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(ready)Media: Towards an Archaeology of Media and Invention in Mexico

I'm pleased to present the project *(ready)Media: Towards an archaeology of media and invention in Mexico*, initiated almost two years ago by Laboratorio Arte Alameda in collaboration with a number of curators, artists and researchers.

As one of the two spaces in Mexico City devoted specifically to media art practices or, as we prefer to say, those practices that engage a dialogue with the multiple relations between art and technology, Laboratorio Arte Alameda's archive has a lot to say. Our archive was not organized, lacking even the form of one a few years ago. Being extremely active in exhibiting and promoting, but most of all, contributing to connect the several media arts' communities in the country, systematizing was not a priority from the beginning.

It takes time for documents to be needed, and now, ten years later, we have the need to organize them. We wanted to deal creatively, critically and, above all, collaboratively with this task. First we set a specific physical space for it and begun to dig in to all the hard discs and drawers holding over ten years of intense production.

It is very important to mention that LAA's founding curator Príamo Lozada was the main contributor for those practices regarding curating, commissioning and promoting in Mexico. Embedded in a profoundly poetical style of curating and a deep understanding of both the national and international context, Príamo's legacy was widely spread. After his death in 2007 the need to read and explore the documents became ever more important.

On the one hand we wanted to explore the archive's documents and, on the other hand we sought to investigate the *deep time* intersections between art, science and technology in our geopolitical context. An intersection that can be tracked as deep as the sixteenth century, as Karla Jasso's Ph.D.

research on time computing in Mesoamerica can show. Naturally, we wanted to share this exploration; so the algorithm for (ready)Media is quite simple: an archive, a deep time history of intersections, and ongoing collaboration. Currently the archive of our documentation center has expanded to an exhibition, an audiovisual series in DVD, and a book. The audiovisual series and the book are being freely distributed for individual reference in art schools, media-labs, art centers and museums libraries, first in Latin America and Spain. It is now in the process of being translated for distribution in English speaking countries.

We were eleven people involved in the process of reading, reflecting and proposing additions to the current set of documents, resulting in seven audiovisual and sound programs being presented to the audience in LAA at the time. Among other collaborations for the book, we counted with the fortunate participation of thirty authors who delved deep in time to encounter *stridentist* poetry in the first radio transmission in the country; the post-revolutionary experimental films; the first paper on Cybernetics by Norbert Wiener, Julian Bigelow and Arturo Rosenblueth, Mexican physiologist; a paper on art and science by Dr. Rosenblueth; and the recently added paper *Caosmos*, by Mexican playwright Juan José Gurrola just to name a few.

At the same time, the audiovisual and sound series include over three hundred works, organized in the following programs:

- *Experimental Contemporary Audiovisual*, by researcher David Wood
- *Cine Povera*, by filmmaker-curator Jesse Lerner
- *Mechanics and Obsolescence in current media art*, by researchers Gabriela Mendez and Juan Pablo Anaya
- *Memorable and Familiar*, by artist Grace Quintanilla
- *Sketches, a Historical Revision on Videoart Curatorship in Mexico*, by researcher Erandy Vergara
- *Experimental Music, Art, Poetry and Sound Experimentation in Mexico*, by artists-curators Manuel Rocha and Israel M.
- *Voice Overs: five authors* (Ximena Cuevas, Ariel Guzik, Dyan Pritamo, Sarah Minter, Arcangel Constantini), by Karla Jasso and Tania Aedo

At this time the project is being shown in Laboratorio Arte Alameda's exhibition spaces, alongside a series of seminars and talks among curators, researchers and artists, with the intent of making (ready)Media a platform for discussion and reflection. The seminar "Located media" by Andrés Burbano as well as "Experimental cinema" by Jesse Lerner and lectures on a wide range of topics, such as cybernetics, technology and invention show the diversity of issues triggered by the project, rendering this starting point a significant contribution to the field.