

— For Immediate Release

Contact: Anne Wehr  
(212) 980-4575  
[awehr@publicartfund.org](mailto:awehr@publicartfund.org)

Public Art Fund presents  
**Alejandro Diaz**  
**A Can for All Seasons**



An Installation of Four Sculptures on the  
Grand Concourse in the Bronx  
June 29 – September 29, 2005

Public Art Fund is pleased to announce the presentation of Alejandro Diaz's *A Can for All Seasons*, a light-hearted take on public sculpture celebrating the overlap between art and everyday life. Inspired by the practice in rural households of growing plants in empty grocery-store cans, Diaz will create four sculptural reproductions of brand-name canned goods, enlarging them to the size of the outdoor planters typically found on urban streets and sidewalks. *A Can for All Seasons* will be on view on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx, between 164<sup>th</sup> and 165<sup>th</sup> Streets, just across the street from the Bronx Museum of the Arts. Installed along the median and filled with seasonal plants, the sculptures will serve as colorful, decorative additions to the urban drive-by environment.

*A Can for All Seasons* addresses art's historic and contemporary ties to advertising and commercialism. Like the Pop artists, Diaz is drawn to the colorful graphics and ubiquity of these inexpensive items. But his inspiration is closer to home, and resides as much in the products' utilitarian nature as in their visual appeal: he follows them from their perch on grocery store shelves into the domestic realm, where empty tin cans often get repurposed. Creating his monumental version of a homemade planter, Diaz affectionately observes and celebrates the practice of "making do," using something on hand to create an aesthetic object. Transforming a small, private act of home improvement into a public gesture, he plays off of the tradition of social sculpture, with its emphasis on using art to reconsider the world we live in.

-more-

The can labels Diaz selected represent four Mexican brand name items, each one showing a type of food that is indigenous to the “New World”: corn, chiles, chocolate, and tomatoes. Like many international imports, these brand-name products are increasingly available to mainstream Americans, a result of immigrant populations and cultural assimilation. Here, they serve as canny observations of the global consumer culture, standing in for the exchange and movement of ideas, images, goods, and even people across borders and social hierarchies. In such, this project recalls Diaz’s 2003 installation for the Havana Biennial, I • Cuba, for which he created a whole line of souvenirs (beach balls, tote bags, beach towels, postcards, etc.) bearing the artist’s take on the iconic city slogan. He distributed them for free throughout old Havana, and then observed as the objects entered the public realm—where they were sometimes even sold to tourists by locals.

An artist of incisive and good-natured wit, Diaz works with equal awareness of, and affinity for, contemporary culture’s modernist highs and its campy lows. Yet he is less interested in specific notions of “high” or “low” than he is in observing and fueling the fluidity between the two. In his paintings, sculptures and performance pieces, Diaz often refers to American art’s greatest hits. He is inspired not so much by the masterpieces themselves but by their populist proliferation through postcards, knickknacks, and other inexpensive souvenirs, as seen in his edible artwork AMOR, a black-and-white cookie based on Robert Indiana’s iconic LOVE painting, or in his glitter replica of Jackson Pollock’s Number 32.

Alejandro Diaz lives and works in New York City. He has had a solo exhibition at Jessica Murray Projects, New York (2001). Recent group shows include “The Superfly Effect,” Jersey City Museum, New Jersey; “Open House,” Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York; “Fall Selections 2004,” Drawing Center, New York; and the Havana Biennial (2003). He received a BFA from University of Texas at Austin and an MA from the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, New York.

Location, directions, and other information:

On the median of the Grand Concourse between 164<sup>th</sup> and 165<sup>th</sup> Streets, across the street from The Bronx Museum of the Arts. Subways: D, B to 167<sup>th</sup> St or 4 to 161<sup>st</sup> St / Yankee Stadium. Always on view.

A Can for All Seasons is a project of the Public Art Fund program In the Public Realm, which is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, The New York State Council on the Arts, A State Agency, the City of New York Department of Cultural Affairs, the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President, The Greenwall Foundation, The Silverweed Foundation, The JPMorgan Chase Foundation, and friends of the Public Art Fund.

This presentation is made possible through the cooperation of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. Special thanks to Community Board 4 and the Bronx Museum of the Arts.

PUBLIC ART FUND is New York’s leading presenter of artists’ projects, new commissions, installations and exhibitions in public spaces. For over 25 years the Public Art Fund has been committed to working with emerging and established artists to produce innovative exhibitions of contemporary art throughout New York City. The Public Art Fund is a non-profit arts organization supported by generous gifts from individuals, foundations, and corporations, and with public funds from The New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

###