

JIMÉNEZ DEREDIA

COSMIC ENERGY IN THE SCULPTURE OF JIMÉNEZ DEREDIA

ART OF
THE
WORLD
GALLERY
Modern & Contemporary Art

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2201 Westheimer Road
Houston, Texas 77098
(+1) 713-526-1201

www.ArtoftheWorldGallery.com
Info@ArtoftheWorldGallery.com

Liliana Molina | Co-director
Mauricio Vallejo | Co-director

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Jiménez Deredia, *Energía Atávica* — *Atavistic Energy*, 2002, marble.
20 x 37 x 28 inches - 50 x 95 x 70 cm

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AN ARTIST OF PEACE

The history of humanity presents us with many examples of nations that did not manage to endure. Some were devastated by external aggressions; others were torn apart in internal conflicts; and others simply vanished, because they failed to define and sustain their own personality, their own essence.

In today's world, no country is safe from these snares. The war lashes a good part of the world. Ideological differences, and even religious differences, confront brother against brother. The cultural overcrowding makes nations, especially the smallest, confused and without contact with their own roots. In the rough sea of contemporary history, some countries risk forsaking their national identity, and the clear vision of their own destiny is obscured.

To move towards a better future, in order not to lose their roots, nations depend on their artists. It is a select group of men and women that rises above the everyday to explore time and space, and allow us, mere mortals, to look at the heart of man and his inexhaustible imagination.

The English poet William Blake once wrote: "The arts of peace are great, and no less glorious than those of war." I prefer to think, however, that this wonderful phrase falls short. I prefer to think that the arts of peace — dialogue, harmony, and understanding — are, in fact, much more glorious than those of conflict and violence that have stained very often the pages of the history of mankind. I prefer to think that just as we marvel at the sculptures of Michelangelo Buonarroti and the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, our children and grandchildren will marvel at the great works of peace that we leave behind. In my dream of the future, men and women of all nations will have us as deserving of their remembrances; they will honor our efforts to find the common ground of our hopes; they will give thanks for our desire to build a world without wars; and will walk the Peace Route of Jorge Jiménez Deredia from start to finish.

Through these sculptures of Jorge, we can transcend the realm of everyday life and find food for the mind and spirit. Jorge is a true architect of the identity of my people, and it is my conviction that he executes plans that were given to him by the infinite Creator. Fame and honors have not deprived Jorge of the natural humility that characterizes his dealings with others. The glory has not diminished his great love for Costa Rica, that love that has led him to leave his mark in all corners of his homeland and beyond, from the National Theater of Costa Rica to the Children's Museum; from the beautiful Boboli gardens in Florence to the Basilica of Saint Peter in the Vatican; from the gardens of the Porte de Champerret in Paris to the Roman Colosseum; from the exhibition of "Twilight" at the Rockefeller Plaza in New York to the installation of the sculptural group at Florida International University in Miami; from the exhibitions in Shanghai, Singapore, and Mexico City, to Houston.

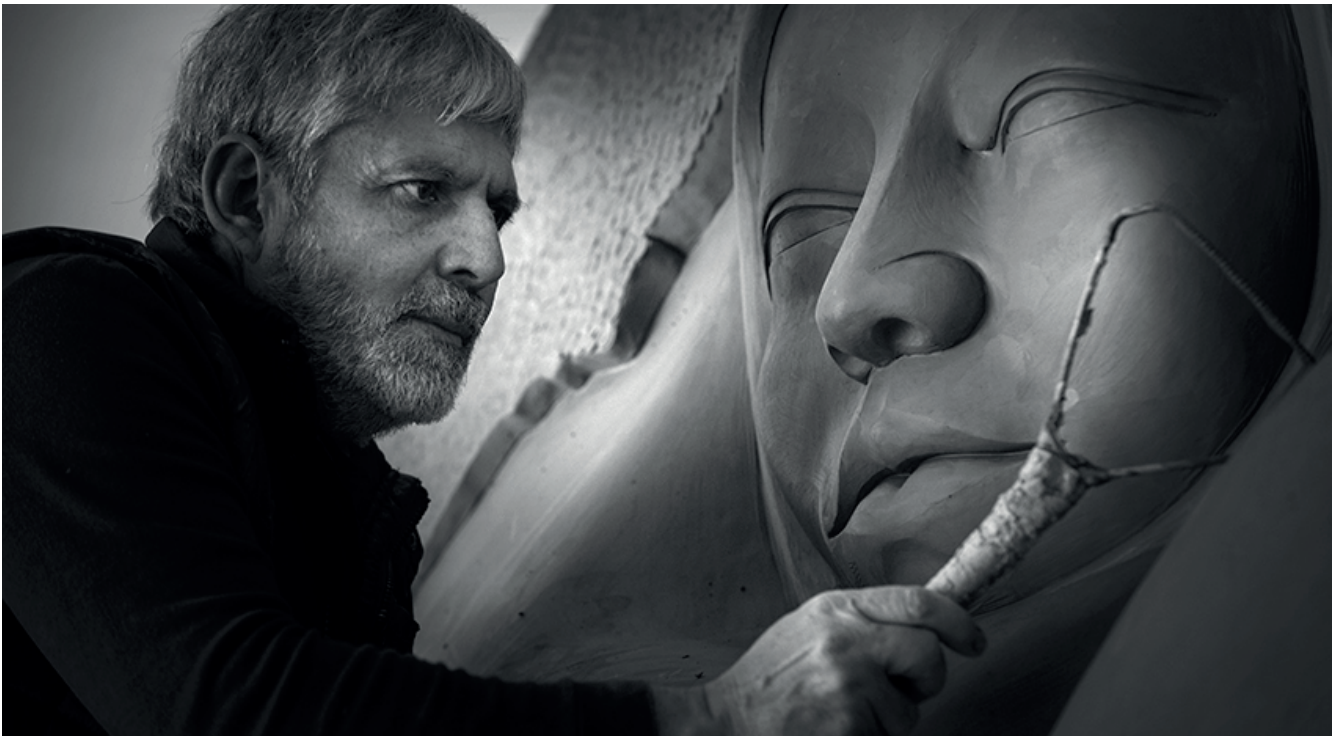
I am deeply proud that this artist from Heredia, my city, is today also the son of Houston. And that a son of peace has been adopted by the homeland of Lincoln. I dream of a future where the arts of peace are exposed in every land, in every city, and in every human heart. United together Costa Rica, Texas, and an artist of peace, we have begun to follow the path that will allow us to make that dream come true.

Dr. Oscar Arias Sánchez

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Former President of the Republic of Costa Rica

JORGE JIMÉNEZ DEREEDIA: MONUMENT MAKER



The sculpture of Jorge Jiménez Deredia is more than work destined for a pedestal.

It embodies the past, present, and future.

These figures honed from marble, or wrought from bronze, are immutable.

Deredia's sculptures have been compared to Stonehenge. We understand why — they possess the dignity and gravitas of grand artifacts left by other civilizations, those from distant times. Strong and silent, the artist's multi-ton creations are sentinels. They serve up clues that challenge the viewer to decipher the wisdom of their maker — and our age — pointing toward a way to understand the existence of the planet, man, and matter (both plant and animal). We also intuit something of the order of the cosmos from his spheres becoming human form — or reversing the process, they appear to curl up again, coiling into from whence they came. Genesis forming and reforming in front of our eyes.

The Costa Rican-born artist is not just a sculptor of three-dimensional objects existing in space — he is a monument maker, activator of carved or cast forms that interact with architecture, the built environment, public plazas.

Michelangelo thought in the scale of time and eternity. So does Deredia.

BRIDGING CONTINENTS, CONNECTING MILLENNIA

His is a talent who synthesizes the Old World with the New — the Latin American with the European; pre-Columbian tradition and its mythic peoples, especially the Boruca of Costa Rica, with the even more ancient Romans. It shouldn't work — but it does.

Deredia grew up in a country with the ruins of an Indian civilization related to the Maya, one extending back millennia, ever present. What they left behind — haunting, inexplicable stone spheres — became a catalyst for a young boy becoming a sculptor.





Both Italy, the artist's home since 1976 where he voyaged thanks to a scholarship, and Costa Rica, where he was born in 1954, possess their share of myths and secrets gleaned from previous peoples. Each has to do with archetypes — Rome's going back to the fable of Romulus and Remus and the She Wolf. Deredia's native country is replete with intrigue over the unexplained remnants left centuries ago by the mysterious, and little known Boruca people. This indigenous population fashioned abstract large-scale spheres, like a ball for a giant child's game or a replica of a planet, works just as fascinating as the haunting totems of Easter Island.

Thanks to Deredia, the Borucas are no longer lost to the world. In a twist of fate, the artist's odes to their idyllic spheres now turn up in monumental sculpture a continent away — sited for example in the town square of Florence, held by the hands of a marble woman hovering over the earth, rooted near Il Duomo.

MAESTRO OF BRONZE AND MARBLE

Linked to the quarries of Michelangelo's marble, when he settled permanently in Carrara, Italy, Deredia

like that master of the Renaissance, thinks in terms of public space and the synthesis of architecture and urban planning. His massive, volumetric figures enliven plazas spatially in the same way that statues of gods, goddesses, deities, and warriors functioned in an ancient temple complex, be it Eastern or Western. There's always a sense of life and implied ceremony. Surely, it must not be an accident Deredia shares the same repertoire of materials that defined the ancient world, and that of the Renaissance — bronze and marble. He breaks with today's art world, by personally toiling over the clay that becomes the mold for his bronze casts, or chiseling the marble by hand, rather than employing studio assistants, to achieve its exquisite surfaces.

Deredia's figures, both male and female, bear serene expressions, faces of unblemished beatitude, countenances inscrutable yet seemingly unperturbed. They appear to gaze into a future of peace and harmony, one polished free of worry or concern. This is channeled work, and just like the Boruca spheres, abstract at its very essence, and in the many forms the figures assume via their massive, multi-ton volumes.





At their most abstract, they quote the sphere itself — or its beginning as a biomorphic hatching process, which could be animal or vegetal. The pure shapes and rigorously honed marble and bronze, and pleasing, generous proportions of the figures recall a Platonic-type of ideal — or should we say a Deredian order, including the palpable beauty of his spheres.

Particularly in this “Genesis” series, nature — from the unfurling of plant tendrils to the growth of a cell — is implied; man is also part of that cycle, not separate from it. The ultra abstract forms that begin each *Genesis* cycle are of today, yet harken back too to a millennium past, again the legacy of the Boruca.

And it can all be traced to an experience the future sculptor had as a nine-year old boy. The volume *Deredia a Roma* records the artist’s memory of an encounter with Boruca sculpture that jolted his life nearly a half-century earlier — “I saw them in the museum of San José in Costa Rica, and they made a profound impression on me. They were fashioned perhaps 1,700 years ago by smoothing granite; the only abstract sculptures before Christopher Columbus ... there were scores of those spheres, all sizes, rounded

with a precision that that still defies explanations; they weighed up to 15 tons and were aligned with the stars and the movements of the sun ...”

SAINT PETER’S AND A CORNUCOPIA OF CITIES

Who could dream that a young man growing up in Heredia, Costa Rica, would be inspired to become a sculptor, and that his work would enter the Vatican collection, going on to occupy a niche in a transept of the great basilica of Saint Peter’s itself, a destination for all of Christendom. Who might imagine that a series of massive figures imbued with tremendous physicality as well as grace, would take over the city of Rome itself, placed outdoors to dialogue with its greatest and most iconic monuments. In 2009, Deredia’s epic bronzes lined the Via Sacra along the Roman Forum, held court alongside the Colosseum, and also graced the public spaces nestled beside the Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Museo Romano, Palazzo Massimo, and Museo Romano Altemps.

In *Deredia a Roma*, the sculptor recalls the surreal sense of his commission for the Roman Forum: “I would never have thought that in my lifetime I would see the dawn three times [installing artwork] under a mobile crane capable of lifting 60 tons, with a boom projecting 40 meters, in the shadows of the Arch of Titus, or that it would stand out against the Curia, the meeting place of the Senate.”

What he created in 2009 for the Eternal City, a conversation across space and time with the surviving grandeur of ancient Rome as well as its modern city, was not the first time Deredia engaged in a discourse with the past. Three years earlier, at the invitation of another Italian city known around the world — Florence — the Carrara-based maestro created marble and bronze sculpture for piazzas and gardens of the fabled metropolis that birthed the Renaissance.

In Florence, Deredia’s monumental sculptures were installed at five locales, all notable and dating back centuries. These encompassed the Limonaia greenhouse of the 16th-century Boboli Gardens and the



splendid gardens themselves (a de Medici endeavor), the Piazza of the Republic, the Piazza belonging to the Pitti Palace, and the square surrounding the Vasari-designed Uffizi Gallery. The installation, entitled “The Mystery of the Genesis,” transfixed the population of the historic city, including Florence’s cultural tourists. The smooth, Mayan-inspired and Chac Mool-like sculptures, in Carrara marble or bronze, stood out as prescient, benevolent beings against the rugged-stone palazzos and streetscapes of Florence.

The artist’s serene, moon-faced figures also popped up the following decade in additional European and Latin American cities, recalling something from a Pre-Columbian archaeological site: mythic, shamanistic, eternal. To date, these are: San José, Costa Rica; Mexico City (including his four-part *Génesis de Arrullo* for the Plaza of the Republic); Valencia, Spain; Segesta, Italy; and Trapani, Italy. These urban places have all been sites where Deredia has brought the beauty and the spiritual sensitivity of his sculpture to carefully curated locations, selected for historic significance as well as their role in current daily life.

PEACE PATH

While other artists look to dissent to raise awareness of the socio-political turmoil of today, Deredia turns his back on this approach. Instead, the sculptor seeks answers in past civilizations from the Sioux and their Medicine Wheels to his birth country’s own Boruca people — thus positing the way to Peace. His is a bold idea, a brave vision, concurring with his succinct proclamation — “I am an utopian” (*Jiménez Deredia: Firenze*). Deredia’s concept demands a decades-long commitment to realizing complex monuments along nexus points throughout the Americas; some might proclaim this big, ambitious plan impossible. May this Path to Peace happen in his and our lifetimes, knitting together countries along a route that does not see borders or differences, but common humanity.

DEREDIA IN TEXAS

This exhibition, documented by the present catalog, commemorates the artist’s debut in Texas. It also marks as well a significant solo show in a country that has yet to fully discover the vision and talent of an artist — one who has exhibited in three Venice Biennales — a sculptor who possesses the rare ability to transform an entire city by virtue of his artwork.

For this occasion, Art of the World Gallery has selected directly from Deredia’s studio 15 bronze and two marble sculptures — all recent works — which share classical elements, and bear the sculptor’s seminal figures. Perhaps it is not coincidence that this work would first be shown in Houston, among all the Texas cities — the birthplace of the quest for the moon and the stars, the home of a medical center where infinitesimal investigations into matter on a nanoscale level have ramifications on human longevity for lifetimes to come.

Would it be possible to have a sculpture from the “Genesis” series placed amid one of Houston’s revitalized parks? What if our city could become another destination upon the artist’s grand plan for pathways to peace? Could the metropolis that pioneered space exploration serve as a new node in Deredia’s profound “La Ruta de la Paz”?

This exhibition signals the beginning of a conversation. It opens the door to a Texas dialogue about Deredia, the nature of his system of Transmutative Symbolism, and the ability of his sculpture to provide an understanding of man within the universe. Most of all, it awakens within an urban dweller an appreciation of the power, promise, and mystery of art.

Catherine D. Anspan

December 16, 2017

Houston, Texas





(Detail)



ENSUEÑO — REVERIE

2007

Bronze with black granite base - Edition 6/8

39 x 23 x 18 inches - 100 x 58 x 46 cm



(Detail)





ARMONÍA — HARMONY

2008

Bronze with black granite base - Edition 5/8

16 x 38 x 18 inches - 41 x 97 x 45 cm



(Details)



MELODÍA — MELODY

2008

Bronze with black granite base - Edition 6/8

31 x 24 x 19 inches - 80 x 60 x 47 cm



(Details)



PAREJA — COUPLE

2008

Bronze - Edition of 6

63 x 138 x 63 inches - 160 x 350 x 160 cm



(Detail)



ARRULLO — LULL

2010

Bronze with black granite base - A/E 1/2

31 x 33 x 20 inches - 80 x 83 x 50 cm



(Details)



INTENSIDAD — INTENSITY

2010

Bronze with black granite base - A/E 2/2

35 x 31 x 24 inches - 90 x 80 x 60 cm



(Detail)





GÉNESIS DE ALQUIMIA — ALCHEMY GENESIS

2010

Bronze with black granite base - Edition 3/6

25 x 89 x 16 inches - 63 x 226 x 40 cm



(Details)



NUMIS — NUMIS

2010

Bronze with black granite base - Edition 5/8

35 x 24 x 20 inches - 90 x 60 x 50 cm



(Details)



PROTECCIÓN — PROTECTION
2010
Bronze - Edition 1/6
31 x 47 x 3 inches - 78 x 119 x 8 cm



(Detail)



QUIMERA — CHIMERA

2011

Bronze with black granite base - Edition 4/8

26 x 28 x 16 inches - 67 x 70 x 40 cm



(Detail)



GEMELOS — TWINS

2012

Bronze with black granite base - Edition 2/8

29 x 18 inches - 73 x 45 cms



(Details)



MEDITACIÓN — MEDITATION

2013

Bronze with black granite base - Edition 2/8

39 x 22 x 20 inches - 100 x 55 x 50 cm



(Detail)



SUEÑO — DREAM

2013

Bronze - Edition of 6

63 x 89 x 51 inches - 160 x 225 x 130 cm



(Details)





GÉNESIS DE MEDITACIÓN — MEDITATION GENESIS

2015

Bronze with black granite base - Edition 2/6

31 x 85 x 20 inches - 80 x 215 x 50 cm



(Details)



ENERGÍA ATÁVICA — ATAVISTIC ENERGY

2016

Marble - Unique

20 x 37 x 28 inches - 50 x 95 x 70 cm



(Details)



PLENITUD — PLENITUDE

2016

Marble - Unique

28 x 43 x 13 inches - 70 x 108 x 34 cm



(Details)



REFUGIO — REFUGE

2016

Bronze with black granite base - Edition 3/8

35 x 39 x 13 inches - 90 x 98 x 32 cm



DEREDIA: THE ARTIST'S JOURNEY

Jorge Jiménez Martínez, whose art-name is Deredia, was born October 4, 1954, in Heredia, Costa Rica. He started sculpting in the 1970s, creating pieces already bearing the signs and characteristics of what would become a constant throughout his successive works: the development of organic shapes informed by their environment, the force of gravity and growth, and the influence of pre-Columbian art.

In 1976 at 22 years old, a study grant brought him to Italy where he settled and from there started to travel around Europe, coming into contact with the main artistic movements of the continent.

Deredia graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Carrara, and between 1980 and 1986, he attended the School of Architecture at Florence University. The intellectual stimulations of those years profoundly changed his approach to his artistic work, and immersed in the Florentine climate, he expanded his interest in the Renaissance period. The academic fervor of that time also pushed the artist to reflect extensively on the development of his own practice.

The perception of a globalized dimension of being and the universe, forming the basis of his vision of life, developed and deepened thanks to a conscious return to the cultural origins of his own country.

In the series that became a touchstone of his career, Deredia started to reflect the extraordinary creative influence received by observing the monumental granite spheres produced by the pre-Columbian civilization of the Boruca people. These artifacts of mysterious, primordial strength moved the sculptor towards studies as much about shape and material, as of function and symbolism derived from the sphere and circle.

By taking on the art-name “Deredia” (a contraction of “de Heredia” translated as “originating from Heredia”), the artist’s conscious return to his cultural origins was underscored at that time as the source of his creative and philosophical inspiration.

In 1985, Deredia realized the of his *Genesis*, a series of sculptures depicting distinct phases of the mutation of matter in space over time. This artistic revelation laid the foundation for the creation of his personal theoretical-artistic system — Transmutative Symbolism.

The artist garnered international acclaim for his sculptural breakthrough, participating in the 1988, 1993, and 1999 Venice Biennales. This Biennale experience was marked by his meeting the celebrated art theorist and critic Pierre Restany. The friendship and collaboration born at that time would prove to be crucial to Deredia’s artistic and intellectual growth.

In 1999, the Fabbrica di San Pietro commissioned the sculptor to produce a statue of San Marcellino Champagnat for one of the huge-scale Michelangelo niches situated along the external perimeter of Saint Peter’s Basilica’s left transept. The sculpture was inaugurated by Pope John Paul II in the year of the Great Jubilee (2000). With this work, Deredia became the first non-European artist to be represented within the key monument of Christianity, the epic Saint Peter’s within Vatican City.

In 2006, after an important personal exhibition held in Florence, Deredia received the nomination of Correspondent Academician of the Sculpture Class by the Florentine Academy of Art and Design.

From June to November 2009, Deredia carried out an important solo exhibition in Rome. The site was among the most celebrated monuments of ancient Rome — the Roman Forum, and more precisely the Via Sacra (Sacred Way) that passes through it, which for the first time in history hosted contemporary creations.

The profound reflection upon the archetypal form of the sphere, put into theory with the idea of Transmutative Symbolism, brought the artist to conceive “La Ruta de la Paz”: de la Paz: a colossal project seeking to establish nine monumental sculptural complexes, based on the cosmic principle of the sphere, in as many countries along the American continent — extending from Canada to the southernmost tip of South America, the archipelago Tierra del Fuego.

During his career spanning five decades, Deredia has created monumental sculpture for museums, external environments, and public institutions in 11 countries extending across the continents of Europe, North and South America, and Asia. The artist to date has been showcased in 35 solo and more than 100 group exhibitions.

SELECTED ONE-MAN SHOWS*

- 2015** “Jiménez Deredia: Una Génesis para la Paz,” installation for Mexico City
 “El Tiempo y el Espacio en la Escultura de Jiménez Deredia,” Ciudad de las Ciencias y las Artes, Valencia, Spain
 “Homenaje a Jiménez Deredia,” Ana Lucia Gómez Arte Latinoamericano, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- 2014** “El Tiempo y el Espacio en la Escultura de Jiménez Deredia,” Ascaso Gallery, Miami
- 2012** “Jiménez Deredia, la Genesi e il Simbolo: il Mito Contemporaneo,” installed at Aeroporto Birgi Vincenzo Florio, Corso Vittorio Emanuele (Trapani Center), Piazza del Mercato del Pesce, archaeological sites of Segesta, Trapani/Segesta, Sicily
 “Jorge Jiménez Deredia,” Etienne Gallery and City Hall Plaza, Oisterwijk, Netherlands
- 2011** “Jiménez Deredia y el Simbolismo de la Esfera,” Legacy Fine Art, Panama City, Panama
 “Jiménez Deredia Sculptures Monumentales avec la Ville de La Baule,” installed at Gare de La Baule – Escoublac, Parvis d’Atlantia, Place des Palmiers, Esplanade Francois André, La Baule, France
 “A Selection of Recent Sculptures by Jiménez Deredia,” Tresart Gallery, Miami
- 2010** “Jorge Jiménez Deredia at Brickell Avenue,” U.S. Century Bank, Miami
 Featured international artist in world’s fair Expo 2010, Shanghai
 “Jiménez Deredia,” Galería Carlos Woods Arte Antiquo y Contemporaneo, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- 2009** “Deredia a Roma,” city-wide exhibition installed at Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Foro Romano, Colosseo, Museo Romano, Palazzo Massimo, Museo Romano Altemps, Rome

- 2008** "Jorge Jiménez Deredia at Brickell Avenue," U.S. Century Bank, Miami
- 2006** "Il Mistero della Genesi nella Scultura di Jiménez Deredia," city-wide exhibition installed at Limonaia del Giardino di Boboli, Piazza della Repubblica, Piazza Pitti, Piazzale della Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence
- 2005** "La Sfera, Simbolo dell'Essere," Parco della Versiliana, Pietrasanta, Italy
Galería Spatium, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2004** "El Inicio del Conocimiento," Americas Collection, Miami
"El Inicio del Conocimiento," Galería Ramis Barquet, Monterrey, Mexico
- 2003** Legacy Fine Art Gallery, Panama City, Panama
Galería Lucía de la Puente, Lima, Peru
- 2002-2003**
Legacy Fine Art Gallery, Panama City, Panama
Galería Lucía de la Puente, Lima, Peru
Boca Raton Museum of Art, Boca Raton, Florida
- 2002** Galería Espacio, El Salvador, San Salvador
- 2000** Museo Amedeo Lia, La Spezia, Italy
- 1999** XLVIII Venice Biennial, Venice, Italy
- 1998** Quintana Gallery in Arco fair, Madrid, Spain
- 1997** Parco del Tettuccio, Montecatini Terme, Italy
- 1996** Teatro Nacional, San José, Costa Rica
Galería Valanti, San José, Costa Rica
- 1994** Galería Valanti, San José, Costa Rica
- 1993** XLV Venice Biennial, Venice, Italy
Gaymu Gallery, Paris, France
Grand Palais (Decouvertes), Paris, France
- 1992** Galería Valanti, San José, Costa Rica
- 1990** Modern Art Museum of Latin America, Washington, D.C.
Latin American House, Paris, France
Le Marie Trainier Gallery, Washington, D.C.
- 1988** XLIII Venice Biennial, Venice, Italy

- 1987** Museos del Banco Central de Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica
- 1985** Centro Allende, La Spezia, Italy
- 1984** Galleria Turelli, Pistoia, Italy
- 1983** Dresdner Bank, Bonn
- 1982** Spa in the Park, Bad Nauheim, Frankfurt
Dresdner Bank, Munich
- 1981** Galleria Cortina, Milan
- 1979** Italian-Latin American Institute, Rome
Museo Dino Scalabrino, Montecatini Terme, Italy
- 1978** Casciana Terme, Pisa, Italy
- 1977** Palazzo Comunale, Sarzana, Italy
- 1976** Teatro Nacional, San José, Costa Rica

** Unless specified, exhibitions titled "Jorge Jiménez Deredia"*

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

- **Costa Rica**

Alajuela	Jardines del Recuerdo
Cartago	Laboratorios Stein
Coronado	Clínica de la Caja Costarricense del Seguro Social
Guanacaste, Papagayo Peninsula	Main entrance to Proyecto Eco Desarrollo
Heredia	Centro Comercial Paseo de las Flores
Limón	Limón Cathedral
San José	Avenida Escazú
	Banco Banex
	Banco Nacional de Costa Rica
	Banco de San José
	Caja Costarricense del Seguro Social
	Jardín de Esculturas del Museo de Arte Costarricense

Jardines de la Casa Presidencial

Jardines del Teatro Nacional

Metropolitan Cathedral

Museo de Arte Costarricense

Museo de Los Niños

Museos del Banco Central de Costa Rica

- **El Salvador**

San Salvador

Roble Group

- **England**

London

A. Saran Group

- **France**

La Baule

Gare de La Baule – Escoublac

Paris

Latin American Gardens, Porte de Champerret

Christian Dior, Armand de Ponthaud Collection

- **Italy**

Foggia

Building of the Province

Isernia

D'Aloisio Family

Pietrasanta

Traffic circle between Via Aurelia and Via Unità d'Italia

Rome

Foreign Ministry of International Affairs

Verona

Grand Hotel

- **United States of America**

Boca Raton, Florida

Boca Raton Museum of Art

Elkhart, Indiana

GDS Diagnostic Division of GDS Technology

Houston

Latin American Medical Surgical Clinic

New York

Goldman Group

Washington, D.C.

Museum of the Americas

- **USSR**

Yugra, Tyumen Region

Public Sculpture

- **Vatican City State**

Vatican City

Saint Peter's Basilica





Liliana Molina and Mauricio Vallejo with Jiménez Deredia in his studios in Italy

