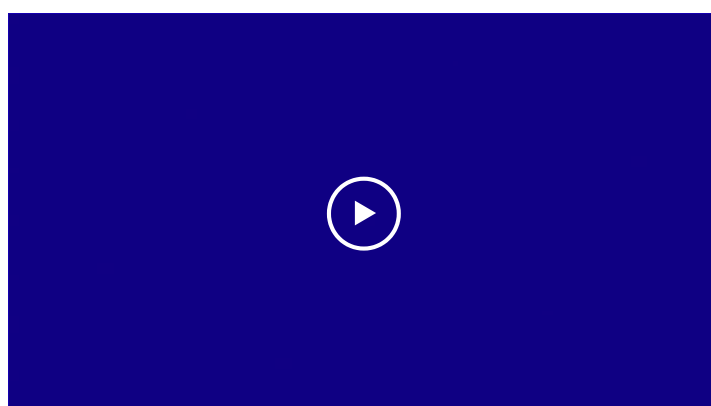
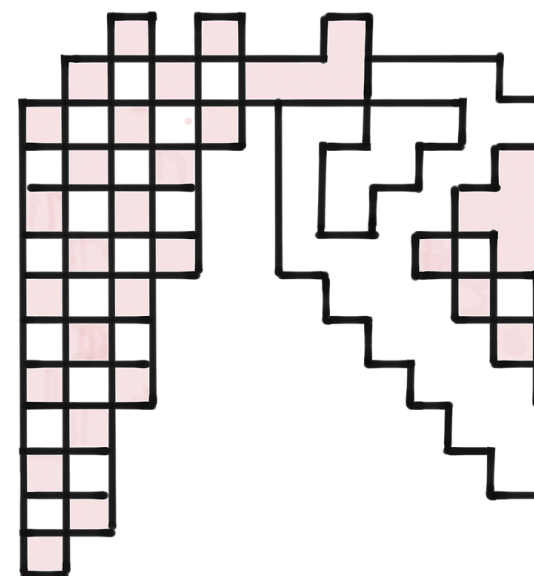




It is the year 2005, my parents are very excited about the soccer camp that will be this year in Florida, in a small community two hours from Miami. The plan doesn't bother me except that for two weeks I will have to train on a soccer field with other people my age, run and jump until I can no longer move my feet. My physical condition is not bad, but I am chubby and I am a person who in the realm of perseverance and effort I limit myself to giving enough unless it has a reward. My only relief is that I am going to the United States for the first time. It makes me curious to know if that country is how it is shown in the cinema and in television series, to see if the daily life of the protagonists is so wonderful because despite the problem that arises, they always find a solution with the solution of their inseparable friends. It will take, however, eight years for me to know beyond the surface that is usually presented to the tourist who goes to the United States who visits Disneyland, for now, I have to run ten laps of the court followed by fifty squats and ten push-ups.



Johnny Video

By: Gustavo Maldonado



In the subsequent visits to the United States, I went to some cities, or well, to the big malls in San Antonio, or McAllen, where one of the main missions was to find a clothing store on sale, with discounts that were really worth it. One of the great satisfactions was finding a Ralph Lauren shirt at 70% discount, or the Jordan sneakers that would not even be found at that price on the market. My mother and I always went to the malls, while my father stayed in Mexico, like that time he said goodbye at the border showing a half smile because, even if he did not admit it, it made him a little sad if he had to remain at the border. But he always said the same thing: "I don't want to get a visa because the United States is boring."

Those years of frenzied addiction to American stores came to an end when my parents decided to separate, my father left home and my mother dedicated herself to working more than ever; In my case, I no longer wanted to be locked in my room, between four empty walls that suffocated me and made me remember my parents' arguments that turned into screams that turned into fights. I wanted my mind to be elsewhere, in another dimension where thoughts flow more freely. Rest was what I was looking for, but not necessarily a vacation on a beach, lying on the couch drinking a non-alcoholic piña colada; I wanted to know something new, I sensed that what I needed was to be alone, away from my parents. So I undertook a two-month trip to the Southeastern United States, mainly California and Arizona. In my arrogance, I believed that I already knew that country, that I already knew those people, their culture. I had already seen it all in his Hollywood movies, in fashion magazines, in the music I listened to.



First, I stayed for two weeks in San Francisco, in the home of my mother's childhood friend, Chagua. It was catastrophic. Within a week, the tension between us was building until one night I arrived at her house without knowing that the alarm was set, and that ultimately woke up the neighbors on the block. We had a strong discussion, I was drunk and I had so much anger stored up that I believed that that moment was the ideal moment to express it. The next day, with a great feeling of guilt, I went to a hostel on Broadway Street, very close to the Beat Museum, one block away from Chinatown. I was a little sad, a little regretful and a little lonely (That was what I wanted, right?) I was scared, but not admitting it, so I drank with some people I met at



the hostel. Then we went to a bar and at some point I lost them, or I was the one who got lost, I don't remember it well. In spite of everything, in the street I found comfort. At night was when the visual spectacle became more interesting: the homeless smoking marijuana, the prostitutes hidden under the headlights, young people walking, smoking unconcerned to get somewhere. The change of this street with the others was evident. A smell of piss emanated from the sidewalk and the advertisements of the establishments shone with more intensity, it was inevitable not to turn to see them, to marvel at the beauty, even knowing that it was an advertisement for a pizza place or half-empty sad bar that only writers like Bukowski or Jack Kerouac frequent. At that time, I wanted to be like them: rebellious, uncompromising, stubborn and write poems at three in the morning. So in my intoxicated state I tried to capture something of the atmosphere, that publicity, those images and messages that the child always saw on television and that at the same time denied because somewhere, perhaps in history classes, I had read that we Mexicans are more influenced by the mixing of the Spanish and Mesoamerican cultures, but for a long time the American culture had appropriated our daily lives. I returned to the hostel room after a long time, less sad, wanting to write.

Johnny does very well when it comes to storytelling. It is a direct and honest way of realizing our influence on American culture in everyday life. Everyday Life is the title shown at the beginning of his video. In it, images, commercials, food, works of art, music - especially music - are displayed that from the beginning reminded me of the cultural closeness that exists between a 10-year-old boy who lives in an apartment in Los Angeles with his Chivas T-shirt and another boy in Mexico City who is watching Los Rugrats on television while eating Choco Krispis.

When I returned to Mexico City, after those youthful experiences in the United States, I had a strange feeling that something had changed, but I knew very well that in two months the city would not transform suddenly. Everyday life is an extensive intermingling fabric, whether we like it or not, we have to use it in order to survive.

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