

CAI GUO-QIANG COMMEMORATES EXPLOSIVE ATTACKS WITH *BLACK RAINBOW: EXPLOSION PROJECT FOR VALENCIA*

**MAY 22, 2005 EVENT MARKS OPENING OF EXHIBITION ON
BLACK FIREWORKS AT IVAM - INSTITUT D'ART MODERN**



Black Rainbow rendering, Cai Studio

April 14, 2005: At 12 noon on May 22, 2005 Cai Guo-Qiang will present *Black Rainbow: Explosion Project for Valencia* in the River Park between the Real and Trinidad C. Alboraya bridges. A mid-day eulogy for the victims of explosive attacks across the world, *Black Rainbow* will ensue after a storm of global violence as the poetic shadow of a rainbow to symbolize the heightened threat under which we now live. The project, commissioned by IVAM - Institut Valencia d'Art Modern for the city of Valencia, expands upon Valencia's awesome annual Las Fallas pyrotechnic tradition.

EVENT *Black Rainbow: Explosion Project for Valencia* will incorporate over two thousand black pyrotechnic smoke shells to form several arches in three stages stretching across the sky over Valencia's River Park. The first rainbow will gingerly arc over the river, drawing swiftly through the sky as if the smoke were being chased by the wind. A second rainbow will fan open, expanding over the river and, finally, three rainbows will flash in succession, punctuating the sky to complete the cycle.

CONCEPT Cai Guo-Qiang conceived *Black Rainbow: Explosion Project for Valencia* as part of a series of salutes that will take place in cities across the world (*Black Rainbows* are also scheduled for Edinburgh and Beijing). Other than *Century with Mushroom Clouds*, Cai Guo-

Qiang's project series in the 1990s for which mushroom clouds were simulated with pyrotechnics in symbolic sites worldwide, including New York City and a nuclear test site in Nevada, *Black Rainbow* is unique as a project sited in multiple venues. The repetition of *Black Rainbow* in the international community is intended as a series of omens of widespread unease. While signaling alarm like ancient smoke signals, the ominous arc of smoke in *Black Rainbow* also serves as a somber and dreamlike salute and reminds us, despite our contemporary associations with explosive materials and warfare, that violence and its signifiers can possess ethereal and profound beauty.

TECHNOLOGY AND EXECUTION *Black Rainbow* will incorporate custom-made pyrotechnics by the Spanish company, Pirofantasia; the duration of the project will be approximately one minute.

EXHIBITION *On Black Fireworks*, a drawing and video installation at IVAM, will occupy Gallery 8 on the second floor and feature gunpowder drawings depicting Cai Guo-Qiang's initial proposal, *Black Fireworks* and *Black Rainbow: Explosion Project for Valencia*, and three videos of Cai Guo-Qiang's explosion projects from 1990-2005, including documentation of Valencia's *Black Rainbow*.

MEDIA CONTACT Sarah Hogate Bacon, Director of Communications, Cai Studio
212.995.0908 / sarah@caiguoqiang.com