

**Funk Staden**  
**Dias & Riedweg © 2007**  
**Videoinstallation, variable dimensions**

Hans Staden (1527-1578) was born in Homberg and died in Wolfhagen, both neiborgh villages of Kassel. He left Kassel and made two journeys to Brazil, where he got caught by and liberated from the cannibal *Tupinambá* indians. His book relating this episode, called „Wahrhaftige Historia“ (True History) is indeed the very first ethnographic record of Brazil. It was first published in 1557 and definitely influenced the general Imagery of the Exotic, which builded up the European perception of Life and Culture in the tropics for centuries, contributing to the myth of the Wild, the Exotic, the Strange, the Foreigner. The Other and the Culture of the Other have always been the product of the perception of the one who will have his relate made as a truth, as a historical fact.

Rio de Janeiro, in another hand, still daily produces terribly violent stories in uncertain grounds. Unofficial stories and official facts violently disagree in the storytelling of different social realities. Still they face the same economy of global capitalism. One of the channels of expression of this constant disagreement between the official history and the local realities is the musical genre named as Funk Carioca. Many of the songs are hyper brutal and often sexually charged. Many of them are forbidden in radios, records and mass media vehicles. Still they silently turned to be very popular, present as many of the unofficial realities that they speak out for.

Dias & Riedweg have invited a group of funk dancers to re-stage nine of the original illustrations of Staden's book. The artists have also constructed an object inspired in the *Iberapema* (a long piece of wood used as a weapon by the *Tupinambás* to kill their enemies), to which they attached three cameras, to thus film the Funk balls in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. The resulting images don't make a specific focus, but document the universe of the Funk music around the turning cameras, substituting any narrative for a rythm, where the conducting line of the script is only the movement of the one who dances with them, therefore who films. In these scenes, the funk dancers celebrate their music and their culture in a grill party at the top of a favela in Rio de Janeiro, in which they re-stage some of the archetypical images that since 1557 have contributed to build up the concept of exotism through modern times.