

Log

WINTER/SPRING 2006

Observations on
architecture and the
contemporary city

19° 24' N, 99°12' W

Calle Cerrada Río de Janeiro, Mexico City

Leaving the Insurgentes metro station and skirting Plaza Río de Janeiro in the heart of *colonia Roma* – just past a replica of Michelangelo's *David* (which appears and vanishes like a mirage, awash in tiny jets of water emitted from sunken channels surrounding its plinth), and a few steps from the fault line running through this New World megacity – one happens upon a quiet dead-end corner where sagging marble lintels meet modern slab construction, and agitprop meets Byzantine restraint. In the tradition of Juan Diego's Virgin of Guadalupe, who imprinted her image in the fabric of his cloak, San Judas Tadeo, protagonist of workers and thieves alike, manifests himself furtively, a guerrilla shrine découpaged on a battered city wall. Exquisite corpse, alchemical fusion of sacred and profane, Tadeo has the uncanny effect of inverting the atavistic power of gods and icons that have tumbled and fallen, injecting that power back into the physical fabric of the public realm.

7

\$10.00



OBSERVATIONS ON FLYERS

At 6 pm on March 24, 2006, the balconies on the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth floors of the Museum of Modern Art are packed. A yellow plane, signaling the launch, sails into the air. At first, a few white paper airplanes begin shyly dancing in the air. Below, in the atrium, some museum visitors appear unperturbed, as if paper airplanes in a museum were a natural happening. But within seconds, from six stories above, 200 paper airplanes appear like a fast-moving white cloud, filling the space. Now, onlookers react with enthusiasm, pointing and exclaiming happily as the planes randomly begin to carpet the floor of the atrium and entry hall below. They catch the planes midflight, or snatch them up off the floor. Some hold them in their folded state like museum souvenirs, while others quickly unfold them to read the text printed on one side.

The museum guards, caught off guard, react in different ways. One begins to gather the fallen planes from the floor, another spreads his arms officiously to prevent curious visitors from collecting them, still another radios for help on his walkie-talkie: "the sixth floor, I think they're coming from the sixth floor."

Flyers that fly: a light way to distribute heavy words.

– Keith McDermott and
Jana Leo



FLYING FLYERS AT MOMA. PHOTOS: SIMON LUND.