

**ANTROPODOCUS PRODUCCIONES  
PRESENTS**



**THE  
INVISIBLE  
CITY**

**VOICES IN THE CAÑADA REAL GALIANA**

**DIRECTED BY  
LUCÍA AGUÉ MDOMÍO RUBIO**



# ANTROPODOCUS

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# INVISIBLE CITY

Flying stones, screams, rubber balls, riot control forces, policemen on one side, and Maghrebians and Spaniards, on the other. Abdul's house is demolished. He is a Moroccan mason living in the Cañada Real Galiana, an ancient cattle track. 40 years of history start being questioned.

Four decades of occupation of public land, 40,000 neighbours from four different communities: Spaniards, Muslims, Spanish gypsies and Romanians. Luxury dwellings, shacks, pushers, drug addicts, volunteers, employers, nobodies and over 10,000 children. No hospitals, neither schools, nor sheep. Forty years after the arrival of the first settlers to the Cañada Real Galiana, this is the scenario of a 16 km linear city located in the autonomous region of Madrid: the largest illegal settlement in Europe.

The peaceful and lawless city of yesteryear has lately become "a settlement of injustice" which is daily haunted by two dramas: poverty, on the one hand, as its inhabitants are those forgotten by a society which intends to recycle them close to an incinerator and, crime and drug dependency,

Through the inhabitants of this lawless city, by means of their voices and the testimony of their lives, the documentary "The Invisible City: Voices in the Cañada Real Galiana" aims at getting closer to the different realities that coexist, on a daily basis in this 16 km long path.





The problem regarding urban environment and the one affecting the lives of those inhabiting the cities, have become one of the main world-wide challenges that must be tackled in order to achieve sustainable development. The cities, avid consumers of resources, host half of the world population, i.e. around 3.000 million people. One third of such population lives in extreme-poverty conditions in these emergency towns of Western countries. It seems that such figure will double in the next 30 years.

Within the European Union, 80% of the population lives in cities. In spite of the beauty and the richness of many of the European cities, they continue suffering from severe social and environmental problems. A new type of intra-European rural exodus, along with increasing transcontinental immigration, are producing precarious ways of in principle, temporary illegal settlement, but due to lack of foresight and institutional apathy, they are now becoming genuine invisible cities suffering from marginalization. Such invisible cities are holding up the development of the liberal welfare-state. According to the definition provided by UNO-HABITAT, based on criteria such as healthiness, water supply, overcrowding, structural quality of the dwelling and security of the property system, around 33 million people, (6% of the urban population) live in shanty towns in Europe. Different countries, different circumstances, but the same reality.



The Cañada Real Galiana, merely 15 km far from Madrid's city centre, is the extreme instance of the degradation of urban environment in big European cities. 40,000 people live in an illegal situation, lacking, in many cases, the necessary resources within their reach. Such space, in constant movement, but suffocated in its own reality, is a consequence of noteworthy contemporary phenomena, such as the problem regarding the access to housing, the difficulties to absorb the latest immigration waves, the problems derived from the social integration of marginalized populations... The documentary "The Invisible City: Voices in the Cañada Real Galiana" raises the delicate matter of responsible citizenship, making every member of the audience reflect on such matter.





# TREATMENT

After a long period investigating all the material written and recorded about the Cañada Real Galiana, we decided that the best idea was that the story of the Cañada Real was related by the voices of its dwellers. The four existing communities are represented by a symbolic figure. The documentary is radiography of an atypical space, a very complex one due to its diversity. The main characters are the eyes of the audience of the Cañada. Wandering around accompanied by its occupants, we go deep into their lives, their homes and their daily coexistence. The documentary “The Invisible City: Voices in the Cañada Real Galiana” is, over and above all, a casting documentary, a choral representation of the existing diversity in the Cañada Real Galiana.

The rhythm of the documentary “The Invisible City: Voices in the Cañada Real Galiana” combines interviews with quiet moments of observation. The interviews are recorded with two cameras. The first one focuses on formal and general shots, with the aim of depicting the character in its own environment. The close-ups reveal the life’s scars in the characters’ faces. The background is representative, their reconstructed house, the rubble of their shacks, the new porter’s lodges... By taking advantage of the characters’ movements, one can see the ins and outs of a place in Madrid, which is unknown for the great majority of Spaniards. The documentary combines objective and subjective takes. The second camera is the most hectic one, looking for the detail, recording the face expressions in close-ups, resulting in a very dynamic editing and mounting of the images.



Being able to convey the atmospheres in the Cañada Real Galiana is one of the greatest challenges of this documentary. The Cañada Real is a unique space, an isolated autarchy, far from any neighbouring urban structure. Therefore, in certain moments, the rhythm of the interviews is interrupted with moments of observation in which the cameras observe the life in the lineal city as mere spectators. The sound is processed with special care, which is a narrative element that manages to transmit to the spectator a quasi-physical sensation of the different atmospheres. When one wanders around Sector 5, one of the most tranquil areas in the Cañada Real, full of vegetable gardens, you do not listen to the same sound as when you walk in Valdemingómez, whose road is travelled by over 4,000 lorries every day. Environments become essential in bringing the spectator closer to a reality of an alien place that rarely has music. The sound is that of the wretched steps of the drug-addicts, the rake used to pick up syringes, the hoarse voice of a gypsy celebrating his nephew's wedding singing a flamenco song, the noise of a hammer cocking in the new constructions, the sound of the trucks, the water from the swimming pool, or the lawnmower in the detached houses of La Cañada.. There are no off-screen voices in this documentary. The producer's questions during the interviews can't be heard, as the reality revealed in the interviews has such intensity that it is not needed.





The documentary “La Ciudad Invisible: Voces en Cañada Real Galiana” introduces us into a space delimited by those 16 km. built along a cattle track. Every community is organized in its own sector. The various groups coexist but do not mix with one another, they are rather juxtaposed. As we circulate along the different geographical areas in La Cañada Real Galiana in this documentary, a map guides us and clearly defines the location in which we are at all times. Such narrative resource is the thread of this movie and it helps the audience to place the area and locate this semi-urban “un-planning”. From the aesthetic perspective, this map is a drawing and it uses, as a symbolic reference, the architecture of the houses, an element without any connotation but so revealing of a lifestyle: the detached houses of the Spanish families, the Moroccan dwellings with their flat roofs, the short gypsy houses with an internal patio where large families gather together and the Romanian shacks. The drawing’s naive aesthetics regains its harshness due to the black-and-white processing, fading the reality. The map appears and disappears, matching up with the fundamental concept of the title: an invisible city lacking legal legitimacy. A city that nobody wants to see. A city which is heard in moments of tension. A city forgotten when the media is not reporting.

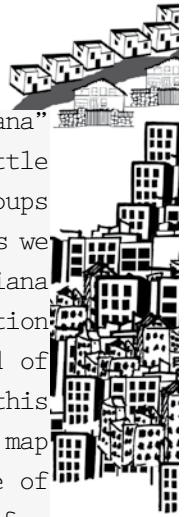


For this documentary we thought about a sound track inherent to the universe of La Ciudad Invisible. The ending theme mixes colour, which is the most emblematic sound of all the communities living together in this space. However, every track is used independently throughout the documentary, depending on the moment where we are.

The will to convey the complexity of such an atypical space in a coherent way: difference and coexistence. This can be seen both in the processing of the documentary and the aesthetic decisions adopted. Mariano, Mohamed or Lucía did not come to the La Cañada because of the same reasons, opportunism or need; neither have they had the same criteria of life or the same future expectations. The only real thing linking them, their sole common struggle is that of the fear of losing their homes.



Due to the richness of the recorded material and the complexity of the subject, the documentary lasts for 52’. “La Ciudad invisible: Voces en La Cañada Real Galiana” is a hybrid between a in-depth social study done by AntropoDocus Producciones human team, combined with data processing, as well as several TV reports. The main difference is that this documentary is the result of narrative and aesthetic decisions.



**RIVA  
ACIAM**

**NCIA**





# LA CAÑADA



On October 18th 2007, over 200 residents of La Cañada Real Galiana, Moroccans and Spaniards, assembled with stones in their hands around Abdul's house. The excavators lie in wait for his house and he aims at defending it, thus avoiding its demolition. After a 15-minute clash with the riot squads, the only things remaining were rubbles and victims on both sides. All of a sudden, la Cañada, the largest illegal settlement in Europe, is in the national and international spotlight. Everyone talks about La Cañada but very few know what it is.





1

## AN ILLEGAL CITY OF 16 KM<sup>2</sup> 40,000 PEOPLE THE LARGEST ILLEGAL SETTLEMENT IN EUROPE



Hilario is a geographer and, since he is 17 years old he is a member of the NGO «Ecologistas en Acción». He explains that La Cañada Real Galiana, La Cañada Real Riojana or La Cañada Real de las merinas, is a cattle track stretching out in 400 km in length. As regards to the type of path, it has a width of 75 metres. This track is one of the several tracks that go all over Spain, having a total of 125,000 km. of cattle tracks. It came directly from La Rioja and stretched down to the Cabañeros area (between Toledo and Ciudad Real). Most of its route is free; however, there is a 16 km. stretch which is occupied, when it passes through Madrid, between Getafe and Coslada. Around 40,000 people have settled here but their houses are built in public land. Construction on a cattle track is illegal, resulting in administrative fines and, according to the Spanish criminal code, it is considered an offence.



Cañada Real Galiana o Riojana

The history of the occupation of La Cañada, dates back to 1974, due to a decree law adopted in a cabinet meeting under Franco's regime permitting the use of the plots of land next to cattle track. The main goal was to transform those plots into vegetable gardens, thus, making the most of those areas. Three years after such decree, Miguel bought a few plots there, in the area that was closer to Rivas Vaciamadrid (situated 15 Km. southeast from Madrid). Like most of those individuals who had access to a tiny piece of land, he built a shack in order to keep the farming implements. And, like many others, with

the passing of time, great care, a few more bricks and slightly less corrugated iron, he transformed his shack into a weekend house. And, like most of the people, he ended transforming his tiny weekend house into a majestic mansion: his definitive home. And, like most of his neighbours, he now has an illegal house. Although Ángel, who is an architect and lives in La Cañada, would rather call it “irregular house.”

Thirty years on, everything is just the same, or maybe not. In 2002, Ángel, the architect, conducted a census with the aim of proving quantitatively and qualitatively data on what the real situation in La Cañada was. Based on a detailed investigation, he concluded that there were around 25,000 people living there. But the population of La Cañada hasn't stopped increasing;



during the last years, the figure has increased up to 40,000 or 50,000 people. This may be due to the fact that it is a way out for those who have just arrived. Juan Francisco Gamella, anthropology teacher in the University of Granada and author of a study on the shanty town problem for the Madrid region, once said that, : «this is an initiative promoted by the poorest people. One of the key issues here is the difficulty to access housing.” In the 21st century Spain, the poorest ones are the immigrants, like Abdul or Mohammed.

Mohammed has been living in front of Miguel for ten years now. He sold his house in Asilah, Tangiers, in order to buy a plot in La Cañada that belonged to a Spaniard and «ceded it» for 3 million pesetas and he was able to build a house, similar to the houses in Morocco. The salary that he perceived as a construction worker did not enable him to rent a house in Madrid, so he preferred to use his income to buy something that he, back then, considered definitive. He was conscious that the plot was illegal but the fact that other Spaniards had had their settlements for a while, inspired him confidence. The same situation affected Naual's mother. They are also Moroccans and they can only rely on a sole extremely low income: that of the head of the family. The only place where they could build a house was La Cañada.





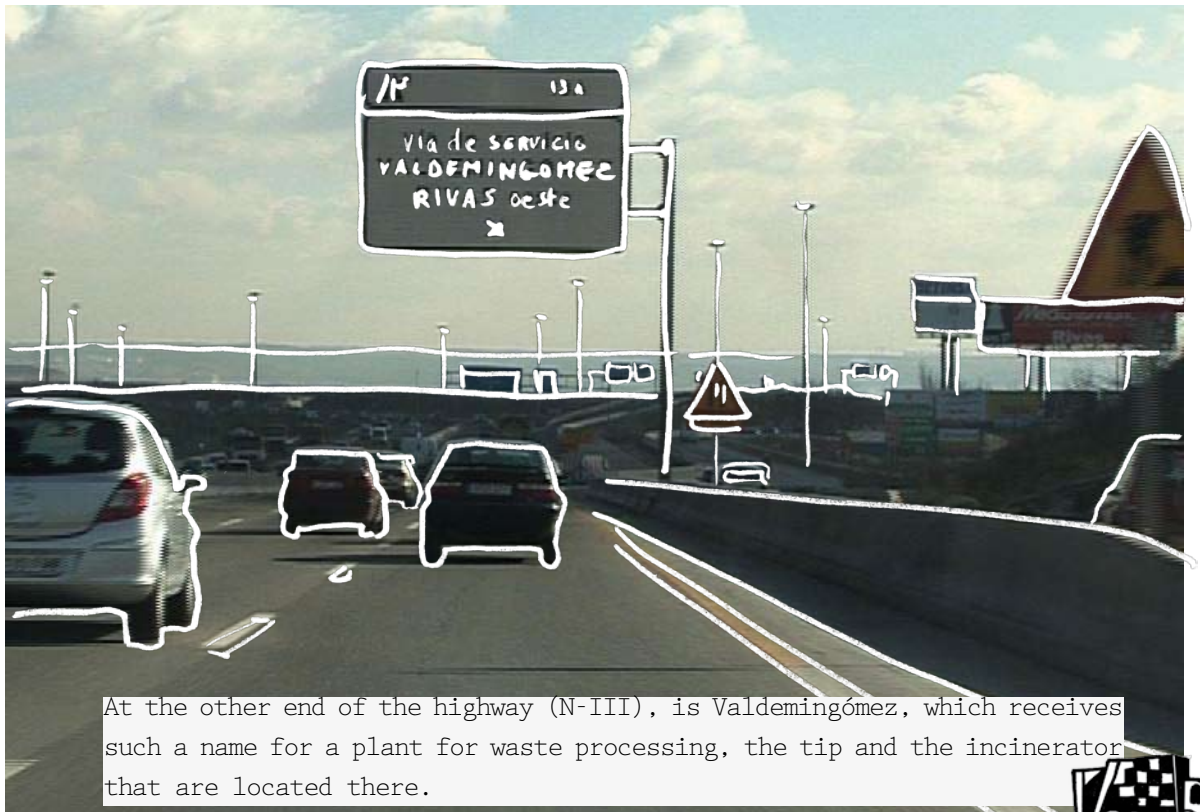
## ONE CAÑADA, SEVERAL REALITIES



The illegal situation of the residents of the Cañada, led them to organize themselves in associations according to geographic sectors, in order to demand their social and urban rights. The sectors represent different realities, to the point that, in some cases, from one area to the other there is a huge gulf. Some people talk about the “Rich Cañada”, located in Coslada, with big houses, where some people managed to legalize their situation when they bought their plots, two decades ago. There is also another Cañada, at the feet of Rivas, that Cañada where Miguel, Ángel, Mohammed or Naoual live; an area that currently hosts 70% of Moroccans and 30% of Spaniards. It is a pleasant and tranquil area and it has positive advantage: the city is so close that the access to health-care centres, schools, shopping malls or means of transport is at hand for all the residents. Here, one can find enormous houses with astronomic gardens, tiny houses, washing on the line of the flat roof, houses without patio, multi-coloured houses filled with parabolic antennas: the houses of the Moroccans.



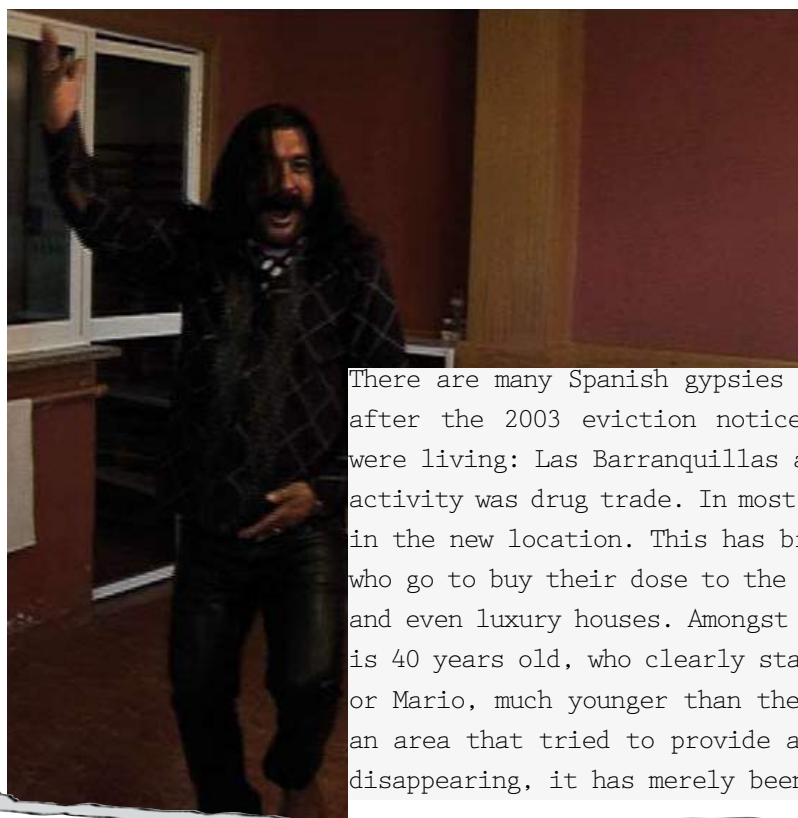
This is the landscape that Pablo (resident of Covibar) sees from his window on a daily basis. A landscape that has been changing in the last 25 years that he has lived in Covibar, a legal housing development in Rivas, right next to La Cañada. He remembers when he used to run in between its plants, when there were plants there and constructing shacks in what previously were farm houses. Those are merely memories. Pablo does not mind people living in La Cañada, although half smiling, he claims that the rest of the people have to pay taxes in order to have a house.



At the other end of the highway (N-III), is Valdemingómez, which receives such a name for a plant for waste processing, the tip and the incinerator that are located there.

The demographic composition of this area is very different, odd and complex. There are also Spaniards living here illegally, like Mariano, who has been living here for 20 years and during this time, he has set up a restaurant and has built two industrial premises to be rented... all this in public land. In his bar, all the ethnic communities from his sector gather together. That is what he calls "the little U.N.O of La Cañada Real". The gypsies arrive at lunch time and use the upper floor in Mariano's restaurant to host their celebrations: weddings, baptisms and first Holy Communions. We find Manuel «the Fat Man» in one of these events. His nephew is about to get married, and with a guitar in his hands, he celebrates with the men in his family. Manuel has been living in La Cañada for four years and he feels sorry for what happened to Abdul's house. He says that he does not want the police to go to Valdemingómez to demolish more houses, because he, his wife and children will be left without homeless.

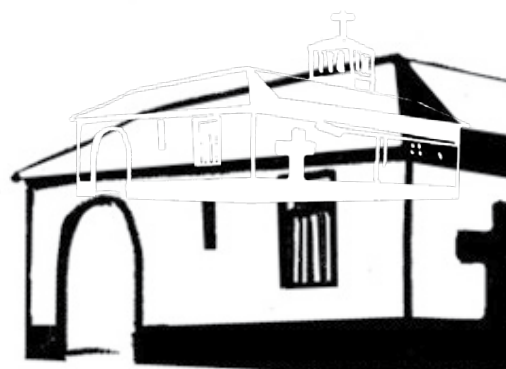




There are many Spanish gypsies in this area. Most of them settled here after the 2003 eviction notice affecting the shack towns where they were living: Las Barranquillas and El Salobral, where the main economic activity was drug trade. In most of the cases, such activity has survived in the new location. This has brought along the arrival of drug-addicts who go to buy their dose to the gypsies' shanty dwellings, humble houses and even luxury houses. Amongst them, we find José, drug-addict since he is 40 years old, who clearly states that «you've got to sell somewhere»; or Mario, much younger than the latter, who believes that La Cañada is an area that tried to provide a solution to a problem, which, far from disappearing, it has merely been moved somewhere else.



Barefoot, in between the syringes left by those who inject themselves with poison, there are children heading to the parish church where Maribel and Ángel have volunteered for the last five years. When they arrived at the parish church, there was nothing but ruins there. But now, there are no longer ruins but ruined men and women jacking up in the vicinity. Inside the church, an ephemeral haven of peace reigns there: mass on Sundays, school support provided to the children, teaching of basic literacy for women and one paediatric office open on Wednesdays, attended by a volunteer doctor and a nurse. Most of the users of this oasis are Romanian gypsies. Most of them do not even live in La Cañada. They are nobodies amongst nobodies. Their shanty towns, located in Valdemingómez, were burnt a few months ago and they decided to move to the area known as El Gallinero, very close from the previous location; the land, however, does not belong to La Cañada Real. There are 400 people living in El Gallinero, nearly half of them are children and only 73 out of them are attending school (just partly). They do not have water and the light is poorly attached to the street lighting. Here, every procedure is an adventure, making a photocopy of the family booklet in order to provide





schooling for a child, taking them to school, going to the GP or having a shower. In spite of everything, Lucía has constructed an impeccable shanty, upright and with dignity, amidst an outrageous scenario of infra-dwellings, rimless bikes and children running at the risk of being knocked down by trucks too many times a day.



The problem regarding the trucks in La Cañadais is a serious one. Irene, a social worker in El Fanal, an association that provides school support in Valdemingómez working with immigrants, declares that around 4,500 trucks pass through Valdemingómez every day in order to take their load to the dump in the recycling plant. In the road, there are no zebra crossings, no traffic lights, not even pavements. Several children have passed away not far from their own house.

Some of these children were Moroccans. In Valdemingómez, there are also Maghrebians, although in a lesser percentage compared to that of Rivas. However, like in Rivas, they have built a mosque. On top of its carpets, barefoot, placed in front of the Mihrab, Mohammed talks to us and denies the information published by a Spanish general newspaper which claims that the Muslim temples in La Cañada host extremists. Mohammed has been living there for a long time and he likes it. His home is far from the area where drugs are sold.

Far from the roadway and the mosque, next to the church and the unofficial park car for those cars that come to La Cañada from Madrid to buy drugs, there are other dwellings with a rural look, not a modern country one, but rather that of a small village. They are next to La Cañada, but they are not considered La Cañada. There is a big notice with the name of the street on it: Francisco Álvarez. The notice shines on the railings of the half-century-old house which belongs to the parents of César, the president of the Neighbours' association of his street. The sole legal street in Valdemingómez which belongs to Vallecas, but Vallecas has forgotten it. César and Mario, vice-president, fight with the aim of changing their situation: they lack running water and no works have been done in that area for a long time. They pay taxes, they have the deeds of their houses and plots, like any given citizen living in Madrid, but they do live far worse than those living in any other area of Madrid. Not only the infrastructures are insufficient, but the price of their houses is also devaluating increasingly due to the presence of drug-addicts in their own doormats.



Salva has been living in this street from the very beginning but he is now around 70 years old and he no longer has the strength to fight against the public administration. Every night, he takes a sleeping pill because the sound of the firecrackers and the motorbikes of the drug-dealers' sons don't let him sleep. Everyday he cleans the area surrounding the church; he rakes to pick the syringes up in order to eliminate them. He tries to return to his neighbourhood –which he once considered one of the best neighbourhoods in Madrid, to his initial state. As the president of the Regional Federation of Neighbours' Associations of Madrid (FRAVM), La Cañada suffers from a problem regarding urban development, environment and a problem with the citizens, because they are excluded from the framework of citizenship and their rights. Hence, Salva's rake is not sufficient.



# 3

## AN ALIEN VIEW: THE INSTITUTIONS



Those who could say something, the ones who could cast a light on the dark Cañada, are politicians... The Spanish Popular Party, ruling the regional and local government in Madrid, hasn't spoken out yet although they've announce that they will soon do so. Ángel Pérez, on behalf of Izquierda Unida (the Spanish communist party), proposes five steps to be adopted in ten years time, first and foremost: to conduct a reliable census. Pedro Zerolo, of the Spanish socialist party highlights the importance of the individuals and emphasises the importance of considering and understanding diversity. They both talk about the political apathy in the «invisible city», which has become enormous in the last 40 years due to the following reasons: employment insecurity, arrival of immigrants with scarce resources, astronomical housing prices, permissive legislation... The proposals are pronounce in between meetings and political consensus and social and welfare investments which have not arrived yet (excepting the daily visit of a health-care vehicle. The also talk about things such as re-housing and law compliance, even having a 40 year old delay, studying case by case.

EThe greatest reference of the above mentioned question is IRIS (Re-housing and social integration institute) which only works upon request by a town-hall in shanty towns. They show us how they work in the settlements, most of them are shanty towns, and they explain us the integration difficulties and how problematic re-housing turns out to be... As yet, they have done one intervention, a re-housing of around a dozen families, but there are still plenty of infra-dwellings and several citizens which are «infra-living». However, even if the media



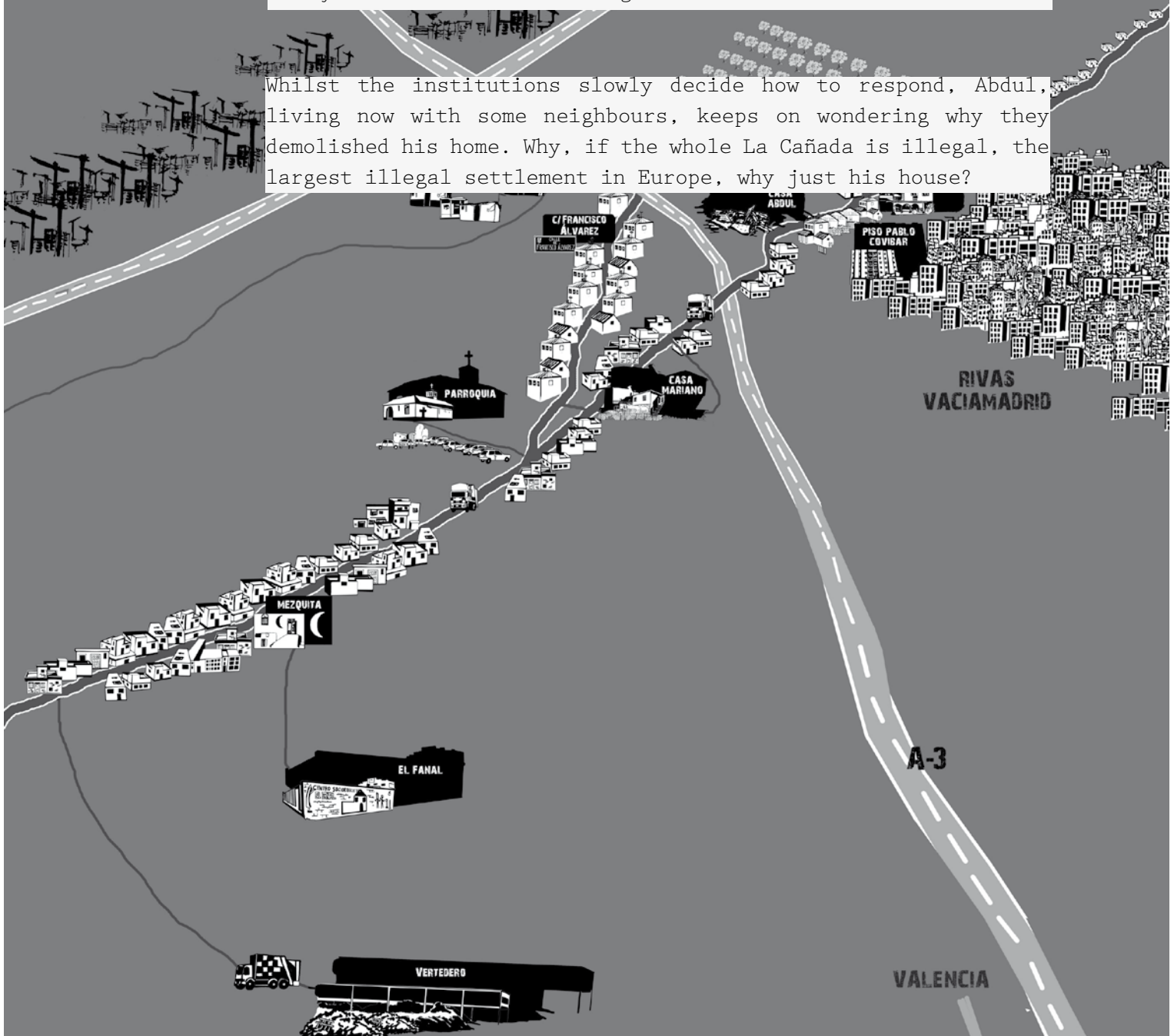
tried to show the opposite, La Cañada Real is not a shanty town, in spite of the enormous amount of people struggling to make ends meet. Unfortunately, the explanations behind it, the reasons why the Cañada Real is what it is today, still exist in Europe and in many other places in the world.

Along with Javier Ramírez, Iris president, we come to the Salobral, one of the last shanty towns in Madrid. That precise day Esperanza Aguirre, president of the Madrid region and Alberto Ruiz Gallardón, Madrid's mayor and several members of the media are celebrating the demolition of the last shacks in El Salobral, but, all things said, they do so far from the rubble, inside a white marquee specially mounted on the occasion of that celebration. Later on, we saw a young family from El Salobral which now discovers its new apartment. A direct re-housing, a symbol that rarely a family in La Cañada Real will see. Too costly? A non-building land that nobody is interested in recovering?

Whilst the institutions slowly decide how to respond, Abdul, living now with some neighbours, keeps on wondering why they demolished his home. Why, if the whole La Cañada is illegal, the largest illegal settlement in Europe, why just his house?



COSLAD





# CHARACTERS

**ABDUL** A Maghrebian middle-aged man. His house has become the symbol of the revolution in la Cañada Real. The media was present during the demolition. It wasn't an infra-dwelling, it wasn't a shack, it was a humble brick home that he had built himself using his own hands. Following this demolition, La Cañada rose up against what they deemed it was an unfair action. Now, the same neighbours that defended Abdul's house as if it was their own cooperated to rebuild it in record time. Abdul and his colleagues talk about racism. They do not understand why his house was demolished before those of their neighbouring gypsy drug-dealers.

**HILARIO** Member of Ecologistas en Acción. He shows us La Cañada Real Galiana in another area, the one that passes through Daganzo. Clean, real, no houses, just nature. He explains the paramount importance of La Cañada , even if sheep no longer pass by.

**MIGUEL** He lives in the Cañada nearby Rivas, in Covibar's housing development. He is one of the first settlers. He has an impressive house in the oldest part. Most of his closest neighbours are Spaniards who have houses with swimming pools and even guard dogs. They have light and water (attached to the street lighting) and not so long ago, they tried to install a sewer system using the community's financial resources. He represents all the parties, united for a common goal and with whom he has a good relationship. He is talkative and is good at expressing his ideas.

**ÁNGEL ARQUITECT** He has been living in La Cañada near Rivas for 4 years, but he had been being «owner» of a plot for 13 years. In 2002 he conducted a census upon request by the coordinator of the neighbours' associations in La Cañada Real Galiana. It took him a year and a half to do it but he finally managed to deliver



a 10-volume census with detailed information on the historic, geographical and economic reality of what the Cañada was once upon a time. Five years on, the data is not worth it. La Cañada has changed. He knows a lot about the subject, because not only does he live there but also, apart from doing the study, he was town councillor for the Popular Party.

## **JUAN FRANCISCO GAMELLA**

Professor of Social and Cultural anthropology in the University of Granada. He has elaborated an extensive study on shanty towns upon request by Madrid region, more specifically, for the IRIS (different forms of settlements, ways of organizing the different groups in the areas, type of construction, structure of the family or house groups, schooling rate, population rates...). He remarks how particular Madrid is, a place that has a long tradition in self-building (construction of precarious illegal buildings with the aim of obtaining their final goal: a house) and he focuses in the situation in La Cañada. He admits that the solution is difficult because any decision can set a precedent for subsequent cases.

## **MOHAMMED RIVAS**

He is a 60 year old Moroccan who has been living over 10 years in La Cañada. In order to obtain his house, where he has spent over 120,000 euros, he had to sell the house he owned in his country. He was attacked by policemen during the October 18th eviction and he now needs a walking stick to help him walk. He is scared of getting out of his house in case the authorities take advantage of his absence to demolish his home. He has trouble to express himself in Spanish.

## **NAOVAL**

Although she does not live in La Cañada, her family does, and she is severely affected by what is occurring there. She has contacts in the Moroccan embassy.

## **PABLO**

Since he was born, he has been living in Covibar, a housing development in Rivas Vaciamadrid, located in front of the Cañada Real. He has seen from the top, i.e., from his flat roof, the transformation until the present. He has indifferent opinion towards the massive arrival of people to La Cañada and he claims that he does not find it dangerous but it runs the risk of becoming a ghetto.



## MARIANO

He lives in the area of Valdemingómez. He has his bar there, a house with a swimming pool and two industrial premises that he rents. All this is built in a land that doesn't belong to him. His business receives people from all ethnic groups. It is one of the few places in La Cañada where people not only exist but they do coexist. He claims that he would love to pay for his land, for the light and water in order to legalize his business. He says with distress that La Cañada has gone from a natural paradise to a living hell for those inhabiting it.



## MANUEL THE FAT MAN FROM THE BARETA CLAN

It is very difficult to talk with the Spanish gypsies, because most of them are within the drug-dealing business and they don't want us to come closer to their homes. However, Manuel celebrates the wedding of his 14 year old nephew and invites us to the celebration. He mentions how the gypsy community copes with the demolitions.



## JOSE

He has been jacking up heroine for 7 years now. He is from Asturias. He has children. He says that he came to La Cañada looking for shelter and he now sleeps here, surrounded by the «kundas» that get there (cars for those consume heroine). He says that this area is far worse than those settlements where he used to go to buy drugs because there are no safe injection rooms, or showers, and there are very few social workers. He has his very own opinion of La Cañada Real, due to his personal view of La Cañada, what he sees on TV and in the free newspapers.



## MARIO DRUG-ADDICT

Mario is also drug-addict. He is 27 years old, but his look does not match with his age. With the aim of obtaining some income, he patrols a dump in exchange of wood pallets that he has to shred afterwards with huge stones. Then, he exchanges that wood with the drug-dealers in exchange for money or a drug-dose. He is critical with the current state in which we find La Cañada.



## ANGEL VOLUNTEER

He works as a teacher in Getafe, belongs to CC.00 (one of the Spanish trade unions) and volunteers three days a week in the church of La Cañada Real. He is deeply affected by what is occurring, something that they predicted a few months ago, due to the progressive deterioration due to the arrival of gypsies from





El Salobral. dHelped by other volunteers and the parish priest, they have re-build a church from the ruins where they have located a weekly paediatric office attended by a volunteer doctor and nurse. As he puts it, every Wednesday endless queues line up there because the hospitals are too far from La Cañada. He is so deeply involved that he has even taken his little daughter, a violin student, to hold a concert in the parish church. In the summertime, he managed to take the Romanian children to summer camps.



**MARIBEL** She is also volunteer in the parish church



**LUCÍA** She is a Roma gypsy who lives in El Gallinero and has a beautiful shack, a very clean one that she shows proudly.



**IRENE** She is a social worker in «El Fanal». By means of her NGO, Irene and her colleagues have created some sort of a child care centre where they provide school support and organize sports activities. It is nearly the only leisure centre in La Cañada.



**MOHAMMED VALDEMINGOMEZ** He is a 25 year old young Morrocan who has been living in Valdemingómez for 4 years. He is upset by the attitude shown in some Spanish media that claim that there are extremists in La Cañada. He likes La Cañada, and although he admits that there are drug-addicts, he says that they are not near his area.



**CÉSAR** He is the president of the street Francisco Álvarez, the only legal street in the surroundings, which is attached to La Cañada, but belongs to Vallecas. They don't have running water. He doesn't mind the people building in La Cañada, but what really bother him are its deterioration and the results thereof. There is an increasing tension between the gypsies and the drug-dealers.



**MARIO VICEPRESIDENT** As opposed to César, who lives in Francisco Álvarez since he was born, Mario came here 4 years ago. However, during this time, as vice-president of the street, he has actively struggled with the aim of obtaining their rights.



## REGIONAL FEDERATION OF NEIGHBOURS ASSOCIATIONS OF MADRID **NACHO MURGUI**

This organization includes over 250 neighbours' associations, social organizations and free radios within the region of Madrid. In La Cañada, there is just one association, (in sector 5). There isn't much contact in between them and they don't really know the opinions of the rest of the associations, but they, as a federation, have an opinion: to listen to all the neighbours and their associations.



## **ÁNGEL PÉREZ**

Spokesperson of the Spanish Communist party in the Madrid town-hall.



## **AUTONOMOUS REGION OF MADRID** **ESPERANZA AGUIRRE**

President of the region of Madrid. La Cañada's soil, for it is a cattle track, belongs to the autonomous community of Madrid.



## **TOWN HALL OF MADRID** **ALBERTO RUIZ GALLARDON**

There is a big part of La Cañada that passes by this town hall's soil. He proposes a meeting between all the implied institutions to find a solution. The elimination of shanty towns in Madrid was one of the points included in the electoral program in the previous elections.



## **PEDRO ZEROLO**

Socialist Secretary for social movements and relations with NGOs.



## **REHOUSING AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION INSTITUTE**

IRIS main goal is to re-locate those living in shanty towns to healthier and decent places after having implemented social habits and after a mediation process between the host communities and the newly arrived people. They only work upon request of the town hall and only in cases with shanty towns involved, not with any other type of dwelling. IRIS has paramount importance in a place like Madrid, where there is a long tradition of shanty towns, where several re-housings have taken place during the last years. Apart from talking about his work, he will show an instance of a family re-housed in El Salobral.



# THE DIRECTOR

Abdul's house was being demolished. A call to the editorial department activated the television device: once again we had a story to tell in three minutes, once again, we had to put the story into context in 15 seconds, once again we had to find reasonably well-informed speakers to summarize the events and then, rush off to edit...

On a daily basis, I scratch the surface of reality but I can rarely immerse myself in it; the tyranny of time prevents me from doing it. Sometimes, the time is so scarce that one does not even have the time reflect on the lack of such. However, La Cañada was different. Too large, too complex, too faraway from the world and too close at the same time. Too many people, too many years, too much apathy... Three and a half minutes, this is the time that I am enabled to broadcast every day in the program in which I work as a journalist. It is negligible. In spite of everything, there we stood, all the reporters from all the media, relating what we had heard from the other colleague, mixing together, but, most importantly, sticking to the rules. All of a sudden, La Cañada became a media circus, with striking images of a demolition, a struggle, banners and scared faces and faces in rage. All the television news started with news related to La Cañada, whose streets hosted more journalists than residents. However, once again it was the same: fragmented reality.

I collected contacts and classified them and then I started to write using the scarce material that I had. Trying to tidy up Chaos is a ridiculous desire and trying to convey it, is complicated, to say the least. What becomes obvious is that doing so in 210 seconds is impossible. Not only time is needed but also someone (or something) who is able to understand it. A telephone conversation with Antonio Cadierno, producer of AntropoDocus Producciones, activated the other machinery, not the one related to TV, but that of documentaries, slower, willing to show the content and not only the form.

"La Ciudad Invisible: Voces de la Cañada Real Galiana" is the result of an interest and the will to know and deeply relate both sides of the same story.

STATEMENT OF



# STATEMENT

# SOCIOLOGICAL PROJECT

On October 18th 2007, the world televised what later evolved into a pitched battle in La Cañada Real Galiana between the Special Forces squad and the Security Forces undertaking an eviction, on the one hand, and, on the other, the united neighbours with different religions, from different ethnic groups and different social status. After the events, my colleague, the journalist Lucía Asué Mbomio, who had done several on-the-spot TV reports, suggested me the idea of producing a deeper explanatory project-documentary. She mentioned that she had lived at first hand those genuine social circumstances and she had witnessed the vital testimonies of the people coexisting in La Cañada Real Galiana. Lucía highlighted that we ought to consider the information from a viewpoint of a deeper analysis on the realities of all its inhabitants, all the individuals sharing a common problem: an illegal settlement. Every single house within those 16 km. is illegal, 40,000 people which are not registered in any census, lacking basic social services due to the abandon of the institutions. An invisible city which is starting to stand in the way of the growth of a European capital: Madrid.

During the last decade, as a sociologist and anthropologist, I have investigated, analyzed and developed audiovisual works on the new configuration of the European society and I have focused on how such society has been affected by the dizzy rhythms of change, with their completely unpredictable consequences. From a global angle, a change or a social conflict in a country can alter the social structure of someone else who is miles away. Europe is not –or does not want to be, ready to import the colonization that we once exported.

As producer of AntropoDocus Producciones Independientes, and along with the AntropoDocus team, we have realized that La Cañada Real Galiana has several unique and special features, but, at the same time, it shares some common features and problems when compared with the rest of the illegal settlements in Europe. We had the obligation of denouncing and showing to the world the reality of the largest illegal settlement in Europe. One of the goals of this social documentary is to try to prevent that this situation strikes us in the future even more than now. As many of the wonderful characters that appear in this documentary put it: “La Cañada is a social bomb about to explode”. The events occurred on October 18th were just a warning sign, which will be repeated with unthinkable consequences.

The director’s sensitivity and the professional support by the AntropoDocus team, not to forget the full implication and availability of the inhabitants of La Cañada making their reality public, they have all done their bit in creating a wonderful investigation work and developing the project; the result being a powerful documentary with a special human touch, giving voice to the most representative inhabitants of every community and showing all their problems.

“La Ciudad Invisible: Voces en la Cañada Real Galiana” is not a completed documentary, every day new social variables that increasingly corner their settlers arise. In AntropoDocus, we will keep on analyzing its evolution and we will keep on documenting it.

Antonio Cadierno Parodi.

Producer.

# ANTROPODOCUS L. PRODUCCIONES

PRESENTATION

AntropoDocus Producciones is an independent production company specialized in anthropologic and social documentaries. The company develops two different types of projects: on the one hand, it develops academic-theoretical products, i.e., visual capture of works in the field and ethnologies with the specific purpose of investigating; on the other, it produces narrative documentaries for the general audience, making the anthropologists' works and concerns available for everyone.

AntropoDocus Producciones is the audiovisual branch and producer of AntropoDocus - international intercultural organization which mainly focuses on visual anthropology. Our staff is composed by anthropologists and sociologists working in the field of communication, and audiovisual experts and technicians interested and curious about documentaries, anthropology and sociology. Our work covers all the aspects of visual anthropology: investigation, theorization, production, distribution and display. AntropoDocus provides the young talented people with the necessary means and it enables the experimented investigators to show their investigations to the world. It is also a decided bet in view of consolidating its position as one of the drivers promoting the development of visual anthropology and anthropologic documentaries at an international and intercultural level. Facing the difficult aim of spreading anthropology, AntropoDocus Producciones explores new ways of communication and develops possible formats for future audiovisual material, such as the Internet and mobile technology.

*We are a group that observes, records, understands... and we make others understand.*

"We document reality"  
**ANTROPODOCUS**

**WWW.ANTROPODOCUS.COM**





# CREW

ORIGINAL IDEA:

Lucía Asué Mbomio Rubio

DIRECTOR:

Lucía Asué Mbomio Rubio

MUSIC:

Fernando Alandes

FORMAT:

VIDEO DV

RUNTIME:

54 MIN

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Antonio Cadierno Parodi

Salvador Díaz Rodríguez

David Erro

José Ignacio Galán Ugartemendía

Ignacio Goytre Samaniego

SOUND:

Aleksandra Cheuvreux

David Erro

Christina Mills Steel

EDITING:

Víctor Quintanilla

GRAPHIC DESIGN:

Sophie Raynaud

PRODUCTION MANAGER:

Aleksandra Cheuvreux

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT:

José Ignacio Galán Ugartemendía

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:

Antonio Cadierno Parodi