



## LA BIENAL 2013: HERE IS WHERE WE JUMP!

### Here Is Where We Jump by Chus Martinez

It is really difficult to use arguments to provide an account of a survey exhibition. Arguments normally revolve around questions posed by the curators or by the artists and these questions would help us to name notions and later somehow form a thesis on the subject matter of the show. Here, however, the subject matter is the exhibition itself: the fact that it exists as a confluence of artists who meet every two years at El Museo and exhibit work. La Bienal as an exhibition should be seen not as a result -even if it is the result of extensive research- but as a beginning. A beginning, a potential "start" that happens in the galleries every two years and serves toward the cause of visibility for an artist community located in and active in a city. Furthermore, it expands upon every past bienal, to make the scope larger, to connect the community to itself, to let the artists and the viewer's know how a practice structures itself. To say that La Bienal is a "start" is different from saying it is a "platform" from which to project one's career. Therefore, one needs to explain the title of this edition carefully: Here is Where We Jump.

The "jump" refers here to the possibility of being suspended in the air between heaven and earth. The notion of the jump and the quote -taken from a fable of Aesopus- is intended to point to the radical distinction we want to make from the media's understanding of the place of artists in public opinion. An exhibition produces indeed a space of transit, a journey between the more private space of the studio and the artist's circles to a larger and differently structured public realm. However, to say we are here to jump is to stress that a simple and banal act like hopping can fully express the force of individual freedom. One can imagine artistic practice like the production of this eternally suspended jump, a space of freedom that is aware of the laws at work, but is positioned in an in-betweenness that allows for a different logic. The jump names the possibility of a distinct order, one that is not in response or in reaction to the existing ones, but able to contain novelty and possibility. And so, we do approach the Latino and Latin American art production based in New York as being capable of both absorbing historical, transmitted knowledge and, at the same time, giving the audience the impression they are unprecedented.

A survey exhibition is different from a group show. It is a collective exhibition whose function is to produce a summit-like situation. The exhibition turns into a congress where individuals already symbolically connected can see themselves as a group and act also as a group during the time the exhibition lasts. And the works are essential to activating the conversation since they are assembled in the space and only after the opening start serving as the real and legitimate basis of discussion. La Bienal is a colloquy. It brings the audience, the artist community, the art historians and critics, the curators, and the art world at large closer to every and each of the works, to listen to the artists. A space of attentiveness reloaded actively every two years, marking the fact that the doing and the thinking exists in our city even if we do not see it in this explicit way. It is crucial to declare again and again the relevance of this artist community. We would like to contribute to the questioning of groupings, encouraging openness and a diverse understanding of cultural identity, always aspiring towards being participants in a world defined by art's ideals of plurality.