

FELIPE EHRENBERG – NEOLOGIST
CURRICULUM BREVIS
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Felipe Ehrenberg (Mexico City, '43) trained first as a printer, then as a visual and graphic artist under various teachers and mentors, notably muralist José Chávez Morado and sculptor Mathias Goeritz. Recognized in Mexico as a draughtsman and a painter, he is better known on an international level for his work in performance and installation art.

In 2008, Ehrenberg marked his 50th anniversary as a practicing artist and presented *Manchuria: peripheral vision*, a large retrospective exhibition curated by Fernando Llanos and Cynthia MacMullin in Mexico City's Museum of Modern Art. The collection was shown at various venues in México, travelled to the USA (Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, CA) and to Brazil (Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo).

Ehrenberg is especially respected as a book artist, a field in which he is recognized to be a seminal proponent. While living in England, in the early seventies, he co-founded the Beau Geste Press. Under his hand, the BGP published his work and that of a number of important visual poets, conceptualists, neo-dadaists and experimental artists, most of whom were closely linked to the Fluxus movement.

A recurrent subject in Ehrenberg's work is Death as conceived by tradition in Mexico. His best known work is the conspicuous tattoo he designed for his left hand in homage to José Guadalupe Posada, the turn-of-the-century engraver considered the precursor of modern Mexican art. Invariably, every year for nearly four decades, the artist presents either an exhibition of drawings, paintings or a large installation, in fact a non-traditional altar, to celebrate the Day of the Dead.

Fluent in Spanish, Portuguese, English, French and German, Ehrenberg has been a guest artist at art centers and cultural institutions, such as the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the University of Rio Piedras in Puerto Rico, the Manuel Belgrano Academy of Art of Buenos Aires, and the Washington Project for the Arts. He is also a welcomed juror, speaker and panelist at national and international cultural encounters.

He is an assiduous essayist and specializes on art theory and contemporary culture. A selected anthology of his published texts, titled *Vidrios rotos y el ojo que los ve*

(Broken glass and the eye that looks at it)", was issued in 1996 by the Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes (CNCA), in Mexico.

In the Fall of 1990, as a visiting artist at Nexus Press, (Atlanta), he published the *Codex Aeroscriptus Ehrenbergensis*, a major book-object which is also an anthology of his well-known stencil iconography. In October that same year, commissioned by the Archer Huntington Gallery of the University of Texas at Austin, Ehrenberg created a large, out-door installation titled *Light Up Our Border - I* and on the following November he built a variation of the piece, *Light up Our Border – II*, at the Bridge Center For Contemporary Art, in El Paso, Texas. These two works, as well as several more he has created in recent years, deal with the relationship between Mexico and the U.S.

Late in 1994, invited to participate in inSITE 94, Ehrenberg built *Tercera Llamada / Curtain Call*, a diptych installation built simultaneously at the Centro Cultural de Tijuana (CECUT), in Mexico, and at the Santa Fe Train Depot in San Diego. In 1995, he participated in Configura-2 (Erfurt, Germany) where he built *Tzompantli*, an out-of-doors installation made with 15th Century beams and planks. This last work became the very first installation piece to be acquired for the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in Mexico (it was also destroyed by the irresponsibility of erstwhile director Martin Lozano).

For his achievements in art and related activities, Ehrenberg has been distinguished with several awards, foremost the Roque Dalton Medal (1987) for his in situ field work during the aftermath of the Salvadoran earthquake, a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship (1976), a Fulbright Lecturing Award and Mexico's CNCA Grant for Mid-career Artists (1991). He was also awarded the Femirama Prize (Argentina, 1968) for painting, and the Perpetua Prize for book design and illustration (England, 1974). He was twice appointed a Fellow of Mexico's National System for Creators (1993 – 1999).

Married to journalist Lourdes Hernandez-Fuentes, Felipe Ehrenberg was Mexico's Cultural Attaché in Brazil between 2001 and 2006. The couple returned to México after a sojourn of 14 years in São Paulo. He is represented by Galería Baró (Brazil), Galería Freijo (Madrid) and Galería Enrique Guerrero (Mexico City).

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