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## MÁXIMO GONZÁLEZ: PLAYFUL

January 28 – May 6, 2012

*Former Marine and ceramist Ehren Tool exhibits war awareness work at CAFAM*



*Magma (detail), woven Mexican pesos, 2010.*  
Courtesy of the artist



*Timeline (detail), school-book prints, Styrofoam, mirrorball, glue, 2005.* Courtesy of the artist

LOS ANGELES — *Máximo González: Playful* is the first major solo exhibition in Los Angeles of Mexico City-based Argentinean artist Máximo González. Curated by Alma Ruiz, senior curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in Los Angeles, this compelling exhibition will be featured at the Craft and Folk Art Museum from January 28 through May 6, 2012. Though González is best known for creating art objects out of devalued currency from Mexico, this exhibition is a journey through a decade of González's playful investigations into contemporary politics, popular culture, and the reutilization of material. Witty, poetic and slightly subversive, González puts a fresh face on craft.

Consisting of installations, murals and weavings made from global currencies, videos, symbolic objects, and performance, González's work demonstrates a range of materials and messages. Infusing ordinary, everyday items with a handmade delicacy, González's work generates new and unexpected reflections on the relevance of utility and value. He turns the mundane into precious and beautiful objects that become symbols of the moment we are living in. By marrying traditional processes such as loom weaving and paper cutting with the politics of contemporary social history, González uses craft to generate new narratives out of historic events and collective memory.

Works such as *Aluminum 1886*, a large-scale installation of precariously arranged vintage aluminum serving platters, trays, and vessels indicate the fluctuating nature of the value of aluminum. *Warning Monument*, an installation composed entirely of red plastic house wares, transforms the commonplace into a stunning sculptural installation.

With *Magma*, González extends our accepted notions of what craft can be. Weaving discarded pieces of Mexican pesos into large-scale textiles, his careful re-crafting of things we have deemed worthless lends new insights into how we value the handmade. Finally, *Wait* brings us a young soldier who sews sequins onto his own uniform, an evolving piece that involves a live performance at the opening reception.

The exhibition will be accompanied by *Changarrito*, a project that was recently exhibited at the 54th Venice Biennale. Based on the vending carts prevalent in the marketplaces of Mexico, *Changarrito* is a small sculptural cart that González exhibits throughout the world as an alternative platform for local artists to show their work. During the exhibition run, *Changarrito* will be stationed outside the museum alongside the food trucks that line Wilshire Boulevard's Museum Row during lunchtime hours, where select works by local artists, writers, and other cultural participants will be shown.



*Warning Monument*, plastic housewares, light-bulbs, 2009. Courtesy of the artist



*Changarrito*, aluminum, 2005 – 2011. Courtesy of the artist.

Born in Paraná, Entre Ríos, Argentina in 1971, Máximo González studied at the Institute of Art Josefina Contte in Corrientes, where he obtained a Teaching Degree in Visual Arts. He has worked extensively to create public art projects throughout Argentina. Since 2003, Máximo has lived and worked in Mexico City. He has completed 27 solo exhibitions and special projects, and has participated in more than 66 group exhibitions in Latin America, United States, Canada, Europe, and the Middle East. Notably, he showed *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* as part of the *Poetics of the Handmade* exhibition at MOCA in Los Angeles; *The Tree: From the Sublime to the Social* at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Canada; *Mexico: Politics / Poetics* at San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA; and *Something Like an Answer to Something*, Artane Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey. In 2010, he completed an artist residency at the Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago, resulting in the solo exhibition *Material Poems*.

A public opening reception for Máximo González: *Playful*, sponsored by the Consulate General of Argentina, will take place on Saturday, January 28 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

### **PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

In addition to exhibition-related adult and family workshops, curator Alma Ruiz will give a public talk. Other events will include a family Craftlab family workshop. Craftlab drop in workshops are held on the second Saturday of each month from 1:30 to 3:30.

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Situated on historic Museum Row since 1973, the Craft & Folk Art Museum (CAFAM) is an invaluable contributor to Los Angeles culture, exhibiting current artists with intriguing perspectives and distinctive practices. Exploring the leading edge of craft, art, and design, CAFAM gives audience to diverse makers and artists whose work is often not represented in larger art institutions. The museum is a place to see art and make art — all under one roof. CAFAM coordinates a robust roster of hands-on workshops led by professional artists and makers. The intimate, atypical museum space and independent spirit at CAFAM combine to create an atmosphere of excitement and innovation, where people in Los Angeles deepen their relationships to art, creativity and one another. For more information, visit [www.cafam.org](http://www.cafam.org)

Location: 5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036

Admission: FREE every Sunday

Regularly: \$7 for adults; \$5 for students, teachers, seniors, and veterans; free for CAFAM members

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.; closed Mondays. Every first Thursday of the month, extended hours 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.