

## Jordi Colomer at the Jeu de Paume in Paris

We make money not art. 2008

Regine

All i knew about Jordi Colomer before entering his solo show at Le Jeu de Paume in Paris was his *Anarchitekton* series, i was prepared for the absurd. I didn't know the absurd could make so much sense.

Colomer's video installations focus on the contemporary city and in particular on the influence of urbanism on human behaviour. They toy with fake actors in real situations, fictions set in barren landscapes, artificial spaces, urban simulacra and architectural narratives. Behind their humour and irony, his productions never fail to reveal us something about the sociological and psychological dimensions of his subjects.



Jordi Colomer, *En la Pampa (Cementerio Santa Isabel)*, 2007-2008. © ADAGP, Paris, 2008



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Colomer's aesthetics and architectural explorations pervade the whole exhibition. The videos are screened onto wooden panels, or in some makeshift structures, there is a battered trailer in the middle of one of the exhibition rooms and a mix-match of what looks like second-hand chairs are aligned against the walls.



*Models of the buildings used for the Anarchitekton performances, as displayed at the MACBA in Barcelona*

Pozo Almonte, a body of works which was produced for the Paris exhibition, is a moving trip to one of the few surviving mining towns exploiting saltpetre (potassium nitrate) in the Atacama desert in Chile. Instead of documenting what was left of the mining activity, the artist went to the cemetery and photographed its constructions. Each of them looks like a small house that redresses the builders' meagre resources with inventiveness and personal creativity. Architecture without architects at its best. As Colomer explains: *The cemetery is a sort of parallel city, well and truly alive, and full of thoroughly*

*terrestrial little houses. It is an area shared by the living and the dead, where the latter seem to be merely on holiday. And yet this family architecture also looks like the decor of another world...*



*Jordi Colomer, Pozo Almonte, 2008. Production Jeu de Paume, Paris. © ADAGP, Paris, 2008*



*Jordi Colomer, Pozo Almonte, 2008. Production Jeu de Paume, Paris. © ADAGP, Paris, 2008*

The Pope's protective vehicle, the [Popemobile](#), is an icon that has traveled all over the world. Says Colomer: *I wanted to put this highly meaningful image back into the street – in three-dimensional form but disencumbered of its Vatican pomp, with the nakedness of a prototype – so as to record the reactions of passers-by. The Popemobile's sacred dimension being already somewhat slight, it was chiefly a matter of desecrating its spectacular side and leaving only the bare bones. It was first and foremost a pretext for portraying a heterogeneous group of people, conjuring up a setting, creating a situation and just letting things happen... What kind of people were going past*



at noon on that summer day in 2005 in the fast-evolving area of Barcelona that lies along Diagonal Avenue in the Poble Nou district?



Jordi Colomer, *Papamóvil 2005*. Extrait du diaporama. © ADAGP, Paris, 2008

*En la Pampa* is an attempt to find whether there is a place on earth that can 'resist fiction'. A man and a woman, chosen because they are not actors, are left free to perform all sorts of activities and discussions in the Atacama desert in Chile. Viewers quickly realize that the mere presence of the camera turns the experiment into a fiction that contaminates the desert itself.



Jordi Colomer, *En la Pampa (Vagar en campo raso es...)*, 2008. © ADAGP, Paris, 2008

Anarchitekton is a series of videos produced over two years and starring a quizzical personage called Idroj Sanicne. The films shows him cavorting around Barcelona, Brasilia, Osaka and Bucharest, brandishing cardboard models of buildings that are visible in the background. By doing so he stretches the boundaries of architecture, highlights its 'backdrop' character, drags reality into fiction and gains the attention of passersby in the process.

Sanicne's performance evokes moments of angry protests, popular parades but also religious processions.



*Jordi Colomer, Anarchitekton, Brasilia, 2003*



*Jordi Colomer, Anarchitekton, Brasilia, 2004*

The work of Jordi Colomer is on view at Le Jeu de Paume in Paris until January 4, 2009.