

# COMUNITARIO

SOCIETY, ART AND RESTAURATION IN OAXACA, MEXIKO



This evening presents two stories about social change with art as a catalyst and tool. The examples origins from one specific place; Oaxaca Mexico, and involve two workshops with different practices; glass art and church restauration. In the meeting with these different contexts we - a group of artists and writers from Sweden, Belgium and England - found an opportunity to scrutinize within ourselves; what does it mean to be part of a society.

Artistic creation in a financial reality which can and ought to be re-defined became the starting point for the project *Initiative of Transformative Cultures (EITC)*. The market do not wish to be site specific, even less take into account social context - here art and its exploration of place and context encourage alternatives. And, above all, vouch for the existence of several cultures.

EITC in collaboration with the Royal Institute of Art (Kunl. Konsthögskolan) have the pleasure of inviting you to an evening with presentations and discussions surrounding art, restauration, social economy and intercultural sustainability.

For those who are not able to attend the entire evening, it is possible to come/leave during the break. The presentations will be made in English.

## THE PROGRAM FOR THE EVENING

- 18.00 - Short presentation by ROBERT BREČEVIĆ (Performing Pictures, EITC)
- 18.10 - CHRISTIAN THORNTON, glass artist and founder of Studio Xaquixe,  
A conversation will be moderated by INGA MODÉN and CHRIS STERN, KKH.
- 19.10 - Paus with drinks and snacks
- 19.30 - GEORGINA SALDAÑA WONCHEE, conservator and manager of Talleres Comunitarios de Zegache,  
A conversation will be moderated by HÉLÈNE SVAHN GARREAU, NIRAS,
- 20.30 - Summary and discussion

**MONDAY OCTOBER 1**  
**18.00-21.00**

## MEJAN

KUNGLIGA KONSTHÖGSKOLAN  
SKEPPSHOLMEN

## HOUSE 28

HOUSE 28 IS SITUATED BEHIND THE KKH MAIN BUILDING, BY THE WATER. FOLLOW THE WATER PASS THE YOUTH HOSTEL AF CHAPMAN AND PASS THE STEAM BOAT JETTY. YOU CAN PRINT A MAP HERE:  
[HTTP://KKH.SE/IMAGES/STORIES/KONTAKT/KARTA\\_ENG.PDF](http://kkh.se/images/stories/kontakt/karta_eng.pdf)

## FREE ENTRANCE

BUT RSVP REQUIRED - SEE BELOW

## RSVP

MAIL [INGA@KKH.SE](mailto:INGA@KKH.SE)  
OR CALL 0707 535186  
THE LATEST FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 28TH

ABOUT EITC: <http://euroaxaca.org/about>  
ABOUT XAQUIXE: <http://www.xaquixe.com>  
ABOUT TALLERES COMUNITARIOS DE ZEGACHE:  
<http://proyectozegache.com/>

# THE TRANSMUTATION OF SPIRIT THROUGH MATTER

A PRESENTATION WITH CHRISTIAN THORNTON



Art and artisanal glass studios around the world traditionally work with dated technologies and produce glass from 100% raw materials. Archaic equipment and traditions limit quality as well as create enormous amounts of contamination while consuming an excess of resources used as combustibles.

The discussion will revolve around Christian's experience in using the principles of sustainability and of living systems to view the immediate environment. How can we challenge our current perceptions and help to dismantle the facade of the structures that no longer serve us? How do we utilize this focus on a daily bases to continue to co-create and express ones artistic nature, while being truly within a particular living system - viewing ones process in terms of the whole, taking into consideration human and environmental interactions?

Christian is an artist and creator of Studio Xaquixe, an innovative contemporary art glass studio located in Oaxaca, Mexico, that utilises a holistic approach to business management based on living system philosophies. The studio constantly searches for innovative ways to apply these principles, asking: 'Is it possible to exist within these parameters while nurturing a sustainable structure in our immediate lives ... and within a consumerist society?' For the past 10 years the studio has specialised in reformulating waste glass, alternative fuel equipment, as well as social and environmental impact.

*My artistic work is a process I use to communicate my feelings and perceptions through the use of glass and other materials. My subjects usually revolve around the phenomena of the transmutation of spirit through matter and how that relates to the paradigm of materialistic reality.*

*I am interested in the transparent barriers that contain our current perceptions, like glass seemingly physically solid to our senses. If we can break through those fluid boundaries, certainly they must be as fragile as the glass itself.*



# TALLERES COMUNITARIOS DE ZEGACHE

## A PRESENTATION WITH GEORGINA SALDANA WONCHEE

The pueblo called Santa Ana Zegache located in the central valleys of Oaxaca is a community of 2000 inhabitants who, like many others has suffered from the migration of many family members to the USA. The migrants are in search of a better standard of living and better wages to help support their families. The effect that this migration has had on the pueblo is loss of the agricultural heritage that had sustained the community. The current status of the cultivation is only sufficient for local consumption.

Aside from the desolation left by this migration, there is a cultural heritage of a seventeenth century Dominican church which has apportioned its inhabitants with a legacy of great artistic and historical value. The Church houses a series of wall paintings, baroque altarpieces, ancient manuscripts, paintings, sculptures and a large collection various styles of mirrors with hand craved frames. Thanks to Oaxacan painter Rodolfo Morales, a restoration of the temple began in 1997. Along with alleviating the damage of the church and grounds, it helped to heal the soul and spirit of the people as they found pride and could identify with the heritage of their community

again and thus, came the possibility for a positive change.

There are many examples of how cultural expressions have changed the destinies of the residents of Santa Ana Zegache who have suffered from hardship and violence. With the intention of giving them the opportunity to rebuild and find new meaning in their lives Maestro Rodolfo Morales created community workshops, offices, and a restoration program on the church grounds. The project encompasses woodcarving, woodworking and hand embroidery, which has revived the local economy with the participation of the community, which produce high quality handicrafts and designs using baroque and contemporary designs.

The importance of this project is evident in the resurgence of the community and its culture. Currently artists continue working in various collaborations with the talented crafts people of the work.

Georgina Saldana Wonchee, is a restorer and the director of the Talleres Comunitarios de Zegache.

THE PRESENTATION IS ARRANGED AS PART OF THE EUROAXACAN INITIATIVE OF TRANSFORMATIVE CULTURES (EITC) – A EUROPEAN-MEXICAN COLLABORATION RUNNING 2011-2013. EITC CONNECTS ART WITH TRADITIONAL – AS WELL AS FUTURE – CRAFTS, WHILE BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE DIGITAL, MEDIATED AND CORPOREAL WORLDS. THE OVERALL AIM IS TO BE A CATALYST OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS BY MEANS OF TRANS-CULTURAL PRODUCTION.

THE EITC PROJECT IS INITIATED AND RUN BY PERFORMING PICTURES AND SUPPORTED BY THE EC CULTURE FUND (2007-2013), KONSTNÄRSNÄMNDEN, KULTURRÅDET AND STOCKHOLMS STADS KULTURFÖRVALTNING.

**K**ONSTNÄRSNÄMNDEN

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