



Promises: A Curatorial Statement

The 9a Bienal do Mercosul | Porto Alegre conceptually focuses on the interaction between nature and culture, and the ways in which visual artists address unknown, unpredictable and seemingly uncontrollable phenomenon. It considers the natural causes and effects that propel human travel and social displacement, technological advancement and world development, vertical expansions in space and transversal explorations through time. It involves looking at the affections these movements inflect, the affects that manifest. It entails dwelling, mining, investigating and exploring what is underneath and above the social realm.

The promise is to articulate ontological and technological questions through artistic practice, object making and experience nodes.

The participating artists of the 9a Bienal do Mercosul | Porto Alegre are considered visionaries of the past, present and future. Considering this, the curatorial research involved different approaches to analyze contemporary artistic practices. These approaches considered the figure of the artist and intellectual as a collaborator, a mediator or an outcast. In each approach, they are seen as producers: makers of images, objects, stories, and situations; creators even of time and space, and, on certain occasions, of the decidedly nothing. Openly contingent to atmospheric disturbances, this process involved constant dialogues about what is imagined and real, what is seen and invisible, what is tenuous and palpable.

The promise is to identify, propose and repurpose changing belief systems and appraisals of innovations.





The exhibitions and programs of the 9a Bienal do Mercosul | Porto Alegre give attention to existing and imagined work cultures—including aspects of seclusion and openness, as well as privacy or publicity—in processes involving the experimentation of art as well as technology. Likewise, it looks at the presentation mechanisms and spatial environments in which insights and findings are created and publicly shared. Aside from assessing processes, it values attempts at sustainability and also acknowledges imminent entropy. In doing so, the curatorial approaches art and ideas as portals, tools and triggers—whether functional or useless—to experience possibly yet unacknowledged natural and cultural manifestations.

The promise is to encounter natural resources and material cultural in a new light, and to speculate on the grounds that have marked distinctions between discovery and invention.

Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy

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