

## Taller California

Independent and Transborder Editorial Project

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Translated by Coco Gutiérrez-Magallanes

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Conceptually situated in a “riot zone,” or “disturbance zone” *Taller California* (2017) is an independent editorial house-project recently founded. The geographic location of *Taller California* in the border between Mexico and the United States responds to a very particular linguistic situation; the modes of existence of this border are constantly threatened by various types of violence: economic, social, linguistic and gender based. This editorial project works with artists, and other interested folk, to produce different printed materials and publications that can be more readily accessible and that clearly oppose the violence of the political economy imposed on what metaphorically and materially Gloria Anzaldúa has named the *borderlands*.

It is an editorial project that collaborates with artists from the Americas and from the transborder zone Tijuana/San Diego for the creation of different projects and publications at low cost, accessible, bilingual and done by women that have crossed the borders between the visual arts, film and literature. In this way, it is an editorial project that is a “riot” or disturbance in that not only it elaborates projects collectively and or in collaboration but also it wants to provide access to materials that are usually inaccessible be it because of the small number of print and /or because of the high cost in the translation of the works; to disturb the logic of the book as a luxury item is, I consider, one of the reasons of existence of this project.

In addition to disturbing the logic of the book as a sumptuary object, this editorial project is in search of working on projects that have as a purpose to make a “ripple effect” in the readership by promoting bilingual or trilingual works in Spanish, English, and other indigenous languages by artists that are little known in the Americas or that have little circulation in the mainstream bookstores or cultural spaces. One of its most recent projects, *Relaciones Inesperadas*<sup>1</sup> (2018), is about a little-known local group of artists from an art school in Tijuana. So in this way, the spirit of this editorial project is to put in circulation and in the hands of the general public, works and materials of authors that are little known and that are not translated as much and that in another way it would be very costly to produce in print and to distribute their works.

The creations/publications of this project aim to put at hands reach authors and themes on and about the border and which cross “the lines” and “checkpoints” established by languages, disciplines and gender mandates. The purpose is for the works to be discussed and dialogued in depth in multiple spheres such as the university (students, professors and specialized researchers), the community/general public and many cultural spaces throughout the Americas.

The director of this independent editorial project, Lorena Gómez Mostajo, has a vast experience in creative projects and holds credentials, both of which ratify her praxis. She is a writing editor and a photographer. She has collaborated in Mexican journals such as *Luna Córnea*<sup>2</sup> as an essayist and editor and as a article writer in *La Tempestad*<sup>3</sup>. In addition, she collaborates in the editorial project *Editorial Ambulante*<sup>4</sup> from the film festival by the same name. Gómez Mostajo holds an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and she has a vast experience in artistic projects and collective and individual editorial projects.

Her experience in visual, literary and translation projects (English-Spanish) was what called the attention of the editors of the compilation *Con los ojos de y la lengua en la Mano. Leer y Traducir a Gloria Anzaldúa* (Nina Hoechtl, Julianne Gilland, Coco Gutiérrez-Magallanes & Rían Lozano) to work with and in collaboration the edition of works, essays, creative writing and visual productions that convey different themes and some texts in translation Spanish and bilingual (English-Spanish) of the written work of Chicana writer, lesbian, socialist and feminist Nepantlera, Gloria Anzaldúa. The call for contributions for this compilation attracted a significant number of proposals and because of the amazingly wide response, the editors decided to elaborate it in three volumes or in three deliveries. It is currently in the editing-elaboration process.

The *Taller California* was the perfect match for this project since it functions as a space for writers, artists, and interested people, to carry out printed works in non-traditional forms and for a wider reach making the print or publication more readily available or accessible. The publications of *Taller de California* are printed on a *Risograph* and assembled manually in such a way that the publications could be worked on and molded as book objects artists' books, or non-conventional publications. Additionally, the manual workings of the edition and publication allow for new editions to be printed on demand by the very reading community that is interested in new editions or more prints.

One way in which the project interrupts or “disturbs” the logic of financial capital in the dominant editorial industry is the *trueque* (exchange) as is also a way to support its own sustainability. *Trueque* here is like a

“disturbance” for capital. The artists or folks who publish in this project also give “provide materials for other artists” publication projects. The logic in this “zone of disturbance” is that of an economy based on solidarity for the purpose of the editing and printing of the books and publications for a wider access. Is this subverting the logic of transnational editorial corporations? Does this put them upside down? The answers to these questions are: maybe yes, maybe not. Or maybe, just maybe, *Taller California* is simply looking for a flight of the logic of capital from the roots and in doing so is creating new material and conceptual forms of making possible publications in a “disturbance zone” also material and conceptual such as that of the border itself or what we call borderlands so that more and more people can access and read works of and about authors such as Gloria Anzaldúa, a border historical body such as her body of work.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Relaciones Inesperadas, 2018. Group of artists focused on production activities, experimental education and art reflection in contemporary art, <https://relacionesinesperadas.wordpress.com>

<sup>2</sup> Luna Córnea, 2018. Bilingual Publication (Spanish and English) which is based in the reflection and analysis of photography, [https://issuu.com/c\\_imagen/stacks/a23fc21f6f9a42d189611efae82eb9ce](https://issuu.com/c_imagen/stacks/a23fc21f6f9a42d189611efae82eb9ce)

<sup>3</sup> La Tempestad, 2018. Mexican Journal focused on the analysis of artistic manifestations, <https://www.latempestad.mx/>

<sup>4</sup> Ambulante Ediciones, 2018. Editorial Project that looks to publish works that expand the documentary film culture and to generate new spaces of reflection; to discover, to transform, and to share ideas, <https://www.ambulante.org/iniciativas/publicaciones/>