

## ***The Works and Days***

Opening: 5/4/2011

"Gods and men are irritated with those who live inactive"

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Hesiod, *Works and days*, c. 700 AC

To the free men of ancient Greece, labor was not a necessity, but an option. However, philosophers and poets quickly realized that in work a series of personal and communal, ethical and social values were forged by this activity and made it something much more important than a simple task to comply.

For the bourgeois society, the work defines a way of living in community, of acting, of intervening and belonging to it. In today's indifferent and devastating capitalism, participation in the labor market is an imperative that determines social existence, inclusion or exclusion, the possession of rights or civil nullity.

The changing world of work induces radical changes in lifestyles, interpersonal relationships, shared values, social hierarchies, historical legacies, memories, values and identities. The last twentieth century years are particularly eloquent in this regard: the displacement of the preeminence of industrial production by knowledge, the disappearance of certain trades, the continued decline of the rights of workers, the mutation of its social composition, the precarious professions, the struggles to uphold values, claims and even the same labor sources; account for the changing contexts in which they have had to set up new ways of living, persisting, resisting and surviving.

This exhibition is proposed as a reflection, modest and partial, about the alternatives that have followed this process in our country, through the approach of specific situations. The works of the selected artists unfold echoes of political, economic and cultural events that have deeply affected the Argentine labor physiognomy in more or less evident, more or less radical ways.

The craft knowledge, the sources of re-appropriated employment, the human maps of the current work force and contexts of labor exercise, past and present, are combined here to offer us a space for thinking, analysis and evaluation of a phenomenon that involves us all. Its appearance in an art space that belongs to a guild is not accidental. It is our intention that the union framework, protagonist also of the reviewed processes, reinforces the values of this exhibition and the reflections it could cause.

*Rodrigo Alonso*

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