

Eltono

Paris 1975, currently living in Beijing

www.eltono.com

eltono@eltono.com

The work of Eltono is distinguished by its constructive approach and its sensitivity to location. His improvisation in situ of forms and colors helps integrate his work within an already existing balance found in the location he has chosen. He almost always chooses neglected surfaces with the intention of reviving their dignity and to take advantage of the power found in aged textures. Such pieces are seldom very visible, which adds privacy to the fortuitous meeting with his work. Renouncing the visibility sacrifices numerous public encounters with his work, but in return increases the pervasiveness of each piece.

He understands his entry in the art system as an opportunity to connect it to the street and to create a relation that enriches both parts. In his works for galleries he sets as a priority the construction of a bridge between the interior and the exterior.

That bridge sometimes crystallizes in the form of collectible products and other times in the form of pieces that rely on physical intervention by the public whether consciously or not. This interaction happens by moving pieces, removing, touching or altering the object in a variety of ways.

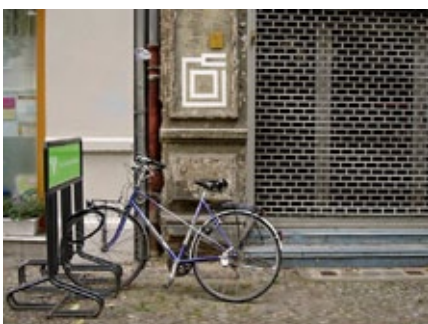
Eltono links this level of public involvement to the form of the piece in a way that leaves its fate to numerous factors outside of his control, and the artist appreciates the process of gradual disappearance that happens after abandoning his pieces. In a way, this frees his work from the sacredness that Western tradition places on art. (Extract from Javier Abarca's article published on Urbanario.es)



Public Space Paintings

Since 1999 I have been painting abstract geometric forms in the street in a respectful and integrated way, adapting to the original surfaces and allowing myself to be influenced by the elements found around me. I am particularly careful to not invade too much or disturb what I find in the street, which is why location is so important for me. Illegal street paintings are the basis of my work, and it is from these paintings that all the new experiments that I am working on today come from.

Over the years I have developed my own graphical language that has allowed me to spend almost all of my time traveling. It has given me the opportunity to paint in more than fifty cities around the world: Madrid, Paris, Toulouse, Pau, Venice, Milano, Modena, Genova, Liverpool, Manchester, London, Glasgow, Oslo, Amsterdam, Zurich, Berlin, Porto, Guimaraes, Vigo, Sevilla, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Tarifa, Gran Canaria, Cordoba, Puerto Lumbreras, Tokyo, Seoul, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Porto Alegre, Salvador de Bahia, Olinda, Natal, Buenos Aires, Rosario, Lima, Cuzco, Quito, Bogota, Monterrey, Mexico City, Espinazo, Mazatlan, Puerto Vallarta, New York, Austin, Hanoi, Beijing... (www.eltono.com/en/projects)

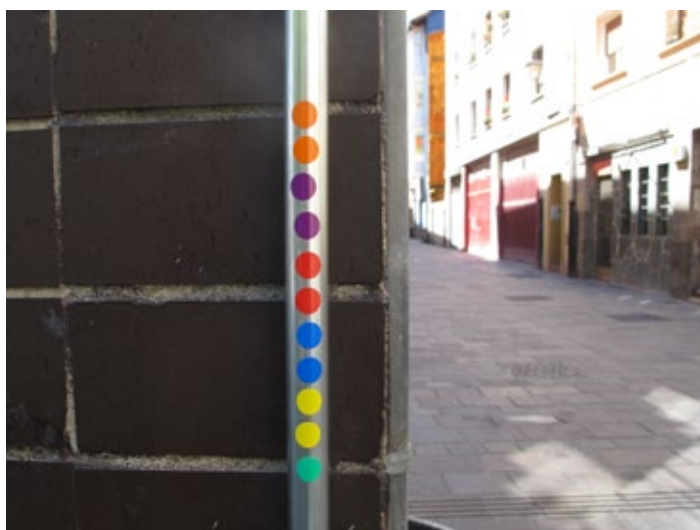
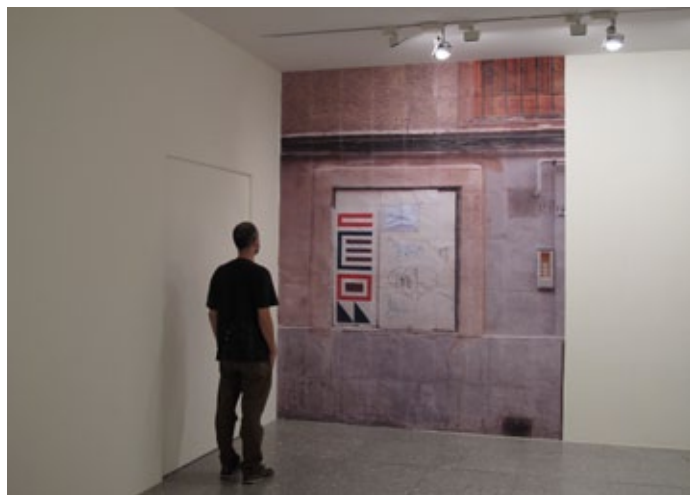


Deambular (Wandering)

Artium, Basque Museum of Contemporary Art
Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain
06/07/2012 – 02/11/2012

Praxis Project: Curated by Blanca de la Torre – Production coordination by Yolanda de Egoscobal
Deambular curators: Sergio García and Javier Abarca

For *Deambular (Wandering)*, I have devised a series of formulas to produce work based on the everyday action of walking through the city, the ebbs and flows of the street and pedestrian interaction, formulas that ran for seven days prior to the exhibition's inauguration and for seven days after. I used these games to outline direct connections between the exhibition space and the public space, links that invited the viewer to stroll through the city and thus form part of the creative process. The Praxis exhibition hall served as a workshop and control centre, and at the same time as a space to display the documentation arising from the various experiments. (www.eltono.com/en/exhibitions/deambular)



1/1 Caochandi - 草场地

C-Space

Red No.1 – C1 & C2, Caochangdi, Beijing, China

30/06/2012 - 26/08/2012

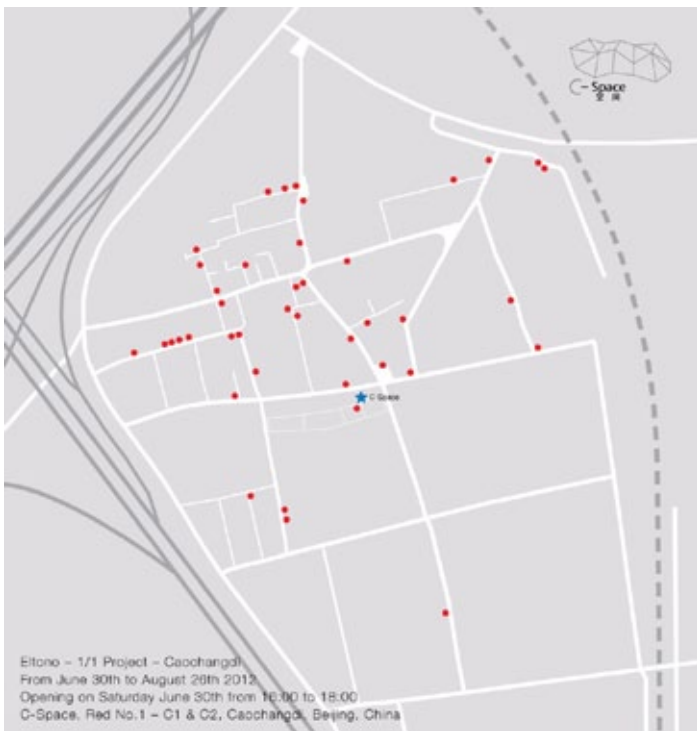
Curated by Nora Jaccaud – Directed by Melle Hendrikse

The 1/1 project aims to bring contemporary art to the street and the street into the gallery. At the entrance of Caochangdi there is a sign that reads “Caochangdi Art Village”. However, when I came for the first time, I was surprised to find an almost tangible frontier dividing the village and the galleries. During my one month residency in Caochangdi, I decided to use my paintings to create a link between these two worlds. I spent several weeks connecting with residents and painting their doors, creating a path throughout the neighborhood filled with mysterious abstract images.

A selection of life size photographs, the result of the residency, were on exhibit in C-space gallery. The rest of the doors can still be viewed by wandering the streets of Caochangdi and following the map produced.

The aim of this project is to create an exchange between two groups: the art community and the local residents. The *1/1* title refers to the life size printed photographs of the doors as well as the one to one relationship that exists between the exhibition space and the street. Using street art as my medium, the *1/1* project hopes to provide a platform where art is accessible to everyone.

(www.eltono.com/en/projects/1-1-caochangdi)



Złota 73

Updates 2011

Złota 73, Wola, Warsaw, Poland

26/04/2011 - 06/05/2011

The *Złota 73* project was part of update 2011, an event organized by the Vlepvnet foundation. Every year they invite local and international artists to work in the city. The project consisted in two big paintings on the facades of an old building that was constructed before World War II (very few of these buildings are still intact because of the intense bombings). The building was located on Złota street in the Wola neighborhood, close to the central station. Thanks to the help of vlepvnet, the volunteers and the support of the neighbors, we managed to finished the two murals in only seven days. (www.eltono.com/en/projects/zlota-73-warszawa)



La Quiñonera

Santa Cruz 111 Col. Candelaria
Coyoacán, Mexico City
07/2011

During June 2011, the exhibition, *Antes de la Resaca* opened in the MUAC (Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo de México DF). The curators organized a retrospective of the spaces created, and innovative proposals put forth by Mexican artists during the 1980s and 90s such as La Quiñonera, Temistocles 44, and La Panaderia. The exhibition was a review of projects and artists who passed through those spaces. In conjunction, Nestor Quiñones organized the exhibition *Espacios Flexibles* in collaboration with Anonymous Gallery (New York) and La Curtiduria (Oaxaca) to give continuity to La Quiñonera as an exhibition space in parallel with the MUAC program. They invited me to be part of the exhibition and offered me a façade to paint inside the cultural center.
(www.eltono.com/en/exhibitions/espacios-flexibles-mexico-df)



Automatic Painting #1

Art Re-Public Festival

05/05/2011

Yoyogi Park, Harajuku, Tokyo, Japan

Art Re-Public is a festival which has been organized over the past few years in the streets of Tokyo to celebrate “Kodomo No Hi” or Children’s Day, an annual celebration throughout Japan. This year however, the festival took place in Yoyogi park in Harajuku. I was offered the opportunity to do an installation at the event and decided to take advantage of the presence of so many children to do an experiment with one of my automatic painting projects. Four stations were prepared where people (mostly children) could choose randomly between 9 figures, 6 colors, 8 orientations and 289 positions. This choice was determined through a series of simple games. The experiment lasted 5 hours during which 85 people participated and 86 figures were painted.

(www.eltono.com/en/projects/automatic-painting-art-re-public-tokyo)



Astillas

La Culpable, Lima, Peru
06/2008 - 07/2008

Festival Of World Cultures, Dublin, Ireland
07/2010

Astillas is a creative experience shared between the artist and the viewer. The installation takes form as the public begins to participate, choosing which pieces go where and establishing any and all possible combinations imaginable. Through this simple model of placing, moving and removing individual pieces the work ceases to belong to one person. It splinters and becomes a fluctuating whole which belongs to everyone. To begin the installation, I placed individually painted pieces of wood at the entrance of the gallery and a rail system on the walls of the rooms. The main idea was to inaugurate the gallery completely empty, with nothing hanging on the walls. In this way, I could see how the audience assembled and edited the installation during the duration of the exposition. (www.eltono.com/en/exhibitions/astillas)



Publico

Rojo Art Space Milano
Via Tortona, Milano, Italy
01/15/2009 - 02/28/2009

In the *Publico* project the viewer is the protagonist. The end result of the work depends on the participation of the public. The experiment plays with the interactivity that exists in the streets and studies how uncontrolled external factors can affect work installed in a city. Thus, the artist reflects on the sacredness of art leaving the creations to evolve themselves and generate a final result that is uncertain and unexpected. (www.eltono.com/en/projects/publico)



Thăng Long Hotel Espana

Nguyễn Trường Tộ street,
Hà Nội, Vietnam
07/2010

In the summer of 2010, I was invited by the Spanish Embassy to work on the project *Thang Long Hotel Spain*, a project in which Vietnamese and Spanish artists intervened artistically in the bedrooms, hallways and exterior walls of the hotel. I was chosen to paint the front facade and after a month of hard work with my four amazing assistants, we finished what is my largest painting to date.

(www.eltono.com/en/projects/sen-thang-long-hotel)



Residencia Tampiquito

“La Galería en el Taller Mecánico”

Calle Plutarco Elias Calles #419,
Colonia Tampiquito, San Pedro, Monterrey, NL, Mexico
04/01/2009 - 05/26/2009

I was invited by Nrmal and Narval to be the first artist to participate in *Residencia Tampiquito* An artists residence in a popular neighborhood of San Pedro (Monterrey). I lived and painted in this neighborhood for two months and completed the project with a gallery show at a local garage, “La Galería en el Taller Mecánico” During these two months I painted close to 50 paintings on the facades of the resident's homes in this remarkable neighborhood.
(www.eltono.com/en/projects/residencia-tampiquito)



Coriandoli

Cripta747 Gallery

Turin, Italy

02/02/2009 - 03/15/2009

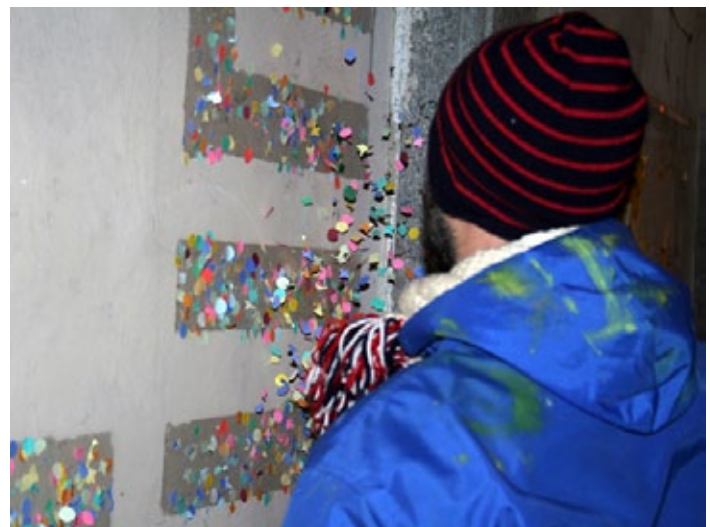
Observatori 2009, 10^o Valencia's International Artistic Investigation Festival

Valencia, Spain

06/04/2009 - 06/27/2009

The *Coriandoli* installation was presented twice, first in the Cripta 747 Gallery in Turin and then at the Observatori Festival in Valencia. The project began with the idea of confronting an allegedly aggressive practice such as graffiti with a material as harmless as confetti. For this project, I developed a few activities for the street such as graffiti with glue and confetti on walls and on a passing tram, and an interactive indoor installation with double-sided tape. In the installation the public threw confetti onto the wall, revealing the art work and aiding in it's evolution.

(www.eltono.com/en/exhibitions/coriandoli)



Street Art

Tate Modern, London, England

Curated by Cedar Lewisohn and Rafael Schacter

05/23/2008 - 08/25/2008

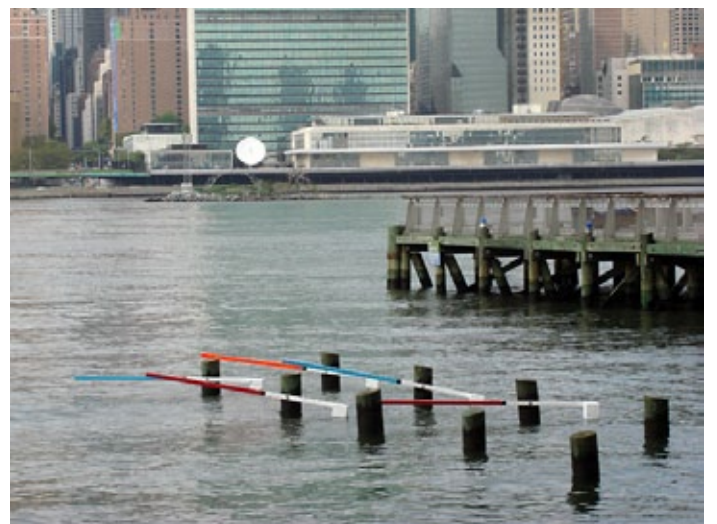
During the exhibition *Street Art* at the Tate Modern, I participated alongside four other artists from Madrid in a walking tour. A walk in the neighborhood around the museum that proposed to the public, map in hand, the experience of enjoying street art in it's natural environment. (www.eltono.com/en/exhibitions/street-art)



PLAF - Autonomous Mechanisms - Eltono & MOMO

New York, USA
08/2008 - 10/2008

During the summer of 2008, in collaboration with the North American artist MOMO, I developed the *PLAF* project in which kinetic sculptures were installed in New York's waterways. Built from recycled material, the sculptures were installed without permission and were left to the elements to try to explore the power and potential of the water, currents, tide and wind. The majority of the sculptures were installed in the East River and were designed based on previously studied maritime aesthetics. The sculptures changed constantly following the natural rhythm of the elements and everything was carefully documented. Afterwards, an exhibition at the Anonymous Gallery compiled and presented the documentation and served as a platform to inform the public of the emergence of new installations as we constructed them. (www.eltono.com/en/projects/plaf)



Rojo Out

Sao Paulo, Brazil
08/2008

In August of 2008 I participated in Rojo Out, a mural painting project in Brazil. The space chosen for me was an enormous ventilation system used for an underground highway at the intersection of Avenida Juscelino Kubitschek and Marginal Pinheiros, in the center of Sao Paulo. (www.eltono.com/en/projects/sao-paulo-rojo-out)



Puerta Lumbreras

Puerto Lumbreras, Murcia, Spain

08/17/2006 - 08/31/2006

In August of 2006, I was asked to develop an artistic intervention for the streets of Puerto Lumbreras, a small town in Southern Spain with less than 12,000 inhabitants. During a period of 15 days I painted 150 doors throughout the village. As always in my paintings, I tried not to cover or transform the original environment, but instead, looked for ways to integrate my pieces, drawing attention to details such as texture and color. I sought to give prominence to those places whose aesthetic use is often over-looked and unappreciated by the average pedestrian.

(www.eltono.com/en/projects/puerta-lumbreras)



Politonos

Madrid, Spain
2004 - 2005

After years of watching all different kinds of interaction between my painting and the public, I decided to take this experience even further and install sculptures around the city spontaneously. The rules were simple: act as if trying to make a painting, choose a site, install the work and leave. For each one of them, I remained hidden close by recording and taking pictures without ever intervening. The sculptures were left until they disappeared, were destroyed or stolen. (www.eltono.com/en/projects/politonos)



El Autotono

Mexico City and Monterrey, Mexico
10/2008 - 11/2008

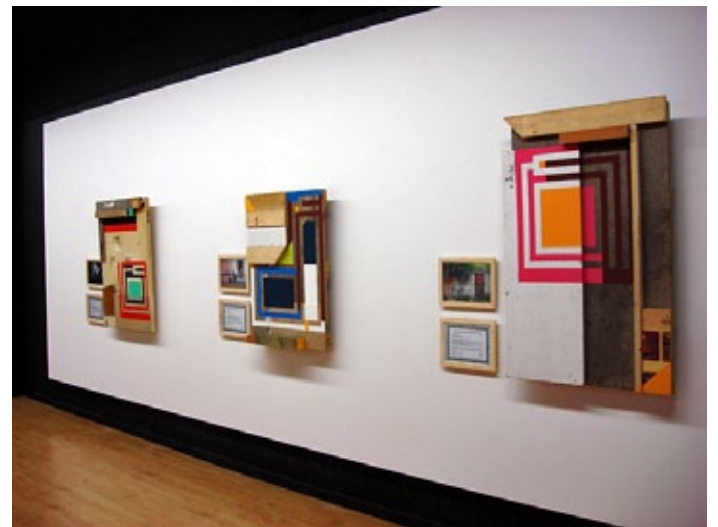
The *Autotono* is a mobile installation that I created to see how people would interact with a piece of art spontaneously installed in a public space. We built a kind of jigsaw puzzle by mixing three designs and then we put it on wheels. Pushing the installation we strolled through Mexico City and Monterrey to see how people interacted and observed the different stages in which the piece was found. What interested me was not if people were able to complete the puzzles, but rather to record all the spontaneous compositions that were created between these attempts. The *Autotono* was tested in several areas: busy streets, tourist attractions, festivals, a design fair, parks and schools. It was amusing to note that after walking hours in places like the center of Mexico City without any incidents, it was in a private design school in Monterrey where we recorded the theft of some pieces. (www.eltono.com/en/projects/el-autotono)



Bermellón

Rojo Artspace, Barcelona, Spain
07/08/2008 - 08/08/2008

Exhibiting street art at a gallery is always difficult, outside its normal environment, the work often loses its essence. To try to resolve this dilemma, I always try to create a relationship between the street and the gallery. For the *Bermellón* exhibition, I built pieces from wood found in the streets of Barcelona and then used these wood pieces as a base to paint inverted replicas. These “inverted artworks” are interpretations of pieces originally painted illegally in the street. Working with absence and emptiness, I tried not to reproduce or falsify my street work while at the same time reflect on the limits created by the relationship between the interior and exterior elements of a gallery space.
(www.eltono.com/en/exhibitions/bermellon)



Pinto Gratis and Servicio 24h

Madrid, Spain
2002 - 2004

2000 posters - 5000 stickers

The projects *Pinto Gratis* (“I Paint for Free”) and *24h* were inspired by spontaneous commercial street communication, its quick design style, its appearance in the streets and its independent advertising. It was an experiment in mimicry, I acted like one more of them, hitting the same places with the same techniques. In some cases, I even saw unfavorable reactions from the competition by offering my services for free!

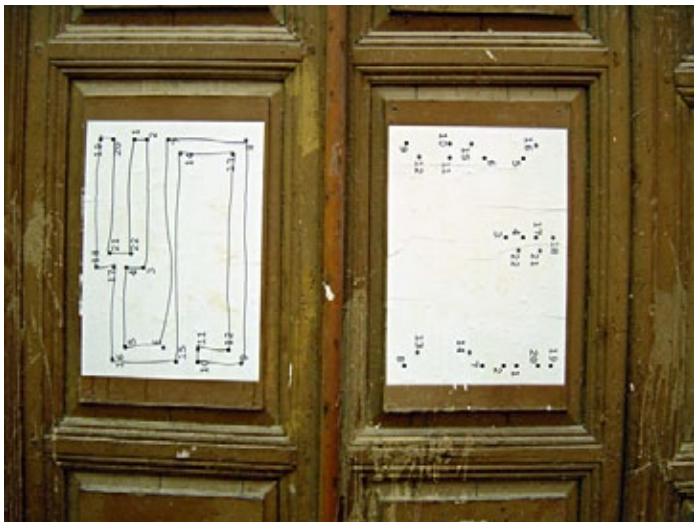
(www.eltono.com/en/projects/pinto-gratis - www.eltono.com/en/projects/servicio-24h)



Interactive Posters

Madrid, Spain
2001

The “Interactive Poster” was the first of all my interactive experiments. With no idea as to how people would react, one night I pasted close to 100 posters in the Lavapiés neighborhood of Madrid. The next day at 11:00 in the morning I observed that over 60% of them were completed. Two days later, the signs that had not been removed were completely finished. (www.eltono.com/en/projects/carteles-interactivos)



Exhibitions

Individual :

07/2012: **Deambular**, Artium Museum, Vitoria, Spain
06/2012: **I/I**, C-Space gallery, Caochangdi, Beijing, China
03/2012: **Duotone**, OZ, Amsterdam, N.L.
10/2011: **Eredu**, SC Gallery, Bilbao, Spain
05/2010: **Retícula**, Montana Gallery, Seville, Spain
04/2009: **Residencia Tampiquito**, Monterrey, Mexico
01/2009: **Coriandoli**, Cripta747, Torino, Italy
01/2009: **Pubblico**, Rojo Artspace, Milano, Italy
09/2008: **PLAF – Autonomous Mechanisms**, New York, U.S.A.
07/2008: **Bermellón**, Rojo Artspace, Barcelona, Spain
06/2008: **Astillas**, La Culpable, Lima, Peru
01/2008: **Montagens**, Galería Adesivo, Porto Alegre, Brazil
01/2008: **Petits collages**, Rojo Art Space, Rosario, Argentina
12/2007: **Invertidos**, Rojo Art Space, Sao Paulo, Brazil
10/2007: **Eltono at ART**, Monterrey, Mexico
11/2006: **Eigenkonstruktion**, Artitude, Berlin, Germany
01/2006: **(x, y, z)**, Vacío9, Madrid, Spain
10/2002: **Complémentaires**, Vacío 9, Madrid, Spain

Collective (selection) :

08/2013: **Wooster Collective 10th Anniversary Show**, Jonathan Levine Gallery, New York, U.S.A.
06/2013: **Fresh Flâneurs**, Doppelgaenger Gallery, Bari, Italy
09/2012: **Biennale d'Art Contemporain du Havre**, Le Havre, France
09/2012: **Festival Bien Urbain**, Besançon, France
05/2012: **Caballo Caballo Tigre Tigre**, Beijing, China (Equipo Plástico)
04/2012: **Esto no es Graffiti**, CICUS, Sevilla, Spain
08/2011: **Outomatic**, M van Museum, Leuven, Belgium
05/2010: **Sala de Arte Joven 2.0**, Sala de Arte Joven de la Comunidad de Madrid, Madrid, Spain
04/2010: **Intervenciones Urbanas Iberoamericanas**, CCEBA, Buenos Aires, Argentina
04/2010: **Postgraffiti, Geometría y Abstracción**, MUAU, A Coruña, Spain
03/2010: **Entre la Silla y la Madre**, Alianza Francesa, Monterrey, Mexico - (Equipo Plástico)
02/2010: **Murals**, Fundación Miró, Barcelona, Spain
02/2010: **ARCO 2010**, Stand Región de Murcia, Madrid, Spain
11/2009: **La Cuadrada**, Centro Cultural de España, Lima, Peru - (Equipo Plástico)
05/2009: **Observatori 2009**, Valencia, Spain
05/2008: **Street Art**, Tate Modern Museum, London, U.K.
03/2008: **Nomadaz**, Scion Gallery, Los Angeles, U.S.A.
12/2007: **Behind the seen**, Ad Hoc Gallery, New York, U.S.A.
07/2007: **Planet Prozess**, Berlin, Germany
05/2007: **Tercera muestra de Arte urbano**, Alcobendas, Spain
02/2007: **ARCO 2007**, Madrid, Spain
01/2007: **Privé och público**, Göteborg, Sweden
09/2006: **Pintura Mutante**, Marco Museum, Vigo, Spain
01/2006: **I Bienal de Arte ONCE**, Madrid, Spain
12/2005: **Tras la pared**, Annta Gallery, Madrid, Spain
02/2005: **Rojo: Gold**, New York, U.S.A.
02/2005: **ARCO 2005**, Madrid, Spain
09/2003: **Ill communication**, Manchester, U.K.
06/2003: **Photo España 03**, Madrid, Spain
09/2002: **Liverpool Biennial**, Liverpool, U.K.
06/2002: **Coded Language**, Atlanta, U.S.A.
02/2002: **Doméstico '01**, Madrid, Spain

In parallel with his own work, Eltono is part of the art collective “El Equipo Plastico” whose inspiration is based on observations made in each city they visit. www.equipoplastico.com