



Exhibition: **Jaume Plensa**
IVAM-Centre Julio González
27th November 2007 – 17th February 2008

Organized by: Institut Valencià d'Art Modern

Curator: William Jeffett

Jaume Plensa (Barcelona, 1955) is one of the Spanish currently active artists most valued both in the national and international scene. Drawing, sculpture, printmaking, opera set designs, video-projections, sound installations...— there is practically no artistic expression or technique he has not experimented with. The exhibition at the IVAM, curated by William Jeffett, focusses on Plensa's most recent works and consists of 5 sculptures. The catalogue published on occasion of the exhibition, a joint production with the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Nice (MAMAC), contains images of diverse works in multiple formats by Jaume Plensa, especially sculptures and installations ranging from the late 90's to the present, and includes texts by Consuelo Císcar, director of the IVAM, William Jeffett, curator of the exhibition, a poem by the artist, and an interview by Gilbert Perlein, chief curator of the MAMAC.

In 2004 the IVAM published the catalogue raisonné entitled "Jaume Plensa. Books, prints and multiples on paper 1978-2003", encompassing the entire graphic work of the Catalan artist up to that moment. With the present exhibition and the respective catalogue, this time the museum focusses on the sculptural aspect of this multidisciplinary artist.

The materials chosen by Plensa for the construction of the art works exhibited at the IVAM are stainless steel, polyester resin and light, the latter used as an artistic mean. Literature, which is one of his main creative sources for his work, is also featured in the exhibition. The show begins with an internally illuminated art piece located at the external hall of the museum. Functioning as a lighthouse, it invites the audience to undertake a poetic internal travel to be developed inside the halls, that culminates with a monumental work entitled SHO, expressly made on occasion of this exhibition. The piece simultaneously produces a feeling of weight and transparency, which combined with its monumental scale lends it a character going beyond the object and figure traditions. As in his public sculpture, where he recovers the lost solidarity of urban spaces other way alienated, we find here a poetic support to our most intimate feelings and ideas.

Born in Barcelona in 1955, Jaume Plensa studied in the Llotja and the Sant Jordi High School of Arts and worked in some mechanical and forge workshops. Starting with cast iron, which characterized his early period sculptures and with which he reached unusual plastic possibilities, Plensa has subsequently worked with such diverse materials as alabaster, polyester resin, plastic, paraffin wax, nylon, glass, sound, light, and the word itself. Beyond his concern for the form, the artist explores the materialization of the poetic forms of representation and the respective aesthetic dematerialization of the work's structure and shape. When sculpturing, Plensa manages to construct a metaphor through the solidification of thoughts.

The artist, currently living between Barcelona and Paris, is mainly known for having made a wide series of daring interventions in public spaces spanning from Tokyo and London to Chicago, carrying so sculpture beyond the object. Among his public sculptural works outstands "The Crown Fountain" (2004), located at the Millennium Park in Chicago. It consists of a series of waterfalls, glass towers and a database of LED images with portraits of the city inhabitants. Plensa is also prominent for his drawings, collages, printmakings, and set designs for both theatre and opera, as shows his collaborations with the theatre group *La Fura dels Baus*.

Outstanding among his past exhibitions is the retrospective show on his work organized by the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in the year 2000. His sculptures are featured at some of the main museums and galleries all over the world, such as the Galerie Nationale du Jeu of Paris, the Henry Moore Sculpture Trust of the United Kingdom, the Malmö Museum of Modern Art of Sweden or the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Lyon. During the last years, he has presented solo exhibitions at the Círculo de Bellas Artes of Madrid, galleries such as the Richard Grey Gallery of Chicago or the Galerie Lelong de Paris (2006), the Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani of Palma de Mallorca (2006), the Centro de Arte Contemporáneo of Malaga (2005), the Museo Colecciones ICO of Madrid (2005), or the Kunsthalle of Mannheim (2005). Plensa has recently been awarded with the title of Doctor Honoris Causa by the prestigious School of the Art Institute of Chicago.