

ONE WORLD, ONE PASSPORT

By Pilar Arevalo

Talk to anyone about a perfect world, a world where everyone is equal, united and global harmony is achieved through the abolition of all national boundaries, probably they'll tell you you're a loony. Talk to Swiss-born artist Tom Müller, who travelled half the world before his 25th birthday and chose the clean beaches of Perth as his preferred residence and you'll find someone who seriously believes such an ideal world is achievable.

Tom's latest art work, World Passport, is a replica passport issued, that enables the holder to travel freely to any county across the globe. The intention of Tom's work is the reformation of social and political boundaries in order to bring people closer together and to increase their global awareness.

Tom says the work is, "steeped in the language of bureaucracy and the world of administration, it operates to permeate beyond the role of nationalism and uses the platform of art to liberate these confined boundaries that contemporary society imposes on us. Breaking the sense of national boundaries and pushing new frontiers."

Conceived during the early months of 1999, Tom researched World Passport with the desire to create as close to a legitimate passport as possible. The finished product is undistinguishable from any legitimate passport you may acquire around the globe. A passport eliminating borders. Currently it is translated into seven different languages. The Passport is made using traditional authentic passport building tools, which Tom hunted down from numerous sources. The Australian Federal Police tracked Tom down to investigate his purpose, tools and methods of construction, on suspicion of fraud. During an exhibition he establishes a virtual International embassy and conducts an application procedure, which involves Tom dressing up and acting as 'World Ambassador'.

The germination for World Passport did not arrive overnight. "My previous work was dealing with issues to do with the notion of passage and threshold in a more physical and time based view. The World Passport is a furthering of that initial development," explains Tom.

Tom has studied many national passports throughout his travels with the strict intention of achieving the most objective and 'worldly' document. "Blue has been chosen as the predominant colour throughout the document because of the colour's vast presence in the world around us, in the lakes, rivers and oceans that connects us and above in the skies that cover us."

Tom says the World Passport, "was born out of the 21st century impulse for renewal and stands as a picture for the modern human being. It recognises the individual, specific traits and qualities that human beings represent in today's world. The individual within the collective and vice versa."

The World Passport is available to anyone of any nationality and is issued by the 'World Ambassador,' at temporary 'embassies' that have been established to this date in Milan, New York, Switzerland and Perth. It may be also mailed globally to applicants. The establishment fee is AU\$150 and like any adult passport, can be renewed every 15 years. Visit World Passport at www.worldpassport.biz