

# Atlas, Plural,



# Monumental

*Paul Ramírez Jonas*

**HELLO**  
my name is

**Atlas, Plural, Monumental**  
*Paul Ramírez Jonas*

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston  
Dancing Foxes Press, Brooklyn

TO STEAK A TRUE WORD IS TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD  
IMAGINATIONS  
WISHES  
ON THIS

THE READER IS AS CREATIVE AS THE AUTHOR  
SPEECH ACTS  
SCORES

(GIFT SHOP?)  
MAYBES

YOU COULD BE ME, I COULD BE YOU

ANYONE  
EVERYONE - ONE ON ONE - ALL THE TIME - AGREGATE - CONCATENATE

I COULD BE YOU, YOU COULD BE ME

INDIVIDUAL CAPABLE OF ADVENTURE AND FANTASY; BUT GROUPED WONDER  
ONE + ONE + ONE + ONE + ONE + ONE  
WE MAKE A FORM

CATALOGUE  
TO PUBLISH  
MAKES A TEXT

PRINT BASED ARTWORKS FOR CATALOGUE

ASSEMBLIES

STORIES TO BE TOLD, NOT EXHIBITED

DIY CATALOGUE PARTICIPATORY  
TO PUBLISH  
MAKES A TEXT

WE MAKE A FORM

LECTURES  
PERFORMANCE

KEY'S

DICTIONARY  
SPEAKING OUT VOICE  
LOUD



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# Foreword

## *Bill Arning*

In 2009, after twenty-plus years as a curator, I accepted the weighty position of a museum director. A director's responsibilities include considering which art might raise the cultural IQ of the general populace in the museum's host city and which art that community might have read about and would be happy to see in person. The hope is that people will tell their friends and family about the art they see and the museum's audience will grow beyond art mavens and conspicuous cognoscenti.

The excellence of the art is not reason enough to offer valuable exhibition time to a particular maker, since there is a plethora of great artists to choose from. Art that hits the museum's sweet spot—bringing together high aesthetic value, respect from art thinkers, and a cause for enjoyment from a diverse public—makes a director's heart sing.

Curators should be more like theoretical physicists or philosophers: happy if, in pursuing their personal intellectual passions, some public joins in for the ride. Directors must balance all the constituencies of their museums and make sure every one of them is

served to some degree. None of this is rocket science, but it does require those of us trained as curators to think differently about museum choices; displaying good taste and picking work because it pleases the director should not be high in the hierarchy of rationale for making shows happen; instead, a director must find the jewels that serve all of an institution's needs.

My serious side as a director is therefore pleased that the public institution I steer mounted the first Paul Ramírez Jonas survey undertaken in a United States museum. When curator Dean Daderko suggested showing Paul's work, it was easy to say yes. Since a quarter century ago when it first emerged—well before the idea of audience members coming to “do” rather than “view” was commonplace—the artist's innovative sculptural strategy impressed not only elite art audiences but an array of publics across the country. In Houston, audiences roundly embraced Paul's invitations to be involved in the experience of his art beyond mere passive spectatorship, enthusiastically volunteering to be his work's essential activators. As an

exhibition, *Atlas, Plural, Monumental* framed his sphere of influence. This overview clearly shows how he has expertly developed his ideas and expanded his areas of inquiry over those three decades. In terms of simple worthiness, the artist deserves the scholarship and sense of historical gravitas of a museum, and this book will for the near future serve as the publication of record for anyone doing serious research into his practice.

All of these are good, solid reasons for celebrating *Atlas, Plural, Monumental* at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, but my glee is beyond professional. I have decided Paul is a provocatively straightforward cultural practitioner. I believe him to be some strange art spirit, appearing at random times in my life just to revive my spirit and remind me that my professional and life choices prioritize the value of play in making adult life bearable.

Chatting together, Paul and I cannot fully remember our first meeting, but I can no longer recall a time when his artwork was not a vital part of my cultural life. In the early 1990s, a group of artists entered my consciousness and changed my very conception of culture, including Jim Hodges, Felix Gonzalez Torres, Cheryl Donegan, Cady Noland, Andrea Zittel, Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler, Tony Feher, and Paul and his life partner Janine Antoni. Even writing this list now I feel a little flush, giddy, and grateful that I was there for that explosive moment.

While that decade's cultural achievements blur together, I can trace a time when Paul presented his solo exhibition *Whirligig* in March 1992 at White Columns. The show consisted of a single, massive sculpture called *Compiler*, which was a simple, analog

computer powered by a large windmill. Mounted on small fans and arranged along a line in the gallery were wheels that displayed the alphabet. From left to right, they spun progressively slower; the last wheel in the line spun so slowly that it would be millions of years before its movement would be registered. Paul's construction was a model of time that ranged from the instantaneous to the geologic.

I remember clearly two facts: One, the artist appeared with the idea fully formed and with confidence that he could make it work (knowing that its multimillion-year time scale made proving its feasibility moot). Two, every time I explained what was happening in the work to friends, colleagues, and random audience members I smiled, inside and out. I danced encouragement for the slower moving wheels not to give up—time would pass and their day would come.

The year 1992 marked the start of many fraught discussions about the acceleration of technological innovations leading to the dawning of a new era, one in which human cogitation would be bettered by intelligent machines. Looking at Paul's analog computational device was a healthy reminder that we as a species were the creators of our new technological world. Theoretically, if the wheels were to continue spinning, every word in the English dictionary would at some point in time be spelled out, since the number of wheels equaled the number of letters in the longest English word. (The artist emigrated from a Spanish-speaking country; the choice of English here is a playful example of his career-spanning engagement with language in North and South American relationships, social and political.) *Compiler* served as a



Detail of *Compiler*, 1992. Wood, brass fittings, windmill; dimensions variable

physical modeling of the Infinite Monkey Theorem, which proposes that a monkey hitting typewriter keys at random over an endless time period would eventually type the complete works of William Shakespeare. The human brain seems compelled to reckon with the incomprehensible nature of infinite time, and by extension its own finite life span; its reactions trigger anything from world-weary dread to maniacal laughter.

So twenty-five years ago, I was among those who had the profound pleasure of introducing an unfamiliar public to the worldview of this amazing artist. Because of the way Paul works, though, only a few words of introduction prompt most audience members to leap eagerly into his world. His works often, and at some crucial level, have a game-like quality that we as humans are hardwired to enjoy. One work that I bought decades ago comprises two wooden top hats that are magic decoder rings. It conjures not only frustration, as I have trouble remembering how to make it work, but also my childhood love of playground mysteries. As the gay boy in the playground, I could not master so many games, but Paul's world embraces outsiders.

My understanding of Paul's life project was informed by a larger ethos of the 1990s that maintained that identity is neither neutral nor given and can be trained and performed in ways open to deconstructive critique. Paul's investigations show that as we (either as adults or children) try to entertain ourselves we absorb culture and societal values. He reminds us that it's a worthwhile task to become conscious of the process of enculturation and be able to ask, "Is this a value I want to assume and pass on to the next



*Apples and Oranges*, 1996.  
Performance in collaboration with  
Spencer Finch at the Gramercy  
International Contemporary Art Fair,  
Gramercy Park Hotel, New York

The author with the artists, during  
the 1996 Gramercy International  
Contemporary Art Fair.



generation?” Paul digs into these questions with a lightness, humor, and compassionate humanity that get to the essence of joy.

In 1996, Paul wandered the halls at the Gramercy Park Hotel in a performative collaboration with Spencer Finch. It was the third year of a hotel-based art fair that would a few years later become an orgy of art commerce, the Armory Show. That year it was still an edgy party. Finch and Ramirez Jonas, dressed in classic hotel bellboy uniforms, offered “fruit” to guests; instead of tasty red and green apples and oranges, however, they offered the fruit as colors on a spectrum produced by a prism. Guests would ask for red, green, or orange, and the artists would match them to a color, sometimes making mistakes of logic. Their game was irresistible, reminding us downtown folks of both the grand hotel tradition and the limits of logic. I recently found a snapshot I had taken of the performance and sent it to Paul. He said that as young artists, he and Finch often forgot to document live events and they only had a couple of unplanned snapshots like mine to prove one had occurred.

Every few years, Paul reappears in my life: in 2005, I was in Cambridge as curator at MIT List Visual Arts Center when he created the public work *Taylor Square*, a tiny park for which five thousand keys were made and dispersed. Making the public elite, the work reminded viewers that we create notions of private and public space and we have the responsibility to question those distinctions. In the artist’s words, “*Taylor Square* belongs to the public. It is closed, yet simultaneously open, re-emphasizing that the ownership of public space resides in the public itself.” Having grown up near New York City’s quintessential private park, Gramercy Square, and remembering the envy I felt for classmates whose homes were near enough to allow them a coveted key, I immensely appreciated Paul’s gesture.

As recently as 2016, I was in California at an opening for a CAMH-organized exhibition, *Marilyn Minter: Pretty/Dirty*, at the Orange County Museum of Art, when my old pal John Spiak invited me to visit the space he now runs in nearby Santa Ana, the Grand Central Art Center. He told me that Paul would be performing *Public Trust* there. Santa Ana is a college town with a much edgier feel than the pristine Newport Beach, where I was staying. Since I am no longer surprised when Paul appears in my life, my walking into one of his pieces in Santa Ana seemed the most natural thing in the world. I talked to some of the student volunteers who performed the work and heard from them the same love and devotion to it that I heard register in visitor’s voices at White Columns in 1992.

For many in Houston, *Atlas*, *Plural*, *Monumental* was their first encounter with

this brilliant and generous artist. I am grateful that I have been able to help occasionally in delivering his works to art lovers over the last twenty-five years and hope to continue doing this for twenty-five more. I could not, of course, bring his work to Houston by dint of my long-term passion for it, and my gratitude to those making it possible is monumental, too! I am thankful for the individuals, foundations, and corporations in Houston who have helped make this exhibition possible through their financial support, specifically Cullen K. Geiselman, Mary and Marcel Barone, and Union Pacific Railroad. *Atlas*, *Plural*, *Monumental* is also made possible through the generous support of the museum’s Major Exhibitions Fund.

Curator Dean Daderko has done a fabulous job of working with Paul to put together an exhibition that captures the essence of his practice. With the help and coordination of registrar Tim Barkley and head preparator Jeff Shore, the exhibition came to life in the space of the Brown Foundation Gallery. Curatorial associate and business manager Patricia Restrepo, Houston’s most stylish museum employee, kept track of all the moving parts of the planning process and budgeting (which in the case of a show like this is a big job). My assistant, Shane Platt, likewise has taken care of logistics until the last work returns to its owner. Deputy director Christina Brungardt, the newest addition to the CAMH family, has proved invaluable as the administrative overseer. My staff never ceases to amaze me, and I am happy they have come to love Paul as I do.



# From This World to That Which Is to Come

Dean Daderko

History is dependent on narrative. Stories teach and entertain, and, when broadly shared, they bridge individual and collective identities to register commonalities. Storytelling is at the heart of Paul Ramírez Jonas's practice, where objects expand stories, making them tangible and intelligible. In a unique body of work full of memorable approaches to creating stories, it is objects that provide the hook. Pulling us to interact with seemingly familiar objects, Ramírez Jonas layers new stories into existing ones. "From the beginning of my career in 1989 I have always considered myself merely a reader of texts. The pre-existing text could have been any cultural artifact that I could interpret . . . : a diary, a plan, an old photo, a footpath, sheet music, etc.," the artist has noted.<sup>1</sup> His audience might interact with an instrument that has been purpose-built to play a single song, stand before a portable lectern and recite words typed into a clay tablet, or sit down at a specially constructed table with a facilitator in order to make and affirm a promise.

In early works, the artist delved into historical archives, singling out the texts, images, and observations of scientists, geographers, explorers, and inventors whose achievements have been overshadowed by the steady pace of technological progress. Ramírez Jonas recasts such activities and achievements to foster new ways to tackle the present through reading—or rereading—the past. As Sofia Hernández Chong Cuy has observed, Ramírez Jonas "addresses ideas of progress through the reconsideration of peripheral aspects of history, focusing on personal accounts or historical moments aligned to significant developments in experimentation, but not pivotal to celebrated achievements."<sup>2</sup> If the investigations he reflects on often hail from the sidelines of rational, scientific discovery, Ramírez Jonas respectfully and delightfully recasts these exploratory undertakings as analogues for creative progress.

For the series *Heavier than Air* (1993–94), Ramírez Jonas faithfully and meticulously reconstructed kites by Alexander Graham Bell, Walter Brooks, and Joseph





Kite from *Hexagonal Box Kite*, after Alexander Graham Bell, 1994. Cotton fabric, single-use disposable camera, modified alarm clock, string, wood, and hardware; 42 x 48 x 70 inches

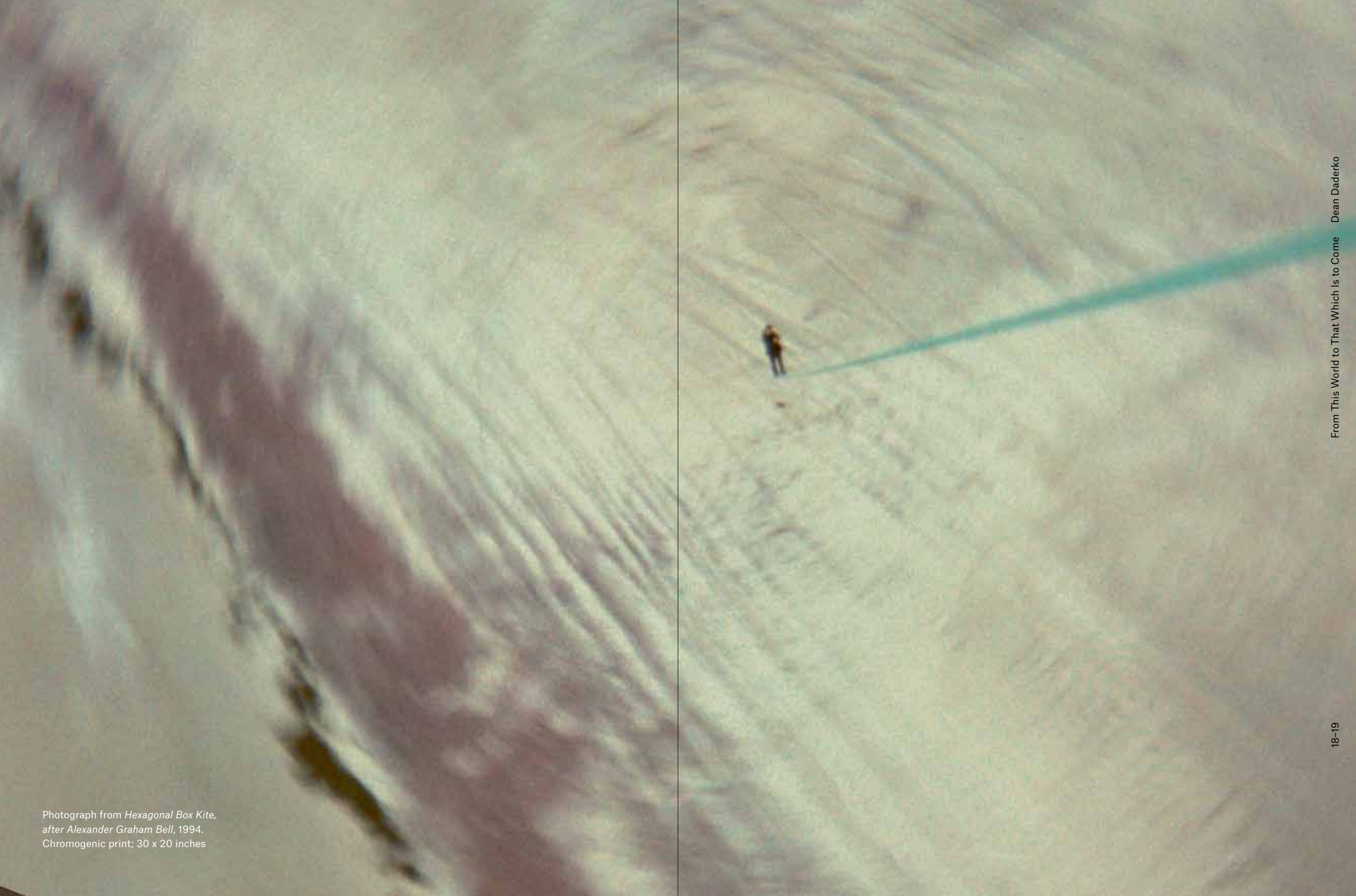


Lecornu. Constructed from white cotton fabric, canvas, wooden dowels, string, and hardware, these unadorned kites are blank canvases of a sort. Contrasting the kites' plain forms, one component stands out: attached to each kite's tether is a contraption the artist made by hacking an alarm clock to depress the shutter of a single-use disposable camera. What's more, each kite has a differently colored string: fluorescent pink, yellow, royal blue. Ramírez Jonas coaxed his kites into the sky at beaches. When the kites were flying, their preset alarm clocks opened the cameras' shutters, capturing bird's eye views of their flights. In the resulting photographs, whether slightly blurry or sharply focused, the path traced along the colored tether leads back to the artist's hands. Exhibited as a pair, each kite and its photograph remind the viewer of the flight capability of the original inventors' designs. They are historical reenactments that document the artist's own present-tense discovery.

If colored strings are the visual triggers to untangling the narrative of



Photograph from *Compound Kite*, after Samuel F. Cody, 1993. Chromogenic print, 36 x 24 inches



Photograph from *Hexagonal Box Kite*,  
after Alexander Graham Bell, 1994.  
Chromogenic print; 30 x 20 inches



Original publication of the lyrics of "John Brown Song," reprinted in George Kimball, "Origin of the John Brown Song," *New England Magazine*, no. 1 (1890)

*Heavier than Air*, another work—*His Truth Is Marching On* (1993)—unfolds when viewers become actively and physically engaged with it. Eighty clear wine bottles filled with varying amounts of water hang from the bottom of a large, suspended wooden ring. A singular object takes the place of one bottle: a small wooden mallet that invites viewers to make their own music. Picking up the mallet and using it to tap the bottles, participants find that the variations in liquid volume produce a variety of tones. With careful control of cadence, as they march around the hanging chandelier, tapping each of the bottles in succession, the tune to "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" emerges. Like the bottles, this particular tune is itself a sort of container: originally born as "John Brown Song," the anthem was reimagined and popularized when it was set with new words in 1851. A decade later, the lyrics were rewritten to express pro-Union messages, and today its popular refrain is often rewritten by sporting clubs.

Another of Ramirez Jonas's efforts to manifest and layer multiple eras and narratives materially focuses on a unique achievement. *Magellan's Itinerary* (1995)—an artwork created with the assistance of a travel agent and consisting of a six-page computer print-out on WorldTek Travel letterhead—recasts Ferdinand Magellan's sixteenth-century circumnavigation of the globe as a series of airline flight bookings. This four-year journey, marked by discovery and hardship, is retraced and condensed into an intensive two-month series of arrivals and takeoffs from airports around the globe.

*Men on the Moon, Rest Period* (1998) is an ambitious amalgamation of multiple eras, undertaken at a scale that is at once modest



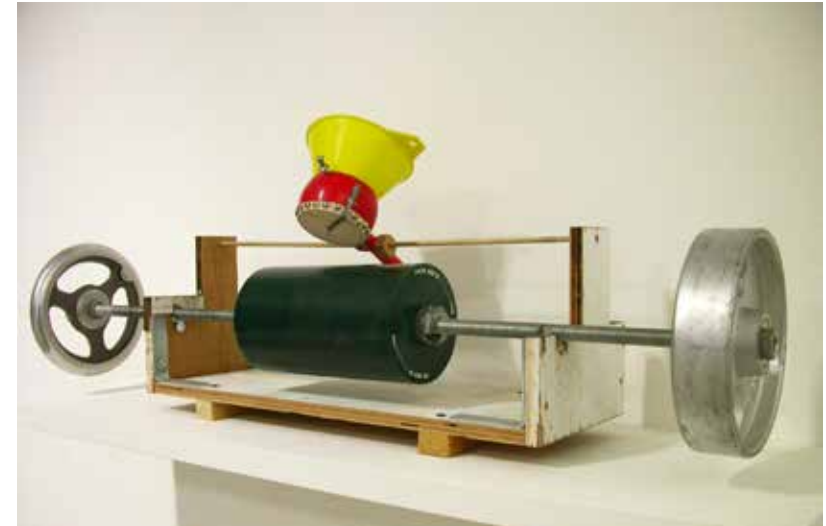
*His Truth Is Marching On*, 1993.  
Wood, glass bottles, corks, water,  
mallet, rope, and hardware;  
16 inches x 84 inches (diam.)



Detail of *Magellan's Itinerary*, 1995. Dot-matrix prints on archival continuous-feed paper; 66 x 9 1/2 inches overall



and impressive. A central element in this work is a phonograph Ramírez Jonas constructed from miscellaneous items, including a plastic funnel, a hand drum, a pushpin, a fly wheel, hardware, and scraps of wood, after a design by Thomas Edison. The American inventor's 1877 invention incorporates a diaphragm that captures sound vibrations, and the pointed stylus translates these vibrations into a series of hill-and-dale grooves on a rotating cylinder wrapped in tinfoil. Ramírez Jonas ingeniously crafted the elements of his phonograph from objects at hand: the hand drum functions as the diaphragm, and the pushpin becomes the engraving stylus. The plastic kitchen funnel focuses the sound waves that are recorded onto the rotating cylinder; it also concentrates the vibrations for future playback, much like the horn on an antique phonograph would. Where Edison recorded onto foil-covered cylinders, Ramírez Jonas uses a machinable wax substrate. Notably, Edison's original invention makes no distinction between recording and playback functions, and neither does Ramírez Jonas's re-creation. The needle



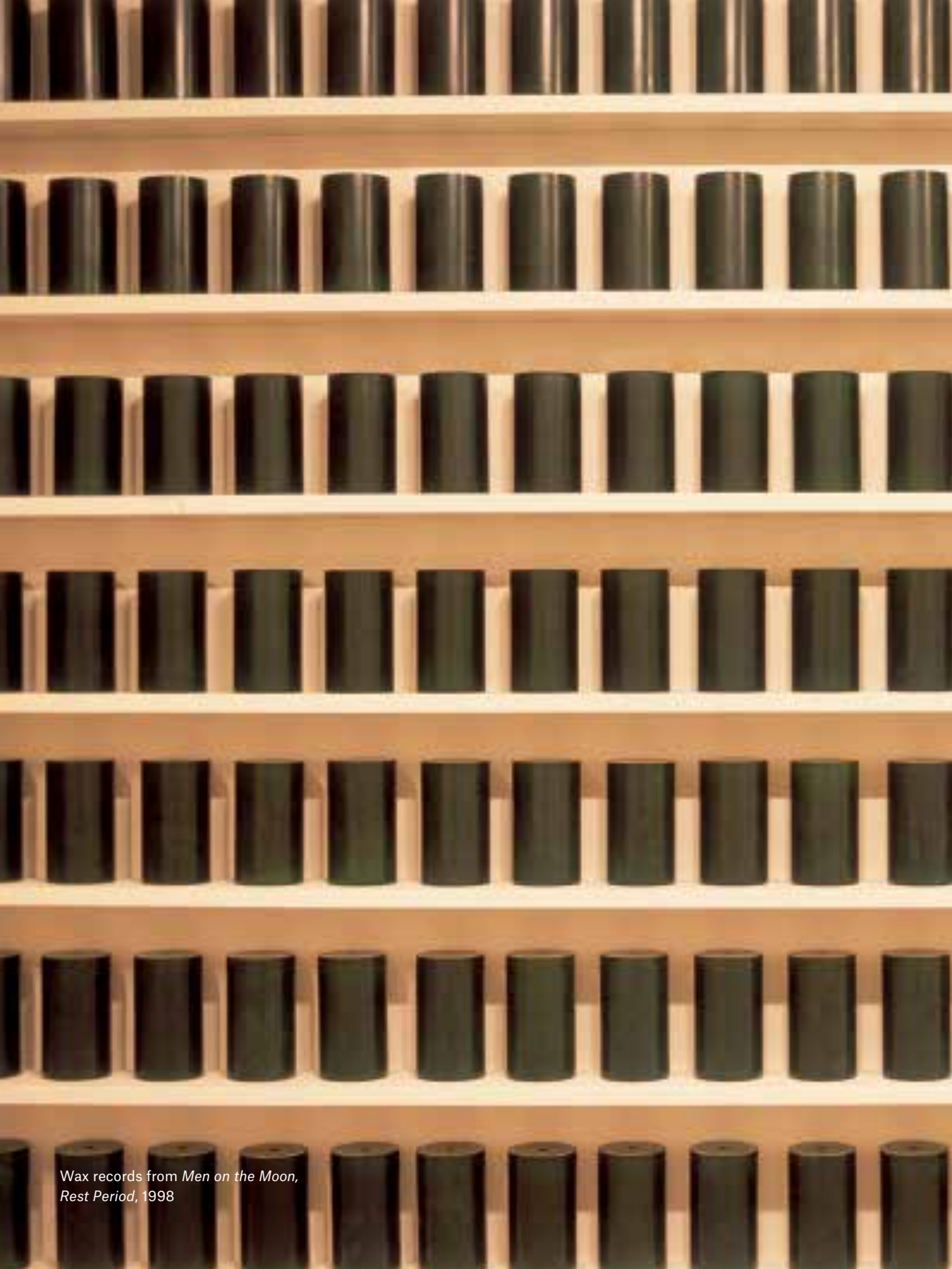
Phonograph from *Men on the Moon, Rest Period*, 1998.

hitting the groove of the rotating cylinder performs both operations simultaneously, such that any ambient sounds at the listening site are inscribed onto the cylinder's surface. Repeated listening will eventually override and erase any originally recorded content.

Ramírez Jonas's title alludes to the content he meticulously recorded onto the 533 individual wax cylinders that comprise the bulk of *Men on the Moon, Rest Period*: the full twenty-three hours of audio exchanges between the astronauts aboard Apollo 11 and their ground control at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) near Houston. Neil Armstrong, Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, and Michael Collins's lunar mission reached Earth's moon on July 20, 1969, after a four-day flight that climaxed with Aldrin and Collins becoming the first humans to set foot on this planet's only natural satellite. Indexed to the second, each cylinder is identifiable by a numerical notation silkscreened onto the top surface of the green wax. In addition, all of the audio is transcribed into a "lyrics book" produced by the artist; penciled marginalia in the books



*Men on the Moon, Rest Period, 1998.*  
Edison phonograph (wood, plastic  
funnel, hand drum, thumbtacks,  
flywheel, and hardware), wax records  
(machinable wax and silk screen),  
and book (linen-bound inkjet and  
laser prints and graphite on acid-free  
paper); dimensions variable



Wax records from *Men on the Moon, Rest Period*, 1998



Detail of wax records from *Men on the Moon, Rest Period*, 1998

outline each cylinder's content. Following NASA's lead, Ramírez Jonas has divided his recordings into four sections, each one an autonomous work: he completed *Tranquility* in 1992, *EVA* in 1996, and *Rest Period* in 1998; the final chapter, *Return*, is yet to be made. When exhibited, the hundreds of wax cylinders that comprise each recording are accompanied by Ramírez Jonas's handmade Edison phonograph and the "lyrics book" of the texts recorded onto them. Edison's breakthrough discovery is the window that the artist uses to reframe humankind's "great leap" forward. Bringing together a reproduction of the first audio recording-and-playback device with audio recordings made during the first lunar landing, the *Men on the Moon* works engage multiple registers of time—1887, 1969, and the present. More importantly, Ramírez Jonas's re-creation of a past invention reinvigorates history. The artist elaborates:

I think that when I retrace another's endeavours, I am not merely making a copy. In a very real sense, I become

implicated and imagine that I am sharing the similar feelings and thoughts as the original source. Something quite frightening happens in this process. In some measure, individual time is destroyed. What I mean is, while at first I might be seeking to regain time, or to recapture the past, what often happens is that the distance between the past and the present is blurred.<sup>3</sup>

By retracing the tracks of notable pioneers, Ramírez Jonas inscribes his vital energy into their discoveries. His contributions expand on those of his predecessors and offer viewers the chance to likewise participate and take pleasure as observations multiply.

The physical manifestation of passing time is a theme that assumes a romantic tenor in the video *Longer Day* (1997). The artist writes:

I woke up at dawn in Brooklyn, New York, got in my car, and headed west. I drove as far west as I could until sundown. Speeding towards the sun would extend my day, perhaps for as much as an hour.<sup>4</sup>

And:

As the sun began to set on the western horizon, I was on a highway somewhere in the middle of America. I turned on the video camera to capture my race against sundown—a futile attempt to make the day last forever. I succeeded in extending the sunset a minute longer than if I had stood still.<sup>5</sup>

A length of videotape thereby becomes evidence of Ramírez Jonas's impossible effort to make a day last forever. In viewing it, we might share in the artist's desire to control time, rather than be subject to it—a hopeful goal, even if it remains unfulfilled.

The similarly titled *Another Day* (2003) charts another path around the globe: that of the rising sun. Displayed on three side-by-side monitors, pixelated white letters flicker against a blue background. Installed high on a wall, the work calls to mind arrival and departure boards in train stations and airports. But this countdown—in hours, minutes, and seconds—signals the arrival of the sunrise in ninety cities evenly spaced around Earth. There is a momentary pause before the time code for the last city on the list—at 00:00:00—disappears from the last monitor, signaling that the sun has risen elsewhere. Watching the scrolling digital display of letters, as locations like Poom, Changzhou, Smolensk, and Ta'izz, and Göteborg cycle past, makes time's ceaseless cyclicity tangible. As locations dissolve one into the other, time proves its fluidity. In making us aware of degrees of temporality—of the sun setting over a highway, or the time it takes for a person or the sun to circle the globe—Ramírez Jonas shows us how humankind's technologies inscribe our stories into history.

If Ramírez Jonas's early works asked audience members to engage with constructions layered with familiar historical references, his works since 2004 ask audiences to interact with objects commonplace to the public realm. *Broadside 1* (2007) combines each of these tendencies: Ramírez Jonas adapted a manual typewriter to



Stills from *Longer Day*, 1997. Single-channel video, color, silent; 18:35 min.





Still from *Longer Day*, 1997. Single-channel video, color, silent; 18:35 min.

Time to Sunrise	
Jabalpur	00:17:21
Bajan hosuu	00:38:21
Kashi	01:09:21
Kuvasaj	01:31:21
Pahtakor	01:47:21
Ramkan	02:01:21
Johannesburg	02:15:21
Ta'IZZ	02:22:21
Al-Kuwait	02:37:21

Time to Sunrise	
Cañas Gordas	00:16:57
Patreksfjörður	00:49:57
San Pedro Sula	01:18:57
Roanoke	01:33:57
Maryville	01:46:57
Lafayette	02:04:57
San Juan del Río	02:16:57
Tulsa	02:34:57
Marfa	02:52:57

Detail of *Another Day I*, 2003.  
Custom-made microcontroller device;  
dimensions variable

engrave letters into a terra cotta slab, which viewers encounter atop a portable lectern complete with a microphone. The anachronistic invocation of the clay tablets of ancient Mesopotamian scribes is conflated with a more recent form of inscription. The text reads:

Do you solemnly swear that you will consider all the evidence in this case, follow the instructions given to you, deliberate fairly and impartially and reach a fair verdict? So help you God.

Ramírez Jonas’s use of a courtroom oath alludes to civic duty and word-as-bond. In such juridical recitations, the oath is a juror’s commitment to truth. These words signal a citizen’s shift away from personal aspirations toward those of a collective body—the “one” referred to in the United States motto *e pluribus unum*—that is tasked with the single purpose of fair and impartial judgment.

In *Paper Moon (I Create as I Speak)* (2008), the phrase “I create as I speak” repeats across 616 pages pinned to the wall



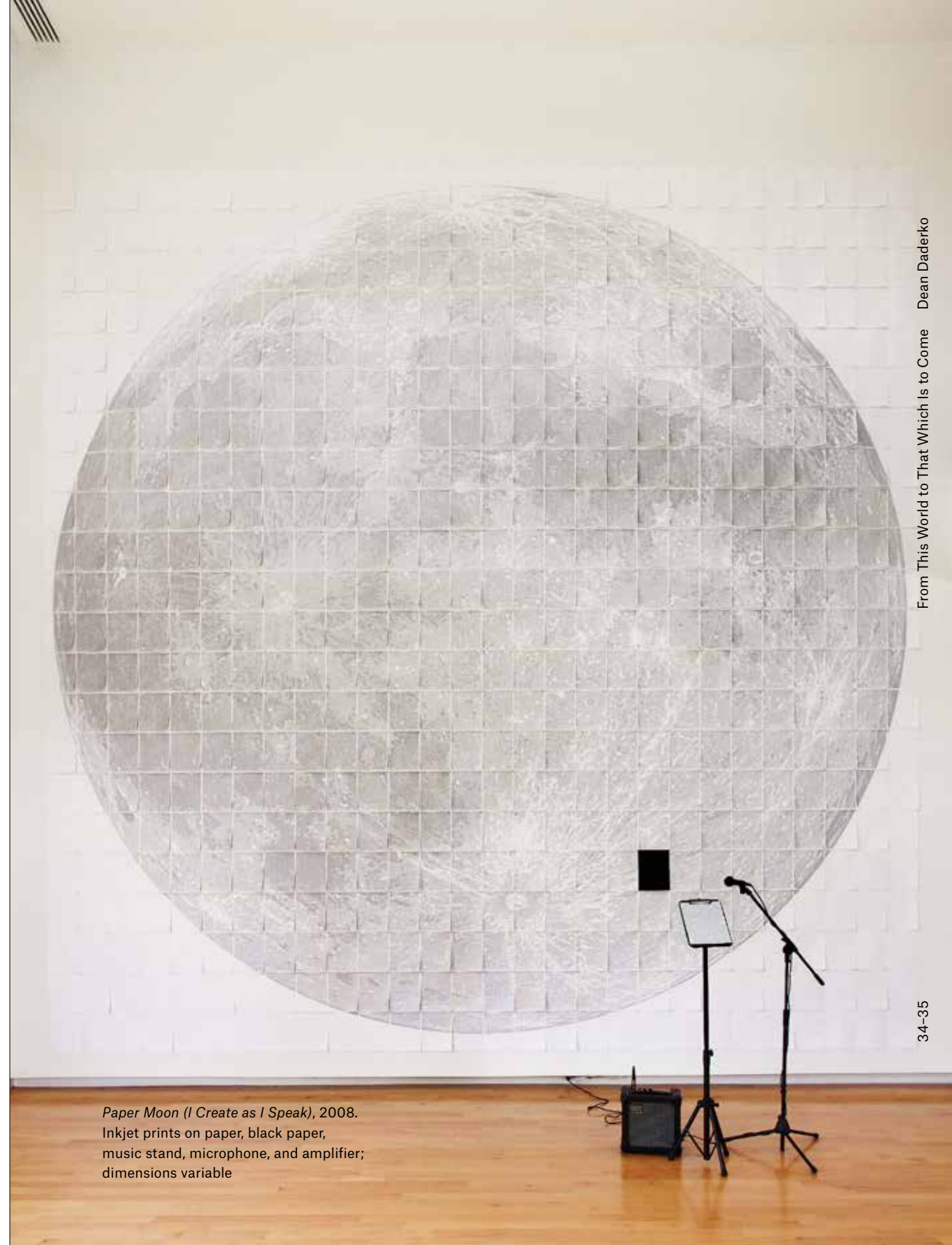
*Broadside 1*, 2007. Unfired clay tablet and portable lectern with built-in microphone and amplifier; dimensions variable



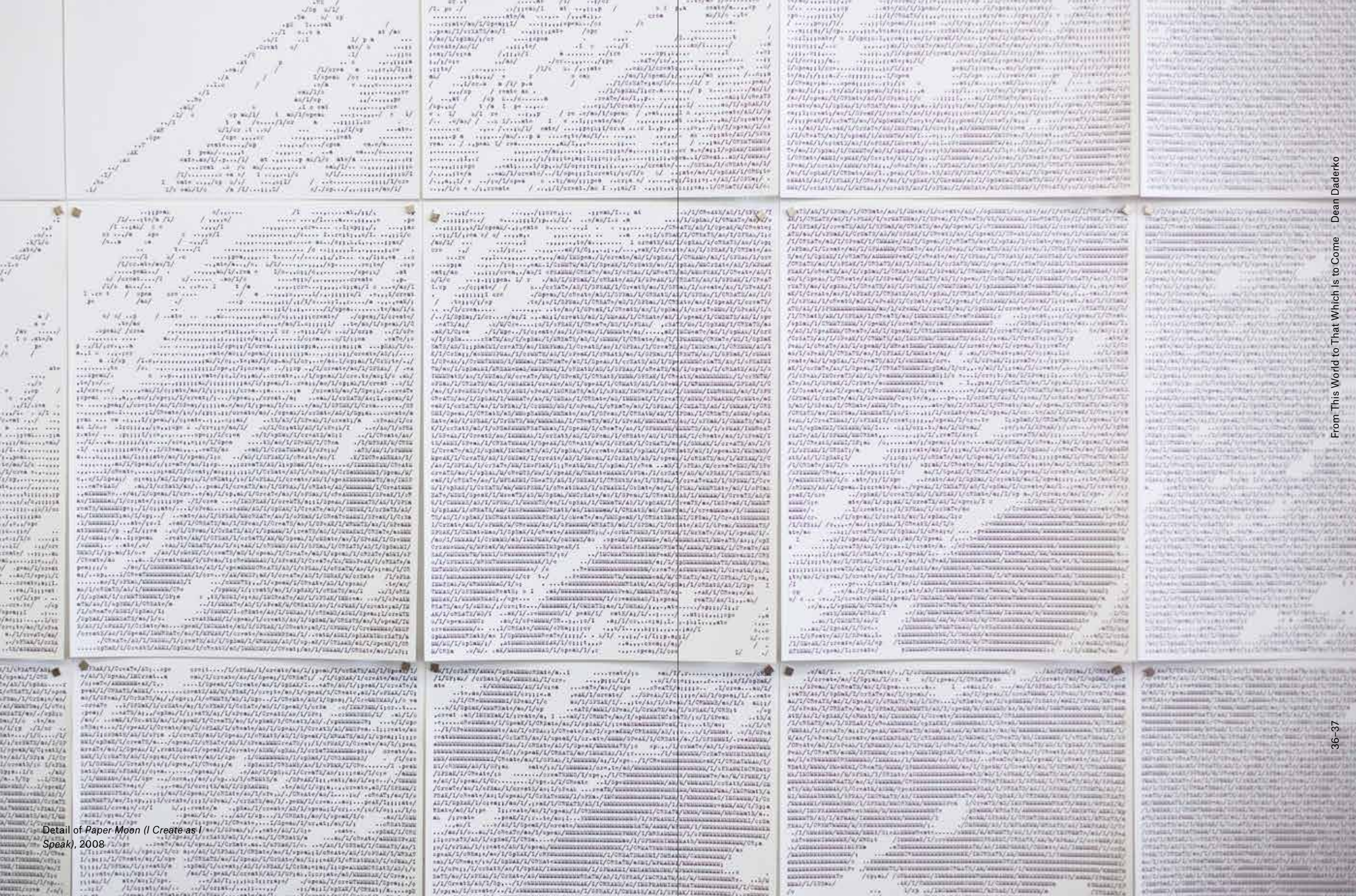
Detail of clay tablet from  
*Broadside 1*, 2007

in a grid. Arrayed over the pages, the punctuation and letters, which vary in their spacing and capitalization, coalesce to form an image of a twenty-foot moon. The familiar typed page thus assumes a magical collective form. Pointedly, the generative text—an incantation—is a translation of the Aramaic word *abracadabra*: “I create as I speak.” The full realization of *Paper Moon* depends on viewer participation; one page of the text is removed from the planetary composition and displayed on a music stand in front of the moon. With it sits a microphone and speaker, which willing viewers can use to amplify their reading of the words, fulfilling the textual promise.

If *Broadside 1* and *Paper Moon* find new material form for exemplar texts of civic engagement—words as bond—in order to give rise to new public readings of them, *The Commons* (2011) generates new public inscriptions through its appropriation of the familiar form of an equestrian statue. Though such public sculptures typically commemorate the horse’s rider, here the horse is stripped of its champion. Further,



*Paper Moon (I Create as I Speak)*, 2008.  
Inkjet prints on paper, black paper,  
music stand, microphone, and amplifier;  
dimensions variable



Detail of Paper Moon (I Create as I Speak), 2008



Detail of *Publicar IX*, 2009. Rock, cork, adhesive, and pushpins; 32 x 22 ½ x 52 inches



*The Commons*, 2011. Cork, pushpins, steel, wood, and hardware; 153 x 128 x 64 inches

on the sculpture's plinth, where we would expect to read an inscription that remembers a particular battle or an act of heroism, we find blank space. Most importantly, this life-size steed and the base on which it stands are constructed not from the conventional bronze or marble but entirely in cork, a soft material that the artist appreciates for its ability to “‘publish’ an endless number of voices.”<sup>6</sup> Indeed, this is just what *The Commons* provokes its viewers to do: using the pushpins found in the sculpture's base, they are invited to leave behind personal items and messages. In place of the monolithic voice of the state is a collection of countless voices. And, likewise, instead of an isolated achievement, this monument celebrates any idea or occasion participants bring to it, manifesting the inherent power of the group, the collective public imagined by the artist through his work. *The Commons* reworks how monuments function by proposing the form as a site made in the present, and one that is infinitely capable of change and adaptation.

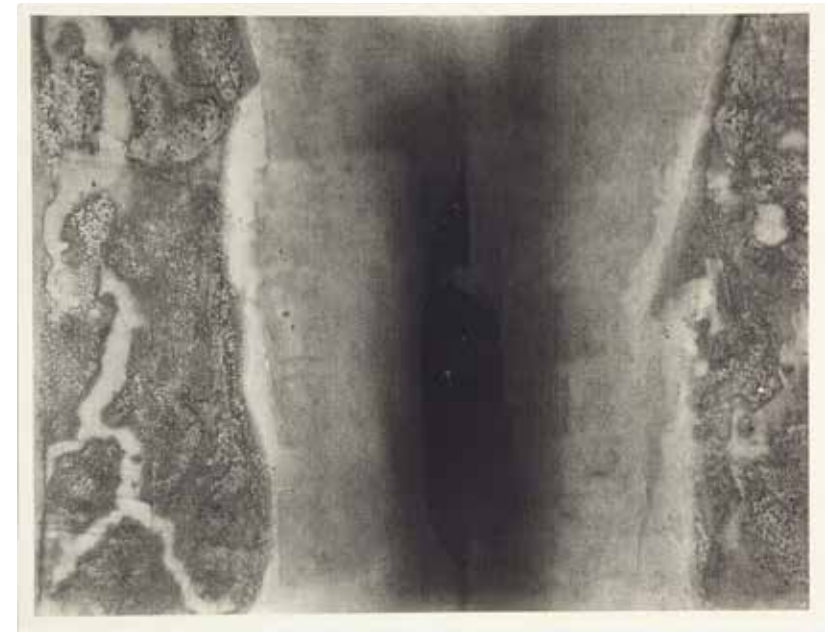
The pedestal returns as a point of focus in Ramírez Jonas's serial work *Witness My Hand* (2013–present). In exhibitions, pedestals are ciphers—we're expected to ignore them as they bring small and medium-size objects up to a level suitable for close inspection. Often covered with protective plexiglass hoods, their material construction warns us to look but not touch. Ramírez Jonas joins a chorus of artists who use these ostensibly neutral components of object display to reveal their effects on our encounters with art. In 1961, for instance, the Italian artist Piero Manzoni created his *Magic Bases—Living Sculpture* (Base



Detail of *The Commons*, 2011



*Witness My Hand*, 2013. Photocopier, packing box, marble slab, Hydrocal reproduction of a book, and hardware; dimensions variable



Photocopy of book sculpture for *Witness My Hand*, 2013

*magica—sculptura vivente*) and *Socle du Monde* (*Base of the World*); the former work invites viewers to step up onto a pedestal to become a living artwork, while the latter—with its upside-down inscription—puts Earth itself on display. With *Witness My Hand*, Ramírez Jonas toys with the notion of the pedestal as a magic box that can turn an item into “art,” as the items he displays sit on the glass bed of a photocopier. Though the displayed object is “an original,” the machine can endlessly reproduce it. *Witness My Hand* wrenches out multiple issues of the sculptural: it translates a three-dimensional object into a two-dimensional photographic likeness, so that it can no longer be seen “in the round,” and it literally and semantically teases with sculptural traditions of original and copy with equal measures of humor and gravitas.

Over the last quarter of a century, Ramírez Jonas’s practice has retained a particular attention to history and its evidence in and through objects, as well as to the role that objects play as vehicles for stories. The most notable shift in his practice over this time has been his move from crafting objects embedded with historical information toward a more open-ended and audience-responsive exploration of the way objects themselves can inspire action. Ramírez Jonas has not turned away from objects and material in favor of more conceptual or ephemeral events; instead, as his fascinations with objects and ephemerality have developed, he has balanced these aspects judiciously and generously with a deep concern for the stories they might awaken in viewers. An inveterate maker, Ramírez Jonas harmonizes



Photocopy of bust for *Witness My Hand*, 2013/2017

form and function with an obvious sense of pleasure in increasingly expansive ideas. He's moved from inventing opportunities by inserting his own discoveries into prior narratives to creating places in which inventive interactions with his work fuel new recollections. This achievement results from a decades-long commitment to using his work as a vehicle through which he—and we—can come to see the world around us anew.

1. Paul Ramírez Jonas, "A Statement about My Research Program and Future Plans," November 2, 2016, <http://www.paulramirezjonas.com/selected/reflimages/CV/statement.pdf>.

2. Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy, "Themes and Motivations," in *Paul Ramírez Jonas*, ed. Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy (Birmingham, England: Ikon Gallery, 2004), 105.

3. Paul Ramírez Jonas, "Routes: Paul Ramírez Jonas in dialogue with Sandra Antelo Suarez," in *Paul Ramírez Jonas*, 114.

4. Paul Ramírez Jonas, "Longer Day, 1997," November 16, 2016, [http://www.paulramirezjonas.com/selected/new\\_index.php#7&18\\_1997&sub73&11\\_Longer Day](http://www.paulramirezjonas.com/selected/new_index.php#7&18_1997&sub73&11_Longer Day).

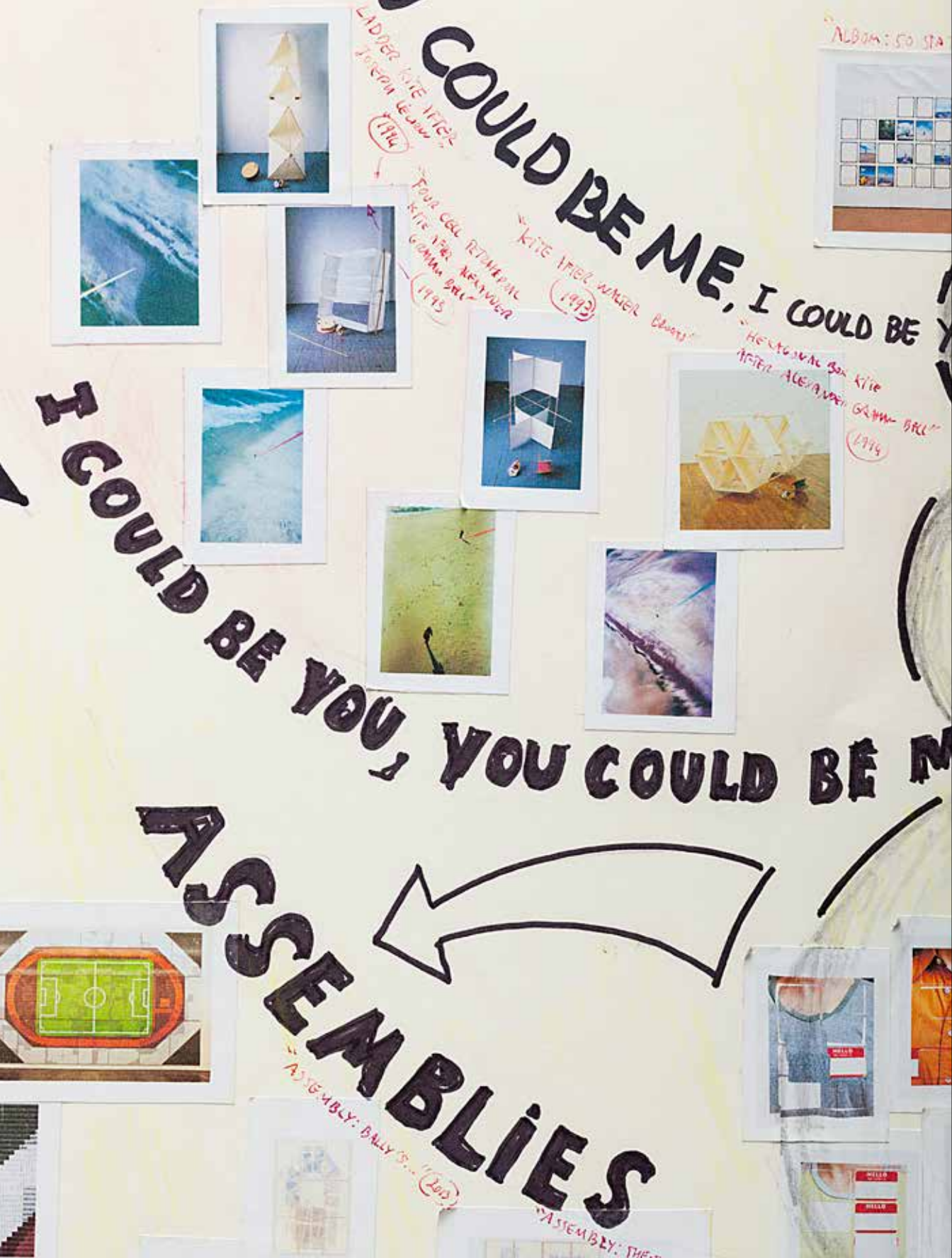
5. Paul Ramírez Jonas, quoted in *Paul Ramírez Jonas*, 7.

6. Paul Ramírez Jonas, [http://www.paulramirezjonas.com/selected/new\\_index.php#21&32\\_2011&sub211&01\\_The%20Commons](http://www.paulramirezjonas.com/selected/new_index.php#21&32_2011&sub211&01_The%20Commons), March 12, 2017.



*Witness My Hand*, 2013/2017.  
Photocopier, paper, wood, plexiglass,  
plaster bust, and hardware;  
dimensions variable





# Speech Acts, Ceremonies, and Bureaucratic Loopholes Claire Barliant



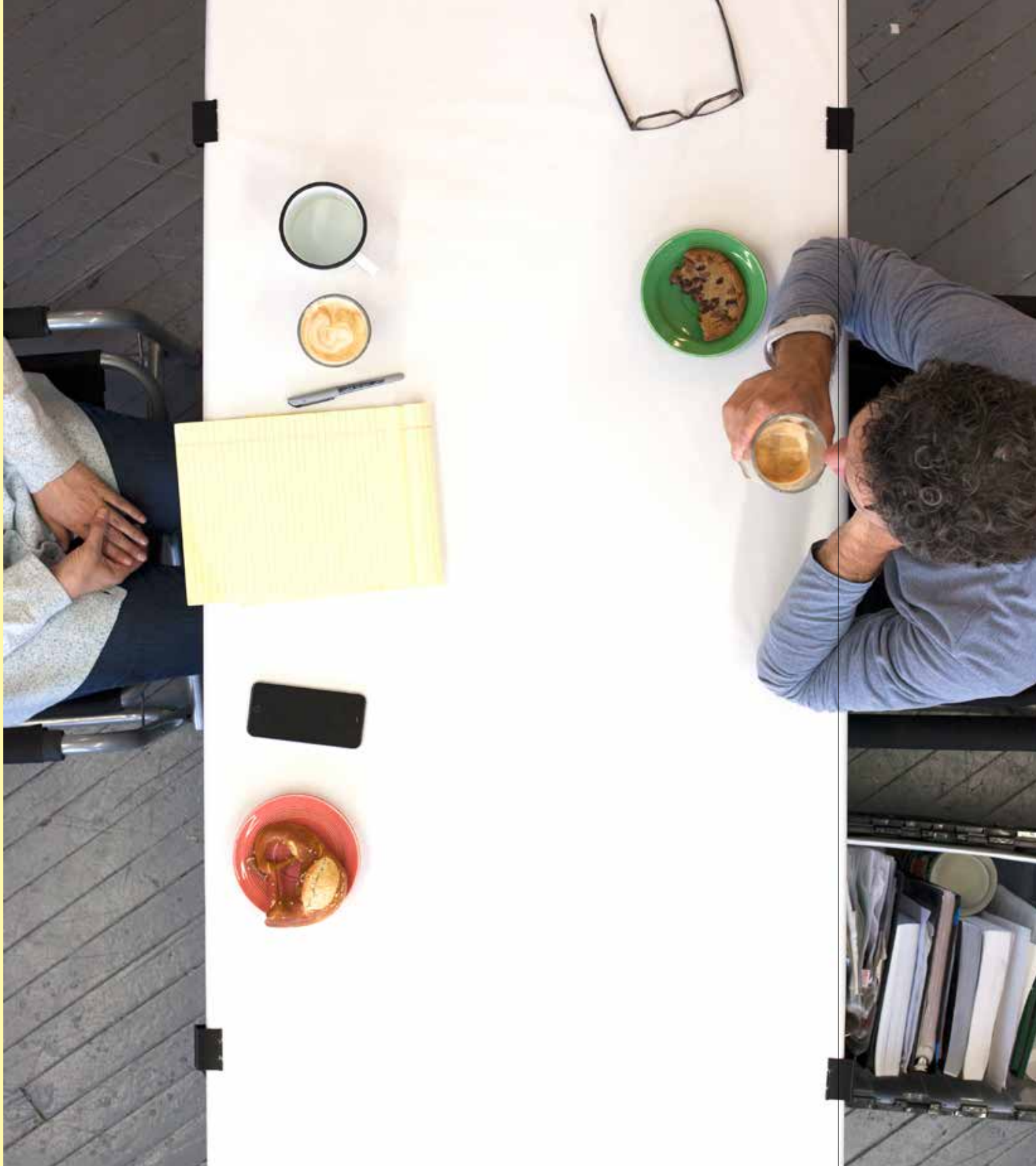
On a chilly day in November 2009, Paul Ramírez Jonas was sitting in a boardroom at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey headquarters. The Port Authority manages transportation facilities for New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, including “bridges and tunnels,” as well as the ferry terminals, so often maligned by those who commute in the area. Ramírez Jonas was there to pitch a project called *Key to the City*. The project, which had been commissioned by the New York public art organization Creative Time, entailed giving civilians genuine keys to doors, gates, cabinets, storage boxes, or rooms in all of the places that make up a metropolitan area, such as churches, museums, courthouses, parks, police stations, and schools. The Port Authority officials intently listened to Ramírez Jonas’s pitch. They wanted to participate, but their

job was to maintain and protect the city’s infrastructure, which often meant concealing it. The towers that filter air into underground tunnels, for example, are deliberately nondescript, practically invisible, to deter terror attacks. Immensely proud of the massive system undergirding and linking Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York, the managers of it wanted people to know that, despite its low profile, it belongs to the public. Ramírez Jonas and the managers talked about what is held in public trust. He asked them whether there was a site that embodied the beauty of the infrastructure and, at the same time, confirmed the need to protect it, to make it invisible.

“The artwork for them, Port Authority, was happening then [in that boardroom],” Ramírez Jonas recalls. “Their participation was then.” I am sitting with

Ramírez Jonas in his spacious studio in Gowanus, huddled over a table as we engage in a version of show-and-tell. Ramírez Jonas shows me artifacts from his public art projects, then describes the project affiliated with each object. These projects are transient, contingent, and rely on audience participation; the artifacts—objects, photographs, documents—are simply residual points of reference to experience.

The first object he shows me is a key to the gates of Taylor Square. Taylor Square is an absurdly minuscule park—the smallest park in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It is located on the tip of a triangle in front of a beautiful brick early twentieth-century firehouse on one corner of a five-way intersection. The gates to the park are locked from the outside, although the wrought-steel fence is short enough to easily step over.



Inside the park is a small stone bench on a scruffy patch of grass and a huge flagpole. Engraved on one side of the key are the words “Copy Me,” like one of the messages Alice finds on inanimate objects during her adventures in Wonderland. The story of the key and the practically secret little park has the ring of a fairy tale or children’s book; in fact, it is more a story of tenacity, patience, and resourcefulness. That is the nature of Paul Ramirez Jonas’s public art: it has an air of magic about it, an easy wizardry that belies the enormous organizational labor and endless negotiations that go into making it happen.

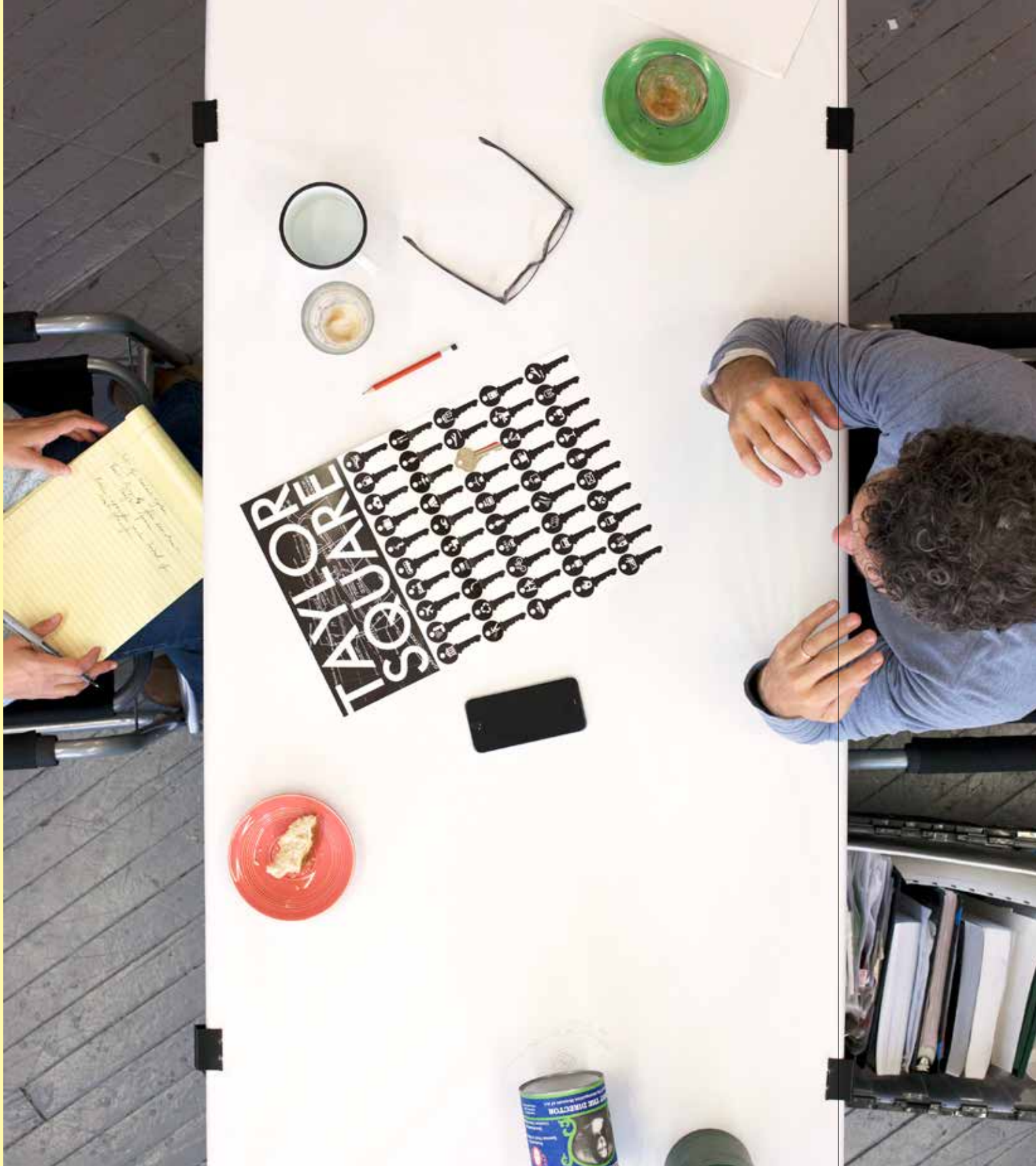


Front and back of key from Taylor Square, 2005

an artwork anywhere on the surface of the historic building. Stumped, he climbed to the roof to survey the site. He noticed that while the firehouse and most of its immediate surroundings were being renovated, a small triangular area at the intersection in front of the building remained in disrepair. Because it wasn’t officially part of the historic site, there wasn’t any money for its refurbishing. Ramirez Jonas decided to make that sorry little forgotten piece of land the site for his work.

I took this tiny little triangle . . . and turned it into a park. I did this through a series of negotiations. I convinced the parks department of Cambridge to accept it into their parks system, so it is officially the smallest park in Cambridge. And then the firemen

The park came about after Ramirez Jonas was commissioned to make a percent-for-art project for the firehouse, which was under renovation. When he came for the site visit, he was told that he couldn’t put



wanted to put a flagpole there, because the station had a flagpole, but it wasn't lit, which meant you had to bring the American flag in every night; it can't stay out in the dark. So I said, if you pay for the flagpole you can do it. Then the department of transportation wanted to make these sidewalks with wheelchair access, so I said if you pay for it you can do it. So the site got smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller. And once it was almost nothing, I just built a fence, and the parks department put down grass, and I had two doors made by a locksmith, and they're always open from the inside and always locked from the outside.

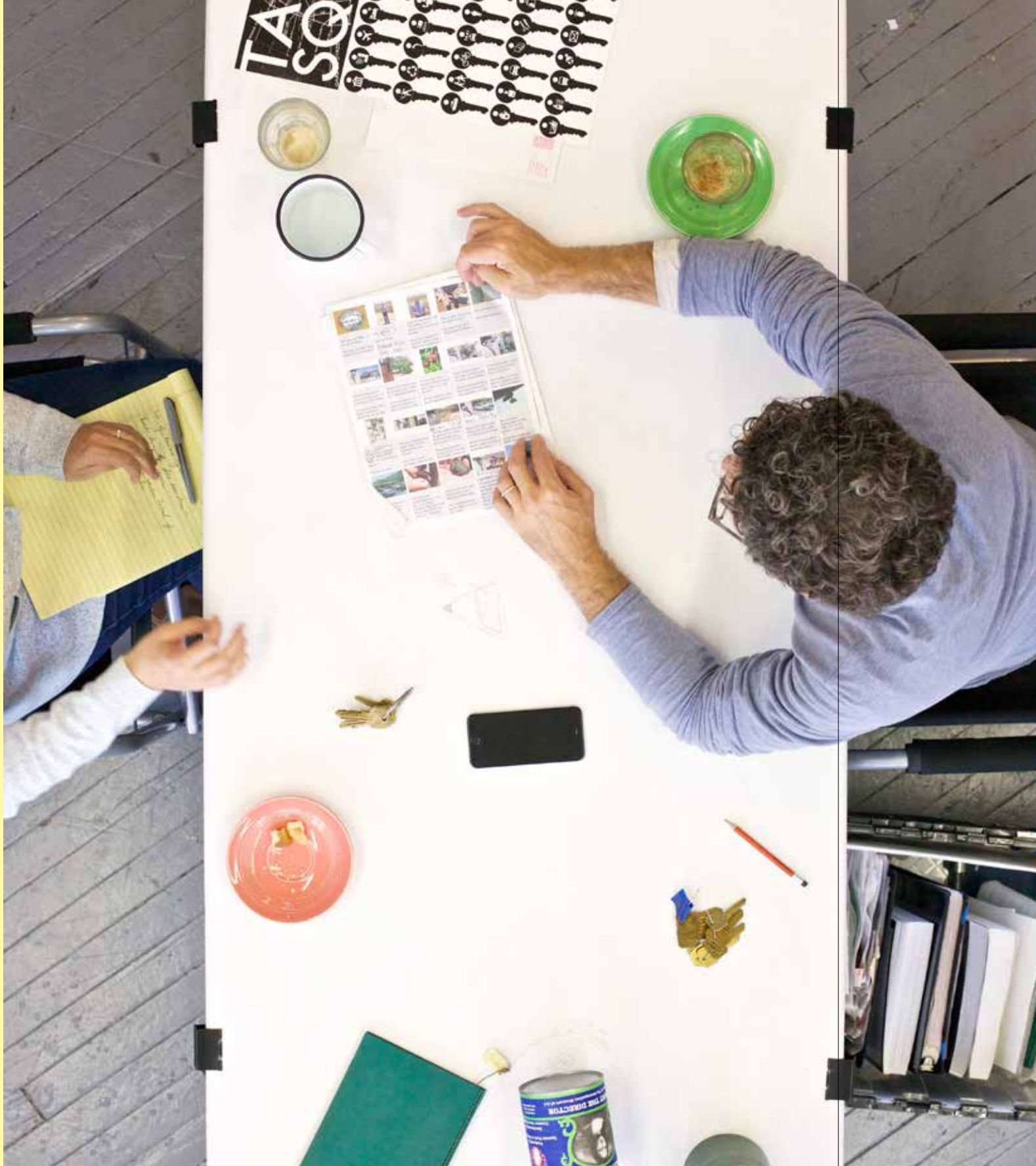
He then distributed keys to nearby residents, along with a note that urged further

distribution through copying and sharing, to “keep the park truly open.”

As it happens, that miniature park marked a turning point for Ramirez Jonas. Up to that point, his public art projects had involved an immersion into the history of a site, sometimes resulting in a permanent installation. In 2007, for example, he installed *Long Time* on a Hudson River pier; the sculpture, a working water wheel that powers an odometer, might be seen as a culmination of the many projects in which the artist re-created an invention from the past, others of which include flying machines and the phonograph. The Taylor Square piece marks the moment he decided to stop making site-specific work and to start making public-specific work. It was when he started to think hard about the meaning of public art and its potential. What does it mean to be a

member of the public? Is it possible, through an artwork, to give an individual a feeling of agency? To make a person feel like they are participating in history, rather than merely being a bystander? “Try not to be a perpetrator. Try not to be a bystander. Try not to be a victim,” says the artist, quoting the filmmaker Michael Berenbaum.

As he was working on *Taylor Square* in Cambridge and becoming more skeptical of generic applications of the word *public*, Ramirez Jonas was asked to participate in inSite, a public art initiative that takes place in both Tijuana and San Diego and implicitly critiques the absurdity and cruelty of the border crossing between Mexico and the United States. (Between 1998 and 2004, 1,954 people died crossing the US–Mexico border.) In 2005, inSite was organized by a like-minded curator, Osvaldo Sánchez, who



had a set of strict, practically draconian, rules for the artists he invited to participate: they had to spend a significant amount of time at the site to avoid the pitfalls of public art made by artists who “parachute” into a region and make their work with little knowledge of it; they could not make a work that could later be retrofitted for another setting, say, a gallery where it might be sold; the work had to be specific to Tijuana and San Diego; and finally—and perhaps most importantly—Sanchez would not give the artists a penny until they told him exactly *for whom* they were making their artwork.

Setting to work by interviewing residents of the area, Ramírez Jonas decided that one way to learn more about their lives and the places where they lived would be to look at their keys—the small implements that provided entry to the “real,”



Imaginary letter to Konstantin E. Tsiolkovsky, with postage from the Soviet Union celebrating his achievements. The address quotes him.



private life of the cities, places a tourist was not likely to find on her own or enter unattended. “For example,” Ramirez Jonas recalls, “Oscar has a set of keys for Tijuana and one from San Diego because his parents are from Tijuana but he’s from San Diego. So he says, ‘This is the key to my house, this is the key to my yard, and then this is the key to this motorcycle, this is the key to this locker, this is the master key to all the places that I work.’” Oscar, along with several others, gave Ramirez Jonas full access to the private spaces in which life and work takes place. The artist snapped some pictures, which he used in a lecture that he delivered at eleven different sites in the two cities, including an architecture school, a prison, an after-school program for troubled youth, and a bird-watching club. The slide lecture included images such as Goya’s



Francisco de Goya, *La confianza* (*Trust*), c. 1797. Ink on paper; 7 ¾ x 5 ½ inches

print *La Confianza* (*Trust*), which features two hooded women who are opening each other’s bodies with keys. He showed images of his American and Honduran passports, as well as images of the border seen from outer space, a vista from which such borders seem completely moot. He talked about the history of rocketry, the distinction between Earth’s atmosphere and outer space, and how rockets were a kind of key that allowed passage between the two zones. And he ended the lecture with a challenge:

I pulled out the key to my house and said, “I will make a copy of the key to my house and give it to anyone here if you let me make a copy of any of your keys,” and you let me give it to someone else in the audience. I had blanks for all the kinds of keys that people



might have, and I had a key-cutting machine. We started with my key, and at the end I would take the key from the last participant.

As we talk, Ramírez Jonas pulls out a ring with eleven keys on it, each belonging to the last person who attended and then participated in the lectures—it is the only physical remainder of the project *Mi Casa, Su Casa*. The keys couldn't be more ordinary, yet they represent a moment when people let down their guard, were open, and had faith in the basic human decency of their neighbors—had trust.

If you were to distill much of Ramírez Jonas's work to two very simple elements, these elements would likely be keys and speech. Just as keys are a means of unlocking private worlds to public view, speech

is a form of publicly broadcasting private thoughts. "I think a lot about the truth and reconciliation committees in South Africa and Argentina," he explains. "If you come and confess your crime, then you're absolved of it. Public speech will absolve you. Public speech is different than just thinking something."

When he made the piece *Tinterillo*—*Yo creo como hablo* (2008) for a biennial exhibition in Cali, Colombia, Ramírez Jonas had an opportunity to explore this idea.

During his site visit, he came upon a plaza called Park of the Poets, which was set up with a number of desks and typewriters, and umbrellas that provided shade. He immediately recognized the function of such a site from his youth in Honduras; it was where the *tinterillos* worked. A public servant who helps people fill out various kinds of forms, a

*tinterillo* may also offer advice as to how to navigate bureaucratic systems, such as filing an affidavit or opening a bank account. Ostensibly in service to people who are illiterate, so they may dictate letters of all sorts, the *tinterillos* in fact help direct people through the byzantine channels of modern life. Ramírez Jonas invited a *tinterillo* to work for him over the duration of the biennial at a local art space, El Lugar a Dudas, which comprises an artist residency, art gallery, and noncirculating contemporary art library. Ramírez Jonas prepared some official-looking forms for visitors to fill out, asking them to complete sentences beginning with phrases denoting a period of time: Many years ago; Tomorrow; I will never forget; In the future; When I was a child; Yesterday; One day . . .



Ramirez Jonas went back to New York, uncertain of the success of this project. After all, he had basically entrusted the *tinterillo* with executing the work for him. But a month later, he received a book-length binder in the mail. It was full of the forms that various people had filled out. “One day: I woke up and I started to dream.” “This takes me to 1979 when I was 22 years old and I fell down the stairs because I was clumsy and I broke my tooth. I was taken to the dentist.” And, another from a friend: “Recently, a great friend of mine named Paul Ramirez Jonas gave me as a present the *Universal History of Infamy* by Borges. I was enjoying the reading and I forgot the book on the plane. I told Paul this story—that I was sad about my carelessness. Paul answered, The book had a destiny to go from one person to another, like almost everything else that we have in our lives.”

Perhaps most moving of all was the letter written by the *tinterillo* who spent a month doing this project, and, at its conclusion, decided to fill out a form of his own.

It is 11 a.m. of the 19th day of November 2008, I arrive to the space called the Place of Doubt [El Lugar a Dudas] without having clear in my mind what kind of work I’m going to be doing here. And it is to start for a short period the work of artist Paul Ramirez Jonas where voice becomes material. . . . My work as a scribe in the Park of the Poets is something that I do every day, writing letters. I buy, I sell, and I do all sorts of forms. Now that I have the opportunity to participate in this big event as a scribe, I find that it is something new for me. . . . I find people with

conviction. And I want to give them value and sense to what is surrounding us, to that which is part of us. . . . I learn with diligence and a blessing that I can enjoy with my own people. . . . Anecdotes, experiences, narratives, and situations such as this I will never forget as long as I live. Something that I learned here that is really important is patience.

To counteract the short attention spans of viewers, Ramirez Jonas persists in his endeavor to connect, *really* connect, with his audience. There is a price: in order for a work to really resonate with a few, it often remains obscure to many. So it is that some of the most profound moments in his work, like the meeting with the Port Authority and the message from the *tinterillo*, remain





Poster by M. Allen for Dictar y Recordar, 2010

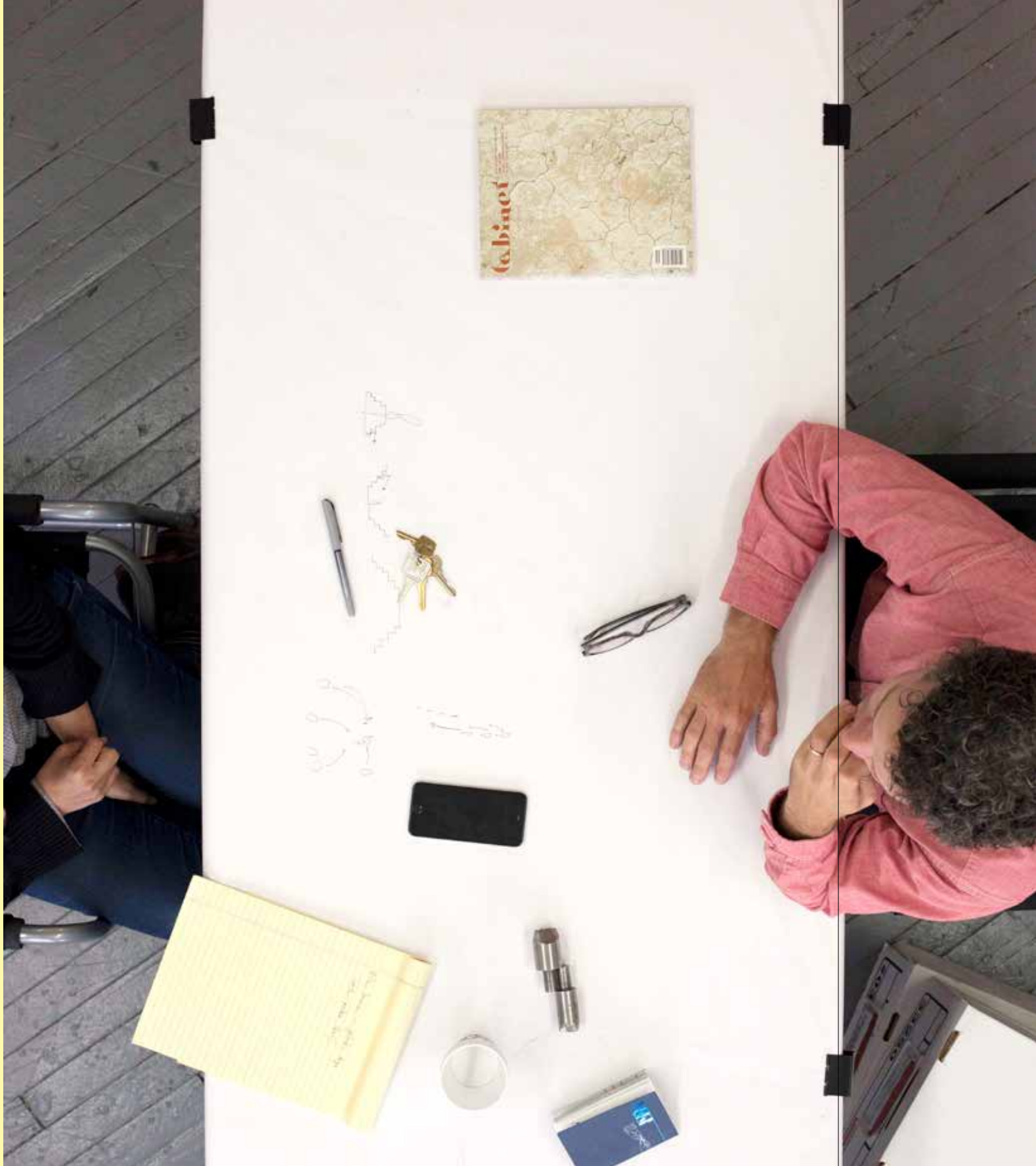
undocumented, untallied. Even so, the works themselves become tangible registers of speech acts and the ephemeral.

Arguably the most personal project of his career, *Dictary y Recordar* (2010), entailed making a public record. He was invited by the Honduran artist Adan Vallecillo to produce a work in Honduras, where Ramirez Jonas grew up. The country has seen an extraordinary number of regimes: over its 180 years of independence, there have been 190 governments. The number of coups, civil wars, and revolutions Honduras has experienced is almost beyond measure.

One of the few reliable, objective histories of the country was constructed from cables sent by US ambassadors and consuls to Washington, DC. To help balance this one-sided account, Ramirez Jonas organized

an event during which ordinary Honduran citizens could record their own versions of their country's history. As in Colombia, Ramirez Jonas made a set of forms that asked respondents to situate their stories at some point between July 30, 1502, which was when Columbus made landfall in Honduras, and the present. A poster and radio ad announced that the event would take place from October 22 to 23, for twenty-four hours, and invited people to come and dictate their accounts. Ramirez Jonas recalls the event:

I hired all the typists from the typing academy. We cleared the cinema-theque, and we had little desks with typewriters. I used some of my money [from an Art Matters travel grant] to pay for bus fare, so if someone was



coming from another part of the country they could come by bus. We catered it every six hours . . . I had a sketch artist, so there wouldn't be just cameras all the time, and that was it . . . I covered the walls with outlines of Honduras filled with geographic names of every location in the country. People would come, and choose a form, and a typist, and they would sit down and talk. It was similar to the project in Colombia, but concentrated into twenty-four hours, so it had more of a flow. There was always a crowd of people—some people listening, some talking. And the stories would go up on the wall.

After the event, Ramírez Jonas assembled the typewritten reports into a book, copies

of which are now in the national archives in Honduras and at the Smithsonian Archive of American Art. The book consists of three parts: an introduction using all of the place names in Honduras, facsimiles of the type-written records, and an edited, cleaned-up version of the first-person accounts, which eliminates typos and grammatical errors for readability. Ramírez Jonas is sensitive to this work's unique posterity. "I'm a funny person, and I use humor in my work," he says. "But the work is not funny, which is something I want to point out. Because the history of Honduras is violent and contested, there's a multipage story about being abducted by the government and tortured by someone who worked with refugees on the border. A few people talked about the history of feminism in Honduras, and that was also very pointed."

Ramírez Jonas made the work in Honduras shortly after wrapping up the landmark project for which he may be best known, *Key to the City* (2010). Commissioned by Creative Time in New York, *Key to the City* was an elaborate work with countless moving parts. Reflecting on the relative contemporaneity of the two projects, the artist notes that each addresses a public directly about something specifically meaningful to it. "No one went to *Key to the City* because it's a work by Paul Ramírez Jonas, no one came to the event in Honduras because it's a work by Paul Ramírez Jonas, they came here because it's about dictating the history of Honduras; they went to the other one because they want a key to the city. There is authorship, but it's not the authorship that creates the meaning. It's the situation that's creating the meaning."



Over the course of our conversation, Ramírez Jonas alludes more than once to theater and his love of that form. At one point, he sketches a rough diagram of the difference between civic monuments and theater; a couple of stick figures look away from an outline of a sculpture, while the stick figures look toward a proscenium. “I think a lot about theater not in terms of plays, but about the position of the viewer,” he explains. “When the Louvre opened, it was the first museum for the people. In the Louvre, people walk to look at the art. As a point of contrast, there are historical paintings that show a king sitting while attendants bring him paintings to look at. For everyone to be able to enjoy the paintings, everyone has to move their bodies. Either many paintings

go to one person, or many people go to the paintings.”

In order for Ramírez Jonas to feel that *Key to the City* would succeed, the key had to be “real”—that is, it had to be an authentic key to the city as bestowed by its mayor. “[Mayor Bloomberg’s] office strung us along until the very end as to whether or not he would devolve his power and make the key that I made the official key to the city. That was important to me, because although making it the official key was a symbolic act, it could only happen from that elevated realm. It would thus be another speech act: the mayor said it, so now it’s true.”

The work was an unequivocal hit. The mayor threw his support behind the project by holding his weekly press conference in Times Square, the site where

### The Ceremony

Please fill in this form. You will read it out loud as you bestow the Key to the City:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ Your name \_\_\_\_\_

On this day \_\_\_\_\_, June 2010,  
Today

Bestow the Key to the City

to \_\_\_\_\_ Recipient's name \_\_\_\_\_

In consideration of \_\_\_\_\_

Being a good friend, a good relative, a good neighbor, a good colleague, a perfect stranger...

Do you accept this key to the city?

Then, by the power temporarily granted to me and this work of art,

I, \_\_\_\_\_ Your name \_\_\_\_\_, award you this key.

(Please hand this booklet and key to the recipient).

Form from *Key to the City*, 2010



the public could receive their key. When it opened the next day, the line was already around the block. As with almost all of Ramírez Jonas's public works, there was a ceremonial element: one person would "bestow" the key on another, a ritual that endowed the small metal object with power. People began leaving notes for future visitors at some locations, exploiting an aspect of the piece that Ramírez Jonas had not anticipated—in other words, viewers were discovering that they had agency. More than anything, *Key to the City* was a gift to New York and a reminder to metropolises in any democracy that its spaces belong to the public. For the artist, it was a minor victory if the project encouraged someone simply to walk into a Bronx courthouse—a civic institution built to ensure civic rights.

It was because of his desire for greater transparency throughout the public realm, after all, that Ramírez Jonas ended up in the meeting with the Port Authority. After thinking about what might be one of the more symbolic sites under Port Authority auspices, the board landed on a footpath traversing George Washington Bridge. It is the only way to get to New York City from New Jersey on foot. There are a few gates along the path, and they are locked at night. The board decided, after much internal negotiation, to give Ramírez Jonas access to one of the gates—but not all of them. That way visitors could verify that they were able to open only one gate and could walk only part of the way across the bridge, prompting an awareness of public access.

In a sense, Ramírez Jonas merges the roles of the king's attendants, unveiling

artworks that His Highness enjoys in private, and a curator who encourages the public to think of art as belonging to everyone. He acknowledges a very human need to feel that we are having a unique experience, while ensuring that this experience is universally available. "I'm trying to bring something from the symbolic realm to the actual realm," Ramírez Jonas explains. "There was a lot of this kind of illusion in *Key to the City*. I'm trying to speak about democracy, that is, bring issues of democracy and rights from the abstract to the real. Sometimes it stays in the abstract. And sometimes it becomes real."



## Trusting Publics Shannon Jackson

*You are faithful in the execution of any public trust.*

Have you read that phrase somewhere? Heard it somewhere? It beckons, with its solicitous second-person mode of address. It elevates with its grand, anachronistic vocabulary. It belongs on a plaque or on a government building engraved in stone. It might be embedded in the script of a ceremony or performed by an official charged with a swearing-in. Of course, its present tense—you *are*—could either be projective or commemorative, descriptive or performative. Perhaps the faithfulness of the “you” is to be tested. Or perhaps that faithfulness has already been demonstrated and is being honored by a ritual speech act.

In fact, I found the expression almost a decade ago in a fortune cookie, imprinted on a tiny piece of paper that I later attached to my office door. Ruffled at the corners around yellowing tape, it is affixed to a door in a building designed by the architect of California’s first public university. The building is old. Its furnace is loud and creaky, its pipes are fragile, and its doors and floors

need replacement and repair. The maintenance of this building has been deferred, as has much of the infrastructure of public education in California (where I work) and in New York (where Paul Ramírez Jonas does). One could say that the erosion of a public-education building demonstrates that public trust has been violated, but one could also ask if the public cared to maintain that trust. One could ask if such trust is something that the public knew was theirs. I open with this paean to a fortune cookie to remind myself that messages of grave importance can be found in the smallest of things. That reminder seems important as one approaches the work of Ramírez Jonas, an artist who endows small objects and gestures with the systemic meanings that they deserve.

*Atlas, Plural, Monumental*—a noun and two modifiers, lateralized in sequence to invite speculation on their relationship. As a grand cartographic representation of the world, the aspirations of an atlas are comprehensive; so, too, ambition defines the monument, as a nationalist glorifier of history and collective memory. But these terms, casually



*Top of the World (Red Ball)*, 1997.  
Silicon rubber, pigment, and  
high-density foam; 10 inches x  
73 inches (diam.)



*Declaration*, 2007. Brass bugle,  
handmade flag; 40 x 49 inches

linked by the word *plural*, are also fragile, their force undone as represented worlds change and as represented publics propagate. As one travels through Ramírez Jonas's world, one finds residues of atlas-like ambitions along with representations that counter that grandiosity: the epic itinerary of the sixteenth-century explorer Ferdinand Magellan is only indirectly reproduced (1995) and the adventure traveler's urge to reach the "top of the world" is simultaneously acknowledged and parodied (1997). These investigations of global positioning that explore the explorer's attempt to account for the world and to place the self (usually *himself*) within or outside it. Ramírez Jonas's reproductions of kites and early prototypes for flying machines likewise survey the navigational impulse, honoring a history of scientific experimentation but also hacking that history in ways that anticipate its future (1994). The alarm-clock triggering system embedded in his kites take pictures of the ground below; we now might read these contraptions as jerry-built drones, recording the global position of the artist who



Detail of *Album 50 State Summits*, 2002–present. Chromogenic prints, silk screen, archival photo corners, adhesive, and ink on paper; 55 parts: 24 x 19 ½ inches, each



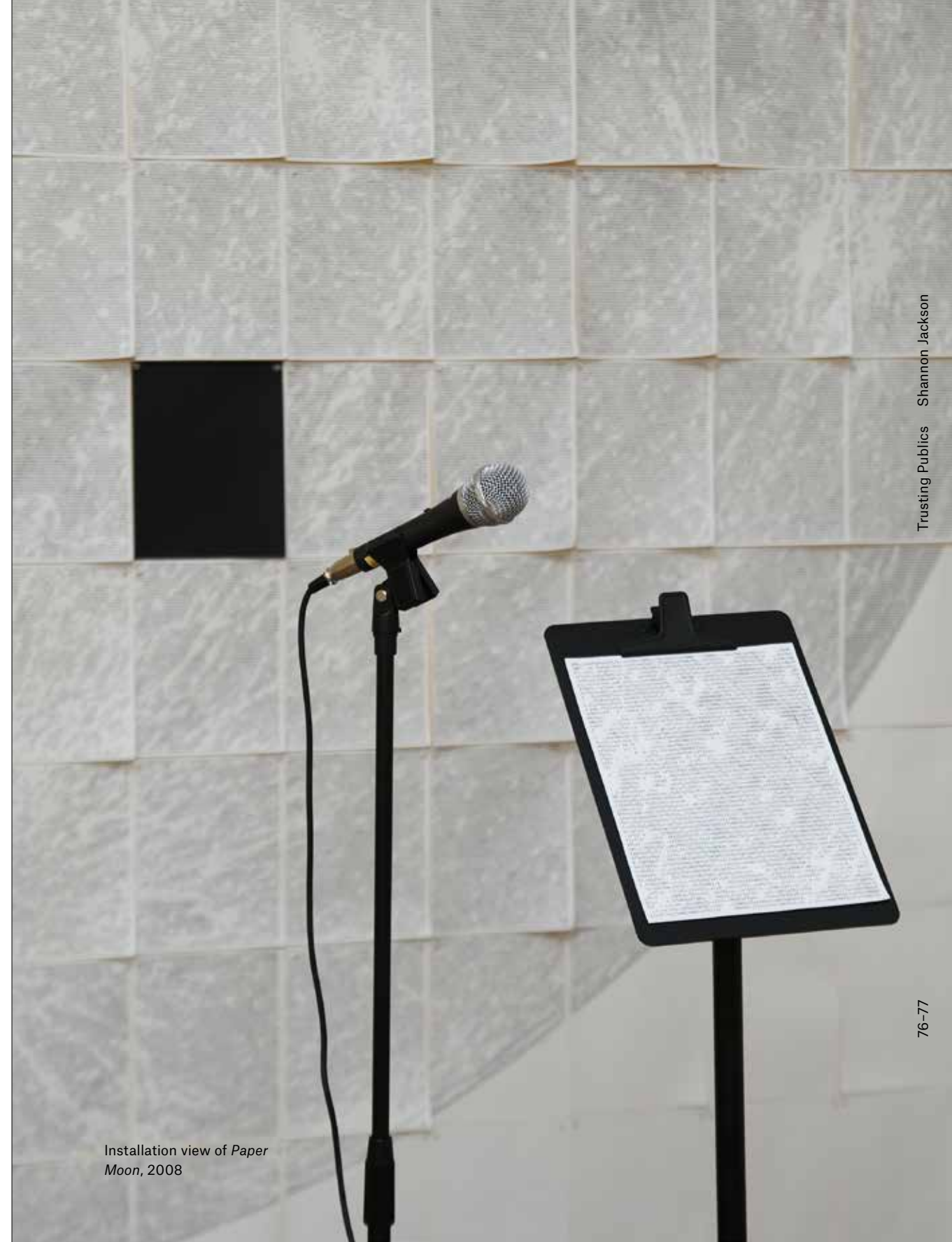
Detail of *Album 50 State Summits*, 2002–present. Chromogenic prints, silk screen, archival photo corners, adhesive, and ink on paper; 55 parts: 24 x 19 ½ inches each



Installation view of *Circular Box Kite*, after Lawrence Hargrave, 1994. Kite: cotton fabric, single-use disposable camera, modified alarm clock, string, wood, and hardware, 37 x 37 x 86 inches; photograph: chromogenic print, 24 x 36 inches

flies the kite while subjected to its surveillance. Other projects mimic the meteoric and the cosmic, in videos that record a “longer day” (1997) and assemble the times of “another day” in sunrises throughout the world (2003). Still others reach for the moon, on wax records (1998) and on paper (2008).

As a critic preoccupied with public trust, I am most absorbed by Ramírez Jonas’s musings on the “pluralized monumental.” He is an artist who relentlessly mines the forms and values attached to the word *public*. If such a project is riddled with disavowed contradiction, it is also buoyed by hope—hope that might be ironic at times, comic at others. His early collaboration (with Spencer Finch) *Masterpieces without the Director* (1991), which offered an unofficial audio guide packaged in a mock tomato can to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, anticipated much of what would follow. Instead of offering the customary authoritarian, “expert” point of view, the project emerged without a central, singular mastermind; rather its making occurred only through public engagement. Moreover, by implying that such masterpieces would

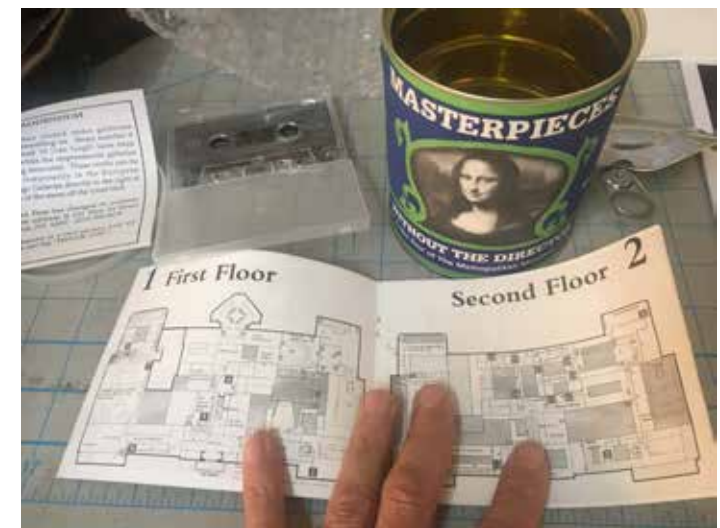


Installation view of *Paper Moon*, 2008





*Masterpieces without the Director*, collaboration with Spencer Finch, September 28–29, 1991. Self-guided audio tour of the Metropolitan Museum of Art



Elements from *Masterpieces without the Director*, collaboration with Spencer Finch, 1991. Tin can, black-and-white and color photocopies, offset-printed booklet, cassette tape and tape case, and plastic lid

normally need a director—not a painter, or a sculptor, or an author—Ramírez Jonas implied that the piece was not only a physical art object but also scenic and collective. Whether the work was filmic or theatrical, the masterpiece unfolded in time, with an ensemble, in expanded space. That sense of assembly—of processes, people, spaces, and objects—would inform much of Ramírez Jonas’s future practice.

Whether his work is described as pluralized, relational, public, or social, he is one of a large coterie of globally connected artists identified under the rubrics of social practice and socially engaged art. While he is committed to sculpture, his diverse body of work also relies on arrangements of materials and environments that elicit novel and unorthodox interaction. It is no coincidence that theatrical metaphors recur in his practice, prompting us to pay attention to the gestures and dialogues that surround them. As critic Nicolas Bourriaud argues in his oft-quoted writing on relational aesthetics, such works position intersubjective exchange not as background or aftereffect of artistic encounter

but as an element of the artwork itself. Felix Gonzalez-Torres—a central figure for both Bourriaud and Ramírez Jonas—famously placed stacks of paper and mounds of candy on the floors of galleries, inviting spectators to take one away with them. Such artworks propel action and reflection; beholders decide whether to partake and then are more likely to consider their connection to the people who came before and those who will come after.

While social practice artists often reject any connection to “public art”—or so-called Plop art—such relational and pluralized practices arguably coincide more forcefully with contemporary debates about the public. Recall Jürgen Habermas’s classic elaborations on the public sphere as a domain of “talk,” or dialogue and debate. Recall Richard Sennett’s lament over the Fall of Public Man, where he extolled the public realm as a space of interaction among strangers. As critics such as Nancy Fraser and Michael Warner have argued, however, Habermas did not fully fathom the exclusions these parameters created, presuming as it did educated white male property owners for whom the issues of women or of slaves were private matters unworthy of public deliberation.<sup>1</sup> Such an intragroup model of public relations misrecognizes what for Sennett is key to any dynamic conception of the public: a willingness to engage a public of strangers, a commitment to sustain the lives of people unlike us and whom we may never know.<sup>2</sup> In these and the many feminist and postcolonial critiques that have followed, publicness comes into being through exchange; it is a set of actions as much as or more than a physical space.

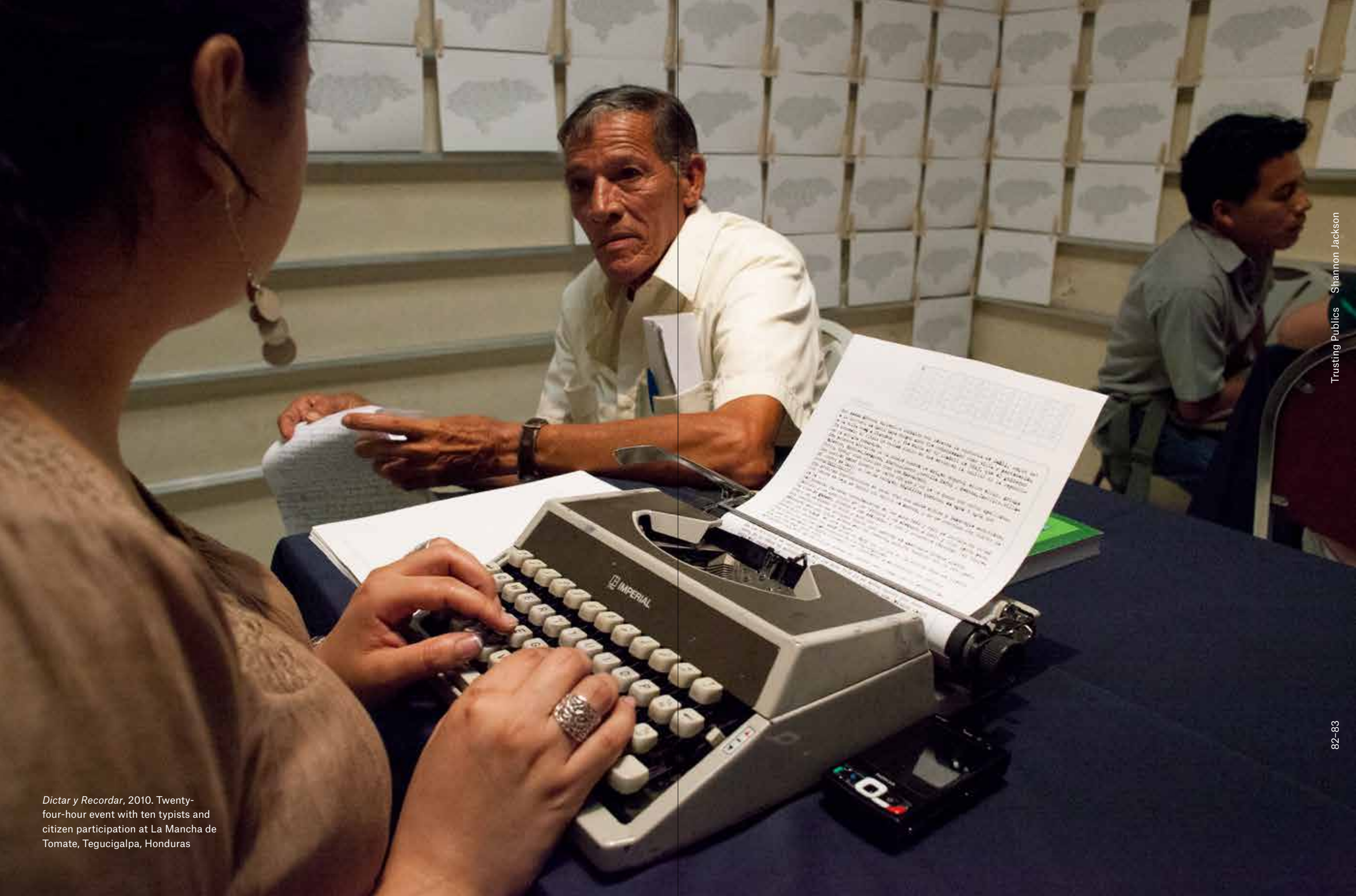
Art projects that self-consciously organize exchange thus resonate with public-sphere theory. To take seriously the aesthetics of encounter is to experiment with publicness. To pluralize a monument is to make public art . . . more public.

But to create a pluralized monument often means using unexpected materials, maybe small objects like keys and cans, maybe anachronistic ones such as alarm clocks and kites. It is striking to read Ramírez Jonas’s own medium lists, which often deviate from museum standards. Reading across the entries, we find not only canvas, wood, ink, metal, and single-channel video but also tin cans, clocks, a music stand, an illustrated lecture, and a phonograph. His pluralization also embraces dematerialized material, including the actions, language, and sounds of people. Sometimes the representation of sound appears as an object (a phonograph), and sometimes it enters the register as a song (“The Battle Hymn of the Republic”). As the dates of production advance chronologically, Ramírez Jonas’s medium seems to open into the domain of speculation. *Paper Moon (I Create as I Speak)* (2008) has a music stand and microphone, but the artist also desires “the public’s voice” as material. The tendency to specify the contributions of audience members has increased as Ramírez Jonas’s social practice has developed: *Dictar y Recordar* (2010) includes ten typists and “your appreciated participation.” His inventory of media thus functions as social invitation.

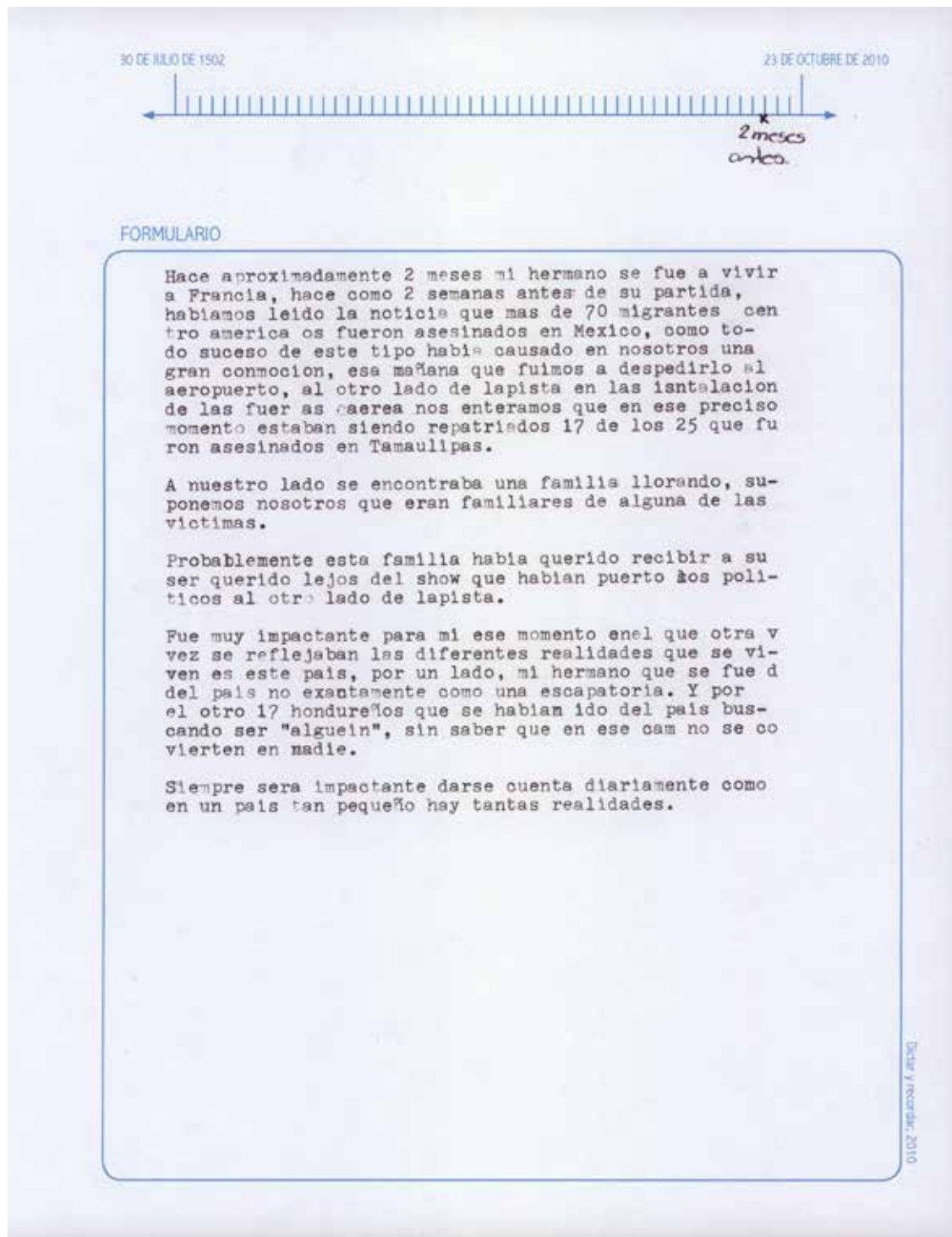
Even with these speculative expressions, many pieces transpire in interactions whose words, emotions, gestures,



*Dictar y Recordar*, 2010, La Mancha de Tomate, Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Twenty-four-hour event with ten typists and citizen participation at La Mancha de Tomate, Tegucigalpa, Honduras



*Dictar y Recordar*, 2010. Twenty-four-hour event with ten typists and citizen participation at La Mancha de Tomate, Tegucigalpa, Honduras



Completed form from *Dictar y Recordar*, 2010. Inkjet print and typewritten text on paper; 8 ½ x 11 inches



*Dictar y Recordar*, 2010. Twenty-four-hour event with ten typists and citizen participation at La Mancha de Tomate, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

twists, and turns cannot be fully specified or anticipated by the registrarial list, of course. And it is in the interactions between art and audience where the public work of “stranger exchange” unfolds. Here I mean *stranger* in both its senses, as adjective and noun. On one hand, the strange and unexpected exchanges elicited by these works give us a new angle on the reality before us. On the other hand, these unexpected interactions occur among strangers, giving us parameters with which to inhabit space shared with people we do not know. They require the medium of talk among strangers, as Habermas or Sennett might propose, but they also become laboratories for examining the effects of the dramas that they provoke. Indeed, at a time when an ethic of democratic participation has been made banal

by the participatory compulsions of late capitalism, opportunities for delicate and nuanced attention seem rare.<sup>3</sup> How does an artist or any citizen create a dialogue? How can you get people to talk to you? And, from the other side, how do you orient yourself toward an artwork that asks for a response? How do you fight the urge to run away?

To understand both the political stakes and subtle underpinnings of such public dramas, the keen ears and eyes of philosophers and sociologists might be helpful. I think of Erving Goffman’s theatrical sociology, its microattention to self-presentation within shifting dynamics of “frontstage” and “backstage.” Goffman used the language of “keying” to track how individuals and groups instantiate and shift among behavioral codes appropriate to various scenarios.



Making keys for *Mi Casa, Su Casa*, 2005

People “key” into new situations, sometimes suspending certain social codes to allow for the playful reframing of a context. In such cases, Goffman observed, “participants . . . are meant to know and to openly acknowledge that a systematic alteration is involved, one that will radically reconstitute what it is, for them, that is going on.”<sup>4</sup> One could say that the promise of public exchange exists in this kind of keying, and, more importantly, that public art becomes socially responsive when it allows for such keying and rekeying. Public art can rekey our movements through the world, creating safe parameters for inviting new forms of exchange among strangers. If, in Goffman’s terms, “keyings seem to vary according to the degree of transformation they produce,” the transformative possibilities of

public art depend on such keyings—that is, on an imaginative aesthetics of encounter.<sup>5</sup>

Ramírez Jonas’s work is in dialogue with a history of public art, as well as a history of its willingness and unwillingness to respond to such social possibilities. Several works particularly focus on a history of nationalist public art, finding new social possibilities in monuments, which might otherwise appear inert and bounded. For the work *His Truth Is Marching On* (1993), the patriotic American anthem “Battle Hymn of the Republic” can be musically rekeyed, if played by viewers on eighty wine bottles with the provided mallet. *The Commons* (2011), an oversize monument not cast in bronze but made of cork, likewise rekeys the nationalist convention of the equestrian statue. Beholders do not simply perambulate



Paul Ramírez Jonas making keys for *Mi Casa, Su Casa*, 2005



Participants in and elements of *Mi Casa, Su Casa*, San Diego and Tijuana, 2005

reverently around it but are invited to tack notes to its torso. Ramírez Jonas demonstrates that the so-called monument has always been more social and more porous than either its nationalist celebrants or its counternationalist retractors have acknowledged. *The Commons* is a testament to the fragility of monuments, as well as to the instability of the identities that need them. The debated flags, statues, and insignias are places where individuals and publics consolidate; as such, they are artifacts to be examined, to be rekeyed, and to be unified as spaces of temporary connection among strangers in a shared (re)public.

Returning to small things and their capacity to hold messages of grave and systemic importance, we find the key in Ramírez Jonas's world newly literalized and socialized, conjoining the small and the large, the local and the systemic and reframing the physical and perceptual boundaries of these polarities. Ramírez Jonas's keys have traveled to several domains—and provoked varied instances of “system alteration.” In *Mi Casa, Su Casa* (2005), the artist invited such reframing by exploring the symbolic function of locks and doors. Audience members were asked to allow a copy of any key on their keychain to be exchanged for one designed by the artist. Sited in San Diego and Tijuana, the work confronted the United States-Mexico border; the word *casa* in its title, representing a private house and a bordered country, provoked a self-reflexive awareness of how and when we shut our doors. The literal key thus metaphorically rekeyed this perceived division between private and public, simultaneously exposing

self-differentiations and self-identifications across national borders.

*Taylor Square* (2005) is sited in Cambridge on what was a nondescript triangle at a three-way intersection in an area of New England where there are already many squares—Porter Square, Inman Square, Davis Square, and Harvard Square. Ramírez Jonas was commissioned by Cambridge's city council to do a public artwork; he scoured the designated area before finding a strip of land whose curb was crumbling. Smiles circulated among civic leaders who found Ramírez Jonas's proposition quite convenient, as they had been meaning to repair the site anyway. They could get a two-fer out of the process: a public-art project and a speedy overhaul of this tiny bit of Cambridge's infrastructure. Ramírez Jonas ended up constructing what he called a park, a tiny one at a tiny square. A small bench and wrought-steel fence, with a lock on the outside that is always open from the inside, was installed. Like other key pieces, this project invokes the work of Gonzalez-Torres, channeling and expanding the potential of small objects to induce stranger exchanges for public purposes. Ramírez Jonas manufactured five thousand individual keys to the lock on this park, giving one to each of the nearby neighbors. The gift of the key came with a note:

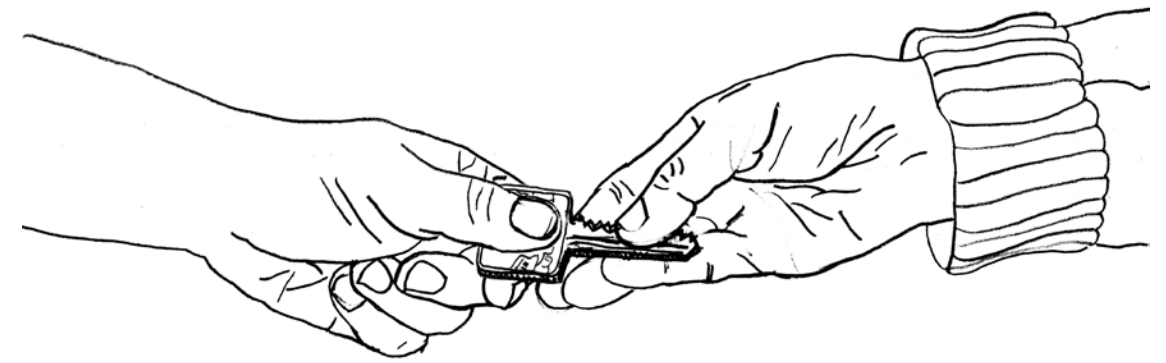
Here is your key. It is one of 5000 keys that open Taylor Square, Cambridge's newest park. The park and the keys are a work of public art that I made for you. The park has barely enough room for a bench and a flagpole; please accept this key as its monument. Add it to



*Taylor Square*, 2005. Permanent public work at the intersection of Sherman Street, Garden Street, and Huron Avenue, Cambridge, MA



*Taylor Square*, 2005. Permanent public work at the intersection of Sherman Street, Garden Street, and Huron Avenue, Cambridge, MA



Sketch for *Key to the City*, 2010

your key chain along with the keys that open your home, vehicle or workplace. You now have a key to a space that has always been yours. Copy it and give away to neighbors, friends, and visitors. Your sharing will keep the park truly open.<sup>6</sup>

The deployment of the diminutive park with its tiny key is just one example of how Ramírez Jonas has heralded breakthrough modes of embedding microinteractions within large-scale public scenarios. The sentence “You now have a key to a space that has always been yours” resonates as a delicate attempt to expose a commons that remains available to citizens who may or may not reckon with their own relationship to its erosion. Paradoxically, it had to be the key—the mechanism that both defines and undoes the boundary between inside and outside, my property and yours—that prompts an awareness of something that had been theirs/yours/ours/mine all along.

With a similar goal, *Key to the City* (2010)—executed in New York City and





Key to the City, 2010. Times Square, New York



Key to the City, 2010. Paul Ramirez Jonas with New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg



Booklet and key for Key to the City, 2010

elsewhere—encouraged city residents to explore the civic landscape and reflect on their role in its collective ownership. Civic leadership passed on to everyday citizens “keys” to unusual public and privately maintained sites. While the political right and left disavow their relationship to public institutions, this project aimed to invent a safe conduit for repairing that sense of connection. Ramirez Jonas’s “medium” for this piece includes a telling mix of objects, spaces, and people: twenty-four thousand keys, twenty-four sites, one hundred fifty-five collaborators, and a mayor.

If public art is in fact a field of practice, its history precedes the creation of the term. One can track genealogies across eras and regions of the world, finding public impulses in the graphic symbols of cave paintings, the statuary monuments of ancient civilizations, the commissioned frescos of cathedrals, the memorials of historical battles, and all varieties of artful expression subsidized by rulers, conquerors, and civic officials charged with addressing—and thereby constituting—a public through art. In the twentieth century,



Site from *Key to the City*, 2010.  
 Centro Cultural Rincon Criollo, Brook  
 Avenue between 156th and 157th  
 Street, the Bronx



Clockwise from top left: Sites from  
*Key to the City*, 2010. Gleason's Gym,  
 77 Front Street, 2nd floor, Brooklyn;  
 the Cathedral of St. John the Divine,  
 Amsterdam Avenue at 112st Street,  
 Manhattan; the Brooklyn Museum, 200  
 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; the George  
 Washington Bridge, near 178th Street  
 and Cabrini Boulevard, Manhattan;  
 Louis Armstrong House Museum,  
 34-56 107th Street, Queens; the Point  
 Community Development Corporation,  
 1391 Lafayette Avenue, the Bronx



Participants in *Key to the City*, 2010

the term became more ubiquitous among the citizens of cities whose (usually elected) officeholders graced civic spaces with sculptural works that promised beauty, contemplation, and collective uplift. Adjacently, however, artists, curators, and citizens find themselves encountering works whose parameters differ. If one model finds the artist working hermetically in her studio, releasing a finished work onto and into a public, other models now start with the site of arrival. Practicing what Suzanne Lacy has called “new genre public art,” artists are now trained to excavate the material, historical, and sociological conditions of the commissioning site, crafting public artworks that respond to the local conditions that they find.<sup>7</sup> For many artists, those conditions include volatile political and economic factors that might exceed the values and original intentions of the commissioning body. Indeed, as the public-art historian Rosalyn Deutsche has demonstrated, the ever-expanding parameters of public art have exposed the fragility and inequity of so-called public space.<sup>8</sup> And they expose



Participants in *Key to the City*, 2010,  
Times Square, New York



Table from *Public Trust*, 2016. Birch plywood, felt, plastic letters, elastic, Bible, Bhagavad Gita, Hebrew-English Old Testament, Quran, Constitution of the United States, Constitution of the United States in Spanish, Zend Avesta, plastic bottle with Ganges River water, Jupiter Stone, disposable medical lancets, piggy bank, call bell, ink pad, pen and ball chain, flip clock, embossing seal, paper, and graphite

the fragility and inequity of what we might call public trust.

We find so many of the genealogies, materials, and theatricalities of Ramírez Jonas’s practice colliding in his recent work aptly titled *Public Trust* (2016). In this project—sited in three public squares in the Boston area—Ramírez Jonas, with a trained team of interlocutors, installed stations that invited citizens to make a promise, publicly. As visitors walked through the plaza, they lingered at tables assembled for conversation and fabrication. Behind them, a large dynamic billboard displayed a series of promises collected from the daily news and from their fellow citizens on the ground. “MBTA pledges to keep stations clean.” “Saudi Arabia promises to protect pilgrims.”

“I promise to visit my grandparents more.” “Chelsea Clinton vows to stay friends with Ivanka Trump.” “I promise I will never have cosmetic surgery.”

As individuals considered the possibilities of promise making, they also faced the question of what it meant to share it publicly. Would that public sharing make them more accountable to their own speech act? How, furthermore, would the public receive their promise? Would it inspire or confuse them? Would they welcome it or laugh at it? Could the promise makers trust the public, and could the public trust them? Meanwhile, Ramírez Jonas’s team worked materially and immaterially to seal the promise. Recalling classic mechanisms of binding a trust—the plaque, the handshake, the pledge over the



*Public Trust*, 2016. Dudley Square, Boston



Making a rubbing and signing for *Public Trust*, 2016



Bible or other sacred text—citizens were invited to choose a means of solidifying their pledge, say by shaking the hand of an interlocutor-stranger or by signing a rubbing of it. Once again, the intimacy of a personal gesture found its way into a structure for reactivating public assembly.

*Public Trust*, like so much of Ramírez Jonas’s work, asked the question of whether a public comes into being in the encounter that may or may not be defined as “art.” It considered whether that encounter depends on a square, a pier, a plaza, or a park; on cleaned sidewalks or billboards; or on the imprimatur of an art organization. It proposed that publicness depends on physical and verbal interactions that might ask citizens to tell us what they value and who they trust. Publicness happens when citizens are asked to give up their keys and when they are given the opportunity to make a promise to the world. From theaters without directors to reanimations of public trust, Ramírez Jonas’s public keys and keyings do what Goffman’s keys and keyings almost did. To key and rekey is not to manage one’s vacillation between the actually private



Public Trust, 2016. Copley Square, Boston



Posing with promises from *Public Trust*, 2016. Top: Copley Square, Boston; middle: Kendall Square, Cambridge; bottom: Dudley Square, Boston

realm and the actually public realm. Rather those keyings—in song, in objects, in interactions—are invitations to examine the instability and necessity of trust. They ask us to confront not only the unstable boundary between private and public but also the necessity of joining my private and my public with yours.

1. See Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text*, no. 25/26 (1990): 56–80; and Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (Zone Books, 2005).
2. See Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Knopf, 1977).
3. See Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore, *The Experience Economy: Work Is Theatre and Every Business a Stage* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999); and Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Gregory Elliott (New York: Verso, 2005).
4. Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), 45.
5. *Ibid.*, 78.
6. Paul Ramirez Jonas, "Taylor Square, 2005," [http://www.paulramirezjonas.com/selected/new\\_index.php#15&26\\_2005&sub152&04](http://www.paulramirezjonas.com/selected/new_index.php#15&26_2005&sub152&04) Taylor Square.
7. See *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, ed. Suzanne Lacy (Seattle: Bay Press, 1994).
8. See Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998).



WITH OR NO NUCLEAR DEAL  
VOTER TURNOUT PROMISES  
TO BE ABYSMAL

I PROMISE TO

WOMAN'S CHOICE COMMITS  
TO YOUTH

PEET'S PLEDGES TO

Public Trust, 2016. Dudley  
Square, Boston



EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

Paul Ramirez Jonas:  
*Atlas, Plural, Monumental*  
 Contemporary Arts Museum Houston  
 April 29–August 6, 2017

Dimensions are listed height preceding width preceding depth.

Paul Ramirez Jonas, in collaboration with Spencer Finch  
*Masterpieces without the Director*, 1991  
 Tin can, black-and-white and color photocopies, offset-printed booklet, cassette tape and tape case, plastic lid, and digital remaster of original audio file  
 Dimensions variable  
 Commissioned by Creative Time, New York  
 Courtesy the artist

*His Truth Is Marching On*, 1993  
 Wood, glass bottles, corks, water, mallet, rope, and hardware  
 16 inches x 84 inches (diam.)  
 The Dikeou Collection, Denver, CO

*Kite after Walter Brooks*, 1993  
 Kite (cotton fabric, single-use disposable camera, modified alarm clock, string, wood, and hardware) and chromogenic print  
 Kite: 45 x 45 x 45 inches; chromogenic print: 30 x 20 inches  
 Collection Sandra Gering

*Hexagonal Box Kite, after Alexander Graham Bell*, 1994  
 Kite (cotton fabric, single-use disposable camera, modified alarm clock, string, wood, and hardware) and chromogenic print  
 Kite: 42 x 48 x 70 inches; chromogenic print: 30 x 20 inches  
 Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH: Museum Purchase, Derby Fund

*Ladder Kite, after Joseph Lecornu*, 1994  
 Kite (cotton fabric, single-use disposable camera, modified alarm clock, string, wood, and hardware) and chromogenic print

*Kite*: 53 x 18 x 48 inches; chromogenic print: 24 x 36 inches  
 Courtesy the artist

*Magellan's Itinerary*, 1995  
 Dot-matrix print on archival continuous-feed paper  
 66 x 9 1/2 inches  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Longer Day*, 1997  
 Single-channel video (color, silent)  
 18:35 minutes  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Top of the World (Red Ball)*, 1997  
 Silicon rubber, pigment, and high-density foam  
 10 inches x 73 inches (diam.)  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Men on the Moon, Rest Period*, 1998  
 Edison phonograph (wood, plastic funnel, hand drum, thumbtacks, flywheel, and hardware), wax records (machinable wax and silk screen), and book (linen-bound inkjet and laser prints and graphite on acid-free paper)  
 Dimensions variable  
 Collection Artist Pension Trust

*Ghost of Progress*, 2002  
 Video (color, sound)  
 24:48 minutes  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Album 50 State Summits*, 2002–present  
 Chromogenic prints, silk screen, archival photo corners, adhesive, and ink on paper  
 55 parts: 24 x 19 1/2 inches each  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Another Day*, 2003  
 Custom-made microcontroller device  
 Dimensions variable  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

Elements from *Mi Casa, Su Casa*, 2005  
 Signboard (particleboard, paint, ink, cotton strapping, and hardware), flag (cotton fabric and thread), key-cutting machine, engraved key blanks, cut keys, artist's house key, key ring, and paper tag  
 Dimensions variable  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

Elements and documentation from *Taylor Square*, 2005  
 Returned mailings and offset-printed posters with adhesive and engraved cut keys  
 Dimensions variable  
 Commissioned by the Cambridge Arts Council's Public Art Program  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Broadside 1*, 2007  
 Unfired clay and portable lectern with built-in microphone and amplifier  
 Dimensions variable  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Paper Moon (I Create as I Speak)*, 2008  
 Inkjet prints on paper, black paper, music stand, microphone, and amplifier  
 Dimensions variable  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Talisman*, 2009  
 Inkjet print with ballpoint pen and marker on archival paper, keys, ink, and hardware  
 64 x 44 inches (each)  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

Elements and documentation from *Dictar y Recordar*, 2010  
 Poster (ink and correction fluid on cardboard), forms (inkjet prints on paper), typewriter, three-ring binder, plastic sleeves, and video (color, sound; 2:16 min)  
 Dimensions variable  
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

Elements from *Key to the City*, 2010  
Plinth (custom-made stainless steel structure), digital prints, engraved cut keys, and book (offset print)  
Dimensions variable  
Commissioned by Creative Time in cooperation with the City of New York  
Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*The Commons*, 2011  
Cork, pushpins, steel, wood, and hardware  
153 x 128 x 64 inches  
Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Hello I Am, Hello I Was*, 2012  
Printed self-adhesive labels  
4 x 6 inches  
Courtesy the artist

*Admit One: New York State Court of Appeals*, 2013  
Silk screen and ink on paper  
39 ¼ x 23 ½ inches  
Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Assembly: Bally's Atlantic City Boxing, Teatro alla Scala, US Supreme Court Chamber*, 2013  
Ink, colored pencil, and graphite on perforated paper  
78 x 120 inches  
Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Assembly: Ghazi Stadium*, 2013  
Silk screen and collage on paper  
180 x 280 inches  
Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Witness My Hand*, 2013/2017  
Photocopier, paper, wood, plexiglass, bust (Jean-Antoine Houdon, Denis Diderot, nineteenth-century copy; Private collection, Houston), and hardware  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy the artist and Business Solutions International

*Public Trust*, 2016  
Table (birch plywood, felt, plastic letters, elastic, Bible, Bhagavad Gita, Hebrew-English Old Testament, Quran, Constitution of the United States, Constitution of the United States in Spanish, Zend Avesta, plastic bottle with Ganges River water, Jupiter Stone, disposable medical lancets, piggy bank, call bell, ink pad, pen and ball chain, flip clock, embossing seal, paper, and graphite) and marquee (plastic letters, plastic rail, letter-changing pole, cabinet, and hardware)  
Dimensions variable  
Produced in Boston, August 27-September 17, 2016, by Now + There  
Courtesy the artist and Galeria Nara Roesler

*Publicar X*, 2017  
Rock, cork, adhesive, and pushpins  
33 ½ x 49 x 31 inches  
Courtesy the artist

## BIOGRAPHY

PAUL RAMÍREZ JONAS

Born 1965 in California  
Raised in Honduras

MFA, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI, 1989

BA, Brown University, Providence, RI, 1987

Associate Professor of Studio Art, Hunter College, City University of New York

Lives and works in New York

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS

2017

*Atlas, Plural, Monumental*, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston

*Half-Truths*, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York

2016

*Public Trust*, Now and There, diverse locations in Boston and Grand Central Art Center, Santa Ana, CA

2015

*The Last Billboard*, Pittsburgh

*Arts on the Point: Another Day*, University of Massachusetts, Boston

2014

*Over the Water*, Exploratorium, San Francisco

*Agora Cooler*, Temple Contemporary, Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia

2013

*Aggregate*, Koenig & Clinton, New York

*Assembleia*, Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo

*Witness My Hand*, Heliopolis, Brooklyn, NY

2011

Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo

Alexander Gray Associates, New York

*Publicar*, Pinacoteca Do Estado, São Paulo

2010

*Key to the City*, Creative Time, New York

*Dictar y Recordar*, La Mancha de Tomate, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

2009

Alexander Gray Associates, New York

2008

Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT

2007

*ABRACADABRA: I Create as I Speak*, Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art, Austin

*Long Time*, Hudson River Park, New York

*To be spoken out loud*, Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm

2005

*Open*, Cambridge Arts Council Gallery, Cambridge, MA

*Taylor Square*, Cambridge, MA

2004

*Heavier than Air*, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham; Cornerhouse, Manchester, England

2003

*The Earth, Seen from Above*, LFL Gallery, New York

Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm

*The Earth, Seen from Above*, Feldman Gallery, Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, OR

2001

*Every Day*, Public Art Fund, commissioned through *In the Public Realm*, five locations in New York

2000

Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm

Ellen de Bruijne Projects, Amsterdam

1998

*Not the New, Not the Old, but the Necessary*, Beaver College Art Gallery, Glenside, PA

Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm

1997

Postmasters Gallery, New York

1996

Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm

Postmasters Gallery, New York

1995

Studio Guenzani, Milan

1994

*Heavier than Air*, Postmasters Gallery, New York

*Heavier than Air*, White Cube, London

1993

Jack Tilton Gallery, New York

1992

Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica, CA

*Whirligig*, White Columns, New York

1990

*AMANAPLANACANALPANAMA*, Artists Space, New York

COLLABORATIONS	2002	1991	<i>Messages from a New America</i> , 10th Mercosul Biennial, Porto Alegre, Brazil	<i>Prática Portátil</i> , Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo	2010
2015	<i>Walkways</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, OR; Western Gallery, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA (2003); Dalhousie University Art Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia (2003); Texas Fine Arts Association, Austin (2003); Oakville Galleries in Gairloch Gardens, and Oakville Galleries at Centennial Square, Oakville, Ontario (2003); Freedman Gallery, Albright College Center for the Arts, Reading, PA (2004)	<i>Masterpieces without the Director</i> , collaboration with Spencer Finch, Creative Time, New York	<i>Who said tomorrow doesn't exist?</i> , 1st TRIO Biennial, Rio de Janeiro	2013	<i>A Modular Framework/Un Marco Modular</i> , Centro Cultural de España el Salvador, San Salvador, El Salvador
2014	<i>MoMA COPY shop</i> , collaboration with the Department of Education, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Artists Experiment series	<i>Enemies of Promise</i> , collaboration with Spencer Finch, 142 Greene Street, New York	<i>Organic Situation</i> , Koenig & Clinton, New York	<i>ReModel 2: Expanding the Dialogue</i> , Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA	<i>Landscape as an Attitude</i> , Alexander Gray Associates, New York
2013	<i>Shine a Light</i> , collaboration with the Portland State University's Art and Social Practice MFA Program, Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR	1989	<i>Very Fun Park</i> , Futon Art Foundation, Taipei	<i>Chasing Horizons</i> , Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum, Milwaukee, WI	<i>(to) give time to time</i> , Australian Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide, South Australia
2010	<i>Always New, Always Familiar</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Escola São Paulo	2000	<i>When You Cut into the Present the Future Leaks Out</i> , Old Bronx Courthouse, Bronx, NY	<i>From Page to Space</i> , Kunsthau, Kaufbeuren, Germany	<i>Art on Speed</i> , Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita, KS
<i>duetto</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Australian Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide, Australia	BüroFriedrich, collaboration with Janine Antoni, Berlin	1988	<i>Blueprint</i> , Storefront for Art and Architecture, New York	2012	<i>Exterritory</i> , ex-territorial waters off the coasts of Lebanon, Cypress, Turkey, and other countries
<i>Always New, Always Familiar</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Galeria Camargo Vilaça, São Paulo	<i>Walking</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Bucknell Art Gallery, Normal, IL	Collaborative performance and installation with Spencer Finch, Sol Koffler Gallery, Providence, RI	<i>Condensed Matter Community</i> , Synchrotron Radiation Center, Stoughton, WI	<i>Now Here Is Also Nowhere</i> , Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, WA	<i>Substitute Teacher</i> , Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, Atlanta, GA
<i>Horizons</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm	<i>Always New, Always Familiar</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Galeria Camargo Vilaça, São Paulo	SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS	2014	<i>Swap Meet: Artpace and the Dikeou Collection</i> , Artpace, San Antonio	<i>Cage Mix: Sculpture &amp; Sound</i> , Baltic Center for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, England
<i>Moving Pictures</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT	<i>Horizons</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm	2017	<i>Under the Same Sun: Art from Latin America Today</i> , Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York	<i>Paper</i> , Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain, Nice, France	<i>Summer Studio</i> , Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia
<i>Specials</i> (Janine Antoni, Byron Kim, Simon Leung, Glenn Ligon, Suzanne McClelland, Kiki Smith, and Fred Wilson), collaboration with Lisa Sigal, High Line, New York	<i>Always New, Always Familiar</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Galeria Camargo Vilaça, São Paulo	<i>Resonance: Paul Ramirez Jonas and David Moré</i> , Pilot Projects, Philadelphia	<i>Crossing Brooklyn</i> , Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY	<i>Caribbean: Crossroads of the World</i> , El Museo del Barrio, Queens Museum of Art, and Studio Museum in Harlem, New York	<i>What's Left: Artworks Made by a Public</i> , Alexander Gray Associates, New York
<i>Specials</i> (Allan McCollum and Dave McKenzie), collaboration with Lisa Sigal, Cabinet, Brooklyn, NY	<i>Art Lovers</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Liverpool Biennial	<i>Metrópole</i> , Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo	<i>In _ We Trust: Art and Money</i> , Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH	<i>Twenty Years After</i> , Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm	<i>Between</i> , Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm
<i>Specials</i> (Anissa Mack and Robert Gober), collaboration with Lisa Sigal, the Old American Can Factory, Brooklyn, NY	<i>Apples and Oranges</i> , collaboration with Spencer Finch, Gramercy International Contemporary Art Fair, New York	<i>The Commons</i> , Cambridge Arts Council, Cambridge, MA	<i>Fixing a Hole</i> , Koenig & Clinton, New York	<i>Residue of Memory</i> , Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO	2009
2005	1993	<i>le opere di</i> , Studio Guenzani, Milan	<i>It's Mine! Landscape and Appropriation</i> , Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, Rovereto, Italy	<i>Particles</i> , Meessen De Clercq, Brussels	<i>A Group Show</i> , Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm
<i>Marking Time: Moving Images</i> , collaboration with Janine Antoni, Miami Art Museum, Miami	<i>Literal Truth</i> , collaboration with Spencer Finch, Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT	2016	<i>Higher Learning</i> , City University of New York, Lehman College, New York	<i>Because Dreaming Is Best Done in Public: Creative Time in Public Spaces</i> , Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund, New York	<i>Fare Mondi/Hacer Mundos</i> , Pabellon de America Latina, 53rd Venice Biennale
2003	1992	<i>X Central American Biennial</i> , Puerto Limón, Costa Rica	<i>Caribbean: Crossroads of the World</i> , Pérez Art Museum, Miami	<i>El Panal/The Hive</i> , Trienal Poli/Gráfica de San Juan: América Latina y el Caribe, Antiguo Arsenal de la Marina Española, San Juan, Puerto Rico	<i>Los Impoliticos</i> , PAN   Palazzo delle Arti Napoli, Naples, Italy
<i>Janine Antoni and Paul Ramirez Jonas</i> , Miami Art Museum, Miami	<i>Telephone</i> , collaboration with Spencer Finch, Jack Tilton Gallery, New York	<i>Under the Same Sun: Art from Latin America Today</i> , South London Gallery, London	<i>Blueprint 2.0</i> , Kunsthall KADE, Amersfoort, Netherlands; Museum of Contemporary Art, Tucson, AZ	<i>Los Impoliticos</i> , Espacio de Arte Contemporáneo, Montevideo, Uruguay	<i>Grito e Escuta</i> , 7th Bienal do Mercosul, Porto Alegre, Brazil
		2015	<i>Retrospective Exhibition</i> , Shandaken Project, New York	2011	<i>The Quick and the Dead</i> , Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
		<i>Bajo un Mismo Sol: Arte de América Latina Hoy</i> , Museo Jumex, Mexico City	<i>Alumni Exhibitions: Part I</i> , David Winton Bell Gallery, Providence, RI	<i>Red</i> , Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm	<i>Urban Stories</i> , 10th Baltic Triennial, Vilnius, Lithuania
				<i>An Exchange with Sol LeWitt</i> , Cabinet, New York; Mass MoCA, North Adams, MA	<i>Transitio_mx 03, Autonomies of Disagreement</i> , Centro Nacional de las Artes—Centro Multimedia, Mexico City
				<i>Barely There (Part II)</i> , Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit, MI	<i>Free as Air and Water</i> , 41 Cooper Gallery, Cooper Union, New York

<i>Underwater</i> , Western Bridge, Seattle, WA	2006	<i>For Nothing</i> , The Bank, Midland, Western Australia	<i>A Work in Progress</i> , New Museum, New York	Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm	<i>Signs and Wonders</i> , Kunsthhaus, Zurich, Switzerland; Centro Gallego de Arte Contemporáneo, Santiago de Compostela, Spain
2008	<i>Subito sera</i> , Galleria Zero, Milan	<i>Me, Myself and I</i> , University Galleries, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL	<i>TRANS&gt;Editions</i> , Chac Mool Gallery, West Hollywood, CA	<i>Collection Service</i> , Spaces, Cleveland, OH	<i>Guys and Dolls</i> , Postmasters Gallery, New York
<i>28a. Bienal de São Paulo</i> , São Paulo	<i>Constant Disturbance: On Cultural Contamination and Foreign Agents</i> , Centro Cultural Español, Coral Gables, FL	2003	2000	1997	1994
<i>41 Salón de Artistas</i> , Cali, Colombia	<i>Until Then Then</i> , Western Front Exhibitions, Vancouver	<i>24/7</i> , Šiuolaikinio Meno Centras, Vilnius, Lithuania	<i>Media_City Seoul 2000</i> , Seoul Biennial, Seoul Metropolitan Museum, billboards, and subway stations, Seoul	<i>Projects: Ceal Floyer, Ellen Gallagher, Paul Ramírez Jonas, Wolfgang Tillmans, Gillian Wearing, Yukinori Yanagi</i> , Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin	<i>NYSP</i> , Galeria Camargo Vilaça, São Paulo
<i>(In)visible Geographies: Contemporary Art in Latin America from the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros</i> , Centro Cultural Eduardo León Jimenes, Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic	<i>HyperDesign</i> , 6th Shanghai Biennial, Shanghai	<i>The Square Show</i> , Bloomberg Space, London	<i>Wānas 2000</i> , Wānas Foundation, Knislinge, Sweden	<i>A Quality of Light</i> , organized by St. Yves International, Cornwall, England, with the Newlyn Art Gallery, Tate Gallery St. Ives, and inIVA, London, among other venues	<i>Lost in Thought</i> , Manes Gallery, Prague
<i>Democracy in America Convergence Center</i> , Creative Time, Park Avenue Armory, New York	<i>Gifts Go in One Direction</i> , Apexart, New York	<i>The Paper Sculpture Show</i> , Sculpture Center, Long Island City, NY; <i>DiverseWorks</i> , Houston; <i>Gallery 400</i> , University of Illinois, Chicago; among other venues	<i>Ideal House</i> , Museo Alejandro Otero, Caracas; <i>Apexart</i> , New York (2001); <i>New International Cultural Center</i> , Antwerp, Belgium (2001); <i>Gallery 400</i> , College of Art and Architecture, Chicago (2002)	<i>Projects.doc</i> , Weston Art Gallery, Cincinnati, OH	<i>Paul Ramírez Jonas and David Shaw</i> , Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
<i>Emergency Art Care</i> , Bourgas, Bulgaria	<i>New York, Interrupted</i> , PKM Gallery, Beijing	2005	<i>Full Serve (Rove)</i> , New York	1996	<i>The Return of the Exquisite Corpse</i> , Drawing Center, New York
<i>PDF Show</i> , Y Gallery, Queens, New York; <i>La Casa Encenidada</i> , Madrid; <i>Bastard</i> , Oslo; <i>Brown Gallery</i> , London; <i>hiromiyoshii</i> , Tokyo; among other venues	<i>Dreaming of a More Better Future</i> , Reinberger Galleries, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland, OH	<i>Cultural Territories International</i> , Gallery for Contemporary Art, Leipzig, Germany	<i>The End</i> , Exit Art, New York	<i>Contrafigura</i> , Studio Guenzani, Milan	1993
<i>Summer Reading</i> , Hosfelt Gallery, New York	<i>The Backroom</i> , The Backroom, Los Angeles	<i>Road Show</i> , George Adams Gallery, New York	1999	<i>Inclusion: Exclusion</i> , Künstlerhaus, Graz, Austria	<i>Space of Time—Contemporary Art of the Americas</i> , Americas Society, New York; Center for the Fine Arts, Miami (1995)
<i>You &amp; Me, Sometimes . . .</i> , Lehmann Maupin, New York	<i>The Plain of Heaven</i> , Creative Time, New York	<i>The Lengths</i> , Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY	<i>Duration and Whenever</i> , Angles Gallery, Santa Monica, CA	<i>Between the Acts</i> , Icebox, Athens; C/O Gallery, Oslo	<i>Fever</i> , Exit Art, New York; <i>Wexner Art Center</i> , Columbus, OH (1994)
<i>Playtime</i> , Bétonsalon, Paris	inSite_05, San Diego, CA, and Tijuana, Mexico	<i>Pictured</i> , Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm	<i>Panorama 2000</i> , Centraal Museum, Utrecht, The Netherlands	<i>A Scattering Matrix</i> , Richard Heller Gallery, Santa Monica, CA	<i>Nancy Megford, Gay Outlaw, and Paul Ramírez Jonas</i> , New Langton Arts, San Francisco
2007	<i>Collection Remixed: Selves and Others</i> , Bronx Museum, New York	2002	<i>Altoids Collection</i> , Clementine Gallery, New York; Center Gallery, Miami Dade Community College, Miami; <i>insideART</i> , Chicago; <i>Robert Berman Gallery</i> , Santa Monica, CA; <i>New Museum</i> , New York (2001); <i>San Francisco Art Institute</i> , San Francisco (2000)	<i>Thin Air: Examining the Ethereal</i> , Elsa Matt Ives Gallery, New York	<i>Add Hot Water</i> , Sandra Gering Gallery, New York
<i>Ensemble</i> , Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia	<i>This Must Be the Place</i> , Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York	<i>Pictures, Patents, Monkeys, and More . . . On Collecting</i> , Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; <i>Akron Art Museum</i> , Akron, OH; <i>Fuller Museum of Art</i> , Brockton, MA; <i>John Michael Kohler Arts Center</i> , Sheboygan, WI; <i>Western Gallery</i> , Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA	1998	<i>Adicere Animos</i> , Galleria Comunale d'Arte Contemporanea, Cesena, Italy	<i>American Gothic</i> , Art in General, New York
<i>The Backroom</i> , Kadist Art Foundation, Paris	<i>Marking Time: Moving Images</i> , Miami Art Museum, Miami	<i>Initial Spectrum</i> , Spectrum, Perth, Australia	<i>Speed</i> , Whitechapel Art Gallery London; <i>Photographer's Gallery</i> , London	<i>History and Memory</i> , Haggart Gallery, University of Dallas, Irving, TX	<i>Tele-Aesthetics</i> , Proctor Art Center, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY
<i>The Situational Drive: Complexities of Public Sphere Engagement</i> , inSite (San Diego/Tijuana) and Creative Time (New York), collaboration with Cooper Union, School of Art, New York	<i>Intuition Box</i> , Curator's Office, Washington, DC	2001	<i>Disappearing Act</i> , Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York	<i>Campo '95</i> , Konstmuseum Malmö, Sweden	<i>Markets of Resistance</i> , White Columns, New York
<i>Going Staying, Movement, Body, Space in Contemporary Art</i> , Kunstmuseum, Bonn, Germany	2004	<i>Another Day</i> , Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm	<i>Double Trouble. The Patchett Collection</i> , Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; <i>Instituto Cultural Cabañas and Museo de las Artes in Guadalajara</i> , Mexico	1995	<i>In Transit</i> , New Museum, New York
<i>Sleeping and Dreaming</i> , Deutsches Hygiene-Museum, Dresden, Germany; <i>Wellcome Trust</i> , London	<i>Art in the Office</i> , Global Consulting Group, New York	2001	<i>Blade Runner</i> , Caren Golden Fine Arts, New York	<i>Campo '95, Elciti-Radiomarelli, Sant'Antonino di Susa</i> , Italy	<i>Washburn Gallery</i> , New York
	<i>1:100</i> , DCKT Contemporary, New York	<i>Globe&gt;Miami&lt;Island</i> , Bass Museum of Art, Miami	<i>Time to Kill</i> , the Pineapple, Malmö, Sweden	<i>Threshold</i> , Fundação de Serralves, Porto, Portugal	1992
	<i>Ebay: Buy or Sell or Buy</i> , Pace Digital Gallery, <a href="http://www.pace.edu/digitalgallery">http://www.pace.edu/digitalgallery</a>	<i>Special Projects</i> , PS 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York		<i>Campo '95, Corderie dell Arsenale Venice</i>	<i>Fluxus Attitudes</i> , New Museum, New York
	<i>The Sneeze 80 x 80</i> , Gazon Rouge Gallery, Athens; <i>Iziko South African National Gallery</i> , Cape Town, South Africa (2007); <i>Durban Art Gallery</i> , Durban, South Africa (2007)	<i>The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Spaghetti Western</i> , Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, CO		<i>Volatile Colonies</i> , part of <i>Africus: Johannesburg Biennale</i> , Johannesburg, South Africa	<i>Detour</i> , International House, New York

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<i>Brooklyn</i> , Jack Tilton Gallery, New York	BOOK, MAGAZINE, AND ONLINE CONTRIBUTIONS	Madoff, Steven Henry, ed. <i>Art School: Proposition for the 21st Century</i> . Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009.	Adolphs, Volker, and Philip Norton, eds. <i>Going Staying—Movement, Body, Space in Contemporary Art</i> . Bonn: Kunstmuseum Bonn, 2007.	<i>Creative Time 1991 and 1992</i> . New York: Creative Time, 1992.	
<i>Improvements? On the Ordinary</i> , Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago	2015		Antelo-Suárez, Sandra. <i>Detour</i> . New York: International House, 1992.	Curiger, Bice. <i>Signs and Wonders</i> . Zurich: Kunsthaus, 1995.	Horodner, Stuart. <i>The Art Life: On Creativity and Career</i> . Atlanta: Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, 2012.
<i>Certainty Uncertainty</i> , Deutsche Bank Lobby Gallery, New York	“Try Not to Be a Bystander.” <i>Debates</i> . Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, May 6, 2015. <a href="http://www.coleccioncisneros.org/editorial/debate/contribution/try-not-be-bystander">http://www.coleccioncisneros.org/editorial/debate/contribution/try-not-be-bystander</a> .	2008	Antelo-Suárez, Sandra, and Alisa Tager, eds. <i>Space of Time: Contemporary Art of the Americas</i> . New York: Americas Society, 1993.	Demeester, Ann, and Kuizinas Kestutis, eds. <i>The 10th Baltic Triennial of International Art—Vilnius, Lithuania</i> . Vilnius: Contemporary Art Center, 2009.	Horodner, Stuart. <i>Walk Ways</i> . New York: Independent Curators International, 2002.
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<i>Selections 49</i> , Drawing Center, New York	“Dear Class.” <i>Art &amp; Social Practice Workbook</i> . Ed. Erin Charpentier and Travis Neel. Portland, OR: Portland State University and Publication Studio, 2013.	2002	Burtscher, Angelika, and Judith Wielander, eds. <i>Visible: Where Art Leaves Its Own Field and Becomes Visible as Part of Something Else</i> . New York: Sternberg Press, 2010.	Fuentes Guaza, Luisa, ed. <i>Contemporary Languages from Centro América</i> . Madrid: Turner, 2013.	Markopoulos, Leigh, and Marina McDougall, eds. <i>Over the Water: Paul Ramirez Jonas</i> . San Francisco: Exploratorium, 2014.
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