



[Situational] **Public**

05



This publication documents two components of **inSite_05: Interventions** and **Scenarios**. **inSite_05** unfolded between 2003 and 2005 in San Diego-Tijuana. Its public phase took place from August 26, 2005, through November 13, 2005.

[Situational] Public is accompanied by two additional publications: *Farsites*, which documents **inSite_05**'s museum exhibition, and *A Dynamic Equilibrium: Liminal Spaces/ Coursing Flows*, a compilation of essays from **inSite_05**'s series of conversations and dialogues.

Esta publicación documenta dos componentes de **inSite_05: Intervenciones** y **Escenarios**. **inSite_05** se desarrolló entre 2003 y 2005 en Tijuana San Diego, y tuvo una fase pública desde el 23 de agosto y hasta el 13 de noviembre de 2005.

Público [situacional] acompaña a otras dos publicaciones: *Sitios Distantes*, que documenta una exposición en museo para **inSite_05** y *Un equilibrio dinámico: Espacios liminales/ Flujos en curso*, una compilación de ensayos de las series de conversaciones y diálogos para **inSite_05**.

[Situational] Public > Público [situacional]

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[situacional] ***Público***

Edited by Osvaldo Sánchez & Donna Conwell

Interventions • Scenarios

August 26 – November 13, 2005
San Diego-Tijuana

inSite_05/

Executive Directors/ Michael Krichman & Carmen Cuenca
Artistic Director/ Osvaldo Sánchez

05



For more than ten years **inSite** has focused on commissioning artistic interventions in the San Diego-Tijuana region that have explored the relationship between the urbanscape, the border, and the public fabric.

inSite's successive versions have documented the historical development of artistic practices of intervention, ranging from urban-scale sculpture to site-specific installations, from performances to non-object based processes and situations.

Twenty-two artists and artist groups were commissioned to produce artistic interventions for **inSite_05**. The projects sought to explore and challenge dynamics of public association and their modes of exchange, and to introduce new political imaginaries into the heart of everyday life. All of the projects employed collaborative processes that developed over a period of time. These processes were utilized to induce public situations rather than to construct aesthetic objects or representational artifacts of the kind that have often been identified as public art.

Interventions unfolded over a two-year period—from an initial research phase through final production. The public phase of the project took place from August 26, 2005, through November 13, 2005. o.s.

Interventions/



Artists/

Allora & Calzadilla
 Barbosa & Ricalde
 Mark Bradford
 Bulbo
 Teddy Cruz
 Christopher Ferreria
 Thomas Glassford
 Maurycy Gomulicki
 Gonzalo Lebrija
 João Louro
 Rubens Mano
 Josep-maria Martín
 Itzel Martínez
 Aernout Mik
 Antoni Muntadas
 Jose Parral
 Paul Ramírez Jonas
 R_Tj-SD Workshop
 SIMPARCH
 Javier Téllez
 Althea Thaubergger
 Judi Werthein
 Måns Wrangé

→ Traducciones/ p. 274

Production/

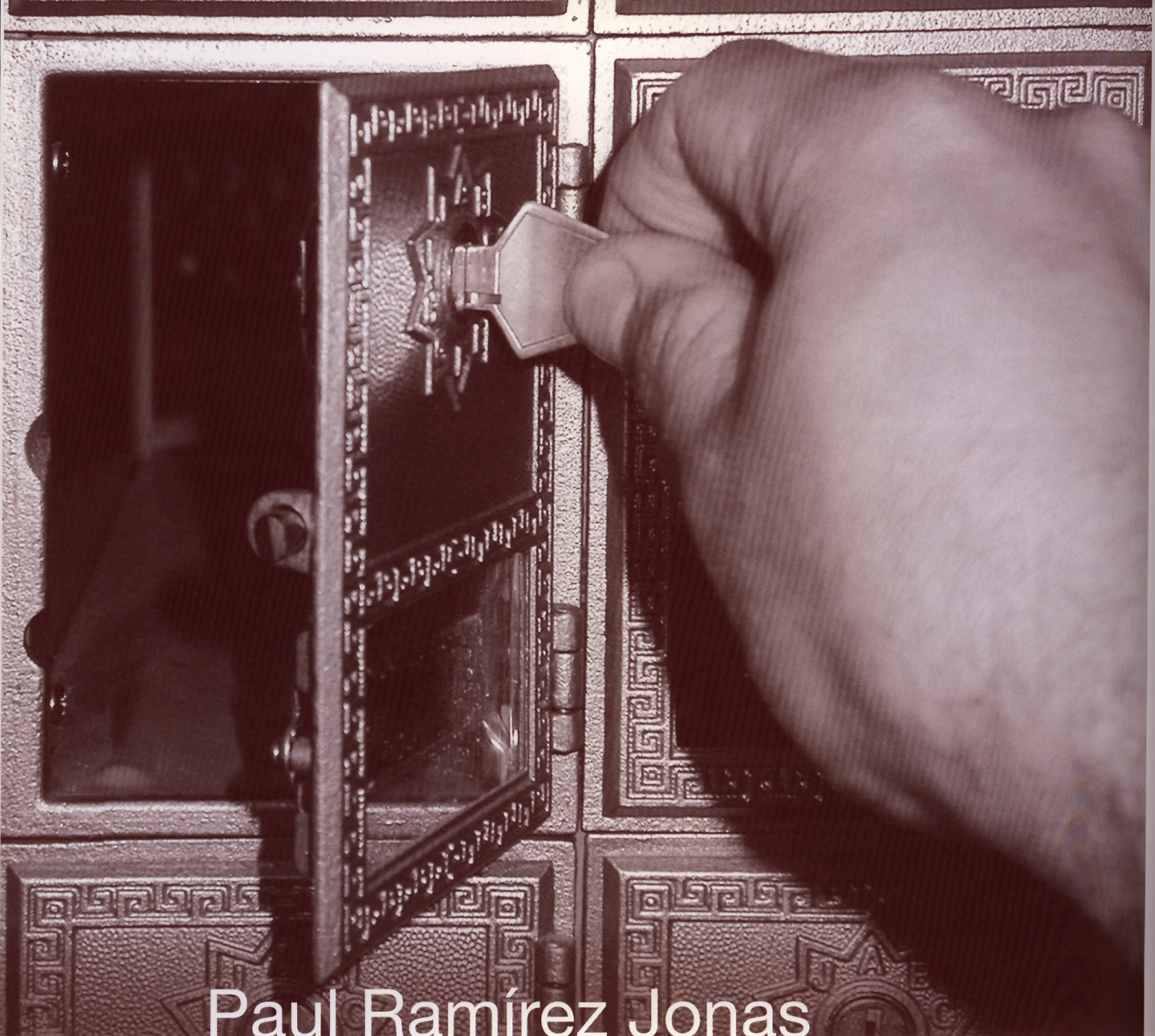
Daniel Martínez
 Mária de León
 Zlatan Vukosavljevic
 Joy Decena
 Esmeralda Ceballos

Interlocutors/

Beverly Adams
 Ruth Auerbach
 Joshua Decter
 Kellie Jones
 Francesco Pellizzi

Curators/

Oswaldo Sánchez
 Tania Ragasol
 Donna Conwell



Paul Ramírez Jonas

Mi Casa, Su Casa/

Synopsis. With *Mi Casa, Su Casa (My House, Your House)*, Paul Ramírez Jonas developed a series of public presentations to promote a dialogue on the definitions of access and trust. *Mi Casa, Su Casa* manifested itself as a program of talks on how we experience the limits between public and private space, and what is consigned as “open” or “closed” space. Ramírez Jonas employed the icon of the personal key as the center point of interaction for his illustrated talks. At the end of each talk, the artist, equipped with a key-cutting machine, initiated a multiple exchange of copied keys between those in attendance. As each audience member consented to swap his or her key, allowing it to be copied, each received in exchange the copy of a key belonging to someone else. *Mi Casa, Su Casa* put into practice an exercise of trust between strangers. The key, representing the possibility of access, gave rise to a dialogue about reciprocity and faith in others. Presentation after presentation, an imaginary network of access and trust was created. Public and private realms were exposed in the individual gesture of this key exchange and in its narration. For this reason, perhaps, *Mi Casa, Su Casa*, as an artistic proposal, began at the point where each presentation ended. The talks were given between August and October of 2005 in venues throughout San Diego and Tijuana.

It begins with a photo of an individual. It continues with a photo of their keychain on the palm of their hand. It ends with an individual photo of each key in the keychain paired with the space/object it unlocks.

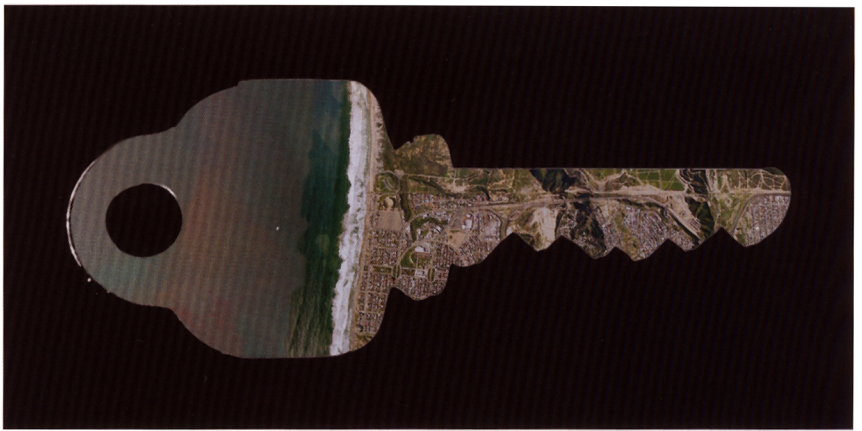
At the conclusion of each lecture the attending public will be invited to exchange keys with the artist and each other. All the equipment necessary to duplicate keys will be available, along with blank keys engraved with a symbol of trust and generosity. **Anyone willing to have one of their keys duped onto these custom keys, will receive someone else's key in exchange.** As the exchange can be anonymous, the security provided by the keys does not have to be undermined. P.R.J./ Statement



Images: Research process and residencies/
Lecture (in color) > Imágenes: Proceso de
investigación y residencia/ Foto de una charla
(a color)

Agosto–Octubre 2004/ Paul Ramírez Jonas

Programa de conferencias/ Entre agosto y octubre de 2005 Ramírez Jonas desplegó su proyecto a través de diez charlas en distintos recintos tanto en Tijuana como en San Diego. Las pláticas partían de las fotografías tomadas en junio de 2005 para hacer un relato acerca de los distintos niveles de acceso y lo que puede considerarse como “llaves”. Al finalizar cada presentación, Ramírez Jonas invitaba al público asistente a llevar a cabo un ejercicio de intercambio de llaves. Esta acción comenzaba siempre con la llave de la casa del artista, que era duplicada y ofrecida a uno de los asistentes. Éste daba una llave propia a cambio, a su vez duplicada y el duplicado era obtenido por la siguiente persona en la línea, siendo Ramírez Jonas quien se quedaba con el último duplicado de cada sesión. De esta manera, presentación tras presentación se iba creando una creciente red imaginaria de acceso y confianza con las llaves anónimas de aquellos que asistían a las charlas.



Sinopsis. Con el título de *Mi Casa, Su Casa*, Paul Ramírez Jonas concibió una serie de presentaciones públicas capaces de accionar una experiencia de diálogo en torno a las definiciones de *acceso y confianza*. *Mi Casa, Su Casa* se manifestó como un programa de pláticas sobre cómo vivimos los límites entre espacio público y privado, y qué se consigna como espacio “abierto” o espacio “cerrado”. Estas pláticas ilustradas tuvieron en el icono de la llave personal su centro de interrelación. Al final de cada plática el artista, provisto de una máquina duplicadora de llaves, inducía a un intercambio múltiple de llaves copiadas entre los asistentes. Al acceder parte del público a intercambiar su llave, permitiendo que fuera copiada ahí mismo, recibía a cambio la copia de la llave de alguien más. *Mi Casa, Su Casa* ponía en práctica un ejercicio de confianza entre extraños. La llave como representación de la posibilidad de acceso era el vehículo que daba pie a un diálogo sobre la reciprocidad y la fe en el otro. Presentación tras presentación se fue creando una red imaginaria de confianza y de nuevos accesos. El dominio de lo público y el dominio de lo privado se manifestaron expuestos en el gesto individual de este intercambio de llaves y en su relato. Por eso quizá *Mi Casa, Su Casa* como propuesta artística comenzaba ahí donde terminaba cada presentación. Las pláticas fueron impartidas entre agosto y octubre de 2005, en sedes diversas de Tijuana y San Diego.



I really do want to give one of the talks at the jail and would prefer to be as accommodating as need be rather than cancel it. Your idea, Tania, of leaving a key along with their belongings (that they receive when they are released) strikes me as very, very intelligent, creative, charming, brilliant.

My internal deadline for finishing the design for the keys is next Friday. I have experimented with images similar to those we saw at the office (hands offering or receiving keys) but not drawn like icons, rather as sketches of specific hands. The difference is very subtle but effective. The language is no longer so authoritarian—it's more intimate. The drawing is no longer disposable but more like a small miniature that one admires.
P.R.J./ Email/ "Re: about jail," June 29, 2005

Images: Research and documentation/ Digital collage and graphics by the artist/ Final key-> Imágenes: Investigación y documentación/ Montaje digital y gráfico del artista/ Llave definitiva.

I like the implication of a continued life for the piece. You could imagine that it will go on and on, “opening” doors in the cities. It is doable. It is impervious to people saying “No” because if someone says no we can just move on to someone else. We’ve just got to make an initial chain of 10. It makes a postman just as interesting as a mayor because the importance of each person is relational not “essentialist.” It would be great if some of our 10 are there as themselves, as citizens, and some are there as the institution they embody. In other words some people give up a key to their personal life, while others give up a key to their business or the institution that they represent.

P.R.J./ Email/ “Re,” April 12, 2005



Images of the lectures> Imágenes de las charlas





Lecture Schedule > Calendario de charlas

AUGUST > AGOSTO

- Tuesday > Martes 23, 6:00 p.m.
Centro Cultural de la Raza/ SD
- Wednesday > Miércoles 24, 12:00 p.m.
Fundación Esperanza/ TJ
(Hope Foundation)

SEPTEMBER > SEPTIEMBRE

- Friday > Viernes 23, 4:00 p.m.
Centro de Protección a la Niñez, DIF/ TJ
(Child Protection Center)
- Tuesday > Martes 27, 11:00 a.m.
Penitenciaría de la Mesa/ TJ
(La Mesa Penitentiary)
- Wednesday > Miércoles 28, 7:00 p.m.
Instituto de Cultura de Baja California/ TJ
(Baja California Cultural Institute)
- Thursday > Jueves 29, 4:00 p.m.
The School of Art, Design and Art History,
San Diego State University/ SD

OCTOBER > OCTUBRE

- Tuesday > Martes 18, 7:30 p.m.
Athenaeum Music & Arts Library/ SD
- Wednesday > Miércoles 19, 6:00 p.m.
Tijuana River National Estuarine Research
Reserve/ SD
- Thursday > Jueves 20, 7:00 p.m.
Woodbury School of Architecture/ SD
- Friday > Viernes 21, 8:00 p.m.
El Lugar del Nopal/ TJ
(The Nopal Cactus Place)



inSite has also been very keen on choosing and stirring me towards ideas that rely heavily on **inSite**'s role as a producer. I want an honest and realistic assessment on your part. Have the logistics and ambitions of all these projects overwhelmed **inSite**? I don't want to compromise the quality of my work and I need to know if I need to think of this as something I can make by myself, with the budget provided, or can I still rely, and to what extent, on **inSite** to produce substantial aspects of the piece.

I just want to be clear about what I have to work with...
I think we can still do something great.

Where would contemporary art be without having embraced failure as a strategy?

P.R.J./ Email/ "The mayor has been overthrown," April 27, 2005

MI CASA, SU CASA/ Lecture Paul Ramírez Jonas



Welcome to this lecture. It is called *Mi Casa, Su Casa*, which is a lecture and also a work of art. It begins with portraits of people who live in this area of Tijuana and San Diego—the border area. One of the first people I would like to introduce you to is called Oscar. Oscar is standing in Border Field State Park, which is where he works. Like many people in this area he has dual nationality. He is a part of both countries. Mostly, he lives in San Diego but he has family in Mexico as well as a house in Mexico; and so, because of that, he has two sets of keys. One set of keys is for the United States, which is the green area over this line. You can actually see the border here; and the other set of keys is for another country, for Mexico, which is below that line. I asked him to show me one by one, all the keys in his keychain; and to show me what they open. The first place where he took me with the first key of his American keychain was his home in San Diego. In many ways, it is very beautiful and typical Southern California home. On the left side of the house is a gate that is never locked; and leads to his organic vegetable garden. It is quite beautiful and has a drip irrigation system. There is an identical and symmetrical door on the right side of the house. It leads to his organic orchard—where he grows these beautiful peaches. I think that they were ripe, but he didn't give me any. Oscar has many loves and hobbies. He is an amateur architect, an avid motorcycle driver, a wood-



worker and he rides an airplane and a boat. He took me to the incredibly compact and small workshop he has at home. There he showed me the key to one of his most precious possessions: his motorcycle. He loves everything to do with freedom and fast movement. This key you see

here, gives access to an extremely tidy closet where he keeps all his tools. As part of his job—he has a really interesting job working for the state park service—he has a state government master key that opens every exterior door of the Border Field State Park visitor's center. For example, the small key opens the back rooms and unlocks the bathrooms at the beginning of the day. It also opens: the video library where they store documentation and A.V. equipment, the library where different kinds of lectures happen, the actual main doors that the public goes through to enter the center, a utility closet where electrical and plumbing and AC are controlled, doors that go to classrooms, and storage closets. Essentially, it is a master key. This other small key is pretty interesting as well. It separates the public parts of the public building from the staff parts of the building. The key controls these three doors: one behind the visitor center's reception desk, a side entrance for the employees, and Oscar's office. So basically with that key, the inner core of the building that is reserved for the staff is locked away from the visitor's part of the building. This seemingly humble and innocuous looking key is a California State Park service master key. It opens a series of identical padlocks throughout the state of California. These padlocks lock gates that block roads that lead into different parts of the park system. In this instance, it simply controls access to the parking lot to the visitor center. But I have to stress the power of this small key: it can open any gate, closing any road, in any state park in California because all of the padlocks are identical. What is interesting about Oscar's keys is that many of his keys don't actually belong to him.





He is the keeper of these keys because he works for the public; and as our representative, he has access to public land and public property. He is the keeper of the keys for places and property that actually belong to us—the public. Simple things, such as the

van that he drives to work and around the park are owned by the state. The vehicle is opened with this key over here on the left. ■ Inside the van, you find another kind of key. Slowly, conventional keys like the ones we have in our pockets right now are being replaced by new technologies. The key inside the van is a transponder, and it is a key that actually opens the door between Mexico and the United States. ■ With this key, these sensors over here detect that it is Oscar and his van coming through. A camera double checks the identity of the driver to the code of the transponder, and it allows Oscar to cross from Mexico into the United States quickly through an express lane—without having to stop at a checkpoint. If you think about it, it is a key with a surprising amount of power. ■ Oscar continued his tour of the spaces that he can unlock for me. He took me to another gate that he thought he could open with the small California



state park key; but instead there was a combination padlock. There was nothing to worry about. In this case, the key was a series of numbers that is stored in Oscar's memory; he simply keyed it in and opened the gate for me. ■ Understandably, he asked me not to show you these numbers. Unlike a conventional key that would have to be in your possession and in turn you would have to take to a hardware store to be copied, seeing these four numbers would mean that the key had already been duplicated—it would be

enough for you to memorize the combination and possess the same access that he has. ■ Finally, he took me to this remarkable gate. He was going to open with his “Fish and Wildlife key.” His “Fish and Wildlife key” grants him access to federal land. That is because the federal government controls the fish and the wildlife, while the state park land is controlled by the state of California. The piece of land that he wanted to

show me is actually a piece of land that he could have also opened with the small state park key, which opens this small padlock over here, which you will recognize as being identical to the one on the gate of the parking lot. Border Patrol also needs to access this land, as it is right on the border. Thus, they have added their own padlock. The military have training grounds through here, so they have their own padlock as well. Finally, there are some road improvements being done. A construction company needs to open the road and they have added their own padlock. The way to solve the problem of access to this land that is not in dispute, but that is controlled by several different players, is to extend the links of the chain with locks. As long as you can open one of the links of the chain, you have a way into this road. ■ Here you see the gate in question and

the road. The road actually leads to a special place called Friendship Park, which has public amenities, which Oscar can also open. ■ This is a men's bathroom, that is opened with the small state park key in Oscar's keychain. ■ Friendship Park made me think about what happens when there are more locks than keys. This is a park that sits right on the border. It is a public park that at the moment is not open to the public due to the current situation between these two countries.

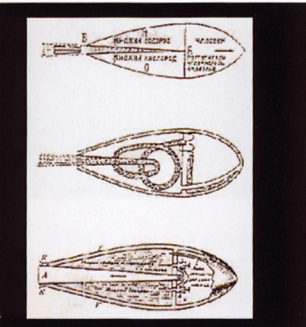
The situation is one where one country is trying to lock the other country out of its territory. The result is that the fence that separates the two splits the park in half, and because they haven't figured out exactly what they are going to do with this current fence that is too easy to cross, or the new fence that is too wide and would swallow the park whole... the temporary solution, is to not let anyone into the park. It has become a no man's land. ■ In this park, there is a monument to the friendship between the two countries. It has become an inadvertent but fitting monument to the situation between these two nations. The obelisk finds itself wedged in the fence separating the two countries. It is like a key inserted and stuck in a lock. ■ You can see



in this picture here, an aerial view of the area. Friendship Park is on the top and the other half of Friendship Park is in Mexico. You can actually see the border as a visible straight line in the landscape. Can you see the circle that is bisected by that line? At the center of that circle is the obelisk. Above the line we have San Diego and below we have Tijuana. This is the border between the two and we can go further up and we can see Playas de Tijuana, which is a beautiful neighborhood of Tijuana, and more of the park and also some of the training areas for the military, and here again we see the border between San Diego and Tijuana. We see downtown Tijuana and a landing strip also used for military training purposes, as well as the beginnings of a beach community in San Diego. Again here is the border, and we see San Diego and at this point all of Tijuana. Further up again, this is the border between San Diego and Tijuana. Now we see the border between San Diego and Tijuana one more time; but we can see all of Los Angeles and part of Baja and again...



Here is the border between the two cities, now seeing all of California and all of Baja. Here again is the border between San Diego and Tijuana. I want to show you one last time the border between San Diego and Tijuana. At this point speaking of borders between these two cities does seem absurd. The only border that is visible is the border between outer space and our own planet earth. And this border is essentially locked because we cannot fly or move through it with our bodies with our natural means. In 1903, as a very humble Russian schoolteacher, if unlocking outer space. Without ever derived all the formulas and all of the r space travel. He wrote a book called e, you can see an illustration of the first different between this drawing and a everything is more refined and sophisticated, but the principles are all here, in Konstantin's drawings and writings. You can see how he even drew the astronauts floating in zero gravity. I think of Konstantin's spacecraft as the first key for outer space. If you think about it, keys allow us to travel through space. Therefore, a rocket is essentially a key. Speaking of rockets, he also came up with designs for both liquid or solid fuel rockets. He was truly obsessed with the notion that we belonged in outer space. It wasn't enough for



him to come up with a vehicle that would take us into that space. He went further and invented the airlock. That's because he wanted our bodies to leave the spacecraft and belong to space... He wrote: "The Earth is the cradle of the mind, but we cannot live in a cradle". He was a unique visionary who died without ever seeing any of his dreams come true. He left a number of drawings like this one where astronauts are floating around and looking at the stars through windows. We had to wait a few decades until Hermann Oberth published a book on space travel that was widely read, accepted, and believed. At last people began to think: "We can do this. We can build one of these keys. We can open outer space". Still, we had to wait a little longer until 1926, when the American Robert Goddard built the first functioning key or rocket. It didn't really open space. It couldn't quite leave the atmosphere, but we had it. We had it. We had something that actually worked. Finally, during World War II, as an instrument of war, Dr. Werner von Braun designed and made the V2 rocket. After the war, it was used to create the first rocket that could leave the atmosphere. The first sentient being, the first inhabitant of earth, that actually be-

came free and crossed the threshold into free space, was a dog named Laika. Here we see Laika on the top of Sputnik 2, the Russian rocket, on November 3, 1957, about to launch into space. She went up there, into orbit, where her body remains trapped forever. There was no way to return; but her mind left the cradle. When I was growing up, and I think when a lot of us were growing up, I thought we would all have one of these keys in our keychain. I believed we would all be able to open space and travel beyond our atmosphere. But that seems to be an ever-receding future that will never come to be. In any case, I am sorry to have digressed and let's get back down to earth, so to speak, we are speaking about a very specific situation and about a very specific space and we are going back to it. Here we are in San Diego and Tijuana again and we are seeing the Friendship monument between the two countries. We are on the American side. We can hop over the fence and land on the other side, now we can see the Mexican side of the monument in the neighborhood of Playas de Tijuana. Playas de Tijuana is a beautiful beach community where Dr. Cesar lives. I went to visit Dr. Cesar and he was very kind to show me his keys. He does not have that many keys in his keychain. He uses them to get into the house. Technically speaking however, he doesn't use these keys to get into his house. He uses this to get into his house. It is the remote control built into his car and opens the garage gate. Only then does he drive into his house. However, to have access to that remote control, first he needs to open the door of his car with this key. But even before he can do that, he needs to disable the alarm with the remote that you see here. It is really a three-step process in which he enters the house through the door through the garage through the car. Once in the garage, he uses this key to open one door, through an inner patio and onto a second door that leads to the kitchen. He is finally home. The last key in Cesar's keychain is the key to the glove compartment of his car. But this is not the end of the story. Inside the glove compartment is another set of keys. What happens is that when Cesar gets into his car he grabs his other set of keys, and



almost like Superman transforming through a costume, Cesar is transformed from a private individual into a public individual. For this other set of keys are the keys that he uses when he is a doctor. It is not a pure set, it is intermixed with other keys. ■ For example the work set of keys includes the front door to his house, which is a formal entrance for guests. He usually enters through the kitchen and rarely enters through



the front. That entrance is for special occasions. ■ He has a small key that opens the gates of the parking lot of the clinic where he works. ■ Another key opens the padlock of the gate for the sidewalk entrance to the clinic. ■ He has something that you probably all have in your pockets right now. I call it a mystery key. It is a key that he no longer remembers what it was for, but he hesitates to throw away because perhaps it opens something of great value. ■ He also has a key to the glass entrance to the clinic. This glass door made me think that glass denotes that everyone is welcome, that the building is always open. But in reality you still have to lock it, so the lock is concealed at the base of the door. ■ Second to last, we have the door of the office where he practices medicine. ■ The last key in his keychain opens the PO box where he gets his mail. Like many residents of Tijuana, Cesar receives his mail in the United States. Every time he picks up his mail ■

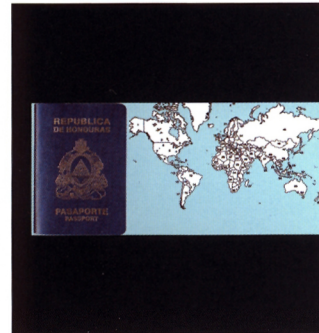
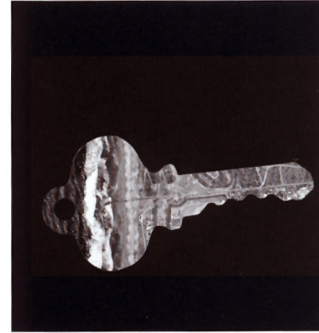
he has to cross the border ■ and he uses this key to open the PO box. This is actually a duplicate of the key that I showed you previously. The dupe is not in his keychain ■. It is in a keychain that belongs to Benjamin ■. How is it that Benjamin has Cesar's key? It is because of Benjamin's job as a driver. He runs errands, drives the children to school, picks up people at the airport. He carries people back and forth. He does all sorts of jobs for Cesar's family and others. In that capacity, he has to have keys with access to Cesar's life—so he can do his job. ■ Look here, he has a key to his car and the car alarm, ■ but he has the master key to the front door of Cesar's house as well. ■



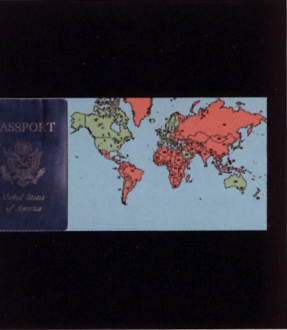
There is an astonishing element of trust in this relationship. It reminded me of this print by Goya called, *La Confianza*—which means trust in English. In it, you see that to own someone's keys is an act of interpenetration. It is intimate. To give out your keys you need a great amount of trust. It is more or less like having access to another person's body. ■ Benjamin, of course, has his own set of keys. His personal set of keys.

Here they are. ■ But his relationship with others is so intermixed that even among his personal set of keys we find three keys to all the exterior doors of Cesar's house. ■ Additionally, he has a key to an office building

of another of his clients. One that he picks up from work. ■ Finally, we see the keys to his home. This is the key to the padlock of the gate to his house. ■ Here is the front door to his house. ■ I found this next key to be very moving. It is the key to his children's bedroom. It made me reflect about how such a small metal object can have great deal of power that is both symbolic and actual. I wished that I could make a small sculpture like this key. ■ This is a key to another bedroom. ■ And lastly, we see a key to the back door. With his keychain, the house, which is a little bit like a fortress, became porous. We went through the front, we went through the middle, and we came out at the other end. The keys literally opened the space up and we went through it. ■ This back and forth between locked doors and going back and forth between countries to pick up mail, to commute, to run errands, and the repeated crossing which I had to do to take these photographs made me ponder on what kind of keys open bigger spaces. The spaces that we have seen so far have been pretty much of the same scale. I wondered what could open spaces that are vast such as this type of space. ■ This is where we live. There is not much more space than this. I have several types of keys, so to speak, that open up this space. ■ For example, I am from Honduras, and my passport is a key. ■ People that are in countries that are marked in green can enter Honduras with their passports without any special visa. Here's Honduras. As I said, all these countries in green are free to enter Honduras. They just show their passport and it opens the land. I have another passport, ■ it is an American passport. You can see that the United States is also in green. I can also enter Honduras with my American passport. I can enter my home country with both keys. ■ Some doors only open one way. Now I am showing you what countries can enter the United States freely with their passports. As you can see, it is a diminished set and please note that Honduras is not in that set. I cannot enter my other home with both keys. ■ For this project, I have



to come to Mexico several, several times. In green, you can see all the countries that can enter Mexico with their passport and no additional visa. It is a bigger set of countries than the United States, but it also excludes Honduras. I need my American key to enter Mexico. As it turns out, my Honduran passport is only good to enter Honduras. It is not a very useful key. However, being a dual national has certain advantages. ■ For example, in Tijuana I met Selene. Like myself, Selene is a dual national and she uses both her Mexican and American passport to move around. She lives in Tijuana, but she studies in San Diego. She has lived in San Diego but she has also lived in Tijuana. She moves back and forth. ■ Here is her keychain. ■ Her keychain references the bi-national nature of her life. It has a UCSD ornament, a little bull that speaks of her Hispanic culture and a heart, but it also has her Ralph's club bar code thingy from San Diego. She is shopping in a super market in San Diego, and yet she is living in Tijuana. ■ This is the key to the front gate that leads into her patio. ■ There are two doors you cross to enter her house. One is a very solid metal door. This key opens it. ■ A second key opens a weaker wooden door. ■ She also



has this kind of key in her keychain. It opens her favorite beer: ■ Pacifico. ■ These two are more mystery keys. They are not exactly mysteries because she remembers what they open. They belong to the old apartment she had when she lived in La Jolla, in San Diego. One was for the mailbox and one was for the apartment door. Why does she hold on to these keys? Why do any of us keep inoperable keys? Could we actually have sentimental attachments to these little pieces of metal? Can they represent a space we used to love? ■ In her patio, I couldn't help but notice that she had several caged birds. ■ I decided to take a look at them ■ because they were another kind of locked space. ■ The doors are actually unlocked, ■ it's just that the birds don't know how to open them, so they are confined. ■ I knew it was a bit of a cliché, the notion of birds as prisoners... ■ I tried to imagine where these birds would go if they could open the doors? ■ If they flew high up this



is what they would see. They would have this bird's-eye view of Tijuana and San Diego. From the bird's perspective, there would be



no visible separation between the two cities. They would appear as one. ■ I once had a very similar vantage point between the two countries. I climbed to the highest mountain in Texas. From the top, I could see both Mexico and the United States, and from my bird's-eye view, it appeared as one piece of land. There was no visible border. In any case, back to Selene. ■ If it gets too late, or she has too busy a schedule, Selene sometimes spends the night in San Diego. She then goes to the community of San Ysidro and stays at her grandmother's house—so she has a key to that door. As it turns out, Selene also works for inSite, which commissioned this lecture. ■ She has keys to the office building of the institution. She can enter the building. ■ She can enter the office. She is inside inSite. inSite is a non-profit organization and they raise money to create this show every couple of years. As a non-profit organization, they have to have a certain amount of governance. They have a director, board members, treasurer, etc. ■ This is the key of the treasurer's BMW. I have never met the treasurer and I have never seen the car, ■ but I did meet Helena, his wife, and she had a spare key to the car in her keychain. ■ Here are Helena's keys. Helena's keys are similar to the keys we've seen so far. We are beginning to see a pattern. ■ She has a small key to the office supply closet in her office. ■ She has a key to her office door ■ and she has the key to the building where her office is located. ■ She also has a mystery key, one that she has no memory of what it opens, but the key is engraved with the message "do not duplicate" so it must be too important to throw away. ■ She has a car key, ■ and she has a key to her home. At the time, her home was being renovated so we couldn't really go in. Instead, she showed me all of the different keys to the house, since this was still a tour of her keychain. ■ This is a key that is on its way to becoming a mystery key. The key used to open this door that is now being becoming



a wall. You can see the door's faint outline in the new plywood. In a few months, this key will be one of those keys that Helena doesn't remember what it was for. ■ While her house is being renovated she uses this key to open ■ this cute little garage apartment that she is subletting near her house. It is interesting for me to see it, because it made me realize that this happens quite a bit in Southern California. People convert their garages into apartments and then they rent them out. It makes sense because there is such a close relation between cars and homes. ■ For instance, here is another Southern California garage and it is actually used how a Southern California garage should be properly used: it is the entrance



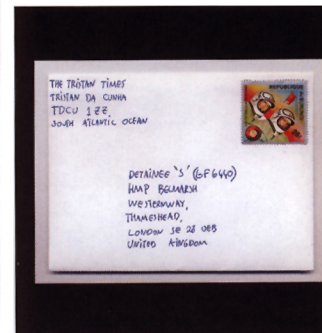
into the house. ■ You open it with your remote control, and then you enter through the garage into the house. The remote control is usually kept in your car. ■ The car has its own set of keys and an alarm with a remote disabler. ■ It is Cecilia's car. ■ These are Cecilia's keys. Like Helena, Cecilia lives in San Diego, but she actually works in Tijuana. She does a reverse commute. ■ Most key chains have some kind of ornament hanging from them. ■ I decided to check this one out. ■ Wonderful! It is a painting. And not just any painting, it is a very famous painting. ■ It is *Las Meninas* by Velázquez. People are always wondering about who is it exactly in the painting that is going through the back door. Wouldn't it be great to make a small artwork that could go into people's key chains? So it can be the real thing, an actual work of art in your keychain, instead of a reproduction of a Velázquez? In any



case, as I was telling you, Cecilia lives in San Diego and ■ she crosses the border everyday to go to work in Tijuana. She actually has two jobs. When I went to visit her, she had just been appointed to a second job and she had just received the key to this new office. ■ The key led me to this interesting door for which you only need a key when it is not between nine to two or four to seven Monday through Friday, or when it is not Saturday between nine to one. The door is only locked half the time and open the rest of the time. ■ She also has a key to the Instituto de Cultura de Baja California, of which she is the director. She can open the whole place. ■ She has a key to the storage place where the office supplies for the institute are kept. ■ She has an old key to a lock that was changed that doesn't open anything anymore—a mystery key. ■ She has a key where the museum's supplies for packing and conserving works are kept. ■ She has the key to the administrator of the museum's office, ■ and a key to a little closet where water and crackers and other snacks are kept. ■ The last key is a key to her office. ■ Inside her office, we see Francisco sitting down. Francisco has been my companion in these adventures. We have been driving around. We make contacts, phone calls, appointments. We go around from door to door. We photograph people. We photograph their doors. At this point, I turned to Francisco and said: "Show me your keys!" ■ Here they are. Francisco is another person whose life is between two countries. ■ He took me to his apartment and we unlocked the gate to it. ■ To the right of the gate, another key opens a stairway to the second-floor apartments. ■ In front of the gate, there is an additional door that leads to the first-floor apartments where he lives. ■ His door has two locks and therefore two keys. ■ He lives in apartment number 2. ■ He took me to his mother's house in Tijuana, which has a beautiful ornate gate. ■ Inside his mother's house, there is a metal door that is always locked that leads into the kitchen. ■ Here is the metal door. ■ Past that metal guard door, there is a second door that is always unlocked that leads to the



kitchen. ■ There is another entrance door on the side. ■ In the back of his mother's house is a gate that separates the neighbor's house from her house. It is a door between two homes. Another key on his keychain is for his mother's car. ■ We had to cross the border to go find his mother's car and photograph it. ■ Even though she is a resident of Tijuana, Francisco's mother works as a teacher in San Diego. ■ Since he also had a key to the car's trunk, and we were being diligent, we opened the trunk and photographed the space inside of it. ■ Francisco's dad lives in San Diego and Francisco stays there half of the week. He uses this key to enter the house. ■ The last stop is another post office box. ■ Like many *Tijuanenses*, Francisco and his mother rent a PO box in San Diego to receive their mail. ■ I paused to think about how letters open spaces that would otherwise not be available to you. To be more exact, the postage in a letter is a key to potentially inaccessible spaces. ■ Look at this letter, you put the postage on the right, you write the address of the space that you are living in on the left, and the address of the space you want to go to in the middle. Presto! You have access to a locked space. For example, you could reside in Nicaragua and want to visit me in the USA. Very likely you could not get a visa, but you could send your words through a letter. In a fashion, you have opened a door. ■ Another example, I might want to send a letter to the most remotely inhabited place on earth, the island of Tristan da Cunha. The island is supplied by a mail boat that only goes there three times a year. And yet, as remote as it is, I want to have access to that space. With the proper postage I can enter it. ■ Some isolation is not just a matter of geography. Perhaps someone from Tristan Da Cunha wants to talk to a prisoner. This is true. In this post 9/11 world detainee "S" is a real someone who is detained at this address in England in Her Majesty's Prison at Bellmarsh. Not only, is "S" tightly locked up with virtually no access to him—even his identity is locked. For reasons of security he is only known as "S". However, even someone in this situation can be reached, unlocked, by a letter. ■ Stamps may even have the power to unlock imaginary spaces. A letter can go from an almost fictional person like "S" to a completely fictional space like Santa Claus' home in the North Pole. ■ However, most of the time letters allows us to enter the spaces of normal people like Eloisa. ■



Eloisa lives in San Diego. She has the most minimal keychain we have seen so far. It only has three keys: a bar code that allows her to enter her gym, and a very sophisticated key that opens her car. Inside her car there are two remotes. One opens the gate that leads into her house. The second one has three buttons, one for each of the garage doors of her house. Now she is inside her house. The third key is the only conventional key. It is the master key to all of the spaces in her home; but before she can open any door she needs to disable the alarm. We increasingly have the need to save numbers and passwords in our memory. These are our new keys, and our memory our new keychain. For example, with the right code you can enter the virtual space of Eloisa's phone mailbox and listen to her messages. The same goes for credit cards, ATMs, websites, etc. I decided to photograph every place that can be opened with Eloisa's master key. It opens the front door, the doors from the inner court yard to the dinning room, to the kitchen, to the garage, and from the left side of the house to the garage, the laundry room, another door to the laundry room, the office off the kitchen. In Spanish these are called keys; they turn on the water. In the back of the house the double doors to the office off the kitchen, dining room, foyer facing the entrance door, and reading room. On the right side the key opens a concealed door that caterers can use to bring



food in and out during large parties. The tennis courts are always open. No need for a key. Behind the house is a guesthouse. The key opens the door to the gym, foyer, bar, and disco. You arrive to the back of the property through this door of the guesthouse. Back there the key is not needed to open the door to the boiler room and central AC unit—no lock on this door. But I found a curious small door back there. I asked Eloisa, "What is that?" She replied, "Open it up." The key revealed a stash of house paint. This was an unusual space that made me think of all the spaces we have not seen so far. I asked Eloisa about them and she took me to this frightening basket full of perhaps a hundred keys. Like most people Eloisa just carries the most essential keys. The basket stored the keys for things that she doesn't use everyday. In our tour so far, we have essentially seen very similar kinds of



spaces: home and work, car and spare key, and so on. But in this world every space can be defined as open or closed, locked or unlocked, and each and every one of these spaces has a key. Let's sit here for a second and think about them. This last key, the key to a museum, is very important for me because I am an artist. I often want to be inside the museum and show my work in it, and most of them are not open to that. I thought it would be great to have a key that would let me enter an exhibition space: a key such as this, which opens the Centro Cultural de la Raza in San Diego. I had the luck of meeting the owner of this key: Nancy, the

director of the Centro. Here she is. She keeps her keys hanging from her purse. Two sets. She showed me the underbelly of a cultural institution. Behind the pristine exhibition white walls you can see something like this: the workshop, the kitchen where they prepare for openings and events, the water heater, and I made fun of Nancy because she had a spare key to the water heater in her keychain. This key was for the electrical panels on the outside, but they recently changed the locks. A supply closet. The donation box. Her van, which she

has named, pronounced in Spanish, C-si-la. It is the van that she uses to ferry her family and all of the visiting artists back and forth. She took me to her house, where she showed me her pickup truck, and finally the apartment where she lives—you need both these keys to open the front door. Like most of the people who collaborated in this project, Nancy was incredibly generous. When I started this art work I didn't realize it would require that people expose their entire lives to me: where they lived, where they worked, their mess, their tidiness, their hobbies, their wealth, their lack of wealth, their connection to their parents, etc. I realize now, what an incredibly generous act it was on their part, to allow me to do this. It demanded some degree of trust around keys—the epitome of lack of trust. I decided to make this drawing based on Nancy's hands and engrave it on a few hundred key blanks. On the other side I engraved this drawing. The blanks are over here on this table. They are the blanks for the fourteen most commonly used keys. I also have a key-copying machine. I want to invite you to be part of an exercise: an exercise in trust. I am going to duplicate the key to the front door of my house (sound of his keys jiggling). I am going to give away a duplicate of my house key copied onto one of these custom engraved keys (sound of duplicating machine running). Anyone here can have my key, but in return that person has to give something in return. That person has to choose a key from their keychain, allow me to dupe it onto the engraved key's blank, and let me give it away to another person in the audience. You have to trust a little, but not too much. There is very little risk, you are giving someone who doesn't know where you live a copy of a key to something—but they don't know what it is... so you are safe. But there some trust is required. A little porosity is created. Are there any takers? Will anyone here take my key?



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inSite is a network of arts institutions and cultural practitioners dedicated to stimulating creative experiences in the border zone of San Diego-Tijuana

inSite es una red de colaboraciones entre instituciones de arte y agentes culturales, orientada a crear experiencias de dominio público en Tijuana San Diego

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