



**Title, SIGNS - A planetary alphabet Jorge ORTA 1973-2002**

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### **A planetary alphabet.**

During the mid 70's, under the military dictatorship in Argentina, Jorge Orta elaborated a codified system of signs, which was to later to become his poetic and visual "planetary" alphabet. This poetic planetary alphabet is a utopian form of communication and dialogue, transcending linguistic barriers. It is a metaphorical crossroads of peoples and of their diverse cultures. Composed of thousands of universal signs originating from various parts of the world, this alphabet synthesises the past, the present and the future and the three-time scales interact and overlap to define new utopias.

The alphabet is informed by the collective memory and has been organized into five levels: Ideogram Signs, Objects Signs, Meta-social Signs, Sound Signs and Textual Signs.

Each artwork is the pretext to create new signs on any one of these levels level.

Site visits and encounters with different cultures are important occasions for Orta to "gather" contextual indicators that in turn he re-interprets or re-creates, categorises and transforms.

### **Ideogram Signs**

Transcriptions of a "world" legacy collected from various sources:

Natural - such as rocks, stones, erosive formations, silhouettes, geological faults, roots, branches, leaves, bark, fruit, flowers, feathers, colours and "sensations".

Cultural - such as rock carvings, museum archives, found objects, idiosyncratic designs and graphics, marks inscribed in architecture and contemporary life.

### **Metasocial Signs**

Images that interpret the contradictions and clashing forces within the reality of our contemporary society.

### **Object Signs**

Beyond their formal aspect, they are the living proof of a community, homage to memories and cultures.

### **Textual Signs**

Transcriptions of community memory in the form of words, phrases, oral expressions and written fragments. Assembled together, they constitute a new layer of writing, "global and interchangeable".

### **Sound Signs**

An archive of natural mummings, spoken accounts and interviews specific to each site. They can be transformed into image through digital trans-coding and vice a versa into sound through the analysis of the morphological structure. This experiment challenges the correlation system, an intense fusion between the sound space and the visual space.

This growing sign system or lexicon constitutes an "infinite poetic alphabet".