

With Eyes of Stone and Water

René Francisco's art is closely linked with the community in which he lives and works. He teaches at the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana, and collaborates with his students on art projects. These projects often take place in the streets or in shopping centres instead of museums or galleries. Without being glum, his art carries a strong message and deals with issues that concern Cuban society. Francisco's considers it especially important to be able to work in Cuba.

René Francisco often uses recycled materials. In this exhibition, his All use is abuse consists of objects reminiscent of furniture, made from pipe. He has also made a series of works from used toothpaste tubes. "My works are relevant to all people because the objects I use are used every day by every one... Like toothpaste tubes — everyone works them, squeezing and shaping them however they please".

The toothpaste tubes are sculptural elements for Francisco. He twists and bends them and attaches large number of them to each other to form large compositions. His works in this exhibition include an enormous wall of toilet paper holders entitled Public Toilet. He has also made a piece called Wall of Tubosutra, in which the tubes are used to represent variations of the love-making positions portrayed in the Kama Sutra. The tube works are symbolic of contact and communication between people and of an individual's place in a community.

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