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IDEA FOR A HORIZONTAL EXHIBITION by Felix Riera

"The light is buried by chains and noise in impudent challenge of science without roots."
Stanza of the poem "Aurora" by Federico García Lorca belonging to his work "Poeta en Nueva York"

In most exhibitions of contemporary photography, the works are displayed/hung on the walls of galleries or museums in a traditional way. They are observed by the spectator at the height of their eyes, frontally. The stillness and accuracy in which they are shown guide our steps. The wall is a vertical surface that orders our gaze. We slide silently with a movement that moves forward and stops, which resembles the blinking of the eyes, the discovered object. It is a movement in discontinuity marked by the pause. It is also a story with beginning and end that is established by the size of the exhibition hall that we travel from one point to another. The exhibited works are observed as we would have seen them at the end of the 18th century in the Louvre Museum. It is therefore necessary to ask ourselves if we should not observe the exhibition space from a more open and complex perspective as regards exhibitions of photographic works, in the same direction that conceptual art advanced.

When I look at Frank's photographs, I am reminded of the work of the German artist Moholy Nagy in his work "*Dynamic of the big city*." A screenplay never made, invisible cinema, in which the artist tries to establish the rhythms of a city through fragments of it. A great wealth of images in which the viewer must inhabit the city in the face of fast-moving images/signs, where animals, factories, darkness, half-lights, athletes, smoke, martial parades converge in our view.... Well, in a large number of photographs of Frank one can get a similar experience, that of being living in New York City hand in hand with the "*murmurs*" that have been captured. One has the sensation of being present, listening to the thoughts of the passers-by, or of absorbing the last voices that still, palely, throb in the reflections of the shop windows. They are images that, more than being seen, propose us to be walked, traveled horizontally, observed in an aerial way, as crossing the zebra crossing so as not to be run over. Another aspect to highlight in the work of Frank is that this, unlike the tradition of European art that we can observe since the eighteenth century where the sublime was associated more with the vertical than the horizontal, the mountains than the plains, As JM Coetzee observes in his book "*South African Landscape*," he moves looking for the plain of the landscape of New York in an act of sensitive description that forces us to look down, to stop dreaming of the mountain tops to get into the broken, worn, anonymous murmur of the most vertical city in the world.

It is for this reason that it would be interesting to expose this series of photos, which I dare to define as "*murmur images*," not hanging on the walls of the exhibition hall but on the floor, so that the viewer does not look who is there, does not observe but transits. An act more physical than intellectual, capable of provoking in the spectator the illusion of a journey. The layout of the photographs should be by accumulation, they should be scattered on the ground, they should force us to bend down so we can look carefully to frame the fragments of the city again. The faces, the crystals, the saturated lights, the uncovered looks, the rhythms of the city that we notice in Frank's images are not simply an act of contemplation, they are noise. Photographs must be able to be seen holding them on the ground with their hands as if the spectators owned them for a moment. When we take them, when we touch them, we will live the experience that they are ours, that they are part of our lives. By bringing them closer to our eyes they will allow us to hear the murmur that they have caught and that have been released in the viewer's gaze. In this sense I see the photographs exposed in the same poetic logic as the *Mnemosyne Atlas* of Aby Warburg but not in vertical tables but in horizontal tables.

My proposal implies that the individual character of each photograph disappears in favor of a conceptual project. The viewer must not understand each photograph but the experience of capturing the dynamics of a city like New York at the hands of "*images murmur*." What the visitor should value is the global proposal to live for a moment the city that the artist offers. Therefore, anyone who wants to buy a specific photograph will be able to do so, but will also be able to purchase the entire installation. At the end of the path of images we should be able to have a small and dark room where we can hear the murmurs of the city without images. In short, the gaze of the photographer is established by the hands of the spectators who choose what to see by taking them from the ground or from a walkway to the ground. Catching is not the same as looking, because in catching there is a mechanism of choice, curiosity, implication, and possession.

Note: (In this way, if larger photographs are interspersed with smaller ones that can be picked up, it will provoke the will of the visitor to appropriate that image that he already has in his hands, and he will want to buy. The smaller format or in a larger format.)

Felix Riera studied at the RTVE Institute in Barcelona. He has developed his professional activity in the publishing field and in the world of television and cinema. As a producer he has highlighted his work of adapting to the audiovisual medium of literary works of reference such as productions: Homenots on the figure of the writer Josep Plà for TVE and TVC, Être Dieu on Salvador Dalí for TVE and La Mediterrànea, based on the Work of Baltasar Porcel for TVC. In film and television he has been a producer of different movies and series such as "*Puro Veneno*", "*El Faro*", "*Chronicles of Occult Truth*". He has also participated as a content consultant for the production company Optima TV, of which he was a founding partner. In the publishing field, he has been editorial director of "*The Sphere of Books*" in Barcelona and Group 62, the leading publisher in the Catalan language. He is the founder of the online newspaper elsingularidigital.cat. He has been a professor of Audiovisual Communication at the Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona and has participated in the Master's in Cinema at the Ramon Llull University and in the cultural management of the University of Barcelona. He has been a member of the Audiovisual Council of Catalonia (CAC). Subsequently, he directed the Institute of Cultural Enterprises of the Department of Culture of the Generalitat de Catalunya. On the other hand, he is a founding member of the Círculo de Cultura and was a member of the advisory commission of the International Congress of Economy and Culture, promoted by the Chamber of Commerce of Barcelona in 2009. He is currently the Director of the group of Issuers of Catalonia Radio.

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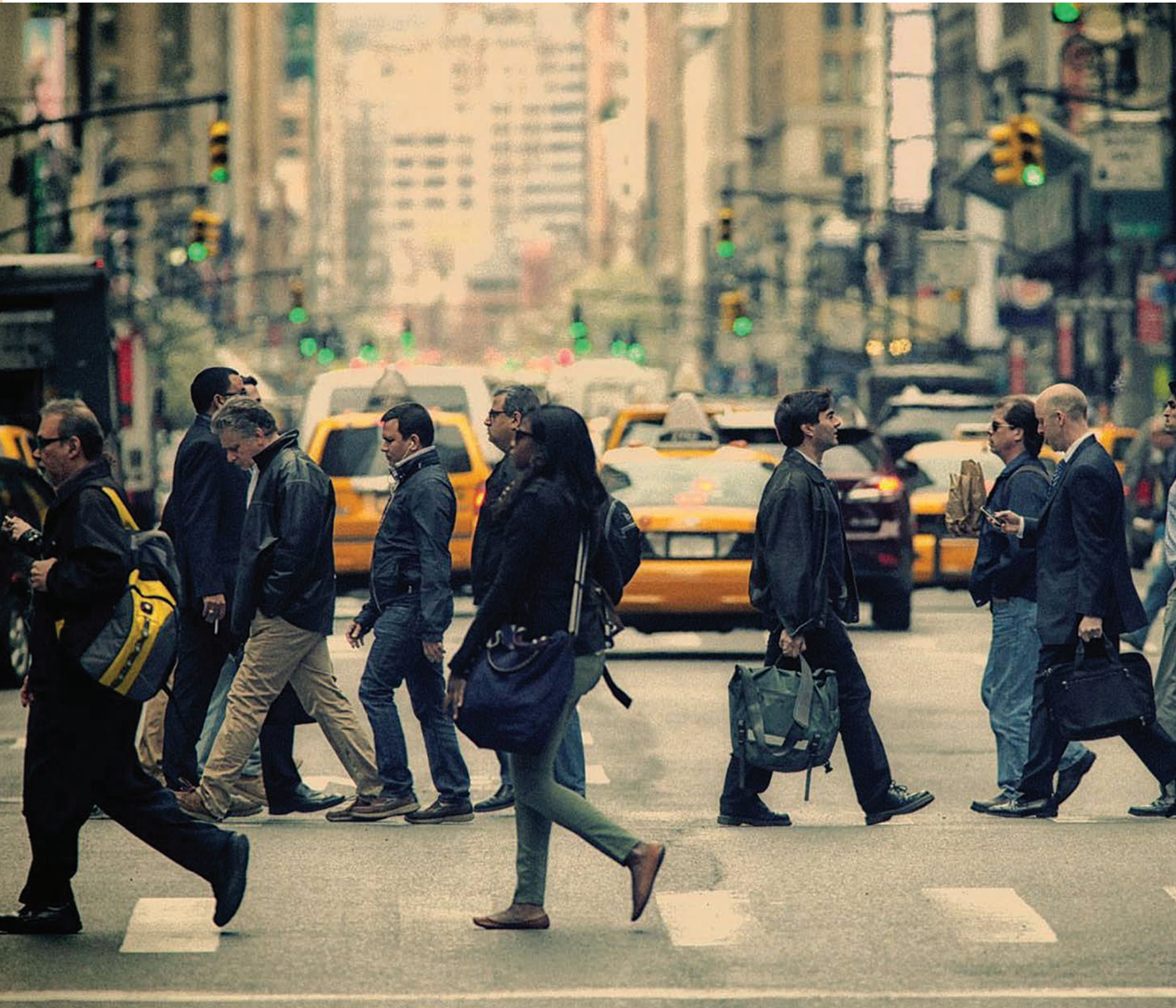


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EXIT

A photograph of a red 'EXIT' sign hanging above a staircase. The sign is rectangular with a black background and the word 'EXIT' in large, bold, red capital letters. It is mounted on a wall. Below the sign, a staircase with a metal railing leads downwards. The background is dark and industrial, with visible structural elements like beams and pipes. Several long, fluorescent light fixtures are visible, providing a warm, yellowish glow to the scene. The overall atmosphere is somewhat gritty and institutional.



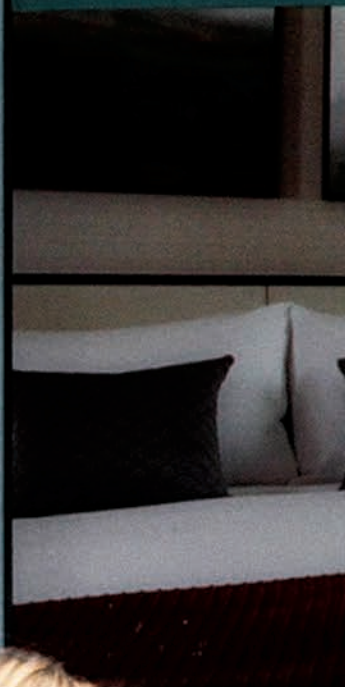
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