

PRESS RELEASE

EXHIBITION

FRAN HERBELLO. *SOUVENIR*

8th July – 2nd October 2005 **ANNEX SPACE**



DATES

8th July – 2nd October 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

DIRECTOR OF PROJECT ROOM

Iñaki Martínez Antelo

CURATOR

Carlota Álvarez Basso

PRODUCED BY

MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo

Fran Herbello, *Siesta*, 2005

Colour photograph

Promotional image of the exhibition. Courtesy of the artist

WORKS ON EXHIBITION

On the occasion of this exhibition at the Annex Space, Fran Herbello, who usually works with photography, has produced two different kinds of works: the visual and sound installation (*Souvenir 1*) in the main hall, made of grass with a sound system integrated, and a video (*Souvenir 2*) which is activated by a presence detector.

CATALOGUE

This exhibition will be marked by a catalogue published in the series "Annex Space" after the opening. This catalogue will be published in Spanish and Galician, and will include a text by the curator, a text written by Chus Martínez —curator of Sala Rekalde, Bilbao—, the biography of the artist, texts and images depicting the process of production of the works, and photographs of the final result of the works installed in the Annex Space.

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SUMMARY OF THE EXHIBITION PROJECT

The Annex Space was originally created as a project room intended for Galician emerging artists. Following this line, it will host the individual exhibition of a young Galician artist who has been participating since the year 2000 in individual and group exhibitions in Galicia and abroad.

Fran Herbello is well known in the artistic milieu for his black and white photographs, which are in fact unreal images conceived as conceptual collages, composed of elements among which different relationships can be established. Due to these combinations, each artwork is subject to many different interpretations; however, the artist tries to go beyond a simple mind game. These images consciously transmit feelings, but they also reveal unconscious relationships determined by the spectator's state of mind.

Herbello presents two different proposals at the Annex Space –an installation and a video screening– specifically designed for this environment. He introduces new elements and resources which were unusual in his earlier work in order to take up the challenge of such a space as the Annex's.

The first installation, *Souvenir 1*, is located in the main hall, which has been transformed into a grass field that occupies the whole room. There are also hidden loudspeakers that give out a cricket chirping in different tones and intensity, so as to transmit a feeling of randomness stressing the natural character of the sound. This installation could be interpreted as the background for the photograph of a voyage, or a panorama worthy of a souvenir photograph that each spectator may customize with his presence. The cricket field is a place that recalls our past and demands our memory to act as if we were watching childhood pictures. The artist reproduces a rural scenery that we may evoke when we feel surrounded by the green field, the smell of the grass and the sound of the crickets. It recalls past experiences and takes the country to the city, turning the museum into a space designed for public holidays, leisure and tourism. In this way, it is a clear reference to the scenery we may find in natural spaces and recreational gardens where the concept of attraction substitutes the concept of entertainment. No wonder why, for the first time, the façade of the Annex Space has been substituted by a glass wall in order to take this scenery to the street and turn the exhibition room into a shop window for passers-by.

Souvenir 2 is a video screened on the wall at the back of the corridor which shows us a dog sleeping. Every time a person comes into the room and approaches the screen, a presence detector is activated and the dog wakes up, starts barking and falls asleep again after a while. This actor-dog behaves as Cerberus, the guard dog owner of the hall during the whole exhibition. This artwork, full of irony and humour, is used by Herbello to show the limits of security in museums and urban spaces, in contrast with the rural world. Taking again an image reminiscent of his childhood as the starting point, the artist draws our attention to the two sides of the figure of the dog and the value of the land in the rural and urban environment: in the country, this animal is the alarm that protects the land; in the city, there are electronic alarms to prevent from burglary in houses and robbery in public spaces. The land —with an essential value for the rural world— disappears as a property and is substituted by a car or a house.

The two sequences of the artwork share the same title. *Souvenir* is our memory, but also a memento, and a panoramic or picturesque view that is worth looking at.

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"Sometimes, when I cross the Ría to come to the city, I discover sceneries typical of the rural environment that I associate with archaeological sites, as if they were souvenirs of its past.

Now the rural environment I know is turning more and more into a souvenir, it updates the memory of these images derived from the intersection of two planes. From this solution, many scenes characteristic of surrealist worlds may arise, which are sometimes painful dislocations, but attract our attention because of their strangeness. Their different elements are out of place, and their own codes slowly fade away.

In rural language, quick associations are skilfully established, and flexible terms grouped in different ways transmit messages full of rhetoric.

In the city, the loss of these codes has meant the rise of similar resources used in some advertisements. The association of elements belonging to different worlds is a recurrent subject in the strategy of persuasion of advertising. This is also common among the Surrealists: they aim for the collision of the poles, they confuse our eyes, and point to new interpretations.

I am very interested in all this, and it is in the intersection of these two planes that I place myself to develop a proposal based on the product of this forced relationship".

Fran Herbello
Vigo, June 2005



Fran Herbello, *Permanente*, 2005
Colour photograph
Proposal of promotional image of the exhibition. Courtesy of the artist

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BIOGRAPHY

FRAN HERBELLO

(Menziken, Switzerland, 1977; lives and works in Aldán, Pontevedra, since 1978)

Degree in Fine Art from the University of Vigo, Pontevedra, in 2000

Individual exhibitions

2005

- Fundación Torrente Ballester, Santiago de Compostela

2003

- *Miradas virxes*, Centro Torrente Ballester, Ferrol

2002

- *Explorafoto 2002*, Casa del Japón, Salamanca
- *Encontros da Imagem 2002*, Famalicão, Portugal
- Fundación Luis Seoane, A Coruña
- Galería Railowsky, Valencia
- Fundación Granell, Santiago de Compostela

2001

- Edificio da Xunta de Galicia, Lugo
- Teatro Principal, Pontevedra
- Galería Berini, Barcelona
- PhotoEspaña 2001, Sala Minerva, Círculo de Bellas Artes, Madrid

2000

- *Outono fotográfico*, Casa da Xuventude, Ourense

Group exhibitions

2005

- *Detrás da Pel*, Galería C5 Colección, Santiago de Compostela
- Galería Por Amor al Arte, Porto, Portugal

2002

- *Poéticas fotográficas en la era digital. Ninfomanías-Infomanías*, Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid
- ARCO 2002, stand Galería Berini, Madrid
- *Imaxes Maiores*, Caixa Galicia. Travelling exhibition

Publications

- HERBELLO, Fran. *Mal de corpo*, Vigo, C.E.F., 2005
- Various authors: *BLINK. 100 Photographers, 10 Curators, 10 Writers*, New York, Phaidon, 2002
- "Fran Herbello", in *Monografías* N° 2, A Coruña, 2002
- HERBELLO, Fran. *A imaxe e semellanza*, Vigo, C.E.F., 2000

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REQUEST FOR GRAPHIC MATERIAL

EXHIBITION

"FRAN HERBELLO. *Souvenir*"

GRAPHIC MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO THE PRESS:

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

IF YOU WISH TO 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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