

JOTA CASTRO
Enjoy your travel

Exhibition space: Umberto Di Marino Arte Contemporanea

Via Alabardieri 1, 80121, Napoli, Italy

Opening: Tuesday 5th December 2006 – h 7 / 10 p.m.

Duration: December 5, 2006 – March 5, 2007

Opening hours: Monday h 4 – 8 p.m., Tuesday – Saturday h 10:30 a.m. / 1:30 p.m. and 4 / 8 p.m.

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The [Galleria Umberto Di Marino Arte Contemporanea](#) is glad to present the first solo show by Jota Castro in Naples, *Enjoy your travel* on Tuesday 5th December 2006.

At the end of the 90's Castro gave up the diplomatic career, thanks to which he had worked together with the United Nations and the European Union and decided to devote himself completely to the artistic research. What moves him is the idea of acting as a spokesman for his age, of stirring up the consciences and expressing his own view-point with the freedom allowed only by art, in the best cases. His works are often soaked in a strong mark of irony, and aim at investigating economical, social and political phenomena, always without taking anything for granted, wrongfooting the visitor in order to let him reflect in a critical manner on what surrounds him.

The shape yields to the idea, and this is the reason why the artist never prefers some media to others. The installations presented for the show at the [Galleria Umberto Di Marino Arte Contemporanea](#) demonstrate that Jota Castro has come to an artistic phase where the manual aspect and the search of the materials have achieved a new importance in transmitting the message. As soon as the visitor enters the gallery, he has already to stop in front of the hindrance of the first installation "500 ways". A rubber dinghy full of 1 cent coins for a sum of 500 euros reminds him of the travel of everybody who risks his own life emigrating from his country in the hope of a better future. Taking into consideration the courage demonstrated in facing the problems of the navigation, the artist comes to the image of a travel towards a dream beyond man's limits - though illusory -, as it had to be at the time of the America's discovery. Nevertheless, there is immediately a recall to our consciences with "Borders", where the mirrors remind us that the first border to cross to go beyond injustices and prejudices is represented by ourselves. Then, in the second room, Jota Castro dwells upon two phenomena, a political one and an economical one, that deeply influence the social changes for the importance they have in the public opinion. Looking at the installation "China" we can observe the drawbacks of the growth of the Chinese market and its influence on the international one, that has stimulated a run in the fall of the prices that has deeply damaged the national industries. For example, if people consider the Italian situation, they will observe that one of the most damaged sectors is the shoe one, because articles of excellent workmanship often undergo the competition of shoddy import products. Nevertheless, it's just the social class, who has to endure this discomfort, that shares in this phenomenon with his obsessive inclination to savings. "Energy" instead plays with the appearances: in fact, if some gas bottles painted with Arabic signs can be a simply legible image, the artist shows us how many prejudices can hinder the real perception of things, showing that those sentences are only the translation of some articles of the European Constitution. The conclusion of all these reflections is in the last room, where – thanks to a *divertissement* resulting from the particular structure of the gallery – Jota Castro illustrates the condition of a whole community inclined to the suicide because of the complete loss of the thrust to a change. "Enjoy your travel" is an improbable skateboard track ending outside the window that lets the imaginary acrobat throw himself against the wall of the opposite building, in order to escape the leading wire of the exhibition, that is to say the fears that trouble the European society more and more overbearingly.

Born in 1965 in Lima (Perù), [Jota Castro](#) lives and works in Bruxelles (Belgium).

Selected solo and group shows:

2006: *Construyendo el mundo*, Marco, Museo de Monterrey, Mexico - *Team show*, Gallery Side 2, Tokyo - *Ni mas ni menos*, Galeria Oliva Arauna, Madrid - *Ars06*, Kiasma, Helsinki

2005: *Taking Part*, Stedelijk Museum's, Hertogenosch – *3rd Tirana Biennale*, Albania – *2nd Prague Biennale*, Prague - *Exposition Universelle 1*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris - *Posture...Say Again*, Uplands Gallery, Melbourne

2004: *4th Kwangju Biennale*, Korea (Biennale Prize) - *Bouc-émissaire*, Gallery Kamel Mennour, Paris - *Quick Sand*, De Appel, Amsterdam

2003: « *Motherfuckers never die* », Galleria Minini, Brescia - « *U-Topos* », 2nd Tirana Biennale - « *Z.O.U.* », 50th Venice Biennial, Survival Guide for Demonstrators - *LoveHotel*, Maisonneuve Gallery, Paris - *Hardcore*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris

2001: *Play with Gary and Reality*, 'Voici' - Palais des Beaux Arts, Bruxelles