

Damián Ortega

New Work

February 16 - March 30, 2002

Opening Reception: Saturday, February 16, 2002, 6-8 pm

D'Amelio Terras is pleased to present the first New York gallery exhibition and United States solo debut of Damián Ortega.

Ortega (born 1967) lives and works in Mexico City. He creates sculptures, photographs and videos inspired by everyday objects such as pick-axes, golf balls, children's toys, weeds and tortillas. Octavio Zaya writes that his art has a "consistent desire to play tricks with our expectations," deconstructing these items to "carry out a mischevious process of transformation and dysfunction." This irreverence can be traced to a "tradition of cultural assault that ranges from Dada to the Situationists, from Buñuel to Conceptual art," and has found consistent expression in Mexican art. It is also informed by his previous occupation as a political cartoonist, a highly regarded intellectual activity in Mexico. His artworks conflate a formal grace with sly wit and institutional critique, provoking reactions from viewers who are presented with an unfamiliar iteration of the everyday.

Ortega will present objects that create both optical and physical illusions. In this exhibition, buildings become transparent, walls become flexible and reveal their constituent parts, and holes in the street come to life. What happens when the hard materials used to construct the space around us soften? When the life we breathe into a space actually changes that environment? Ortega's art is a modest yet insistent call for reconsideration of all that we see around us.

Damián Ortega has recently participated in group exhibitions at the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki, Finland, the P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in New York and at the Witte de With Museum of Contemporary Art in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. He will be featured in a one-person exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia this autumn.

Images and biographical information for the artist can be found on our website, located at <http://www.damelioterras.com>.

For more information or press requests, please contact Brian Sholis at 212.352.9460 or brian@damelioterras.com

D'Amelio Terras represents the work of Polly Apfelbaum, Erica Baum, Delia Brown, Tony Feher, Joanne Greenbaum, Glenn Ligon, John Morris, Rei Naito, Rika Noguchi, Damián Ortega, Miguel Rio Branco, Karin Sander, Joe Scanlan, and Yoshihiro Suda.