of cities.

When talking about the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the then Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Jan Eliasson, remarked that “cities are where the battle for sustainable development will be won or lost”. The sustainable development set out in the Agenda is not only environmental, but also social and economic. The eleventh goal is to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”.

Cities are also places where we are seeing the emergence of new economic models, alternative currencies, building cooperatives, temporary uses and utopic models of community living. Cannabis clubs skirt the black market by reinterpreting a law that allows marijuana to be grown in small amounts for personal consumption, as members become the partial owners of indoor plantations. In prisons, where cash is not allowed, systems of bartering are created in exchange for services and clandestine goods.

Over the course of the year, Rimini Protokoll and Dominic Huber have worked on an ongoing basis with seven figures who represent other economic models of survival—an investment consultant, a woman who used to live on the streets, a prison officer who oversees the work of inmates while they make parts for factories who subcontract the work to the penitentiary system, a girl from the Raval neighbourhood who questions the status quo and reflects on the different fears that can be triggered in urban spaces, a mother who has decided to give up her job in an advertising agency to grow marijuana at home and spend more time with her child, an economic and environmental history lecturer who prefers the city to the country, emphasising the possibilities for sharing resources, an entrepreneur in the field of new tech-based economies, who reaps the benefits of the boom in delivery services controlled by algorithms... But instead of telling the stories of these real characters in a strictly documentary style, Rimini Protokoll has used scenography and technology to allow the audience to step into these contrasting ways of city life, as if walking through a film or exploring a life-size model of a city in which we can all see ourselves reflected. At the heart of the installation is the fluidity of roles as we step into the shoes of very different characters, changing identity by moving through the different spaces in which each action unfolds.



Rimini Protokoll, made up of Helgard Haug, Stefan Kaegi and Daniel Wetzel, is a theatre company that has been carrying out experiments in the field of post-dramatic theatre for more than twenty years on all five continents, with a plethora of international awards to its name. With “Urban Nature”, the group continues its renowned collaboration with the scenographer Dominic Huber, combining different languages and disciplines and tackling controversial current topics.

In 2017, as part of the exhibition “After the End of the World”, the CCCB and Rimini Protokoll coproduced “win> <win”, an interactive installation analysing the ability of jellyfish to survive in increasingly challenging natural circumstances on a planet where mortality hangs over our own species. With “Urban Nature”, the CCCB is producing one of the company’s most ambitious projects to date, in a proposal that involves an ambitious change of scale, that rethinks audience interaction and the use of digital technologies in museums, that highlights the most performative facet of exhibitions and is in line with the CCCB’s long held commitment to reflect on the challenges and possibilities of urban space.