The issue’s title Periférico, short for ‘amplio períferico’ or peripheral ring, refers to the name of the main road that encircles Mexico City. In one of our earlier conversations, we asked ourselves whether it was possible to address contemporary Mexican and Australian cultural agents, both in the way in which they work together and in the relationships they are part of, without addressing the very complex, endless and has no apparent purpose of confronting our thesis, and to hear from our contributors to reflect on three major points of enquiry:

- Tracing some of the key developments from the 1990s which positioned contemporary Mexican art on the global art circuit and their subsequent impact on the current milieu of artists.
- The way in which art production in Mexico responds to the pessimistic situation that the country faces.
- The intersection of ideas between Mexican and international contemporary artists in different scenarios.

We asked them to reflect on the impact that such a harrowing context has on their art, how it impacts the narrative and incisions, like bullets, to collage of images and text which relate to the Staircase Project’s capital (Mexico Distrito Federal), a city perpetually in motion, and Cuauhtémoc Medina and Aline Hernández both introduce an article by Lauren Brincat which resulted from Cuauhtémoc’s suggestion to the artist: “you should walk in traffic.”

Due to the dual nature of the publication, many similarities and coincidences emerge. The unconscious relationships between collaborators, both in the way in which they formally resolved their texts and in their approaches to producing them, have been enlightening to us. As Regine Basha’s piece cleverly suggests, language also binds us, perhaps not as countries but certainly within the networks in which we operate. She identifies the evolution of a transatlantic language (ArtSpeak/NoSpeak) that originates as a means of communication between groups that do not have a language in common but need to understand each other in order to trade. The borders blur. Naturally, an interest arises to describe some of the roads and circuits that may already connect Mexico with Australia. Violeta Horcasitas, for example, presents us with an unofficial map of an artistic community; revealing existing lines between artists which we might not have been aware of.

As Alme Hernández points out in her text, to talk about traffic in Mexico City is to open a sort of Pandora’s Box: the topic is complex, endless and has no apparent solution. For inhabitants of Mexico City it is the most commonplace topic of conversation one could choose, like talking about weather, perhaps because it affects everyday life, invariably - and distracts from the more weighty topics which sadly are part of Mexico’s every day. A great portion of life is spent in the stagnant concrete highways (particularly Chilpancín in the cultural centre of the country) idles, enduring, waiting for change. But there are plenty of people out there who are resisting, reacting; some finding poetry in failure, and others fearlessly walking into traffic as a way to describe the world.