

Artinfo

27 September 2013

Brooklyn's Reanimation Library Opens Branch at Mexico City Gallery

By Laura Garcia Sandoval

In 2001, Andrew Beccone opened a small public library in Brooklyn, with the aim of acquiring discontinued books, books out of circulation or out of print editions; he called this magical place Reanimation Library.

Since then, Beccone has been collecting books based on unique illustrations and exceptional findings where literary academic content surrenders to visual appeal. In this library, visitors can not only explore the pages of books, but also photocopy or scan them so they can rescue these books, forgotten to some extent, and bring them back into circulation.

In this time where printed work has lost more and more ground to this new digital era, the Library seems to stand for nostalgia, but also to represent a serious way to preserve these books for future generations. With this project, Beccone helps build collections that inspire creative works and look into the riches of graphic and print culture, ratifying the potential of libraries and exploring ways between digital and analog.

Since 2009, Reanimation Library has had several branches in different cities, for which Beccone creates small temporary libraries with works from local used bookstores. From August 31st until November 2nd, Mexico City's talcual will host the first branch in Mexico: The Colonia Juarez Branch.

In addition to this, ten artists were invited to create pieces inspired by the collection or the idea behind the project. Some of the names involved are: Gustavo Abascal, Iñaki Bonillas, Rodolfo Díaz Cervantes, Ricardo Gonzalez, Sue JeongKa, Daniel Monroy, Emilia Sandoval, Enrique Santos, Arturo Soto, and Katri Walker.

Blouin ARTINFO México spoke to Andrew Beccone to learn more about this project.

How was the idea of Reanimation Library born?

Reanimation Library started over ten years ago, born of my two professions: I am an artist and librarian. I was in a bookstore searching for inspiration to use on the work I was doing

then, and found a book of psychology from the 1950s, and the idea was born in my head to build a collection of visual material that would be much more interesting to me. After a year of collecting, I realized that if I showed that collection to others, it would inevitably have other uses besides the one I gave it.

What is the main objective of Reanimation Library?

The production of new work, with a sense of reclaiming the creative potential of things that otherwise would be discarded.

Where do you find the books?

I'm always looking. Many of the books that interest me have little value in the market; people get rid of them, so it's easy to purchase them for low prices. I look for them in special sales in bookstores and libraries, now I receive more and more donations from people. When I do the branches in other cities, I visit used bookstores, to take in the local area content. For example, in Mexico I searched in used bookstores.

Which libraries did you visit?

I went to the streets of the historic downtown with all the libraries. I barely had time to see the surface, but it's great to see what they have.

Do you think printed books will disappear?

I don't think they will disappear altogether, they have a very solid base. I think in relation to digital material, they will be minimized. It's hard to say what will happen with books in the future, but it is hard to imagine that the book will be completely gone.

How was it to work with Mexican artists for the project?

What happens with the branches and the library is that I don't know how the show is going to look or which books are included in the end. What I try to do is work with people whose opinion I trust and see what happens. But I've been very pleased with the work that has been produced with all of the branches so far.

[<http://www.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/954611/brooklyns-reanimation-library-opens-branch-at-mexico-city>]