



INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART

NEWS RELEASE

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CARLOS MOTTA: THE GOOD LIFE

JANUARY 18–March 30, 2008

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 6-8PM

EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGH WITH ARTIST CARLOS MOTTA AND CURATOR STAMATINA GREGORY: THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 5PM, *ICA MEMBERS ONLY*



top: Carlos Motta, *The Good Life*, video still, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2005-2008

bottom: Carlos Motta, *The Good Life*, video still, Tegucigalpa, Honduras, 2005-2008

PHILADELPHIA, PA

The Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) is pleased to present “Carlos Motta: The Good Life,” the first museum presentation of an ambitious work by Carlos Motta, on view January 18 – March 30, 2008. “The Good Life,” a long-term, in-progress, experimental documentary project, engages and critiques documentary practice itself. It is a relevant examination of the regional history, perception and effects of US interventionist policies in Latin America, at a time of global critical awareness of those politics.

Since 2005, Carlos Motta has recorded over 300 video interviews with civilians on the streets of twelve cities in Latin America. The questions he asked, on individual perceptions of US interventionism and foreign policy, democracy, leadership, and social inequality, resulted in an extremely wide spectrum of opinion, which varies according to local situations and forms of government in each country. The resulting footage is the basis of “The Good Life.” Informed by conceptual documentary traditions the project references the approach of cinema vérité classics such as Chris Marker’s *Le Jolie Mai* (1963) and Vilgot Sjöman’s *I am curious (Yellow)* (1967), which began to study the notion of public opinion as mediated construction.

In this iteration, created for the Project Space, Motta’s interviews with persons in Bogota, Buenos Aires, Managua, Mexico City, Santiago and Tegucigalpa, serve as both a conceptual and formal framework. Arranged in an open structure that evokes a classical space for the exercising of democracy, these conversations shed light on the effects of political intervention, and the public perception of political concepts, on the formation of national and individual subjectivities. The exhibition also comprises a series of accompanying photographs, shot during visits to each city, and a takeaway poster featuring texts commissioned from artists Ashley Hunt, Naeem Mohaiemen and Oliver Ressler; and political philosopher Maria Mercedes Gómez that answer the question, “What is democracy to you?”

Carlos Motta (b. Bogotá, Colombia, 1978, lives in New York) was a participant in the Whitney Independent Study Program, (2005-2006), and completed his MFA at Bard College in 2003. Working primarily in photography and video installation, he uses strategies from documentary and sociology to engage with specific political events in an attempt to observe their effects and suggest alternative ways to write and read these histories.

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*checklist and images available upon request.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ICA is located at:
118 South 36th Street at the
University of Pennsylvania

ICA is open to the public, except during
installation, from 12pm to 8pm on
Wednesday through Friday and from 11am
to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday.

Admission is \$6 for adults, \$3 for students
over 12, artists, and senior citizens; and
free to ICA members, children 12 and
under, PENN card holders, and on Sundays
from 11am to 1pm.

For more information,
call 215-898-7108/5911, or visit
www.icaphila.org.

INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Founded in 1963, the Institute of
Contemporary Art at the University of
Pennsylvania is a leader in the presentation
and documentation of contemporary art.
Through exhibitions, commissions,
educational programs, and publications,
ICA invites the public to share in the
experience, interpretation and
understanding of the work of established
and emerging artists.

He has had solo projects at Winkleman Gallery, New York, NY;
rum46, Aarhus, Denmark; Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT; Kevin Bruk Gallery,
Miami, FL; and La Alianza Francesca, Bogota, Colombia. His work has been
shown in numerous group exhibitions, at venues including CCS Bard Hessel
Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY; Fries Museum, Groningen,
Holland, among others.

Motta is the editor of artwurl.org, and faculty at the International Center of
Photography and Parsons The New School of Design in New York.

This exhibition is organized by 2007-2008 Whitney Lauder Curatorial Fellow Stamatina
Gregory and will be accompanied by a brochure publication.

ICA is grateful for funding provided by The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, the Commonwealth
of Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, The Dietrich Foundation, Inc., the Overseers Board for the
Institute of Contemporary Art, friends and members of ICA, and the University of Pennsylvania.
(Information complete as of 12/21/07.)

The artist wishes to thank Kevin Bruk (Kevin Bruk Gallery), Alberto Chehebar, Ella Fontanals-
Cisneros, and Solita Mishaan for their generous support for this exhibition.

ALL PROGRAMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE VISIT THE ICA WEBSITE, WWW.ICAPHILA.ORG,
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON PROGRAMS IN CONJUNCTION WITH "CARLOS MOTTA: THE GOOD
LIFE."