

## Francis Alÿs

Francis Alÿs (born 1959 in Belgium) began his career as an architect, but shifted his focus to art after moving to Mexico in the 1980s. His working process involves walking around cities, executing actions, and creating works of art based on them using diverse, multidisciplinary methods including drawing, film, video, and photography. Alÿs' actions, such as pushing a large block of gradually melting ice through the streets for an entire day, and charging headlong into a tornado, are reminiscent of child's play yet they also serve to highlight the contradictions and absurdities of our society, in which hard work and suffering do not necessarily lead to a just reward.

This exhibition presents Alÿs's oeuvre from his earliest works, capturing various actions he performed on the streets of Mexico City, to his recent large-scale project at the Strait of Gibraltar separating Europe and Africa, in which children from both continents marched into the sea in an attempt to form a human bridge connecting them.

Alÿs has earned great international acclaim for his unique approach, based on performing actions in public spaces that allegorize social and political issues. His work is charged with universal themes brought alive through the potential of imagination and the power of narrative. Walking through the world, observing it, and weaving stories from the threads of everyday life, Alÿs opens the viewer's eyes to a wealth of creative possibilities that might hold the key to overcoming real-world conundrums.

**Francis Alÿs/** Born in Antwerp, Belgium in 1959. Currently resides in Mexico City. After studying architecture in Venice, Alÿs moved to Mexico City in 1986. There, he was engaged in rebuilding projects in the aftermath of the 1985 earthquake for approximately two years. He continued to work as an architect but also began his artistic career from the late 1980s. His works often deal with the social circumstances of Mexico, and thus Latin America which he translates into allegorical narratives that are delivered in the form of physical actions, videos, paintings, photographs, etc. From the latter half of the 1990s, Alÿs has enjoyed international recognition through presentations at the *Venice Biennale* and the *Istanbul Biennial*, among others. In 2010, the Tate Modern in London hosted a large-scale solo exhibition, which traveled to The Museum of Modern Art, New York the following year. In 2012, he participated in *dOCUMENTA(13)*, an international exhibition that takes place every five years in Kassel, Germany. <http://www.francisalys.com>

- Duration: Sat. October 26, 2013- Sun. January 26, 2014
- Opening hours: 10:00-17:00 (Last Admission 16:30) \*10:00-19:00 (January 25, 26)
- Closed: Mondays (Except November 3, December 23 and January 13), November 4, December 24 and January 14. December 27 - January 1
- Admission charges: Adults 1,000 (800) yen, College Students 700 (600) yen, High School Students and Senior [65 and over] 500 (400) yen \*Figures in brackets ( ) are the charges for advance-purchase and groups of 30 or more persons.
- Organizers: Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, The Chugoku Shimibun
- Supported by: Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium, Flanders Center
- Partonized by: Hiroshima Prefecture, Hiroshima Municipal Board of Education, Hiroshima FM Broad Casting Co., Ltd., Onomichi FM Broad Casting Co., Ltd.

### Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art

Curatorial Staffs: Yukie Kamiya PR Officers: Akiko Goto, Hanako Suzuki  
1-1 Hijiyama Koen, Minami-ku, Hiroshima City, Hiroshima, 732-0815  
Main Phone: +81 82 264 1121 Fax: +81 82 264 1198 <http://www.hcmca.cf.city.hiroshima.jp/>



*Don't Cross the Bridge Before You Get to the River*, 2008

In collaboration with Rafael Ortega, Julien Devaux and the Fundación Montenmedio Arte Contemporáneo, Strait of Gibraltar  
Photo: Jorge Golem



*Tornado*, 2000-2010

In collaboration with Julien Devaux and Rafael Ortega, Milpa Alta  
Photo: Jorge Golem



*Paradox of Praxis 1(Sometimes Doing Something Leads to Nothing)*, 1997

Mexico City  
Photo: Enrique Huerta