

**TEACHER'S BOOK**  
**31ª BIENAL DE SÃO PAULO**

The Bienal de São Paulo possesses the most important documentary collection of modern and contemporary art in Latin America. Since its first edition, in the early 1950s, it has afforded visibility to artists and reflected trends. It is in the same league with Venice and Kassel. It coordinates with and receives contributions from renowned institutions in Brazil and throughout the world.

Its work in the development of an educational project geared toward cultural appropriation on the part of public and private school faculty and students is of inestimable weight and importance.

Culture is the identity of a people, and what the Bienal has done throughout the course of its extraordinary history is open our eyes up to windows looking out upon a challenging and sublime, at times even disconcerting, world. Those who go to the Bienal end up having an unforgettable experience, because art transforms.

I laud the initiative of this new educational project, and highlight the fact that it joins the efforts that we also undertake at the Ministry of Culture, particularly in actions related to the training of artists, the public and, fundamentally, citizens.

Marta Suplicy

MINISTER OF CULTURE

One of the fundamental moments that precede the opening of any edition of the Bienal is, without a doubt, that of the conception, creation and distribution of the educational material. Structured so as to afford multiple readings and expand the possibilities of reflection around the 31st Bienal, the package presented here is the fruit of six months of intense work on the part of the Educativo Bienal, in partnership with the curatorship and other departments of the foundation.

It is worth remembering that the Fundação Bienal's actions in the educational realm date back to its second edition, in 1953, having since created actions aimed at fostering proximity with the public in consonance with the challenges presented with each passing decade. A benchmark in this history is the achievement, beginning with the 29th Bienal, of a permanent educational project, with actions that spill far beyond the duration of each exhibition *per se*.

All throughout the course of 2014, training sessions with teachers in the public and private school systems and with social educators will be joined by specific activities in schools and communities in order to generate a single seam between the fields of art and education and multiply fruitful dialogue between teachers and students. With the same participatory model, seminars and workshops held in recent months have played a fundamental role in the structuring of the material presented here, with educators serving as active agents in the creation of its form and content.

For, challenging in its essence, contemporary art is able to evoke concepts such as collectivity, imagination, conflict and transformation. Based on these four major axes established by the curatorship, this publication intends to provide tools capable of activating our possibilities of relation and signification of the works presented.

Expanding the space for reflection both inside and outside the classroom and fostering proximity between the Fundação Bienal and its various different audiences continue to be the central objectives of our work, and a task the institution embraces whole-heartedly and enthusiastically.

Luis Terepins

PRESIDENT OF THE FUNDAÇÃO BIENAL DE SÃO PAULO



Itaú Unibanco believes that access to culture, in addition to bringing people closer to art, is a fundamental complement to education, developing critical thought and transforming people, society and the country as a whole.

This is why we have invested in and supported some of the most important cultural manifestations in Brazil. We are the official sponsor of the 31st Bienal de São Paulo, an event that with each new edition is transformed, welcomes more people, and takes in new ideas and variations of artistic expressions that expand the horizons of those who participate in and visit the exhibition.

With more access to art and wider horizons, knowledge grows and more opportunities emerge to change the world for the better. After all, people's world changes the more culture they have. And the world of culture changes the more people it has.

Investing in changes that improve your world means being a bank made for you. Investing in culture.

#issomudaomundo [#thischangestheworld]

Itaú. Made for you.



Throughout its history, the Votorantim Group has supported and invested in projects that, like the Bienal de São Paulo, are committed to widening the population's access to cultural goods. We believe that contact with art transforms human beings and helps in the construction of a stronger and more plural society.

In addition to making access to various different artistic manifestations possible, the Bienal de São Paulo's Educational Project also carries out a series of activities alongside teachers, students, first-time visitors and all those in the community who are interested in order to provide them with the best aesthetic experience possible. With our support for this project, we hope that ever greater numbers of people will be able, in contact with art, to discover new meanings and sense for their lives.

Instituto Votorantim



The Grupo AES Brasil believes that investing in the training of professionals in the educational sector means contributing toward the country's sustainable development. They are the ones who disseminate knowledge for current and future generations. This is why aes Eletropaulo is sponsoring, for the third time, the Bienal's Educational Project.

This project promotes citizens' sense of belonging and inspires people to see the world from a different standpoint. This is also one of the objectives of the Casa de Cultura e Cidadania, a project that has enjoyed our support since 2008 and fosters the transformation of people and of the communities in which we work. There are thousands of children, youth and adults who, through activities geared toward the arts, education, culture and sports, benefit from the project every year in states of São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul.

Present in Brazil since 1997, the Grupo AES Brasil is made up of businesses that generate, commercialize and distribute electricity and rely on a workforce of more than 7,400 employees. A total of four companies are part of the aes Corp., which is present in 23 different countries.

AES Eletropaulo

Dear teacher,

In your hands is the educational material from the 31st Bienal de São Paulo. This publication is intended to serve as a tool to help bring you and your group of students closer to the universe of the exhibition, but also to be material that can allow for multiple uses. It is made up of a *Teacher's handbook* and a *Toolbox*.

In the *Teacher's handbook*, you will find information on the 31st Bienal in the texts written by the curatorship and by the staff of the Educativo, all aimed at introducing a number of important concepts for the event and for the material itself.

The *Toolbox* was projected and elaborated to be used, collectively, in the classroom. It is simple, economical and easy to handle and share. You are invited to take ownership of this content in order to use it in the way it was planned to be used, as well as come up with other ways of working with it. After all, a toolbox is nothing more than a series of possibilities in a state of waiting. The posters and file cards contained in it need to be handled in order to take on form, in order to generate something. Inside the box are ten posters that present projects by artists who will be a part of the 31st Bienal and forty educational suggestions.

The posters contain images of the projects and texts that describe the artist's or collective's mode of production. The intention is not to focus on biographies or on individuals, but rather on the way they operate: the strategies they employ, the ideas they discuss, the way the work of art is materialized and how it communicates with the public. In this sense, the works discussed will not necessarily be those on display at the 31st Bienal, since the posters are intended to be tools for reflection on a given way of producing and thinking. It is understood that these ten projects will open the way for your group to become more familiar not only with them, but with a wider universe, of different practices of contemporary art, revealing ways of seeing and doing. They may be used by small groups of students to promote discussions, research and actions.

The educational suggestions are proposals for actions to be carried out by the students. They were initially based on each one of the projects shown here through the lenses of collectivity, conflict, imagination and transformation. These lenses

are platforms of thoughts, places from which one directs one's gaze. The suggestions may be used in conjunction with the posters – they promote different actions and questionings that go beyond the sphere of the classroom (they understand the school, the neighborhood, the city as a space of learning) and the traditional limits of the visual arts, aligned with contemporary thought.

The 31st Bienal de São Paulo's educational material is aimed at different target audiences (students of at least six years of age), so it is up to the teacher to adapt it to the needs of his or her group.

We hope it provides for new constructions!

## Collaborative Creation

STELA BARBIERI

Houses, objects, squares, gardens, streets, tools, food, clothes, toys, art, relationships... Since time immemorial, men have at every moment in history invented ways of living and other worlds to inhabit. Little children and artists are inventors *par excellence*. They believe in the possibility of new creations and strive to bring the world their ideas, which often seem impossible to be made reality. Even so, these tireless inventors germinate their seeds in the field of imagination, affording visibility to their projects.

The Educativo Bienal has been working in a collaborative manner over the past five years to create other possibilities of engagement alongside its partners. Some of these partners have been recurrent in their suggestions and proposals, present at a great many moments, in an intermittent conviviality that opens the gates for there to be new ways of intervening in the world.

After sixty years of Educativos in the Bienals, we investigated the oral history of all of them, thus paying homage to their participants. The Educativo is overjoyed with the production of this publication for the 31st edition of the event. With the political and historical responsibility revealed by the Fundação Bienal's past, it is clear that the best way to contribute to personal betterment is to afford diverse possibilities of inventing relationships.

Part of the production of this material, aligned with this practice of dialogue, was a collective creation with the Educativo's partners. Some forty people, including teachers, social educators, artists and pedagogical coordinators, were invited, alongside our staff, to elaborate an important segment of the contents: the educational tips. The tips are propositions of actions whose intention is to collaborate with education and art professionals in the work with their peers and groups of students.

Creating alongside others can be a pleasant task, but, in most circumstances, it is challenging as well.

We gathered for five days to carry this work out. The meetings began with a discussion on educational mechanisms with two of the five curators from the 31st Bienal: Pablo Lafuente and Nuria Enguita Mayo. Then, divided into smaller

groups, the participants sought to become more familiar with the projects of some of the artists or collectives who will be participating in this edition of the Bienal.

The research that resulted in the elaboration of the tips was based on the four lenses proposed by the curatorship of the event: collectivity, conflict, imagination and transformation.

Over the course of those five days, the groups concentrated on the concepts that serve as the foundation of the exhibition and on the projects chosen to be a part of this publication. With the lenses and projects in hand, it was possible to ponder contemporary life and the tools used by artists in their work situations.

In order to facilitate the elaboration of the tips, the participants worked with tools that are recurring elements in the educator's career:

- **Listening** to oneself, to others, to artists' projects. Full-body listening that makes the sensitive perception of contemporary life possible.
- **Openness** to study, to getting to know the concepts surrounding the event and the projects, and to confronting the imponderable.
- **Asking** and reflecting on the issues that inspire each one of us, perceiving the question/idea that drives the artist's project. Thinking about and proposing a constant revision of the assumptions of our everyday existence.
- **Curiosity**, beginning with the first meeting: the moment of empathy, of ritual, of compounds.
- **Presence** and connection with collective work.
- **Urgency** of the flow of bodies in space: what drives us at this precise moment in our lives, what drives the various collectives of which we are a part – the city, school, our homes and the groups of people we see and interact with on a daily basis.

- **Collision** on confronting ideas without producing enmities, understanding discord as a healthy symptom of encounters and as a means of creating wealth.
- **Encounter** in all relationships of conviviality. Pondering the movement of established relationships: what does each situation ask of us in terms of contact, language and care? What does each person convoke in us?
- **Dialogue** in the face of the ambiguities of creation, in order to create devices to activate different grammars of our bodies and generate greater degrees of concentration or dispersion.
- **Patience** in order to understand the other's time, to know how to deal with different rhythms and retreat in order for others' anguish to have a place.
- **Enthusiasm**, a word that comes from Greek and means carrying the gods within oneself. That which leads us to act and give sense to what we do.
- Each individual's **experience**: memories, suffering, joys, achievements, frustrations, what has existed in the places where we've been, the scents we've smelled, the flavors we've tasted, the scenes we've witnessed and everything that has generated and can generate affection.

This was a collectively invented work, in which, as in the various moments in which the Educativo met, words were in movement, activating our desire to engage in creation with other people. The intention is for this creation to give rise to other collaborations and other collectives.

## Some Tools for the Present

CHARLES ESCHÉ, GALIT EILAT, NURIA ENGUITA MAYO, OREN SAGIV AND PABLO LAFUENTE

### Introduction

For the 31st edition of the Bienal de São Paulo, the curatorial staff decided to place education at the center of attention. This means that we want to involve people in a process of discovery and transformation, in which art is a means of creating unexpected possibilities for those investing their time and energy in the experience. The educational material found here is not presented only as a preparatory guide for the event, but also as a series of independent questions and problems to be developed through collective discussion and classroom activities. In order to illustrate different approaches that will be expanded upon over the course of the 31st Bienal, we have selected ten artists or collectives that constitute examples that may be applied to other works when you visit the exhibition beginning in September.

The educational material for the 31st Bienal is fundamental to our understanding of the project and how it can function in São Paulo today. This package is devoted to providing tools for collective use – tools that will contribute to transforming thought and emphasizing that any effective change, be it cultural, social or political, will have to be collective in order to occur. Inspired by the pedagogical approach of the “school without walls,” the material is characterized by an economy that requires collective use by small groups. Each element is intended to be used by all, while the different lenses and vocabularies allow the artistic projects to be interpreted in different, non-competitive directions by different members of the groups. Collectivity and plurality are at the heart of the exercises presented here.

The ten artistic projects are not yet definitive elements that will be in the exhibition per se, although the respective artists are all participants in the event. They are, however, modes of working beforehand to prepare attitudes and approaches on how art is linked to wider social ideas. At the moment, we are developing their specific contribution to the 31st Bienal alongside all of the artists involved. Here, these projects show you attempts at approximation to the artistic and cultural practices we believe are relevant as well as

representative for the general approach. They may give access to a series of sets of problems and ways of dealing with them. They speak to our current period and attempt to expand our capacity to understand different positions and share ways of acting. Each one of these modalities of practice is associated with individuals or collectives, but what is important here is not their name, but what they do. The focus lies in how things function and how we can work with them collectively, inside and outside the context of the exhibition.

Our general concern with the 31st Bienal is to create relationships between ideas, people and groups. These people include the artists and other cultural producers, but are concentrated on the potential users of the Bienal, especially on teachers, students and educators of all types. In order to achieve this, the participating artistic projects need to be relevant and specific to this time and place, as well as be transformational, in the sense that they afford another way of looking at things that are already familiar or assumed. Many works that you will find here and in the exhibition will respond to the circumstances around them, at times in a direct way, at others in a subtle and, perhaps, controversial way. Other works will themselves be transformed by time and by place, and Brasil's conditions and the environment of the Bienal will influence the way a work is perceived. This principle of transformation runs through all of the processes of the event, aiming to alter perceptions, structures and results, in addition to raising questions that can be debated before and after a visit to the Bienal Pavilion.

In order to fulfill art's transformational power, various principles were adopted. They are part of a permanent process of research and discussion that is still in development, while we prepare ourselves for the opening of the exhibition within the next eight months. In using this educational material, always keep more general issues in mind, and see how they can be applied to an artistic project.

### Principles

- 1 **The exhibition as event.** The 31st Bienal intends to explore the special characteristics of the biennial format as a way of reading the contemporary moment. The Bienal will center its focus on experiences, be they aesthetic or not, as they are captured and exchanged among people. Performance, involvement and synchronization will be fundamental. Different types of mediation and modes of dealing with encounters with art will be developed. Working with this series of materials is a way of becoming involved with the Bienal beforehand and beginning to think about how art unleashes transformation. *Imagine the works you will find here in relation to one another and to the Bienal Pavilion and their audience.*
- 2 **The building as place.** The Oscar Niemeyer pavilion has a direct relationship with its surroundings – the park, the city, the country, the world. The 31st Bienal will be physically open to the wider context by way of the exhibition's layout. Its architecture will take into account the vigor and capacity of the human body, defining the conditions for looking at, listening to and approaching the works of art, as well as time for reflection, conversations and action. There will be a series of interconnected “densities” that deal with specific issues or propose problems for consideration. *Imagine the works you find in this material set up in a space and the relationships between them in terms of histories, spatial perception and time.*
- 3 **Process.** The 31st Bienal will be concentrated in its development process and will involve the artists in the production of new works in response to local conditions. The different processes will be communicated to the public before and during the exhibition. *Consider the production of the works present here, the conditions they require to be made, and what the artists did to create them.*
- 4 **Education.** The 31st Bienal is being thought of as an educational exchange between teacher and students and among the students themselves. We consider a process that is exploratory to be educational, based on the undefined raw material of the artistic works, whose meanings may be determined in conversations that will gradually concentrate on a shared understanding. We hope it is clear that the relationship between the contemporary art and pedagogy is permissive, allowing new discoveries to occur and targets, methods and results to be altered during the course of dialogues about art. *Experiment with how the tools and terms provided here can change the direction of discussion.*
- 5 **Contemporaneity.** The project of this edition of the Bienal is related to the present. The idea is to make a direct cut in the present and manage to look at the world around us from a new perspective through contact with art. The geographical context of São Paulo, Brazil, Latin America and the world today, as well as the immediate social or economic context of the group, will determine the dialogue. This local specificity will then be connected to the modes of thinking and doing that are being developed throughout the contemporary world. As these modes are not resolved, this lack of resolution will be evident in the discourse and in the projects' visual material. *Seek to concentrate on the present of the discussions and deal with issues that are of immediate importance to the group.*
- 6 **From spectators to users.** The 31st Bienal will emphasize active users more than spectators. It is hoped that users will take in the works of art and make them a part of their own concerns. In terms of educational discussions, there is no need for there to be predetermined roles, for they are created in this process of exchange. We hope that this publication can foster active thinking and form a common language. *Work as much as possible in groups and hold collective dialogues in which the groups stake out their own positions.*

- 7 **Art/non-art.** The change in focus from the work of art and the spectator to the tool and the user brings with it languages and modes of production and distribution that are not easily classified as art, at least not according to classic canons. This means that other forms of expression, from graffiti to film, from dance to movement, will be present at the 31st Bienal. At the same time, the project is wrapped in the “mechanism” of art, expressing its capacity to affect those who come into contact with it in a way that is different from that which occurs with other types of cultural objects or production. Responses of affect – corporeal, sensorial, emotional and intellectual – will be called for by the works of art, and, although dialogue is essential, it does not need to be based on any predetermined knowledge of art. *Test the difference between looking at an object as “art” and as “something that is not art.”*
- 8 **Turnaround.** The notion of turnaround encompasses the idea of transformation, which is the key to our ambitions for the Bienal. Turnaround is a process in which there is a change in the conditions even if their mechanisms and consequences may not be clear. A turnaround is often irreversible (once the pain comes out of the tube, it can’t be put back in), but, like an action under way, it has no defined direction. There is something disordered, and perhaps also fraudulent, in the turnaround. It regards the notion of inconstancy, which is often manifested when different cultures come into contact. The lack of understanding can lead to the sensation that the other side is always changing its mind or being insincere. If transformation seems like something more profound and absolute, the turnaround brings it back down to Earth and allows it to be human. The turnaround emerges as an urgent response to specific situations, more than to universal truths. Nor is it “modern,” in the sense of being part of a strategy aimed at the future, of being progressive. Turnarounds are not afraid of conflict and confrontation, but in a certain way keep them from continuing to turn around. *See what happens when different*

*interpretations are revealed about the same object or work of art. Assess if it’s possible to have two ideas with very different meanings in your head at the same time.*

- 9 **Journey(s).** Journeys afford the promise of transformation through a process of displacement. The journey itself may be conceptual, intellectual or physical, but the common thread is a departure, an arrival and a change of scenery between the two. We will structure a visit to the Bienal around the idea of the journey, and we also hope that this educational material will lead people on a path from one type of thinking to another. These journeys offer the possibility of presenting things in a certain sequence and of leaving things behind and moving forward. *Trace the route of the discussions on a work of art or a combination of works, create scales along the path and later discuss how they altered the group’s interpretations. What was the journey of understanding upon which they set out?*
- 10 **“How to talk about things that don’t exist.”** This is our title. We would like the term *talk about* as being constantly substituted by alternatives such as “imagine,” “perceive,” “fight against,” “agree with” and many others. The formal title suggests that we want to talk about the present, but it also asks us: when do things not exist? When do we not see them, or when are they beyond our ability to understand? When do people hide them from us? When do we refuse to look at them? These are the questions the title intends to unleash in all of us. *Imagine other variations for the title and discuss what non-existent things could be included in it.*

### Tools and Audiences

The projects may be examined using four comprehensive conceptual tools that do not act only as interpretive lenses, but also as methodologies. They are intended to delineate modes of seeing the projects and possible actions to be undertaken. Along with the principles that have been outlined, they form the central vocabulary that may be used in dialogue and discussions among teachers and students.

- **Collectivity.** In contrast with conceptions of the artistic process centered on the figure of the individual artist/producer, the 31st edition of the Bienal focuses on collaborative work among its participants and the fact that artistic production requires the coming together of different people and structures. The natural development of this approach is asking all the participants of this Bienal to think collectively. Working together, whatever the scale or context may be, results in a transformative change in expectations and can lead all of those involved to an emancipating process.
- **Imagination.** Art's ability to imagine things in a different way, to suspend the state of things and point toward different modes of thinking, perceiving, feeling and doing, is essential to our task. This does not imply a simplistic understanding of art as an instrument, but rather an emphasis on art's capacity to also doing something, or many things, that are beyond it. We want to suggest that the exercise of free imagination is fundamental to the use of this educational material and to encourage discussion among the students.
- **Conflict.** The state of things is, in the world we inhabit, a situation of inequality – there is a major difference in access to things and people, to platforms for discourse and modes of action, as well as to rights. Not only does this situation generate conflict, but often also demands conflict in order to alter it. The 31st Bienal would like to

discuss this conflict and reflect upon it in order to evaluate its positive and negative aspects and study why it happens. Conflict can be a way of liberating energy and, in a group situation, can allow different individual positions to be articulated more clearly.

- **Transformation.** This is a difficult word, but can take place on different scales and at different intensities. What is of interest to us is not to establish what will or should result from this change in definitive terms, but to reflect on the uncertainty of all transformations, of allowing ourselves to bask in the moment of transformation, to be in the transition, to refuse to be one thing or the other. Ultimately, transformation should permeate every relationship established by the 31st Bienal and affect all of those involved in or in contact with it.

Who are these people who will be in contact with the 31st Bienal? The exhibition's graphic identity, projected by the Bienal's design staff in collaboration with artist Prabhakar Pachpute, can help answer this question. As one of the images reproduced here shows, it is a group of people who have been brought together, even if temporarily, and who are, as such, moving in the same direction for at least some time, on a shared journey, be it against their will or voluntarily. A group of people whose faces are not identifiable, and whose collective effort, because it is collective, is full of noise, mixed vocabularies, shared and conflicting intentions, temporary agreements and misunderstandings. Whether they are children or adults, art professionals or those curious enough to become involved with the exhibition, these people will be given a series of tools with which they will be able to approach the art they find before them and consider ways to relate it to the concrete situations they face in life.

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