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## Chelsea Art Museum shows Federico Uribe's "Human Nature?"

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"The true work of art is but a shadow of the divine perfection."

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Federico Uribe - *Human Nature* (detail) -mixed media installation

dimensions variable - 2007 - at The Chelsea Art Museum

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**NEW YORK CITY** - Uribe's rain forest installation consists of animal, insect and plant sculptures that are produced solely from PUMA shoes, with every part of the shoe being used in the exhibition. The sculptures are installed exclusively in a landscape of shoe laces and shoe parts creating a magical transformation that is the very substance of art-making. "Human Nature" challenges the individual to witness the violent, voracious and self-destructive characteristics innately found in humans. **On exhibition through August 18th, 2007, at The Chelsea Art Museum.**

Uribe began his creative process in July 2006 with 25,000 shoelaces and 1,500 shoes. Held together by wood and 22,000 metal screws, "Human Nature" measures about 4,000 feet and features various creatures and objects found in nature including the artist's favorite piece - a red tiger which jumps out of the grass. This work culminated with a show during Art Basel Miami Beach 2006 at La Comunidad Warehouses in Miami's Wynwood Art District. Since then Uribe has added another 10, 000 shoelaces and about another 200 pairs of shoes to the installation.

This creative collaboration between Uribe and PUMA formed as a result of Uribe's strong creative sensibility and his ability to work with everyday objects. **Both Uribe and PUMA felt there was a mutual artistic viewpoint that helped lead to this design collaboration.** In seeing his past works and Uribe's use of daily objects in art, the idea of using PUMA sneakers as an artistic medium came to life. PUMA's support for Uribe's talent is just one more step in the company's mission to embrace and cultivate talent and collaborative endeavors.



From his early work in painting, Uribe evolved into a sculptor, first using found objects like baby bottle nipples, coins and screws, along with industrial cleaning products and things gathered in street markets. The color, form, texture and symbolism of these objects created a potent combination which established Uribe's reputation as a contemporary conceptual artist whose hybrid work still defies classification.

Uribe's art-making is a labor-intensive, repetitive and almost compulsive process essential in order to re-envision how the

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**Federico Uribe, artist *Human Nature (detail)*, mixed media installation dimensions variable - 2007**

human body and these ordinary objects of today's culture are perceived. By recombining in such an obsessive manner, Uribe introduces irony into both the technique and the meaning of the work, with a fresh and radical association of materials and ideas. He induces the metamorphosis of items used in daily life into a new object that has a different significance, appearance and texture. Once the viewer gets past the "wow" factor of the work, it seduces and entices him or her to physically experience and complete the work by interacting with it in a personal way.

The humorous titles of Uribe's work, through the use of popular metaphors and plays on words, also offer a different perspective on the work to the viewer. Words are simultaneously the expression of a concept and a direct reference to tangible objects with their immediate power of evocation of meanings, forms, sounds, textures and colors. **The Pop nature of his materials, e.g. PUMA sneakers in this series, engender surprise and joy in viewers, who see these everyday objects in a new and refreshing light.**

Humor, beauty and love are essentially what remain in the memory of the viewer of Uribe's work. For an artist who comes from a country that has been at war for almost half a century, this achievement is a way of reconciliation with life: *"I have the hope," says Uribe, "that people who relate to my sculptures and live with them, will see the love I put into them. I want people to feel that I do this with a lot of careful attention and the purpose of beauty. I give my life to my work and I want people to see it."*

*"When I started working with shoes I could not avoid thinking where they came from and all the materials from nature that we use to comfort our life. So as a tribute to what nature gives us all, I got the idea of reconstructing nature from its own raw materials. I can not give my creations true life but I may give them the echo of life, which is as much as art can do,"* says Federico Uribe.

Federico Uribe, born in Columbia, lives and works in Miami, FL. His work has been exhibited in solo and group shows in galleries and museums in North America, South America and Europe.

**Visit The Chelsea Art Museum - 556 West 22nd Street (at 11th Avenue) - NYC -**



**Federico Uribe, *Human Nature (detail)*, mixed media installation dimensions variable - 2007**