

ALICIA FRAMIS

Exhibition May 30 – September 4, 2009

Social problems and political injustices are the themes of Alicia Framis's art. Instead of merely documenting them, though, she prefers to develop imaginative proposals as solutions. As part of this process, she uses methods from other disciplines such as architecture, fashion, and design; she designs clothes, puts on fashion shows, organizes workshops with scientists, artists, and non-professionals, and translates her ideas into constructed models and computer drawings. Framis does not make traditional works of art; rather, her works and performances have a highly aesthetic visual form, whose critical content emerges through closer observation.

We are pleased to present two new groups of works by Alicia Framis, in her first solo exhibition in Germany.

With her continuing project, *New Buildings for China* (2007-2009), Framis reflects upon her experiences with repressive, unstable social relationships in China. For a country whose cultural roots have been cut off, which copies and mixes up every sort of style, the artist calls for a kind of architecture that will rise to the challenges presented by social, cultural, and economic changes. She designs prototypes of buildings out of wood, plaster, polyester, and metal, and then exhibits them as computer-generated 3D drawings and models. Using ordinary objects such as rice bowls, microphones, pill boxes, etc., she constructs fantastic buildings and monuments whose transparent walls, rooms, and open structures illustrate the control exercised by the system, the isolation of people, or the country's restrictive family policies.

Welcome to Guantanamo Museum, Recycling (2009) also deals with the theme of inhumane structures. Framis has developed ideas for a hypothetical museum at the site of the United States' prison camp in Cuba; she has created true-to-scale architectural models made of barbed wire, wood, and polyester, as well as 3D drawings and an audio piece that was composed in collaboration with Blixa Bargeld, the singer of the band *Einstürzende Neubauten*. The artist refers to the fact that, throughout history, places where cruelty has been practiced have been turned into memorials, and this project anticipates the transformation of the prison camp into a memorial site. Models and drawings recreate the topography of the camp as it is currently, making it possible to see into and experience it. Framis designs the spaces as she imagines them, opening them up to fantasy and turning a place that has been taboo until now into a place for reflection and contemplation.

Alicia Framis, born in 1967 in Barcelona, lives and works in Shanghai as the Concept Director for the MOCA (Museum of Contemporary Art) Shanghai. She has become known around the world for her performances and actions, such as *Loneliness in the City* (1999-2000), the *Secret Strike* films (2003-2006); an installation accessible to women only, *Minibar*, at the 2nd Berlin Biennial in 2001; and *Anti_dog* (2002-2003), realized for the Dutch pavilion at the 50th Venice Biennial in 2003, which featured a fashion show of tough, fireproof clothing for women.

Solo exhibitions (selected): Centre d'Art Santa Mònica, Barcelona, 2008; Centro Galego de Arte Contemporáneo CGAC, Santiago de Compostela, 2006; CAPC, Musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux, 2006; Shanghai Duolun Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, 2006; Group exhibitions (selected): Caixa Forum, Barcelona, 2008; Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2008; Today Art Museum, Beijing, 2007; 59th Film Festival Locarno, 2006; Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, 2003; Prizes (selected): Prix de Rome Art in Public Space (First Prize), 1997; Prix Lleida Contemporary Art (First Prize), 2000.