

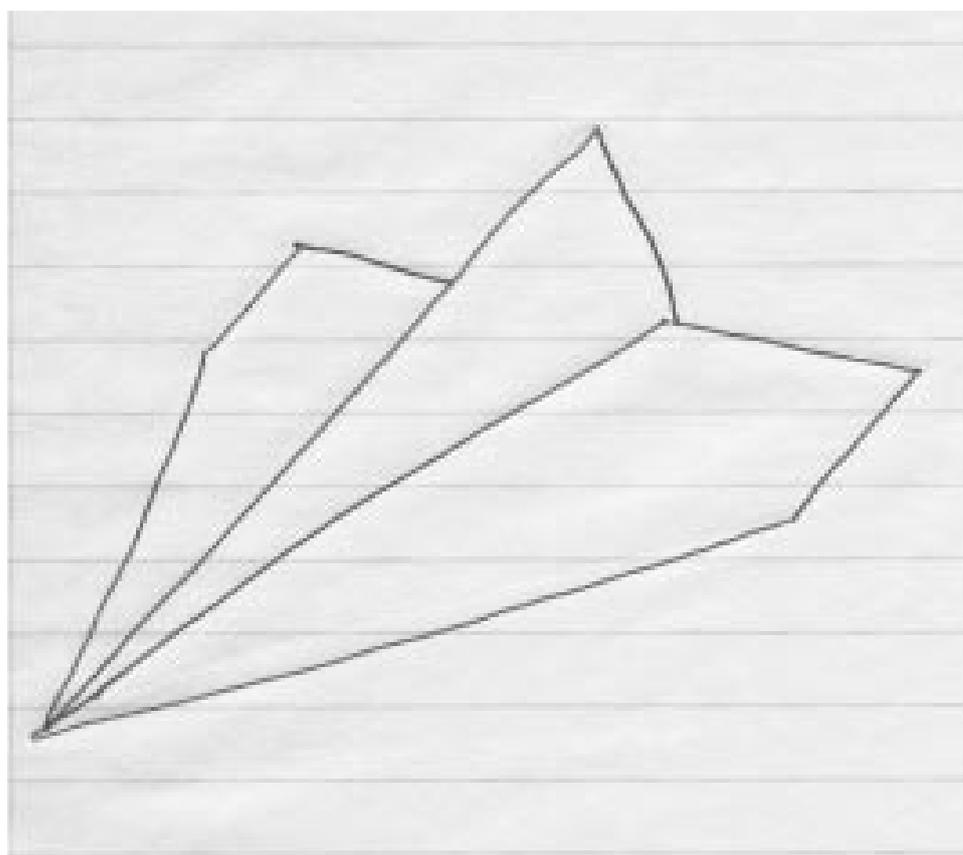
**La BF15** presents

# **PLAYING HIGH**

**Gonzalo Lebrija**

**exhibition** from September 13 to October 15 2005  
**opening** Monday September 12 from 6.30 pm

*In résonance with the biennial of contemporary art of Lyon 2005*



© Gonzalo Lebrija

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# **La BF15**

**360 m3 d'art contemporain**

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Association soutenue par la Ville de Lyon, la Région Rhône-Alpes et le Ministère de la Culture / DRAC Rhône-Alpes

# PLAYING HIGH

## Gonzalo Lebrija

Exhibition of September 13 to October 15 2005

In his photography, videos, and intervention projects, Lebrija explores “unproductive” activity and its relationship to individual creativity. Through poetic gestures that engage with everyday objects and experiences, Lebrija examines the dislocation between the grand meta-narratives of progress associated with modernism and daily contemporary existence. By way of fragile and fragmentary anecdotes he suggests that recreational activities give meaning and significance to our random existence.

For this specific project in La BF15, entitled PLAYING HIGH, Lebrija has taken several photographic portraits of lawyers deeply consumed in a rather mysterious activity : standing next to a window, they seem to be putting all their effort and energy into building or throwing paper airplanes into space. These obscure and dry Vermeeresque images interact with a pair of stainless steel enlarged sculpture replicas of the ordinary paper airplanes shown in the photographs. This whole project documents a performance/contest organized by the artist in which the participants attempt to achieve the longest and most time consuming flight, throwing their paper airplanes from the 23d floor of Guadalajara’s tallest building. Complementary to the photographs and the magnificent sculptures, the first floor of La BF15 will show a video documenting the flight of one of the contestant’s airplanes; a sense of freedom, timelessness, urban chaos and spirituality comes to mind when observing the slow and random descent of the modest piece of paper, displaying a wide panorama of the city as the camera follows its flight path.

### Works presented

#### at the ground floor

*Avión* stainless steel 2005

*Concurso de aviones 1* video 2001

*Playing High* photographs 2005

#### on the floor

*Concurso de aviones 2* video 2001



© Gonzalo Lebrija *Avión* stainless steel 2005



© Gonzalo Lebrija **Concurso de aviones** video 2001

# Gonzalo Lebrija

## Extracts of a dialogue between the artists Gonzalo Lebrija and Cristián Silva

Cristián Silva.: Your work always conveys a sense of complete freedom, yet is accompanied by a precision in regard to media, format, and procedures. It is also marked by the singular flexibility of your imagination. Could you tell us how the process of image configuration and technical construction takes place in your work?

*Gonzalo Lebrija : My technique is probably related to my education. When I began to work in advertising, I used photomechanical ideas and technology, which I'd studied in communication programs at the university. Many of my first works arose out of advertising productions: I had to establish a relationship with clients with whom I had nothing in common or with their market philosophy, in which I had no interest. At the same time, those situations created interesting conditions. For instance, I found I could use and transform film sets into art. Suddenly, I saw that those instruments of production could work in a field that was alien to their original intentions. A case in point: The photograph titled Aspiring to be Christian was taken at a location where a vacuuming and carpet-washing company was producing a catalogue. From experiences like that I've learned techniques and strategies that conceptualized produced images. But images that reflect my own interests.*

C.S.: Which would be then the differences or similarities between the idea of "client" and the idea of "spectator"?

*G.L.: I think there are concepts that connect these two words. I also feel that, in both cases, as far as I'm concerned, seduction mechanisms and strategies for convincing others must be present. I'd like to transmit the same sensations of pleasure I feel about my work to both the spectator and the client, to establish a degree of complicity. I think it was Picasso who said that a painting was ready the moment someone bought it. It seems that in today's market conditions, spectator and client have become synonymous terms. It happens a moment that unknown spectators connect with and get involved with your work to such a degree that they end up acquiring it, not as an investment or simply to possess it but as a sign of identification with your intentions. (...)*

C.S.: Nowadays, it's easy to see, of course, not only in the world of the visual arts, the re-floating of discourses from bygone decades by figures such as Guy Debord and Paul Virilio about subjects as basic as notions of spectacle, war, and velocity, and their implications in the formulation of our cultures. In what way do you feel your work is affected by these or other cultural agents, and what do you think the function of artists should be in regard to those issues?

*G.L.: Look, I'll tell you that the effect of all that on my work is huge, that right now I'm embarking on two projects that clearly work as evasive or abandoning alternatives to the reality you mention. Right now I'm producing a series of Gobelins which are being woven using eighteenth century technology in which the principle image is made up of different species of lilies. In the same way, a couple of months ago, I began a collaborative work with Eduardo Sarabia, which will consist of going to different places in the world that have favorable conditions for sport fishing. The title of the project is 'Gone Fishing, and we think that after a year and a half of expeditions, it will culminate in a document in the form of a book that will register the most significant moments of the experiment. As you can see, notions like war, spectacle, and velocity appear in my most recent work perhaps only because of their absence. So I believe that if there is some mission artists can embark on in that sense, it would in no way be to offer answers or solutions but instead to shake up the conventions through which those themes are generally taken up. (...)*

**Selection of solo exhibitions**

- 2005 *Playing High*, La BF15, Lyon  
 2003 *LIGHTS ON, I-20 Gallery*, New York  
 2002 *15753 Kms.*, Galería Arena México Arte Contemporáneo, Guadalajara

**Selection of collective exhibitions**

- 2005 *La imagen y lo invisible*, Sala Alcalá 31, Madrid  
*Soft machos*, Pilar Parra & Romero Galería de Arte, Madrid  
*Eco Mexico*, Museo de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid  
*Insite*, San Diego
- 2004 *So far so close, The Americas Society*, New York  
*La colmena*, Colección Jumex, Curada por Guillermo Santamarina, Mexico City  
*Oil*, Triangle Project Space, San Antonio  
*Peau froide*, Institut du Mexique, Paris
- 2003 *Paris photo*, Carroussel du Louvre, Paris  
*Arena Mexico*, Ramis Barquet Gallery, New York  
*L'artiste portatif*, Instituto de México en Paris  
*Clusterfuck* Latch Gallery, Los Angeles  
*Wasla internaciona artist workshop*, Sinai, Egypte  
*Jet set*, Museum of installation, London  
*Piel fria*, Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, Mexico City
- 2002 *Zebra crossing*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt GmbH, Berlin  
*Axis Mexico (common objects and cosmopolitan actions)*, San Diego Art Museum, San Diego  
 National Grant ship by FONCA (Fondo Nacional para las Culturas y las Artes) Mexico  
*7 dilemas*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City  
*Intangible*, Casa Clavijero, Guadalajara, Mexico  
*Thinking local*, Sicardi Gallery, Houston  
*La panaderia*, The Americas Society, New York  
*Sauvage*, La Panaderia, Mexico City  
*Leisure Theory*, Jumex collection, Mexico City
- 2001 *01-800-TV-MEX, IASPIS*, Stockholm  
*Braziers international artist workshop*, Oxfordshire  
*Recreo*, Galería Enrique Guerrero, Mexico City  
*Sonido blanco / ruido blanco*, Programa Art Center, Mexico City  
*Minutos chinos*, 291 Gallery, London
- 2000 *Demonstration room / Ideal house*, Museo Alejandro Otero, Caracas  
*Venezuela*, Apex art, New York, *The big show*, NICC Antwerp, Belgique  
*America foto latina*, Museo de las Artes, Guadalajara  
*Fraccionamiento del Terreno - A piece of the action*, Galería Emma Molina, Garza García, Nuevo Leon, Mexico  
*Propulsion a chorro*, Museo de las Artes, Guadalajara, Mexico  
 National Grant ship by FONCA (Fondo Nacional para las Culturas y las Artes) Mexico

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**selection of recent catalogues**

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- 2004 New York. Americas Society. *So Far so Close*, éd.. Gabriela Rangel.
- 2003 Mexico City, Mexico. Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil. *Piel Fria*, éd.. Carlos Ashida.  
 Paris, France. Instituto de México á Paris. *L'Artiste Portatif*, éd. Daniela Franco.  
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- 2002 Berlin, Germany. *Haus der Kulturen der Welt. Zebra Crossing*, éd. Magali Arriola.  
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