

## HEARD IN A DREAM

“I was up all night sleeping.”

## MORNING IS EASY

The morning is easy.  
You’ve done it before.  
You pee, wash your  
face, open the door,  
leave the bathroom.

It’s night that’s hard.

NIGHT: INSURGENCIES

# An Intro to a Night Manifesto

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The Night Seminar in São Paulo was organized in 2014 as a means to discuss new ways of understanding the night. The independent group CoLaboratorio and the City of São Paulo partnered to see how regulations and incentives could enhance the city’s nightlife, strengthening both its creativity and economic importance. It was one of many initiatives that had been bubbling in the city for some years and found its pivotal point in the 2012 mayoral elections.

São Paulo is a metropolis of 20 million people within a vast area, fragmented by deep social-spatial segregation. One result of this segregation has been eight decades of car-oriented urban planning that has destroyed the pedestrian scale of the city. Together, these phenomena have exacerbated the split between private and public spheres. In conjunction with real and manufactured fear, daily life has become enclosed behind fortress-like walls, and public spaces have gradually become leftover spaces, spaces for no one.

In 2012, as a homophobic right-wing candidate rose in the polls, several independent arts groups got together to organize a cultural response by hijacking public spaces for music shows, community uses, and protest activities. These gatherings at Roosevelt Plaza came to be known as the “Pink Plaza Shows,” evoking the “rose” in Roosevelt, a firm stand against the homophobic and racist comments made during the mayoral race. These meetings

went some way towards temporarily satisfying the desire for a new use of the city’s shared spaces, and brought them into the political arena through their occupation.

Out of this emerged CoLaboratorio, a group formed by professionals from different sectors and research areas who are interested in discussing new forms of urban interaction and development. We believe in the creation of “Cultural Territories,” in which urban space is understood as the interaction of its hardscape and softscape,<sup>1</sup> and where voices and memories are as important as streets and buildings.

Nightlife is one of these territories, a time-space in which the city breathes differently and in which many voices can be heard. Rich with culture and life, as well as economic power, nightlife in São Paulo is large-scale but difficult to catalogue. As we began our research, we found there was little actual information about it. São Paulo’s Night Seminar was thus planned as a partnership with local officials to start building collective knowledge about the city’s night.

One hundred people were invited to the Night Seminar to discuss the topic in group roundtables, and over three days, artists, DJs, researchers, journalists, owners of night-oriented establishments, workers, and producers, all linked in one way or the other to the city’s night life, discussed São Paulo’s night. During the evenings, seminars and presentations brought into the debate prominent figures in the city’s nocturnal cultural scene, as well as politicians, city officials, and three international guests: Luc

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Gwiazdzinski (Grenoble University), William Straw (McGill University), and Mirik Milan (Amsterdam's Night Mayor).

Our main questions and conclusions were summarized in a book, Manifesto da Noite/Night Manifesto, available for free online. The manifesto forms the centre of the book, which is intended to initiate an international dialogue, and strive for more equality and freedom for urban nightlife around the world. A video summary of the event may be found on YouTube by searching "Manifesto da noite."

NOTE

<sup>1</sup> Here the terms hardscape and softscape are used to differentiate the physical form of the city (hard) from that which is non-physical and intangible (soft).