



## Jordi Colomer *Medina - Parkour*

*Medina-Parkour* (2013) presents a set of videos and photographs undertaken by **Jordi Colomer** during a residency program in Tetouan (Morocco), the former capital of the Spanish protectorate. While there, Colomer directed a workshop with students from the École Nationale d'Architecture that was registered in video format -the piece *Architectes (Tétouan)*. Concurrently with this project, the artist carried out a series of individual activities.

Colomer's project in Trankat, the residency space, introduces a Tetouan that takes the role of active subject. Starting from a critical view towards traditional urban theory, *Medina-Parkour* challenges the common usages of architecture and urban space through the works that form the project. Both *Architectes (Tétouan)* and *Medina-Parkour (Tétouan)* reflect, through the different media of photography and film, on the different modes of life in the city and the implication and integration of its inhabitants. Colomer challenges the modes of representation and usage of the metropolis through his practice. He studies deeply the morphology of the medina and its adaptive growth to the city's population. This model, established by daily life, presents an alternative logic to Western urban planning.

On the other hand, questions like the passage of time in the city or the subjective visions of the urban space (what Henri Lefebvre calls "the production of space") are also part of the work's fabric: the temporary character of the medina, inherent to its urban distribution, also influences the multiplicity of the forms and narratives that structure it. This is what Colomer narrates in *Medina-Parkour*: how the spatial configuration of a historical neighborhood (and, by extension, the city), with its terraces and rooftops -places that appear in other works such as "Crier sur les toits" and "The Istanbul Map"-, create an open, accessible, continuous space of domestic intimacy.

The installation of *Medina-Parkour* is composed of two videos, "**Architectes (Tétouan)**" and "**Médina (Parkour)**", and two photographs: "**Medina (Tetuán)**" and "**Zapatos de Tetuán**". Close to the documentary format, *Architectes (Tétouan)* describes a physical and intellectual tour around the urban space of the city, guided by the students of l'École Nationale d'Architecture de Tétouan, in which the same students serve as guides. This dwelling explores the city in a similar way to the Situationists' driftings and allows the artist to know the areas where the students live and their personal stories. On the other hand, a short animation shows the creation of an evolutive miniature of the city: a species of exquisite corpse made with traditional bread and pastries on the rooftop of Trankat, the residency space. The quantity used is the average production of one day in the neighborhood bakery, the main source of bread in the area. The miniature establishes a parallel between the materials and the city (a sort of reflection of the production of space, which is made by its inhabitants). The bread is shown here as an ephemeral art and the bakery, as its place of production, the neuralgic heart of the medina. By doing so, Colomer studies a form of local craftsmanship, based on an essential food in the Moroccan culture, as bread is. At the same time, he uses it to represent a mimesis of the life in the city. This gaze towards the rhizomatic and informal circulation of bread and its artisans shows up to which extent these basic elements shape the neighborhood distribution in the interior of the medina.



*Architectes (Tétouan)*

The animation of "**Architectes (Tétouan)**" is constructed from fixed images, mixing the technique with conventional video fragments of 25 images.

In *Medina-Parkour (Tetuán)*, the artist runs across the rooftop terraces of the old Medina carrying a bag of bread. The terrace roofs -which Colomer has explored widely through his career- are still accessible and active in the countries of the Middle East and Maghreb. In a sort of gymnastic and burlesque manner, the *parkour* practice is evoked. The artist reenacts this common activity in the European peripheries, following the movements of cats and kids, the protagonists of this pastime in the heights of the city. Through jumping across the walls that set the boundaries of properties and territories, the limits between domestic privacy and public space are questioned. By means of a parallel itinerary, a heterotopic space that functions as an alternative to the codes of conduct of the city at ground level is drawn.



*Fragment of Médina – Parkour (Tetuan).*

In both works, bread is a symbolic and sculptural element, a foundation of the living forms and organization in the city.