

PRESS RELEASE

EXHIBITION

CARLOS RODRÍGUEZ-MÉNDEZ

18th March – 19th June 2005 **ANNEX SPACE**



DATES

18th March - 19th June 2005

WHERE

Annex Space (square at the back of the museum)

OPENING TIMES

Annex Space

From Tuesdays to Saturdays (including holidays), from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Sundays, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

FREE ENTRANCE

DIRECTORS OF PROJECT IN MARCO

Carlota Álvarez Basso

Iñaki Martínez Antelo

CURATOR

Iñaki Martínez Antelo

PRODUCED BY

MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo

WORKS ON EXHIBITION

This will be Carlos Rodríguez-Méndez's (As Neves, Pontevedra, 1968) first exhibition in Galicia, and on the occasion of the opening at MARCO's Annex Space he has created two different kinds of works: on the one hand, the sculptures called *Columns* (2004) and *Canal XIV* (2004-2005). On the other, the series *Construir procesos* (2003-2005) and *Trabajos de fuera* (2004-2005), screened on DVD.

CATALOGUE

This exhibition will be marked by a catalogue, the third of the series of publications called "Annex Space". This catalogue will be published in Spanish and Galician, and will include a text written by the art critic Miguel Cereceda, an interview of the curator with the artist, his biography, and texts and images depicting the process of production of the works, as well as photographs of the final result of the installation in the Annex Space. On this occasion, due to the need to include pictures of the installed works, the catalogue will be published after the opening of the exhibition.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Iñaki Martínez Antelo (Santiago de Compostela, 1969) has a degree in Contemporary Art History from the Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, and a master's degree in Aesthetics and Art Theory from the Instituto de Estética attached to the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. He has worked in the Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea in Santiago de Compostela (1996-1998), and was coordinator of exhibitions at the Auditorio de Galicia (1998-2002) and coordinator of cultural activities at Casa Asia, Barcelona (2002-2003). He is chief curator at MARCO since April 2003.

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SUMMARY OF THE EXHIBITION PROJECT

This will be Carlos Rodríguez-Méndez's (As Neves, Pontevedra, 1968) first exhibition in Galicia, and on the occasion of the opening at MARCO's Annex Space he has created two different kinds of works: on the one hand, the sculptures called *Columnas* (2004) and *Canal XIV* (2004-2005), which are sculptures made of a structure covered with peat. On the other, the follow-up in Vigo of two series commenced in Madrid, which gives a special sense to the presentation of his works at MARCO due to the fact that they are being produced in our city. This series, screened on DVD, is integrated by *Construir procesos* (2003-2005) –ephemeral constructions created on the street with waste taken from debris containers– and *Trabajos de fuera* (2004-2005), where he takes photographs of himself inside the existing holes in the city.

What is most astonishing when first approaching Carlos Rodríguez-Méndez's work is his particular attitude towards the creative act, from the construction of the work in the workshop to its installation in the exhibition space, regarded as an essential part of the process. His categorical peat sculptures not only place themselves in this environment, but they also dwell in it, as if they refused to confine themselves to a single definite location. This process is recorded in video by the artist, with a clear documentary purpose that he considers to be as important as the sculpture itself, allowing more than one interpretation of the artwork.

His sculptures have somehow inherited the tradition of the *Arte Povera*, with materials as poor and ephemeral as earth itself and a strong element of serial repetition that might connect them with Minimal Art. They are located in the Annex Space but they invade the hall completely, making the public turn around if they want to get inside. While the dimensions of Ángela de la Cruz's works prevented the public from visiting the hall, Carlos Rodríguez-Méndez's enormous artworks aim to create a similar effect of complete invasion of the space, but by very different means.

The time factor is another key element in this creative process: his large columns or earth blocks demand a long period for drying, which the artist utilizes to undertake actions where the idea of construction is ubiquitous. He works with space and the materials it provides, such as the waste placed in a debris container (*Construir procesos*), or the holes found in the street, taking possession of them and giving them an artistic character by the simple gesture of photographing himself inside them (*Trabajos de fuera*). He sometimes builds and distorts himself by placing objects underneath his clothes, or spends hours in empty, abandoned or nearly destroyed places, trying to "belong" or be part of the memory of these spaces. In these actions, the artist himself behaves like one of his sculptures, takes possession of all the places –their history, meaning, *raison d'être*, relationship with man and the environment– and reflects about the artistic act, working with found objects completely different from those he may create in his workshop. Or perhaps not so different...

Iñaki Martínez Antelo
Curator of the exhibition

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TEXT BY THE ARTIST

About my work

An important part of my work is focused on sculpture materials. I am closely linked with earth and peat, and their potential has lately resulted in the creation of items intended to attain a physical experience through these materials. That is why I only consider an artwork as accomplished when it is completed by the human body, going as far as regarding many items as instruments, with special characteristics that confer them the possibility of being used.

Therefore, my interest in completing an artwork and turning it into a unique and definite item regards two different aspects. On the one hand, it takes into account the task, the process itself –as my latest work shows, through a serial, systematic approach, in which formal repetition highlights this processual aspect in the creative and constructive realm. On the other hand, it considers the design of “habitable” places, taking the human body as a measure and specifying how to arrange the items to be used. This is how I conscientiously experience two materials: the body and the earth.

This instrumental character of my works adds a new condition to them. Every action emphasizes the process: “There is no event without practice, there is no situation without repetition. What is imposed as the best for us must be repeated, elaborated and transformed into what we subjectively want. (...) This aesthetics of the event creates the idea of art as a practice: (...) what is most important in stoic thinking is not the artwork but its practice, that is, the processual moment that leads towards it, the productive movement that creates it” (Mario Perniola, *L'arte e la sua ombra*, 2000). Being completed by the action of using the items establishes a private relationship with the qualities of their materials. These qualities have a bearing on the “user” and create a tension –as Hölderlin called it–, and so intensify conscience.

About the construction of columns

There are two essential aspects I am interested in when building columns. Firstly, their support, instability, and the body as a base. Secondly, intrusion in spaces, empathic fusion between floor and ceiling, and coexistence as a process to develop a sense of belonging.

I carefully consider the instability that the lack of base transmits to the pillars. When I resort to a large number of columns as symbolic elements of instability, I present them without a base, turning this main idea of sustainability into an expression of absurdity and discouragement. I also interpret columns as elements of support. For example, I fix them to the ceiling and leave them hanging on the floor, leaving an exact space –corresponding to their base– for their use. The earth pillars act as the seat of the artwork that will be fulfilled only when a man physically occupies it. In this way, it becomes the base of the columns, responsible for their own stability. Base and column make up an impossible whole, and ironically, every time the body withdraws from its status as a base, instability will be re-established, revealing a frail firmness. Only systematic coexistence, considered as the process that establishes a relationship between dwelling and the aforementioned use, succeeds in intensifying conscience and the sense of belonging.

CARLOS RODRÍGUEZ-MÉNDEZ

Vigo, March 2005

PRESS RELEASE



BIOGRAPHY

CARLOS RODRÍGUEZ-MÉNDEZ

(As Neves, Pontevedra, 1968)

Degree in Fine Arts from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 1995

Individual exhibitions

2004

- Galería KA, Madrid
- *Columnas de tierra*, installation, Ateneo, Madrid (grant from the Fundación Arte y Derecho)

2003

- *Pseudomorfosis del Amor*, 20th June - 6th July 2003, Los29Enchufes, Madrid
- *Relación=Recibo* (with the poet Maite Dono), Red de Arte Joven de Madrid, Ateneo, Madrid

2002

- *Restablecer*, Espacio f, Madrid
- *Reenvío*, Catálogo General, Bilbao
- *Concierto para tres esculturas*, Concejalía de Cultura, Las Pedroñeras, Cuenca

Group exhibitions

2005

- *En algún lugar alguien está volando furiosamente hacia ti*, Inéditos 2005, La Casa Encendida, Madrid (in preparation)
- *III Bienal de escultura Riofisa*, Madrid (in preparation)

2004

- *Guasipichai*, Los29enchufes, Madrid
- *Extensión sobre una segunda morfología privada*, Casas y calles 04, Madrid

2003

- *Expresa 2003, Arte y Cultura Contemporánea*, Ciudadela, Pamplona
- *Generación 2003*, La Casa Encendida, Madrid. Venues at Barcelona, Sevilla, Cascais, Santiago de Compostela
- Catálogo General, Bilbao
- Galería Artificial, Madrid

2002

- Catálogo General, Bilbao
- *Exposición Internacional de Artes Plásticas*, Valdepeñas

2001

- *Presentación de los artistas de la temporada 2002*, Espacio f, Madrid

1998

- *Ciento y... postales a Federico García Lorca*, Fórum Filatélico, Madrid

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REQUEST FOR GRAPHIC MATERIAL

EXHIBITION

“CARLOS RODRÍGUEZ-MÉNDEZ”

GRAPHIC MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO THE PRESS:

CD including texts and photographs of the exhibition in different formats.

IF YOU WISH YO RECEIVE DOCUMENTATION, PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND SEND IT BY E-MAIL, FAX OR MAIL POST TO:

MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo

Rúa Príncipe 54
36202 Vigo (Pontevedra). Spain

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