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## DARÍO ESCOBAR: BROKEN CIRCLE

May 18 – August 24, 2014

### GUATEMALAN CONTEMPORARY ARTIST DARÍO ESCOBAR CREATES SITE-SPECIFIC INSTALLATION AT CRAFT & FOLK ART MUSEUM FOR HIS FIRST SOLO MUSEUM EXHIBITION IN LOS ANGELES



*Broken Circle XI*, bicycle reflectors, 2014.  
Courtesy of the artist



*Crash No. XVI*, chrome iron and steel, 2014.  
Courtesy of the artist

LOS ANGELES — The Craft & Folk Art Museum presents *Darío Escobar: Broken Circle*, the first solo museum exhibition in Los Angeles of the acclaimed Guatemalan artist. Escobar is widely considered Central America's leading contemporary artist, known for reinventing everyday objects and sports paraphernalia into compelling sculptures that are layered with history and playfulness. *Broken Circle* is a site-specific wall installation composed of 1,000 red bicycle reflectors, activated by the interplay of light and the visitors' movements through the gallery. The exhibition has been curated by Alma Ruiz, Senior Curator at The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in Los Angeles.

Escobar (1971–) was educated as an architect and art conservator in Guatemala and Spain before exchanging his training for a career in visual art. His groundbreaking early work included gilded consumer objects, such as a McDonald's paper cup, and silver repoussé sports equipment including skateboards. This conflation of industrial objects with religious imagery using colonial silversmithing techniques formed his initial visual investigations into the impact of middle-class consumerism, material culture, and mass production on Guatemalan society.

In recent years, Escobar's work has shifted into larger-scale installations composed from the accumulation and repetition of sports objects, including bicycle tires, soccer balls, and billiard sticks. The tridimensional motion of lines and the gesture of drawing inform these installations, which curator Alma Ruiz refers to as drawing-sculptures.

*Broken Circle* follows Escobar's recent trajectory of drawing-sculptures, as he generates a new work conceived entirely from the color, form, and behavior of the red bicycle reflectors. Echoing the kinetic effects of geometric abstract art, the repeating undulations and rotations of the mural-like wall installation will interact with the light in the space to generate a flickering effect produced by the visitor's own movement through the gallery space.

Two floor sculptures—"Crash No. XVI" and "Crash No. XVII" (both 2010)—will also be exhibited in the gallery space. The shape of each car bumper-turned-sculpture has been determined by the impact the vehicle suffered during an automobile accident. The significance of pairing these two types of artworks lies in the artist's preoccupation with personal safety. The bike reflectors caution both pedestrians and vehicular drivers of the proximity of a bicycle; the bumpers are reminders of human error and its fatal consequences. In Los Angeles, a city renowned for its car culture, *Broken Circle* will acquire a particular resonance.

Darío Escobar has exhibited widely in galleries, museums, and biennials in Latin America, North America, and Europe since the late 1990s. Escobar's work is in the collections of The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles; the Blanton Museum of Art, University of Texas, Austin; the Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina; La Colección Jumex, Mexico City; Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich; Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami; and the Miami Art Museum. Escobar was

chosen to represent his country at the Latin American Pavilion at the 53rd Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy in 2009 and at the 2013 California-Pacific Triennial, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, California. He is currently part of a group exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) titled *Fútbol: The Beautiful Game* through July 2014. Escobar lives and works in Guatemala City.

An opening reception will take place on Saturday, May 17 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. preceded by a conversation between Darío Escobar and curator Alma Ruiz from 6:00 – 6:30 p.m. The reception is open to the public for a \$12 admission fee. CAFAM members will be able to preview *Darío Escobar: Broken Circle* on Saturday, May 17 starting at 12:00 p.m.

This exhibition is partially supported by the Pasadena Art Alliance.

#### PUBLIC PROGRAMS

CAFAM will offer exhibition-related workshops and events in conjunction with the exhibition, including CraftLab family workshops on the second Sunday of each month from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

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The Craft & Folk Art Museum (CAFAM) is Los Angeles' only institution exclusively dedicated to exhibiting contemporary craft, design, and folk art. Located on the city's historic Museum Row, CAFAM's dynamic exhibitions feature established and emerging artists whose works create thoughtful and provocative visual exchanges between craft and contemporary art. CAFAM's regular programs and events provide opportunities for the public to participate in artmaking and engage with exhibiting and local artists. In addition to the exhibitions on view, the Shop at Craft & Folk Art Museum features fair-trade art and handicrafts from both local and global artists and artisans.

For group tour information, call 323-937-4230, x.28.

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

Admission: FREE on the first Wednesday of every month

Regularly: \$7 for adults; \$5 for students, 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 - 9:00 p.m.