

The Association of American Cultures (TAAC)
Open Dialogue XI: Global Connections to Cultural Democracy
The Magnolia Hotel, Denver, Colorado
July 12–15, 2007

BIOS OF YOUNG CULTURAL LEADERS
PARTICIPATING IN THE GLOBAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Gabriella Gomez-Mont

Gabriella Gomez-Mont is an interdisciplinary artist, writer, and thinker from Mexico City. She has worked in Mexico, the United States, and Italy, has exhibited her work in Japan, Mexico, and Europe, and has acted as contributor and editor for a number of national and international arts magazines. In 2004 she founded Toxico: Cultura Contemporanea, an art foundation which brings world-famous artists to Mexico to conduct workshops and create collaborative projects with young professionals. She also founded Laboratorio Curatorial 060, an experimental collective of thinkers who come to the arts from diverse backgrounds, and who focus on questioning contemporary cultural practices.

Aziz Ridouan

Aziz Ridouan is a 19-year-old political lobbyist from Paris who began lobbying against AOL at age 12 to stop the waste caused by their CD giveaways and serves as an advisor to the recent French presidential contender for the Socialist party, Ségolène Royal. He is the co-founder of the French Association des Audionautes, a group that provides legal services to individuals targeted by major corporations on charges of illegal downloading. Ridouan often gives media interviews, meets regularly with members of Parliament and other politicians, and has been roundly praised for his eloquence, ease, and lack of pretension. As he describes it, his role is largely to explain and represent the reality of young French citizens to the politicians whose decisions affect their lives.

Quentin Renaudo

Quentin Renaudo is a 17-year-old political lobbyist from Paris who co-founded the French Association des Audionautes—which loosely translates as "the audio surfers"—with Aziz Ridouan in 2004. The Audionautes is a nonprofit association that provides legal assistance to those accused of illegally downloading music, many of whom were taken to court by the Civil Society of Phonographic Producers—the French equivalent of the Recording Industry Association of America. Renaudo currently serves as the organization's vice president.

Carlos Enríquez Verdura

Carlos Enríquez Verdura is the Director of International Cultural Promotions for CONACULTA, Mexico's National Council of Culture and Arts, Mexico's equivalent of the National Endowment for the Arts. Enríquez believes that art does not specifically correspond to a nation based on the cultural identities of the artist, but that it extends beyond borders and functions similar to a universal language. He desires to present contemporary Mexican art in a way that transcends stereotypes—created by the prominence of notable artists such as Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera—and depicts Mexican art as unique and globally significant. Through his work with Mexico's National Council of Culture and Arts, Enríquez Verdura seeks to connect the development of Mexican art and culture to the global conversation, to expose the richness and

diversity of Mexican contemporary art to other nations' arts communities, and to help launch the careers of a younger generation of Mexican artists.

Mauricio de Font-Réaulx

Mauricio de Font-Réaulx is the project director and motivating force behind the construction of the Centro Cultural Universitario at the Universidad de Guadalajara. The Centro is a unique development where culture, entertainment, and commerce converge. It offers advanced technology and mixed-use infrastructure for housing, recreation, work, and space for quality shows. The Centro—classified as a “cultural district” because of its proportion and significant addition to Mexico’s cultural landscape—mixes virtually every form of art with culture, with venues for the visual and performing arts, exhibitions of everything from art to environmental science, along with Mexico’s second largest library.

Natalia Toledo

Natalia Toledo is a Zapotec poet, writer, spokesperson and activist for indigenous women’s rights, and daughter of the acclaimed painter Francisco Toledo, from Oaxaca, Mexico. In 2004, Toledo wrote *Guie’ Yaasé’ (black Olivo)* by which received the prize Nezahualcóyotl de Literatura, only national prize of contemporary indigenous Literature in Mexico. Toledo travels around the world doing readings of her poetry and speaking to the plight of indigenous women.

Ivan Duran

Ivan Duran is the Belize-based director of Stonetree Records, a record label that works with artists in the Afro-Cuban, African-Belize, and Caribbean music genre. Duran, born in Belize to Catalanian parents, founded Stonetree in 1995 after studying music at the Escuela Nacional de Música in Havana, Cuba. His work involves producing, researching, promoting, and managing the tours of artists engaged in the Garifuna traditions (African-Belize). Duran is currently working on his next project: *Umalali*. *Umalali*, the Garifuna Women’s project—the result of countless auditions of the best Garifuna women singers and efforts to revive their voices in the musical tradition. He has been described as “an incredible one-man show of the next generation.”