

Contemporary Art Museums in Processes of De-Bordering: Looking at Topics in Exhibitions, Artists and the Urban Environment

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ABSTRACT

This work addresses contemporary art museums in Europe from the perspective of processes of de-bordering. Contemporary Art Museums are one of the main cultural agents of the urban modern life in a double sense: in accordance with their cultural agendas, as well as in accordance with their political representation in the urban sphere of modern cities. Issues of cultural activities at contemporary art museums like exhibitions commonly are about those topics which are current in the society. Their architecture and environment often have contributed to an urban renovation of a certain area. Some international examples are the Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao (Spain), among others. On the other hand, processes of de-bordering have had a high impact in modern urban life in accordance with social key fields, such as social inclusion, cultural diversity and identities, cultural democracy and social justice. The present paper compares and contrasts various examples of international contemporary art museums in accordance with variables based on de-bordering processes, such as topics in the museums' cultural agendas (exhibitions, conferences, workshops, etc.), the origin of artists as well as the insertion of the museum architecture in its urban environment. The sample of cases comprises three local museums in different European countries: the Whitechapel Gallery in London (U.K.); the MAC-VAL in Vall-de-Marne (France), the "Casa Encendida" in Madrid (Spain).

Keywords: art, museum, de-bordering processes, identities.

Themes: Museums & heritage; Immigration & Ethnicity.