

THE CITY AS A WORK (AND OBJECT) OF ART

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Urban concentrations (their great expansion) are usually attractive for artists, especially when a large majority of them live there. Thinkers and intellectuals relapse into debating, explaining and even converting the urban fact into an artistic object. And without this being a brand new practice, its revival and reintroduction as an exhibition element, in museums, literary circles or in the cinema.

The writer **Juan Villoro**, a reference in the Spanish-American literary chronicle, offers his [point of view of the monster that Mexico City is for him](#) in an interview with Alberto Barrera for the program *Miradas Urbanas*. In the [second part](#) of his story, he refers to the "second floor of Mexico City", which can be easily understood with [the fascinating last sequence](#) of images from the documentary [In the Hole](#), of the Mexican Juan Carlos Rulfo. He also does it from another perspective: that of narrated urban violence, the Alfaguara Award for the novel **Xavier Velasco**, in what he calls "[Mex Appeal](#)".

Precisely with regard to the city, this week in *El País* a series of very brief book reviews were collected that link to the [cities and literature](#).

In addition, it can be pointed out that one of the liveliest and most dynamic branches of current contemporary art is street art, due to its broad sense -as well as paradoxical- democratic when it achieves the participation of anyone, like dictatorial when the citizen is imposed the art that *must* see.

Street art represents a broad set beyond the almighty [Banksy](#). Scattered all over the planet, there are recognized proposals ranging from linear ornaments from the Mexican city of Puerto Vallarta with [The Tone](#), going through the look of Lilongwe in Malawi with [Kid Acne up to the Chilean Vasko to name a few](#).

The democratic perspective can be *painted* in the [project CorpusTrip](#), by the photographer [Luca Donnini](#), about ephemeral art. His particular "tour" covers 10,000 kilometers, spread over 20 European cities and a van, which will install the photographer's work at night in public spaces where conventional art exhibitions are not common. What he calls *Speed Show*.

Other examples are illustrated in the street proposals of the Bolivian anarcho-feminist collective [Mujeres Creando](#), which has been included in the institutional orbit of the great museum, in this case in the Reina Sofía in the risky exhibition [Potosí Beginning](#).

Other of the most dynamic creative centers on the peninsula have also understood these urban needs and address them from an educational perspective. Last year, Casa Encendida in Madrid presented the exhibition [Livable cities, cities of the future](#) and The CCCB Barcelona presented [City and Public Space](#) in 2010. The industrial heritage itself is an ode to urban space. The thousands of examples beyond the Matadero Madrid, the Alhóndiga or the Tabakalera have already been widely shown.

An interesting example is that of the municipality of Arlington (in Virginia, USA and neighboring Washington DC, with a population close to that of San Sebastián) that is developing emerging spaces such as the [Artisphere](#), have come up with ideas that combine public-private initiatives. Since that town hall they have winked at urban art with exhibitions such as [Design for the Civic Realm](#) or [Contain-Maintain-Sustain](#) but they have also dealt with public art, not as a happy coincidence but as part of a plan of action and intervention< strong> dating from 2004: [Public Art Master Plan](#).

The street (or what lives in it) moves very fast and the forces of the city itself too. Today attention is paid to the urban environment, perhaps for this reason the popularity of *hip hop* or comics along

with street art or *graffiti*: due to the vitality of its proposals and the desire to say things

There are no comments yet.