

## JUAN SORIANO IN THE MAIN SQUARE (ZÓCALO): AN EXPERIENCE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT HISTORICAL TOWN CENTRE FROM PUEBLA-MÉXICO

**Adriana Hernández Sánchez. Barcelona University /PhD. Student**

### ABSTRACT

*This research is trying to spread the experience of a temporary exhibition of contemporary art in the most important public site from the historical City of Puebla-Mexico, named "Los sueños moldeados de Juan Soriano" (The manageable dreams from Juan Soriano) carried out by Instituto Municipal de Arte y Cultura (Municipal Institute of Art and Culture) from the Town Council of Puebla City, from April 21st to June 26th, 2006, within the setting of the festivities for the 475 years of the City foundation. This space from XVI century was selected in order to show great sculptures (monuments) carried out by the Mexican artist Juan Soriano (1920-2006)*

### RESUMEN

*Esta investigación trata de difundir la experiencia de una exposición temporal de arte contemporáneo muy importantes en el sitio público de la histórica ciudad de Puebla-México, llamada "Los sueños MOLDEADOS de Juan Soriano" fue llevada a cabo por el Instituto Municipal de Arte y Cultura del Ayuntamiento de la Ciudad de Puebla, entre el 21 de abril y el 26 de junio de 2006, en el marco de las festividades de los 475 años de la fundación de la ciudad. Este espacio del s. XVI fue seleccionado con el fin de mostrar grandes esculturas (monumentos), llevada a cabo por el artista mexicano Juan Soriano (1920-2006), con un total de doce piezas de bronce fundido, tales como: 1.- Dos Caras de aves, 2.- Dafne, 3 Amarillo.- Gallo, 4.- Ofrenda II, 5.- El Pato, 6.- Paloma, 7.- Máquina de Hacer Dinero, 8.- Paseos de aves, 9.- Aves en la Onda, 10.- Planta, 11.- Bull, 12.- Gallo con bola. Cada escultura de la colección CONACULTA- INBA A.C., y Juan Soriano y Marek Keller, AC. Esta gran experiencia no se lleva a cabo muy a menudo en este lugar histórico y en un espacio tan representativo; esta es la primera exposición de arte contemporáneo y con un largo período (dos meses). Estos hechos nos dan la motivación para llevar a cabo una investigación y una encuesta de opinión sobre este tipo de eventos en un sector considerado como Patrimonio Cultural de la Humanidad por la UNESCO.*

The arrangement was carried out by Carlos Blas Galindo from Sistema Nacional de Creadores (National System of Creators), the sculptures were placed in the perimeter, as a lock design, it is important to mention that the main square (zócalo) has a large extension, with an area of 11700m<sup>2</sup> approximately, it has a rectangular design (proportion 1 to 2). Since XVI century this place had fulfilled several functions all years long, from the religious to profane, carrying out performances, masquerades, supernumeraries, Moorish and Christians combat, the giants and bullfights. Also in the Novo-Hispano epoch because of the performance of Holy Inquisition, this was the site where the population was punished in the gallows and the pillory.

The main square actually has two roadways crossing in its central point, the first from North to South and the second from East to West. It also has diagonal pedestrian areas and areas with vegetation.

The Main Square (zócalo) design let the people to appreciate more the sculptures of Soriano from different angles like in a catwalk, because they were placed in the roadways, but in spite of the large space of the Main Square, it looked full, mainly because of the quantity and the dimensions of the new pieces and because of it is a space having several artistic elements about several topics, material and dimensions that has a specific function inside this place: 1.- Scale Model Plan flanked by poles, 2.- Angels' sculpture that shows the City's sketch, 3.- At the end of every gardening area, they are located four sculptures that represent the four seasons, which were donated in 1926 by English, Syrian-Lebanese, German, Spanish Colonies. In the same way, we can find to the North in strategic points, plates and monuments allusive to Monuments' Area (Cultural Patrimony of the Humanity) and to the Glorious Army of East, besides the Flag pole. Finally at central point it is located the San Miguel Fountain (1777), being the most representative evidence from Historical town centre of Puebla City, at the back it is located the Cathedral; in front it has a Passageway, Arches and the Town Hall. Most due to the lack of maintenance are damaged, and they have: mold, store of dust, wearing away of junctions, broken pieces, and birds' defecation besides others. They take part for the damage due to their location because they can not be seen due to the gardening areas.

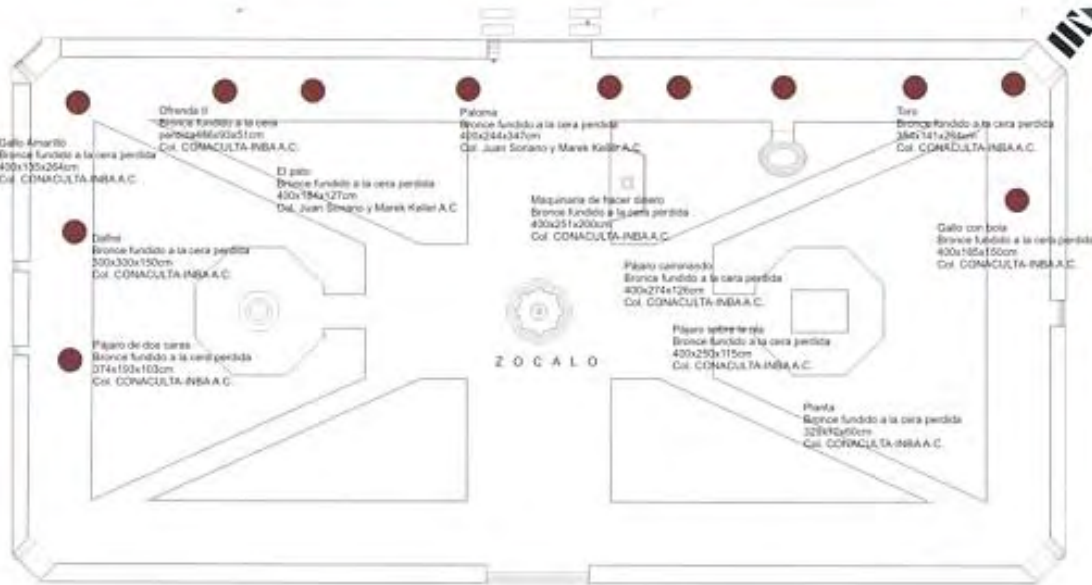
None of them, as the shapes proposed by Soriano, so that, it will be very interesting to contrast this art with the traditional art, if we can mention in this way.

By carrying out an opinion poll, we could get interesting outcomes focused to investigate how the population accepts this art, which sculpture liked more to them and which was not according the traditional space; we asked them that name the most representative in the area. Besides if it was essential to carry out more frequently Contemporary Art events.

In this case, the elements were valued depending on the school grade, as well as on the age. At the same time the features of the elements (shapes, colors and size) determined their preference, therefore their appropriation was greater and/or lower. A point to consider was their location, because it had an important role for the impact of the sculptural works.



4 5 6 7 8 9 10



11



12



3



2



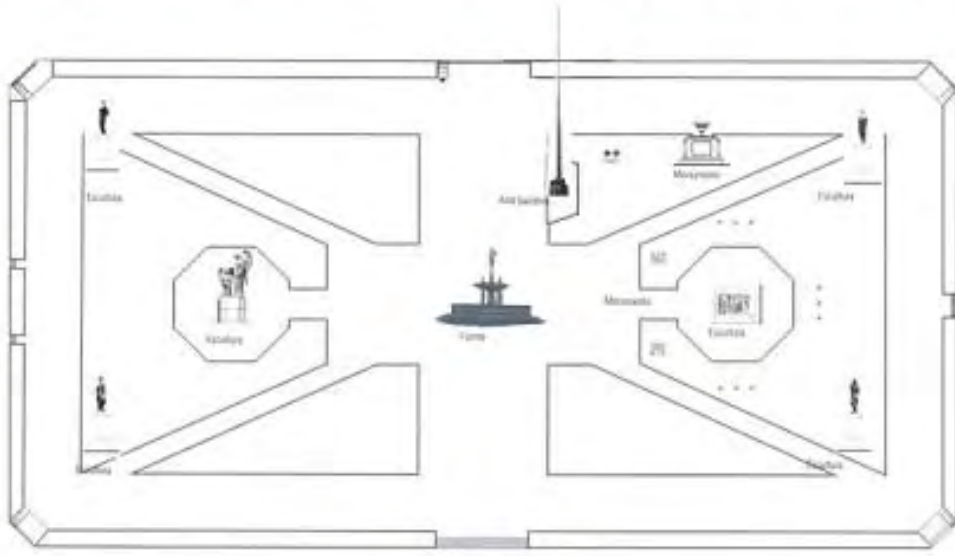
1

**Main Square (Zócalo)  
The manageable dreams  
from Juan Soriano**



**6.-Pigeon**





**Main Square (zócalo)**



**Sculptures**



This exhibition regrettably was only for a period of time and in spite of the inconveniences it was widely accepted by the population. It shows that it is indispensable to involve new ways or public art in the traditional spaces, carrying out new plans where the City Councils are the link with offices that negotiate and diffuse the production or art works of local artists in public areas, specifically at historical towns centres.

#### **NOTES**

*1 This sculptural exhibition ennobles Puebla, when showing a contemporary great artist. And that with his step by our City remains recorded in this great commemoration of its foundation. The sensibility, occupation, authenticity and imaginary wealth give as outcome art works that give to the Mexican plastic an important space in our artistic history, which let us see Juan Soriano as he was and he continues being: a great artist, a man of our time.*

*2 Soriano was an artist of this time and of all times, that he did not belong to any group, school or tendency, which offered a personal aesthetic to the history of Mexican art, in which the art of vanguard has aroused.*

*3 Whips, executions, besides of showing the decapitated ones. , in total twelve pieces of melted bronze, such as: 1.- Two Faces Bird, 2.- Dafne, 3.- Yellow Rooster, 4.- Offering II, 5.- The Duck, 6.- Pigeon, 7.- Machine for Making Money, 8.- Walking Bird, 9.- Bird on the Wave, 10.- Plant, 11.- Bull, 12.- Rooster with Ball. Every sculpture from the collection CONACULTA-INBA A.C., and Juan Soriano Marek- Keller A.C. This great experience is carried out not very often in this historical site and in a space so representative; this is the first exhibition of contemporary art and with a long period (two months). This fact give us the motivation for carrying out a research and an opinion poll over this kind of events in a sector considered as Cultural Patrimony of Humanity by the UNESCO.*